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## CONTENTS

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The Blessedness of the Person .....	1
Letter on "Apostasy" .....	7
Extract .....	9
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	10
God's Order .....	18
What is a Christian's Rule of Life: Christ or the Law? .....	22
"Thou art the Man" .....	27
Temptation .....	29

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE PERSON**

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF  
THE PERSON OF CHRIST  
IN ITS UNITY  
AS PRESENTED IN SCRIPTURE**

By A. C. Ord.

(Continued from v. 4, #6)

Thirdly, as to the relations, positions, and offices between God and man, which He fills, we declare that they all, and in every aspect, imply and involve the whole glory of His Person.

As to this cardinal point Mr. Raven is most distinct. Referring to Psalm 16, he speaks of "*my statement* -- that 'Christ is viewed as man *distinct and apart from what He is as God*' -- in that, and other passages" (*A Correspondence*, p. 3).

And in another letter, in this correspondence, he says:

"By a most *improper* use of the statement, 'no man knoweth the Son but the Father,' Christians are virtually stopped from seeking to enter into the import of any particular relation or position which Christ sustains -- for to do this they must of necessity look at such relation *abstractly*, i.e. in what it is in itself *apart from other thoughts* as to the *Person* who sustains it, because it is so revealed -- and is the only way in which man (*being finite*) could take it in. In many cases it would not be possible to bring *the thought of God as such* into the particular relation -- for how could it be said of God over all blessed for ever, that He had 'a head,' or was 'perfected for ever,' or 'entered in,' or is the 'mediator between God and men,' or 'the first born among many brethren'? If any one dares to speak of these things *abstractly*, he is charged with dividing the unity of the Person of the Son. By such a notion all is shrouded in mystery, utterly and hopelessly obscured. Where the idea of *unity of a person* is *got from I know not*. It seems to me *perfect nonsense*. The idea of 'person' does not bring in the thought of either parts or unity" (*ibid.*, page 9).

It is most blessedly true that Scripture sometimes brings specially forward, and emphasizes, the reality of the humanity of Christ; for this is its beauty. But

where do we find that "Christ is viewed as Man distinct, and apart from what He is as God?" Nor is it true, as Mr. Raven affirms, that Scripture in speaking of Him as 'first-born among many brethren,' 'second man,' 'Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,' 'Head of the Body,' 'High Priest,' &c., &c., and in presenting Him to us in these positions, speaks abstractly, i.e. limits itself to what is appropriate <sup>1</sup> to the particular position in hand, and *does not, in so speaking, cover all that is true of the Person who has entered on those positions* (p. 4).

On the contrary, Scripture always presents Him to us as a whole Christ, in the blessed unity of His Person, and *never* so limits itself, or speaks of Him as "man distinct and apart from what He is as God," or without involving the divine in His Person. And it is profane to imply, as this sentence does, that this is not appropriated, and necessary, to *every* position in which He represents us as Man before God. The Scripture does indeed delight, in every way, to bring out the perfect suitability and adaptation of Christ for the positions or offices which He sustains, whether in reference to God or to ourselves. Sometimes, therefore, when His Mediation or Priesthood is in view, we are encouraged by the reality of His Manhood being brought into special prominence, -- His partaking of flesh and blood, and His experimental acquaintance with our circumstances, our sorrows, and our temptation. But this is never, as Mr. Raven affirms, "apart from other thoughts as to the Person who sustains it." It is, on the contrary, accompanied and interwoven with thoughts and statements concerning His nearness to the Father as Son of God, and the acceptability of His Person, as such, in the exercise of this office. Besides this we have the sovereign grace and dignity with which He upholds the people of God in their weakness, and the glory of God involved in their maintenance to the end, both in their connection with God, and in their conflicts. "Seeing then that we have a *great* High Priest, that is passed *through*" (Greek) "*the heavens, Jesus the Son of God*, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:14,15).

If we are invited to consider Him as the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, offices to which He is called by God, and in which He represents us, standing as Man for men in the presence of God, we are reminded that, in this position, He is "counted worthy of more glory than Moses"; distinguished

1. This is partly true and partly false, and thus calculated to mislead the reader. It sounds very plausible to say that Scripture limits itself to what is appropriate to the particular position in hand, which is of course true, but in assuming, as Mr. R. here does without proof, that the whole glory of His Person as divine is *not appropriate* to these positions or relations, because He has become Man in order to undertake them, he takes for granted the point in question, which assumption is a snare and a delusion of the enemy. This moreover is what Mr. R. means, when he says that Scripture speaks *abstractly*. Inasmuch as the Lord necessarily fills these positions as Man, He would *abstract* what is otherwise true of His Person as divine.

and honored as Moses was in an exceptional way (Numbers 12:7). For He who, *as God and Creator*, "hath builded the house hath more honor than the house" He has built (Matt. 16:18); as well as having, beyond the place of a *servant*, the personal interest and rights of a "*Son over His own house*," in what belongs to Himself (Heb. 3:1-6). So far is the word of God from looking at Him "distinct and apart from what He is as God," in these relations.

Again, the apostle insists on the greatness of the Lord in Hebrews 7, arguing this from the way in which Melchizedek is presented to us in Scripture, "without father, without mother, without *descent*, having neither *beginning of days*, nor *end of life*; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a Priest continually." Melchizedek's fitness to represent the Son of God in the dignity of His Person, thus sets before us figuratively His power to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him, in all the exigencies of their spiritual conflict with powers of evil, both within and around them (vv. 3,16, 25). It is this suitability which has led to His being called or saluted as High Priest, by God Himself, who finds delight or satisfaction in His personal qualifications for this office, as the word "salutes" (Hebrews 5:10, Greek) indicates; as does the oath itself by which He is constituted High Priest, as well as the terms in which it is expressed, "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. . . . For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh *the Son*, who is consecrated for evermore" (Heb. 7:21,28).

Christ is also the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the means of access or introduction to the Father (John 14:6). He is likewise the Shepherd, whose love and interest extend to every one of the sheep. But though these relations towards ourselves specially involve and express His nearness and tender approach to us, in His perfect humanity, as well as in His giving His life for the sheep, yet, as the Son, no man takes His life from Him. He knows His sheep divinely, as the Father knows Him and He knows the Father. He has other sheep, the Gentiles, whom *He* must bring. He calls them by name, He gives them infinite and eternal blessings, and no one can pluck them out of His hand, who alone could say, "I and My Father are one" (John 10). If He is the true Vine (John 15) in whom we are to abide, He is the source of nourishment to every branch; and it is only in dependence on His infinite fullness that we are blessed, for without Him we can do absolutely nothing. And when sending forth His disciples after His resurrection, whilst He speaks of Himself as Man, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, He adds, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). In like manner he tells us, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). This blessed and constant ministration of strength, grace, or blessing, by the perpetuity of His divine presence, promised in these varied ways, teaches us that in every relation, position, or character fulfilled by Him towards us, we must bring the thought of what He is, as God, into the particular relation, -- which is exactly what Mr. Raven says we must

not do. To "look at" "any particular relation or position which Christ sustains" "abstractly," "is the only way," he tells us, "in which man (*being finite*) can take it in." But such reasoning is utterly destructive of all our blessing, and virtually reduces Christ to the measure of our finite minds. What finite man can comprehend how Christ can be thus present with each of His servants, or in the varied assemblies of His saints, or sustain, in grace, in every moment, each soul that looks to Him? The fact is, our confidence is invited, and based upon His capability and qualifications for maintaining the relation and positions assumed by Him towards us, precisely on the ground which Mr. Raven denies. Our profit and comfort would be all destroyed by the admission of such a sentiment into the mind as Mr. Raven suggests. For how could Christ act as Mediator, or High Priest, or Shepherd, without the divine knowledge of each case? This is the very point on which our blessed Lord expressly insists with His disciples when announcing His approaching departure and absence from them on high. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe *in God*, believe also *in Me*" (John 14:1). For His care and presence and power, being divine, would be ever used towards them in the same way, and like the unseen power of God, could be apprehended by faith alone. Moreover we need to be assured that, as our Mediator, He can sustain the dignity of the character of God and His holiness, and assure us of our relations with God being maintained; whilst, at the same time, He comes so near to us, and wins the confidence of our hearts, in having become Man; expressing all His tender compassion for us in our far-off condition. But to do this effectually he must know all the secrets of our hearts, and all our peculiar trials and temptations, as God alone can, so that *all His divine attributes are necessarily involved in the exercise of each of these offices*. There is "one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus," i.e., "Jehovah the Saviour" (1 Tim. 2:5). All this is as unfathomable as His divine Person, though it is the delight of faith to count upon it, and realize it as infallibly true. Mr. R.'s reasoning insists upon attempting to measure what is infinite, and in order to do so, he must reduce the whole to the level of our finite minds.

The assumption of human nature in its weakest and lowest stage by our blessed Lord, His subordination in all things to the Father, and perfect absolute dependence in that condition, has always been used by human reason and unbelief as the occasion for the depreciation of His Person and His glory. And so it has been in this controversy. But the word of God, on the contrary, makes this very humiliation of Himself, so unsparing on His part, the occasion for bringing out more fully His glory, insisting on His investiture, as Man, with special positions and dignities, which should bring us closer to Him and render us more dependent on Him, and beholden to Him, endearing Him the more to our hearts, and making Him thus the object of more honor from man, and even from all intelligent beings in the universe. For it is the Father's counsel that He should be honored, in that nature in which He has been slighted and despised. Hence Scripture delights to dwell upon what He does as man, and to show the victories or triumphs He has gained in that nature. For now He has, as has been

justly stated, acquired, as well as inherited honors. Satan has been overcome by Him, the power of death and the grave destroyed, sin put away, the judgment of God endured, and all this could only suitably be done by Him as man, because it was for man, and as representing man, that all the powers of evil, under which man had fallen, were to be overthrown; whilst the glory of God was to be thus re-established before the universe (Hebrews 2:9,10,14-16). Hence these same glorious works are sometimes ascribed to Him in His manhood, and at other times ascribed to the exercise of His power as the Son of God.

From all this we may learn, when His manhood is specially brought into relief, not to conclude (from false assumptions of the human mind untaught by the Spirit of God), that when He is spoken of as the "Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," as "Head of the Body," as the "Second Man," that divine attributes are not included as the power by which He acts in or sustains these relations, but that in all the properties or powers which distinguish Him as God and Man, in the unity of His blessed Person, there is a gracious adaptation and special competency, in a double way, for the exercise of these functions, such as is expressed in the words, "I have laid help upon One that is *mighty*, I have exalted One *chosen out of the people*" (Psa. 89:19). As chosen out of the people, He has the sympathy that links Him with the people of God, in the knowledge of their trials and exercises, and to what the weakness of flesh and blood (unlike the nature of angels) exposes them to, whilst the might that exists in His Person shows His fitness, in another way, to render all the help that we need to be ministered to us, and which He has undertaken to supply. For He does not indeed take hold of angels (*i.e.* by the hand to assist), but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold. In all this we trace not only the perfect grace of God which has considered so perfectly all our need, but we have also God's own satisfaction in, and appreciation of, the One who is the divinely chosen instrument of our blessing. For Christ's investment with the highest functions and offices connected with redemption, far from implying weakness or inferiority, is naturally founded, by God's purpose, on the original ground of suitability, in His capacity and qualifications for what He has undertaken.

A striking illustration of this statement, and one of great importance in the present controversy, is given us in John 5, where Christ is brought before us, both as Son of God and Son of Man. There we learn that all the works expressive of divine prerogative and power are done by the Son in Manhood, equally with the Father. He quickens souls to Eternal Life, giving life, as the Son, to whom *He will*. He raises all mankind, as to their bodies, out of the dust of death by His life-giving voice. And, lastly, He alone judges, and thus disposes, sovereignly, of the eternal destiny of the creature -- "That all . . . should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father" (v. 23). At the same time He does this specially as Man. He "hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man" (v. 27. Cp. Acts 10:42, 17:31). There is indeed exquisite adaptation, even in His manhood, for this office, not



only because He has been degraded and set at nought, as Man, by man whom He came to save, but also, because there is suitability, in the estimation of the divine wisdom, that the Judge of Mankind should be Himself One who has been manifested and proved, in the midst of human circumstances and temptations -- where the creature has failed; and who, as pure and perfect man, has made experimental acquaintance with all that exercises the human heart. At the same time delegation and commission of these varied powers of quickening, saving, or judging, could alone be entrusted to, or be undertaken or executed by, One who was equal with the Father, who could act with Him in all He does, who is perfectly acquainted with His mind and will (v. 30), and who knows all the secrets of men's hearts, and reads their whole life and history at a glance. (Cp. Rom. 2:16, 1 Cor. 4:5). Everywhere, when exercising judgment even on the living -- as we see Him, either walking as the Son of man amidst the seven golden candlesticks, or coming with many crowns upon His head (Rev. 1:19), He is represented as having eyes as a flame of fire, which penetrate into everything, and with a two-edged sword going out of His mouth, and He declares that "All the churches *shall know* that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts" (Rev. 2:23). Power which is expressly stated to belong to God alone (Jer. 17:10, 1 Chron. 28:9), for, as has been said by another, "The exercise of judicial authority in determining the final condition of mankind is a work which could no more be delegated to an inferior intelligence than could the government of the universe. It requires the highest attributes of Deity for its performance." Hence also, when spoken of in Eph. 4, as man, who "gave gifts unto men" (v. 8), He is also the One "that ascended up far *above all heavens*, that He might fill all things" (v. 10). And again, "He is *before all things*, and by Him *all things consist*. And He is the *Head of the body*, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For all the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him"<sup>2</sup> (Col. 1:17-19, Greek.) Thus, Scripture, instead of looking at these relations as "distinct and apart from other thoughts as to the Person who sustains them," in every such relation introduces the thought of the Glory of the Person, for our eternal consolation, as well as in view of His proper and peculiar exaltation. Indeed, this is just the difference between Christ and all other beings, however honored, whether angelic or human.

(To be continued, if the Lord wills)

2. Compare Mr. R.'s statement, detaching what is true of Christ's Person from His position as Head of the body, with the way in which both His divine Power and His "fullness" are associated here with His headship. (A Correspondence, page 4, line 4, etc.)

## LETTER ON "APOSTASY"

### BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

The day of apostasy is hastening on with rapid strides, and also the day in which the Lord shall come to snatch His own away. The present moment is of so solemn a character that I feel constrained to address you this word of exhortation. Godly men everywhere, who watch the signs of the times, see the moment approaching which shall terminate the present actings of grace. The time has evidently arrived when one must speak plainly and decisively, and ask you where you are, and what you are about. You have by grace, which has shone brighter and brighter as it has approached its termination, been gathered out of the seething mass of idolatry and wickedness which now threatens Christendom and the world with an overthrow more awful than that of Sodom and Gomorrah of old; and the question is whether you are adequately impressed with the responsibility, as well as the blessedness, of the ground you are on, and walking like men and women whose eyes have been opened. Believe me, there has never been in the world's history such a time as the present, and Satan is occupied with none as he is with you; and his occupation with you is the more to be feared because of the subtlety of his operation. His object is to withdraw your attention from Christ, while you suppose you are on safe ground and have nothing to fear. He would destroy you with the very truth itself. For mark the subtlety: you are on safe ground but only while Christ is your all in all. Here is where Satan is drawing some away. Interpose anything between your soul and Christ, and your philadelphia becomes Laodicea; your safe ground is as unsafe as the rest of Christendom; your strength is gone from you, and you become weak, like any ordinary mortal. Some of you are young, recently converted, or brought to the right ways of the Lord, and you do not know the depths of Satan. But you are hereby solemnly warned of your peril; and if mischief overtake you, you cannot plead ignorance. Again I say, Satan has his eye especially upon you, for the purpose of interposing the world in some form between your soul and Christ. He cares not how little, or in what form. If you knew but how little will answer his purpose, you would be alarmed. It is not by that which is gross or shameful; such is the development, not the beginning of evil. It is not by anything glaring that he seeks to ruin you, but in small and seemingly harmless trifles -- trifles that would not shock nor offend anyone as things go, and yet these constitute the deadly and insidious poison, destined to ruin your testimony and withdraw you from Christ. Do you ask what are these alarming symptoms, and where are they seen? The question does not shew what is the character of the opiate at work. Brethren and sisters, you are being infected with the spirit of the world. Your dress, your manner, your talk, your lack of spirituality, betray it in every gathering. There is a dead weight, a restraint, a want of power, that reveals itself in the meetings, as plainly as if your heart were visibly displayed and its thoughts publicly read.

A form of godliness without power is beginning to be seen among you, as plainly as in Christendom generally. As surely as you tamper with the world, so surely will you drift away to its level. This is the nature of things. It must be so. If you tamper with the world, so surely will you drift away to its level. This is the nature of things. It must be so. If you tamper with the world, the privileged place you occupy, instead of shielding you, will only expose you to greater condemnation. It must be Christ or the world. It cannot be -- ought not to be -- Christ and the world. God's grace in drawing you out of the world in your IGNORANCE is one thing, but God will never permit you to prostitute His grace, and play fast and loose, when you have been separated from the world. Remember you take the place, and claim the privilege, of one whose eyes have been opened; and if on the one hand this is unspeakably blessed (and it is), on the other hand it is the most dreadful position in which a human being can be found. It is to say, "Lord, Lord," while you do not the things that He bids. It is to say, "I go, sir," as he said who went not.

Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, though I thus speak; and I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will bless Him for these few faithful words. Nothing can be more glorious than the position you are called to occupy in these closing days. Saints have stood in the breach, have watched through weary days and nights these eighteen hundred years, and you only wait for the trumpet of victory to go in and take possession of the glorious inheritance. Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors; and yet, forsooth, you are lowering your dignity to the level of the poor potsherd of the earth, who only wait for the rod of the Victor (and yours too) to be dashed into pieces. Oh, awake, then from your lethargy: slumber no longer; put away your idols and false gods; wash you garments, and get you to Bethel, where you will find God to be better than ever you knew Him, even in your best days. Lay aside your last bit of worldly dress; guard your speech, that it be of Christ and His affairs, and not, as you know it now often is, of anything but Him. Let your prayers mingle with those of other saints at the prayer meetings; they never were more needed. Neglect no opportunity of gathering up instruction from that word which alone can keep us from the paths of the destroyer, and let your life be the evidence of the treasures you gather up at the lecture, or the reading-meeting, or in secret with the Lord. If you want occupation, with a glorious reward from a beloved Master, ask that Master to set you to work for Him: you will never regret it, either in this world or in that which is to come.

Beloved, bear with me; I am jealous over you with godly jealousy. You belong to Christ, and Christ to you. Break not this holy union. Let not the betrothed one be unfaithful to her Bridegroom! Why should you be robbed and spoiled? And for what? Empty husks and bitter fruits, while you waste this little span of blessing! All the distinctions acquired here in the energy of the Spirit will but serve to enhance your beauty and render you more lovely in the eyes of Him who has espoused you to Himself. Can you refuse Him His delights in you? Can you refuse Him the fruit of the travail on His soul, who

once hung, a dying man, between two thieves, on Calvary, a spectacle to men and angels, and for you -- you who have FORGOTTEN (for you cannot have DESPISED) this devotedness for you. He could have taken the world without the cross, and left you out, but He would not; and now will you, having been enriched by those agonies and that blood, take the world into your tolerance and leave Him out? Impossible! Your pure mind did but need to be stirred up by way of remembrance.

Let us therefore take courage from this moment. We have lately been offering up prayers, confessing the lack of piety and devotedness. May we not take this world as the answer of our ever-gracious faithful Lord, to arouse us - to re-awaken our drooping energies? And then the more quickly He comes the better. We shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Hebrews 10:23-25, 37.

*Collected Writings of J.N. Darby 32:407-410.*

## EXTRACT

There are two words in the original tongue for "carnal" (σαρκινος and σαρκικος), the only difference being one letter. They are found in 1 Cor. 3:3 and Rom. 7:14, and elsewhere. One word is applied to the *standing* of an awakened [quickenened] man, still "in the flesh," that is, having the sense of his responsibility, as a child of Adam, and no deliverance [Rom. 7:24] before God. This is Rom. 7. The other is applied to saints, whose practical *state* was not spiritual: They "walked as men" (1 Cor. 3). This latter is opposed to the normal state of a saint as a "spiritual" man. We find in the context (1 Cor. 2,3) the "natural," the "spiritual," and "the carnal man." The first a man merely with a natural soul unquickenened: the second, the normal state of a saint; and the third, the saint walking after the flesh.

*F. G. Paterson, A Chosen Vessel*

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

### PART 2

### THE TWO PARENTHESES

#### CHAPTER 2.3: "THIS AGE" AND THE HEAVENLY PARENTHESIS

#### INTRODUCTION

We saw that the O. T. prophets prophesied an earthly kingdom under Messiah<sup>1</sup> and that this is the kind of kingdom a Jew had rightly to expect.<sup>2</sup> We have also seen that the Jews and the remnant expected a literal kingdom as the O. T. prophets had prophesied; and that our Lord endorsed that expectation.<sup>3</sup> We also found that this kingdom was presented in the Person of the lowly and meek One Whom the remnant received but the mass did not. God offered the kingdom in the form of a moral test of the people at large, knowing, of course, the depravity of the human heart and that His Son would be rejected. We considered the moral implications of such an offer, too.<sup>4</sup> The temporal kingdom is therefore postponed, in accordance with God's purpose of glorifying Himself in Christ. Meanwhile, during the Gentile parenthesis of judgment upon Israel, while they are Lo-Ammi,<sup>5</sup> God is doing another work: namely, the forming of a heavenly company blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ - - during a period we call "the heavenly

1. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 1.

2. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 2.

3. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 3.

4. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 4.

5. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 5.

parenthesis."<sup>6</sup>

God's purpose is to glorify Himself in Christ in two spheres: the heavenly and the earthly. When the kingdom is manifested in power Christ shall head up both the heavenly and the earthly (Eph. 1:10). The accusation that dispensational truth teaches that God has two different purposes is a figment manufactured in the minds of opposers.

#### THIS AGE

Let us now consider three expressions found in Scripture concerning this age that we want to consider:

1. *This age*: Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10.
2. *The completion of the age*: Matt. 13:39,40,49; 24:3; 28:20.
3. *The age to come*: Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Heb. 6:5.

Previously we considered the Gentile parenthesis of judgment upon Israel (i.e., the times of the Gentiles). Our Lord lived here during that parenthesis and spoke of "this age." It was the Mosaic age preceding the introduction of the earthly kingdom.<sup>7</sup> Note, then, that the Gentile parenthesis of judgment upon Israel did not change the age!

But more, the introduction of the heavenly parenthesis did not change the age either. Several epistles refer to it as "this age" after the introduction of the heavenly parenthesis. Observe, then, that "this age" is still in progress. It will come to an end, of course, when "the age to come" (i.e., the millennial age - the dispensation, or administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10) is introduced. There is a short period just preceding the introduction of that administration which brings to an end "this age." It is called "the completion of the age." You will see from this the fitness of designating the work God is doing in forming a heavenly company now as "the heavenly parenthesis." This work does not alter the fact that "this age," which has to do with the earth, existed before the Lord came, was in progress when He was here, is in progress now, and will be completed after the rapture; and when this age is ended, the

6. *Thy Precepts*, v. 4, # 6. A reader of *Thy Precepts* called my attention to an article in the Baltimore Evening Sun (May 8, 1989), "Israeli Rabbis Prepare for Return of Temple," in which it was said, "'All Jewish history as far as we're concerned is one big parenthesis until the Temple is returned,' says Rabbi Nahman Kahane of the Temple Institute."

7. Concerning "this age" J. N. Darby remarked that it was "a perfectly well-known phrase among the Jews who spoke of *olam-hazeh*, this world or age, and the *olam-havo*, the age to come, the latter being the time of Messiah's reign" *Collected Writings* 10:360. See also *Collected Writings* 24:12,19,45,78; 25:244; 8:13,14,22; 13:155,156.

earthly parenthesis of judgment will close. But if this is all true, and it is, what about the change introduced with John the Baptist?

## THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY JOHN THE BAPTIST

Verily I say to you, that there is not arisen among [the] born of women a greater than John the baptist. But he who is a little one in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than he. But from the days of John the baptist until now, the kingdom of the heavens is taken by violence, and [the] violent seize on it. For all the prophets and the law have prophesied unto John (Matt. 11:11-13).

The Law and the prophets [were] until John: from that time the glad tidings of the kingdom of God are announced, and everyone forces his way into it (Luke 16:16).

These texts do not mean that prophecy had no further fulfillment after John came preaching. There were, for example, prophecies of Christ's death and resurrection that were fulfilled after John was dead. And so it is in the case of the law. There were types in the law that Christ fulfilled in His death. "For all the prophets and the law" indicates the whole of what we call the O. T. I suggest that the point is that they *pointed toward* the coming kingdom; John *announced* it. Thus, these passages do not mean the end of the prophets and the law arrived when John came preaching. But this does mean that a change was impending. This was a period of transition. The kingdom had not yet commenced, of course (else John would have been in it and not compared with the least in it).

In Matt. the rejection of Christ is marked in chapter 12 when the religious leaders said that He wrought by the prince of demons - thus committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, Who was the true power that wrought in Christ. <sup>8</sup> In ch. 13, the parabolic form of teaching about the kingdom began -- but the form of the kingdom to be introduced was changed. It would take a mystery form (Matt. 13:11), i.e., a form unforeseen by the prophets and the law. This, in the development of God's ways, was consequent upon Christ's rejection by the leadership from Jerusalem committing the sin against the Holy Spirit.

The preaching of the kingdom up to this point of rejection was not about the mystery form but about the kingdom in power. This includes Matt. 11:11-13. "A little one in the kingdom of the heavens" refers to one in the kingdom in power, what we call the millennial reign of Christ. As J. N. Darby remarked,

The introduction in testimony, of the kingdom, made the difference between that which preceded and that which followed. Among all that are born of women there had been none greater than John the Baptist, none who had been so near Jehovah, sent before His face, none who had rendered Him a more exact and

8. The sin against the Holy Spirit was the sin that these men committed in saying that the power that wrought in Christ was of Beelzebub.

complete testimony, who had been so separate from all evil by the power of the Spirit of God -- a separation proper to the fulfillment of such a mission among the people of God. Still he had not been in the kingdom: it was not yet established; and to be in the presence of Christ in His kingdom, enjoying the result of the establishment of His glory, was a greater thing than all testimony to the coming of the kingdom.<sup>9</sup>

The moral state suitable to the kingdom (Matt. 5-7)<sup>10</sup> was quite at variance with the state of the people generally and especially the leaders (with a few exceptions). The "violent" are those who break through all that which spiritually opposed entry into the kingdom. This does not refer to physical violence, but to those who at all personal cost would lay hold of that kingdom with its blessedness under Messiah's reign before His ancients in glory.

To return; my point is that John's announcement of the coming kingdom did not put an end to the law and the prophets (cp. Matt. 5:17 and J. N. Darby's footnote). There yet remains the kingdom in power "to fulfil." John had announced it as at hand; and so did our Lord likewise. But the kingdom in power is "postponed," but not because God did not know Christ would be rejected.

God presented the kingdom in the Person of the meek and lowly Lord Jesus -- One Whom depraved man would certainly reject. And through this rejection, and consequent upon His exaltation in glory at the Father's right hand, He has taken the position of Head of the body formed at Pentecost by the Spirit sent down upon those who had received Him (Acts 2:32,33, 1 Cor. 12:13, etc.). This unity of the saints with the Head in heaven is the great mystery of Christ and the church -- unforeseen by the prophets (Rom. 16:25). The kingdom pointed to by the law and the prophets will yet be established by the crushing power of the stone of Daniel 2 after God's present work of forming a heavenly people is completed.

Concerning the law, we do not read that it has died. But the Christian is dead with Christ (Rom. 6:8). The law does not apply to a dead man (cp. Rom. 6:7) but, "Now we know that the law [is] good if anyone uses it lawfully, knowing this, that law has not its application to a righteous person . . ." (1 Tim. 1:9).

Still, the law as a dispensation does not appear to be in force since the law-giver, Jehovah, having come down here in holy manhood, was crucified. At any rate, Scripture shows that the Christian is not under the law of Moses as the rule of life, a subject on which a few further remarks are in order at this point. The system that puts the Christian under the ten commandments as the rule of

9. Synopsis 3:59.

10. There are moral features brought before us in Matt. 5-7 suitable for those in the kingdom in mystery now; but not all is suitable for the Christian.

life finds it necessary to transmute the seventh day sabbath into the Lord's day sabbath - else how have all ten? You see how spiritual alchemy is an amazing thing.

Galatians does, in spite of all contradiction, oppose putting the Christian under law for any purpose; and speaks, not of fulfilling the law of Moses, but of "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). The law of Christ is not the law of Moses. *The law of Christ is the rule of the new creation:*

For [in Christ Jesus] neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision; but new creation. As many as shall walk by this rule, "peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (Gal. 6:15,16).

Here, believing Gentiles and believing Israelites <sup>12</sup> (the Israel of God) are directed to the law of Christ, namely, the rule, the norm, the standard, of the new creation of which Christ in resurrection is the head. The law-of-Moses-minded do not seem to comprehend this and call us antinomians (i.e., without law). The rule of the new creation is for those who ought to be here in this world to give expression to the will of the Head of the new creation, Christ Himself. This rule of the new creation is the law of Christ. The law of Moses was addressed to those who stood in Adamic responsibility. Our standing is "in Christ."

## NEW CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS AGE

During "this age" the Lord Jesus was rejected. His crucifixion marked the end of the testing of the first man (man in the lost, Adamic standing of responsibility). Since His rejection, Satan is called the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4). The true God has been rejected. And "this age" is now for the Christian "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). Demas forsook Paul, "having loved the present age" (2 Tim. 4:10). How well it is for us to "love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8) which will display the rights and glory of Christ in "the age to come," i.e., the millenium.

## WHAT IS 'THE PRESENT DISPENSATION'?

In many, many places J. N. Darby (and others) spoke of the present period as a dispensation, *speaking conventionally*. However, I commend to your meditation the following.

The church is not, properly so called, a dispensation. It is the assembling together the co-heirs in unity, whilst the kingdom is in mystery. When the law

ends as a dispensation, the kingdom is not yet established in power, and all is in transition. Here the saints are seen above, and the throne of God is in relation with the earth. <sup>13</sup>

The Church, properly speaking, the body of Christ, is not a dispensation, it does not belong to the earth; but there is an order of things connected with it during its sojourning here below -- an order of things whose existence is linked with the Church's responsibility. <sup>14</sup>

Notice that in both cases he used the word "properly," as in the next citation below. And we are seeking at this point to be more exact so as to enlarge our understanding, not merely gliding along on a scheme that regards a dispensation as "a period of time during which . . ." and sets up a neat scheme of *seven* while leaving out the essential subject of the development of the ways of God in government in the earth, not apprehending the true meaning of the heavenly parenthesis and other concomitant truths. Besides that, man (the first man) is no longer under probation (under testing) since the death of Christ. Why do some, then, speak of man being tested now with respect to "grace" since the first man is no longer under testing since the cross? It is because of erroneous notions about the character of dispensations accompanied by defective views regarding the end of testing the first man, who no longer has a standing before God, and the consequences of this great change.

At any rate, dispensations have to do with the earth, not with a heavenly company.

I pass over the time before the flood, whose general character offers a sad contrast to the time when righteousness dwells in the new heavens and the new earth, without a government to maintain it and make it good against the opposition of an adverse nation or the weakness of a failing one. Neither one nor the other can properly be called dispensation. They are both another world from that in which we live.

With Noah we begin the course of dispensation, or of the manifestations of the ways of God for the final bringing out the full glory of Christ. These ways regard the earth, and are founded, so far as they are conferred blessing, on the sacrifice of Christ. <sup>15</sup>

Really, this is not a dispensation. The Jews had a "this world" and "a world to come," "this age" and an "age to come." Messiah was to bring in the "age to come." The age of the law went on and Messiah did come, but they would not have Him, and the whole thing stopped: then comes the church between that and His second coming; and this is why I said this is not strictly a dispensation, but when Messiah comes again, it will close this time, and then will be the last day

11. "κανων (kanon), rule, standard, norm," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* 3:339.

12. The expression, "the Israel of God," refers to believing Jews. Theology has transmuted the Israel of God into the church.

13. *Collected Writings* 5:15, (1842).

14. *Collected Writings* 4:328.

15. *Collected Writings* 5:384.

of this age.

The times of the Gentiles in Daniel, and the parenthesis of the church, are not at all contemporaneous; for the times of the Gentiles began in Babylon, being the times of the four Gentile beasts in Daniel. The times of the Gentiles will not end at the same time with the church, but go on a little after we are caught up. The temple of Jehovah on earth was set aside when the people were carried to Babylon, and they never got the ark again, but a remnant of them was spared to present to them Messiah.

I know what a person means by "the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven," but we belong to a heavenly thing in an interval, and there are no dispensations in heaven. The kingdom of heaven is a dispensation, the dispensation of the gospel is an administration.<sup>16</sup>

The fact that "this age" is still proceeding does have a bearing on the way we should think of the period we are in.

And hence it is also that this present time is called (not I judge a dispensation, but) a parenthesis, because the Lord Jesus speaks of "this age" when He was upon earth, as the same as that which will close by judgment at the end; but this was a period connected with His relationship with Jews, and which will not be closed till He again is present in person; whereas, in the interval, the Church of the first-born has been gathered for heaven.<sup>17</sup>

To me the world now is not under any dispensation, but the whole course of God's dealings with it are over until He comes to judgment.<sup>18</sup>

The dispensation of the law will be followed by the administration of the fulness of times (Eph. 1:10), the millennial reign of Him Whose right it is to reign. Observe that the covenant of the law will be followed by the New Covenant. The New Covenant, if we believe the express statements of Scripture, will be made with the house of Israel and Judah (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:7-13),<sup>19</sup> not the church. There are certain blessings for Israel under the new covenant that we share. We already have the Mediator and the blood and the forgiveness of sins as our own, *on the basis of our oneness with Christ*, not by

16. *Collected Writings* 25:244.

17. *Collected Writings* 13:155 (1850).

18. *Collected Writings* 26:248.

19. Rom. 9:1-5 declares that the covenants belong to Israel and this is complemented by the statement that Gentiles are strangers to the covenants of promise (Eph. 2:11-12). Zecharias, filled by the Holy Spirit, prophesied, and his prophesying shows that the Abrahamic covenant (the promises to the fathers) was not yet fulfilled and that it applied literally to Israel (Luke 1:67ff). Scriptures such as Ezek. 20:33 ff, Isa. 66:8 and Rom. 11:26, Rom. 15:8 all point to the same thing.

covenant.<sup>20</sup> And thus we are able ministers of the new covenant (2 Cor.3) without being under it. These things are sovereignly given of God. The Law demanded; the new covenant gives, and gives by grace. To contrast the two covenants, may we not say that the law and works go together, and the new covenant and grace go together?<sup>21</sup>

It is true that Paul received an "administration of the grace of God which has been given to me towards you" (Eph. 3:2). Call it a dispensation of the grace of God, if you will. That does not change the fact that Paul was not given "a time period during which man is tested . . ." Properly speaking, we are not in a dispensation; not in "the dispensation of grace." Paul had an administration to discharge and he did discharge it. This involved the mystery, which is beyond the grace that Israel will experience in the millenium, of course. But none-the-less, grace<sup>22</sup> will characterize God's dealings with Israel in the millenium; and a blessed Israelite may say, this is indeed the dispensation of grace (having a position greater than John the Baptist). And as far as God's dealings with an earthly people are concerned, that is true.

Observe again J. N. Darby's remark: "To me the world is not under any dispensation, but the whole course of God's dealings with it [with the world; with the earth] are over until He comes to judgment."<sup>23</sup> Dispensations have to do with the earth, not with a heavenly people. No, the administration committed to Paul does not contradict this. This was toward those composing a heavenly company during the heavenly parenthesis, while "this age," begun in the time of Moses, continues on. We are not part of this age, though "there is an order of things connected with it [the church] during its sojourning here below -- an order of things whose existence is linked with the Church's responsibility."

20. Just as dispensations have to do with the development of the ways of God in government in the earth, so covenants have to do with the earth, not with a heavenly company now being formed. Indeed the Noahic covenant involved the introduction of government in the earth and marks the first dispensation.

21. Good works are formed by, and flow from grace. Thus they are life-works, not dead-works.

22. The grace experienced now is poured forth from a Man in the glory of God (Acts 7:56) shining out from His face, so that it is "the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4). The grace experienced by Israel in the millenium will be of a much lesser order, but vastly greater than what O.T. Israel had. The least in that kingdom will be greater than John the Baptist. In the development of God's ways in the earth, this is a vast step upward.

23. He said, Now is the judgment of this world." This also indicates a change, though "this age" proceeds. The judgment has not fallen on the world yet and will not while the heavenly company is being formed. It is for the Christian "this present evil age" (Gal 1:4) and Satan is its god (2 Cor. 4:4). What manner of persons ought we to be while we await the Savior? Doctrine is meant to form our behavior, not entertain our intellect.

Dispensations began with the introduction of government in the earth after the flood. A distinguishable time period is not necessarily, strictly speaking, a dispensation. Abraham to Moses is such a time period when calling was introduced but I doubt that, strictly speaking, that is a dispensation. There is the Mosaic dispensation and also the millennial dispensation.

At any rate, speaking conventionally, 'dispensation of the Church' would at least distinguish from Israel's blessings, by grace, in the kingdom under the New Covenant in contrast to the covenant of law.

So there has not been a change in the age; and it continues while God's formation of the heavenly company is in progress. The kingdom as Messiah's reign has not been inaugurated; but rather, in God's ways, consequent upon the rejection of Christ, the manifested kingdom has been "postponed" and the mystery form of the kingdom introduced, during the time of which, God is forming the heavenly company.<sup>24</sup>

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord wills)

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## GOD'S ORDER

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### PART 1: THE CREATION OF GOD

**ORDER** can be viewed as that state in which everything is in total accord with God harmoniously. The slightest element that causes disruption in God's order and His enjoyment of what He has done for His own glory and joy is sin and produces disorder.

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<sup>24</sup> The Kingdom in its mystery form will run beyond the rapture up to the appearing of Christ in glory.

## CREATION ORIGINALLY

God, being Who He is, must of necessity do all things perfectly. So, His original creation was perfect but the only statement in scripture concerning it is that in Gen. 1:1, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*". There is, of course, further explanation by God, in His Word, as to its subsequent state.

## CREATION SUBSEQUENTLY

What a solemn thing this is to consider, for the sphere of God's creation came into a state of being "*waste and empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep, . . .*" (Gen. 1:2). What the cause of this was God has not told us, so we enquire no further as to it. However, God has told us, "*For thus saith Jehovah Who created the heavens, God Himself Who formed the earth and made it, He Who established it, -- not as waste did He create it; He formed it to be inhabited: -- I am Jehovah, and there is none else.*" (Is. 45:18). Is not this a glorious enlightenment for our souls which entirely shuts out all arguments of scientific deductions, and all philosophical assumptions as to what was prior to the knowledge which God has sovereignly given us concerning the present scene?

## CREATION RE-ORDERED

Even so, God reordered the chaotic state, depicted in Gen. 1:2, into a state of sinlessness (for there is very little as to what He did with the state existent in the original heavens) as entirely satisfying to Himself and perfectly suited for the blessing of man whom He placed in it. And, God declared concerning the work that He had done, "*And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.*" (Gen. 1:31).

## DISORDER BROUGHT IN BY MAN

God must and will have order and no man can escape the liability of maintaining what God has done, and is guilty of every act contrary to it. Thus, when sin came into the world through Adam death entered also (see Rom. 5:12), and this has continued as the irrefutable evidence of sin, quite apart from the multitude of defects to be seen on every hand in creation. So, sin disrupted God's order and spoiled His pleasure in creation with the rupture of man's relationship with God.

## ORDER RESTORED

The disorder in creation will not be rectified until the Son of Man (our Lord Jesus Christ) comes in His great power and reigns over the whole scene, when He will put down all that is contrary and offensive to God, and at the end of His reign He will hand it all back to God totally acceptable to Him. (see Rev. 11:15 & 1 Cor. 15:20-28).

## DISORDER RE-APPEARS AND IS FINALLY JUDGED

During the 1000 years peaceful reign of Christ, over this present earth, Satan will be bound in the abyss (see Rev. 20:1-3). Following this he will be let loose and will act again on the earth in mustering all the world to fight against God's beloved earthly people, and His chosen city (Jerusalem). This will result in God, Himself, dealing with them all in total and final defeat with the consignment of Satan to the "lake of fire" (prepared for him and his angels). This will bring in the establishment of "the great white throne" at which all who have died in their sins will be likewise consigned to the "lake of fire" (see Rev. 20:7-15). Thereby the last remnants of disorder in this physical creation will be for ever removed. However, there will be a godly remnant of Israel (as restored in one nation) together with a host of righteous Gentiles (saved through acceptance of the preaching of the everlasting gospel which will be proclaimed during the seven years prior to the Lord setting up His kingdom), who will be preserved through God's final dealings with this earth (see Rev. 14:1-7) and translated into the new earth which He will bring into existence for eternity.

## ETERNAL ORDER ESTABLISHED

The end of this present heavens and earth are clearly told in 2 Pet. 3:10 -- which terminates what is called 'the day of the Lord' and initiates what is called 'the day of God' -- when He will "make all things new" by bringing into being "new heavens and a new earth". In this new physical creation God's order will continue undisturbed eternally, when He will 'tabernacle with men' - a blessed advance to that of Adam who only knew God as visiting him in the cool of the day (see 2 Pet. 3:12; Rev. 21:1 & 5).

## OUR PRESENT STATUS

As we wait for our blessed Lord to come for us we are no more part of this world scene, except for being in it for the glory of God in witness for Christ against it, and to present Him in His loving grace to it. We are those of whom it is true "our commonwealth has its existence in [the] heavens" (see Phil. 3:20); where Christ is waiting the Father's time to rise up and call us to Himself. After the saints are called up to meet Him then He will continue with all that the scriptures tell us as to the world's destiny.

Paul desired that, "*the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly: and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thess. 5:23). He also said, "*ye have been bought with a price: glorify now then God in your body*" (1 Cor. 6:20). While on God's side He will preserve us 'spirit, and soul, and body', for He is faithful to all that Christ has done to "redeem us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:14), on our side we have to answer to all that God has done for us by glorifying Him in our body. Let us take this very seriously and not treat our body as our own (1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 5:10), or allow it to participate in anything which will dishonor God. We are tripartite human beings, and as God made us so should we live for Him in body, soul and spirit (Rom. 12:1-2), while the unbelievers live entirely for themselves. Thus shall we show order according to God's mind and be a witness for Christ against the world which is disorderly in all its ways.

## NEW "HEADSHIP"

The re-ordered state that God brought into creation, according to Gen. 1, was all made suited for the blessing of man. God made Adam the 'head' of this creation scene. In Psalm 8:3-8 we have the sublime statement as to this as it (in the first instance) applied to Adam. However, Adam forfeited this supreme place and it needs Another to take it up and with Whom there will be no failure. So, Ps. 8 is quoted by the Holy Spirit, through the writer of the epistle, in Hebrews 2:5-9 and applies it, evidently, to the Lord Jesus Christ as the One Whom God has already appointed to this glorious position. However, according to Ps. 110 the actual subjugation to Him has not yet taken place but we are assured, by faith, that soon it will be so when we see our blessed Lord manifested in this scene and ruling in justice and equity throughout the whole earth.

Morally and spiritually believers are 'new creation' in Christ already (see 2 Cor. 5:17) and we await the redemption of our body to receive one in "conformity to His body of glory" (see Phil. 3:21). Meanwhile we come under the "headship" of Christ, having been transferred from the "headship" of Adam through the death of our adorable Savior. There are more passages in the New Testament which we would do well to search out in connection with our conduct as befitting our God. For He Who created us has also purchased us to be suitable to Himself, with a new nature and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to minister to that new nature all the divine resources which alone will satisfy it.

J. Pascoe

(To be continued, if the Lord will)



## WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN'S RULE OF LIFE: CHRIST OR THE LAW?

It is commonly taught among Christians, that the believer's rule of walk is the moral law, or the Ten Commandments. It is admitted, of course, by all, that the believer is not justified by the deeds of the law, and that if the law be thus used, it will only add to man's condemnation. His justification must clearly be by grace, and on the principle of faith; but when justified, what is the standard by which his life is to be governed? This, it is generally held, is the moral law, which was undoubtedly the rule given to Israel, and for its own purpose is, therefore, as perfect as all the other works of God's hands. It is true that believers are said to be under grace, and not under law; but this, it is maintained, applies to justification, not to walk. They are urged also not to return to law, but this is explained to mean the ceremonial law, not the moral. These distinctions are intelligible, but are they scriptural? Where does the word of God speak of a believer as being under the law for one purpose, and not for another? Where does it declare that while the ceremonial law is abrogated, the moral law is still in force as the rule for Christian walk? No doubt there is a distinction between the moral and ceremonial law, and also between the law as a ground of justification, and the law as a rule of life; but when this distinction is used to make Scripture harmonize with theology, it behooves us to inquire whether Scripture is thus fairly interpreted.

It is said, "that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth;" but it is added that the believer does not live, having "become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that he should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:1,4). Then follows-- "Now we are delivered from the law, having died to that" (the true reading) "wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (v. 6.) Here, as usual in this epistle, man is looked at as first alive in the flesh. Such is his standing before God, and in this standing the law "hath dominion over" him. But believers are "dead with Christ" (v. 8), and are therefore "become dead to the law"--"delivered from the law, having died to that wherein they were held." No language can be clearer. The believer, as dead with Christ, is free from the law.

Is this the ceremonial law? Evidently not; for the passage goes on --"I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (v. 7); so that it is of the decalogue itself that the Holy Ghost is here speaking, and to the decalogue itself that the believer is declared to be dead. Is he dead to it, then, only as concerns justification, and still alive to it as a rule of conduct? In the above passage the question of justification is not even alluded to; and the reason why we are said to have "become dead to the law" is, that we "should

be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." When "in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." (v. 5.) The contrast, then, is not between justification and condemnation, but between the fruits produced under the law, and those produced by our being "married to another." We cannot be "married to another" until we are dead to the law. If alive to the law, we are not dead with Christ, and the result is "fruit unto death." If married to Christ, we are dead to the law, and the result is "fruit unto God." The believer is, therefore, dead to the law, not only as a ground of justification, but as a rule of walk. The law can no more produce fruit to God after his conversion, than save him from his sins before his conversion. So in the previous chapter it is said, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are *not under the law, but under grace*" (6:13,14). Here, again, the subject is not justification, but walk. Our justification is assumed, and the question is, whether, being justified, we shall serve sin or God. What delivers us from the power of sin? When "in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Now, however, being "not in the flesh," but "dead with Christ," are we put under the law again to be kept from sin, and to bear fruit for God? Just the contrary. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are *not under the law, but under grace*." In a word, the power for walk is not in our being under the law, but depends upon our being dead to the law.

The apostle then asks, "Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." (v. 15.) But what is the ground for this decided negative? Does he say, "You must not sin, because, though not under the law for justification, you are under it for walk"? Surely if this had been true, it would have been the obvious reply, and that the apostle does not so reply proves that the doctrine is not true. Instead of drawing this theological distinction, he shows that the new basis of Christian morality is, not the law partially revived as a rule of conduct, but the new position into which the believer is brought as dead and risen with Christ. The law, so far from being the rule of life for a believer, works nothing but misery when the believer thus uses it; for even of a quickened soul it is said that "sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence" (Rom. 7: 8), while elsewhere it is written that "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56). So the apostle reproaches the Galatians for bringing in the law after grace was known. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?" (Gal. 3:2,3). This is very striking, for the Holy Ghost here speaks of the introduction of the law, after they had believed, as a reverting to the flesh. He then shows that the law, however introduced, is fatal; "for as many as are of the works of the law are *under the curse*, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

(v. 10.) It may be said that this refers to justification, not to conduct. It is, however, addressed to persons already justified. Moreover, the principle is a general one, applying to any use of the law whatever, and showing that there is no such thing as being half dead to the law, and half alive to it; but that if we are under the law at all, we are under the curse. So it is taught elsewhere, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. 5:3). How could Scripture and theology more flatly contradict each other? Theology says that we are under the law in one way, and free from it in another. Scripture says that we must be under the law altogether or free from it altogether.

Sinking theology, then, and following Scripture, we find that the believer is dead to the law, not only for justification, but as a rule of life, and that its introduction in any form is a departure from the principle of grace. But does this give reign to lawlessness? The apostle deals with this very question in the Romans. If the law were retained as a rule of life, it could never have arisen, and the fact that it did arise proves that the law was not so retained. But if not, what barrier is there against lawlessness? A twofold barrier; first, that being "dead to sin," we cannot "live any longer therein" (Rom. 6:2); and next, that being "married to another," we can "bring forth fruit unto God." As dead with Christ, we are dead to sin, and the practical teaching founded on it is, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12). As having life in Christ, we are "alive unto God," and the practical result ought to be, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (v. 4).

The law was, of course, perfect for its own purpose; but, working through the flesh, it not only could give no power against lust, but positively *created* lust. Being "weak through the flesh," it could not "condemn sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3). But now we, being "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead," are able to "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," and thus "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us" (v. 4). While under law, we are, through the flesh, unable to fulfil its righteous requirements. Freed from the law, walking as those who are dead and risen with Christ, its righteous requirements are fulfilled in us. Thus the attempt to put the believer under the law as a rule of life defeats its own purpose. It is only when we are completely emancipated from it, that its righteous demands are brought out in our lives. For the law, while it gives directions, gives no power. Power comes from the new life in which we are quickened together with Christ. Having the life of the risen Christ, we are able to show forth that life in our walk and conversation.

But it may be asked, Did not Christ fulfil the law? was He not "made under the law?" and if we are to show forth His life in our own, must not we be under the law too? Undoubtedly Christ, as a man born into this world, was "made under the law." But we are not "married" to Christ as a man born into this world, but as the man "who is raised from the dead." It is as united with Christ *risen* that we have, and are enabled to "walk in, newness of life." Christ as man

met every righteous requirement of the law, even to death, which He endured on our behalf. Is Christ risen and glorified under the law? If not, neither are we; for we are dead with Him, and thus delivered from all out of which He has passed, while our life, as quickened with Him, is the same as His own.

But is not the law appealed to by Paul himself? Does he not say that "all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this,--Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" (Gal. 5:14). Does he not quote the fifth commandment in speaking to children, "Honor thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth?" (Eph. 6:2,3). And do not these and kindred passages show that the believer is still under the law? Such passages doubtless show that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." To the Galatians his reference to the law was most apt; for they wished to put themselves under the law, and what more telling than to show them that the law itself condemned them? But surely we can quote the law as indicating God's mind without putting ourselves under it. Some of our judges have cited the Roman law, because of its admitted excellence, in delivering their judgments; but who dreams that these judges held the Roman law to be binding in our country? If God lays down principles in the law, they must be perfect, and as such Paul quotes them. But this no more proves that we are under the law of the Ten Commandments, than a judge's reference to Roman law proves that Roman law is the law of this realm. On the other hand, if believers *are* under the law as a rule of life, why is this rule so rarely named? Why is the apostle constantly urging other motives, and hardly ever even alluding to that code which, according to theology, is the Christian's real guide? This alone suffices to show how widely the theological dogma of the believer's being still under the law as his rule of walk departs from the true teaching of God's word.

The rule for the believer's walk, then, is Christ, and not the law. He may follow the law ever so diligently, but the result will be that "the commandment which was ordained to life" will be "found to be unto death" (Rom. 7:10). Just so far as his walk answers to the truth that he is "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead," will he "bring forth fruit unto God." In all cases our rule of life depends on the position we occupy. A child and a servant both owe obedience to the head of the house, but the child's obedience should flow from his position as a child, the servant's from his position as a servant. An Israelite's relationship with Jehovah was determined by the covenant made at Sinai, and his rule of life was, therefore, the law. Our relationship with God is determined by our having received the Spirit of adoption, and our rule of life is, therefore Christ, "the first born among the many brethren" to whom we belong, the Son, whose Spirit "God hath sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." As dead with Christ, we are dead to the law; as quickened with Christ, we can walk in newness of life; as beholding the glory of Christ, we "are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

T.B.B., *The Christian Friend*, 1880.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

For [in Christ Jesus] neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision; but new creation. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (Gal. 6:15,16).

Here we are expressly told what the Christian's rule of life is. It is the *new creation*! "As many as walk by this rule" refers to believing Gentiles while "the Israel of God" means the saved Jews. There is but one rule for both; it is Christ, the head of the new creation.

The law addressed man in the flesh, man in his Adamic standing and responsibility -- as fallen -- in the persons of the favored nation of Israel. That is of the first creation of which the first man, Adam is head. The second man is head of the new creation, begun with His resurrection -- the day on which He breathed upon his disciples, communicating the Spirit as power of life, life in resurrection, thus bringing them into the new creation (cp. John 20, etc.). This occurred on the first day of the week. The sabbath, the seventh day of the week, was the day specially associated with the law.

Those that would have it that the law is the rule of life must obey the law concerning the sabbath. Ignorant of the truth that Christ, the head of the new creation is the Christian's rule of life, they transmute the sabbath into the Lord's day. And then they do not even keep it! Wm. Kelly has well said:

Those who insist on the perpetuity of the sabbath, how do they keep it? It is not only that they never heed the true day; but supposing the Lord's-day were really the same as the sabbath, do they observe it according to the law? Not at all. They will tell you that Christianity, besides changing the day, has modified the mode of its observance, that the gospel mitigates the severity of God's law, etc. If this be not to make void the law through unbelief, it is hard to say what is. I deny their facts, doctrines, and conclusions. Christianity, so far from attenuating the law, or reducing its sanctions, is that which alone gives the law its full value - "By faith we establish the law" (Rom. 3:31). The doctrine of faith, instead of weakening the law's obligation, illustrates and maintains it to the utmost. But the establishment of the law, of which the apostle speaks in Romans iii., has no reference whatever to the question of a rule by which the Christian has to walk. The chapter treats of man's ruin and God's righteousness, not of practice, and shows that faith upholds the authority of the law in the cross of Christ, which owns men's just and total condemnation, and is the basis of divine justifying righteousness, which is revealed to and becomes the portion of the believer. The law's curse fell upon Christ, which has thus been magnified to the uttermost, its full sentence having been exhausted upon the head of the Son of God. Hence, whether you look at God or man, or the Saviour, faith establishes the law, as nothing else could. But as to the Lord's day, far from being the same as the sabbath, it is the first day of the week, not the seventh, and rests on quite different foundations. When you come to test the would-be teachers of the law, their zeal is soon seen to break down in practice; and they are easily convicted

of introducing changes and modifications in order to suit the time, country, climate, and people, i.e., to suit *themselves* in the things of God. This theory of mitigation, and of a flexible law, can never stand a fair scrutiny. On the other hand, those who hold that the Lord's-day is a new thing, in no way connected either with creation or with the law, are under no difficulty; because they see that the same God who sanctified the sabbath originally, and gave the law to Israel, was pleased to put special honor on the first day of the week, in commemoration of redemption accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ; but they see it as having its own proper character, and not as confounded with the sabbath. The Lord's-day calls for no mere rest which you may share with your ox or your ass; and so far from its due honor consisting chiefly in bodily quiet, I believe that if a Christian were on that day enabled to walk twenty sabbath-day's journeys on special services for the Lord, he would not only be at liberty to work, but that it would be most acceptable to the Lord. Each day is separated from other days by divine authority; but in other respects they differ as decidedly as law from grace, or the old creation from the new.

W. Kelly, *Lectures on . . . Galatians*, London: Morrish, n. d., p. 189.

Ed.

## "THOU ART THE MAN"



This, I think, is one of Benjamin West's, the American painter, best pictures, King David and the Prophet Nathan. David, as you may remember, had committed a great sin, taking from one of his most faithful soldiers his wife and then to cover his crime had this valiant man killed, in battle, as it was made to appear, but really at the command of the king. It was indeed a most grievous sin and the guilty David was made to suffer fearfully in his troubled conscience. And when God who sees and knows all saw that the time was ripe sent to him the fearless prophet Nathan.

Now this Nathan must have been a very wise man for he did not thrust himself into the King's presence and directly accuse him of the crime; no, for had he gone about it in this way the chances are that he would have been ordered to prison, or at least ordered out of the king's presence, and his mission ended in failure. He, the more readily to gain the king's ear, begins by telling a story, or if you will, a parable. "There were two men in one city," he says, "the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and brought up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his own bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress (prepare for cooking) for the wayfaring man that was come unto him: but he took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."

So the story ends and a most entertaining one it was, too; and David thinks it is something that really happened in his realm and that the prophet was come to inform on the rich mean subject. So, without waiting to hear more, he says in his anger, "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die," etc. He did not at first understand that the prophet meant that he himself was the rich man and the poor man was Uriah, his faithful warrior and the little ewe lamb taken from him was Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, whom David had taken for himself. This was more than mean of the king, -- it was a base crime; and as soon as the king pronounces death to the rich man, the prophet accuses him by saying, "Thou art the man!" This is just what he was aiming at, -- to get the king to condemn and pronounce sentence against the transgressor. He then enlarges on the wickedness of David's deed and tells him the troubles he should suffer all his lifetime because of what he had done. And when David sees the great wickedness of what he had done and says, "I have sinned against the Lord!" Nathan can say to him, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." He then tells of still more troubles that should come into David's life because he had done this thing. Read the whole account for yourself; you will find it in 2 Kings 12. And so, though David did not die nor lose his soul because of his great sin, he was made to suffer in this life because of his guilt; this is what we call God's governmental dealings with His children when they sin grievously; and it is stated in that word in Galatians 6:7; "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

So God's gracious dealings with His servant David should not encourage any of us to sin but rather warn and discourage us lest we also fall and reap in this life the bitter fruit of our sinful sowing.

How dejected and sorry David looks in West's painting; he has laid aside his crown as you may see while the faithful prophet delivers God's message to him.

Benjamin West seems to have been a real Christian and I remember when a boy reading about how when he was quite young and too poor to buy brushes he would cut fur from the house cat's tail; and I can still see in my mind's memory the boy artist before the astonished Indians whose portraits he had drawn.

But . . . forget all this and think only of the fearfulness of sin and how it cost the Saviour to come down from heaven and die that God might righteously forgive us, if we believe in Jesus as our Saviour. And do not forget that if as Christians we sin we must be made to suffer the consequences here in the body, now in time.

C. Knapp

## TEMPTATION

It has been much the fashion, of late, to extol and set forth, the peculiar advantages of our day and generation. It has been advanced, that the spirit of inquiry is generally diffused, that objects of utility engross attention, that the industrial classes are advancing in the scale of social improvement; and, in fact, that the world is decidedly and steadily marching onward to a pitch of civilization never yet attained in the former ages of its history.

There are those who seek to counteract this movement, and set up old-fashioned prejudices as a sort of breakwater against them: men of one idea, which, if threatened with destruction, have no other to replace it with. There are again others who are seeking to combine the old and new together: men of a past age, who were fast when the world was slow, who now find themselves out of breath in the efforts to keep pace with the present. And again, there are others who are going with the stream, and think they are progressing, because they are going fast, and that they are making good speed, because they are rushing onwards.

That we live in exciting times no one can for a moment doubt; that we live in eventful times will be readily granted, and that there is a fast spirit abroad, and a hurry and excitement in everything is apparent: but we need the word of caution not to allow the times, nor the events either, to be so uppermost in our thoughts as to displace the due consideration of our own conduct in the. A man in a house which was on fire, would be well occupied in seeking his own safety

and getting out of it. A man on a plain, threatened with inundation, would do well to make for rising ground. To be occupied with the progress of the flames or the rapid increase of the waters, to the neglect of his own safety, would be surely suicidal. However circumstances may change, and the pursuits of any age be more or less stirring, yet man as man, in his nature, remains the same. Antecedent to the Deluge, the wickedness of man was great in the earth; so great as to call for Divine interference in judgment. The building of the Tower of Babel was another manifestation of what man would dare to do; and other events in sacred as well as profane history, bear witness to the unchangeable energy of man in evil. Circumstances might moderate or excite -- but the nature was there to be acted upon, and was affected by them.

Everywhere the world is in motion. We live in a busy and active era, no evil because it is active and busy, but because of the end of its activities -- the exaltation of man (the first man, not the Second), the "Go to" spirit of the associated masses at Babel, which is a growing characteristic. Sober men of the world are not indifferent or unmoved spectators of what is passing around them. Dismal forebodings occupy many minds; others indulge cheering anticipations. "We shall see what all his will come to bye and bye," is the ominous language of some; "We shall see what man is capable of," the exulting conclusion of others.

Now the child of God, in the midst of it all, is encompassed by snares on every hand. The Bible is his book emphatically, yet has become of common appeal to others, who have not the token of being "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Modern Christianity has taken its form from modern characteristics. The age has features of its own, and would fashion a religion of its own. Revelation leaves no field for invention: its authenticity invulnerable, the ingenuity of man is occupied in its perversion. God deals in His word with men as they are. Man would begin with men as they ought to be. Hypocrisy was the first-born of sin. Man's fallen nature, ignorant of God's remedy, seeks refuge in disguise. The grace of God is apprehended, bringing the sinner into His presence about the very sins thus discovered. Where everything is to be gained by confession, concealment is wanton folly. In communion, where the basis of all intercourse is founded on the fact of necessity and the acknowledged need of everything, the best recommendation to obtain grace to meet is, it follows, as an obvious truism, that our greatest wisdom is to seek whatever would encourage confidence in "the God of all grace," and whatever would convince of the absolute necessity of dependence upon this grace.

Sin is itself absolutely evil; but the evil is only fully known by the judgment of it upon Christ's person. God's holy abhorrence of it is brought fully before us in the fact, that when Christ was, though grace, numbered with the transgressors, He could not escape until He had paid the utmost farthing. The fact of His having paid it, proved by His resurrection, is the assurance to the

believer that he will never be called in question about it.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life;" "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee [the Father] the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

Now it is just because the believer has this Divine life, is a partaker of the Divine nature, has his life hid with Christ in God, that he is called upon to puff off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye put on the new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. As He that hath called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation and Godliness.

There is present happiness in practical holiness; "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness." There is positive misery in a sinful course; "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death."

To help to the one, if God permit, and warn off the other, is the object of the writer in considering the various temptations to which we are by nature exposed; and the very positive provocation of our nature in the novel and exciting circumstances of our day and generation. And, as we have before remarked, the truest wisdom is to seek whatever would encourage confidence in the God of all grace, and whatever would convince of the absolute necessity of dependence upon that grace.

The power of Jehovah was made known to Israel in their redemption out of Egypt. Their necessities in the Wilderness gave occasion for the display of His resources, to supply them. So also for us, as the hymn so truly and sweetly puts it:

"In the desert God will teach thee  
What the God that though hast found  
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy,  
All His grace shall there abound!"

In relationship with the holy Lord God, and with the revelation of His will, as to the conduct which became His people, they learned themselves in the light of it.

What they should do was laid down for them; what they did is on record. "These things . . . are written for our admonition" (1 Cor. 5:11).

They were not redeemed because they knew God, but that they might know Him. We are not redeemed because we are what we ought to be, but to become so. As with them, so with us. We have the standard of conduct: "He left us an example, that we should follow His steps." In "the light of His life," we learn the darkness of our own. Beholding what is spiritual, we detect what is carnal; but it is because we are redeemed.

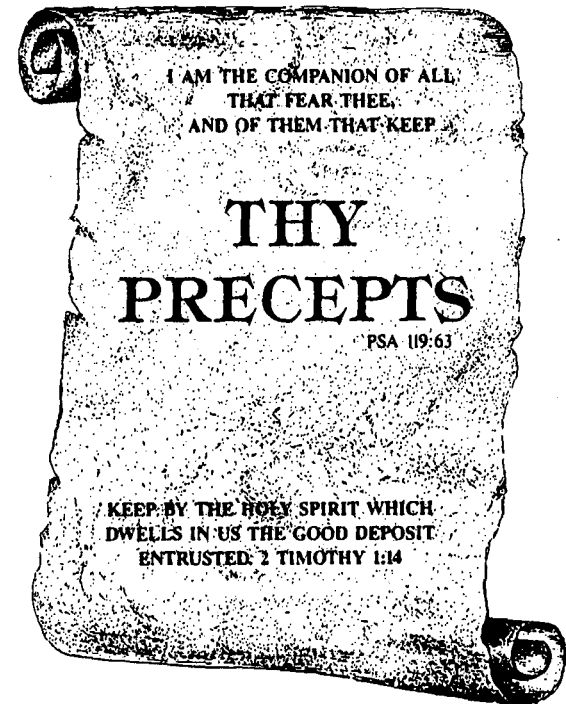
Nothing answers for the believer before God but what Christ is: As He is so are we in this world." "Our life is hid with Christ in God." We have passed

from Death unto Life. We have passed through the Red Sea, and are out of Egypt in the Wilderness, to learn, as Israel of old, what resources we have in Christ, and what need we have of Him. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and remains so. Saints were sinners; as sinners, were led by the Spirit of God to rely on the work of the Lord Jesus for them, and became saints. Their seed remaineth in them. God planted it. Yet because saints, they enter into conflict. "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim... When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (Exod. 17). However sure of victory they may be fighting the Lord's battles, the entire dependence of the people, at every moment, on the divine blessing, is presented to us in this, that if Moses (who with the rod of God represents to us His authority on high) keeps not his hands lifted up, the people are beaten by their enemies. Nevertheless, Aaron the high priest, and Hur (purity) maintain the blessing, and Israel prevails. Sincerity, valiant efforts, the fact that the battle was God's battle, were, though right, of no avail - all depended upon God's blessing from on high.

Doctrinally, we apprehend it; but how apt to forget it in conflict. Our hearts grow discouraged because of the way. Things that happen to us in the way divert us from it. Circumstances arise to make manifest what is in ourselves, and when we see it at home, we are taken by surprise. We would condemn the act in another, judge the sin in the action, and so far it is right: but to judge ourselves as having the seed of that sin in us, and to use the occasion of its manifestation in another, for the bewailing our own liability to it, is moral safeguard against falling into it, and puts the soul right before the God of all grace, in pleading with Him, on behalf of any who have gone astray. "Ye have not rather mourned," was the apostolic rebuke to the church at Corinth. "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they kept not Thy law," is the language of David.

The science of Chemistry resolves itself into very few, simple, and primary elements. However compounded or mixed, yet the analysis separates it into comparatively few divisions. And much the same may be advanced of "Temptations." However diversified in their aspect, or different in development, affected by climate, or colored by circumstances, yet they too are resolved into primary elements: and the triple classification, "the world, the flesh, and the devil," embraces them all.

*The Remembrancer* 20:74-80



MAR / APR  
Vol. 5, #2

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## CONTENTS

---

The Blessedness of the Person .....	33
God's Order .....	40
A Fragment (1 John 3:1-3) .....	45
How do you Worship? .....	46
A Word to Christian Parents .....	47
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	48

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE PERSON**

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF  
THE PERSON OF CHRIST  
IN ITS UNITY  
AS PRESENTED IN SCRIPTURE**

By A. C. Ord.

(Continued from v. 5, #1)

Fourthly, as to the work of expiation which He has accomplished -- we affirm that the thought as well as the reality of what He was as God, in accomplishing it, must always and of necessity be brought into it.

The idea of what Christ was divinely, as God, or as the Son of God, is essential to this blessed work, both as to fact and as to our apprehension of it. Whether He is viewed as sustaining the judgment of God, or as giving infinite value to the sacrifice which He offered, or as displaying the love which was the source of, and in which He accomplished, -- the whole, the full glory of His Person, is the foundation of all.

No instructed Christian thinks of saying that God died, but we can say, because of the unity of His Person, that He who was God died, and all the love manifested in this blessed work, as well as the value of it, is taken out of it or lost, if this is denied. Mr. Raven, however, attempts to separate between the human and divine in contemplating the death of our Lord, but solely on the ground of his own reason, as we have seen in other places, nor hesitating to tread on such holy ground. He says:

"But further, besides presenting God to man in His pathway here, Christ presented man in perfectness before God, and this is the view in Psalm 16; and further, as Son of Man, the woman's seed, He bore the judgment of death that rested on man -- *by man* came the resurrection of the dead. How can you import *the thought of God*, as such, into all this, in any *subjective sense*? though all was effected, and could only be effected, in one who is in Person divine. It is really *irreverent and profane*. The truth is, that the moment those who have left us



commit themselves to anything, they betray only painful inability to grasp divine thoughts." . . .

"Mr. Hunt fails to carry on his thoughts as to Christ to death and resurrection, and it is *intelligible*, for how are you to bring in the thought of God in any subjective sense there, though nothing could alter the truth of the Son's Person?"  
(*A Correspondence*, pages 4 and 11).

We will here again quote what Mr. Turpin has brought forward (*in extracts from Mr. Darby's writings*) in order to guard from the danger of such pernicious reasonings.

"Who could say but, *there, 'God is known in death'*? Is it not there God's love is known, never known really till known there? Yet it is weakness, and as to His place as man, the very end of man. But in Himself *God is known in love by His being down here with sinful men -- by that love reaching even to us. . . .* But what an emptying that was, when *He who was God could come into death -- though suffering, though obeying, bring all that God was in His moral perfection into death.*" (See *Helps, &c.*, No. 35, pp. 299 - 301).

Having quoted these extracts, we will bring forward, in support of what we affirm, first of all the perception of faith, and the testimony, of the Roman centurion, who, as recorded by the inspired writers, being on guard, witnessed the sufferings of the Divine and Precious Saviour on the Cross. Converted on the spot, by the powerful effect of beholding Him throughout this solemn scene, we learn from his own lips, that he saw in the marvelous death of our Lord, not only the suffering of one who was perfection itself in manhood, because He was divine, but also the exhibition of a divine power, and of characteristics which elicited from the centurion, in a double way, the same declaration that He was "the Son of God." "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, saw that *He so cried out, and gave up the ghost*, he said, *Truly this Man was the Son of God*" (Mark 15: 37 - 39.) In Matthew we are told that the accompanying divine witness to the glory of His Person in the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and the opening of the graves, as well as the whole scene, produced the same effect upon him, *and also upon his companions*. "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, *they feared greatly*, saying, *'Truly this was the Son of God'*" (Matt. 27: 54.) Whilst the evangelist Luke, who loves to bring before us the true and perfect humanity of our Lord, tells us, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit': and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, *Certainly this was a righteous man*" (Luke 23:46,47). A striking testimony, when taken together with the accounts of the other evangelists, of that perfect union of the human and divine, which leads to the blessing of the centurion, *the divine being brought into it, in the full subjective sense which Mr. R. denies*.

In 1 Corinthians 1 the apostle says that "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is *the power of God*. . . . But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ *the power of God*, and the wisdom of God" (vv. 18,23,24). Here we have the cross as the expression of weakness, but Christ, even in that solemn moment, was to faith the display of the power and wisdom of God. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (v. 25); for the preaching of the cross "is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16), though His apparent powerlessness to save Himself was the occasion of the scorn and mockery of His foes, for the strength of God was there, even in that lowly, humble, and despised form, or we had never known sin put away in the cross, and God glorified in all His holy being and divine nature -- this being done by man, and in the nature of man, or we could have had no interest in it. Who but one who was divine could restore or sustain the infinite glory of God, harmonizing all His attributes, and causing that glory, compromised by man, to shine out before the universe, displayed as it never was before, and never can be again? "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him" (John 13:31,32). "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4). And here He is speaking as the Son. Take away the thought of the divine Person, the Son of God, who did it -- not only could He not have stood in such a place, but it becomes a mere human act, and all that glory which has accrued to God, and which will soon be recognized, as the means of the reconciliation, and the foundation of the new heavens and the new earth (Col. 1:15,16,20), vanishes in a moment.

But the Lord Himself unites these thoughts, which this teaching would separate, and tells us the reality of what takes place on the cross in John iii. He first speaks of the divine necessity of His death, in the aspect of His Person as the *Son of Man* and our representative on the cross, to satisfy the claims of infinite justice; "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the *Son of Man* be lifted up": and then He adds the blessed thought of the gift of God's love in the same act, and of the divine value or worth of His own blessed Person, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His *only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (vv. 14-16).

In the 1st Epistle of John also we constantly find the Person of the Lord introduced in this connection. After speaking of God in sending "His *only begotten Son* into the world, that we might live through Him," the Apostle adds, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent *His Son* to be the *propitiation* for our *sins*" (Chap. 4:9,10). Here it is expressly the Son of God bearing the judgment due to sin, as a propitiatory sacrifice for it, the Spirit of God insisting on this as a display of love, because of the infinite worth

and dignity of the Person who so bore it. This corresponds with the statement in chap. 1, "The blood of Jesus Christ *His Son* cleanseth us from all sin."

So the Apostle Paul, contrasting the weakness of the law, and the hopeless ruin of man through sin, magnifies the powerful effect of the death of the *Son of God*, by which God intervened in love on our behalf; and sin, even in its very principle or root, was condemned to the very uttermost. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending *His own Son* in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Here it is in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet as the Son of God, and in His death for sin (that is, by a sacrifice for sin, *περι αμαρτίας*) that this is done (cp. Rom. 1:3 and 5:10), and this also is the bearing of sin in judgment. The sense of what sin is, with the love that dealt with it, is only thus brought out, in all these passages, in connection with the value of the Person of the Son of God, who took the sin upon Himself. Again in the same chapter we have, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

In John 6 Christ is spoken of again and again as the living bread which *came down from heaven*, involving at once His divine nature as Son come down from heaven, though manifested in manhood, and given by the Father for our sustenance, whilst, as such, He gives life unto the world, and satisfies all the boundless necessities of souls, so that those who eat thereof live for ever (vv. 32,33,35,40,50). But whilst saying, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven," He adds "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (v. 51). For by the value of His Person, as the source of life from heaven, He overcomes death, and gives what is of infinite effect, not only to give life *"unto the world,"* but *"for the life of the world"* (vv. 33, 51). So the Apostle Paul says, "I live by the faith of the *Son of God*, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). In Heb. 10 we find all the sacrifices offered in past ages under the law (superseded because of their inefficacy) giving place to the one perfect and efficacious sacrifice of Christ, which puts away sin for ever. But how is this accomplished? He who undertakes to do the will of God according to the eternal counsels, says, as God, in the holy and solemn act of offering up Himself, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, . . . a body hast Thou prepared me" (vv. 5,9). According to this voluntary purpose, He assumes human nature, in order to offer up this body on the cross, -- in all the value which the Person so coming, the counsels He fulfilled, and the motives actuating Him in so accomplishing the will and the glory of God, could lend to this act. "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). In a similar way His divine person, as the Son, is brought in, in chap. 1, in connection with His work, "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had *by Himself* purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). For alone, and by His own power, He who upholds all things accomplished this still more wondrous work

of purging sins, in the presence of the majesty of God; all of whose nature and being were expressed to the uttermost against sin, at that solemn moment when He bore it, who was made sin for us. Thus constantly is the thought of what He is as God brought, by divine teaching, into this blessed work.

This power displayed even in His death, which so struck upon the mind of the centurion, is still more to be observed in the gospel of John, where, in ch. 10, it is coupled with the power to re-assume, even when in death and the grave, the life He voluntarily laid down for the glory of God. In chapter 2:19, He said to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," speaking of the temple of His body, but in this passage (ch. 10:), He goes further, alluding to the cross; for in that solemn moment of weakness and apparent helplessness of manhood He was free to dispose of His own life. He says, speaking as the Son of God, "No one [*οὐδεὶς*] taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again"; for His power was as infinite on the cross, as in the sepulchre. His exemption from our subordination to death (since He had title over His own life), with His unfailing obedience to His Father's will, even in death, to establish the rights and glory of His Father, was what constituted its value in His Father's eyes, and was the occasion of special love on the part of the Father towards Him. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, *that I might take it again*" (vv. 18,17). This act could not have had the same worth were it not as really His own, as when He said, when coming into the world, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," "a body hast Thou prepared Me" (Heb. 10: 9, and 5). For though fulfilling the counsels He had undertaken to accomplish, death was not the unavoidable necessity that it is in our case. Hence we read in chapter 19, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, . . . said, It is finished, and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost" (v. 28,30); putting His seal to the value and perfection of the work, with these blessed words, "It is finished." For in His cross, with His heel upon the head of the serpent, He spoiled principalities and powers. Death was conquered and Satan's prey delivered. Thus when His death is alluded to in this gospel, it is spoken of rather as departing out of this world to the Father, or as finishing the work the Father had given Him to do, or as His being lifted up -- as offering His life according to all the devoted purpose of His heart, so glorifying God and bringing a sweet savour to Him out of death.<sup>1</sup>

Even in the other gospels, where He is more seen as Man, yet as God manifest in flesh, rather than as the Son of the Father, we find the perfection of

1. "As to death: if it be meant He was capable of dying, the fact is evident -- He died, and that death was pressed upon His soul even before; if, that he was under the necessity of death in respect of His relationship to God, then it is false. And you cannot, in His Person, separate the sustaining power of Godhead, nor having life in Himself, so as to make a necessity without His will in grace. He laid it down of Himself. The Lord's own words seem purposefully intended to set aside such a doctrine" (J. N. D., *Coll. Writings* 15:234).

love and obedience in divine power which characterized Him on to the end, and sustained Him through all, even though the sufferings were infinite, and though He felt them all as none but a divine Person could. Yet He never yields or gives way as we do; He takes the cup in unswerving obedience to His Father's will, and from His hand alone, -- and even justifies Him, and cleaves to Him, when forsaken in the darkness of judgment, in the words, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? why art Thou so far from Me, and from the words of My roaring?*", adding, "*But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel*" (Psa. 22:1,3). We know from Isaiah 50 that He set His face like a flint to accomplish His Father's will. And whilst "they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, . . . Jesus went before" His disciples, -- who "were amazed, and as they followed, they were afraid" (Mark 10:32). In Luke 9 we have "He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem" (v. 51), whilst the dignity of His Person is expressed in the way in which, in the Greek, His death is spoken of, on the mount of Transfiguration, as His *exodus* from this scene (see v. 31). This is further marked in the statement of the evangelist, "when the time was come that He should be *received up*" (v. 51). For He was, in His person, the true ark of God before whom the waters of death and judgment were dried up for us; as of old, when the priests' feet, bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth, touched the Jordan when overflowing its banks, a way was made for the people of God to pass over on dry ground; He Himself alone could encounter the judgment of God and the power of the enemy, and exhaust for us the cup of wrath, as He says to Peter, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards" (John 13:36).

It is evident from the passages we have referred to, that the Holy Ghost sometimes brings into distinct relief the divine power and glory exhibited in the Person of Christ, and sometimes the weakness and dependence of suffering humanity, and this even in the same acts and scenes; and it is not for us to attempt to reconcile these various aspects, because the mystery of His Person and work alike forbid it. Nevertheless, in the latter case, this is always accompanied with expressions of confidence, or fidelity, or obedience, which, in their full perfection, are only possible in one in whom the divine nature was the source of thought and feeling, as well as of power, as Mr. Darby says, "The spring of divine life in the midst of evil, so that His every thought as man was perfection before God, and perfect in that position. This was what marked His state, as being down here, this new thing" (*Collected Writings* 15:231, note).

We have observed this perfection in His language in Psa. 22, where He says, "I am a worm and no man," and "I am poured out like water"; yet He never fails in His confidence and recognition of what was due to God in the place where He was, as the sinless one made sin for us, or the sin-offering burnt without the camp. It is on this account that, in one of the sacrifices for sin, the fat of the sin-offering, burnt like that of the peace-offerings, went up "for a sweet savour unto the Lord" (Lev. 9:31). For even when made sin for us and for the glory of God, there was in Him and in the motives and devotedness

expressed in thus offering Himself, what was infinitely acceptable to God and precious in His sight. A perfect picture of human weakness, expressly contrasted with divine strength, and yet in the same blessed Person, is given us in Ps. 102. There the sufferings of the Lord on the cross are brought before us. From the lips of the Lord Himself we hear the words, "My days are as a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass . . . I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop . . . He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. I said, O *my God*, take me not away in the midst of my days" (vv. 11,7,23). But this complaint of utter weakness and desertion is answered by God addressing the Son, "Of old hast *Thou* laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of *Thy hands*. *They* shall perish, but *Thou* shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end" (vv. 25-27). Thus the Holy Ghost tells us, in Heb. 1:10-12, these words are to be applied, contrasting His eternal existence and creative power, with His human weakness and shortened days; but both are true at one and the same moment, and of the same Person.

From this we learn the folly and sin of attempting to submit to our finite minds what is infinite; and that it is our wisdom to receive truth on so solemn a subject with reverence, as Scripture presents it, without seeking to dive into the unfathomable depths of strength or weakness in the cross, which are only recorded for faith to apprehend, and as subjects of adoration and praise.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

## SECUNDUS, TERTIUS AND QUARTUS THE BROTHER

These three brethren's names mean second, third and fourth. Secundus was with Paul for a time (Acts 20:4) and the other two are mentioned in Rom. 16. There was no brother Primus (# 1). However, there has never lacked those who wish to be Primus. Diotrephes was of that class "who loves to have the first place" (3 John 9). Such aim to have the very place that God has accorded to none other than His beloved Son -- "that *he* might have the first place in all things" (Col. 1:19). The pretender to be brother Primus is a most shameful spectacle, a gross dishonor to the Lord's name, and a scourge upon all who bear him. He must necessarily be the opposite of our Lord Jesus. For He has declared the unalterable truth that every one who humbles himself shall be exalted in due time, but he who exalts himself shall be abased.

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## GOD'S ORDER

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### PART 2: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

#### DIFFERING EXPRESSIONS

In beginning this section of our study of the Word we need to have a clear understanding of at least two aspects of the Kingdom of God, which presently affect us while in this world. There are at least nine different designations of the Kingdom, in God's Word, all of which concern the same and only Kingdom of God. The expression "*Kingdom of God*" is the totally embracive term which is inclusive of all the others. The other terms have application to different features of the same Kingdom of God. While this paper is not taking up the subject of the Kingdom as a whole, which is a wonderful subject to trace, we need to realize the meaning of two terms -- "THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS" and "THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE". The first term is the subject matter of the whole of Matt. 13:1-52 -- as well as other passages. The second term is only mentioned in Col. 1:13. In addition, we need to grasp the meaning of the term "Kingdom".

#### MEANING OF TERMS

##### Kingdom -- Definition

A 'kingdom' is a realm in which there is a 'king' or 'ruler'; and also 'subjects' over whom the king rules.

##### Kingdom of God

"Kingdom of God" means the rule of God. So, this Kingdom is distinguished from every other kingdom.

There are those kingdoms which are in the hands of men, and there is that kingdom of which the Lord made mention when He said, "*And if Satan casts out Satan he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom subsist?*" (Matt. 12:26). The Kingdom in which we are interested and of which we form a part is the one which is "*of*" or "*belongs to*" God. It is not that God does not exercise His rights and power in the kingdoms of men, nor that He has given anything to Satan to enable him to have a kingdom. God does give kingdoms

to men, but Satan has usurped God's rights in exercising power over men in this world in their subservience to him through sin.

##### Subjects of This Kingdom

According to the Lord's spoken words, when here, only those who are "*born of water and of Spirit*" can enter into the Kingdom of God (see John 3:5). Therefore, having been "born anew" we are now in that Kingdom and consequently 'subjects' in it. As saints of God, then, we must not forget that we are subjects in God's Kingdom (though the rightful King has not yet taken up His great power to reign in His Kingdom publicly down here) and should fulfil what is due from us to God in His realm.

##### Kingdom of the Heavens

The point in the parables in Matt. 13 is, that because of the rejection of Christ as the true King by the Jews, and crucified later by the Gentiles, He did not establish the Kingdom of Israel as prophesied of old. So, when He returned to the glory of the Father, being the rejected King on earth He would exercise His rule from the heavens. We now know, of course, that His rejection was known to Him from the beginning and that He would go to the cross (not simply because of His rejection by the Jews but consequent upon it) in order to do the work given Him to do. This was essential that not only Israel should be established as a nation on earth but that He might have His Bride (in the Assembly), and that the Gentiles might also be blessed on earth.

##### Kingdom of the Son of His Love

That we are in the Kingdom in a very special way is clearly stated in Col. 1:13, "*Who has delivered us from the authority of darkness, and translated us into the KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE: in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*". Nothing can be plainer than this, that those who know their sins forgiven, as the result of the redemption which Christ has effected for us, are no longer of the realm of Satan's control but under the glorious rule of the Son of God's love. May our hearts rejoice in this, while adoring Him for suffering on our account in order that this eternal transition could be made.

##### The KING, the "Anointed One"

Christ is the One referred to in Ps. 2:6, "*And I have anointed My King upon Zion, the hill of My holiness*". Mr. Darby refers this passage to Prov. 8:23, "*I was set up from eternity, from the beginning, before the earth was*". In his footnote, in reference to the words "set up", he says, "Lit. 'anointed' as Ps. 2". It is often spoken in connection with Ps. 2 as if the 'anointing' is future but this

is not so for He has already been anointed by God, to the end that He will be King in actual fact over Israel as a re-united nation -- not divided as they were when the Lord was on earth. The sense of this is to be seen in the anointing of David by Samuel as recorded in 1 Sam. 16:11-13, and this took place while king Saul was still on the throne of Israel.

His title of "Messiah" (in Hebrew) and "Christ" (in Greek) means "Anointed", and He is the One Whom all prophecy predicted would come to Israel but they refused Him when He came in lowliness and grace. While today we do not confess Him as our King, for He is never said to be King of the Assembly (the translation in the excellent A. V. of Rev. 15:3 as "*King of saints*" should be rendered "*King of nations*"), yet we recognize Him as God's Anointed and own that He has full and absolute rights to, and in, this scene; and bow to His rule over us in our confession of Him as our Lord.

## SUBJECTION

We owe to our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, all fidelity and love and should be here as willingly subject to Him as contrasted to those in the world who are still "subject to bondage" through "fear of death" (see Heb. 2:14-15).

## OUR CALLING

Among other truths in regard to the 'calling of God' there is one spoken of by Paul, in writing to the saints in Thessalonica, "*that ye should walk worthy of God, Who calls you to His own kingdom and glory*" (1 Thess. 2:12). What a charge this is! Do we fully realize that our walk through this scene, while waiting for the Lord to come, is expected by God to be in complete accord with His realm of divine rule? This involves that we are obedient to His every word and glorify Him as we display to those around us that we do indeed belong to His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Will the outcome be that we are like the world in its frenzied activities in the pursuit of pleasure, material gain and self centeredness to the exclusion of all that is due to God?

Are the 'subjects' of Satan marked by doing what is right in the sight of God according to the standards of His righteousness and holiness? Do the 'subjects' of Satan evidence real joy and peace, or is there not underlying all their facade a misery and disturbance of heart, mind and spirit? These worldly features are not true of those in the Kingdom of God who realize they are under the rule of God's dear Son -- Who Himself was perfectly obedient to Him Who sent Him into this world, and Who absolutely fulfilled everything to the glory of God in this scene.

## TRUE OBEDIENCE AND RESULTS

Did our Lord not say, "*because I do always the things that are pleasing to*

*Him*" (John 8:29)! -- He was always righteous in what He did.

Did our Lord not pray to His Father, "*And now I come to Thee. And these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them*" (John 17:13)! -- He Who was always in the joy of communion with His Father, despite the sorrowful circumstances of His pathway and the dreadful contemplation of the end of that path on the cross.

Did He not say to His own, "*I give My peace to you*" (John 14:27)! -- never a cloud between Him and His Father, nothing contrary to God's will which would disrupt His peace.

Blessed, holy, perfect Man (Son of God) Who, in view of the cross, declared, "*I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have completed the work which thou gavest Me that I should do it*" (John 17:4).

Well might our hearts aspire after Him, to be faithful to Him and to walk in the truth as to "*Christ also has suffered for you, leaving you a model that ye should follow in His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when reviled, reviled not again; when suffering, threatened not; but gave Himself over into the hands of Him Who judges righteously*" (1 Pet. 2:21-23).

Have we learned not only that God has called us unto His kingdom and glory but that the features of that Kingdom are "*not eating and drinking, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he that in this serves the Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men*" (Rom. 14:17-18)?

## OUR RESPONSIBILITY

The Lord Jesus went about preaching the "gospel of the Kingdom" while He was on earth (see Mark 1:14) and He portrayed all the holy features of that coming Kingdom as befitting the King of it -- but they cast Him out and said, "*we will not that this Man should reign over us*" (Luke 19:14). The people of the world have not changed in this regard for they do not yet cry out for Him to reign over them, and furthermore have rejected almost entirely throughout the world the whole concept of subjection to any form of rule - so we get laws changed to suit the depraved desires of mankind.

In the midst of the civil disorder that marks the world at large, for let us realize that rejection of God's order in rule is disorder according to His authority, we are called upon by God in His Word to be orderly. There are two passages which indisputably place responsibility upon men generally (in Rom. 13:1-2); and the saints in particular (in 1 Pet. 2:13-15). In Romans it says, "*Let every soul be subject to the authorities that are above him. For there is no authority except from God; and those that exist are set up by God.*" In Peter it says, "*Be in subjection therefore to every human institution for the Lord's sake; whether to the king as supreme, or to rulers as sent by Him, for*

vengeance on evildoers, and praise to them that do well".

## NO EXCUSE FOR DISOBEDIENCE

There is no excuse for us as saints, let alone as people in this world, to be disobedient to the laws of the land in which we live or those which we visit -- when they do not contravene God's Word. This should be a very searching matter for us all to think about for in Romans we are told *"that he that sets himself in opposition to the authority resists the ordinance of God; and they who thus resist shall bring sentence of guilt on themselves."* And, in Peter we are told, *"Because so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye put to silence the ignorance of senseless men"*. Not only is there no excuse for us disregarding the requirements of the authorities over us but it is a grievous dishonor to God.

## NEEDED REPROOF

Some years ago the writer was deeply impressed, when travelling through one of the States, to see a long line of signs in the middle of the divided highway which read, *"The law abiding citizen need not fear the State Trooper"*. What a reproof to us as believers, and it was quite according to God in what the authorities had said. There are many areas of our lives in which we need to examine ourselves on a daily basis as to whether we honor God by honoring the authorities He has set over us.

Are we worthy subjects of the "Kingdom of His dear Son" in obeying His Word to us as to our place in the world as still subject to the powers that be?

## PERFECT EXAMPLE

Our blessed Lord was once down here as "God manifest in flesh" (see 1 Tim. 3:16) and He never violated any decree of the Roman power that was legitimate, and said quite clearly, *"pay then what is Caesar's to Caesar, and what is God's to God"* (Matt. 22:21). He also said, *"And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"* May this also search us out as we easily refer to Him as our Lord, which He is and we delight to own Him in this way, but He must say the same to us if we are disobedient to the authorities which He has established over us and we disobey them.

It is striking that the Lord, in the quotation given in regard to Caesar, mentioned Caesar's rights before God's. This, of course, does not put God's rights as subordinate to Caesar's but clearly infers that God upholds Caesar's rights.

## EXCEPTIONS FOR BELIEVERS

We must bear in mind, however, that if the requirements of any authority

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among men is in opposition to what is due to God then we must speak as did Peter when he said, *"If it be righteous before God to listen to you rather than to God, judge ye"* (Acts 4:19).

## RIGHTEOUSNESS A CHARACTERISTIC

It is little realized that 'righteousness', with the sense of 'doing what is right', occurs 35 times in the Epistle to the Romans. This Epistle presents saints as justified before God, and living righteously on the earth in serving God and not as any longer serving the interests of sin. It is suggested, then, that the Epistle to the Romans is very largely applicable to our position as in the Kingdom of the Heavens. Along with this Epistle we need to implement the truths of Philippians, Hebrews and James to keep us in balance practically and morally (in relation to our lives down here) with the more heavenly truths in Colossians and Ephesians.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

J. Pascoe

## A FRAGMENT (1 John 3:1-3)

I am going to be like Christ in glory; then I must be as like Him now as ever I can be. Of course we shall all fail, but we are to have our hearts full of it.

Remember this, that the place you are in is that of an epistle of Christ. We are set for this, that the life of Christ should be manifested in us. Christ has settled the question of our sins with God: now He appears in the presence of God for us, and we are in the presence of the world for Him. "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." If I know He is in me, I am to manifest the life of Christ in everything. If He has loved me with unutterable love which passes knowledge, I feel bound in heart to Him; my *business* is to glorify Him in everything I do. "Bought with a price" -- that is settled: if bought, I am *His*. But, beloved friends, I press upon you that earnestness of heart which cleaves to Him, especially in these last evil days, when we wait for the Son from heaven. Oh! if Christians were more thoroughly *Christians* the world would understand what it was all about.

The Lord give you to have such a sense of the love of Christ, that, as bought with a price, the only object of your souls may be to live by Christ and to live for Christ; and for those who do not know Him, that they may learn how He came down in love to seek us, and, because righteousness could not pass over sin, died to put it away.

From, *To Every Man His Work*

## HOW DO YOU WORSHIP?

Read John 12:1-11

She came not to hear a sermon, although the first of Teachers was there: but to sit at His feet and hear His Word (Luke 10:39) was not her purpose now, blessed as that was in its proper place.

She came not to make her requests known to Him. Time was, when, in deepest submission to His will, she had fallen at His feet, saying, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:32); but to pour out her supplications to Him as her only resource was not now her thought, for her brother was seated at the table.

She came not to meet saints, though precious saints were there, for it says, "Jesus loved Martha . . . and Lazarus" (John 11:5). Fellowship with them was blessed likewise and, doubtless, of frequent occurrence; but fellowship was not her object now.

She came not after the weariness and toil of a week's battling with the world to be refreshed from Him; though surely she, like every saint, had learned the trials of the wilderness, and none more than she, probably, knew the blessed springs of refreshment that were in Him.

But she came, and that too at the moment when the world was expressing its deepest hatred to Him, to pour out what she long had treasured up (v.7), that which was most valuable to her, all she had upon earth, upon the person of the One whose love had made her heart captive and absorbed her affections.

She thought not of Simon the leper; she passed the disciples by; her brother and her sister in the flesh and in the Lord engaged not her attention then; "Jesus only" filled her soul; her eye was on *Him*; her heart beat true to *Him*; her hands and her feet were subservient to her eye and to her heart, and she "anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair."

Adoration, homage, worship, blessing, was her one thought; and that in honor of the One who was "all in all" to her; and surely *such* worship was most refreshing to Him.

The unspiritual (v. 4) might murmur, but He upheld her cause, and showed how He could appreciate and value the grateful tribute of a heart that knew His worth and preciousness, and could not be silent to it. A lasting record is preserved of what worship really is by the One who accepted it, and of the one who rendered it.

And now, dear reader, is this your mode of worship, or do you on the Lord's day go to hear a sermon, say your prayers, meet the saints, or be refreshed after your six days' toil? Oh! if every eye were on the Lord alone; if every heart were true to Him; if we were each determined to see "no man, save Jesus"

only", what full praise there would be! Not with alabaster boxes now, but our bodies filled with the Holy Ghost, a stream of thanksgiving, of worship of the highest character, would ascend in honor of the blessed One that now adorns the glory as He once adorned the earth.

Be it ours thus to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Amen!

From, *To Every Man His Work*

*An Appeal to  
Christian Parents*

## "THE COURSE OF THIS WORLD"

*Ephesians 2:2*

Mark yon broad and rapid stream!  
Brilliant though its surface seem,  
Mingling in its depths below  
Poisonous currents surely flow.  
Christian parents, pause to think  
On that treacherous river's brink,  
Ere you launch your tiny bark  
On those waters deep and dark.  
Yours the path of Jesus here,  
Seek it for your children dear.  
Though you cannot life impart,  
Cannot bow the stubborn heart,  
Do not help to weave a chain  
You would gladly break again.  
Shall not He who for you died,  
Food and raiment still provide?  
He who has your children given,  
He can bless for earth and heaven.  
Seek then first His holy will,  
Seek His pleasure to fulfill,  
Constant still in faith and prayer  
That this blessing they may share.  
And when by the Spirit's power  
Comes the gladly welcomed hour,  
When the lips you love so well,  
Of a Saviour's grace shall tell,  
They will have no cause to say  
That you turned their feet astray;  
Rather, from their earliest youth,  
Taught and nurtured in the truth,  
May their light unhindered shine,  
To the praise of grace divine.



## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

### PART 2

### THE TWO PARENTHESES

#### CHAPTER 2.4: THE OPENING OF THE HEAVENLY PARENTHESIS

#### INTRODUCTION

Included in this chapter is a chart outlining the major divisions of the book of Acts, which book gives us the history of the Spirit's testimony to Christ resurrected and glorified. The truths connected with the heavenly parenthesis were not unfolded suddenly on the day the parenthesis opened. The chart will assist in seeing how God worked in unfolding the truth of the mystery of Christ and the church, though the heavenly parenthesis opened on the day of Pentecost.

The opening of the heavenly parenthesis is interconnected with truths and facts that would help us understand why the heavenly parenthesis (which is bound up with the formation of the body of Christ) opened when it did. In particular, it is important to understand the truth regarding the two men (1 Cor. 15:45-47), when the trial of that first man was completed and consequently the second man was established, and when the fall of Israel occurred. We will also examine in some detail the subject of the baptism in the Spirit, when it occurred and the results. Pentecost, and Joel's prophecy (cited in Acts 2), will also be considered.

There are Christians who claim that the body of Christ was begun with the salvation of Paul. I will refer to this as the Acts 9 position. Others claim that the body began in Acts 13 (Acts 13 position). Others say it was formed in connection with Paul being in prison (Acts 28 position). These later are followers of the scheme of E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913) and have been called "Bullingerites" and "ultra-dispensationalists." Many of them hold the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked -- a doctrine that is a fundamental affront to

the work of the atonement.<sup>2</sup> E. W. Bullinger seemed to hold a sort of Acts 13 type position in his *The Church Epistles*,<sup>3</sup> but under the influence of Charles Welch he switched to the Acts 28 position.

Subsequently, J. C. O'Hair (independently of E. W. Bullinger, he claims) took an Acts 13 position.<sup>4</sup> From this the Acts 9 position sprang, C. R. Stam apparently being the father of this variation. These do not hold annihilationism or the unconscious state of the dead.

I have thought it well to thus briefly touch on these perversions of dispensational truth<sup>5</sup> because we will consider teachings of the Acts 9 and 13

2. E. W. Bullinger did not hold the idea of the annihilation of the wicked though he held a doctrine sometimes called "soul sleep" of the dead until resurrection.

3. Some of Dr. Bullinger's notions regarding the mystery of Christ and the church were examined in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:124, etc.

4. It appears to me that J. C. O'Hair fell into this erroneous system by the way he tried to refute Pentecostalism. C. R. Stam (*The Berean Searchlight*, Jan. 1988, p. 293), says:

It was in a hotel in Indianapolis that Pastor J. C. O'Hair came to see that water baptism has no place in God's program for the Church, the body of Christ.

He had been invited to help an Indianapolis pastor whose congregation had been invaded by Pentecostalist teachings. Night after night he spelled out the difference between our Lord's "great commission" to the twelve and his greater commission to the Apostle Paul and to us. He showed from the book of Acts and the epistles of Paul how the Pentecostal program, with its supernatural sign gifts, had passed away.

One night a man came forward at the close of the service and said, in effect: I am inclined to agree with all you have said, but if your premise is correct, would you not have to eliminate water baptism for today along with the sign gifts?" O'Hair replied, "Of course not," but the question kept robbing him of his sleep that night, until he concluded that the man had been right, that it was not Scripturally consistent, or logically possible to acknowledge the passing of the sign gifts but to continue practicing water baptism.

From that time he began to see the glory of the "one baptism" into Christ and His Body, and with that, the glorious truth of the mystery so dear to the heart of the Apostle Paul.

It seems to me that there is an implication that brethren like J. N. Darby, Wm. Kelly, Ed. Dennett, R. Holden, Wm. Trotter, etc., etc., could not really have had a correct grasp of the mystery. Of course, persons ignorant of their writings might think that.

5. In a short article, "The Recovery of Grace Truth," (*The Berean Searchlight*, May, 1989, p. 90), P. Sadler (the present editor of that publication and a holder of the Acts 9 position) wrote about Paul, Luther and the Huguenots and then said:

These were followed by devout men of God like J. N. Darby who recovered the truth of the premillennial rapture. C. I. Scofield built upon this by uncovering the dispensational approach to Scripture. Then God raised up Pastor J. C. O'Hair who took a giant step in teaching us how to rightly divide the Word of Truth. He showed us that there is a difference between Prophecy and the Mystery. He was followed by Pastors Stam, Baker, Elifson and others who were used of the Lord to bring order out (continued...)



positions, showing how refusal of the fact that the body was formed at Pentecost leads to setting up two churches, two baptisms in the Spirit and two different meanings for persons being "in Christ", thus even placing O. T. saints "in Christ," and other errors (such as the denial, in effect, that the standing and testing of the first man was ended at the cross; consequently leading to error concerning the new creation). And such supposedly revel in the truth of the mystery -- but I suggest that these positions lower Christ's glory and confuse the Christian position and the truths that Christians ought to apprehend.

5(...continued)

of chaos. Pastor Stam was largely responsible for systematically putting the message together and working out many of the problem areas.

In the Jan. 1988 issue, p. 301, C. R. Stam wrote:

Later Mr. John N. Darby and Dr. C. I. Scofield were raised up to recover "that blessed hope" and related truths . . . This writer well remembers the days when the "Darby-Scofield Movement" had gotten under way . . . ."

J. N. Darby was used by God to recover the truth of the *pretribulation* rapture (posttribulationists also believe in a premillennial rapture) in connection with, and at the same time as he understood, the truth of the church, the body of Christ. These are interconnected. He understood also the fall of the church (all in 1827). It was he who rightly understood dispensational truth and much else. C. I. Scofield was saved about 1879 and JND died in 1882. As to a "Darby-Scofield Movement," obviously the two men had nothing to do with each other personally. CIS's position as a congregational clergyman was diametrically opposed to recovered ecclesiastical truth taught by JND. CIS accepted the truth of the pretribulation rapture and the distinction between Israel and the church, which was taught by JND, but some of CIS's teachings on dispensational truth are erroneous and deficient. Those who "took a giant step" built somewhat on CIS and, in reality, went backwards from him.

What is meant by the "difference between Prophecy and the Mystery" is that J. C. O'Hair viewed the early chapters of Acts as fulfillment of prophecy and so the mystery could not have begun until Paul ministered. The fact is that JND was the one who brought out that the church was not the subject of O. T. prophecy, as well as the character of the mystery. Now, readers of JND know these things and realize how shallow the above citations are -- but there will be some who need this called to their attention. Also, in connection with church truth, JND showed the unscripturalness of the clergy. What has happened is that a few of the truths he recovered (particularly the pretribulation rapture and that the church is not the spiritual Israel) have been accepted by those called dispensationalists while they go on with false church systems and clergy.

## THE TRIAL OF THE FIRST MAN COMPLETED AT THE CROSS

### THE TWO MEN

1 Cor. 15:45-47 reads:

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: the first man out of [the] earth, made of dust; the second man, out of heaven.

Adam received life; the Son of God gives life, from Adam onward. The O.T. saints received divine life through the quickening (making alive) action of the Son.

Christ is called the last Adam because there will be no other race after the one He formed. The word "Adam" signifies, in both cases, the headship of a race. The first man, Adam, was the head of the natural creation (v. 46) on earth while Christ is head of the new creation.

Now, Christ took the place of last Adam in resurrection, and this was founded upon an accomplished redemption. Christ is "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). When did that creation of God (i.e., the new creation) begin? When Paul was saved (Acts 9);<sup>6</sup> or when he began his formal ministry (Acts 13)? Of course not. When Christ rose from among the dead He had that place. Thus Col. 1:18: "Who is the beginning, firstborn<sup>7</sup> from among the dead." He stood forth in glorious resurrection in resurrection-life. And shortly thereafter he breathed upon His disciples the Spirit as power of life, thus characterizing the divine life they already had (as having been born of God) as resurrection-life (John 20).<sup>8</sup> The grain of wheat fell into the ground and died and brought forth much fruit (John 12:24). He now no longer abode alone, but the disciples (as we do now also) formed one plant in Him (John 12:24), now having life in abundance<sup>9</sup> (John 10:10). This is indeed *oneness* of

6. P. M. Sadler, editor of *The Berean Searchlight*, in a letter to me, dated Dec. 15, 1989, affirmed that the new creation began with the salvation of Paul.

7. "Only begotten Son" is a divine name. "Firstborn is an acquired title of rank, of preeminence. As come into the world He takes the place of firstborn of all creation; as risen from among the dead, He takes the place of firstborn from among the dead; and concerning brethren, He must needs be firstborn among many brethren. It is not at all a matter of priority in time; it is a matter of preeminence in rank and dignity.

8. These matters have been examined in past issues of *Thy Precepts*.

9. This refers to the character of the resurrection-life, not to jubilation or fruitfulness in the Christian.

life in the Son (1 John 5:11).<sup>10</sup>

The second man (Christ) is out of heaven. This does not mean that His humanity came from heaven. It came from Mary under the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit. The second man being out of heaven refers to what characterizes the second man. It refers to what is moral. He is characteristically a heavenly man. He was from heaven. He was of heaven. And He will eternally bear this character. And, oh joy, He has connected us with Himself eternally, too. Not that we could be in deity; we have life in the Son in connection with His risen manhood, now glorified above all heavens.

None of this could be until that which was first, that which was natural, was fully tried and found wanting.

### THE TRIAL OF THE FIRST MAN COMPLETED

All this blessedness awaited Christ's death and resurrection. It could not be earlier (John 12:24). There was a long period of trial of the first man Adam. What was first was natural (1 Cor. 15:46). The principle of this is illustrated throughout the book of Genesis where the one born first does not obtain the inheritance! Have you ever noticed that?

There is also the instructive word "yet" in Rom. 5:8. Why does it say while we were "yet" sinners? The word refers to the fact that though God tested the first man (all of us ranged under his headship naturally) in every way he was still but a sinner.

What was the last trial of the first man? Note that while Israel stood in a special place, their trial was a part of the trial of the first man -- now with promises, the law, priesthood, sacrifices, the glory cloud, kings and prophets and the covenants. All was failure upon failure. That is why the prophetic ministry became so pronounced. But it was the trial of the first man in the persons of the favored nation. The parable of Matt. 21:33-46 tells the tale. The owner of the vineyard had one remaining thing to do. He sent His Son. They will reverence His Son, He said -- yes, but in a future day, of course, when God will also answer the prayer of that Son, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The crucifixion closed the trial of the first man. It is a grave mistake to think that the preaching in Acts 2 - 7 or 2 - 12 indicates that the Jew was still under trial, that the first man was still under trial. I will comment on to that preaching in due time, if the Lord will. God's dealings in trial concerning the first man were over at the cross, and the second man consequently took His

10. Interestingly, in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:406 and 3:15, referring to Christ as quickening spirit, he capitalizes "Spirit."

place in glory, upon which the Spirit came in a special capacity.

There are two truths that especially characterize the heavenly parenthesis:

(1) Christ is in glory.

(2) The Spirit is here in the special capacity of testimony to a resurrected and glorified Christ and for forming a heavenly company united to the Head in heaven as members of one body, etc. His coming at Pentecost opened the heavenly parenthesis and when He, the restrainer of 2 Thess. 2 leaves at the rapture of the saints, the heavenly parenthesis will thereby be closed.

Now, it is much to be observed that Christ taking His place in glory and the coming of the Holy Spirit in this way is dependent upon the trial of the first man having been completed. Christ resurrected and glorified is proof of it. Note the sequence: "But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:46). It is contrary to Scripture that the natural (when the first man was under trial) should exist at the same time as the spiritual (when the second man took His place). When did the second man take his place? When Paul was saved (Acts 9) or began his formal ministry (Acts 13)? Where is Scripture for that?

I ask, when did Christ take His place? What did it follow? Paul's salvation or the beginning of his formal ministry? Listen:

... having made [by himself] the purification of sins, set himself down on the right hand of the greatness on high, taking a place so much better than the angels ... (Heb. 1:3,4).

Well, I suppose, no one would think otherwise than that He took His place consequent upon His finished work and resurrection. Why don't all see that therefore the trial of the first man (and therefore the trial of the first man in the persons of the favored nation, the Jews) was over by their rejection and crucifixion of the Son? Apparently not all Christians see the end of the trial of the first man at the death of Christ, because they say that what they call "the dispensation of the Spirit" (or some, "the dispensation of grace" or "the dispensation of the mystery") began at Acts 9, or 13 or 28 or somewhere else. Part of their system is that the Jews continued to be tested after Acts 2 under *the previous dispensation* (or an additional one intercalated) and up to Acts 9, or 13 or 28 according to the school of opinion they espouse.

Those who delay the formation of the body of Christ to some time after Acts 2 do not apprehend that the testing of the first man ended with the cross. This seems implicit in ideas concerning what a dispensation is. For example:

God Himself never changes. In His person, essence and character He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). His dealings with man, however, have undergone various changes down through man's history -- changes made necessary down through man's history. Identifying these changes is a basic issue

in studying the Bible dispensationally for a dispensation is a particular program that God administers (or dispenses) for man's obedience.<sup>11</sup>

Since that writer holds that we are in a dispensation now, with the idea it is "a particular program that God administers (or dispenses) for man's obedience," this means that man is still under testing. That is, this system implicitly denies that the cross ended the testing of the first man. Worse yet, what this writer says means that the first man is still under test even after whenever he thinks the fall of Israel occurred. Indeed, this is implicit in his definition of a dispensation.

## THE STUMBLING OF ISRAEL

Rom. 11:11-15 reads:

I say then, Have they stumbled in order that they might fall [πεσῶσιν]? Far be the thought: but by their fall [παράπτωματι] [there is] salvation to the nations to provoke them to jealousy. But if their fall [παράπτωμα] [be the] world's wealth, and their loss [the] wealth of [the] nations, how much rather their fullness? For I speak to you, the nations, inasmuch as I am apostle of nations, I glorify my ministry: if by any means I shall provoke to jealousy [them which are] my flesh, and shall save some from among them. For if their casting away [be the] world's reconciliation, what [their] reception but life from among the dead?

Rom. 11 does not support the notion that there is no future for Israel as if they have irremediably fallen. They have fallen but not irremediably. (Of course, the non-elect have indeed fallen irremediably). In verse 11, the word "fall" (πεσῶσιν) means to fall irremediably so as not to regain the former place. "Far be the thought," says Paul. The next two uses of the word "fall" in verses 11 and 12 are translated "trespass" by Wm. Kelly and others. This is, perhaps, clearer. At any rate, it is a fall that involves a moral trespass on Israel's part.

Israel has stumbled but not so as to fall irremediably. Verse 15 speaks of their casting away, meaning that they are laid aside. The natural branches (Jews) of the olive tree (a figure for the line of God's blessings) have been broken out (Rom. 11:16-24) but not the elect Jews; because *some* of the branches were broken out (Rom. 11:17), thus not all.

Israel stumbled and fell (Rom. 11:11), were cast away (Rom. 11:15) and blinded (Rom. 11:7), or as Wm. Kelly has it, were "hardened." The question before us is when did this happen? I answer, the stumbling and fall and hardening of Israel is interlocked with the end of the trial of the first man and thus occurred at the death of the Lord Jesus, Whom they slew. This is the

trespass of Romans 11. Just imagine delaying this to when Paul was saved,<sup>12</sup> or began his formal ministry or was put in prison or who knows where. Likely some will say it occurred when Israel finally rejected the "reoffer" of the kingdom in Acts. Such notions are the exigencies of a false system. The reader should have noted by now that *implicit in moving the formation of the body of Christ from Pentecost is the denial that the cross marked the end of the trial of the first man*. In effect, this makes something else the turning point instead of Christ and the cross -- and thus far lowers Christ's work. How so, you say? Why, in the cross God fully judged the first man, and put him away from before Himself. This is why the Christian can reckon himself dead (Rom 6). This is why a Christian can say, "I am crucified with Christ . . ." It is because the standing in Adam, the first man, was terminated at calvary. It was part of Christ's work. Giving the first man any standing after that lowers the work of Christ.

Christ Himself is the occasion of Israel's fall:

And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother, Lo, this [child] is set for the fall and rising up of many in Israel (Luke 2:34).

It is Christ Himself that is the touchstone of this whole question. Matt. 21:44 reads:

And he that falls on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.

Here are the two positions of our Lord: on earth as the stone of stumbling, and above as the smiting stone. "And the chief priests and the Pharisees, having heard his parables, knew that he spoke about them" (Matt. 21:45). Reader, I ask you, what was it that sealed their doom? Was it not what they did to Him Who was set for the fall and rising of many in Israel (Luke 2:34)? Was it not that they fell on this stone? He was the stone that the builders rejected (Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17). Yes, He was the stone of stumbling and the rock of offence (1 Peter 2:7,8). The subsequent preaching to Israel (Acts 2-11) cannot change this. The parable in Matt. 21:33-42 is express:

And they took him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him (v. 39).

And the hearers of the parable pronounced their own judgment. The judgment, note well, turns upon the casting out and killing of the heir.

When therefore the Lord of the vineyard comes, what shall he do to those husbandmen? They say to him, He will miserably destroy those evil men . . . (Matt. 21:40,41).

12. C. R. Stam (Acts 9 position) says that "God's dealings with Israel at Pentecost prove that He had not yet concluded them in unbelief or cast them away at that time," *Acts Dispensationally Considered* Chicago: The Berean Bible Society, 1954, 1:69.

11. R. Jordan (Acts 9 position), *The Grace Journal*, Nov. 1989, p. 1.

The rejection of the Lord Jesus is very strongly marked in Matthew which emphasizes God's governmental dealings, ways and changes. In Matt. 12, the leadership committed the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, namely, saying that the power (confessedly) working in Christ was Beelzebub's (Matt. 12:24). It may be perceived that in the unfolding of God's purpose in Matthew's account, this led to the parabolic form of teaching wherein certain things were meant to be hidden from the rejecters of Christ (Matt. 13:13-15). He had hinted to them that they would make of Him their adversary (Matt. 5:55; Luke 12:58).

The rejection of the Lord came to a climax at the cross. Just before He was crucified we read of His lament in Matt. 23:37-39 where He said, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." A few days later, the awful shout of rejection rose up before God, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). Then they crucified the heir (Matt. 21:38) and therefore the kingdom of God was taken from them (Matt. 21:43). Thus Israel stumbled and fell.

The fact is that the Lord sought fruit from Israel for three years, for Israel was a fig tree without figs, and the sentence was:

... cut it down; why does it also render the ground useless (Luke 13:7).

The added year (Acts 2 - 7) does not change the sentence against Israel. Another year was added to demonstrate, not that it would produce fruit, but to prove that the stumbling, the fall, the blindness, had indeed taken place. It was a *year of exposure* of the state of Israel while the believing remnant (the Israel of God) continued to be augmented. After that the Word began to go forth to the Gentiles. It was not a continuation of the testing of the first man. It was an added demonstration of Israel's resistance to the Spirit (Acts 7), Who answers to the servant of the parable. They cast Christ out down here and would not have a Christ in glory either (Luke 19:11ff; Acts 7:54-58).

Additionally, when charged with the murder of the Lord Jesus, those whose hearts were touched by the preaching in Acts 2ff had an opportunity, as it were, to take the place of the manslayer and run into the city of refuge, while the rest were left for the avenger of blood to overtake them (Deut. 19).

It is true that reconciliation was sent to the Gentiles consequent upon Israel's fall (Rom. 11:11,12,15). This does not prove that the message was sent (or had to be sent) to the Gentiles, say, the day Israel fell, or the day after. There was a lapse of time marked by the *exposure* of Israel's resisting the testimony of the Spirit regarding the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. So before the Gentiles were blessed and the mystery was revealed, the Jews were addressed first (Acts 3:26). This was the first step in the NEW mission, new because it was to the Gentiles, beginning, however, at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).

The acts 9/13 position advocates have a difficult time pin-pointing the fall of Israel, whereas it is interlocked with the testing of the first man; and thus the fall of Israel occurred when the testing of the first man ended (the cross). Consequently, the second man was glorified. *The false system results in a*

*concurrent standing for both the first and the second man.* Now, Scripture declares that there was no concurrency:

But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual: the first man out of [the] earth, made of dust; the second man, out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:46,47).

Previously, it was pointed out how a false definition of a dispensation betrayed the fact that implicit in that definition was a denial that the trial of the first man ended at the cross. Of course, it would follow from this error that the same writer would find the fall of Israel somewhere in Acts instead of at the cross - in order to suit the theory of the body of Christ being formed with Paul's salvation or his formal ministry. The following citation will show this and also many errors concerning how the N.T. is handled as a consequence of delaying the formation of the body of Christ to a time subsequent to Acts 2:

**Time Past:** In *Matthew through John* we find the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ to the nation Israel. In the book of Acts we have the fall of Israel and salvation going to the Gentiles through the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

**But Now:** *Romans through Philemon* provide the doctrine for the present dispensation of grace.

**Ages To Come:** *Hebrews through Revelation* focus on the ages <sup>13</sup> to come when God will bring to fruition His purposes for both the nation Israel and the Body of Christ. <sup>14</sup>

While Bullingerism gave rise to the term "ultra-dispensationalism," there are references now to that as "extreme" and the Acts 9/13 positions as "moderate." Distinctions do have value (especially if one feels misrepresented). "Moderate" is too mild a word when I look at the last quotation above.

## SUMMARY

The point at which the testing of the first man ended involves many truths, some of which we have considered.

1. The testing of the first man ended with the death of Christ, not at the salvation of Paul, nor at the beginning of his formal ministry, nor when he was put in prison, nor when Israel finally rejected the "reoffer" of the kingdom, whenever that is supposed to have been.
2. Israel was cast away consequent upon slaying the Lord Jesus.
3. The second man took His place in glory consequent upon finishing

13. I hope the writer meant to say "age" because "the ages to come" refers to the eternal state while "the age to come" is the millenium.

14. R. Jordan, *The Grace Journal*, Nov. 1989, p. 5.

redemption and its correlative ending of the testing of the first man.

4. As a consequence of His taking His place above, the Holy Spirit came down in a special capacity. He came to empower the disciples for the NEW mission, to the nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8), and to baptize those who had believed on Christ into one body (1 Cor. 12:13).

## THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT

### THE MAN IN THE GLORY

It is blessed indeed to contemplate our Lord Jesus as the man in the glory of God. The eternal Son, Who always is, uninterruptedly, in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18) yet speaks of Himself thus:

... and have believed that I came out from God. I came out from the Father and have come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father (John 16:27,28).

How unspeakably precious this is to the soul! He came out from God and came out from the Father. Have you noticed that this is, so to speak, movement in the Godhead? Why, yes, my soul, it is movement in the Godhead, the Son coming out from the Father and coming into the world. The Father was the Father when (and before, too) the Son so came out. And it was the Son, as such, Who came out from the Father, as such, before He came into the world in incarnation.

In John 17:5 we read:

And now glorify me, thou Father, along with thyself, with the glory which I had along with thee before the world was.

The blessed Lord never glorified Himself in any way. As man He asks and receives everything. And now He requests to enter that glory as to presence and place. It was a glory He had along with the Father before the world was -- only now, oh staggering thought, He would enter that personal glory as man!

He had told His own that He was going to prepare a place for them (John 14:3). This was a place above, to be shared with Him. And *as soon as He entered* the place above, as man, victorious over sin and hell and death, *the place was ready*. He has not been busy for 1900 years getting it prepared. No, no. When He entered there as glorified man, it was by that very entry prepared.

He said, "and I sanctify myself for them . . ." (John 17:19). This sanctification is not in a moral sense -- could not be -- but refers to setting Himself apart in the glory for effecting our practical sanctification to God. And

thus He is in the glory the transforming object to our gaze (2 Cor. 3:18).

The cross marked the end of the testing of the first man; and consequent upon that work the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4). Yea, and God gave Him glory (1 Peter 1:21). There is a consequence of the glorification of Christ. The Spirit could not come until Christ was glorified (John 7:39).

The finished work of Christ, and the consequent resurrection and glorification above is the great change upon which all devolves, not the salvation or formal ministry of a servant of Christ (Paul), however illustrious, or anything else. See, for example, in Eph. 1:20-23 how all is connected with Christ's glorification. And so the giving of gifts is likewise the expression and demonstration of His ascension into glory (Eph. 4:9-13). We see some of these gifts functioning in the early part of Acts, including Phillip the evangelist.<sup>15</sup>

### THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT

The Spirit is omnipresent, present everywhere. He was here in O.T. times. Yet our Lord spoke of the Spirit as One Who would come:

But I say the truth to you, It is profitable for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you (John 16:7).

Here we learn that in order for the Spirit to come, the Lord Jesus would have to go away (into the glory, of course). We also learn that as thus gone away, the Lord would send the Spirit. Not only must the Lord go away before the Spirit would come, the Lord had to be glorified first:

But this he said concerning the Spirit, which they that believed on him were about to receive; for [the] Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:39).

There are several other Scriptures to note:

And I will beg the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see him nor know him; but ye know him, for he abides with you, and shall be in you (John 14:16-17).

... but the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance all the things which I have said to you (John 14:26).

15. In Eph. 4, the gifts given are the men themselves, given from Christ, the head of the body, to activate and stir up the ministry of all the joints and bands. In 1 Cor. 12, the gifts are looked at as in the persons and are manifestations of the Spirit for profit. In Rom. 12, the gifts are viewed as services to God.

Those who receive the Spirit during the heavenly parenthesis will have Him for ever. He is not a come-and-go Spirit. The words, "for he abides with you," do not mean that they had Him indwelling already, for He had not come yet to abide in them. It is a statement of character; He is such a One as abides -- once come, of course, in this special capacity. He was not yet in them, but "shall be in you."

Note also that the Father would send the Spirit in the Son's name. In John 16:7 we saw that the Son would send Him. Thus *both* would send Him; and the Spirit would be the divine remembrancer and teacher.

In Luke 24:49 we read:

And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but do ye remain in the city till ye be clothed with power from on high.

The Spirit is *the promise of the Father* and thus He is the Holy Spirit of promise, as we read of Him in Eph. 1:13.

... in whom also, having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Why is He so designated in Eph. 1 as "the Holy Spirit of promise?" It is to draw our attention to the connection with what transpired at Pentecost when the Spirit came and baptized those who had believed into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). He came at Pentecost as the promise of the Father and formed the saints into one body united to the glorified head in heaven. The body was formed once for all and we are joined to it by the same Holy Spirit of promise (via sealing) that formed that body.

Before the Lord Jesus was received up into glory He,

... commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to await the promise of the Father, which [said he] ye have heard of men. For John indeed baptized with water but ye shall be baptized with [en] the Holy Spirit after now not many days (Acts 1:4,5).

So they waited; and the Spirit came at Pentecost, the 50th day after the waving of the sheaf of firstfruits (Lev. 23). The sheaf of firstfruits was waved before Jehovah the morrow after the sabbath following the passover; i.e., on our Sunday. This signified Christ's resurrection as the firstfruits. Now, of the grain of the same crop from which the sheaf of the firstfruits came, were made two loaves. However, leaven was put in the two loaves, for there is an evil nature in those who compose the present testimony; but it was baked, and fire (judgment, self-judgment) stops the action of the leaven. Two loaves speak of testimony, testimony to Him Who is the firstfruits.

The Spirit came, and parted tongues, as of fire, sat upon each of those waiting according to our Lord's instructions. In Acts 2:32,33 we read:

This Jesus has God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses. Having therefore been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the

promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which ye behold and hear.

So our Lord, having been exalted received the Spirit the second time. He received Him once as perfect man, in bodily form as a dove, for Him did the Father seal without measure. But now as glorified man, He received the Spirit in consequence of His work which glorified God and saves and cleanses sinners so that they, too, may receive the Spirit. The Father gave Him, as glorified man, up there in the glory, the Spirit, (i.e., gave Him the promised Spirit) and the glorified Lord Jesus Christ sent that Holy Spirit of promise here below. Thus were the Scriptures we have been considering fulfilled. This was how both the Father and the Son sent the Spirit. Note, too, that when we considered how the Son prayed in John 17:5, asking to enter that glory which He had with the Father before the world began, we noted that as man He asks and receives all. He did not glorify himself. And here, in the glory, as the glorified man, He asked the Father for the Spirit for his disciples (John 14:16-17), and in the glory He received the Spirit for His disciples, and sent that Spirit (Luke 24:49). Of course, the Father thus sent the Spirit also. And the coming of the Spirit clothed them with power from on high. They were also baptized in the power of the Spirit into one body, though the results of that were not revealed at this time, for God would yet expose the moral state of Israel now stumbled, fallen and blinded.

The Spirit, we have been considering, came; came in a special capacity, though He was ever here as the omnipresent One. When will He leave? For those who understand that the restrainer of 2 Thess. 2:7 is the Holy Spirit, it is clear that He will be removed at the rapture. Now, this is the close of the heavenly parenthesis. The close of the heavenly parenthesis is coincident with the removal of the Spirit, i.e., removal with respect to the special capacity in which He came.<sup>16</sup> It is clear that He came at Pentecost. It was His coming that is coincident with the opening of the heavenly parenthesis -- a conclusion which is, of course, opposed to the notion that the body of Christ began in Acts 9, 13 or 28, or anywhere other than Acts 2.

## THERE IS ONLY ONE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT

The reader may be aware that Pentecostal/ Charismatics speak of several baptisms in the Spirit, for they speak of in, by, of and with, the Spirit.<sup>17</sup> Here are the passages, before Pentecost which speak of the baptism in the Spirit:

16. The Spirit will, of course, remain here as the omnipresent One, effecting the new birth during the tribulation. What think you of the understanding concerning what God is doing when posttribulationists object that 'If the Spirit is removed in a pretribulation rapture, how can anyone thereafter be born again?'

17. See my *The Word of God Versus the "Charismatic Renewal,"* obtainable from the publisher.

he shall baptise you with [en] the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11)  
 he shall baptise you with [en] the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:4)  
 he shall baptise you with [en] the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16)  
 he it is who baptises with [en] the Holy Spirit (John 1:33)  
 ye shall be baptised with [en] the Holy Spirit after now not many days  
 (Acts 1:5)

In a footnote to the word "with" in Matt. 3:11, J. N. Darby says, "*En*, 'in the power of,' be it external or simply the nature and character of, but always including the latter: see Luke 2:72."

The Pentecostal/Charismatic varying of the English prepositions to represent *en*, in order to make several kinds of Holy Spirit baptisms is a farce. Amazingly, C. R. Stam, an advocate that the body of Christ began in Acts 9, did a similar thing, *while writing against Pentecostalism*:

There is a vast difference between the baptism with or in the Spirit at Pentecost and the baptism by the Spirit today. At Pentecost it was Christ who baptised believers *in or into the Spirit* (Matt. 3:11), while today it is *the Holy Spirit* who baptises believers *into Christ and His Body* (Rom. 6:3; Tit. 3:5; 1 Cor. 12:13). These are exactly opposite.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, if 1 Cor. 12:13 does actually refer to Pentecost, his entire system collapses. Rom. 6:3 reads *eis* Christ, i.e., *unto* Christ, and refers to water baptism (which he does not believe, of course).

What this means is that there are two absolutely distinct baptisms in the Spirit. It is really not possible to deny that a Spirit baptism took place at Pentecost, of course. But the system involves that the body of Christ was formed in Acts 9, Paul being the first member of that body. The body never had only one member; no, not for one second.

It is a Pentecostalist doctrine that persons were baptised "into the Spirit." There is no such teaching in Scripture.

It is true that Matt. 3:11 shows us that Christ is the baptizer. The Spirit is the effectual power. But the gospels do not tell what the result of Christ baptizing in the power of the Spirit would be. It awaited the revelation of the mystery of Christ and the church before the result would be stated; namely, the formation of one body. So while the five scriptures cited look forward, 1 Cor.

12:13 looks back at what happened and tells us that the body of Christ was formed.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 12:13

1 Cor. 12:13 reads:

For also in [the power of] one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free, and have all been given to drink of one Spirit.

The word "in [the power of]" represents the same Greek preposition, *en*, as in the other five places. Let us insert this preposition.

For also *en* one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body ... (1 Cor. 12:13)

he it is who baptizes *en* the Holy Spirit (John 1:33).

Where the difficulty is in understanding this simple and obvious connection is that men impose their troublesome system on Scripture.

The baptism in the Spirit is a once for all event. It happened only once. J.N. Darby remarked:

As to 1 Corinthians 12:12,13, it is the aorist (ἐβαπτισθημεν) and therefore says nothing of continuity: it is continuous, if we speak of individuals receiving the Holy Ghost. But people look for a re-giving of the Holy Ghost, as if He did not abide for ever; and the thought of re-giving denies that, and also the responsibility of the church consequent upon it, which is a great evil.<sup>19</sup>

When a Christian is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13), Who is the same Holy Spirit of promise that came at Pentecost, as we have seen, he is joined to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17) and thus becomes a member of that body once-for-all formed at Pentecost. It was the man in the glory that baptized, in the power of one Spirit, those that had believed, into one body.

So the above citation from C.R. Stam, regarding several differing baptisms *en* Spirit, says five references to the baptism *en* Spirit refer to one thing and the sixth reference<sup>20</sup> to the baptism *en* Spirit refers to another thing (no evidence being produced in Acts 9-28 for its occurrence). His system requires this. It takes away, too, the truth that the man in the glory was not the baptizer, *en* Spirit into one body. The theory is that the Spirit, not Christ, in virtue of one Spirit, formed the body. I think this lowers one of Christ's glories.

I suppose also that this must mean that some like Peter were baptized into

18. *The Berean Searchlight*, Sept. 1984, p. 168. So also his, *Acts Dispensationally Considered* 1:70. R. C. Brock speaks similarly:

Paul is the only one who writes about this baptism BY the Holy Spirit. What took place at Pentecost was the baptism with the Holy Spirit BY the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:11; Acts 11:16). Christ continued His ministry to ISRAEL on the Day of Pentecost. *The Revelation of the Mystery*, p. 12.

19. *Letters* 3:467.

20. Actually there is one more such reference (Acts 11) where Peter refers to it in looking back to Pentecost.

the Spirit and Paul was not; that Peter was clothed with power from on high by being baptized into the Spirit, but Paul was not. I ask, did Peter ever become a member of the body of Christ? When? -- and how (if not at Pentecost)? What did it? How do we know? If so, then he was a member of the body as Paul was, but in addition, he was baptized into the Spirit and clothed with power from on high. Poor Paul; he missed being clothed with power from on high, yet he said,

For I reckon that in nothing I am behind those who are in surpassing degree apostles (2 Cor. 11:59; cp. 12:11,12).

As we have considered the doctrine of two distinct baptisms in the Spirit for the purpose of delaying the formation of the body of Christ (and thus the opening of the heavenly parenthesis), it follows that what it means to be positionally "in Christ" must be also divided into two different things.

The body of Christ is a joint body of Jews and Gentiles. The fact that no Gentiles were added to the body until after Pentecost is beside the point. 1 Cor. 12:13 comprehends all members from Pentecost until the rapture, though that baptism took place at Pentecost. We are joined to that body when sealed with the same Holy Spirit of promise in the power of Whom that body was then formed. That baptism is an all-encompassing and embracing event as is this:

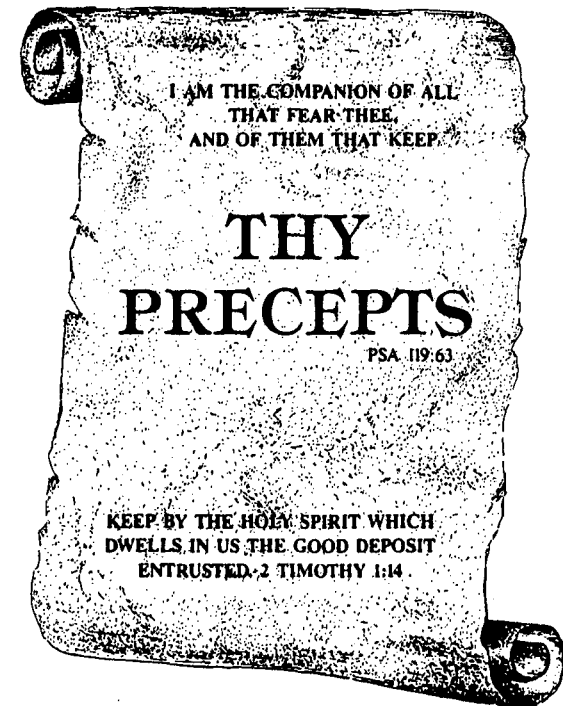
... has quickened us with the Christ (ye are saved by grace) and has raised [us] up together, and has made [us] sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:5,6).

So just as these things are true in connection with Christ's resurrection and seating above, and God including us in His divine view of it, so with 1 Cor. 12:13. Jews, Greeks, bond or free did not need to be present at Pentecost any more than you or I needed to be present when Christ was raised.

Ed.

(If the Lord will, this chapter will be continued)





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## CONTENTS

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The Blessedness of the Person .....	65
The House of God .....	73
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	81
The Government of the Father .....	91
The Appointed Path .....	94
Ambitious Self .....	95

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE PERSON**

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**THE BLESSEDNESS OF  
THE PERSON OF CHRIST  
IN ITS UNITY  
AS PRESENTED IN SCRIPTURE**

By A. C. Ord.

(Continued from v. 5, # 2)

There are some passages where the specially human sufferings of Christ are most tenderly and touchingly depicted, as in Isa. 53, where He is presented as the Man of Sorrows; yet invariably do we find that the Spirit of God, who indited them, introduces at the same time His Person, as that which gives its character to these sufferings, and makes Him the object of the affections of His people. He is the *Arm* or strength of Jehovah, and as such the subject of revelation: "To whom is the Arm of the Lord *revealed*?" (v. 1). And He alone, as such, can bear the griefs, and carry the sorrows of His people, (vv. 1-4). So in Heb. 12, where, as Man, He is looked at as the Author and Finisher of Faith, He also is the One exalted on the throne of God, who alone, amidst a multitude of others, is the *Object* of Faith, and who endured the contradiction of *sinners* against *Himself*; language which could only be used of One who is divine (v. 2,3).

But the passage we have quoted, and also Ps. 16, have been brought forward to prove that Christ is viewed as Man *apart from what He is as God*. We therefore give the following extract:

"The state described in this Psalm is that of man considered apart from God (I do not mean of course morally separated, *nor touch upon the union of the divine and human nature in Christ*); but it is man partaker of the divine nature, for so only it could be, but having God for his object, his confidence, as alone having authority over him, entirely dependent on God, and perfect in faith in Him. This could only be in one *personally partaker* of the *divine nature*, *God Himself in man, as Christ was*, or derivatively as in one born of God; but, as we have seen, Christ is not here viewed in this aspect, nor the believer as united to Him. The

divine presence in Him is viewed, not in the manifestation of God in Him, but in its effect in His absolute perfection as man. He is walking as man morally in view of God" (J. N. Darby, *Practical Reflections on the Psalms*, "Psalm 16," p. 26).

Thus, from first to last, as the Babe in the manger, born of the virgin, as the Victim on the cross, in His life here below, and in His relations or positions above, the Holy Ghost keeps Him before us, in the unity of His Person, and never for one moment presents Him to us "abstractly," or "distinct and apart from what He is as God."

This quotation may well serve as a warning of the way in which Mr. Darby is wrongly made to appear as a supporter of these doctrines. Not only is the passage misquoted by Mr. Raven, but Mr. Darby carefully guards what he says from the interpretation put upon it by Mr. R. and other writers of the same school. Similarly, the statement of the author, speaking of the use of eternal life as "a general term," and distinguishing its application to Christ, personally, by the use of the article, as "the Life," or "that Eternal Life," or in other similar ways, "is quoted by a writer of this school as being a surrender of the truth which has been contended for, and the words which immediately precede and follow applying the term to Christ personally," are left out by him, as if in order to give an exaggerated truth to the said writer's statement. Godly souls are still pained and distressed by similar utterances amongst Mr. Raven's followers, which appear in various places, showing that the leaven is gradually, though surely, working in their midst, verifying the emphatic testimony of Scripture, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Who can remain in contact with such teaching, and not suffer from it, even though it works imperceptibly in the soul? "The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil": and in all the errors, whether doctrinal or ecclesiastical, of far less magnitude, that have come in amongst Brethren, this has invariably been insisted upon, and the course pursued in obedience to the word of God, "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." To dishonor the person of the Lord Himself, and then to plead the claim of unity, would keep one in Romanism, or in association with any other evil system. And all who have taken this course, though at first refusing and repudiating Mr. R.'s doctrine, have become more or less contaminated by it, and many have become defenders of it; for the tone of the soul becomes insensibly lowered, or indifferent to the evil with which it is linked, and there is a direct power of the enemy which blinds the eyes of those who tamper with it, so that the only safeguard is to break with it entirely, and to refuse to listen to the insinuations and arguments of its defenders.

Think of what all this comes to, when "to import the thought of God, as such, in any subjective sense" into Christ's bearing the "judgment of death that rested on man" (which Scripture teaches, and which is believed by all

Christians), is denounced by Mr. R., as "really irreverent and profane" (*A Correspondence*, &c., p. 4). We have seen his denial of the unity of the Person of Christ, brought out in various ways, and applied so as to undermine the leading truths of Christianity; but the length to which it is here carried is indeed frightful. That which is so precious to the soul, and on which really hangs its safety for eternity, is to Mr. R. "irreverent and profane." Do Christians comprehend what this means? It is this; that so completely does he divide the natures in the Holy Person of Christ, that *to look upon them as absolutely united and inseparable in that Person, and hence in His death, and in the work of expiation, is profanity*. Of course to speak of Godhead as being united to humanity, in any other person and work, would be profane and irreverent, because it would degrade the Godhead; but such language applied to the Holy One of God, of whom the angel, in virtue of His miraculous conception, says to the virgin, "Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called 'The Son of God'" (Luke 1:35), ought to make Christians shudder. We may be thankful for Mr. R.'s testimony that there are some who "betray only painful inability to grasp" what he calls "divine thoughts."

We add a further warning from Mr. Darby:

"And though God of course could not die -- no more even could a human soul -- yet there was no separation of the natures . . . Of course, if I think of the Son as a divine Person, He could not die -- no more, I repeat, could a human soul in fact . . . If Christ was only as a man there, it was no more than another man there, only sinless -- that is, it was nothing. The Son as a divine Person of course could not die looked at apart; but He who was Son died and gave Himself, *not as apart*, but in all the infinite value of His Person and in His divine love to us. I do not say Mary was the mother of God, if I may compare them, but she was the mother of Him personally who was God, and if He was not, His birth was nothing. A person may object to saying the Son died, because he is looking at Him apart as a divine Person; but if it be denied that He being Son died, I have lost the value of His death, which is infinite, both in love and value" (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:224).

The following remarks of a well-known brother, now with the Lord, whose writings have been much blessed, are added as appropriate on the subject:

"The ark and the camp were, in some sense, necessary to each other during the journey through the wilderness. The ark, seated in the tabernacle on which the cloud rested, had to guide the camp, and the camp, in its order, had to accompany and guard the ark and all connected with it. . . . Their" (mere) "journeying through that desert would not have constituted divine pilgrimage. Many a one had travelled that road without being a stranger and pilgrim with God. In order to be such, *the ark* must be in their company.

"The mind of the camp, of which I have spoken, might betray its weakness, or forget itself, and this might lead, as we know it did, to chastening again and again. But if its business, of which I have also spoken, were given up, there would be loss of everything. . . . And thus it is with ourselves. We are to maintain those truths or mysteries which the tabernacle and its furniture

1. See "The Glory of the Person of the Son of God," p. 34.

represented; and the apostle commits our entrance into Canaan to that. 'If ye continue in the faith'; and again, 'if ye keep in memory what I have written unto you.' Our safety, our rest in the heavenly Canaan, depends on our keeping the truth. This, however, is to be added, that not merely for our own safety's sake, but for Christ's honor, is the truth to be kept.

"This is to be much considered. Supposing for a moment that our own safety were not concerned in it, Christ's honor is, and that is enough. Such a thing is contemplated in 2 John 10; the elect lady was inside the house, she was in personal safety, but she has a duty to perform to 'the doctrine of Christ'; so that if one come to her door, and bring not that doctrine, she must keep him outside, and refuse to have him where she is. . . .

"Mere journeying from Egypt to Canaan will not do. Let the journey be attended with all the trial of such an arid, unsheltered, and trackless road, still it is not divine pilgrimage. A mere toilsome, self-denying life, even though endured with that moral courage which becomes pilgrims will not do. There must be the carriage of the ark of God, confession to the truth, and maintenance of the name, of Jesus. . . .

"In the thoughts of this epistle, *Jesus Christ* is always this *divine One*, so to speak, the *eternal Life* manifested. With St. John 'Jesus Christ' is 'the true God,' Jesus is the 'He' and 'Him' in the argument of his first Epistle; and this 'He' and 'Him' ever keeps before us One who is God, though in *assumed relations and covenant dealings*. . . .

"This, I judge, is the mind and import of the required confession that 'Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.' I here speak of God under the name of Jesus Christ, and it is, therefore, the demand of a confession to the great mystery of 'God . . . manifested in the flesh.'

"The very adjunct (as another has written to me) 'come in the flesh,' throws strongly forward the deity of Christ; because if He were a man, or anything short of what He is, it would be no such wonder that He should 'come in the flesh.' And verses 2 and 3 of chapter 1 guide us to John's thoughts in the use of the name 'Jesus Christ.' 'That which was from the beginning,' the *'eternal Life* which was *with the Father*, was the *Person* he declared to them. The words 'with the Father' are important, making it evident that the Son was the eternal One, the name of this eternal Son being Jesus Christ. And it is interesting to compare the close with the commencement of this epistle. 'This is the true God and the' [with the article] 'eternal life'" (From "Brief Expositions by J. G. B.," printed by Mr. Reid, of Edinburgh, in *Bible Witness and Review* 2:275-279).

Leprosy is spoken of in Lev. 14 as that which God Himself might put in a house as a test, bearing, as in the case of the individual, a figurative character: "When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possessions" (Lev. 14:34). The house, like the assembly now, is identified with the position of Israel in the land, and with the responsibility to maintain holiness to the Lord in the heavenly place in which He has set it. The suspicion of leprosy called for priestly judgment, and the stones, apparently affected, were to be carefully taken out and replaced by others, and the whole house to be carefully scraped and plastered throughout. Has there been anything corresponding to this?

If the plague broke out again, what was the required prescription? Not only all who entered the house, whilst it was shut up under priestly examination, were defiled, but there was no other remedy to prevent the disease spreading, but the entire levelling the house to the ground, and casting the *debris* out of the city, into an unclean place.

We may add that we are not charging Mr. Raven with what he disavows; but it is clear that his whole teaching does divide the *natures* in the Person of Christ. Probably he is not aware of what he is doing, and still less of the injurious consequences of his speculations, as he appears to follow his own reasonings in ignorance of much that has been written and has passed on this subject in the Church of God at large.

In conclusion, we subjoin the following reflections as meeting some of the deceptive arguments of the present day:

"One of the most alarming symptoms in the religious world at the present day is the idea, that there is power in the truth to preserve. There is no power in the truth to preserve; but the question is, whether the soul holds fast the truth. Unless my thoughts, my heart, are in the truth, there will be no power in the truth to me. It is very certain that God will keep His truth; but is my heart kept? If not, it is the mere confidence of man's mind; for 'greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world'; the only ground of victory is the power of the *Spirit of God*, in the affections and consciences of the saints, and then the heart will be set on Christ, and the things of Christ, to love Him, enjoy Him, and serve Him better. The conflict and difficulty are rather when the truth is brought in question, than when it first goes forth in power.

"It is false religion that suits the world better than truth, because it suits itself to man, and the mass will ever follow error, so Paul had to say, 'All in Asia are turned away from me.' The Apostle did not expect that truth would have power over the world, but plainly declared that error would. So we see when the Lord allows the sifting of a large body of people on a point of truth, the greater number will adopt the error. . . .

"What we have all to seek is, to be occupied with the truth every day, knowing more of delighting and feeding on Christ as the *true God*, and as the *perfect Man* subject in all things to His Father; and all this not so as to be able to write an essay on it, but as the Christ in whom I know God and man, the One who lived by the Father, depending on the Father. Then everything that is not of Him strikes upon my soul. It is *that* Christ who is *touched*, and it affects the whole harmony of the soul. Be sure of this, if it is not the living power of a living Christ known and enjoyed in the soul, you cannot withstand error. It must be truth held in connection with the *Person of Christ*, or it will not guard you against error; the mere truth is no match for Satan. I would not venture to meet Satan on the truth if I were not called to do it to warn the saints, and for the glory of God, because I should be afraid; but I know God will keep me when in His service. But I do not therefore cast myself down from off the pinnacle of the temple, because it is written in the Word, 'He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways'" -- (From J. N. Darby, *Nine Lectures on the First Epistle of John*).

It is our earnest prayer that these weighty words as to the power of the truth, and the importance of its being held in the soul in connection with the Person of Christ, may have their due effect upon the hearts of many. It is time surely

to awake out of that lethargic sleep in which Satan seeks to lull so many now, recalling the state of the Jews, shortly before the Chaldaean invasion, whose false prophets cried "Peace, peace," when there was no peace, and the people loved to have it so.

## APPENDIX

### Containing Further Important Quotations from Mr. Raven and Others

In Mr. Hunt's first letter we have the quotations from Mr. Raven's writings touching the Person of Christ, as well as Mr. Hunt's ground for his objections to them, firmly, yet temperately expressed, as follows: --

"Mr. Raven himself has written as follows: -- 'What has characterized the second man could not include all that was true of a Divine Person.' . . . Mr. Raven has repeated this assertion in a stronger form in the same well-known letter, expressing his surprise that any one could think 'that the second man covers all that is true of the Son,' and in a later letter (May, 1892, apparently) to Miss B---, he writes; 'I need scarcely to refer you to the many passages in the Word in which Christ is viewed as man and apart from what He is as God.' . . . But the serious fact, which arrested me three years ago, still confronts me -- more clearly established by later evidence -- that without denying that Christ is God, and that Christ is man, Mr. Raven and, as I must conclude, the brethren who support him, have been tempted to look on this awful truth as admitting, at least, of distinction. The effect of this process, unavoidably, is to place certain words and acts of the Lord under one or other heading, and to take away the weight of the Divine from what is held to be only human" (*A Correspondence*, pages 2 and 1.)

It is impossible to misunderstand language so definite and distinct, pointing out how the foundation of all truth is imperilled by it. Mr. Raven, however, in his reply, takes no exception to Mr. Hunt's statement of his views, nor to the citations from his letters; but, on the contrary, insists on the correctness of his views, as so expressed, adding, as explanatory, the following statement:

"As regards the main point of the letter, I affirm that *the Person of the Son is what He ever was and is eternally and unchangeably as divine* -- the Son in distinction *from the Father and the Spirit*. But the Son has *become* man, and as such (having died and risen) He has entered into relations, in regard to men, into which He could not have entered simply as a divine Person; such as 'first born among many brethren' -- 'second man' -- 'mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus' -- 'Head of the body' -- 'High Priest,' &c., &c., and Scripture in presenting Him to us in these positions speaks abstractly, *i.e.*, limits itself to what is appropriate to the particular position in hand, and *does not in so speaking cover all that is true of the Person who has entered on those positions*. I cannot imagine any thoughtful person contesting this" (page 3).

This, however, does *not* bring in the *human nature* of Christ, as having its distinct part and place *in the unity of His Person* after He became Man. Consequently it does not in any way afford an answer to Mr. Hunt's charge, if one may so call it, but rather the contrary; for if, when Incarnate, the human nature of Christ had and has its full part in the unity of the Person, "the thought of God" could not be excluded from what He is, and does as man. Neither could it be in any degree irreverent and profane to introduce the thought of God in a "subjective sense" into the value of the offering on the cross.

Further, although Mr. Raven says that, as to His offices as man, "all was effected and could only be effected in one who is *in Person divine*," yet, in his subsequent letter, he maintains, that if we admit "*such a notion*" as that of the unity of the Person of the Incarnate and Divine Son, "all," as to these offices, "is shrouded in mystery, utterly and hopelessly obscured" (*A Correspondence*, page 10).

Yet we find Mr. Darby, with whom Mr. Raven professes to be in full accord, expressing a very different thought, when he speaks of "The union of the Divine Person of the Son and of the humanity," and, in the same passage, of "His Person as Son of the Father and man" (*Collected Writings* 33:452), in these following words:

"But we have something else to remark here. First, *the union of the Divine Person of the Son, and of the humanity of the Saviour*. . . The glory that He had, as loved of the Father, before the world existed. . . is the precious truth, which is like a thread uniting all the chapter; but here, that which is put more forward, is *His Person, as Son of the Father, and Man*, and the association of the disciples with Him" (*Collected Writings* 30:452).

The following extracts from the well-known Dr. Owen, vice-Chancellor of Oxford, will show the views of orthodox Christians on this subject:

"He" (Satan) "raised a vehement opposition against the hypostatical union, or the union of these two natures in one person. This he did in the Nestorian heresy, which greatly, and for a long time, pestered the church. The authors and promoters of this opinion granted the Lord Christ to have a divine nature, to be the Son of the living God. They also acknowledged the truth of his human nature, that he was truly a man, even as we are.

"But the personal union between these two natures they denied. . . That the Son of God assumed our nature into personal subsistence with Himself -- whereby [the?] whole Christ was one person, and all his mediatory acts were the acts of that one person, of him who was both God and man -- this they would not acknowledge. And this pernicious imagination, though it seem to make great concessions of truth, doth no less effectually evert the foundation of the church than the former. For, if the divine and human nature of Christ do not constitute one individual person, all that he did for us was only as a man -- which would have been altogether insufficient for the salvation of the church, nor had God redeemed it with his own blood.

". . . Who shall undertake to declare what are the chief instances of this

incomprehensible effect of divine wisdom? 'What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?' (Prov. 30:4. See Isa. 9:6). It is enough for us to stand in a holy admiration, at the shore of this unsearchable ocean, and to gather up some parcels of that divine treasure wherewith the Scripture of truth is enriched. I make no pretence of searching into the bottom or depths of any part of this 'great mystery of godliness, God. . . manifest in flesh.' They are altogether unsearchable.

"There is required. . . an influence of power into all the actings of the souls of believers; an intimate, efficacious operation with them in every duty, and under every temptation. These, all of them, do look for, expect and receive from him, as . . . head of the church. This also is an effect of divine and infinite power. And to deny these things unto the Lord Christ, is to raze the foundation of Christian religion. . . The same may be said concerning his *sacerdotal office*, and all the acts of it. It was in and by the human nature that he offered himself a sacrifice for us. He had somewhat of his own to offer (Heb. 8:3), and to this end a body was prepared for him (chap. 10:5). But it was not *the work of a man*, by one offering, and that of himself, to expiate the sins of the whole church, and forever to perfect them that are sanctified, which he did. (Heb. 10:14). . . We can have no due consideration of the offices of Christ, can receive no benefit by them, nor perform any act of duty with respect unto them, or any of them, unless faith in *his divine person* be actually exercised as the foundation of the whole. For that is it whence all their glory, power, and efficacy are derived. Whatever, therefore, we do with respect unto his rule, whatever we receive by the communication of his Spirit and grace, whatever we learn from his Word by the teachings of his Spirit, whatever benefit we believe, expect, and receive, by his sacrifice and intercession on our behalf, our faith in them all, and concerning them all, is terminated on his divine person. The church is saved by his offices, because they are his." (*Works of John Owen*, D. D. "A Declaration of the Glorious Mystery of the Person of Christ." Johnstone and Hunter, London, &c. M.DCCC.L. Vol. I., pages 40,44,99).

A. C. Ord

(Concluded)

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## GOD'S ORDER

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### PART 3a:

## THE HOUSE OF GOD

### INTRODUCTION

(continued from v. 5, # 2)

#### "HOUSE" DEFINED

Before dealing with the question of ORDER in God's House it is necessary that we understand the implications of the term HOUSE. For in scripture there are various references to God's House as applicable to Israel, individual saints of the present day of grace and the Assembly. A house is a dwelling, and this has application to the "House of God" as being the place where He dwells.

Regarding ISRAEL as a nation, God said to Moses, "*And they shall make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shall shew thee, the pattern of the tabernacle . . .*" (Ex. 25:8-9). The Tabernacle then became the dwelling place of God here on earth among His chosen nation. Later, in the days of king Solomon, we learn that the Temple took the place of the Tabernacle. In 2 Chron. 6:1 we read, "*Then said Solomon: Jehovah said that He would dwell in the thick darkness. But I have built a house of habitation for Thee to abide in for ever.*" Then, from 2 Chron. 7:1 we learn, "*and the glory of Jehovah filled the house.*" These scriptures clearly convey to us that the dwelling place of God was with men in a material building. But, later, Israel was set aside as His people, for the time being (see Hosea 1:9-11). Many centuries later the glorious Son of God was here on earth as the Son of Man ("*God has been manifested in flesh,*" 1 Tim.3:16).

Now, during the Lord's absence from this scene the saints currently on the earth form, both individually and collectively, God's place of abode. For the individual position we refer to 1 Cor. 6:19 and for the collective one we refer to 1 Cor. 3:16. However, there is also the word in 1 Tim. 3:15, ". . . *that thou mayest know how one ought to conduct oneself in God's house . . .*," and this is the truth that is the subject of this section.

While the truth remains that all saints today form the House of God which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the disorder that man has brought into the House -

- by the sad divisions which man has made -- is dishonoring to Him who dwells in it. What still answers to the true character of the House is to be found "where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). However, there can still be disorder found in such a company and this is the burden of this paper, to consider what is becoming behavior in God's House -- for Paul wrote to Timothy, "*How one ought to conduct oneself in God's house*" (1 Tim. 3:15).

While any company so gathered together to the Name of Christ cannot, today, claim to be exclusively God's House yet there rests on such the responsibility to regulate their conduct according to God's Word as suited to His presence for, "*Holiness becometh thy house, O Jehovah, for ever*" (Psa. 93:5). It is with this exercise, then, that the following is presented for the consideration of all who desire to honor God.

## TWO ASPECTS OF GOD'S HOUSE

It is purposed to deal with two aspects of God's House, in connection with due ORDER, and these are --

- 1) The place of **APPROACH TO GOD**
- 2) The place of **ENJOYMENT WITH THE FATHER**

Though we speak of two aspects yet it is really that both aspects are integrated in the same people at all and the same time. If anything can be distinguished, as to our apprehension of these thoughts, it would be that the first would govern our attitude in not forgetting that the One Whom we approach is an infinite God and is due all propriety in us. The second would be that we who do approach Him do so without any fear of Him, but having a realization of our position established for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has brought us into acceptance, nearness and relationship as children to our God and Father.

## APPROACH TO GOD

### God's Eternal Dwelling Place

As the eternal and infinite God, He is "*the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy [place]*" (Is. 57:15). Furthermore, we are told by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul that God is, "*the blessed and only RULER . . . Who only has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen, nor is able to see*" (1 Tim. 6:15-16).

### God's First Approach to Man

When God made Adam He was heard by Adam when He was "*walking in the garden in the cool of the day*" (Gen. 4:8). Evidently Adam did not see God but

'heard' Him, and also realized a sense of His presence for we read that, "*Man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah Elohim, . . .*" -- sad and fateful moment for mankind when this occurred!!

## Mans' Subsequent Position

When Adam and Eve sinned, while in the Garden of Eden, God drove them both out of His presence and from the Garden -- God refused all association of man with Himself. The grievous position of man in Adam ever since (that is, a sinner) is "*afar off*" (Eph. 2:13) and "*once were alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, . . .*" (Col. 1:21). What caused the present alienation between man and God? We can learn from God's word to Israel, for what caused their distance from God as His chosen nation equally applies to man as a whole. Through the prophet Isaiah, God declared to Israel, "*your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [his] face from you, that He doth not hear*" (Isa. 59:2).

## Can Man Approach God?

The first basically essential fact to lay hold of in our souls is that man could not possibly approach God unless and until God made it possible to do so. This is equally applicable to sinners and saints, that is, whether unbelievers or believers. It seems to be little understood that *our holy God is The Eternal God* -- and has never changed nor will He. Being God He has absolute and undeniable right to dictate to His creature, man, whether he can approach Him or not; and to specify His terms to do so.

## How Can Man Approach God?

Shortly after the banishment of Adam and Eve two men sought to approach God -- Cain and Abel, two sons of Adam. God received Abel and Cain He refused. What made the distinction? Why, Abel came to God bearing that which spoke to God of His beloved Son in the excellencies of His perfect work of redemption (he brought "*of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat*", Gen. 4:4); while Cain brought what spoke to God of the curse imparted to the earth through Adam (he brought "*of the fruit of the ground*" Gen. 4:3). Though this took place many centuries before our blessed Lord actually effected the work of redemption on the cross, yet God accepted Abel in virtue of it and because of Abel's faith (see Heb. 11:4). Now, many centuries after the work of redemption was finished, approach to God can only be through the same Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in Him.

## Approach By a Sinner

Sinful man has the audacity to think that he can approach God in the manner

of his own choice, in complete disregard to his inherent condition. This is just like Cain. The consequence of such an approach is to be rejected -- as Cain was. The Lord said, *"no one comes to the Father unless by Me"* (John 14:6) He also said, *"him that comes to Me I will not at all cast out"* (John 6:37) -- precious Saviour!

### Approach By a Saint

Likewise for the saint, only through our Lord Jesus Christ can we enter into God's glorious presence in the "holy places" (see Heb. 10:19-20). Here we can be at perfect liberty to worship the Father -- precious privilege!

### Lessons From the History of Israel

We need to learn the lessons conveyed to us in God's Word regarding the present alienation of Israel from God, though He had chosen to dwell in their midst in the Tabernacle and Temple (see Ex. 25:8 and Ezek. 9:3; 10:18-19; 11:23).

### Redemption of Israel

The descendants of Jacob were selected by God from all the nations of the earth to be specially for Himself, but He did not dwell in their midst until they were clear of Egypt and in the wilderness. Physically they were *sheltered* from God's judgment while in Egypt but not *delivered* from the power of Pharaoh until after they were across the Red Sea. These two things form a combined type which portray to us the truth of **REDEMPTION**. The result of redemption is that God takes pleasure in dwelling among His people (Ex. 15). Does this fact not impress itself upon us that God, being still the **SAME**, must have us today as not only clear of His judgment upon our sins (sheltered) but also clear from the enslaving power of Satan through sin (deliverance) -- thus being at liberty in His glorious presence?

Christ not only died and shed His precious blood to save us from the judgment due to our sins, but also to *"annul him who has the power of death, that is the devil,"* and to *"deliver us out of the present evil world, . . ."* (see 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 2:14; Gal. 1:4). Wondrous Saviour and adorable Son of God our Lord!!

### A Chosen Nation Set Aside

Due to the idolatry of Israel, after much patience with them, God finally withdrew His presence from the Temple which Solomon had built (see Ezekiel chs. 8-11) -- and He has not re-entered a physical building on earth since He sent His people into captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Though the Temple was rebuilt under Zerubbabel (see the book of Ezra) God did not

occupy it, nor did He do so in respect to the Temple built by Herod.

Since God is the **SAME** whether in relation to Israel, His chosen nation, or The Assembly, His present House, we must deeply consider the lesson which God would convey to us through His action in leaving His temple among His people of old -- **BECAUSE IT WAS NO LONGER HOLY**. The present state of the professing church is indicative that what the Lord said in connection with the church of the Laodiceans, *"I will spue thee out of My mouth . . ."* (Rev. 3:16), will soon take place. This should cause us great exercise of conscience as to our state now -- both personally and collectively.

Though we are in a completely different relationship with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, yet what affected God's relationship with His chosen people in Israel still applies, in the principles involved, in our relationship to Him today. God has not cast off His people Israel for ever (Rom. 11) but He has set them aside until He takes them up again, after the Assembly is removed to heaven at the coming of the Lord for His saints.

### The Son of God as the Temple

After the departure of God from the Temple in Jerusalem, as recorded by the prophet Ezekiel, we do not find that God was resident among men until the beloved Son of God came into this world, as a perfect, holy, sinless Man. Our blessed Lord referred to His own holy body as "the Temple". In John 2:19-21 we have the record of the Lord's spoken words, *" . . . He spoke of the temple of His body."*

We learn from those who understand the original in Greek that there are two words used which are translated "Temple" in our English version. The one that is used in a general way is "**HIERON**" -- this word relates to the buildings from an external view. The other word is "**NAOS**" -- this specifically relates to the 'inner sanctuary' or 'shrine'. We never read of the Lord going into the "**NAOS**" but always in the "**HIERON**" -- i.e. the courtyard and outer buildings. This was because He, as Man in the ways God, was born of the tribe of Judah (the royal tribe) and not of the tribe of Levi (the priestly tribe). Thus, in perfect recognition of God's order He did not violate God's limitation of entry into the Temple to those of the family of Aaron, son of Levi.

### The Lord, The Shrine

However, when the Lord referred to His own body He used the word "**NAOS**," for *He Personally was the Shrine in which God dwelt.* <sup>2</sup> This is

2. This does not affect the truth that our Lord was at the same time God, though He was found here in perfect Manhood -- in spirit, soul and body. His Deity and Manhood cannot be separated in His holy Person.



confirmed to us by Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, when he wrote to the Colossians, *"for in Him all the fullness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell . . ."* (Col. 1:19).

### The Saints, as a Shrine

During the present period of the Lord's absence from the earth God now dwells both in each individual saint (1 Cor. 6:19) and the global company of saints as a corporate company (1 Cor. 3:16 and Eph. 2:22). In these three scriptures the word *"naos"* is used. Does this not give to us a wonderfully distinct position in this world, and along with it the commensurate responsibility to be entirely suited to God's presence? Where there is a real sense of the Holiness of Him of Whose house we form a part, and in which we have the holy privilege to function as spiritual priests, will there not be that behavior which is fitting -- according to God's order in His House? Will there not be that carefulness to not allow the introduction of anything that is of mans' devising? Let us remember that the idolatry in the nation of Israel, which finally led to the glory of God departing from the Temple in Jerusalem, started by them making the golden calf (which they worshipped) only a matter of days after God brought them out of Egypt -- this was man substituting what was according to himself in the place of what was due to God. By the time the glory of God departed from the Temple (Ezek. 10) the STATE of both the PRIESTHOOD and the people had become utterly obnoxious to their holy God. It is just such a state in the profession of His Name today, that will be found obnoxious to Him, which the Lord will spue out as rejecting it -- as He Himself tells us in Rev. 3:16.

### The Lord's Assurance

We have the Lord's precious promise to the individual that, *"I will not leave thee, neither will I forsake thee"* (Heb. 13:5); and also, for all who respond to the Spirit's action, *"For where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them."*

We can also take encouragement from the knowledge that He continues, in connection with His assembly, in *"purifying [it] by the washing of water by [the] word, that He might present the assembly to Himself glorious, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things; but that it might be holy and blameless."* (Eph. 5:26-27). This will be seen in its perfection in display when we are with Him in His glory above.

### Our Present Response

Saints of God today, in any locality as gathered together unto the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, give expression to the truth of being the House of God (though not claiming to be it exclusively). In this they are responsible to

maintain what is due to God in the order of His House, according to His thoughts given to us in His Word. This is not affected in any way by the fact of the failure that has come into the profession of Christ's Name in christendom but, rather, makes it all the more necessary that God's order should be seen among those who seek to walk in the truth of separation from evil. The main occupation for us in God's House, as He dwells among us and as we are gathered by the Spirit for the purpose, is -- to serve Him in priestly functions in the most holy place, that is in the realization in our souls that God is indeed present. This was God's intention in establishing the priesthood in Aaron and his sons, *"that he may serve Me"* (Ex. 28:1). So is it the prime objective for us as we get it in Heb. 10:19, *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness for entering into the [holy of] holies by the blood of Jesus, the new and living way which he has dedicated for us through the veil, that is, his flesh, and [having] a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart, in full assurance of faith . . ."*

### Holy Conditions Required

In order that we can draw near to God for the purpose of worship, praise and thanksgiving there are conditions consistent with it. The passage quoted in Heb. 10 continues with, *"sprinkled as to our hearts from a wicked conscience, and washed as to our body with pure water."* Can this be truly said of all saints who profess to be worshipping God? It is wondrously true of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ but, if it was *practically* true of all then all would be in God's due order together in the fulfillment of this great privilege. Not that all saints over the whole earth would be in the same place but that those who are in a locality would be together in fellowship with those in every other place who are doing the same thing. What, then, has happened such that it is evident that this is not so?

### Division

It is a self-evident fact that true, dear saints of God are now not only divided from one another in their various systems, as established by man according to many choices, but that they are largely intermixed with many unbelievers. Such unbelievers, though they are members of men's churches, cannot possibly be acceptable to God as worshipers in their sinful state. The Holy Spirit has neither formed them into the House of God nor can He operate with them in any function Godward except in bringing them to true *"repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20:21).

J. Pascoe

(to be continued, if the Lord will)

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## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

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### CHAPTER 2.4

(continued)

### **"IN CHRIST" AND THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST FOR SALVATION**

#### **"IN CHRIST"**

On the day of Pentecost, those baptized in [the power of] one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), were made members one of another and were joined to the head in heaven, the man in the glory. "For even as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also [is] the Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12). "The Christ" in this passage is likened to the human body. In this passage, "the Christ" refers to the Head in glory and the members on earth forming -- "the Christ." All such have the indwelling Spirit. "But he that [is] joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). The man in the glory received the Spirit there, in consequence of the perfection of His work, and poured Him out upon those fit to receive the Spirit, as those cleansed by that perfect work. So He received the Spirit and they below received the Spirit; and He above and they below were joined, united, by one Spirit (a collective act). Subsequent to Pentecost, saints are joined to that body when sealed (an individual act) with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).

Hence, those who were "in Christ" between Pentecost and Paul's salvation were "in Christ" before him. Paul stated expressly that some were "in Christ" before him.

Salute Andronicus and Junia . . . who were also in Christ before me (Rom. 16:7).

What this means is that the body of Christ, formed by Christ's baptizing, in the power of one Spirit, into one body, existed before Paul was "in Christ"; and the only time this could have happened was at Pentecost. Therefore, those who say that the body was formed when Paul was saved, or later, must explain away the above verse. Here is a way in which an Acts 9 position advocate does so.

When the Apostle Paul makes mention of those who were *in Christ* before him he does not mean to imply that Andronicus and Junia were in the *Body of Christ* before him. It deserves our most thoughtful attention that the Church, the Body

of Christ, was not even introduced on the stage of this world until the conversation of Paul, who was the *first* member of that Body (Col. 1:24-26; 1 Tim. 1:12-16). The phrase in Christ used by the Apostle here in Roman 16:7 is to be understood in its broadest sense of *redemption*. Every blood-washed saint of all ages can be said to be in Christ redemptively. He stands before God, not in himself, but *in Christ!*<sup>3</sup>

The believers of this dispensation have the unique honor to not only be *in Christ* redemptively, but also *in Christ* as far as being in the Body of Christ is concerned. Christ, who is our head, is the one we share in common -- He is the common denominator.<sup>4</sup>

O. T. saints are nowhere in Scripture said to be "in Christ." The writer says they were, not because Scripture says so, but because it is a notion essential to his system; and without this invention of two kinds of "in Christ," the system collapses -- because there were persons in Christ before Paul.

Was David "in Christ"? No. Christ did not exist in O. T. times. Certainly the Son of God existed -- He did so eternally. But "Christ" denotes One Who is both God and man in one Person; and this awaited the incarnation. This system not merely confuses things that differ, it is a *retrograde* system regarding the blessed truths recovered to the church last century -- while claiming to be an advance.

### THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST FOR SALVATION

Not only were the early saints in Acts not "in Christ" as members of His body according to this system, we are also informed that they did not have the finished work of Christ for salvation preached to them. C. R. Stam wrote:

We should like to ask who, before Paul, proclaimed the finished work of Christ for salvation. Did Peter preach this at Pentecost? (see Acts 2:38 and cf. Rom. 3:21; Gal. 3:23; 1 Tim. 2:5-7). And who before Paul presented Christ as Head of a new race?<sup>5</sup> Did Peter at Pentecost? Did he not rather present Him as King of Israel? (Acts 2 and 3). Christ as head of a new race was revealed through Paul with the ushering in of the dispensation of grace and the mystery (Rom. 5:12-19; cf. Eph. 2:15; 3:1-3). Does this sound as if "basic salvation" was presented for the faith of "all believers, regardless of calling"?<sup>6</sup>

Regarding the souls that accepted what Peter preached, we are told that they were "saved" (Acts 2:47). The saved persons also continued in "breaking of

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3. P. M. Sadler, *The Berean Searchlight* Nov. 1989, pp. 229,230.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

5. His method here is to link together what is true (concerning Paul and Christ's headship) with his unfounded assertion.

6. *Did the Twelve Apostles Become Members of the Body of Christ?* Chicago: Berean Bible Society, 1963, p. 6.

bread" (Acts 2:42). In Luke 22:19 we read that the Lord Jesus said:

This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me . . . This cup [is] the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Paul, in 1 Cor. 11 refers to this remembrance of the Lord. Certainly from Pentecost on the disciples continued to remember the Lord in His death for them. Keep in mind that the idea we are reviewing is that these "saved" ones who remembered the Lord Jesus in His death for them in the breaking of bread allegedly did so apart from having had presented to them "the finished work for salvation." Peter preached:

Repent, therefore, and be converted; for the blotting out of your sins (Acts 3:19).

Is not the effect of the notion being reviewed that these saints had the forgiveness of sins preached to them as a result of Christ's death and had their sins blotted out without knowledge of the finished work of Christ for salvation? In Acts 4:12 Peter says:

and salvation is in none other, for neither is there another name under heaven which is given among men by which we must be saved.

Also, Peter preached forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:32). So these so-called Kingdom Church people were indwelt by the Holy Spirit of promise sent down as a result of Christ's finished work, His resurrection and exaltation; they had their sins blotted out, had Christ presented as the only One in Whom there is salvation, were saved, had forgiveness of sins -- all without having had, it is alleged, the preaching of the finished work of Christ for salvation, because, allegedly, no one before Paul preached this. This is an excellent example of how systematized error works. The final section of this chapter, where we will consider the new mission, also has a bearing on this issue.

## THE CHURCH DIVIDED

### THE CHURCH DIVIDED

In Matt. 16:18 Christ spoke of building His church upon Himself as Son of the living God.<sup>7</sup> It was something future. In Acts 2:47 we learn that the Lord

7. C. R. Stam wrote:

Israel was the Church, God's called-out people, when she was in covenant relationship with Him. Similarly, the "my Church" of which our Lord spoke, was to be founded upon a recognition of Himself as Israel's Messiah (See Matt. 16:16; John 1:49; 11:27; etc.) not upon a recognition of Christ as the exalted Lord, the Dispenser of

(continued...)

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added daily to the church. The church had been formed previously that morning and continually thereafter received accessions. In Acts 5:11 we learn of an occasion when great fear came on the church, while Acts 8:1 speaks of the church at Jerusalem. Paul made havoc of the church, Acts 8:3. The system which delays the formation of the body until Acts 9 would not regard these as references to the church which is Christ's body.<sup>8</sup>

We might ask, in view of Acts 8:1 speaking of the church at Jerusalem, if the reference to the church in Jerusalem in Acts 11:22 is the pre-body "Kingdom Church"; or did the church at Jerusalem change into the church which is Christ's body? And if it changed, when did it change, and how did it change? In Acts 15:4 we find Paul being received by the church at Jerusalem. Was it then part of the church which is Christ's body? If so, when and how did it change over? And if it had not changed into the body of Christ, what did Paul have to do with it? But if the church at Jerusalem was still "the Kingdom Church," then we have the interesting phenomenon of the delivery of the decrees of the apostles and "the Kingdom Church" to all others to keep (i.e., those who were in the body of Christ).

Before Paul was saved he persecuted the church (Acts 8:3); i.e., the Kingdom Church, as we are supposed to believe. So fierce was he that "being exceedingly furious against them, I persecuted them even to cities out [of our own land]." So there must have been quite a few of these so-called Kingdom Churches (cp. also Acts 9:31).

In 1 Cor. 15:9 he says that he persecuted the Church of God. Here the church is not looked at in a local character but as an entity encompassing all believers on earth. It is the church on earth that he persecuted. In 1 Cor. 1:2 he addressed the epistle to the church of God at Corinth. He used the expression "church of God" in 1 Cor. 10:32 and 11:22 also. Evidently the Corinthians were part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Were they supposed to think that "church of God" in three passages had to do with the body of Christ and the

7(...continued)

grace to a Lost world. *The Church, The Bride and the Body*, Chicago: The Berean Bible Society, p. 2.

Scripture says, "Christ, the Son of the Living God," "and upon this rock I will build my assembly" (Matt. 16:16,18). It is Christ, not as Israel's Messiah but, in his character as Son of God upon which this assembly is built. And note how Paul immediately began preaching Christ in this character (Acts 9:20). We know that it was Paul who doctrinally laid the foundation (1 Cor. 3:10,11). Note also that our Lord said He *would* build, not 'I am building.' The notion that Christ built a Messianic, or Kingdom, Church is another myth of the system we are considering. The church Christ referred to began at Pentecost.

8. C. F. Baker (Acts 13 position), *A Dispensational Theology*, Grand Rapids: Grace Bible College Publications, 1972, pp. 528, 529, calls it "the Kingdom Church which Christ was building" and "Church of Israelites" which Christ gathered around Himself and which existed at Pentecost.

last one referred to the Kingdom Church? In persecuting the church, Paul was persecuting Christ's body (and thus persecuting Christ -- Acts 9:4). Were the Galatians supposed to know that he persecuted the Kingdom Church (Gal. 1:13); and the Phillipians also (Phil. 3:6)?

Well, those who believe in two baptisms in the Spirit and two kinds of being "in Christ" are quite capable of believing such things. The system demands it. The system collapses if any one of these distinctions is false.

Two arguments offered to prove the existence of two fundamentally different churches are these:

1. Acts 2:41 says that souls were added and a thing has to exist already to receive additions. Therefore, the church already existed at Pentecost.<sup>9</sup>

These 3000 "were added in that day" to what had been *formed just that very morning*. Peter and those with him had received the baptism in the Spirit and thus formed one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Subsequent to this, on the same day, after the preaching, about 3000 were added. The above argument does not prove the church existed before Pentecost. The Lord said "I will build" (not, I am building) "my church"; and we first hear of its existence in the early chapters of Acts.

2. When Paul says "the church which is His body" he implies another church which is not Christ's body.<sup>10</sup>

Col. 1:18 says, "and *he* is the head of the body, the assembly." Reasoning in the same manner, one would allege that this implies another body, which is not the assembly. 1 Tim. 3:15 says, "... how one ought to conduct oneself in God's house, which is [the] assembly of [the] living God." Does this imply that there is another house of God, which is not the assembly? If I were to assert such things would you not conclude I was trying to bolster an unscriptural system?

## WAS PAUL THE FIRST MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST?

Recall that in the above citation from P.M. Sadler, he said:

... the church, the body of Christ, was not even introduced on the stage of this world until the conversion of Paul, who was the *first* member of the Body (Col. 1:24-26; 1 Tim. 1:12-16).<sup>11</sup>

Is it not rather obvious that Paul being the special minister of the mystery that is spoken of in Col. 1:24-26 does not prove that the mystery began with Paul?

9. C. F. Baker (Acts 13 position), *A Dispensational Theology*, p. 483.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 483.

11. *The Berean Searchlight*, Nov. 1989, p.230.

It began at Pentecost but was not manifested to the saints immediately. But besides the hollow reasoning about Col. 1:24-26, there is an appeal to 1 Tim. 1:12-16 as if this Scripture states Paul was the first member of the body of Christ. Paul says, rather, that he is the first of sinners. The text states that. But let us see how the reasoning proceeds.

The BODY OF CHRIST begins with the Apostle Paul. Notice very carefully his testimony to this fact.

1 Timothy 1:13-16, "Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am FIRST (chief). Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me FIRST Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a PATTERN to them which should hereafter believe of Him to life everlasting."

This is the Holy Spirit's interpretation of Paul's conversion in Acts 9. It is worthy enough to be accepted by all. The word 'first' is the same Greek word in both cases, and the using of 'chief' as a translation is very misleading. Paul was no worse a sinner than anybody else. All outside of Christ are DEAD in sin (Ephesians 2:1).<sup>12</sup>

The argument devolves upon the words "that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern . . . ." The writer takes this to refer to becoming a member of the body of Christ. An implication is that thus he would be the first to be baptised in the Spirit. Then a second person, a third, etc; and thus the result is continuous baptism in the Spirit -- which is contrary to the construction of 1 Cor. 12:13.

The passage says nothing about entering the body of Christ, or about the baptism in the Spirit. The words, "that in me first," refers to rank. Wm. Kelly translated thus:

... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. But for this cause mercy was shown me that in me, [as] chief, Christ might display the whole long-suffering for an outline-sketch of those that should believe on Him unto life eternal.

J. N. Darby translated:

... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am [the] first. But for this reason mercy was shewn me, that in me, [the] first, Jesus Christ might display the whole longsuffering, for a delineation of those about to believe on him to life eternal.

12. R.C. Brock, *The Revelation of the Mystery*, Pendley: St. Petersburg, June 1968, p.6. Obviously; the Acts 13 position does not accept this reasoning.

If "first," it is first in rank; if "chief," it is chief in rank. In both verses the word *protos* (chief/first) refers to the same thing; namely, his rank as a sinner, not to being the first in time to be a member of the body of Christ. It was the character of His terrible persecutions that gave him this rank. And the character of the grace shown to such a one was the character of the grace shown to all.

C.R. Stam (Acts 9 position) wrote:

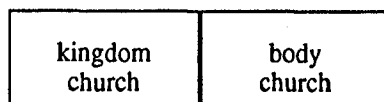
We believe that Paul's conversion and call to apostleship marks the beginning of the new dispensation and of the body of Christ.<sup>13</sup>

There is no proof whatever that the baptism in the Spirit of 1 Cor. 12:13 took place at that time, or any other time, if it did not take place at Pentecost. "We believe" is what has determined it for him, not Scripture.

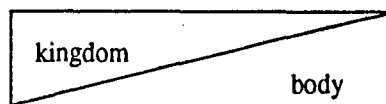
It is interesting also that after the body of Christ was allegedly formed with Paul's salvation, the Spirit "fell upon them even as upon us also at the beginning" says Peter, concerning a group of Gentiles (Acts 11:15). For the Acts 13 position this is interesting because this would be the inclusion of Gentiles in the Kingdom Church.

13. *Acts Dispensationally Considered* 1:176. His theory can be illustrated thus:

Paul saved



Thus with Paul's salvation the Kingdom Church suddenly becomes the body church. Concerning the "kingdom program," he says, "the kingdom program *gradually* disappeared, as the program for the one body emerged thus:



From *Did the Twelve Apostles Become Members of the Body of Christ?* p. 1. The first diagram is my representation of his view. The second diagram is his and it shows, amazingly, two very distinct programs going on at once. The truth is that there was one program that had several phases to it. Acts is the history of the Spirit's testimony to the resurrection and glorification of Christ. The NEW mission to the Gentiles (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8) began at Jerusalem, gathered in believing Jews while exposing Israel's resistance of the Spirit's testimony, and then went to Samaria and then outward. In due time the great secret came out respecting the mystery, God having, however, formed the body at Pentecost.

## JOEL'S PROPHECY

### JOEL'S PROPHECY NOT FULFILLED AT PENTECOST

Joel's prophecy, quoted by Peter in Acts 2, was not fulfilled at Pentecost.<sup>14</sup> Let us consider why it was not fulfilled; and after that, why Peter quoted Joel's prophecy. First we will place Joel 2:28,29 alongside of Acts 2:17,18:

And it shall come to pass afterward [that] I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. Yes, even upon the bondmen and upon the handmaid in those days will I pour out my Spirit. (Joel 2:28,29).

And it shall be in the last days, saith God, [that] I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your elders shall dream with dreams; yea, even upon my bondmen and upon my bondwomen in those days will I pour out of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:17,18).

The number of people upon whom the Spirit came hardly answers to "upon all flesh." Granted that "upon all flesh" does not mean every person on the globe; it does indicate more than Jews only. It refers to people generally without distinction of nationality and class. Those Jews present at Pentecost, upon whom the Spirit came, do not answer to the prophecy.

At Pentecost, those upon whom the Spirit came were Jews. Now, the Spirit of God had numbers of O.T. prophecies to cite, through Peter, referring to the pouring out of the Spirit upon Israel (Isa. 32:15; 44:3,4; Ezek. 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; cp. Isa. 59:21; Zech. 12:10), and needed not to cite Joel, who speaks of the Spirit coming "upon all flesh," if the intent was that Pentecost was the fulfilment of prophecy concerning only the Jews.<sup>15</sup>

Of the prophets who speak of the effusion of the Spirit, Joel is the only one who prophesies of it as going beyond Israel. This is the prophecy selected by the Spirit for Peter to use. I suggest that this is in keeping with the new mission stated in Luke 24:47:

14. Amillennarians and postmillennarians believe Joel's prophecy was fulfilled. Such see the church as the spiritual Israel and believe that the church was a subject of O.T. prophecy. Those who say that the body of Christ was formed at Paul's conversion, or later, also claim that Joel's prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost. Their reason is that they view the early chapters of Acts as strictly and only an era of prophetic fulfilment and thus not a period included in the period of the body of Christ.

15. It is argued that 1 Cor. 12:13 cannot be applicable to Pentecost because not all those classes were present. In response, we point out that there were not representatives of "all flesh" there either.

... and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

The NEW mission given by the Lord (see also Acts 1:8), whether understood by them or not is beside the point, was *a mission to the nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. The prophecy cited from Joel, regarding the effusion of the Spirit, includes the nations ("all flesh") and thus fits so beautifully in application to Pentecost, for Pentecost began that new mission.

Joel is the only one who in speaking of the giving of the Spirit, views it as going beyond Israel. This may be one reason why Joel was quoted rather than the other prophets. God indeed intended to bless Gentiles during the time of the heavenly parenthesis.

References to the Spirit coming on Israelites clearly refer to the millenium. And, the expression in Joel, "upon all flesh" includes Israel.

Where is Joel's prophecy placed chronologically? Joel says, "And it shall come to pass afterwards . . . . After what? Isa. 1:26 says of Jerusalem, "Afterwards thou shalt be called, Town of righteousness, Faithful city." Hosea 3:5 says, "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king; and shall turn with fear toward Jehovah and toward his goodness, at the end of days." Compare the expression "at the end of days" with Peter's word, "and it shall be in the last days . . . ." These verses all refer to the millenium.

It is claimed that Peter said the last days had arrived. Not so; nor was it yet the prophesied last days of Joel. Nor did he say 'this is the fulfillment of that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.' Besides, just shortly before, the disciples asked the Lord if it was time for the kingdom to be restored to Israel (Acts 1). Did the Lord tell them something to encourage them to think that Israel's last days were about to arrive?

There is no reference in Acts 2 to anyone actually dreaming and seeing visions.

Now we will consider what was written concerning signs:

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be changed to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible days of Jehovah come. And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Jehovah hath said, and for the residue whom Jehovah shall call. (Joel 2:30-32).

And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be changed to darkness and the moon to blood, before the great and gloriously appearing day of [the] Lord come. And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of [the] Lord shall be saved. (Acts 2:19-21).

Spiritualizers may point to the destruction of Jerusalem (A. D. 70) to find a fulfillment of these signs. However, when Jerusalem was destroyed in A. D. 70 there was no deliverance in mount Zion and in Jerusalem. Indeed, it was quite the opposite.

Moreover, the fact is that these signs will actually take place before Israel's deliverance and subsequent experience of the Spirit being poured out. Notice, too, that Peter did not cite all of Joel 2:32, the last half obviously pointing to a future day for fulfillment of this prophecy. He sought to make an application of the portion cited in Acts 2:21 to his hearers.

The texts state expressly that these signs precede that advent of the day of the Lord. And there will be those who shall call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. The pouring out of the Spirit will follow after the setting up of the kingdom. Thus, the signs will precede, in time, the pouring out of the Spirit. The destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) cannot answer to the signs, therefore.

C. R. Stam (Acts 9 position) claims that 'the signs of Pentecost were to be followed by signs both in heaven and on earth . . . .' <sup>16</sup> Concerning the purpose of Pentecost, he claims it was for the purpose of enduing them with "supernatural power" in preparation for the great tribulation which would have come had God not intervened in grace. <sup>17</sup> This gives the appearance that he thinks that the effusion of the Spirit was even to precede the great tribulation. C. F. Baker (Acts 13 position), who asserts that Joel predicted Pentecost (and thus Israel's last days began) says that the signs did not take place because Israel's rulers "hardened themselves in their unbelief and opposition to Christ." <sup>18</sup> Not only do these writers reverse the order (necessary to their system) but claim fulfillment of the prophecy, and some excuse away non-fulfillment of parts of the prophecy. I suppose anything can easily be 'proved' by such methods.

Referring to Joel 2:28-32, J. N. Darby noted:

This is an entirely distinct prophecy, which goes by itself, preceding the day of Jehovah, as indeed is clearly stated, which day ushers in the blessing previously spoken of. The order in the last days will be repentance, deliverance by the day of Jehovah, temporal blessing, the Holy Ghost. Before the day of Jehovah, signs will take place. This last stands therefore necessarily apart, as the calling on the name of Jehovah of course precedes the deliverance. <sup>19</sup>

The Spirit, then, will be poured out upon all flesh in connection with the setting

16. *Acts Dispensationally Considered* 1:91.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 119

18. *Understanding the Book of Acts*, Grand Rapids: Grace Bible College Publications, 1981, p.21.

19. *Synopsis* 2:366, note.

up of the kingdom. In Acts 2 the coming of the Spirit, which involved the baptism in the Spirit, brought about the body of Christ.

### THIS IS THAT

As has already been indicated, Peter has made an application of two things in Joel's prophecy:

1. What the onlookers were witnessing was consistent with what Joel had said about the Spirit being poured out.
2. He used the point that whoever would call upon the name of the Lord would be saved.

His thrust, then, was *this* has *that* character. It has been objected that the text does not say 'this has that character.' Well, then, we ought to note that the text does not say 'this is the fulfillment of that.' Notice Acts 1:16 shows Peter was quite capable of using the word "fulfilled" (cp. Acts 3:18). It is a prophecy of the signs preceding the establishment of the kingdom, that those calling on the name of the Lord would be saved and there would occur the pouring out of the Spirit on all flesh. The fact is that there are numbers of citations of the O. T. in the N. T. used in just this way as Joel's prophecy; for an application or illustration, while the fulfillment of those passages is in the future.

Ed.

(to be continued if the Lord will)

## THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FATHER

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Peter 1:17). This passage introduces us to the government of the Father, which, it may be observed, is not exactly the same thing as the government of God. The latter has more direct reference to the earth and the world -- that economy of things from which we are morally delivered by the death and resurrection of Christ, that scene in which God's throne has been usurped by Satan, and where the "rights of man" have displaced the rights of God.

But if men of the world refuse Him His place of government as God, ought not we as saints with ready hearts so much the more make space for the government of the Father?

In the fourteenth verse we get the beautiful term the Spirit of God uses in speaking of those who answer to His word; viz., "children of obedience." All

such will be found calling on the Father. He, in short, who has the Spirit of adoption cries, "Abba, Father." Well, the Father holds in His hand the sovereign administration of the affairs of His family, and grace and government go along together. It is ever so; for God is sovereign, and He must be.

Because through grace God's grace is so precious to us, we are in danger of losing sight of His governmental dealings -- this government of the Father.

In the present day the decay of filial piety and of reverence for parents has told upon us seriously, and those marks of the last days which Paul describes to Timothy -- "disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection" -- are becoming more and more pronounced; so that, even in the natural relationship, children rarely render, and parents rarely expect, the honor and reverence which are not only morally becoming, but which God accounts to be due from one to the other. In result parental government is relaxed, and often the merest semblance of it prevails even in the families of believers. And, alas, it has even become an open question now, to be debated in daily papers and religious journals, whether wives ought in these days to obey their husbands, and Christian teachers, so called, are not wanting who have the temerity to take the negative side. What a terrible indication is this of the last days!

Accordingly in divine things the government of the Father is little recognized or understood. The thought of the Father has carried with it, and rightly so, the blessedness of a known relationship of the highest character, which blessedness has been enjoyed according to the degree in which the Spirit has been ungrieved and the affections divinely engaged; but yet in connection with this how little place has been given to the direct government of the Father in that peculiar sphere which is constituted by the saints in their relationship of children to Him. To many such the very thought of government would savor of legality, and possibly be refused as anomalous.

But it is an ever-abiding principle that "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness"; and though grace be regnant now it is true, yet is it still further true that "grace reigns through righteousness." While therefore our souls hold fast to the blessedness of this relationship in respect to the renewed affections, we must no less recognize that it demands of us a wholly surrendered will. If it be true that "mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other," then what God hath joined together may not be put asunder, grace and government may not be severed. When the loving heart and the broken will keep company together, the Father will assuredly find His delight in each. But He is no respecter of persons; all man's pretensions must give way; He respecteth no man's person, but judgeth according to every man's work. "His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous" (Psa. 11:4,5). What then? Then falls upon the opened ear the weighty exhortation, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

What a mighty motive have we had before us! He who has called us has



called us to the relationship of children; the Holy Ghost seeks to fashion us as "obedient children"; the children call upon the Father, who respects not our persons, but governs according to our works and ways within His family circle, administering there His own blessed will, that we may give no place to ours. What an appeal this makes to us to walk softly, retiringly, meekly, with guarded footsteps, giving no place to the will of the flesh! In God's government of the earth He is met by Satan's power as god of this world, and by the men of the world carried along in the strong current of utter godlessness. But the Father in His governmental dealings with His children is -- alas, how often! -- met with the flesh in us -- unjudged, uncurbed flesh -- the allowance of which is seen in the working of the natural will, which is totally unfruitful toward God, and can only chafe under His government. What marvel if, when this is allowed, the Father has to lay His chastening hand upon His child! Whom He loves He chastens, that He may not condemn with the world. And when the exercised heart has been fittingly broken down before Him, how graciously, in forgiveness of His child, does He remove His afflictive hand, and nothing remains but to reap in lasting result "the peaceable fruit of *righteousness*." (Note the word.)

But in the words, "Forasmuch as ye know," etc. we have coupled with this exhortation of Peter the divine basis of the ways of the Father with His children; viz., that we are redeemed with the precious blood of God's immaculate Lamb -- the One who from before the foundation of the world was foreordained for this blood-shedding, but now is risen and glorified! Blessed ground upon which the Father claims from us the allegiance of beloved children, that He has redeemed us at the mighty cost of the blood of that Victim, who from all eternity was the Son of His love, and has been manifested in these last times for us that our faith and hope might be in God.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (vs. 22). Their souls were purified in obeying the truth; this was *light*, divine light, illuminating their souls; their hearts were purified by faith; and now the apostle exhorts to *love*, that other thing which in Scripture God Himself is said to be. Their souls were purified, they obeyed the truth, and had genuine love to the brethren, but he urged them to it afresh with purity and with fervency.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God"; it is of His nature, and comes from Him. Thus, when it flows forth from our hearts it should have for its special objects those who are the special objects of His own love; and when in purity and in fervency, it is only the more like His. For we are born of God by the incorruptible seed of His own word, which liveth and abideth for ever; while, on the contrary, all flesh is before God as transitory as the grass, and all its glory as fading and fugitive as the flowers of the field!

*Words in Season 9:301-304*

## THE APPOINTED PATH

The effect of the presence of the Lord on His disciples was always to constrain them into the mind of God, so that He could say, "While I was with them in the world I kept them in Thy name." Wonderful is the effect of a presence which commands our veneration while controlling us into fellowship with itself. If we have no liking or drawing to it, we soon retire from it, for we cannot endure a restraint entirely foreign to our tastes. The taste may not be strong enough to sway us into the same line which the presence of one supremely powerful will sway us into if there be any real taste for it.

In John 11 we find that Martha, when the conference with the Lord comes close, escapes from it. Not so with Mary; the closer it becomes, the more swayed is she by His all-controlling presence, and she walks according to God, side by side with her Lord, fulfilling everything in her path. Her grief at the death of her brother was none the less, nor her joy at seeing him raised up, and yet all the time her soul was gathering up that ointment of spikenard which was to be expressed at the proper time. She was lovely in the common walks of life; and, learning the heart of her Lord there, and walking with Him there, she could say to Him, when He came into His own house, "While the King sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." She was beautiful and useful in every position: she abode in the Lord, and therefore brought forth much fruit.

It is a very harassing and profitless occupation to lose time asking oneself, "What shall I do now?" If I were near the Lord, I should see in a moment what He would not have neglected; and the next thing to be done is always at the very doorway; for the smallest thing often leads to the greatest results; and it is in neglecting these that the greatest misadventures have occurred. Nothing is neglected by God.

If at any time I am at a loss to know my true path, I shall ascertain it better by drawing near to the Lord than by cogitating the various bearings of the circumstances. I may be very laboriously fishing all night, and have taken nothing; but if the Lord is with me, I shall surely find the difficulties vanish.

While He was with the disciples, they lacked nothing; He was both a purse and a sword to them; but when He was going to leave them, He says, "He that hath a purse, let him take it; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." He was going to leave them there for that all-absorbing work of sin-bearing, and they could not reckon on His care for the time being. No greater picture could be given of their desolation.

The presence of the Lord gives a perception and power for doing things. Not only does it furnish me with power, but the possession of power provokes me to use it like vigor in a man of strength. I feel He is better to me than a

purse or a sword, and He will always succor me if I am in my true path; for there alone are the proper difficulties to the faith which He gives me, or rather the proper exercises for that faith. If I turn aside from my path, I turn aside from the faith proper to it, and I must leave His presence, which could only attend me while walking according to God's will. Abraham sought to walk with God; and thus He entered into His joys and blessings. Lot sought to make a path for himself, and he was forever going from one sorrow to another, seeking to escape evil, instead of walking with God above it. There is no use in trying to better an evil or mistake. We must only, like Peter, abandon the ship and cast ourselves on the Lord; and then the path will be open to us again, and we shall have grace to follow Him.

*The Christian Friend*, 1876, pp. 101,102

## AMBITIOUS SELF

**"loves to have the first place"**

"I wrote something to the assembly; but Diotrephes, who loves to have the first place among them, receives us not. For this reason, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, babbling against us with wicked words; and not content with these, neither does he himself receive the brethren; and those who would he prevents and casts them out of the assembly. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil" (3 John 9-11, J. N. D. trans.).

What a character! and how many have imitated him, to some degree.

"Ye shall be as gods" was believed by the parents of the human race. As the result ambition was instilled in man to exalt himself these six thousand years. Soon in its most advanced form the antichrist will "exalt himself above all that is called God, . . . showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4).

Diotrephes and his imitators are not without many warnings in the word of God. Go back to the Old Testament:

Abimelech was so determined to rule that he enlisted all his uncles to electioneer for him: he hired followers, slew seventy of his brethren, and reigned three years. He thrust out another aspirant, slew his followers, then took their city and burned a thousand men and women in the hold of Shechem. A woman crushed his skull (Judges 9).

Absalom, so much admired, slew his brother, set Joab's field on fire, then prepared him chariots and fifty men to run before him and said, "Oh that I were

made judge in the land!" and then stole the hearts of many by kissing them, after which he set his throne in Hebron in defiance of King David. Absalom also reared for himself a monument. Hanging was his end. (2 Sam. 14, 15, 18.)

Adonijah exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." Again he said, "The kingdom was mine, and all Israel set their faces on me that I should reign," in defiance of King Solomon. He too was slain. (1 Kings 1 and 2.)

"Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not" (Jer. 45:5).

"They had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest" (Mark 9:34). "Love the chief place . . . and the first seats" (Matt. 23:6 N.T.). "Put thyself down in the last place" (Luke 14:10 N.T.). "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

"As to honor each taking the lead in paying it to the other" (Rom. 12:10 N.T.).

"In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3).

"Content to be little" (N. T.) "Little in thine own sight" (1 Sam. 15:17).

"Neither as lording it over God's heritage" (1 Peter 5:3).

(Note:) May God forbid us encouraging in any way insubjection to elders and "to one another", as this too is a constant danger.

But just try to reach the conscience of a Diotrephes or try to rebuke him and you will in all probability discover a stout combatant and a clever self-defender. To justify his course of iron rule he may insist that "all things must be done decently and in order"; and also "he that ruleth with diligence," and "let the elders that rule (lit. take the lead) well be counted worthy of double honor." But this rule is the unofficial gift which enables the possessors to "restrain the working of the wills by the word and the Holy Spirit" (J. N. D.). (Instead of "rule" three times in Heb. 13, read "take the lead".) Another favorite Scripture resorted to is in Numbers 16 where Dathan and Abiram did wrong in opposing Moses and Aaron saying, "You take too much upon you . . . wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation?" As types of the Lord, God duly appointed Moses and Aaron to their office, but now that all are priests there is no special appointment. The truth itself rebels against those who assume such a place. For that is how clericalism got started in the church. Ambitious bishops lifted themselves up above the rest, aspiring to be "chief men" among brethren, and this spread into the vast hierarchical system of our day. It displaced the Holy Spirit's office and has thrown the church into hopeless confusion. May the Lord preserve us from the subtle intrusion of a hierarchy among those gathered to His precious name. "One is your Master, and all ye are brethren."

Worldly and carnal saints are not without blame as they are so apt to rally

around their favorite champion, "who loves to have the first place," to run everything and everybody.

Where there is an undercurrent of bitter vying for supremacy, like Saul eying David because he could brook no rival, it is an abomination. It shows the neglect of unsparing self-judgment.

The further from any love of prominence, or pretention to official place and dignity, the better.

"It is affected strength that we have to dread and shrink from" (C. H. M.).

"When he was strong his heart was lifted up" (2 Chron. 16:16).

"The advancement of self is the greatest loss" (W. K.).

"The best are those who most know their own nothingness" (W. K.).

"If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. 6:3).

"Who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me)" (Gal. 2:6).

It is safer to be a "nobody" than a "somebody".

One who takes over the meeting, making himself conspicuous, is to be pitied.

"Beware of too sublime a sense  
Of your own worth and consequence.  
The man who deems himself so great,  
And his importance of such weight  
That all around and all that's done  
Must move and act through him alone,  
Will learn by deep humiliation  
The folly of self-exaltation."

Is my object Christ? or is it self? Do I desire to exalt Christ in order to exalt myself?

If Diotrefes withheld the letter of the aged and only living apostle and spoke abusively of him, this second letter must have been to him most unwelcome. It did commend Gaius and Demetrius for not being so lacking in "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

"Truth does not hurt unless it should."

A. C. Brown

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## NON-PUBLISHED PAPERS AVAILABLE

The following papers, written by the editor, are available as 8 1/2" x 11" sheets. They contain a large number of quotations from others.

Some Considerations Concerning the Subject of Ministry in the Assembly and "Reading Meetings" with Appendices on Stated Ministry and Lectures (Aug. 8, 1987).

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Notes and Quotations on Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7:15 (Dec. 24, 1984) with Appendix 1: Additional Observations (Dec. 1, 1989).

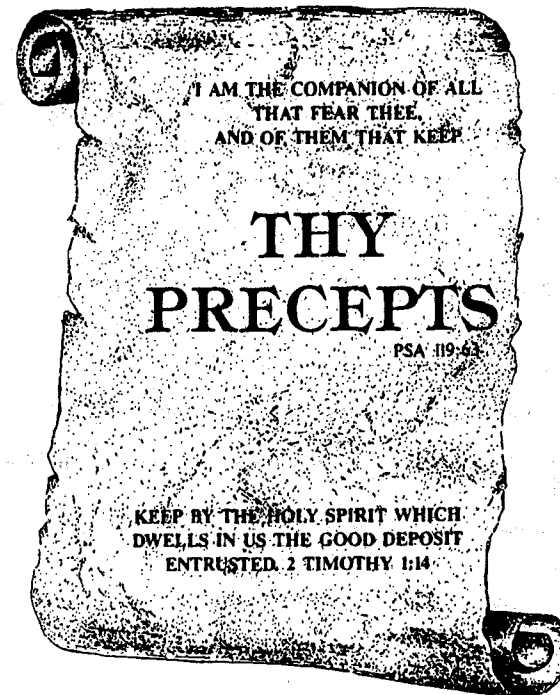
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## CONTENTS

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The Manifestation of the Divine Nature .....	97
The House of God .....	105
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	114
The Second Epistle to Timothy 2:19-22 .....	123

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## MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE

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### THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST

[The following paper by A. C. Ord begins from p. 13 of the original and omits the appendices]

The pretension to fathom such adorable mysteries as the Trinity, or the blessed Person of Christ, is both folly and irreverence. The Lord Himself tells us that no man knoweth the Son but the Father. How can the finite creature fathom the infinite? The mind of man has no adequate measure for it, and must be infinite as God Himself to do so. Were it possible to penetrate that mystery, Christ would soon cease to be the holy, precious, and ever-increasing object of interest to the heart. For a subject that our thoughts can scan or compass soon loses its attraction for us, and in the end comes to be neglected or despised. The search, therefore, into the mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh," the human mind is precluded from entering upon; not only because it transcends its powers, but it is forbidden ground; God has so reserved it in order to maintain its precious and sacred character. It is as inscrutable to angels, or any created being, as to ourselves. It is not only no man, but "no one (οὐδεὶς) knoweth the Son but the Father:" this mystery is in the secret knowledge of the Father alone.<sup>1</sup> Yet, with this reservation, to endeavor to remove false conceptions raised by the enemy of souls, by showing the way in which Scripture presents Christ to us, is sometimes right and even imperative, for the sake of those who

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1. Even in our own marvelous constitution we have something analogous, a mystery we cannot solve, the union of two natures, body and soul in one person. *How* they are united, and act and react mutually upon each other we cannot tell; *the fact* is known to us, as in divine mysteries that have been revealed to our faith, but the mode or manner is hidden from us. This is the case with innumerable powers and secrets of nature -- the law of gravitation, what it is, *why* it acts as it does; the life of a plant, and *how* it assimilates certain elements from the soil and atmosphere around it and rejects others.

have been beguiled into them, and for His sake who is God and Man in one blessed person for ever. Nevertheless, this is holy ground, and the shoes of our feet should be taken off in approaching it.

"Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in flesh."<sup>2</sup> All that is essentially and properly divine, and all that is truly and perfectly human, were found combined in the unity of His Person apart from the taint of sin and its inevitable consequences, corruption and subjection to death. And though we cannot tell how, yet Scripture shows us that He was always at the same moment, and at times evidently in the same acts, dependent Man as well as manifest God,<sup>3</sup> the Infant of days as well as the Ancient of days. The angels could celebrate His entry in divine love upon this scene of human woe and misery, (to take up as Man the cause of fallen man) *as the expression* of glory to God in the highest assumption of manhood: and faith could delight in the Virgin's seed, "as the Dayspring from on high," who had come to bruise the serpent's head, conquering death in divine power on our behalf. Yet, He Himself tells us what He felt in the apparent, and yet real, weakness of infancy, in the touching appeal He makes to His Father, when, hanging on the Cross, reminding Him of that dependence which was to Him so sweet, and of the confidence which He alone could exercise in those earliest moments of human life. "But thou art He who took me out of the womb; *thou didst make me hope*, when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb, thou art *my God from my mother's belly*" (Ps. 22: 8,9). Even in infancy the blessed unfailing sense of personal relationship, the dawning of hope, the expectation of faith that could not be disappointed, that had all its stay in God, are all presented to God whose title and place as Jehovah had even then awakened this response in the soul of that holy One.

This is all the more remarkable and intelligible also when we perceive from the comparison of Matt. 27: 43, and Ps. 22:8, that the position and circumstances in which the Lord was found on our account, had given occasion to the taunt in which His enemies mocked His trust in God and His relationship to Him: "He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now, if He will have him; for

2. Dean Burgon has proved from the consensus of ancient MSS., early translations and citations of the passage, that the preponderance of evidence is in favor of it as it stands in the authorized version (θεός, and not ος).

3. This will be seen as we proceed, but among others we may instance the Lord's giving thanks for the loaves and the fishes whilst He multiplies them for the need of the multitude that surrounded Him (Mark 6:41, 8:6,7). His cure of the man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, in Mark 7., when "He put His fingers into his ears and spit and touched his tongue, and, *looking up to heaven*, He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened (read ver. 35, 37); in John 11., when acting as the resurrection and the life, He calls the dead out of the grave with the words, "Lazarus, come forth," and at the same time tells how the Father had heard Him: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it that they may believe that thou hast sent me" (ver. 41,42).

he said, I am the Son of God." And this awakens the reply: "But *thou art* He that took me out of the womb. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." Even in the case of John the Baptist, for instance, the angel says, "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb"; hence Elizabeth, when "filled with the Holy Ghost," exclaims, "Whence is this to me that the mother of *my Lord* should come to me, for as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the babe *leaped in my womb* for joy" (Luke 1:47,48). What things incredible to human reason happen, where God is at work, and where, He for His glory, is pleased to display Himself! And how much more when this display is in the Son Himself!

But I shall be told, perhaps, by some one only partially acquainted with facts, that what has been stated, is, that in certain acts human life only was manifested. But how dare any one presume to affirm this? Who can assign limits either to the extent and range, or to the manifestation of the divine or the human in Christ? and who can tell what appeared to the eye and mind of God in that blessed One? If any lower estimate is taken, we are in danger of falling below the level which is proper to faith. The Jews had their blind and mistaken thoughts concerning Him, and the disciples beheld Him in the twilight of their own partially enlightened minds, which never rose to the divine estimate. Hence in attempting to discern what was manifested in Him to others, unless we keep in view what appeared to the eye of God, we necessarily descend to what unbelief, partial or entire, beheld, and take that estimate for our own. It has been the fear of this, combined with the sacredness of the subject, that has hitherto kept reverential minds from attempting to draw the line, or seeking to define with exactitude what is expressed in the acts of our blessed Lord; though in the different Gospels we see Him presented in various aspects, one giving us more of the human element, as in Luke, and another, as in John, more of the divine.

Why has this holy and sensitive feeling been cast aside? and the silence, which Scripture maintains respecting His life with His parents after the earliest stage of infancy, been rudely invaded? Is it not a holy wisdom that has veiled these years, along with His early life and His occupations, from our eye, lest we should intrude with our fleshly mind where Scripture and the Holy Ghost do not lead us? And though we are far from denying that He filled such a position with His reputed father, Joseph, yet we should not forget that it was not the Holy Ghost, but His rejecters, in order to depreciate His person and worth, who said, "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3).

When at twelve years of age He is found in the Temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, in the very center of Jewish learning, and though with faultless propriety He takes the place of inquiry, both hearing them and asking them questions, we read of the effect produced: "All that heard Him" (even the

doctors) "were *astonished* at His understanding and answers."<sup>4</sup> And this was really service of the highest order, for being challenged by His mother with the words, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," she is answered with the rebuke: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" This reply intimates the glory of His own Person as the Son, His relationship with the Father, the supreme and divine character of that service He came to render. Striking indeed at such an age this must have been in their eyes. Was not their anxiety natural, and might they not justly have expected He should remember what appeared due to them, for He had remained behind in Jerusalem for three days, whilst they were returning home? But the claims of His Person and service were paramount, and far from being excused, His parents are blamed for their want of perception of the higher glories of His Person, and the purport of His presence here below, and this was before His public anointing and recognition by the Holy Ghost resting upon Him. It is also the more remarkable because, having thus indicated His personal glory and liberty of action, we are told: "He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them." This was the fulfillment of the prescribed obedience of the law; but, lest man's unbelief should infer it was a mere human act, which had no divine spring and motive characterizing it, we are told by the prophet respecting the whole of this obedience: "He will magnify the law and make it honorable" (Is. 42:21).

The law, as coming from God, would have put honor on any mere creature, who fulfilled it, but here this is reversed, and the law itself is honored and exalted by the dignity of the Person who undertook to accomplish it. Thus it was with every relationship in which He was found, every position which He filled in His life here below. He conferred honor upon it, shedding a divine lustre on all the human path He trod in this world.

Everywhere indeed throughout His course we shall find this divine element, which lent its sweet savour to His life. The meat offering is specifically given as an exemplification of this. It was composed of three elements, the fine flour, the oil, and the frankincense; the fine flour without leaven is the fruit of the earth, significant of the pure and holy humanity of Christ, where no trace of sin or corruption, but all human perfection, was found; and next we have the special action and presence of the Holy Ghost, both in His birth and His anointing at His baptism. In order to make this more emphatic, and show the permeating power of the Holy Ghost, characterizing that holy nature and life throughout, the offering was parted in pieces and oil poured upon it, for there was this spring in it from its origin: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called *the Son of God*" (Luke 1:35). Lastly

4. For the Holy Ghost says, "He was *filled* with wisdom," and this was from the earliest (Luke 2:40); also that He grew in wisdom (ver. 52). But all this is unfathomable.

we find the frankincense which was to be wholly consumed upon the altar. The remainder of the offering was to be eaten by the priests, but only after the handful called "the memorial" had been taken out and burnt as a sweet savour unto the Lord with *all the frankincense*. This sets forth typically the fragrance which the divine element lent to all that human life and perfect devotedness and obedience. "Who made *Himself* of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7,8). This humiliation for the glory of God was so precious to God that all His future exaltation and place of supremacy as Man is due to it. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name." But whilst the frankincense was entirely for God and offered to God, the fragrance of it so filled the atmosphere that none within its range could be unconscious of it.

Here we may pause for a moment to observe that the meat offering as repeatedly stated in Scripture, was a thing "*most holy* of the offerings of the Lord made by fire" (Lev. 2:3,10,16). The whole of it was to be presented to the Lord. Only the priests in their full character as such, were to partake of it. It was to be eaten in the *holy place*, every one that touched it was to be *holy*. Communion with God and nearness to Him and the sense of His presence, and of the holiness of this precious subject now before us are thus prescribed, as the necessary accompaniment and safeguard which Scripture throws around it. Has this been maintained in all that has transpired of late?

Never was there an act of Christ, even as Man, which did not exhale this perfume, and to which this divine life did not give its worth, its character, and perfection. In all the Gospels it is discernible to the spiritual eye; in John it is predominant, for there is no essential difference, though there are various aspects to what is divine; just as there are different *colors* and shades of color in the rainbow, though all proceed from, and are combined in, one ray of light. We know that in the earlier Gospels, especially in Matthew, where He is presented as the Messiah of Israel, the Object and Accomplisher of the promises, there was special reason for His hiding His glory (veiled as it was in the lowly guise of manhood), in order that Israel and the heart of man might be fully put to the proof, and that He might be owned by faith, not by sight or sense; which moreover, could not appreciate His true worth. Such were the conditions for the divine glory, under which He came. For Israel had been the subject of the divine dealings for ages past, under priesthood, law, kings, and prophets, and now was to be subjected to the last great test by which man was to be tried, the presence of God in love on this earth, whilst at the same time accomplishing or offering the fulfillment of the special promises given to that favored people. It is this that accounts for the special character of the Lord's presence and activities in this Gospel, though a stumbling-block to unbelief, as Scripture foretold, often resulting in the denial of the true glory of His person. Listen to the expression of what is an apparent inconsistency to the darkness of

the human mind, in the words of His brethren, in the days of their unbelief. "Depart hence (out of Galilee), and go into Judea, that Thy disciples also may *see* the works that Thou doest. For there is no man that doeth anything *in secret* and he himself seeketh to be *known openly*. If thou do these things show thyself to the world" (John 7:2-5). For this display is what man expects and looks for. But wisdom is justified of her children, for there was ample evidence to all that the God of Israel was there. And more than this, the character of God as come in love into the world, shone out in this way more than it ever could have done, had there been a visible or external glory apparent to the eye of man, and suited to flatter the pride of his corrupt heart.

But was not Israel held responsible according to the real glory of the Lord, when amongst them as Incarnate? What were the terms in which His birth was predicted? "Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us*" (Matt. 1:22). This was the sign given to the house of David of God's faithfulness, when that house seemed at its lowest point. He was the virgin's seed and yet Emmanuel. The remnant of Israel declare their conviction, and make their boast of this. "Unto us *a child is born*, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:6). Again, we say, it was a question of what faith always saw in that wondrous Babe. We have seen what the Angels beheld, and when the aged Simeon enters the Temple, his heart filled with exultation, he takes the Babe in his arms and blesses God and says: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people" (Luke 2:29). "How could a helpless babe be the manifestation of eternal life" says one. How could Simeon "see" God's salvation in that Babe, and glory in it? -- has been the just reply given to the miserable reasoning of the human mind. He was announced by the Angel to the shepherds as, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, *a Saviour*, which is Christ *the Lord*," and this is Jehovah, for His title of Lordship over all as Man, is only given to Him in resurrection (Rom. 14.), but His very name of Jesus, bestowed by the Angel, is the definite expression of His presence here as the Jehovah of Israel. "And she shall *bring forth a son*, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21; comp. Luke 2:21). Jesus -- that is Jehovah Saviour -- the words added, *His people* whom He shall save, bring out more distinctly that it is Jehovah Himself who is manifested in this Babe.

Thus does the Holy Ghost, as if to guard us against the low unbelieving thought of the natural mind, delight to surround the One who, we are told, has been displayed as "a helpless babe," with varied testimonies to His glory, even in that very condition. The exultation and praises of the heavenly host attendant on that moment; the witness rendered by John the Baptist, or rather by the Holy Spirit even before His birth; the worship awakened in the heart of Simeon, as

he glories in what he, by faith, discerns and possesses in this Babe born at Bethlehem; the honor rendered by the wise from the East with their gold and frankincense and myrrh; all alike combine to show the way in which God delights to keep Him before us, as the holy Object of faith, communion and adoration, and to put to shame the denial of the manifestation of divine life in Him at any moment of His history. All this is the more remarkable, because occurring chiefly in the Gospel of Luke, which dwells mostly on His character as Son of Man, and gives us all the human relationships in which He stood, and which have been used to divide or lower the dignity of His Person.

Of old we were rightly warned against the danger (on either side) of "dividing the Person or confounding the substance," as it has been termed -- i.e., supposing that the Godhead was changed into manhood, or manhood into Godhead, by their union in the Person of Christ: this would equally neutralize the value and be destructive of both natures, and would not be union, but transformation. But it was also observed by an eminent servant of God, that, so perfect was the union of the divine and human in the Christ of God, that what properly belonged to one nature, is in Scripture constantly applied to the other. "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). "The bread of God" (Christ as manifested in His humanity here below) "is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:33). These passages speak of Him as Man, and yet of His personal presence in heaven at that very moment, and pre-existence there. In the first citation, when He was conversing with Nicodemus, and when he had more-over been telling him of *earthly* things, He says no one could tell him of heavenly things but He that came down from heaven, but whose intercourse with heaven and with His Father, were as infinite as His own being. "The Son *who is* in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." In Gal. 2. also and where we should have said the Son of Man, the Apostle Paul says, "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." And again, implying His divine Presence, "Lo I am *with you always*, even to the end of the world." But above all are the words addressed to Him: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against *the man* that is my *Fellow*, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 13:7).

Even in speaking of the divinity and humanity of Christ, we have to be most guarded, for "God and Man are one Christ." Hence some have unwittingly erred in saying this was divinity, and that humanity, this was eternal life, and that was not eternal life; for, though we may speak of one nature predominating, or being more expressed than the other, in certain acts, the moment we speak of them separately, we divide them, and the Person is virtually falsified or lost. In Him the divine and human are *never abstract*, but always in their mutual relation to each other as combined. Scripture never speaks of Him but in the *unity* of His Person: "*Jesus wept*," -- "*Jesus* therefore being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well -- i.e., He is spoken of under His personal name, which includes all that He is, Jehovah Saviour. If I



say, eternal life was never weary, I have made the divine *abstract*, and separated it from its relative position in the Person of Christ, and lost the thought of how both were involved and affected by their co-relation. Thus all the perfect and divine love that made Him stoop so low, and come into the condition and circumstances of human want and weakness to win the heart, is lost. He asks indeed for a drink of water for *His thirst*, and He is *hungry* as well as *weary* as He sits upon the well, but He is Himself the Fountain and the Giver of the living water that He gives, and that water becomes a well itself in the soul, springing up to *life eternal*. Had the woman, as He says, but known *who it was* that said to her, "Give me to drink," it would have put her in the place of a lowly suppliant and recipient, of all this blessing; and yet we are now told that in all this, He is not the manifestation of eternal life! Again, we repeat that the Spirit, in the word, *never* speaks of our Lord but in the unity of His Person. "*Jesus, knowing* <sup>5</sup> that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled saith, *I thirst*" (John 19:28). It is the same blessed Person, who, whether in the fullness of divine knowledge, or in lowly utterance from the depths of His humiliation, expresses Himself in these words: "They gave *me* also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave *me* vinegar to drink" (Ps. 69:21). It is because of what He is in the unity of His Person, that all His sufferings, and all His love to us in them, have their value to the heart.

Where is the separation here into "the upper and the lower life," nor "having to return to communion with His Father," as we are told He had to do after His conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4?<sup>6</sup>

(to be continued, if the Lord will)

5. In the Gospel of John this divine knowledge of the Lord is always brought before us (ch. 2:24,25; 6:6; 18:4).

6. This was modified by the statement that He returned to the joy of communion, but has been defended by teachers in its original form, as a proper and suitable remark. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

## GOD'S ORDER

### PART 3b:

## THE HOUSE OF GOD

(continued from vol. 5, # 3)

### True Response

There is, and will always be until the Lord take us all to Himself, those who are gathered together by the power of the Holy Spirit to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ -- outside of all ecclesiastical systems of men, and apart from all human organization -- in faithful obedience to His Word. To these alone can the Lord's words be truly applied, "*For where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them*" (Matt. 18:20). In addition, it can only be on such occasions with such saints as gathered together that Heb.2:12 can be realized, "*I will declare Thy Name to my brethren; in [the] midst of [the] assembly will I sing Thy praises.*"

### True Power

It is a most precious thing to be "gathered together" and having the Lord in the midst, but it is another thing to be able to function acceptably to God in occupation with Him on such occasions. We do not have any power in ourselves but we do have all power in the presence of the Holy Spirit with us at such times. In Phil. 3:3 we learn that "*we . . . worship by [the] Spirit of God, and boast in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in flesh.*"

### True Substance

The mass of professing christian worship is really nothing but either idolatry or services with sociological or political content. But there is what is real and acceptable to God to be found in exercise in a spiritual house according to 1 Pet. 2:55, "*yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*" The power is the Holy Spirit, and the Substance is our Lord Jesus Christ -- for all the sacrifices of old in the Tabernacle service were types of

Christ.

### True Conditions

There are precise, inviolate requirements stated by God Himself as to what He is, what His House requires and, what is required of us. As to God Himself, He says: "*I, Jehovah thy God, am a jealous God*" (Ex. 20:5) -- that is, He will not forego anything of what is due to Him. "*I Jehovah your God am holy*" (Lev. 19:2) -- that is, He cannot tolerate sin in any shape or form. As to God's House, the Spirit of God through the Psalmist says: "*Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thy house, O Jehovah, for ever*" (Psa. 93:5) -- that is, the place where He dwells must be in total accord with Himself. As to God's people, He says: "*ye shall be holy; for I am holy*:" (Lev. 11:44 & 1 Pet. 1:16) - that is, we must be in accord with Himself, in the refusal of sin. As to approaching Him, He says: "*I will be hallowed in them that come near Me, and before all the people I will be glorified*" (Lev. 10:3) -- that is we must keep Him in His rightful place in our attitude and testimony. "*No man shall appear before Me empty*" (Ex. 23:15, 34:20 & Deut. 16:16) -- that is, we should not come to Him to receive but prepared to give.

### God's Regulation of the Israelites

In connection with the Tabernacle, God gave meticulous instructions as to the order to be instituted and maintained throughout the generations of Israelites. There was no allowance for the mind of man to enter into anything that concerned God and His service. Not only were these details given in regard to the services of the priests and Levites, but also for the daily lives of the people. The moral stipulations were numerous and covered every aspect of their behavior, and with them God gave His judgments as to any violation of them. All this was because God is holy and therefore required that His people be holy as well. Indeed, a reading of Leviticus deeply impresses one's soul with the comprehensive details as to governing the moral conduct of the Israelites. Also in Numbers there are precise arrangements as to their domestic settings and travel order, in relation to the Tabernacle, as they moved through the wilderness. Then, in 1st Chronicles there is complete details as to the order in connection with all that stood in relation to the Temple and its services in the Land of Caanan.

### God's Regulation of saints today

God has not and will not change irrespective of the differences between one dispensation and another. Under the strict regulation of the law to Israel, or under the wondrous liberty of grace in the Assembly, God is still holy and demands holiness on the part of all who draw near to Him. This truth cannot be too often presented for we so easily forget it and lapse into carelessness, and

thence into a moral and spiritual state that is not according to God's holy order in His House.

### What Is "Holiness"?

"Holiness" is used in two ways in Scripture; a) to denote a *nature* which is pure and always rejects evil while always being good, and b) to denote a *practical conduct of separation from evil*. In connection with a) only God is or can be in accord with this, for only He has such a Nature, for mankind is born with a sinful nature. As to b) this has application to saints as having a new nature which cannot sin because it is born of God by the Spirit (see 1 John 3:9 in the Darby rendering and his note 'd'), yet still having the old sinful nature from Adam. There is responsibility, therefore, on all saints to live according to the new nature, and not the old one, consistent with the divine life that we possess which is holy even as God is holy.

### God's Regulation in His House Today

Are there no 'rules' for us today as forming the current dwelling place of God? Indeed there are! With Israel there was a physical, material building in both the Tabernacle and the Temple, and all that pertained to both was of spiritual significance -- although the Israelite did not appreciate what it was. Today, we form a spiritual edifice, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and in which "spiritual sacrifices" are offered in our function as a "holy priesthood" (see 1 Pet. 2:4-5). Is there, then, licence for us to act according to our own thoughts as to what is suitable and acceptable to God? Not at all! We have referred earlier to Philippians 3, where we are told that "*we worship by the Spirit*"; and in 1st Peter we are told that our spiritual sacrifices are "acceptable to God by Jesus Christ".

There is, therefore, no liberty allowed us to act according to our will or choice -- if we did, this would be sin like to Nadab and Abihu. God dealt in judgment with these two sons of Aaron the High Priest for their offering "*strange fire*", which was not acceptable to Him because "*He had not commanded them*" (Lev. 10:1). What a solemn lesson this is for us today, for both men were divinely appointed priests, as sons of Aaron. They both had "*each of them his censer*". They were, no doubt, properly dressed in their priestly garments. In what, then, was their sin? Was there anything wrong with having "their censer" -- and putting incense on it -- and presenting it before God? Was it not exactly what they had seen Aaron doing? Yes! But, there was a fundamental difference. The difference was that *they acted of their own accord* and not according to the Word of God -- this constituted sin on their part, and of such a solemn character that God dealt instantly with them in summary judgment. Likewise would it be with us, that we would sin if we acted in God's presence apart from the direction of the Holy Spirit. May we very seriously consider this and not act, even in the smallest detail, without first

being assured that the Spirit of God is energizing us to take an active part when together in God's presence.

### Our Relationship Different to Israel's

Today, we enjoy a much more intimate place with God than Aaron or his sons ever did. They did not know God as Father, as we do through our Lord Jesus Christ -- but this should not cause us to act in disregard of what is orderly according to God. Not that we enjoy our relationship on our own -- this could never be -- but as in association with our Great High Priest, and in virtue of His being in the presence of God in the glory on our account. Aaron was prohibited from entering into the most holy place except for once in the year, on the great day of Atonement, and his sons were not permitted in there at all. But, we have liberty to enter often having boldness for doing so (not brazenness), and to draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith (see Heb. 10:19-22).

### How do we Approach God?

What then do we bring Him? Do we approach Him "empty"? All too often it seems as if we are simply present without the needed preparation to respond to the Spirit's leading, or in disregard of it when acting as if in a routine service.

This is not said with any individual criticism but with a sadness of heart that it is so, for our blessed God is denied what He ought to receive from all present before Him. Has it not been known to all of us, at some time or other, that there is evidently a spiritual dearth when our hearts should have been so full of Christ that they could not contain the expressions of praise and thanksgiving. It is not that we advocate audible expressions of any kind simply for the sake of making them -- far from it -- for there is greater spiritual participation when all hearts are blended in one deep appreciation of God and His beloved Son that charges the silent times with real response to Him -- which is true worship. The essential point is that subjection to the Holy Spirit on the part of all, with no cause for "*grieving*" (Eph. 4:30) or "*quenching*" (1 Thess. 5:19) Him, will inevitably produce the greatest satisfaction to God and glory and joy to His dear Son.

We ought to thank God for the occasions when we have realized something of this spiritual reality, when our hearts have been knit together in love for Him, and our voices have united in praise of and to Him in thanksgiving and joy -- rare though such times are yet we know them for we are reluctant to leave such a holy place.

### How do we approach God today?

It is a wondrous liberty afforded to all saints today to approach our God and Father in worship and thanksgiving, as well as to make our needs known to Him

and all the personal details that burden our hearts. It is an inestimable privilege open to all His own to be gathered by the Holy Spirit around the Person of our adorable Lord and Savior. There are only two restrictions which inhibit free approach -- that is sin and defilement. While this is so, and not one saint is clear of the possibility of sinning or becoming defiled in some way or other, yet there is provision made for us like that which God provided for His people of old, in Israel. When an Israelite, under the law given through Moses, sinned then there was provided by God the sin or trespass offering which could be brought to the priest and which would answer to God satisfactorily on account of that sin or trespass (Lev. chps. 4,5 & 6). When it was a case of defilement then we read in Numbers 19 of the provision of the Red Heifer, and all that was needful as to the application of it to make a defiled Israelite ceremonially clean again, and able to partake of the full privileges available to clean Israelites. There are valuable lessons in all this for us today, and if we take note of them there is no reason at all why there should not be full liberty in the Holy Spirit, for all saints, to approach God at all times. It was only a question of the time it took for an Israelite to bring either the sin/trespass offering or apply the Red Heifer before there was full restoration of all that God made available for them in their day. For us, of course, things are very much different in fact although the principles remain the same. If we sin then we have recourse, as 1 John 1:9 tells us, so that *full* communion with God our Father is *instantly* restored. If there is defilement, and surely we acquire this every day of our pathway down here with the abounding evil that there is all round us, then we have the rich provision that our blessed Lord exemplified when He was still on earth. In John 13:4-17 we read of what our blessed Savior did to His disciples when He washed their feet. It is quite clear, by the Lord's words, that it is essential to have this still applied to ourselves today for He said, "Unless I wash thee, thou hast not part with Me." (verse 8). Now the Lord did not say, "Unless I wash thee thou dost no longer belong to Me", or, "Unless I wash thee thou shalt no longer be My disciple". No, it is a matter that defilement interferes with having part with (or, having a share in) what He has for those who are rendered clean. God (and the Lord is eternally God) cannot violate His holiness and if it was not for His rich provision in this way then we could not have part in the circle of divine provision while we are down here, waiting to be taken up to Himself in the unstained glory of the Father's house. Linking the words of our Lord spoken on this occasion with Eph. 5:26 we can, surely, see His meaning in what He said. The pure living Word of God, the scriptures, are the present means by which we can be cleansed of defilement picked up morally while we go through this present evil world. There is no question about the result when we read God's precious Word we know what it means to be so cleansed -- for all believers who do this realise that their souls are affected by the Word which removes those unclean thoughts and desires from our minds and hearts. When God's holy Word occupies us then there is no room simultaneously for all those things that Satan puts before the minds and hearts of the unbelievers. Not only are we morally cleansed in this way but we also store up the knowledge of the

Word, which the Holy Spirit can subsequently use, whenever He so decides, as He knows that we have assimilated the truth of the Word into our own souls. What a wonderful fullness there is in all that our blessed God has done for us, leaving us without any excuse for not being suited for His presence while we are down here. Surely, too, if we understood the lessons contained in Numbers 19 we would more appreciate what our blessed Savior went through in order to redeem us and cleanse us from all sin. And, we would respond in full accord with His death and resurrection in consigning, by faith, all that is of man to that death into which He went for us. These matters, of which we write, are not only for the advanced in the christian faith but for all from the moment of being sealed by the Holy Spirit to the moment that we depart from this world by way of death or the Lord's coming for us. Our God and Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ both delight, as One, to have us in Their presence and how responsive should we be if we but realised this more fully.

### Are We Empty, or Full?

Having the liberty of approach, and knowing the holy requirements such that we are not hindered in approaching our God, whether Father and/or Son, it still remains that there must be a preparedness on our part in order that there is spiritual, divine material which the Holy Spirit can bring out from us for the joy and glory of God. An empty barrel is still a barrel but it is of no use without having a content that can be drawn from by the owner of it. It does not mean that there will be a drawing from it on all occasions but it has some content which can be drawn as and when the owner desires to do so. This is much like how we should be when found in the presence of God, Who takes pleasure in having His own around Himself. We have full instruction in various parts of the New Testament as to what is suitable for each occasion when we are gathered together around our blessed Lord and Savior. It is not the purpose of this paper to go into all this but rather to search out our hearts and consciences as to the order that becomes God's House in this most precious matter of being found together in God's presence.

### What Is Acceptable to God?

In a simple statement, what is acceptable to God is what is acceptable to Him "by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). To enlarge a little on this, it would be anything that speaks to God of the glorious Person and work of His Beloved Son. The Holy Spirit enables us to worship, for we read in Phil. 3:3, "*who worship BY [the] Spirit of God, and boast in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in flesh.*". It is essential, then, that all that is of the flesh (that is, the product of the sinful mind of man) is excluded and that our only "boast" is in Christ Jesus, and not ourselves. Anything which exalts ourselves would not be in keeping with this statement.

It might arise in the minds of many as to who is competent to offer anything to

God. To this the reply is that all saints are competent -- but God has regulated that when in assembly only brothers can be audible in speaking on behalf of the assembly. However, it might also be in the mind of some that their capacity is so limited that it would not be acceptable. Let such take courage from God Himself. When the woman gave "all that she had", when putting her two mites into the treasury of the Temple when the Lord was on earth, God took note of it and appreciated it -- for the blessed Son of God took account of her action and highly commended it, and it is recorded in His Word for the world to read (Mk. 12:42-44). In the days of Israel of old, there was provision made by God Himself to allow the poorest of His people to offer something acceptable to Him, and which spoke to Him in the highest way of the preciousness of His dear Son -- not that the Israelite realised this, but God did. In Lev. 1:14-17 we read of the Burnt Offering being "of turtledoves, or of young pigeons". How beautiful this is, that the mighty God saw in the offering of the sacrifice of the smallest material cost that which spoke to His heart of the One Who is of infinite value to Him. It is good for us to remember these things, for it so common to man today to think that only the educated, and the trained, and the capable speakers can function in a public way -- this is most positively not so. It is not the capacity of our mind that counts but the contents of our hearts. If our hearts are devoted to the Lord Jesus then they will be occupied with Him and filled with that which the Holy Spirit will use, when He calls for it, on behalf of the whole gathered company. A simple expression of devotion to our precious Savior and Lord will surely rise up to the heart of God for His delight as a sweet smelling savor. What we must always be on guard against is the behavior such as the Pharisee who "prayed thus to himself", but who was publicly addressing God. He was very eloquent and spoke 4 times as many words as did the poor tax-gatherer who prayed to God also -- the 'small' talker was justified rather than the 'big' talker. It is not the amount, nor the eloquence of speech, but the content that God appreciates. It is within the capacity of any brother to give out that which fills his heart concerning Christ, as the Spirit of God uses him to do so -- and none can say to him 'nay' but rather would all present add their 'Amen'. Let us remember the words of the apostle Paul, "but in [the] assembly I desire to speak five words with my understanding, that I may instruct others also, [rather] than ten thousand words in a tongue." (1 Cor. 14:19). As Paul had already said, "I speak in a tongue more than all of you:", and who was more eloquent than he, or more gifted than he? The simplest saint can not only delight the Father's heart, but those of the saints also who can unite with him in the outpouring of the heart to God. It is to be feared that there is far too much of the reverse today -- of much speaking but with no substance; of much eloquence but with no spirituality; of much truth but with no power. May we all be encouraged to be totally dependent on the Holy Spirit for usefulness to Him when in assembly and not to be discouraged by any consideration of the company and especially of the presence of those who are, perhaps, reckoned to be more 'able'. The writer was deeply impressed, and well instructed, many years ago to hear an aged brother say, "Any brother can

get up and simply give thanks to the Lord" -- do we not know that this is pleasing to Him? Did not the Lord record for us His appreciation of the 'one' who returned to give Him thanks for the blessing bestowed on him in cleansing him of his leprosy (Lk. 17:15-19)? Oh! that we could hear more from brothers who are restraining themselves in a false sense of modesty or fear of others, or even of themselves -- and nothing of those who are full of themselves and their abilities.

### Quenching and Grieving the Holy Spirit

We are told by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to neither "Quench" nor "grieve" Him. In Eph. 4:30 we read, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which ye have been sealed for [the] day of redemption." In this passage we learn that our personal conduct can grieve the Holy Spirit, and if we do is it thinkable that we shall be suitable to the Holy Spirit for His use when in assembly? In 1 Thess. 5:20, "Quench not the Spirit;" and this is linked with "do not lightly esteem prophecies;" -- when in assembly we must be in the state that, as and when the Holy Spirit would use us for the vocal expression of whatever is suited to the occasion, that we (brothers) do not act on our own prompting, nor remain silent when the Spirit would have us to speak -- let it be always as dependent on Him for both the substance of what is said and the power to say it.

There is a hymn which is sometimes sung which says,

Our hearts are full of Christ, and long  
Their glorious matter to declare!  
Of Him we make our loftier song --  
We cannot from His praise forbear:  
Our ready tongues make haste to sing  
The glories of the heavenly King.

Little Flock Hymnbook, # 220 (1881 ed.)

May we all be found in accord with God's holy order in His House, with hearts that can unitedly give expression as this hymn declares -- in total dependence on the Holy Spirit and in the realisation that our adorable Savior is present as our Object bright and fair, to fill and satisfy our hearts. Then we shall know the joy of the following words,

Brought to rest within the circle,  
Where love's treasures are displayed,  
There we drink the living waters,  
Taste the joys that never fade.

Brought to know Thy Well-Beloved,  
Drawn to Him in boundless grace,  
Thy effulgence, love and glory  
Shining in His blessed face --

We adore Thee, God and Father,  
May Thy Name exalted be!  
Praise and worship we would render  
Now as in eternity.

Part of hymn by T. Willey.

J. Pascoe

\* \* \* \* \*

(continued from page 128)

He need not fear isolation, as he loves the communion of saints. God will not fail to work in those whose hearts are cleansed by faith. Let him then pursue that path, not doubting but with good cheer. He will not be alone, he is to follow after the way that is acceptable to God, "with those that call on the Lord with a pure heart," *i.e.* true-hearted saints, in contrast with the promoters or defenders of pravity in word or deed.

Thus is the will of the Lord made plain for a day of ruin. It is not for the faithful to abide in evil with empty protests, after the resources of patience are exhausted. It would be presumption in the face of scripture to stay in the vain hope of mending that which is publicly maintained and justified. The unmistakable call of God is to purge one's self out, and, carefully watching against one's own dangers, to follow the path of righteousness, faith, love, peace, not in pride or carelessness of isolation, but in the fellowship of the like-minded that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

*The Bible Treasury*, vol. 16.

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

### CHAPTER 2.4

(continued from vol. 5, # 3)

#### THE DAY OF PENTECOST

##### IS PENTECOST RELATED TO THE CHURCH?

As part of the system of delaying the formation of the body of Christ, C.R. Stam wrote:

Pentecost was a Jewish feast day, not related in any way to the Body of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Paul wrote:

For also our passover, Christ, has been sacrificed; so that let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven . . . (1 Cor. 5:7,8).

Paul speaks of Jewish feasts and these feasts have application to members of the body of Christ. Passover, as we know, refers to the death of Christ. The "feast," however, refers to the feast of unleavened bread which ran from the 15th to the 21st of the month (Lev. 23). It denotes an unleavened walk and here Paul applies it to members of the body of Christ. Moreover, the feast of first fruits (Lev. 23) typifies the resurrection of Christ. That, too, is related to the body of Christ. There is one more of the four feasts that took place in the first two months of the Jewish year (starting with Abib -- Ex. 12) and that is Pentecost.

The last three feasts of Jehovah took place in the 7th month and speak of the regathering of Israel (trumpets), Israel's national repentance (the day of atonement), and Israel's entry into rest (booths).<sup>2</sup> See Lev. 23. These apply to Israel.

Not only have the feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits and

1. *Acts Dispensationally Considered* 1:68.

2. The reader will find the seven feasts of Lev. 23 positioned on a five color chart in my *Daniel's 70 Weeks and the Revival of the Roman Empire*, available from the publisher.

Pentecost something to do with the church (which is Christ's body) but in Ezekiel 40 - 48 where we learn about feasts to be celebrated by Israel in the millennium, no mention is made of Pentecost (the feast of Weeks). It received its fulfillment just as passover did. However, Passover will be celebrated in the millennium because the blood of the New Covenant was shed for them also. Christ's death had both us in view *and* the nation of Israel, as such (John 11:51,52).

Besides this, the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits (Christ in resurrection) and Pentecost have a connection. See Lev. 23.

##### THE TIME OF THE FEAST

Israel was to count from, and include, the day that the wave-sheaf was waved, seven sabbaths. That equals 49 days. They were to count also the day after the seventh sabbath, which made 50 days in all (Lev. 23:15,16). This is where the word *Pentecost* comes from. It refers to the 50th day. J. N. Darby translated Acts 2:1, "And when the day of Pentecost was now accomplishing . . ." It was then that the Holy Spirit came (John 7:39; Acts 2:32,33) in a special capacity, the doctrine of which was reserved for the apostle Paul to expound.

Lev. 23:15 says of the days, "they shall be complete." This is seven sevens. It signifies, I believe, the spiritual exercises of the Lord's people during those days that they were awaiting the descent of the Spirit. See Luke 24:29; Acts 1. This was a time during which exercise for testimony was prepared; which testimony is typified in bringing the *two* loaves out of their dwellings. This was done on the morrow after the seventh sabbath, the Lord's day when fulfilled.

We should learn from this that it is morally right and suitable that spiritual exercise precedes testimony and service.

##### A NEW MEAL OFFERING

There is a reason why the meal offering of the Feast of Weeks is called a NEW meal offering, or, oblation (Lev. 23:16).

1. The meal offering of Lev. 2 typifies the perfection of Christ in His holy Person and His walk for God's glory, as energized by the Spirit (the oil). No leaven was allowed in it.
2. Hence this is a new meal-offering. It had leaven in it, which was strictly forbidden in the meal offering which speaks of Christ. Leaven denotes evil in Scripture usage.

##### THE CHARACTER OF THE NEW MEAL-OFFERING

Let us look at each characteristic of the new meal-offering.

1. It was brought "out of your dwellings." To be a testimony to the true character of the wave-sheaf (a resurrected Christ) there must be an exercise of heart in our dwelling. Where, and in what condition of soul, do we spiritually dwell?
2. There were two wave-loaves. Two is the number of testimony in Scripture. The Holy Spirit formed a testimony, to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, at Pentecost. They were made from the same grain as the wave-sheaf. "Except a grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). His grace has identified us with Himself in His victory over death and with His resurrection-life (John 20:22). As the sheaf of firstfruits was waved before Jehovah, so were the loaves. The waving signifies something for the enjoyment and pleasure of God.
3. The wave-loaves were of two-tenths (of an ephah, probably) of fine flour. The quantity of the wave-sheaf was also two-tenths. Again we have the number of testimony. It also means that we ought to maintain the character of Christ Himself as the faithful and true witness, for He has made us partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).
4. The wave loaves were baked with leaven. There was no leaven in the meal-offering (Lev. 2) which typifies Christ. Evil is present with me, said Paul (Rom. 7:21). The leaven in the wave-loaves signifies the difference between Christ and His people. But fire, representing judgment, stops the action of leaven. Hence these are baked loaves. Do we judge ourselves (1 Cor. 11:31)? Self-judgment will stop the working of leaven. There is, then, a treasure that we have in these earthen vessels. But in the earthen vessel there is sin, and this refers to our fallen nature. The prince of this world had nothing in Christ (John 14:30). In us, alas, he has material upon which to work. But fire, judgment, self-judgment, will stop it working.

Now, Christ stood forth in victorious resurrection, "marked out Son of God in power, according to [the] Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of [the] dead" (Rom. 1:4). This is the waving of the sheaf of firstfruits. Of necessity, there followed His exaltation, "far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things" (Eph. 4:11). He fills the very heart of the Father. Oh, that He might fill your heart and mine!

The exaltation took place 40 days after He rose from the dead (Acts 1). We may thus distinguish the resurrection and exaltation but not separate them morally. On the 50th day, the descent of the Spirit took place, forming what answered to the wave-loaves. Yea, His coming formed the one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:3), but this is not seen in the wave loaves. The two wave-loaves typify a testimony, like Christ Himself, to the true character of the wave-sheaf. We have observed that Acts is the history of the Spirit's testimony to the resurrection and glorification of Christ.

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST

No doubt the feast of weeks was celebrated many times in Israel. It was one of the three feasts (Ex. 23:15,16; 34:22; Deut. 16:16; 2 Chron. 8:13) at which all the males had to appear before Jehovah. This did not hinder women and children from coming however (1 Sam. 1:3,4; Luke 2:41).

Note that a record in the O. T. of this feast being kept is absent. Also, it is absent in Ezekiel 45:21-25. It will have no application in the millennium because it was fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4. What took place as recorded in Acts 2:1-4 is the formation of a new testimony to the character of the wave-sheaf. The testimony of the Jewish remnant during the great tribulation will again be the gospel of the kingdom, which John (Matt. 3:2) and our Lord (Matt. 4:17) preached. That is the testimony to the coming of the kingdom in power, as drawn nigh. That which was preached in the early part of Acts is part of the new mission, to the Gentiles (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8), beginning at Jerusalem.

## THE ALLEGED CONTINUANCE OF THE KINGDOM PROGRAM

We are told that the early part of Acts is a continuation of the kingdom program that existed before the cross. R. Jordan wrote,

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM" (Luke 24:47).

After some 40 days of personal instruction from their resurrected Lord in things "pertaining to the kingdom of God," the apostles understood that the program of God still focused on Israel and her coming kingdom:

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, LORD, WILT THOU AT THIS TIME RESTORE AGAIN THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL?" (Acts 1:6).<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting that he cited two Scriptures which show the opposite of his theory. Notice where he put the emphasis in Luke 24:47. He is trying to force continuity whereas this text explicitly states discontinuity. The program our Lord specified in Luke 24:47 was that repentance and remission of sins should be preached *among all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. This is the New program and it is not a continuation of the kingdom for Israel program. Previous to the cross the mission was expressly confined to Israel:

These twelve Jesus sent out when he had charged them, saying, Go not off into [the] way of [the] nations, and into a city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go

3. *The Grace Journal*, Nov. 1989, pp. 3,4.

rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:6).

But he answering said, I have not been sent save to the lost sheep of Israel's house (Matt. 15:24).

Subsequent to the cross, we read:

And he said to them, go into all the world and preach the glad tidings to all the creation . . . And they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working with [them], and confirming the word by the signs following upon [it] (Mark 16:15,20; cp. Heb. 2,3,4).

Then opened he their understanding to understand the scriptures, and said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:45-47).

Now observe what could be said by the time the book of Hebrews was written:

How shall we escape if we have been negligent of so great salvation, which having had its commencement in being spoken [of] by the Lord, <sup>4</sup> has been confirmed to us by those who heard; God bearing, besides, witness with [them] to [it], both by signs and wonders, and various works of power, and distributions of [the] Holy Spirit, according to his will? (Heb. 2:3,4).

How much more clearly does it need to be stated before believed? The "great salvation" the Lord spoke of was spoken by the Apostles; and had application when the book of Hebrews was written. To neglect that "great salvation" was perilous to the soul at the time of the writing of Hebrews, long after Paul was saved. Certainly more truth was revealed through Paul, but the "great salvation" was preached before Paul and was preached long after he was saved, and continues to this day -- though Paul speaks of the gospel of the glory, which is an additional subject.

Of course Peter preached to the Jews. And it is quite true that Acts 10:9-16 shows Peter's Jewish prejudices. God knew how to over-rule that. True, too, that Peter might have been slow to grasp the implication of Luke 24:47. But for all that, when guided in his preaching by the Spirit, he said, on the very day of Pentecost itself:

For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all who [are] afar off, as many as the Lord our God may call (Acts 2:39).

Yes, we Gentiles who "once were afar off" (Eph. 2:13) are included here in Acts 2:39, for the sovereign God has called us. Peter says, "For to you is the promise." I suggest that this refers to the promise of the Holy Spirit (the promise of the Father) about which the Lord had told them (Luke 24:49, etc.). And not only did Jewish believers receive the promised Holy Spirit, so did

4. See especially John's gospel.

Gentiles:

. . . in whom also, having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).

Thus we are sealed with the same Holy Spirit of promise that they received at Pentecost. How wonderfully all fits together. The point here is, however, that in Acts 2:39, Peter, guided by the Spirit, included the Gentiles.

In summary, observe these points:

1. Before the cross the preaching was confined to Israel. <sup>5</sup>
2. Subsequent to the cross the Lord told them to preach to the whole world. <sup>6</sup>
3. They preached everywhere and the Lord worked with them and confirmed this preaching everywhere with signs. <sup>7</sup>
4. The Lord told them to preach repentance and remission (forgiveness) of sins. They did so.
5. Heb. 2:3,4 calls this "great salvation" and says there was witness to it by signs.
6. The Lord told the disciples that the preaching should begin at Jerusalem.
7. The preaching, as guided by the Spirit, had those who were afar off in view.

Now, this is obviously a NEW program, not a continuation of the pre-cross program <sup>8</sup> to only the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is new in both content and audience. What the disciples understood is not the point. The question is: What was God's program? Yes, the program was to begin at Jerusalem, but that fact alone does not determine what the program was, whatever else God

5. I do not enter here on the abeyance of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom and also the introduction of the parables of the mystery form of the kingdom. It is clear that John's gospel shows the Lord speaking of the great salvation, though it awaited the atonement, His resurrection and glorification, and the descent of the Spirit for its propagation.

6. The gospel of John assumes the rejection of the Lord at its very beginning (John 1:11) and presents the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, as Saviour of the world.

7. The theory that the signs and sign gifts were for the Jews (part of the system we are noticing) is false. The signs authenticated the Apostles, as sent from Christ. Paul calls them the signs indeed of the Apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). Scripture does not state that the signs were for the Jew, though Jews sought such. "So that tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers; but prophecy, not to unbelievers, but to those who believe" (1 Cor. 14:22). Now, if you want to change the word "unbelievers" to "Jews," if you want to set up a theory that the signs were only for the Jews, as J. C. O'Hair did, and go on and on with that way of handling Scripture, you may end up holding the false system we have been noticing.

8. The Lord had spoken of bringing other sheep into one flock which were not of the (Jewish) fold (John 10:16).



may have been doing in connection with Israel.<sup>9</sup> It is expressly stated that the nations are in view. And what was the Lord's answer to the disciples' question (Acts 1:6)? Did he encourage them to expect the kingdom immediately? Quite the contrary. Indeed, in Luke 19:11-27 we are expressly told that the parable was stated because they were near Jerusalem and because the disciples "thought that the kingdom of God was about to be immediately manifested." In fact, He subsequently told them what the program would be: "... and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, *and to the ends of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). Here again is the new mission to the nations. Now, this shows a break with what preceded. Yet, because the new program was to start at Jerusalem, and it did, it is asserted that this is only a continuation of a previous kingdom program. Such false reasoning is required by the theory that the body was formed some time after Pentecost (Acts 2).

It is claimed that the "first real offer of the kingdom" was made after Pentecost (cp. Acts 3:19-21). C. R. Stam wrote, "The kingdom was not even offered to Israel until Pentecost..."<sup>10</sup> because Christ had to suffer first before the kingdom glory would be realized (cp. Luke 24:26; 1 Peter 1:11). To this I reply:

1. Certainly Christ had to suffer before the Kingdom would be inaugurated. But as a matter of fact, we now know that it was also the purpose of God (Eph. 3:11) that the assembly be formed before the kingdom would be established. The formation of the body, therefore, had to be before the kingdom. But, behold, this fact did not set aside the preaching of Acts 3:19-21. So I ask this: if a real offer of the kingdom could not be made because Christ had to suffer first, how could a "first real offer of the kingdom" be made until the body of Christ was here no longer, since in the divine purpose of the ages, the formation of the body of Christ had to precede the kingdom? Obviously, God is not limited in offering the kingdom by either case.
2. Jerusalem had to be destroyed, not necessarily before the rapture, but certainly before the setting up of the kingdom (Matt. 22:7; Luke 21:20). Yet this did not hinder the Spirit regarding what was said in Acts 3:19-21. C. R. Stam's reasoning is contrary to the facts of Scripture -- yet required by his system. Surely his system is wrong.

The objectors' delay of the kingdom offer is part of a false system and their reasoning upon it falsifies what the sovereign God can and cannot do. He did offer the kingdom in the Person of the lowly and meek Lord Jesus as a moral test to thus bring out the state of the people. This false system systematically

9. He would have a remnant according to the election of grace that was there brought into blessing while exposing the fallen state of Israel, and their resistance to the Spirit's testimony to the resurrected and glorified Christ, even as in the stoning of Stephen who testified to His place in the glory.

10. *Acts Dispensationally Considered* 1:69.

takes away from Christ what is His due. In *Thy Precepts*, May/June 1989, vol. 4, #3, pp. 87-96, there is a discussion of the offer of the kingdom to Israel when our Lord was here and is a refutation of the notion that the first real offer of the kingdom occurred after our Lord was in the glory, as well as refuting the amillenial/postmillennial notion that He did not offer an earthly kingdom.

I would just add that as J. N. Darby pointed out, the mission given in Matt. 28 is one that will be carried out by Jews in the great tribulation. I have somewhat discussed this elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

## SUMMARY

The worst feature of the Acts 9/Acts 13 system is that it lowers numbers of Christ's glories and unduly exalts His honored servant, Paul. Let us briefly review this.

1. The end of the standing and trial of the first man, in the death of Christ, is, in effect, not acknowledged.
2. And so the fall of Israel occurring upon the end of the standing and trial of the first man in the rejection and death of Christ is also not acknowledged.
3. When Christ rose from among the dead, He thus became the beginning of the new creation. He is robbed of this by asserting that the new creation began with Paul's salvation.
4. Christ's headship of the body resulted from a complex of glories: His death, resurrection, exaltation and consequent sending of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The false system, in effect, makes Christ's headship of the body devolve upon Paul.
5. Christ Himself is the One Who is the baptizer into one body. This system says that the Spirit is the baptizer into one body.
6. This system means that those in the earliest part of the Acts did not have the finished work of Christ for salvation preached to them.
7. The mission for which Christ sent the Spirit is broken into two incompatible programs which are viewed as operating simultaneously for some time.

I trust that you will clearly see that this system lowers Christ's glories. This system is not of God, Who is not the author of confusion. It is a confusion pretending to rightly divide the Word of God, whereas it is retrograde regarding dispensational and other truth.

11. *Paul's Gospel*, obtainable from the publisher. See J. N. Darby's *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 281, 282, *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 3:17, *The Bible Treasury* 12:127, 128, *Synopsis* 368, note (Stow Hill ed.).

## ADDENDUM TO CH. 2.4

There has just come to hand a periodical containing the following comments regarding Acts 7:54-56:

Don't read over this too lightly, for a tremendous change has taken place: In Acts 2 Peter warns them that Christ had *sat down* in heaven at the Father's right hand *until* that time came for Him to return in wrath and destroy His enemies. In Acts 7 Steven sees Christ *standing* -- no longer seated, but now "*standing on the right hand of God.*" There is only one scriptural explanation for the change in His posture: the time for the outpouring of His wrath had arrived. Our Lord was standing to do what Psalm 110:1 warned He would do: "make His foes His footstool." . . .

At the very *moment* when the prophetic clock had reached the hour of judgment, God in His grace *interrupted* the prophetic program by ushering in an *unprophecied* [sic] program -- a previously unknown purpose called "*the mystery*" . . . .

. . . Just as the prophetic clouds of judgment lay heaviest on the horizon, God in His infinite grace and manifold wisdom *interrupted* prophecy . . . .<sup>12</sup>

1. This falsifies the Word which says, *with respect to* His enemies, "sit until." This theory has Him sitting, getting up and then sitting again *with respect to* His enemies; so he did not do as the Psalm said: "sit until."

2. His "only one scriptural explanation," used to bolster the Acts 9 position, being false, we may look for another explanation. That kind of reasoning upon scripture to bolster a false theory reminds me of an amusing posttribulationist argument, which says, why do you pretribulationists say Christ gets up from the throne to come for the rapture seven years before He crushes his enemies, when Psa. 110:1 says he sits until then? Suppose I were to reply that Christ sat down in perpetuity (Heb. 10:12) and therefore will never get up? You would answer, 'But that sitting forever is *with respect to* the finished work on the cross.' Well, of course; but *with respect to* His enemies, He will not, nor ever has, risen from the throne until His enemies are made the footstool of His feet. That says nothing *with respect to* His martyr Stephen, nor does it say anything *with respect to* the rapture of the saints.

Ed.

12. *The Grace Journal*, vol. 3, # 5, May 1990, pp. 2,3.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

### Ch. 2:19-22.

The truth cannot be undermined without the most withering consequences, both morally and ecclesiastically. It is not only communion interrupted between Christ and His own, but divergence from and opposition to His mind, more or less distinctly. Those who undermine may be of course themselves deceived; they may flatter themselves as contributing a higher testimony. But truth is never at issue with truth: \*in Christ all is in harmony. To say that the resurrection is past already, is both the index of the grave heterodoxy at work destructive of our proper hope, while professing to give advance of privilege, and the ready instrument of deep and rapid progress in evil. For when the resurrection comes, no more need of watching unto prayer, no more endurance of affliction, no more the good fight of faith: all will be settled in power, glory, rest, and enjoyment. That we are dead and risen with Christ is true and holy, and cannot be too urgently pressed on the believer, from first to last of his career; but we, groaning within ourselves, as having the first-fruits of the Spirit, await the adoption, the redemption of our body. It will only be at Christ's coming, which the enemy would also conceal and rob us of, the most influential of all hopes for such as love Him and would know the fellowship of His sufferings. How crafty and pernicious then the device which, turning our hope into an expression of high privilege now, would thus annul our heavenly hope, destroy communion and walk, hide Christ from our heart's longing, and make rest in present things a wise and right thing!

Such was the error of Hymenaeus and Philetus: profane babblings truly, and sure to proceed farther in ungodliness, and a very gangrene in its devouring corruption. It is the overthrow of faith wherever it is accepted.

"Nevertheless the firm <sup>1</sup> foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth those that are His; and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord <sup>2</sup> depart from unrighteousness. Now in a great house there are vessels not only of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earthenware, and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor. If one therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, <sup>3</sup> serviceable for the master, prepared unto every good work. But flee youthful lusts, and follow after

1. The Alexandrian uncial has the strange error of "the foundation of God standeth to the firm."

2. Very few and poor cursives give "of Christ."

3. The copulative is wrongly inserted by many authorities, as in the Text. Rec.

righteousness, faith, love, peace, with <sup>4</sup> those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (ver. 19-22).

It may be well that the reader should know how much speculation has wrought about "the foundation of God." Some have conjectured that it is the doctrine of the resurrection, others the promises, some again election. Further, it has been supposed to be the church, or again, with better reason, Christ Himself. But there seems no sufficient ground for defining the foundation in this place. If the Holy Spirit has left it general, why should any seek to limit the thought? The object clearly is to mark what abides firm and of God, in the midst of confusion and ruin; and to use that immutable foundation for the comfort and good courage of all who desire to do His will. Doctrines, promises, election, are out of the question; and the church, or the believer, is rather that for which provision is made in the midst of the existing disorder. On the face of it the house cannot be the foundation; and it seems unreasonable to argue that Christ Himself should be said to have this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are His;" and "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

Nothing more simple or important if the firm foundation of God be taken in the abstract; those who stand upon it are on the one side comforted, on the other solemnly admonished. The state of things was such that one could no longer suppose all who composed the church to be members of Christ's body. Carelessness had allowed a harvest of weakness and shame; the godly were compelled to fall back on the assurance that the Lord knoweth them that are His, but along with that they could not press christian responsibility-"Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

It will be noticed that here it is no question of "Christ," but of "the Lord." "Christ" is the proper expression where grace known and enjoyed is before the heart; "the Lord" as properly comes into use where profession and responsibility hold good. Even if there be no real communion, there can be no doubt that such is the case in the clause before us; and such is the reading of the best and most ancient authorities followed by all modern critics, even though they may have no notion of the difference in the truth intended.

There is, however, a great deal more, and of paramount importance, in that which the apostle adds, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earthenware, and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor." There we have a living picture of what the church was becoming. How different from the view given in the First Epistle 3:15! There the house of God is said to be the church of the living God, the pillar and stay of the truth. It is the church on earth, God's habitation in the Spirit, as that

which alone here below presents and maintains the truth before all men. The Jews had not the truth, but the law; the Gentiles had only vanities, and corruptions, and dreams of men. The assembly of the living God held forth the truth before all eyes. But now, in the Second Epistle, the influx, not only of ease, instead of suffering, and of timidity, instead of courage, and of false doctrines, even in fundamentals, gave occasion for the Spirit of God to represent a far different condition. It is not that the Spirit of God has abandoned His seat, but He no longer characterizes the house as that of the living God. It may assume a greater appearance but there is far more unreality. "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earthenware." Long before the apostle (1 Cor. 3:5) had prepared us for that which might be built even upon Christ Himself. Who among even true servants is like Paul, a wise master-builder? Every one therefore should take heed how he builds thereon. One might build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones; another, on the contrary, might build upon it wood, hay, stubble; too many, a mixture of both. And the day shall declare as the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. That which abides is proved to be acceptable to God; that which cannot stand the fire will be so far loss to the workman, even though he himself shall be saved. Here in the second Epistle to Timothy the apostle is looking not at the process but at the result. In a great house there are not only precious vessels but the commonest, "and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor." God's house therefore is here regarded as reduced to a human comparison. It was becoming just like what we find among men on the earth, it has no longer that exclusively divine stamp which one used to expect in God's house. Failure in many ways has vitiated the testimony; and the result is that mixture which is so abhorrent to God and to those who love His will and Himself.

What is to be done then? Are we to accept His dishonor, and to lie down in despair? Or must one be bound hand or foot to unity, and shut one's eyes to all the sin and shame? A lowly-minded saint would feel bitterly the dilemma, and could not satisfy his soul by verbal protests against the evil he was sanctioning by his actual life and ways. In such a state it is well to humble one's self, and like Daniel to confess the sins of all one is associated with, as well as one's own sins. But is this all? Thank God, it is not; the apostle immediately gives precise and authoritative direction. The most timid need not fear to follow; the heart most oppressed is entitled to be of good cheer; and those who cleave to the allowance of evil, under the plea of not breaking unity, are rebuked and confounded by the apostle's call, "If one therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, &c."

When the assembly is in its normal condition, and an evil-doer, however gross, is among the saints, the word is, "Put away from among yourselves the wicked person." But here it is the converse. Evil may prevail in an assembly, and the moral sensibility be so low that the mass refuse to purge out the old leaven: the vessels unto dishonor have influence enough to remain in spite of

4. Even Lachmann edited, "all" here, on considerable authority, but not the best. It is a gloss from Acts 9:14; 1 Cor. 1.

all efforts for their removal. What then? The apostle commands that the God-fearing man should purge himself from them. This meets the conscience if it were of only one; but the self-same principle, it is plain, applies to all who discern the evil, after patient waiting on the assembly and every scriptural means also employed in vain to rouse the conscience. At bottom it is evidently the same principle of separation from evil, which in 1 Cor. v. is applied to put the evil-doer out. In 2 Tim. ii. it is a far more developed case where the well-doer, having striven without effect to correct the evils sustained within, is bound to purge himself out. Impossible that the Spirit of God would seal evil under the name of the Lord Jesus. We are unleavened as surely as Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The assembly which professes to be of God cannot bind Christ and known evil together. If any therefore bear the Lord's name, who, under the plea of unity, in the love of ease, or through partiality for their friends, tolerate the evil which scripture shows to be hateful to God, a godly man has no option, but is bound to hear the divine word and to purge himself from these vessels to dishonor.

Doubtless this application of God's immutable holiness to guide the saint in these sad and difficult circumstances is a novel one. The apostle only gave it in the last Epistle he ever wrote. The reason is manifest: no occasion as yet had risen to call for so serious a word. Disorders had often been, and some of extreme character; but hitherto the saints, however faulty, had broken down, and obedience at last had prevailed. No need had ever existed for a just abandonment of those who had walked together in the assembly. But here the Spirit of God brings before the apostle's eyes a new and still more appalling result of the increasing power of evil. Whenever vessels to dishonor are forced on our acceptance, we have no choice: the honor of the Lord is above all other considerations; and, whether it be the most valiant, or the most timid, we are alike called to obey the apostle's command which applies to this state. Let us only be sure that the evil does really call for absolute separation; and, further, that patient and godly remonstrance are duly applied to get the evil judged, rather than to separate. But if it be sheltered and sustained to the dishonor of the Lord and His word, there is no alternative but to purge one's self out.

In these circumstances to give up conscience is in effect to give up God and His Christ; humbly but firmly to purge one's self from the vessels of dishonor is to be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, serviceable for the Master, prepared unto every good work. So it is ever found in experience: godly separation costs much but gains more. He that separates lightly for a mere idea or reasons of his own, is but sounding brass, and gathers profit for neither himself nor anyone else; yea, he is a standing reproach against the Lord and His word where it truly applies. But the saint who purges himself out with the deepest pain to himself and godly sorrow for others, and the rather because he believes them to be the Lord's, enters into fresh blessing, and renews, as it were, all that

is proper to a saint, with fresh power to his own soul. "He shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, serviceable for the Master, prepared unto every good work." Such an assurance is the more comforting, because he must make up his mind for the keenest shafts from those he has left behind, as well as from all who confound easy indifference with love for the church of God. Besides, he might dread a narrow circle for his affections, and a contracted sphere for his work. How gracious that the Lord should forestall all these apprehensions and give him the promise, if he have gone through the great trial with God, of enlargement of heart in all that is for His glory.

It may be noticed that there is no such thought as quitting the house, though some have fallen into the misconception in their zeal for holiness. But we could not, and would not, so long as we bear the Lord's name. An apostate no doubt has abandoned His name. But to purge one's self from vessels to dishonor is here laid down as a positive duty, and, so far from being presumption, is simple obedience to the word of the Lord if done rightly. It is therefore the path of true and divinely given humility, whatever be the terrorism sought to be exercised by those who seek dominion over the faith of the saints. Purging one's self from evil-doers within the house is not to leave the house, but to walk there as one ought according to scripture.

So it was at the Reformation. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Cranmer, did not leave the house of God when they rejected the mass, the worship of the saints, the authority of the pope, and other evil doctrines and practices. On the contrary, they were learning, however slowly and imperfectly to renounce what disfigured that house, and was most antagonistic to Him Who dwelt there. It was only the gross bigoted ignorance of Romanists which taxed them with leaving the house of God. The papal party assumed, as other pretenders are apt to do, that they exclusively form that house; whereas, as far as the Reformation went, the godly among the Protestants sought to purge themselves from vessels to dishonor, while the Romanists clave only the more pertinaciously to the evil, and thus became increasingly guilty. But both were in the house all the same; only some more acceptably to God, others more offensively, than before.

The principle applies no less when the godly amongst Protestants, and Romanists began to discern the true character of the church, and the wrong done by prevalent error and evil practice, not merely to the members, but to the Head of the body. This led, through a better knowledge of the written word, to the distinct conviction of the injured rights of the Holy Ghost in the assembly as well as in ministry. And those who were thus taught of God clearly saw that they must carry out the truth in faith practically, and so seek to glorify the Lord. It were wretched and ungrateful to grieve the Spirit by treating all they had learnt as mere ideas for discussion or criticism of existing thoughts and ways. But by thus acting faithfully as far as they knew, did they thereby leave the house? The very reverse; they were only striving, in deference to scripture and in dependence on the Lord, to behave themselves better in that house. Christendom is not given up by walking more according to God's will in the

true path for Christians, whether individually or corporately. And the self-same principle is no less valid at any time, no matter how truly gathered the saints may once have been. Vessels to dishonor cannot enjoy Christ's sanction, and ought to be intolerable to the faithful. "If one purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honor."

But the tendency is great to press this searching truth on others, and to claim, without saying so, an immunity for ourselves: so readily does the assembly slip away, from the faithfulness of the Lord when really leaned on, to set up a gradually growing plea of indefectibility. For faith degenerates into superstition the more rapidly as spirituality declines, love decays, knowledge becomes more self-complacent, and forms displace reality. A new and pettier Rome soon develops and is cried up as the only right thing. Yet the truth abides for the Spirit to use for Christ's glory, whenever the eye is, or is made, single. We are bound, if we would please Him, to sift ourselves by His word even more rigidly than others.

Nor does the apostle forget personal dangers when one might be pre-occupied with public evils. "But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (Ver. 22). It is of high moment, especially in the circumstances of clearing ourselves from what ensnares many a saint, and perhaps had ourselves too more or less in times past, that we should not give occasion to them that seek it. In vain do you testify against that which is ecclesiastically offensive to God, if you fail in conduct plainly enough to be seen by those virtually censured. Hence the care of Paul to urge earnestly on Timothy to beware of that which might hinder or trouble, and the rather then and thus. Lusts youthful must be shunned, not only worldly or carnal but "youthful," such as impetuosity, self-confidence, levity, impatience, or the like. Nor is it enough to watch against what elders might chiefly resent: he was to pursue practical consistency or righteousness, to walk in faith, not mere human prudence or policy, to hold fast love, not selfish interests, and to maintain peace, not allow strife or push for his own will.

But more; he is encouraged to do all this in personal association and mutual action with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. I cannot agree with a German's suggestion (followed by Alford, Ellicott, &c.) to remove the comma after "peace," so as to separate "with those that call," &c. from the verb, and connect it only with the substantive immediately preceding. Heb. 12:14 has no real analogy with the clause; for to limit the pursuance of peace to those that so call on the Lord would give the poorest possible sense, as being such as presented the least strain. Not so: the faithful man, if he purged himself from vessels to dishonor, and walked in self-judgment and cultivation of ways pleasing to the Lord, is cheered with the prospect of companionship in his path.

(Continued on p. 113)

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## NON-PUBLISHED PAPERS AVAILABLE

The following papers, written by the editor, are available as 8 1/2" x 11" sheets. They contain a large number of quotations from others.

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16 pages. \$3.00 postage paid.

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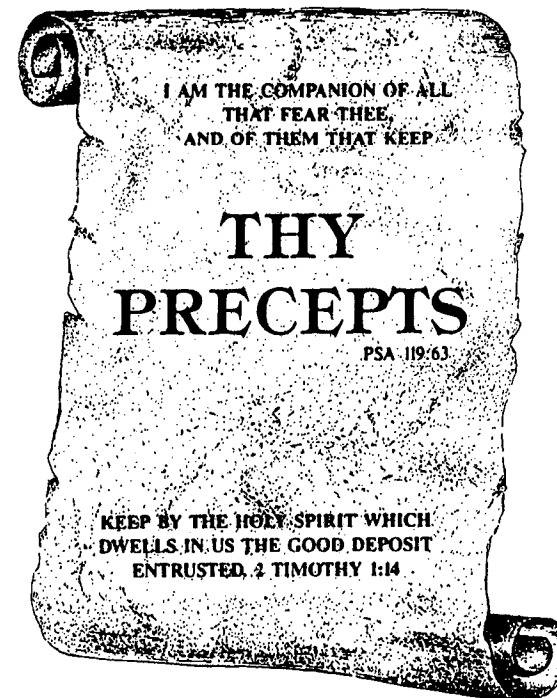
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## CONTENTS

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Manifestation of the Divine Nature .....	129
Extracts .....	136
Filling the Lump with Honey .....	137
God's Order .....	138
The Promise of the Lord: Matt. 18:20 .....	148
This Generation Shall not Pass ... ..	148
Extract .....	150
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	151
Extracts .....	160

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## MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE

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### THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST

(continued from vol. 5, # 4)

John the Baptist, contrasting Him with himself, says, "He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; He that cometh from heaven is above all; and what He *hath seen and heard* that He testifieth" (John 3:31,32); and again He says Himself, "He that hath sent me is true, and I speak *to the world* those things that I have *heard of Him*," and, as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8:26,28), and, "He that sent me is with me, the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him" (*ver.* 29). Again, both to the Jews and to the disciples, He avers that the words and the works were expressive, not only of what He was essentially, but also demonstrative of His oneness with the Father. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not, but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is *in me and I in Him*" (John 10:37,38). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" and this, "*he* that hath seen" is *absolute*, not limited to the disciples. Referring again to His works and words, and the consequent guilt of His rejection by the world, He says, "Now have they both *seen* and hated *both me and my Father*" (John 15:24). His words therefore, and all that He did were the expression of this perfect unity, and were spoken in the infinite communion which flowed from it. If He had to return to communion with His Father, He must have quitted it, and His words have ceased to be the manifestation of that divine unity, which *He* unequivocally declares they exhibited.

The Apostle John speaks in his Epistle of "the *Word of Life*," for *the life* was manifested; "that *eternal life* which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1:2). This is the essential nature of what was divine in the Person of Christ, *before* manifestation, *when* manifested, and (elsewhere in

Scripture) as *now* on high. As seen in the world, He *could* not but display it, for it is what He was and is, essentially, whether before man or with the Father. It includes what He is *personally* and in *relationship*, for it was "(παρά) with the Father," which is the expression of personal relationship; whilst "the Word of Life" indicates the manifestation of the mind of God; and "the Word" again identifies it with the Person who was with God, and was God, and was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:1,2,14). Not to express this life when on earth, wherever and before whomsoever He was, must have been to cease, to exist, or to be Himself, in the world.

We have the Word presented to us in John 1 in all its varied relations, in the absoluteness of Godhead, *with God*, and *as God*, the eternal Creator; then in connection with men as having entered the scene where men were. Was the "life" invisible? Just the opposite; it was universal light, for it shines upon every man, and shows everything in its true character. "That which doth make manifest is light." Angels saw God displayed for the first time, though borrowing light, so to speak, from that which was given as the Light of *men*. This Word of life, carried with it as the Light of men, its attractive, penetrating, exposing, and quickening character. Not a ray of divine Light was wanting; all was displayed, and displayed to the world and among men, and to men. "Yet a little while is the Light with you," says the Lord: "Walk whilst ye have" (not some light) but "the Light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the Light, that ye may be the children of light" (John 12:35,36).

The moral qualities of this divine or eternal life displayed in the world are light and love. "God is light," and "God is love," and it was impossible for the one to be hidden, as the other, when Christ was here. Indeed they cannot be separated in manifestation, in what He is, or God would be falsified. These are, as has been observed, the only two essential properties of the divine nature. For righteousness, holiness, majesty, &c., are all attributes, and are relative, whilst light and love are absolute. Constantly therefore in Scripture we find them associated in the manifestation of what was divine in this world (John 3:16,19, 1 John 1:5, 4:8,9, 2:8,11). The latter passage, which refers to its manifestation *in us* shows that they must co-exist (see *ver.* 9,10) as flowing from what Christ is, "which thing" (speaking of the new commandment, love) "*is true in Him and in you*, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." Again, in ch. 3:14, of this Epistle, love is given as the evidence of *this life* in us in association with Christ. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." In the Gospel of John we have the characteristics of this life, which display, either what God is to man, or the Son as come from the Father; in the Epistle more of the traits of this life as manifested in the Christian. Hence righteousness, dependence, obedience, &c., are added, as well as all the enjoyment of relationship and communion. But all is included in the

display (John 14:31).

As the Son also, manifesting the Father, and coming from the Father into the world, He bore *a glory* (when "made flesh") adapted to the condition of man; "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This grace and truth shone out in the world, and this was in contrast with the law, which had indeed a glory of its own, for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth (that which God was, as meeting the evil, and as supremely above it) came by Jesus Christ. "*No man* hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." It is the absolute manifestation of God, as the Father, through the Son, according to what the divine nature was (in itself and even in relationship, the Son in the bosom of the Father), which brought out all the grace which could be displayed through such a medium, and in terms which render evident, that God in this divine perfection, never could have been seen or known otherwise. If sin had not been in the world, and man what he was and is, never should we have seen all that was heavenly, and all that was divine, expressed in infinite perfection. Had aught of that perfection been hidden, God had not been completely glorified, nor man fully tested; nor could it have been displayed, save in the unity of the divine nature, and in the perfect communion with the Father, deep and full as the Godhead itself.

But not only this, the world into which He came was a world into which sin had entered, and death and ruin were all around Him. In the absence of all that was of God, of all divine life, the necessities of the soul of man were deep, the ruin infinite; for men were not only in darkness, but "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, by reason of the hardness of their heart." Was there nothing in Christ, as the Eternal Life, responding to their condition? adapted to this moral ruin? suited to the wants of the soul awakened, when light from God enters, or when it begins to say: "How many hired servants of my Father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my Father, &c." (Luke 15:15,17,18)?

Was not His presence here the answer on God's part, or rather that of the Father, to this need, as well as fitted to awaken the sense of it? He Himself makes use of the illustration -- the Manna, the bread which came down from heaven, to satisfy the necessities of Israel in the desert. "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a *man* may eat thereof and not die; I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:50,51). Again, "I am the bread of life." Is not this personal and eternal? and, "my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:32,33,35). Again, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37,38), for from Him the



streams of eternal life flow. What also does He Himself tell us of "His words," which He spoke at this very time (John 6.) at Capernaum? "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and *they are life*." And again of His words which He had received of the Father who "gave Him commandment what He should say and what He should speak"? "I know that His commandment *is life everlasting*, whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Does this imply that these words of life (or all that Christ *was* as the Eternal Life, the Light of life, the Bread of life, or the Giver of the water of life), were received? No. But the effect was felt, as the reply in John 6 tells: "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Whilst not only could the Apostle Peter say, "Thou hast the words of eternal life"; but the officers sent by the chief priests and scribes to take Him, were disarmed by them, giving as the reason why they could not touch Him, "Never man spake like this man"; and these words of eternal life, because they were such, form the judgment of those who have rejected them at the last day (John 12:48-50).

But if this eternal life manifested in the world, and for man as such, in these varied ways and aspects, is denied, how deep is the deprivation to souls: how much of the beauty and attractiveness of the Gospel has disappeared! Like the Calvinistic system, which is limited to the elect, and has not only something to offer to *them*; instead of Christ as the Eternal Life being the blessed display of, and response on, God's part to the spiritual wants of the human soul -- man, as such, is excluded from its sympathy and its outflow; though the words "whosoever," and "any man," constantly tell of the universality of its character, as it has been so often proclaimed, as coming down from the heart of God to sinners in this world.

Even His relationship and intercourse with the Father, and the Father's delight in Him, is positively declared among men, and this not only in the Gospel of John, but in Matthew also, the most Jewish of all the Gospels in its aspect. This at once accounts for the revelation of the Father's name in that Gospel, and shows that whilst we may see and learn much from the varied presentation of the features of the blessed Person of the Savior in these different Gospels, we must beware of restricting them, or excluding what does not appear to be the special subject of the Spirit of God in that Gospel; for some additional ray of glory may, according to the perfection of that Person, throw further light on our view of His dignity and beauty, and on the Scripture itself. See Matt. 11:27.

In the Gospel of John, the Lord refers, amongst other public and emphatic testimonies that had been rendered to His glorious Person, to that of the Father, as special and above all other testimony to the Jews, saying: "The Father Himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me" (John 5). But it is remarkable that this testimony of the Father is much more fully given in the Gospel of Matthew, where the heavens open over Him (for He is the object of

heaven, though in humiliation here on earth), the Spirit, like a dove, descends upon Him, and the voice of the Father is openly heard, saying in language that invites the attention of all, "*This* is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:14,17). This revelation by the Father accounts for the grace made known, and in which the Father is revealed and acts in this Gospel, and the consequent conduct to be exhibited by the believer in manifesting the grace of the Father, as above the evil in this world (Matt. 5.), which is far beyond what the revelation of the Messiah would imply. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 4:48).

It has been said that when the Lord retired to a remote part of Israel's land, to the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and would have no man know it; surely this was not the display of divine life? Who is this, we may reply, that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Is this the light in which the Holy Ghost presents this remarkable scene to us? (Matt. 20. and Mark 7.) Grieved with the unbelief and the blindness occasioned by the formal religion which enveloped the people that He loved and hindered their discerning His glory -- a grief which He expressed elsewhere in the words, "How long shall I be with you and suffer you," -- He withdraws and takes the place and attitude described in the prophet: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon Jehovah who *hideth His face* from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him" (Is. 8:16,17). This was a divine action, and suited to the moment. He hides His face full of grace and healing power from an unbelieving nation. The Spirit's comment on this is, "But He could not be hid," for it was impossible that the beauty of that light could cease to penetrate even into some dark recesses of the human heart, where need existed. The Syrophenician woman attracted by it (though the Lord does not forget even then the primary claims of Israel), touches the spring of *divine fullness* of blessing, that was there overflowing even to the dogs. This could not be limited to the Jews, but reached even to a Gentile outcast in the distance, for God was manifest in grace, and she receives the response, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matt. 15:28).

It will be now intelligible why John 3: 14-16, containing the beautiful type of the brazen serpent, has been taken away from the sinner as such, and we are told it is "*not the beginning* of the Gospel." But Scripture shows that it is for those who are "*perishing*," and in death, an effect of the serpent's power, and goes on to say, "*For* God so loved *the world* that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). So that in both cases we have the perishing condition and eternal life, first in the death of the Son of *Man* on behalf of man (John 6:51); and then the love of *God* who has given *His Son* for *the world* and bestows *eternal life* according to the value of that gift, with *whosoever* believeth added in each case. Was He not lifted up for the world to see, as an effect of God's love, and there and then, that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life?" But no, all this would not suit the system which denies that

eternal life is presented to the world, and is a conditional relationship in which the world of course could have no interest. The most beautiful display of Christ's person and work to the world, and which has been so wonderfully blessed to souls, is gone, and has even become "repulsive."<sup>1</sup> Whilst another teacher avowed that he could not preach the Gospel any more from the Gospel of John.

But this manifestation of that life which was divine or eternal so characterized the Person of the Blessed Lord that the body was included in it. As the Apostle says: "That which was from the beginning . . . which our hands have handled, of the Word of life" (1 John 1:1).<sup>2</sup> Sometimes it flowed out in such power, that "the whole multitude sought to touch Him for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all;" sometimes He makes use of that which flowed from His body as conveying this living power; as when He made clay of spittle and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay (John 9:6), figure of divine power and the humiliation of manhood combined (see also Mark 7:33; 8:23). There remains the glorious expression of this Eternal Life which is in Him, when applied to His saints, to put them in the same condition of life and glory as Himself. To this He alludes, in reply to the inadequate thoughts of Martha, when He says: "I am the resurrection and *the Life*; he that believeth in Me though he were dead yet *shall he live*: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die" (John 11:25,26). This life was in Him then, for it is what He is, in Himself. When this shines forth from Him in quickening power it will raise to life and swallow up mortality in life, for those who remain, and fill the whole scene with this grand and wondrous exhibition of what He is essentially in His own Person. Not only we have this word, "*I am*," applied so often to the fullness of Eternal Life, in such varied aspects and ways, but finally He is presented in the Revelation as the Tree of life, in the paradise or city of God, bearing *twelve* manner of fruits, on which our souls shall feed throughout eternity; whilst during the Millennium the leaves of this Tree of life, "are for the healing of the nations." and the water of life "proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1,2).

Christ is spoken of personally and essentially as the Life or the Eternal Life, just as He is addressed as "Jehovah," or as "the Word;" for to be the source and spring of spiritual life, to give it or to maintain it, is a divine prerogative, and this Eternal Life is a special manifestation or aspect of the divine in Him. But though it is what He is essentially, it does not, any more than His title of "Jehovah," or than that of "the Word," include all that He is essentially; hence the idea that the participation in it introduces us into Deity, which is given as a

1. This comes from a mistake in not distinguishing the word "manifest" in John 14:21-22, from "manifested" in 1 John 1-2.

2. This was when He became incarnate as the words "from the beginning" show, and not merely in resurrection life. They could not handle or gaze upon a sphere or condition.

reason for its being a condition or relationship, and not what Christ is personally, is a mistake; for it is not a question of His divine attributes, such as omniscience, omnipotence, &c., which are incommunicable, but of the moral qualities of the divine nature, in which we can participate, being made "partakers of the divine nature;" "the seed of God remains in him" (the believer), "and he cannot sin because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9).<sup>3</sup>

It is because it is personal, and that blessed Person who is the true God and Eternal Life, *is the Son*, that we who now believe, through His death and resurrection are introduced into His blessed relationship with the Father, for now He shares, as Man, what He had before the world was, with the Father, and having united us with Himself as Man risen from the dead, He can bring us into the sweetness and blessedness of what was His own with the Father. "Then I was by Him as one brought up with Him" (Prov. 8:30); "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18); and if there is this divine glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, out of His fullness *have we all* received, and grace for grace (ver. 18); so that we share in the Father's love to Him, and in all the depth of this relationship. "Go, tell my brethren, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and unto my God and your God" (John 20:17). As He says Himself, when speaking of His own nearness, and the joy of relationship, "These things I speak in the world that they might have *my joy* fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13).<sup>4</sup>

But if Eternal life is "not imparted to us," as we are now told, and if it is not Christ Himself, and what He was before the world began, and if it was not manifested to the world; not only there is no link with this infinite fullness, but it becomes some ideal mystic invisible thing, a sphere or condition, substituted for the divine reality presented to us in the Word of God.

It was the revelation of the Father, in contrast with Judaism and the knowledge of Jehovah in covenant relationship with His earthly people, which introduced into this new position of sonship and eternal life in its heavenly associations and character; for according to Matt. 25:31, Rom. 14:2 [sic], it has its earthly sphere and associations as well as its heavenly. But here the Lord takes His place on high, in the glory He had with the Father before the world

3. For God quickens by His Word, which is the expression of His nature, or what He is morally, just as a man's breath and words are the expression of what he is. Hence Christ is called "the Word," as well as the "Life," or "the Eternal life."

4. Mr. Darby gives us the clue to this in the following passage; "Christ introduces [us] into the enjoyment of that which is His own -- of His own position before the Father. This is blessedly true in every respect, except, of course, essential Godhead and oneness with the Father; in this He remains divinely alone. But all He has as Man, *and as Son in manhood*, He introduces [us] into. 'My Father and your Father, my God and your God.' His peace, His joy, the words the Father gave to Him, He hath given to us; the glory given to Him, He has given to us; with the love wherewith the Father has loved Him we are loved." -- *Synopsis (John)* p. 541.

was (and where His own are to be with Him, and behold Him) -- in order to give eternal life. Yet He says: "I *have* declared unto them Thy name and *will* declare it." So that it was not only declared, and eternal life thus given, *after His death*, resurrection, and ascension had brought it out fully, but as we have seen in principle or germ whilst He was *here on earth*, and as a consequence of His glorious Person being known as Son of the Father (John 6:40).

This brings us to the subject of eternal life manifested in the believer. In 2 Cor. 4:10-13, the Apostle speaks of "the life of Jesus being made manifest in our mortal flesh." The remark has been made upon this passage, that it is the human life of Christ, and not the divine that is referred to here. This is, in fact, to divide His blessed Person, as if the human and divine could be separated, and shows the deteriorating effect of these views, and that in result they lower the character of life in the Christian, as well as sever it from its proper spring. We have seen that Eternal Life cannot be limited or divided in the Person of Christ, nor does Scripture allow of any such limitation in the case of the believer. The words, "the life of Jesus," relate to what He was personally, for as the name Jesus means "Jehovah Saviour," "for He shall save *His* people from their sins," it involves all that He was, and all the perfections of that divine life which have been displayed in Him, as well as all that He is now.

A. C. Ord

(to be continued if the Lord will)

## EXTRACTS

God may take up bad clay and grit, and have to pass it through every sort of process, but the skilful Master-hand will form of it a vessel fit for His own use. If God means to place me up there as a vessel to display His glory, is it not separation of a very peculiar character that He looks for now?

In connection with the names written on the breast-plate . . . every time the high priest breathed, the breast-plate moved; and I am not on the breast-plate, but in the heart of Christ. I am connected with every throb of that loving hearts of Christ. I can see Him as my justification before God, and God reckoning to me all that He is. God looks upon the blood of His Son sprinkled on me. That Son of His love is seated as Man on His right hand, with every capacity to feel as man, and to enter into things that affect us down here. Yes, He has the feelings of a man, and is entering into ours.

To meet the Lord in the air -- what a volume in those words! Nothing can give cheerfulness in the thought of treading a path never trod before, but the Lord Himself being there -- meeting Him there.

G. V. Wigram

## FILLING THE LUMP WITH HONEY

J. G. Bellett wrote:

He [our Lord Jesus] was not to be drawn into softness, when the occasion demanded faithfulness, and yet he passed by many circumstances which human sensibilities would have resented, and which the human moral sense would have judged it well to resent. He would not gain his disciples after the poor way of amiable nature. Honey was excluded from the offerings made by fire as well as leaven. The meat offering had none of it (Lev. 2:11); neither had Jesus, the true meat offering. It was not the merely civil, amiable thing that the disciples got from their Master. It was not the courtesy that consults for the ease of another. He did not gratify, and yet he bound them to him very closely; and this is power. There is always moral power when the confidence of another is gained without its being sought; for the heart has then become conscious of the reality of love. "We all know," writes one, "how to distinguish between love and attention, and that there may be a great deal of the latter without any of the former. Some might say, attention must win our confidence; but we know ourselves that nothing but love does." This is so true. Attention, if it be mere attention, is honey, and how much of this poor material is found with us! and we are disposed to think that it is all well, and perhaps we aim no higher than to purge out leaven, and fill the lump with honey. Let us be amiable, perform our part well in the civil, courteous, well-ordered social scene, pleasing others, and doing what we can to keep people on good terms with themselves, then we are satisfied with ourselves and others with us also. But is this service to God? Is this a meat offering? Is this found as part of the moral glory of perfect man? Indeed, indeed it is not. We may naturally judge, I grant, that nothing could do it better or more effectually; but still it is one of the secrets of the sanctuary, that honey was not used to give a sweet savour to the offering.

*The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus*, pp. 21,22.

The hope of the Lord's coming is a divine hope, centered in Himself; not only rejoicing in hope of the glory of God -- more than that, waiting for Christ Himself, who, being now in the very highest point of glory as Son of man in the glory which He had with God before the world was, will come forth from that glory to take us up. How are your hearts affected in regard to the thought of this Christ of God not only coming to throw open the Father's house, but coming Himself to be our joy? Can you say that the longing of your hearts is flowing forth in the invitation continually ascending, "Come Lord Jesus?" That Nazarene has it in His heart to come, and if He speaks and says, "Surely I come quickly," have such words, dropping from His lips, the continual answer in your heart, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

G. V. Wigram

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## GOD'S ORDER

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### THE HOUSE OF GOD

(continued from v. 5, # 4)

#### ENJOYMENT WITH THE FATHER

##### IN GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

The second aspect of the House of God is that, as His children through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we know Him as our Father. The thought of having God as our Father is one that completely transcends the grasp of the human mind. However, we have our Lord's own assurance that this wondrous relationship is an eternal fact for those who are His brethren (see John 20:17). Here we have another amazing truth for our hearts to enter into, and that is that the Son of God so loves us that He has made us suited to be His brethren (Heb. 2:11,12). A further equally amazing reality is that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and enables us to cry, "Abba, Father" -- the cry of a known relationship as sons (see Rom. 8:14-16 and Gal. 4:6). While it is wonderful that God has set His love upon us, and in love provided His Son as our Savior, yet this could have brought us into divine favor but still left us at a distance in terms of having no relationship with God. The position of children, and particularly as sons, has brought us into the nearest intimacy with God, which none other of His creatures enjoy. We know that we have a most precious relationship now with the Son as His Assembly and Body, and in the eternal future as His Bride, but for now we are only considering our place in the family of God -- especially as our Father.

In inspiring the several writers of the New Testament the Holy Spirit directed the usage of the exact words to suit the separate presentations which He chose each writer for. Thus we find that there are two distinct words used in the original language of the New Testament which are not always properly translated in our excellent Authorized Version by King James. However, a careful check in any reputable concordance of the Bible will disclose that the two words are "*Teknon*" and "*Huios*". In the New Translation by Mr. J. N.

Darby there is a footnote, found in the G. Morrish edition in reference to Mark 7:27, which explains the difference between these two words as follows: "Here 'children' in the sense of being born of the family, often used by John to signify this relationship in Christians, as born of God; different from *Huios*, 'grown up to be sons'." It is instructive for us to realize that in all of the apostle John's writings he uses the word "*Teknon*" (i.e. "children") and never the word "*Huios*" (i.e., "sons"). Whereas, the apostle Paul uses both words according to the subject matter of his writing requiring the distinction to be made. John writes concerning the relationship of believers as "children" of God, which is the relationship through "*being born . . . of God*" (John 1:13). As "children" we are in God's family in all the privileges of it. Paul introduces the term "sons" when responsibility and dignity are involved.

##### As Children

What a wonderful relationship we have, that instead of being of the sinful and condemned family of Adam we are those to whom John writes, "*See what love the Father has given to us, that we should be called [the] children of God*" (1 John 3:1). Then, in Eph.2:18 we learn that, "*for through Him [i.e. Christ Jesus] we have both [i.e. Jew and Gentile] access by one Spirit to the Father.*" Becoming "children" is the result of the essential operation of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of the Word of God, which we believe through the faith which God gives to us. The various scriptures which cover these points are -- 1 Pet.1:23 as to the instrumentality of the Word; John 1:12 as to belief on our part; Eph. 2:8 affirms that faith which is needful in order to believe is given to us by God; John 3:8 presents to us the divine and sovereign work of the Holy Spirit by Whom we are actually born anew. God has given us not only a new life in Christ but a new relationship with Himself, such that He can enjoy us and we respond to Him in divine affections.

##### As Sons

Not only are we "children of God" but we are also "sons of God". Our being "sons" is not as the result of spiritual generation through "*being born . . . of God*" (we are "children" through this means) but, through God "*having marked us out beforehand for adoption through Jesus Christ to Himself*" (Eph.1:5). In his note on this verse in Eph. Mr.Darby refers to his note in Gal.4:5 in connection with "sonship" as follows: "or 'adoption'. It is receiving the position of sonship as a gift. 'Receive' has an active force here. Jew and Gentile received it as a gift from another, even freely from God; for the Jew was in bondage under law: the Gentile had right to nothing: see Rom.8:15,23; 9:4; Eph.1:5." In Heb. 3:14 we get another beautiful truth. Heb. 2:10 says, "*For it became Him (i.e. God), for whom [are] all things, in bringing many sons to glory . . .*", then we learn from Heb. 3:14, "*For we are become companions of the Christ . .*" Is this not a wonderful thing, to be brought into such honored

relationship with the Father as His sons and to become companions of the Christ -- ever bearing in mind that our blessed Lord has in all things the pre-eminence which in this aspect involves,

"... God, thy God, has anointed Thee with oil of gladness above Thy companions." (Heb. 1:8).

### What Does the Relationship of Father Involve?

First, perhaps, our thoughts turn to the realization that "the Father loves". We learn that the Father's love embraces His eternal and only Son, as the One of absolute and paramount interest to Him. We also learn that the Son loves the Father, and the two scriptures which present to our hearts the reciprocal love between the Father and the Son, in connection with the Son undertaking the work which was given Him to do, are found in John 10:17, "*On this account the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.*" and John 14:31, "*but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has commanded Me, thus I do. Rise up, let us go hence.*" We are considering extremely precious and delicate matters, but what a marvelous thing it is that the Lord tells us, "*he that loves Me shall be loved by my Father*" (John 14:21).

When we read of the reciprocal love of the Father and the Son we have an understanding of something very intimate and exclusive to Themselves. Yet, and this should bow our hearts in worship and praise, we learn that "*the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them*". There is a Personal eternal bond of love between the Father and the Son and this same love is what the Lord desired that we should realize for ourselves. What then do we learn from this revelation of the Father in the Son when He (the Son) was here on earth? Do we not find in Him the perfect answer to all matters that relate to our place as sons in the Father's family of saints? Was there not perfect unanimity between the Father and the Son in all matters -- no discord, nor deviation of thought, word or action? Was there not also the perfect display of the joy and peace that this eternal relationship between the Father and the Son ever had without any disturbance whatsoever? What did the circumstances of this scene do to affect the personal joy and peace of our beloved Lord? Nothing at all. He ever walked in the intimacy of the Father's love and in the knowledge of His approval of all that He was doing here on earth. Are we as completely dedicated to the Father's will as He (The Son) was? No, nor will we ever be, but we can certainly be much more so than we are. Do we reciprocate the Father's love for us as His Son did to Him? No, nor shall we ever do, but we can certainly do more than we do. It is easy to say that we love Him because He first loved us, but what we need to examine ourselves about is -- do we love Him as He loves us and as much as He deserves to be loved by us! If we did then there would not be the need for discipline at the Father's hand as we so often prove to be the case with us, and which is the evidence to us that the Father loves us and wants us to be suited to share in the full liberty of His love for us. Let us never forget that order in "*the household of God*" (as Ephesians

2:19 includes us) demands that as the Father loves us so must we love the Father, and the starting point for this is surely clearly presented to us in the Lord's words, "*If ye love Me, keep My commandments*", and the Father responds to this according to the Lord's further words, "*he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him*" (John 14:21), and He added the further assurance, "*If a man love Me, he will keep my words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*" (John 14:24).

In these words of our Lord Jesus we have much to arouse us as to our state in God's family. The existent state among us as saints on earth is indisputable evidence that we are not behaving as we should among ourselves. How much must this affect our behavior in relation to God our Father, to His grief and dishonor! The words of the Lord are conditional words in that the result depends on the fulfillment of the conditions. We cannot expect to enjoy the love of the Father, or the Son, while we are disorderly in our conduct which is the evidence of failing to keep His commandments and to keep His words. This twofold requirement may appear to be a repetition of what the Lord said but this is not so. To keep His commandments involves carrying out exactly what He has instructed us to do. His first words as to this were, "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*" (John 13:34). This was not the only commandment given to us by the Lord for we read in 1 Corinthians 14:37, "*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*" Keeping His words is to delight in everything which He has said.

### Natural Relationships

If we consider the situation of a natural family we can get some understanding of what is becoming in the much higher order of things in the spiritual family. For a family to be happy together there must be first of all love in activity between the various members of that family. If there is any lack of love then it is understandable that there will be a failure in the main factor that cements a family together. This may not be, necessarily, a deficiency on the part of the parents for it may be the lack of responsiveness on the part of a child. However, the initial governing activity of love must be found in the parents. When the love of the parents is realized by the child then there would normally be a response to that love from the child to the parents, which would be shared by all the other members of the family. If this is not the case then the fault could be traced to sin being active in the child but, in such cases, there should be generated a deep exercise on the part of the parents as to whether there had been some failure on their part during the formative years of the child. It is a common mistake to think that the parents have lavished love upon their child when in reality there has been a sad lack of the necessary ingredient (in bringing

up the child) of the discipline that would have corrected the initial waywardness of that child. Such discipline is according to God's order and is an essential part of the expression of love to the child. How can it be true love to allow a child to have its own way and take its own course all through the years during which that child should properly be morally and spiritually molded to conform to the love of God? We are considering this matter from the perspective of a christian parent on the assumption that every christian parent will own that God's Word is absolutely sufficient to instruct us, as parents, how to raise our children for Him.

### Examples In the Old Testament

We only have to read His Word to get a deep sense of how needful it is for us, as parents, to cast ourselves entirely upon God in the interests of our children. We are not in a special category in our day even though the details of modern life do differ dramatically from those which affected even our forbears in recent generations. We can go back into the earliest history of God's Word and find that parents were faced with what we would call impossible situations. What did they do? Why, they trusted in God and committed their case into His hands and waited on Him for the results. Was this not true in regard to the parents of Isaac, Moses, and Samuel as three outstanding cases of this?

### Isaac, Moses, Hannah, Rahab

When it was a matter of a wife for Isaac the commitment was left in God's hands as to His choice -- and what better choice could there have been than Rebecca? Regarding Moses, when his parents were faced with the dictate of Pharaoh that their child had to be killed, what did they do? Why, they did what they could to preserve him in that they gave him over into the care of God. What was the result? Moses was preserved alive and chosen of God to be His servant to bring His chosen people out from Egypt. Hannah received from God a son, in answer to her waiting in faith upon God for him. She had committed him to the Lord's service and after raising him to the point that he was no longer dependent on her care as a mother, he became a mighty prophet for God and was used in a marvelous way. There is no doubt that if this interesting subject was pursued through the scriptures many other cases would shine out to encourage us to trust entirely in God in regard to our children. If we carry out our God-given responsibilities then can with confidence leave the results to Him.

What can we expect other than our children will go the way of the world if we have allowed them to grow up in the manner of the world? One knows the common response to all this is -- "but our child will be the butt of the other children around them" or, "our child will have to suffer the awful peer pressure at school" or, "our child will stand out as odd among all the others and suffer their ridicule". Dear parents, this is absolutely true -- they will. But -- do we

want them to have the approval of their peers, or other parents, or their teachers or anyone else in this world rather than have them secured for God's glory and use during their lives on earth? The reply can be, "but it is all very well for us as parents to impose this on them, but we do not have to suffer what they go through". Again, dear parents, this is absolutely true. But who is greater, God or Satan? Who has the most interest in our children, God or Satan? Who can and will preserve our children from all the evil that not only surrounds our children but presses in on them in increasingly difficult and subtle ways, God or Satan? There is not a shadow of doubt that our loving God not only wants to and can do it, but will do it if we commit ourselves and our children to Him. One Word of His alone is sufficient to assure us of this. "*Them that honor Me I will honor, saith the Lord*" (1 Sam. 2:30). When the Israelites were faced with the "impossible situation" of having the armies of Pharaoh behind them, the Red Sea in front of them, and no escape to either side -- it was only "impossible" to them, not to God. The answer to their difficulty was simple. Moses told them, "*Stand still*" -- what, and wait for the Egyptians to slay us? Oh no, but to "*see the salvation of the Lord*". And God not only made a path of escape for His people but overthrew all their enemies as well. Our Lord said, "*In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good courage: I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). Is this true or is it not? Faith instantly says, 'Of course it is true for our Lord said so.'

### We Must be Consistent

With regard to the child, if the father (particularly, although it is right that the mother should be consistent with the father in all matters of rearing the child for the Lord) fails to not only present to the child all that he can from God's side to attract it to the Lord Jesus, but fails to apply whatever type and measure of discipline is needful for the correction of all displays of the flesh in the child -- the child also recognizes this as inconsistency on the part of the parent. Many parents feel that the child will turn against the parent if discipline is applied. The writer is fully assured that while this may be so as the first reaction of the child, within itself the child knows what is rightly deserved and does not turn against the administrator of the discipline. Sooner or later that child comes not only to respect the one who did it but also to have a deepened sense of love, when later realizing that it was done in love for the child's good, as well as for the glory of God.

Now it might be wondered why all this has been presented in such a paper as this. The reason is that what is true in our natural families has a great influence on what we are in the family of God. If we are true to Him in our natural family then we shall be true to Him in His, of which we are each one a child. But, is this all confined to the parents rather than the children in our natural families? Not by any means, but the beginning must be with the parents and then the child will be more likely to be correct itself. However, there is the subsequent result which we look for in the child, in that whatever is called for



in the rearing of the child, as for the Lord, the child will respond to that upbringing for the joy of the Lord and its own blessing. In other words, we have the situation which applies to us as given in Hebrews 12 that what our Father does to us is done in loving discipline to bring us back in closeness to Himself to enjoy His company, and the final words of the passage are, in relation to His chastening of us, *"but He for profit, in order to the partaking of His holiness. But no chastening at the time seems to be [matter] of joy, but of grief; but afterwards yields [the] peaceful fruit of righteousness to those exercised by it"* (see the whole passage in this chapter from vv. 5-11). In the experience of the writer these words have been proved to be absolutely true, both in regard to one's natural family and also as being in His family.

### Lessons in the Parable of Luke 15

From this parable concerning the reception of the "prodigal son" by the father we can learn a lot that relates to our subject as to being in the enjoyment of the Father's love in His house as part of His family. The first lesson that seems to have been involved was that the son had the sense in his heart that his father loved him despite what he had done to the father. Had this not been so the son would never have had the moral courage to have returned, even with such a confession as he intended. We do not know what thoughts the son pondered over while still affected by the desperate straits he was in, at the lowest point that anyone could get. He evidently thought of the blessings available in the Father's house, and that he was a son who should be able to share in them, but that he was not in a fit state to do so. That he had too low an understanding of the father's heart, such that he thought that he would be acceptable as a "hired servant", neither affected the father's attitude to him nor did it preclude him from the full measure of what the father could bestow upon him. How wonderfully true this is for us on the much higher plane of being children of God our Father. Still, it is imperative that we consider our state, just as the "prodigal" did, while at the same time being so assured of the Father's heart of love that we "arise and go to my father". This is a most essential matter for us, for there is no doubt that we often take ourselves away from the intimate sphere of the Father's love in His own house (that is the company of all the saints) in our waywardness in turning back in any measure to the elements of this wicked world from which our Lord Jesus has redeemed us (see Gal. 1:4). We cannot possibly enjoy the love of Father, nor His blessings, if we are in any way defiled by this world. Do we not have the word, *"hating even the garment spotted by the flesh"* (Jude 23)? And this should be our attitude to all elements of that old nature, which we still have, which would spoil our joy in God the Father if we allow it to be active. The onus is upon ourselves as to whether we choose to enjoy companionship with and approval of worldly 'friends' rather than walk with God in the holy atmosphere of His house of love and joy. In the first case we shall only experience in a much sadder fashion the spiritual poverty of soul that the "prodigal" experienced in the "far country". We realize,

however, that we cannot mix the two spheres of the 'world' and 'the Father's house'. If we want to take our place properly in God's family of saints then it must be in accordance with the holiness of God's house, and the world would only defile this happy sphere.

But, our lessons are not yet complete. If having realized that we are not "worthy" we must then also realize just what the Father's heart contains in love for us. Let us never forget that our state can never change our relationship as children of God (it can only affect our enjoyment in being such), nor will it ever in the slightest degree affect the Father's love for us. From the moment of the son's return to his father it was in the father's control as to what happened to the son. The father was, evidently, constantly looking for the return of the wayward son and when he was "yet a great way off" the father ran toward him. What a lovely picture for our hearts to absorb as to the portrayal in this of our Father's heart. Our blessed God and Father is instantly ready to encourage our feeble hearts which may have any reserve in them as to His reception of us when we come back to Him. When we realize that we have taken ourselves out of the sphere of His love as known to His children we can only return in the state in which we have put ourselves, that is as marked by the elements of the world into which we might have gone, but our Father (as it were) then takes over our case and does all that is necessary to re-establish us in the fullness of His divine favor. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). What an encouragement to our hearts to have this assurance from Himself, and what a strength is brought in for our help in the Advocacy of our Lord Jesus Who intercedes on our account to this end.

### The Father's Love

First of all, then, there is the lovely expression of the love of the Father for his son in that he "kissed him". Does this not convey volumes to our hearts as to the Father's desire and willingness to have us in the intimacy of His company and not in the distance, no matter how small that might be? He knows all about our state, but He also knows that His love has won our hearts back to Himself. There is no love like His. The father, in the case of the prodigal, did not wait until his son was all washed from the dirt he had accumulated nor until he had a change of clothing. No, the love of the Father is an everlasting love not governed by our state but expressed despite our state. Here we have the first move on the part of the Father in that He bestows upon us that irrefutable mark of His divine love for us, as expressed in "and fell on his neck" -- not repulsed by the appearance or smell, no cursory peck on the cheek, nor hesitation or remoteness, but rejoicing in the fact that his son had returned. What a loving and gracious God we have -- why do we ever want to be the least distance away from the conscious knowledge in our souls that we are His?

## Suitability for the Father's House

But, and here we have a most important principle, the *condition* of the son was not at all suitable to nor acceptable by the father. Nor can our state be according to God our Father if we are in any way tainted by the defilements of this world. This is where the encouraging verse quoted from 1 John 1:9 comes in -- "*cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" Forgiveness and cleansing are complementary in order that the Father's love can be fully enjoyed. There cannot be the one without the other in God's dealings with us as His children, for forgiveness on its own could leave us still outside the warmth and joy and provision in the Father's house but cleansing (morally) enables us to feel absolutely at home without self-occupation because of our condition. Then we get the further stage, in our needed lessons, that the father provided the clothing that was necessary and suitable for the son to be in his house. With our loving Father there are no partial measures in that He undertakes for us in all our need, as His children, to bring us into the full, unhindered liberty of His enjoyed presence in the circle of His exclusive holiness within His house. The "best robe", "a ring on his hand" and "shoes on his feet" are all very clear pictures of what is suitable to being in the Father's house.

The "best robe" -- would this not tell us that all that characterized us when we were in the guilt of our sins must be entirely obliterated from the eyes of our holy God and Father? Would He be satisfied to see in us any evidence of our sinful life before He received us in all the acceptability of His well-beloved Son? This is not to infer that we have any part in the change which only He can effect, although we do have responsibility to answer to what He has done for us as Paul writes to the Galatians, "*For ye, as many as have been baptized unto Christ, have put on Christ*" (Gal. 3:27). Furthermore, God has "*taken us into favor in the Beloved: in Whom we have . . . the forgiveness of offences*" (Eph. 1:7). What a blessed result from the work of God the Father and the Son that we are no longer seen by Them as we were, but now as clothed worthy of our beloved Saviour, and made presentable to being in the Father's house!

Since God's Son is over God's house (see Heb. 3:6) is it not consistent that we should be like Him, the Son? We must show forth the virtues of the Son in order to truly function as "royal priests" (see 1 Pet. 2:9), remembering that "royal priests" are those who have come out of the Sanctuary of God's House after serving Him therein as "holy priests" (see verse 5). While this is not our subject at the moment, nevertheless we have the same principles involved in that only what suits the Occupant of the house can be acceptable to Him in His house, with the outward expression of it in testimony to the world.

The "ring on his hand" -- does this not indicate that God has not only established a relationship for us with Himself but also bestowed upon us the wonderful dignity of sonship and that this position should characterize us? We get a feeble illustration of this in the case of Pharaoh and Joseph. In a certain

sense Pharaoh had "adopted" Joseph, since Joseph was not an Egyptian, and "*he set him over his house, and all that he had he gave into his hand*" (Gen. 39:4). Is this not the love of the Father seen in not only bringing us into His favor, in the Beloved One, but "*having marked us out beforehand for adoption through Jesus Christ to Himself*" (Eph. 1:5) and "*that we might receive sonship*" (Gal. 4:5)? Mr. Darby's footnote to this verse has been already referred to, and it is very helpful. The "prodigal" had just previously been clad in rags and had no dignity, though he was a true child of the father. The provision of the "best robe" would have made him feel more comfortable in the father's presence. However, the father desired to have established in his child's heart that he wanted him to be in the full sense of His approval, and so he conferred on him the dignity becoming to his relationship, not only as a child but as a son. We have been brought into a much greater and higher relationship, and given a heavenly dignity in order to enter into and enjoy the true fellowship of all saints -- with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3). May we value this and walk in the reality of it to the joy and glory of the Father and the Son.

The "shoes on his feet" -- in all our movements while in this world (for we have responsibilities while here) we need to be preserved from picking up defilement outside that would be incompatible with the holy sphere of God's house. We must understand that we are always in His house as part of His family, while at the same time we form the house for His pleasure as He dwells in it by the Spirit. So, for both reasons -- as forming God's house and being in it as His family -- we must be always in that suited state of being undefiled by this world. How marvelous it is that we have our Savior and Lord as the One who constantly washes our feet (in the moral sense) in order that we should be clean despite our walk through this world with all its defiling elements, which we experience all the time we are down here. There is also the thought that while in the Father's house down here we are prepared for moving out of this scene to our heavenly home in the Father's House, into which we shall be taken by our blessed Lord when He calls us up to meet Him in the air -- where and when there will be no more defilement to spoil the eternal joy with Him, the Son.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

J. Pascoe



## THE PROMISE OF THE LORD

Matt. 18:20

The two leading features of Prophetic testimony, in its immediate application, were the exposure of the principles of Apostasy then at work; and comforting the hearts of the Remnants, who were groaning under the sense of it. The contrast to this was, the testimony of false prophets, who always lulled into security the many, and treated the groaning Remnant as the enemies of God and His people. "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteousness sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations; for I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. 13:22,23). In the period just before the Babylonish captivity, we find the two pleas of the Lord against His people to have been, either that they justified continuance in avowed evil, as though the case were so desperate that they could not serve the Lord; or, that they asserted their innocence, and that their state was one of which the Lord approved. "Thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go: Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me: behold I will plead with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned" (Jer. 2:25-35). These therefore, are the two things which the Lord hateth; -- contentedness with avowed evil, under the plea that there is no remedy for us, so that we must make the best of it; or forgetting the holiness of God, by giving the sanction of His name to that which He disowns, by asserting our innocence, and saying, "The temple of the Lord," etc. It is just here that the ministry of the prophets came in; they were raised up, as Apostasy was setting in, and their testimony multiplied as it advanced to a head. The Spirit of Christ in the Prophets, taking up the principles then working, carried them out in all their fearful result, looking through the long and dreary vista, to that great and terrible day of the Lord, in which they would be consummated, and met in judgment by the Lord. But whilst there was the most uncompromising witness against present evil, and testimony of God's sure judgment against it, there was invariably the promise of God's favor and protection towards the feeble Remnant, faithful in the midst of abounding evil. "The hearts of the righteous were not made sad." -- "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Is. 3:10). To take one example -- in the prophetic strain of Isaiah, chap. 7-12. - The Spirit in the Prophet, at the very time that apostasy was set in under king Ahaz, after showing the unchangeableness of the counsel of the Lord, which would stand, in spite of all the failures of man, and all the confederacies against it, takes a discursive range, through all its minor developments, up to the great Apostasy.

*The Christian Witness* 2:128,129 (1835).

## THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS . . .

It has not been adequately considered how completely Luke 21:32 settles the real bearing of those much-debated words, "This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." As long as they were regarded only in the light of Matthew 24 and Mark 13, there remained room for doubt; and certainly there could not but be doubt without a just and sure understanding of their context; and this was the very thing most contested. Those who restrained the chapters to the apostolic period, or to the end of the age, interpreted the clause according to their respective theory. But the truth is larger than either of these human views; and when its extent and precision withal are seen, the light which flows from these words of our Lord is no longer hindered or perverted. To this end the third Gospel contributes invaluable help, not certainly by swamping the other two, but by the fresh wisdom of God communicated by Luke, making us understand each so much the better because we have all, and thus furnishing a more comprehensive perception and enjoyment of the entire truth.

Here then God has taken care for the first time to introduce "the times of the Gentiles" still going on after the Roman siege of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews. Then from verse 25 we have the signs of the last days, and finally the Son of man seen coming in the cloud with power and great glory, proving the futility of the scheme which would confound Titus capturing Jerusalem (ver. 20-24) with the Son of man appearing in verse 27. But it is after this that we read in verse 32, "Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." It is not till they "begin to come to pass," of which we do read in verse 28, and a call to the faithful when they see it to "look up and lift up their heads." This generation is not to pass till ALL be fulfilled (γενηται). No language can be more accurate. This Christ-rejecting, unbelieving, stubborn and rebellious generation of the Jews should not pass away till then. A new generation will follow. The expression has a moral, and not a mere chronological, sense. Compare Ps. 12:7 (Heb. 8) in contrast with the generation to come. See Ps 22:30(31),31,(32). The clause therefore seems to be meant in its unlimited strength, and so put by the third Evangelist as to render all other applications impossible. Nor is there the least ground for taking it otherwise in the corresponding places of Matthew and Mark; but Luke demonstrates this.

The case then stands thus. On the one hand Matthew and Mark do not notice the times of the Gentiles, which Luke was inspired to present very distinctly as well as the successes of the Gentiles, not only when their armies conquered Jerusalem, and led the people captive into all nations, but also during their continued occupation of that city as in fact has been the case for 1800 years. On the other hand Matthew and Mark, but not Luke, notice distinctly the setting up of the abomination of desolation and the unequalled time of trouble just before the Son of man comes for the deliverance of the elect in Israel at the

end of the age, passing at once from the early troubles in the land (while Jerusalem was still an object of testimony) to the last days, when it re-appears with its temple and the Jews there, but alas! the deceived of Satan and his instruments till the Lord appears in judgment. Hence it will be observed that there is no question in Luke 21 as to "the sign of His coming and the end of the age." In all this I see not confusion, but the perfect mind of God giving what was exactly suited to each Gospel. It is the comment which confuses the truth, instead of learning from each and all. In Matthew and Mark the future crisis follows a preliminary sketch of troubles put so generally as to apply both to the apostolic times and to the earlier epoch when the Jews return and rebuild their city and temple in unbelief before the age ends: Matthew 24:4-14 (Mark 13:5-13) being the general sketch, and verses 15-31 (Mark 13:14-27) the crisis at the close or last half-week of Daniel's unfulfilled seventieth week. Luke alone gives us anything like continuity in the very brief words of chapter 21:24, as he alone gives us distinctly in this prophecy the past destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as he does also in chapter 19:32,44. Chapter 17:22-37 I do not doubt also refers to Jerusalem, but exclusively in the latter day, when the Son of man is revealed, not when Titus sacked it. In that day there will be a perfect discrimination of persons in the judgment, which proves it to be divine, not a mere providential event however awful.

*The Bible Treasury* 10:328,329.

### EXTRACT

My heart has perfect repose in the thought of being rejected. I only trust I shall always be able to bear it in meekness, neither in disdain turning from and scorning those who so act, not in self-vindication retaliating, but accepting all simply as that path in which we are to have fellowship with Jesus, who was so misunderstood, and whose principles were so little appreciated even by His apostles and brethren. It is so valuable a school to learn in; the one in which the more you love, the less you are loved, and still not to faint or to be weary.

At times my heart is very sick at the aspect of things -- such divisions, such jealousies, such evil surmisings; but then I think it was thus with Jesus. If I am called a teacher of Blasphemy, so was He; If I am called a Sabbath breaker, so was He; if my authority to teach was questioned, so was His, though it was the wisdom of His; if He was neglected by His own people, so are we.

J. G. Bellett

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

### PART 3: ACTS OF THE APOSTLES:

#### DOES ACTS SHOW THAT THE CHURCH FULFILLS THE O. T. PROPHECIES OF THE KINGDOM?

It is intended in Part 3 to examine a number of passages in Acts where antidispenationalists claim that the church is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom. Such a notion, we have seen, is contrary to Rom. 16:25, Eph. 3:5, and Col. 1:26.<sup>1</sup> And, of course, the Jews *had to* expect a temporal kingdom<sup>2</sup> and so the godly remnant expected a temporal kingdom as did our Lord who confirmed the expectation of the kingdom.<sup>3</sup> But the kingdom was presented as embodied in the meek and lowly One Who was rejected and so the kingdom is "postponed."<sup>4</sup> Of course, God never purposed to inaugurate the kingdom at that point. Christ must die and God be glorified in it; and redemption wrought. Then a heavenly parenthesis was introduced which occupies the time between Pentecost and the rapture.<sup>5</sup>

The objective of the spiritualizers of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom is to show that the reign of the Messiah was inaugurated at Pentecost.<sup>6</sup> Some have thought that the book of Acts is clear

1. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4, #1, pp. 1-13 (Jan./Feb. 1989).

2. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4, #2, pp. 58-64 (Mar./Apr. 1989).

3. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4 #3, pp. 87-96 (June/July 1989).

4. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4, #4, pp. 137-145 (Aug./Sept. 1989).

5. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4, #5 & 6, vol. 5, #1-3.

6. See, for example, O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1945, p. 136.

proof of this. O. T. Allis concluded:

The verdict of the Book of Acts on the question, whether the Church, the founding of which it describes so graphically, was foretold by the prophets seems to be so clear and unmistakable that we might rest our case after citing its testimony. But it may be well to show that the testimony of Acts is fully confirmed by the use made of the Old Testament in other books of the New Testament.<sup>7</sup>

If the Lord will, when we finish examining the principle passages in Acts that are most relevant to the issue, we will also review passages in the other books of the New Testament.

The church cannot be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom.

Now to him that is able to establish you, according to my glad tidings and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to [the] revelation of [the] mystery, as to which silence has been kept in [the] times of the ages, but [which] has now been made manifest, and by prophetic scriptures, according to commandment of the eternal God, made known for obedience of faith to all nations . . . (Rom. 16:25,26).

To me, less than the least of all saints, has this grace been given, to announce among the nations the glad tidings of the unsearchable riches of the Christ, and to enlighten all [with the knowledge of] what is the administration of the mystery hidden throughout the ages in God, who has created all things, in order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the assembly the all-various wisdom of God, according to [the] purpose of the ages, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . (Eph. 3:8-11).

Now, I rejoice in sufferings for you, and I fill up that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ in my flesh, for his body, which is the assembly; of which I became minister, according to the dispensation of God which [is] given me towards you to complete the word of God, the mystery which [has been] hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been made manifest to his saints . . . (Col. 1:24-26).<sup>8</sup>

In order to believe that the Old Testament prophecies of the kingdom speak of the church, one has to find a way around the plain force of the Scriptures cited. Our examination of some passages in Acts will be, on the other hand, in conformity with the guidance given by these Scriptures, which show that the mystery of Christ and the Church was not a subject of O. T. prophecy.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

8. Scripture quotations are from the translation of J. N. Darby.

## CHAPTER 3.1

### ACTS 1:3-9: IS IT AT THIS TIME?

. . . to whom also he presented himself living, after he had suffered, with many proofs; being seen forty days, and speaking of the things which concern the kingdom of God; and, being assembled with [them], commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, which [said he] ye have heard of me. For John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit after not now many days.

They therefore, being come together, asked him saying, Lord, is it at this time that thou restorest the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not yours to know times or seasons, which the Father has placed in his own authority; but ye will receive power, the Holy Spirit having come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. And having said these things he was taken up, they beholding [him], and a cloud received him out of their sight (Acts 1:3-9).

The question in verse 6 is about the literal<sup>9</sup> kingdom they and the remnant expected, which expectation the Lord had confirmed.<sup>10</sup> We never read that our Lord told His disciples that there would be no such kingdom for Israel. Nor did He state that in this passage.

Some opposers of the thought of a future, national kingdom for Israel might suggest that the disciples, in v. 6, did not refer to such a kingdom.<sup>11</sup> If it is admitted that the disciples did indeed refer to a national kingdom for Israel, v. 3 is compelled to mean, for example:

This, of course, could only mean that He was instructing them concerning the

9. I do not imply by the word "literal" that there is nothing of a spiritual character in the kingdom when all Israel shall be saved and the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

10. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 4, #3, pp. 87-96.

11. One postmillennialist suggests that they were speaking of a present kingdom:

. . . merely asking the Lord, "Is it now time for Israel to be converted to you and enter the kingdom, which you have established?" This would fit well within the semantic theological and psychological framework of the episode . . . (Bahnsen, G. L., and Gentry, Jr. K. L., *House Divided, The Break-up of Dispensational Theology*, Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, p. 172, 1989).

This is as absurd as it is desperate. If that will not do, theology can supply other alternatives. However, the amillennialist, O. T. Allis is better: "That it would be an Israelitish kingdom the disciples apparently still regarded as self-evident" (*Prophecy and the Church*, p. 312). The fact is that it is self-evident when Rom. 16:25,26, Eph. 3:8-11, Col. 1:24-26 and the prophets are believed -- instead of being explained away.

work of the Kingdom in which they were to serve Him as soon as they should receive power through the coming of the Holy Spirit . . . .<sup>12</sup>

The fact is that one decides what the content of the Lord's instruction concerning the kingdom of God (v. 3) was, based on whether or not he thinks that the church fulfills the Old Testament prophecies of the kingdom. One thing is certain from the question in v. 6: if the Lord had been telling them there would be no such national kingdom for Israel, they did not understand, or else did not believe, Him. There is no reason why He could not have spoken of both the moral aspects of the kingdom and of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and there we leave it. He had, of course, died for the nation (John 11:52,53), which provides the righteous basis for their future "adoption" (Rom. 9:5), and so Paul tells us all Israel will be saved when the Deliverer turns away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11).

At any rate, the Lord did not answer the question of v. 6, by saying 'I have told you that there will be no such kingdom,' nor could He, for the prophets had prophesied of it. The well-known amillennialist, O. T. Allis, in his polemic against dispensational truth, admitted this:

The Old Testament prophecies if literally interpreted cannot be regarded as having been fulfilled or as being capable of fulfillment in this present age.<sup>13</sup>

And a Jew *had* to understand the O. T. prophecies that way. Moreover, those prophecies make a coherent whole, literally understood (with all due allowance for figures of speech and symbols).

The Lord's answer is instructive for us to consider in connection with 1 Thess. 5:1 where we also find reference to times and seasons.<sup>14</sup> In order to help us understand the bearing of this, part of a footnote to 1 Cor. 8:1 in J. N. Darby's translation is quoted:

Two Greek words are used for 'to know' in the New Testament -- *ginosko* and *oida*. The former signifies objective knowledge, what a man has learned or acquired. The English expression 'being acquainted with' perhaps conveys the meaning. *Oida* conveys the thought of what is inward, the inward consciousness of the mind . . . .

Acts 1:7 reads "It is not yours to know (*ginosko*) times or seasons." Now, this cannot contradict 1 Thess. 5:1,2. The meaning of the passage is that times and seasons were not to be their portion. The times and seasons, "the defined periods of which prophecy speaks" (W. Kelly), are not connected with the

12. P. Mauro, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, p. 108.

13. *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 238.

14. 1 Thess. 5:1 connects directly with 1 Thess. 4:14. 1 Thess. 4:15-18 is parenthetical in explanation of how those now dead in Christ can come with Him when He appears -- by prior rapture.

rapture. Thus we do not know them in the sense of becoming objectively acquainted with them. If the disciples had entered into the times and the seasons, they would surely become objectively acquainted with them. The disciples, in accordance with the expectation of the remnant, had asked, "Is it at this time that thou restorest the kingdom to Israel?" The expectation was right, the time was wrong, and, furthermore, times and seasons were not to be any Christian's lot.

All of this does not imply necessary ignorance on the part of Christians concerning the subject of times and seasons. "Ye know (*oida*) perfectly well yourselves, that the day of [the] Lord so comes as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2). "This great and solemn truth was part of their inward conscious assurance" (W. Kelly).

While it is true that the disciples, as seen in Acts 1, were still occupied with the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and also Matthias was chosen as the twelfth apostle<sup>15</sup> by the Old Testament method of lots, the fact remains that in Acts 1:6-8, the Lord tells them that times and seasons are not their portion to know, in the sense of experiencing them.

Then He redirected their thoughts to the coming of the Spirit and the testimony that they would render to Christ as His witnesses.

## CHAPTER 3.2

### ACTS 2:16-21: JOEL'S PROPHECY

#### QUOTATIONS

There are two general ways in which Old Testament scriptures are quoted in the New Testament.<sup>16</sup>

1. They are quoted to show a fulfillment, as often in Matthew, Acts 1:16 is an example.
2. They are quoted to:
  - a) illustrate a point;

15. Accepted by God as the twelfth (cf. Luke 24:33 where Thomas was missing and Judas was dead; Acts 2:14; 1 Cor. 15:5).

16. See W. Kelly, *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, pp. 54-58, for an examination of how Isaiah is quoted.

- b) make an application;
- c) show that something is not inconsistent with the ways of God.

Therefore, something may fall within the use of a prophecy but not be its fulfillment. Acts 2:17-21 and Acts 15:14-18 are examples of #2. Sometimes such quotations are very full and contain more than what refers to the point under consideration, thus showing that the fulfillment has not occurred. The fulfillment is millennial, but something in #2 is applicable meanwhile.

### ACTS 2:17-21

And it shall be in the last days, saith God, [that] I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your elders will dream with dreams; yea, even upon my bondmen and upon my bondwomen in those days will I pour out of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be changed to darkness and the moon to blood, before the great and gloriously appearing day of [the] Lord come.

We previously sought to show the misuse made of this passage by so-called Acts 9/13 "ultradispensationalists." We saw that the passage is millennial and that Peter showed that what had happened was not inconsistent (or absurd) with the ways of God. That is, Joel's prophecy was not fulfilled at Pentecost<sup>17</sup> though the effusion of the Spirit (see v. 17) and the calling on the name of the Lord (see v. 21) fell within the scope of Joel's prophecy. Moreover, the position taken here is that there was not even a partial fulfillment. The effusion of the Spirit at Pentecost was not upon all flesh, as Joel's prophecy says it will be.

**The Last Days.** It is claimed that since Joel said "and it shall come to pass afterward" and Peter said, "and in the last days," Peter thus claimed that the listeners were living in the last days.<sup>18</sup> Peter made no such claim. His "last days" does not refer to the last days in which we now live. 2 Tim. describes the ruin come in upon the church and gives the character of the "last days" in 2 Tim. 3 describing a changed state. This time is called by John "the last hour" (1 John 2:1). "The last hour" marks a change in the state of the church. "The last hour" was not inaugurated at Pentecost anymore than were the "last days" of Joel or of Peter's quotation.

The "last days" of the prophets (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 23:20; Hosea 3:4,5; Micah 4:1) have to do with God's ways of government in the earth. They refer to Israel's last days.

17. *Thy Precepts*, vol. 5, #3, pp. 87-90.

18. I. H. Marshall, *Acts*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 73, 1983.

**Prophecy, Visions, and Dreams.** Joel had said that "your sons and daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your elders shall dream with dreams" (Acts 2:17). Obviously this did not happen but if Joel spoke of the formation of the Church, why, it simply must have happened. So, to circumvent the problem an objector said:

Since tongues could be broadly described as a kind of prophecy, this passage provided the nearest equivalent to tongues in Old Testament phraseology. . . .<sup>19</sup>

**Signs on the Earth Below.** Peter says, "and I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be changed to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and glorious appearing day of [the] Lord shall come" (Acts 1:19,20).

The signs are said to be, "probably the gift of tongues and the various healing miracles which are shortly to be recorded."<sup>20</sup> Thus it is implicitly admitted that healing miracles did not occur at Pentecost -- so how was Joel's prophecy fulfilled at Pentecost? And then we are treated, as well we might be, to silence concerning the blood, fire, etc.

**Wonders in the Heaven Above.** How can this be handled? Ah, theology; let us hear it:

If we do not accept that the reference is to the cosmic signs which accompanied the crucifixion (Luke 23:44f.), then Peter is looking forward to the signs which will herald the end of the world . . . to the 'end' of the last days, rather than to their 'beginning' which is just taking place.<sup>21</sup>

Anything, so long as the theory that the church fulfills the Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom is maintained. How, for either suggestion, was Joel's prophecy fulfilled at Pentecost? Regarding Luke 23:44ff:

1. This was before Pentecost.
2. If Joel is to be understood literally regarding the sun being turned to darkness, why was not the moon turned to blood?<sup>22</sup>

Joel's prophecy is not about the darkening of the sun when our Lord suffered at Calvary. That darkness was literal, of course. Joel's prophecy of the moon

19. I. H. Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

20. I. H. Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

21. I. H. Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

22. F. F. Bruce, *The book of Acts*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 69, 1955, says ". . . the paschal full moon may well have appeared blood-red in the sky in consequence of that preternatural gloom." That refers to an event before Pentecost and in any event is certainly outside the words "this is that." At Calvary there was a literal darkness -- but concerning the moon, we are offered a "may well be" and an appearance of a blood-red moon.

turning to blood, however, is symbolic. The symbols of sun, moon and stars were present in Joseph's dream where they meant Jacob, his wife and his sons, respectively. These symbols are used of powers: supreme, derivative and lesser, respectively. These symbols are repeatedly associated with the day of the Lord (Isa. 13:9-11; Ezek. 32:7,8; Joel 2:10 & 3:15). Our Lord used these symbols also (Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24,25) as did John (Rev. 6:12; 8:12 -- cp 12:1). But I do not mean to say that there shall be no actual signs in the heavens.

**This Is That.** There are antidispenationalists who assert that this phrase means that Pentecost fulfilled Joel's prophecy.<sup>23</sup> This leads to quite a working of the theological imagination. The truth is that the Spirit came at Pentecost in fulfillment of *the promise of the Father* (Luke 24:49; John 14:26). The Spirit was not given until the Lord Jesus was glorified (John 7:39). And so, having been exalted, Christ received from the Father the Spirit and then Christ poured Him out (Acts 2:32,33). Thus the Spirit we have received is not called the Spirit of Joel's prophecy, but the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).

Another alternative is to put part of the prophecy off for, now, more than 1900 years. So the position taken by the editor of the *Evangelical Quarterly*, I. H. Marshall, is that "Peter sees that it is beginning to be fulfilled in the events of Pentecost."<sup>24</sup> No wonder he did not comment on the words "this is that which was spoken through Joel the prophet." He has had opportunity to read other amillennialists on this passage who have asserted that these words mean 'this is the fulfillment of that.' But *his* view means 'this is a partial fulfillment of that' since part is to be fulfilled, he says, in the future. The truth is that the only understanding of "this is that" that does justice to the passage itself, and is also in keeping with the Scripture statements that the mystery was "hidden throughout the ages in God" (Eph. 3:9, and silence was kept about it (Rom. 16:25,26), and that it was hidden from generations and ages (Col. 1:25), is this: "this is that" means that the outpouring of the Spirit has that character -- not that

23. "Peter makes the Spirit's manifestation the fulfillment of the Jewish prophecy by Joel, . . . Pentecost was the fulfillment of their own prophecies," *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, vol. 4, p. 507, 1977. Another says, "Contrary to Peter's interpretation -- viz., that Pentecost fulfilled Joel's prophecy . . .," G. L. Bahnsen and K. L. Gentry, Jr., *House Divided*, Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, p. 75, note 30, 1989. A very strange thing appears in the "dispensationalist" Dallas Seminary Faculty commentary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Wheaton: Victor Books, p. 358, 1983: "This clause does not mean, 'This is like that'; it means Pentecost fulfilled what Joel had described. However, the prophecies of Joel quoted in Acts 2:19-20 were not fulfilled. The implication is that the remainder would be fulfilled if Israel would repent." The last sentence is just imagination. Does this not sound similar to the 'ultradispensationalist' view of Acts 2? See *Thy Precepts*, vol. 5, #3, pp. 87-90. And it violates the fact that the church is not the subject of the O. T. prophecies.

24. I. H. Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

it is the fulfillment.

I have pointed out elsewhere that the objection to this, namely, that the text does not say 'this has that character' is countered by pointing out that the text does not say 'this is the fulfillment of that.' Far worse is I. H. Marshall's view, which makes the words mean "this is a partial fulfillment of that," (or, "this is the beginning of the fulfillment of that").

Peter showed his audience how the view that this was necessarily drunkenness is false, since Joel had spoken of something of a similar character. Thus, there was another, the true, explanation. So at Pentecost, the effusion of the Spirit fell within the bearing of this aspect of Joel's prophecy but did not fulfill it either fully or partially.

**Joel Said, "Upon all Flesh."** In Acts 2 the Spirit came upon Jews only. And so on an 'antidispenational' view of the passage, that fact would require an antidispenationalist to say that this also was the *beginning* of fulfillment, which view, of course, is taken.<sup>25</sup> It is interesting that the Spirit of God cited *Joel* in regard to the pouring out of the Spirit on all flesh. Other references to the effusion of the Spirit (Isa. 32:15; 44:3,4; Ezek. 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; cp. Isa. 59:21; Zech. 12:10) refer only to Israel. At Pentecost, the Spirit came only upon Israelites, yet one of those texts that refer only to Israel was not chosen by the Spirit. Pentecost was not the fulfillment, either for Israel or for all flesh. However, Joel's prophecy may have been chosen by the Spirit because the blessing was going to go beyond these Jews, even to Gentiles whom God would save during the present period.

**The Day of the Lord.** The wonders and signs will occur "before the great and gloriously appearing day of [the] Lord comes" (v. 20). Though "before," it is correct to say that the wonders and signs just precede that day. We might pause to note that those "dispensationalists" who say the day of the Lord is inaugurated at the rapture are therefore incorrect. Such signs will not precede the rapture. It is the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory that ushers in the day of the Lord and the wonders and signs will occur after the rapture.

**Calling on the Name of the Lord.** "And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of [the] Lord shall be saved" (v. 21). What a blessed fact, cited again in Rom. 10:13. Peter quoted from Joel up to this verse, which, while Joel has reference to the last days also, has an application now. This he desired to bring before his hearers so that they might repent and be saved. The citation from Joel concerning the Spirit answered the charge of drunkenness. The application of v. 21 would meet their deep need. O. T. Allis remarked:

25. F. F. Bruce, *The Books of the Acts*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 68, 1955.

But the words themselves are clearly applicable to that mystery church. . . .<sup>26</sup>

Verse 21 is indeed applicable now. That fact, however, does not prove that the church is the subject of prophecy. Verse 21 illustrates how something can be "applicable" without it being the fulfillment and without the mystery being a subject of prophecy. Moreover, v. 21 applies to individuals.

The notions of the antidispenationalists cited are notions characteristic of their approach to Scripture. It is just such a way of distorting (I do not say intentionally) Scripture that is required in order to support the idea that the church is the spiritual Israel and that the church is a subject of O. T. prophecy.

Ed.

(To be Continued, if the Lord will)

## EXTRACTS

There is such a thing as walking with God. The invisible God is not hidden to the soul. Moses endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Enoch walked with God, the God of heaven, his heart was above, and he had the testimony that he pleased God. What else ought men of faith be doing, save walking with God! Faith says, "Ah, there is a man in heaven, and all the divine glory of God in Him, and connected with Him, I can walk with Him. I do not see Him with my bodily eye, but his eye is upon me; I hear His voice behind me."

It was not the question of the measure of light they had who followed the Lord; it was Himself they thought of and loved. They felt it, no doubt, a wonderful thing to walk about with Him who had all power to heal the sick and raise the dead: but ah! They loved Himself. Can we not only say, "the Son of man made all things," but is this Lord Jesus Himself the one object before whom our heart is bowed?

If failure comes in, you must not give up all for lost, but thank God that you have a connection with Christ in God, which your failure cannot touch. Satan cannot check the living water that flows forth to me in spite of all in myself, enabling me to be "up and on."

G. V. Wigram

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26. O. T. Allis, *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

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## NON-PUBLISHED PAPERS AVAILABLE

The following papers, written by the editor, are available as 8 1/2" x 11" sheets. They contain a large number of quotations from others.

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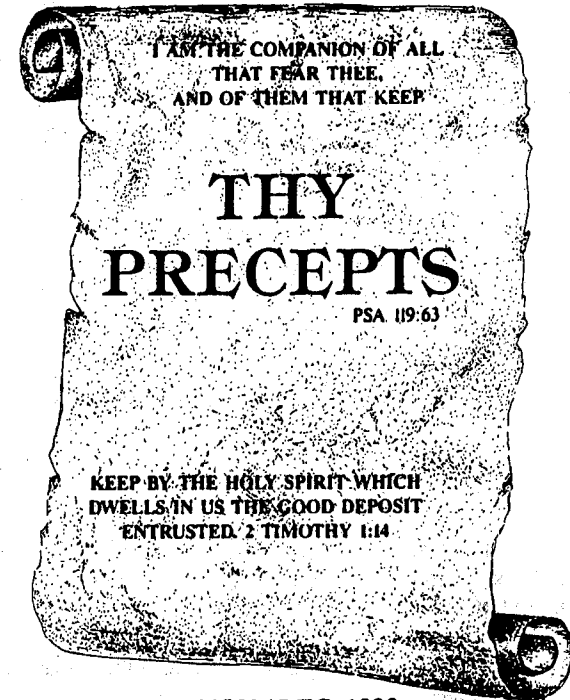
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## CONTENTS

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Manifestation of the Divine Nature .....	161
Is the Law the Rule of Life for a Christian? .....	170
An Account of a Man Who Was Fed the Same Food as the Multitude that the Lord Fed .....	173
The Truth of Christ's Person .....	175
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	185
"A Voice in the Wilderness" .....	190



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## MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE

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### THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST

(continued from vol. 5, # 5)

And here appears the deep mischief and injury caused by these reasonings; for not only has the teaching robbed souls of Christ *as the Eternal Life* personally, but they are led unconsciously by the enemy (as their language shows) to speculate on what was or was not human or divine in Him, and His Person as well as life is *also divided*. Thus the enemy gains his end, whilst he leads them out of their depth, and Christ is gradually displaced in the soul, and His Person openly dishonored. For though their intention is innocent, the result is not innocent.

The only way for the simple, when such thoughts are presented, is to treat them as sin against Christ. The attempt to realize their meaning or explain them, leads into temptation, and the soul is caught by the enemy and entangled in this net. Many have suffered in this way without being aware of it; teachers as well as taught.

To support this line of reasoning, a passage of Mr. Darby's is quoted, which has some apparent but merely fictitious resemblance to it. An inexperienced and unwary person may be deceived by a fictitious Bank of England note, while a practiced eye will readily detect the forgery. Mr. Darby's statement is as follows:

In both Philippians and Colossians, the heavenly life is spoken of as a present thing; but there is entire separation, even down here, between the pilgrimage and this heavenly life itself, although the latter has a powerful influence on the character of our pilgrim life.

*His life -- God Himself* (the last is more John's doctrine) -- was what was to be *expressed*, expressed suited to the scene He passed through; but, being a true man, He walked with objects before Him, which acted on the tenor of His path. The fact that *He was this life*, and, that for His living it, had not to die in

His death as we have to an evil nature, makes it more difficult to realize in His case; but obedience, and He learned what it was, suffering, patience, all referred to His place here; compassion, grace as to His disciples, and *all the traits of His life*, though divine and such that He could say, 'The Son of Man who is in heaven,' *all were the development of the heavenly and divine life here.*

Its influence was perfect and entire in the case of the Lord Jesus; but His life in connection with men, *although the ever perfect expression of the effect of His life of heavenly communion*, was evidently distinct from it. The joy of the heavenly life entirely set aside all the motives of the lower life, and, leading to the sufferings of His earthly life in connection with man, produced a life of perfect patience before God. In Him all was sinless; but His joys were elsewhere, save in acting in grace in the midst of sorrow and sin -- a divine joy. - *Synopsis on Joshua 3.*

But in this passage, though the word sphere is subsequently used, which gives some apparent similarity, the unity of the Person of Christ is carefully preserved by the words -- "His life in connection with men, although the *ever perfect expression* of His life of heavenly communion." We have all been taught to see the perfect way in which Scripture presents the Lord to us in various phases. In the Gospel of Luke much more of manhood -- the precious and holy dependence -- the temptations which surrounded Him -- His agony in the garden, where He prays more earnestly and the Angel from Heaven appearing to strengthen Him -- express this. So in the Epistle to the Hebrews He suffered, being tempted, "learning obedience by the things which He suffered," accomplishing the whole path of faith with joy set before Him at God's right hand. This is in striking contrast with what we find in the Gospel of John, in Gethsemane, where He goes forth "knowing all things that should come upon Him," to meet His adversaries, who go backward and fall to the ground, and He gives Himself up; whilst protecting those who trusted in Him, from the power of the enemy. But in all this, though clearly distinguishable, the unity of His Person is never for a moment touched; it is one and the same Person that is always kept before us, though in various lights, just as photographs taken from different points of view will bring into prominence the varied features of the same lovely scene. So we have in the passage cited above, various influences or springs of life connected with God, but "a life of perfect patience before God produced." "His joys," Mr. Darby says, "were elsewhere," (speaking of this heavenly life, as the Apostle John presents Him to us), "save in acting in grace in the midst of sorrow and sin a *divine joy*"; just what this system denies, as regards this heavenly life, whether in Christ or ourselves.

So much is this the case, that even of the wondrous story of the descent which He made from the divine glory to the lowly form and state of manhood, the Apostle says: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." This descent and humiliation, inconceivable to us in its fullness, is yet that in which by His life in us, we can share as to the thoughts and springs which it displayed. The humiliation of this obedience (commenced in the assumption

of manhood, going on even unto death, the death of the cross for the glory of God), was the obedience of a δούλος or bondservant -- for such was man; and into this Christ came, from the divine place and "form," and carried it out according to His divine purpose and love, even to the last and lowest point, the shameful death of a malefactor. Such is the mind in which we are called to participate, instead of glorying in ourselves, or hindering instead of edifying others by our pretentious assumptions. But this shows how the divine characterized and pervaded all the human life of this blessed One, and how it may be carried out in detail by us, from the fact that "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). "Put on therefore," says the Apostle, "as elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering," for all this was manifested in Christ, and is now to be seen in the new man, where "Christ is all and in all."

When He rose from the dead and appeared to His disciples on the first day of the week, He breathed on them, establishing them in His own relationship with the Father and position before God as risen; for this He had promised, even life more abundantly, and that they should have life, not only from, but with Himself. "Because I live, ye shall live also." This, with the presence of the Holy Ghost, gave its heavenly character to that life, life of a new order, power, and blessing; in contrast with life in the Old Testament, and even in the Millennium. In it, as in the life of Christ on earth, grace is to be exemplified; whilst Israel, in the Millennium, will be used as the executors of divine judgment, as we learn from the Psalms. Though they have eternal life, it will bear an earthly character.

There are three aspects of responsibility brought before us in Scripture, answering to the three positions occupied by the nation of Israel; in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan.

In the first they were in bondage, exposed to the judgment of God, and liable to destruction by their enemies. This corresponds with our standing in Adam as men in the flesh, on which ground, being creatures responsible for rendering the obedience and love which is due to the Creator, of which the law is the measure, we are totally lost. This is brought to an end in the Cross, where, owning Christ as in death for us, we see ourselves delivered from the consequences which sin entailed on us.

The second sphere of responsibility, which is more properly Christian, is, after having crossed the Red Sea -- figure of Christ's death and resurrection for us -- we have as pilgrims to pass through the desert scene of this world before reaching the heavenly Canaan. In this state is learned what the flesh is practically, and it is in this more especially that we are tested, as to what we are (Deut. 8.), and to this more distinctly the "ifs" of Scripture apply; as we are not looked at as in heaven, but going on to it, in weakness, and amid the toils and dangers of this world, and we have the promise of being kept, and not being tempted above what we are able to bear (See 1 Cor. 10., Heb. 4., Rom. 5., &c.).

Thirdly, we are looked upon, in our highest aspect, as in Christ, seated in heavenly places in Him, in the new Creation -- i.e., already in Canaan, like the Israelites after they had crossed the Jordan, where they had to maintain their position in conflict with their enemies. But to say that there is "no such thing as responsibility in Christ" is an Antinomian statement, and runs upon the same mystic line as the notion of the invisibility of eternal life. True that this position, which according to the purpose of God, is beyond the effects of sin and failure, will be infallibly accomplished by divine power in glory, because secured to us in Christ, to whom we are united. But immediately upon our being spoken of, according to our calling and position in Ephesians 1, 2, as quickened, raised, and made to sit together in heavenly places, comes the warning, "*Wherefore remember*" and "*Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*"; so we have the character of God to be displayed in us as dear children, to walk in love, and a conflict, not down here, but maintained with wicked spirits in heavenly places, and we have to put on the whole armor of God and to stand in the combat. Indeed the whole book of Joshua exhibits the responsibility which belongs to this position; circumcision -- the constant returning to Gilgal, the place of circumcision or judgment of the flesh -- the government of God -- the holiness suitable to His presence -- the conditions under which the conflict is to be carried on, all exhibit responsibility of the highest order. Indeed the Apostle says: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye *in Him*" (Col. 2:6). The higher the privilege, the higher and more elevated the responsibility attached to it. Hence in this heavenly position it relates more to the interests of the Church of God, the service and glory of Christ, the conflict with the power of Satan, in which we are now engaged, and which flows entirely from the fact that we are in heavenly places in Christ.

Mr. Raven's statement is that "there is no such thing as responsibility in Christ." Mr. Darby's statements, now given, presents the matter in its true bearings:

We contend with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places where all passes, in Ephesians, and we are *called upon*, 'having done all, *to stand*'. We are in possession of our place, and our business is to *hold good*, and hence, being spiritual, the arms of God are what are called for.' . . . Hence in conflict the matter is *to stand* against the wiles and having done all, *to stand*." -- *Notes and Comments*, Part 16, p. 375.

In Ephesians conflict and *government*, the armor of God to be able to stand in the evil day, but not on a journey, uncertain whether I arrive, or sure to fail in myself and if he is sure to be kept by another, but only therefore sure and hence tested." -- *Notes and Comments*, Part 6, p. 200.

I can say 'I abide in him' -- placed with the Father in His perfectness before Him, a place of joy and peace, and witness of eternal love. *I ought then so to walk as He walked*. Christian responsibility is the responsibility of being a Christian; that is of walking because we are *in Christ*, as *Christ walked*, through

Christ dwelling in us." -- *Coll. Writings*, vol. 17, p. 450.

In the foregoing papers the subject of Eternal Life has been examined from Scripture. The following extracts are given to show how distinctly Mr. Darby, who has been quoted as agreeing with this teaching, presses that Christ is the Eternal Life personally (that it is not a condition merely, that its manifestation was before all and *to* all, whether in Christ or the Christian), as also, the infinite importance of the subject, with the seriousness of its denial.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which 'we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life.' It was in a man bodily. It comes by the power of the Word now, but they had seen this Eternal life in the person of a man walking about in this world. Just as we see natural life in Adam, so we see Divine life in Christ. If we look at the life in us, it is united with failure; but I can see and know what the perfectness of the life is by looking at Christ. For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. . . . Christ is my life, and *all Christ's words* are the expression of that life. . . . All the words of Christ are the expression of what He was. *They told out His nature, life and being*, and when we have got that nature, they guide and direct us.

In the Gospel we get Divine life in the Person of Christ, and in the Epistle this divine life in the person of Christians. -- From *Notes on John's Epistles*.

1 John exhibits to us specially Divine life in the Person of Christ, but communicated to us, and the traits which serve as a proof that life is there. He first speaks of this life as he had known it in Christ on earth; showing it as the means of communion with the Father and the Son, so that our joy may be full. But He who was and is this life, has given, yea, has been, the absolute revelation of God as light." -- From *Brief Outlines of the Books of the Bible*.

1 John 1:1. First, it was from the beginning; second, it was a real substantial Person they had known familiarly, not a *doctrine*; that is the blessed secret of it all. If they had got Christ, then they have got all that the Father has got, all that is revealed of Him, and they can't go from that without being wrong. They have got *Eternal life*, the perfect revelation of God, the power of life in Christ. This is what is presented to us as the full enjoyment and the *safeguard* of the saint. It is ours through that which was with the Father, yet was so near to us, not union, but so near to us that nothing could be so near as Christ Himself. This is the Eternal Life that was with the Father, and it is as we study the Lord Jesus Christ we shall have affections established towards Him which nothing can break.

The *least thing* manifests the life of Jesus . . . Whatever does not manifest Him is of the world, *whatever is not the manifestation of the life of Christ* in our souls, that is *sin*.

We get in His person the life itself that was with the Father, 'from the beginning.' He was the life, it was in Him. Now it is never said eternal life is in us, it is in Him. But it is given to us; that's a different thing. He Himself is our life; He has life in Himself. God has given us Eternal life, and this life is in His Son; but the Son has life in Himself. My hand is alive, but my life is not in

my hand; my hand lives by virtue of union with my body; take it off and I shall live still. It is in Him the reality of life is. When Christ was down here, all His instructions were the expression of this life." -- From *Nine Lectures on First Epistle of John*.

The Person then of the Son, the Eternal life manifested in the flesh, is our subject in this Epistle." . . . "Life came in the person of Jesus, in all its own divine perfection, in its human manifestations. Oh, how precious is the truth that this life, such as it was with the Father, such as it was in Jesus, is given to us.

The law promised life to those who obeyed it. Christ is the life. This life has been imparted to believers. Therefore the words which were the expression of that life in its perfection in Jesus, direct and guide it in us according to that perfection. -- From the *Synopsis, First Epistle of John*.

Christ Himself is this life sent from the Father into the world and here revealed in manhood. And now he that hath the Son hath life, 'he that believeth on Him hath everlasting life.' . . . "This life is Christ Himself" (1 John 1). He is the life which was with the Father and is come down here. -- From *Meditations on the Epistle to the Romans*, p. 75.

This life existed in a person, *Christ*, the One who was in the beginning with God, and was God; *that* is the Christ with whom my life is hidden with the Father. Being in Himself life, He came into the world as the life, and manifested the life -- The thing was embodied in the person of the Lord as Man." "If we turn to 1 John 1. we see how this life came down. 'What our hands have handled of the Word of life' (1-3). It is a real Man. The life which was with the Father was manifested down here in the Person of Christ. In many you will find great vagueness of thought in connection with this life. It is Christ Himself. 'When He who is our life,' etc. Before he speaks of the communication of life he speaks of its enemies; he says, 'we have looked upon, and our hands, etc.' . . . What a thought! That Eternal life in this world -- a man, a poor man, a carpenter, one who had not where to lay His head. -- From *Collected Writings, Evangelical* vol. 2.

In the Person of Jesus, *people* saw Him who was come down from heaven, the Son of God become Man, as we see in [the] first chapter of [the] First Epistle of John. 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard,, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have contemplated, and our hands have handled concerning the Word of life' . . . the Eternal life which was with the Father and has been manifested to us." . . . "As in the whole Gospel, we have here what Jesus was, light and life, in His Person, as come into the world. . . .

Paul, in the Epistle to the Ephesians (ch. 1:3,4) presents to us this life in its double character. In the first place, that which answers to His nature, that which Christ was, and is; and secondly, our relationship with the Father, that is to say, sons, and that in His presence." . . . "The glory of Christ Himself will be the full manifestation of this life, and we shall participate in it, we shall be like Him. Still it is an inward life, real and divine, by which we live, although we possess it in these poor earthen vessels. -- From *Notes on the Gospel of John*.

"I could not say that life was not communicated, for surely if a man is born, life is communicated, only I do not admit life in us as a separate thing. 'He that hath the Son hath life.' God's 'seed remaineth in him.' . . . Christ is Eternal

life. We have Him as life, and it will be complete when like Him in glory." -- *Letters*, 12. p. 10.

Existence is not life; the table exists, but is not alive. 'In Him we live' is not we have life. *But the thing I fear is, the unsettling the fact of what life in Christ is.* Thus 'the Father hath life in Himself.' Is that a mere condition of being? -- *Letters*, 12. p. 17.

'He that hath the Son.' 'God hath given us Eternal life, and this life is in His Son.' 'He that hath the Son hath life,' Christ is life. . . . *Life is not a condition of being*, it constitutes it; a material substance without life is not called a being, a being supposes *personal* spontaneity. -- p. 19.

Is life in God a mere *condition of being*? Being means what has life. Hence to say life is a condition of what has life, has, by itself, no sense. -- pp. 19,20.

What we have to cleave to is Christ, in Him we know the Father, and He is that Eternal life which came down from heaven. -- *Letters of J. N. D.* Part 13. p. 173.

The fact is that the body of our blessed Lord as an integral part of His person was the instrument and expression of these springs and motives of the divine Eternal life which existed in Him alone. The value of expiation itself in one aspect flows from and depends on this. The Lord says with all the fullness of divine purpose "when He cometh into the world." . . . "Lo, I come to do thy will" . . . . "*a body* hast thou prepared me." "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of *the body* of Jesus Christ once for all." The body prepared for Him became the vessel for the fulfillment of the eternal counsels, taken by Him who alone could enter into, measure and accomplish them. The dignity and worth of the Person were such, that the varying conditions through which He passed were as nothing in comparison with what He was; and what He was always and in every circumstance impressed its stamp on the whole.

Hence to say "Eternal life never wept," is to partition His Person -- revolting to a Christian heart, and destructive of all that affection and adoration, which the tender, loving manifestation of divine sympathy, in its human form, awakens. As another moved by reading the account of the Lord's weeping over Jerusalem has well expressed it:

They asked not whom those tears were for, they asked not whence they flowed.  
Those tears were for rebellious man, their source the heart of God.  
They fell upon this desert earth, like drops from heaven on high,  
Struck from an ocean tide of love which fills eternity;  
With love and tenderness divine those crystal cells o'erflow,  
'Tis God that weeps thro' human eyes, for human guilt and woe.

Even with ourselves the body of the believer is sanctified, and becomes the organ or vehicle of the divine life, so that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God. Yet, we are told, "eternal life never ate and drank," or "commended His mother to the care of His

loved disciple," and thus the beauty of this touching act is lost and it is reduced to a mere human level, by these unhallowed reasonings. We have seen that the exhibition of "all else" is denied, but "the manifestation of *infancy in its helplessness*," "*humanity in its conditions*." Yet even in a mere babe the divine life is often displayed in a wondrously attractive way. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise"; whilst we are told this could not be in the Lord of all. To so low an estimate of Christ's glory has the originator of these sentiments fallen.

A. C. Ord

(Concluded)

## THE MAN IN THE PURPLE ROBE

Men placed several robes on our Lord Jesus in connection with mocking and striking Him. God's Word says that He makes the wrath of man to praise Him and the remainder He restrains. In view of this let us consider those robes. John (19:3) and Mark (15:17) say that our Lord had upon Him a purple robe that Pilate's soldiers put upon Him. But Matt. (27:28) says it was scarlet. Herod's soldiers had previously put on Him a "beauteous" robe (Luke 23:11). All three descriptions are suitable to, and consistent with, the presentation of Himself in each gospel. The Spirit of God inspired each writer to present Christ in a certain way. Luke presents the Lord Jesus in the perfection and beauty of perfect manhood. Thus the robe put on Him by Herod's soldiers is described as "beauteous." Concerning the other robe, have you not seen cloth that looks purple when turned one way and scarlet when turned another way? I have.

I believe we may learn something from this purple robe regarding the official glories of the Lord Jesus. The following chart may bring before our eye what may help us to more easily grasp the matter before us.

GOSPEL	CHRIST	ROBE	OFFERING	BULLOCK
Matthew	Israel's King	scarlet	trespass	--
Mark	Servant	purple	sin	bullock
Luke	Man	beauteous	peace	--
John	Son	purple	burnt	bullock

Not everyone relates the offerings of Lev. 1-5 to the gospels in this way. (What answers to the meal offering (Lev. 2) is found throughout all four gospels). While it is not my purpose to here state the reasons for this correlation, I just observe that the order in Lev. 1-5 is God coming out to man beginning with what is the highest to Himself, the burnt offering (Christ wholly given up to God and His glory); and the order in the gospels is the reverse -- man coming in. The saint learns the truths represented by the offerings when he proceeds experimentally from Lev. 5 to 1, the very order of the gospels.

I intend by this chart that the eye may be drawn to Mark and John particularly; because, in these two gospels the robe is said to be purple and also because the bullock of the offerings of Lev. 1 - 5 is found only in the offerings that correspond to these same two gospels.

Perhaps in studying the tabernacle, we have realized that scarlet speaks of earthly glory or kingly glory. Purple is the color of universal rule. (The whore of Rev. 17 pretends to both). Matthew presents the Lord Jesus as the King of Israel, the wearer of the scarlet. Luke, who presents Him especially in the beauteous perfection of manhood (even at 12 years of age) says that he was arrayed in a robe that was beauteous. How lovely this all is in its place in Scripture, assigned by the ultimate Author of the Gospels, the Spirit of Truth, Whose office it is to glorify Christ.

Now, why do both Mark and John say that the robe was purple; and what is the connection with the bullock? The purple is the color of universal power, the emperor's color. The bullock is a type of service, and here a type of the Servant of God, with Whom none can compare. And the connection between His lowly place in service and His exaltation is found in Phil. 2:5-11:

... Christ Jesus; who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on equality with God; but emptied himself, taking a bondman's form, taking his place in [the] likeness of men; and having been found in figure as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and [that the] death of [the] cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and granted him a name, that which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal [beings], and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord to God [the] Father's glory.

It is John's gospel that particularly and emphatically presents the One Who subsists in the form of God. It is Mark's gospel that particularly presents that One in the form of the Servant of God. In Phil. 2:6-8 we have Him brought before us in these two ways.<sup>1</sup> He took the Servant's (the bullock) place.

Notice the "wherefore" in Phil. 2:9. It is because of what is stated in

1. Subsistence in the form of God is a personal glory. Servanthood is an office and human station that He assumed. The first three gospels present Christ in some human office and station.

Phil. 2:6-8 that He is exalted to be the wearer of the purple, so to speak. Universal dominion is His, though He is yet to take to Himself all this in a coming time. It is His by moral right, for whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

He will wear the human nature forever that He took in incarnation. It has been well said that He will administer the coming millennial kingdom as man; indeed, as a Servant. And having perfectly administered it, He will "give up the kingdom to him [who is] God and Father; when he shall have annulled all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24). He need not have it taken away from Him since there will be not even one failure.

There never was one human act of the Lord Jesus performed apart from what He is as God. He is not two persons as if He is a "they," a human person and a divine person. The eternal Son united humanity to Himself: one Person, two natures. His every human act had a divine spring in it. And though the Man will universally reign, it is God and man in one Person. He Who is God and man in one Person will be invested in purple -- yea, and scarlet and beauty unspeakable. When the One Who is God and the Servant at the same time is invested with the purple, there will, as always since the incarnation, be the perfect expression of the Godhood and manhood in Him. And just think, He will associate us with Himself in His reign.

ed.

## Is the Law the Rule of Life for a Christian?

What follows is not a doctrinal statement but the history of the experience of John Warburton, a poor English weaver of Manchester, England, into whose life this question came in a significant way. In about the year 1800, he heard that a new church with a fine organ was to be opened in the village of Bolton. Accordingly, he left his wife at home and walked six miles to see the new church. The sermon smote his conscience so mightily, however, that he did not stop at any of the taverns on the way home (as he had before intended). So alarmed did he become at his sins and at his powerlessness to cease from them, that he even contemplated suicide. In vain he went to hear sermons by various clergymen. But, stop, here are his own words from his autobiography:

In the morning I went to Mosley Street Chapel, and soon after I was seated a solemn old man ascended the pulpit; and O how my soul trembled for fear lest he should bear a message from God to me of wrath and condemnation. What distress and horror I felt when, in reading the chapter, he came to these words, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book

of the law to do them." I can never express the thousandth part of all the misery and sense of guilt that I endured. I saw that my soul was doomed to certain destruction for ever and ever. . . . The service being concluded, I wandered up and down from street to street, until I verily believed that my senses were entirely gone. . . . seeing no person near, I sat down on the steps and wept until I had no more power to weep. After some time I got up, and thought I would go home and put an end to my miserable life. . . . On my way home, as I thought, I got into Cannon Street, and observing a chapel there, into which people were crowding, . . . I stopped and said, "Shall I go in?" "No," thought I, "I will not. The minister will take that text, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.'" I proceeded a short distance down the street and stopped again. . . . "Well," said I, "I can but be damned;" and so I came to the resolution of going into the chapel, and "if I perish," said I, "I perish." . . . When seated in the chapel all the horrors of hell seemed to come upon me. I trembled from head to foot, and wished that I had never come in. At the conclusion of the first hymn, Mr. R--- . . . begged God that, if there was any one present who had come to make a last trial of His mercy, He would show Himself to such a one as *his* God. It was with hard work that I could keep from calling out, "Yes, here is poor lost John Warburton. Here I am, come to make the last trial." . . . All my little hope seemed dashed to pieces when I saw the minister take his Bible from the cushion to find his text. "O," thought I, "he is certainly seeking for that awful text which has so torn my heart asunder all these months. What shall I do if he takes that text, 'Cursed is every one,' etc.?" . . . I could not imagine why he delayed so long to put the Bible upon the cushion. At last he did so, . . . and when Mr. R--- read his text, O the wonder and the glory that shone into my soul! The precious text was, "Thou has ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them" (Ps. 68:18). . . . "What can this mean? Where are my sins?" . . . I looked for my sins, for my burden, for the wrath and misery I had so long carried in my poor distracted soul, and could find neither guilt nor sins, wrath nor bondage; for the Saviour of my soul had taken them all away. Such a sight of His sufferings and death shined into my soul as broke my heart to pieces. . . .

When the service was over, I went down the street blessing, thanking, wondering, praising and adoring the God of my salvation; . . . O what cause of holy wonder I saw in God's being a just God, and yet a Saviour. That holy law that had been my terror for months, which had cursed me for every thought, word and deed, I now saw completely honored and righteously fulfilled in Christ. And how precious were these words, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). Whilst another text came upon the back of it with so much power, sweetness, majesty and glory, that it overwhelmed me with adoration, praise and thanksgiving: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:16). I saw, and believed, and felt that Christ had stood in my law-place and stead; and that all the wrath and damnation which I had deserved at the hands of a just God had been laid upon Jesus. I saw that He had stood as my Surety and Bondsman, had atoned for all my sins, and magnified the law, and made it honorable in so holy a way, that there could be no condemnation either from heaven, earth, or hell.

This account of his conversion to God may well prepare us for his reaction when he was told that the law is the rule of life for the Christian. The brightness of his conversion was, of course, noticed by his neighbors:

I was preaching Jesus Christ and His preciousness to every one with whom I could get to talk; and ignorantly thought that all who went to chapel would be ready to rejoice with me. But, alas! I was wonderfully deceived; for when, at the first prayer-meeting which I went to, I told them what great things the Lord had done for my soul, . . . poor things! they could not tell what to make of me. Some laughed, some pitied, some called it nothing but wild-fire, whilst others warned me not to be too secure. . . .

One of them, who professed to be my friend, told me that he was afraid I was turning Antinomian. "Antinomian," said I, "what sort of people are they? I never heard the name before." "They are those," replied he, "who deny the moral law to be the believer's rule of life, which is a most awful doctrine, and leads to all manner of sin." "Moral law!" said I, "what is that?" "It is that just and holy law of God," replied he, "in which He commands us to love and obey Him." "What," asked I, "do you mean that law which Paul meant when he said, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them'? Do you take that law to be your rule of life?" asked I. "Surely I do," said he, "and all those who do not are Antinomians." "Then," said I, "I am one of those Antinomians. Blessed be God! He has delivered me from that law." . . . I asked him how he felt that law, what it did for him whilst he was under it, and how he had been delivered from it. Upon this subject he could say nothing; but he maintained that believers were required to be obedient to the law, as well as to believe in Christ; but I insisted on it that there was obedience, and blessed obedience too, in Christ, obedience which did my soul good, which pleased God, honored the law, pardoned all my sins, confounded the devil, and made my soul dance for joy. I told him I would not commit a single sin for a thousand worlds if I could help it; for it was my meat and drink to do the will of my God and my Saviour who had done so great things for me. "When I was under the law," said I, "I had no obedience, but I was full of anger, rebellion and wretchedness." . . . And I insisted on it that I never knew what it was to hate sin, to love God, and to delight in His ways until His pardoning love and blood were enjoyed in my heart, and that I was confident this was not the law, but Christ Jesus, my God and my Saviour, in my heart. . . .

Although he had been so recently converted, this dear babe in Christ was given, not only to see clearly that the law is not the rule of life for the believer, but also to suffer for the truth's sake, losing the esteem of his neighbors and friends.

Let us now consider an account of the Lord's provision for him.

## An Account of a Man Who Was Fed the Same Food as the Multitude that the Lord Fed

John Warburton, the poor English weaver who was converted to God in about the year 1800, suffered considerable reproach for the gospel's sake. An account of his conversion was given above. In his autobiography, he relates that when he spoke of the love of the Lord Jesus, he was ridiculed and shunned as a dangerous person.

. . . the more I talked of the precious Jesus and the glorious things He had done for my soul, the more they hated and shunned me; nay, I verily believe that some of them hated me a thousand times worse than the devil. They told some of the ministers, whom I was in the habit of hearing with them, that I had turned Antinomian, and denied the moral law as my rule of life, which made all the professors with whom I was at that time acquainted look upon me for holding such a sentiment as a very dangerous man.

I recollect there was one minister, a Mr. E--, who preached at Bury, who was in the habit occasionally of coming to one of their houses at Radcliffe Bridge. One time when he had been preaching there, he came to me to convince me of my error. . . . I told him that I had been under the law for months, and had felt its curses and terror in my soul in such a manner that I expected nothing but damnation night and day, until I heard Mr. R--- read these words, "He hath led captivity captive," &c. I told him that, as he was a minister of Jesus Christ, he must have known these things. He turned very cross, and said I was got to be a teacher, one too wise to be instructed by my teachers. I answered that the dear Jesus was my Teacher, that He had told me that all my sins were forgiven, that He had died for me upon the cross, that He had shown me His hands and feet, and that I knew that He was my Lord and my God. "I have Him in my heart," said I, "this moment, and He is precious to my soul." Upon this, Mr. E-- said that he pitied me, and that he was sorry for me, and would pray for me, for he feared that I was awfully deluded.

Nevertheless, the Lord helped John Warburton and gave him courage against all his opposers. Yet a different kind of trial soon came upon him and it may be instructive to us to see how God tested his faith in adverse circumstances. He became impoverished shortly after his conversion until he had no food to eat.

At this time I had two small children, and my wife was near her confinement with the third. Trade was very bad and provisions dear, flour being fivepence or sixpence a pound, and other things in proportion. It was what we called "*barley times*," for there was scarcely anything for the poor except barley; so that our table was very scantily provided. Indeed, at the very time my wife was taken in labor we were without a single sixpence, and had not in the house two shillings' worth of provisions. . . .

My landlord insisted on my quitting the house and going into the ground-cellar, where I then kept my loom and used to weave, as he wanted the apartments in which we lived for himself. As I owed some money for rent, I complied; but my wife, having been so lately confined, was so much affected by the dampness of the place -- and, indeed, it was a sad place to sleep in -- that she, for a time, nearly lost the use of her hands, for she was taken with the cramp in her hands and fingers, so that she could but seldom either dress or undress



herself or child. Work was now very bad, and provisions immensely dear. We had three small children, and had lost one about six months before. . . . One week we had a very scanty allowance of food, not sufficient to last us through. In the hope of getting my piece out, if it were possible, by Saturday, I worked very hard; but this hard work, and the want of nourishment, our food being principally barley, so exhausted me, that I was obliged, through weakness, to leave off on Friday at the very time when we had not one morsel of food remaining. Here was a gloomy scene, not a morsel of food for husband, wife, or child; the wife, too, with an infant at her breast. If ever I prayed in my life, I did that night, that the Lord would take away our appetite and send us to bed satisfied. And, I believe, the Lord heard my cry, for the poor children wanted to go to bed, and said not one word about anything to eat, for which I felt thankful. But my trouble was about the morning, for I could not leave the morrow to take thought for the things of itself. I rose very early the following morning, and worked till I was obliged to leave the loom, and could scarcely walk or stand, I was so faint and weak. My poor wife, who was as weak and as sickly as I, burst into tears, and cried, "O what shall we do? I cannot live; I am sure we shall die of want." . . . But what was the finishing stroke to my feelings was that my eldest child, who was about five years of age, looked up to me with tears running down its little cheeks, and cried, "Father, give me some bread; O my father, do give me some bread." . . . I ran into a little place under the cellar stairs, fell on my knees before God, and entreated the Lord with all my soul to take away my life. . . . Whilst I was upon my knees . . . these words came with great power and force into my mind, "And they did all eat and were filled; and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full" (Matt. 14:20). . . . I did all I could to put it away. "What," said I, "can it have to do with me in our situation?" . . . but the whole connection came so powerfully to my mind how the Lord had fed five thousand in the wilderness with five loaves and two fishes, and they were all filled. . . . I arose off my knees . . . and told my wife that the Lord would most certainly send us something to eat, and very soon. She wanted to know how and when. "It does not matter," said I, "about the how nor the when; I know it will be the case, and my soul can bless God for it before it comes." Just upon the back of this, a man knocked at the door, and I went and opened it to him. It was a gentleman's servant. "John," said he, "my master has bought some herrings to give to his factory people. I had no orders to leave you any, but I thought as I came along that I would leave you twelve, if you like to accept them." I was so overpowered that I could scarcely speak to the man. . . . Whilst I was still wondering and admiring the goodness of God to a worthless worm, a neighbor sent two cakes of bread. I thought my very soul would have burst through my poor body, and taken its flight into glory unto my dear Jesus. I withdrew into the little palace under the cellar steps, the very place in which, a few hours before, I had begged God to take away my life. And O what a heavenly palace it was! After returning my God thanks, some of the fish were soon ready, and we sat down to the table all crying together. "Come, my dears," said I, "we are now dining on the same food as Jesus and the five thousand dined on in the wilderness."

And who is there who would or could refute the assurance of John Warburton that God had fed him with that same food wherewith the Lord had fed the multitude in the wilderness?

Dennis Ryan

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## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

### "Do you have F. E. Raven's 20 volumes of printed ministry and his letters?"

For some time *Thy Precepts* has carried articles by A. C. Ord written in view of F. E. Raven's attack on fundamental doctrines concerning the Person of Christ. I believe it would be the Lord's mind to have a series of article relating to the truth of Christ's Person. These will be articles by different persons. The first of these I have recently written because of the question directed to me which is found in the title of this article.

Possibly a palliator of F. E. Raven may say that if one does not have *these* particular 21 books he is disqualified from rendering a sound judgment concerning F. E. Raven.

If *these* particular books (1960's edition) were free of all the fundamentally evil doctrines which F. E. Raven (FER) taught, it does not logically follow from that, that he did not teach them. While I do not have 19 of these books (I do have the *Letters*, 1963), I have other volumes and papers of FER which contain his evil teachings, as well as many papers written at the time of the controversy exposing him. Even supposing, then, that the volumes of the 1960's edition were free of evil (which the 1963 ed. of FER's *Letters* is not), it is only reasonable to assume that many teachings would be negatively affected by the fundamentally evil teachings. After all, God's truth forms a whole -- and fundamentals cannot be corrupted and then the superstructure be unaffected.

When Christ died, the human soul and spirit remained united to the deity. That is, the union of the two natures in Christ subsisted while His body lay in death; which means that the incarnation subsisted while His body lay in death. Now, FER, in his new style of speaking about Christ's manhood actually denied that Christ had a human soul and spirit. Persons read his papers and say, Oh, but he affirms the Lord's manhood. Indeed? Do you naively suppose that everyone means the same thing by using a familiar word. Do you not know that evil is often brought in by attaching new meanings to old words? This gives the evil teacher time to gain a following before many wake up, though a few discerning ones may quickly see the evil. But the "moderates" dwell on the amiable characteristics of the evil teacher, contributing to his success.

Very likely, FER's 1889 paper, "The Person of the Christ," is in those 20



volumes. In his own clever style of wording he taught therein the (Apollinarian) doctrine that Christ had no human soul and spirit. What that means is that, having no human soul and spirit, the deity formed the spirit of the body --- and what this means is that when He died, when the deity left the body, the incarnation was dissolved. In the above paper he taught that 'in Person He is God, in condition He is man.' This means that a "condition" died, *not a human life*, and the real meaning, the result, is: no atonement! It is all so horrid, horrid, horrid.

The fact is that the 20 volumes and the *Letters*, of the 1960's edition, are not at all needed to demonstrate that FER taught fundamentally evil doctrine. Moreover, we must keep in mind the editing of FER's writings. The 1960's edition has reduced the number of volumes. Was anything changed or left out? Those who print FER's books have travelled even further down the road of departure than did FER. I will cite evidence of how they have handled FER's *Letters* and then utilize an extract from N. Noel regarding editing that went on during the time of the dispute. Then we will have an illustration of how FER and his supporters dealt with those who opposed them. Thus we will have a brief look at the moral character of Ravenism. But if FER held that Christ had no human soul and spirit, how could FER speak of the Lord's humanity? FER had a complete system. He taught that humanity was ever in the Son and of course He brought that humanity that was in Him into incarnation. This, however, is not the Christ of God. It is a Satanic imitation that overthrows the Person of Christ and the atonement. We will see that He taught that humanity was ever essentially in the Son, as found in his *Letters*, 1963. We will not discuss other evil doctrines that he taught. Finally, I will list a few papers written in the 1890's (plus my own 1980 book), copies of which anyone may purchase from me. Table 1, below, lists dates of FER's letters not found in the 1963 edition of his *Letters*.

## RAVEN-TAYLORITE EDITING

It is well to keep in mind that when fundamentally evil doctrine is taught, palliated or espoused, that this is usually accompanied by a decline in integrity.

R. Nelson, in *Faithless, Erroneous Reasoning*, 1973, p.4, wrote:

The latest edition (1963) of "Letters of F. E. Raven and Fragments From His Ministry," claims to contain "more than twice as many (letters) as before . . .", yet some letters have been subtly edited, without being so noted. Others, previously in print, are missing. A few examples are those dated 6/3/88, 3/20/88, 7/3/90, 7/16/90, 7/24/90, 8/5/90, 8/14/90, etc.

I wondered if these missing letters included any that had been quoted by those who opposed FER's evil doctrines. So I made a list of letters quoted in a number of papers that I have, written by opposers of FER. Table 1 (Appendix 1) lists those letters by FER that were cited by these opposers but which are missing from FER's *Letters*, 1963. Table 2 (Appendix 1) lists those letters

cited by these opposers of FER but are found in FER's *Letters*, 1963. An Asterisk indicates the letters cited above by R. Nelson. There are a total of 43 letters in Tables 1 and 2 of which 27 (Table 1) do not appear in FER's *Letters*, 1963. That represents 63% of the letters cited in the anti-FER papers that I have collated. Is it not interesting that they are not included? I suggest that the meaning of the missing letters is:

the Raven-Taylorite publisher is not a reliable source concerning the facts about FER's evil teachings.

On the other hand, enough fundamental error remains in FER's *Letters*, 1963, so that no confidence can be placed in the soundness of what the present publishers do print of FER's writings.

R. Nelson, cited above, warned that some of FER's letters "have been subtly edited." A. P. Aris is a Ravenite, now in his nineties, who does not accept all the Taylorite development of FER's teachings. In his, "The Holy Spirit - His Place in the Economy of Grace," p. 3, he cited from a letter of FER dated 03/08/1892 which, he says, is found in *Extracts of Letters from F. E. Raven*, 1908, p. 10, and then says:

an extract falsely suppressed in the Stow Hill edition of the *Letters* 1963, edited by R. S.

The Foreword in the 1963 edition of FER's *Letters* says this:

The volume incorporates all the letters previously printed in 'Extracts of Letters, F. E. R.' . . . .

## PAST EDITING

N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:537,538, wrote:

The Notes of the Witney meeting [1888] were revised by F. E. R., J. B. S. and T. H. R.,<sup>2</sup> and even then were considered unsafe for publication. The same thing took place at the Crieff (Scotland) Conferences; the Notes being revised and corrected by F. E. R. and T. H. R., and even then it was deemed inadvisable that they should be published (the Christian, a partisan of F. E. R., who took them down in shorthand, on showing them to the writer hereof, but not parting with them, remarked, "There's enough in these to set the Thames on fire." They have not been so overhauled, that it has been possible to have them printed.

The late Dr. C. Wolston<sup>3</sup> informed the writer hereof, that the Notes of the Malvern meeting were treated in the same way, and for the same reason. Think of it! *Truth* considered unsafe for publication in the church, which is "the pillar and ground of truth"! Witney, Crieff, Quernerford, Malvern, 57 Park Street

2. J. B. Stoney and T. H. Reynolds.

3. Christopher Wolston edited the valuable periodical, *Words of Faith*. He withstood FER but his brother, W. P. T. Wolston, went with FER.

(London), all bore witness to a system, *a new system*, of teaching steadfastly pursued for a long period; and revealed what can be done even by otherwise well-taught brothers, when *once they are off the lines of truth*.

## ILLUSTRATION OF THE METHOD OF FER AND HIS SUPPORTERS

In the early 1890s, an attack had been made upon faithful Major H. H. McCarthy for putting into print something that FER and his defenders said that FER did not write. A. C. Ord, in *The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ*, pp. 42,43, wrote:

Mr. Raven wrote to a brother in the West of England a letter dated July 2nd, 1890:

"I send you an extract from the letter in which the statement, 'Think of a helpless infant etc.,' occurs. I think it speaks for itself. The exhibition of eternal life is in *the Risen Man*,<sup>4</sup> who has annulled death. (Signed) "F. E. Raven."

Extract.

"June 29, 1889. -- Then, again, as to life, he says: 'Christ never ceased to be the exhibition of eternal life, from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. Think of a helpless infant being *the exhibition* of eternal life, whatever might be there. Infancy, and all connected with it, does not find place in John. It is simply there 'the Word became flesh.' The fact is, there is a tendency to lose sight of the truth, that, as well as being eternal life, Jesus was God, and exercising Divine prerogatives down here. 'The Word was God,' and further, in taking part in human life down here (the life which sin attached), He took part in that which in Him was brought to an end judicially in death, and this assuredly was not eternal life."

Here then is the letter (June 29, 1889) so long held back: and the reason for this unholy compact in concealment is now evident. The leaders of the Raven party at Ealing, though Major McCarthy had got the sentence originally from them, which he printed afterwards, insisted that he should be put under discipline for his unrighteousness in printing a sentence reported from a letter, which was not contained in that letter; and Mr. Raven was a party to this conduct by *declining* to say to Mr. Barker more than "*I am satisfied I never used these words.*" Thus, with this prevaricating reply, he leaves Major M., with the imputation of unrighteousness cast upon him, and its consequent effects conveying the impression that Major M. has done him an injustice. It now turns out that the difference in the sentence consists in

"*Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life.*" (Major M., as reported to him.)

"*Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life.*" (Mr. Raven to Mr. Rudling.)<sup>5</sup>

4. FER denied that Christ was the exhibition of eternal life in manhood while here on earth. I consider this a fundamental attack on His Person and glory in manhood.

5. More on this matter is found in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:537.

The reader, having both sentences in juxtaposition, will now be able to judge what is the difference between them. The dishonorable character of the concealment becomes evident; as it is clear that the charge against Major M. of unrighteousness, could not have been sustained for a moment, had the sentence as originally written been divulged. Thus the holy discipline of the House of God is made a handle for party spirit -- a false charge made, and long sustained by these clandestine means, and by the professed leaders of an assembly, -- where the glory of the adorable Person of the Son of God was in question. One of these took the trouble to *count the words* in each, to insist upon the horror of the Major's conduct, saying that there were eleven words in the original instead of nine, and that there were six differences. This he repeated, over and over again, on many different occasions, before many witnesses; whilst a leading London brother denounced, at Cheapside, the iniquity of the Major.

The words "expressed," and "exhibited" (or "manifested," which is the Scripture term, and perhaps, the strongest), are expressive of what is displayed in the *Person Himself*, and *not at all of perceptions existing in the beholder*. Hence, if we say that anything that was essentially<sup>6</sup> in Christ was not exhibited in Him, we deny His own Word, "I am altogether that which I say unto you" (John 8:25).

The above is an example of the morally evil character of Ravenism.

I call your attention to the fact that both the July 2, 1890 and June 28, 1889 letters of FER, cited above, do not appear in the 1963 ed. of FER's *Letters*. In a letter dated Nov. 28, 1890 (*Letters*, 1963, p. 38ff) FER gives a version of this issue that continued to impugn the character of H. H. McCarthy. I leave to themselves those who defend such a letter and person. However, I cite one part of that letter of FER as the essence of his approach.

The discrepancies between Major M.'s sentence and mine, and the strictures in his paper on a word (fancy) which I had not used may be thought matters of secondary moment, or attributable to misunderstanding. What is important is that Major M. *had not seen my letter* which had *not* been circulated, and yet the sentence was set in inverted commas as a quotation, and was said to be *taken from a circulated document among christians*.<sup>7</sup> His conduct as to this and other matter arising out of it, came seriously under question at Ealing.

When Mr. Snell, through Mr. Barker, asked in March last if it was true that I had owned myself the author of the sentence printed by Major M., I replied, 'I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine -- it is for Major M., who I believe is the author of the paper in which the sentence appears in inverted commas, to prove whence he derived it.'

"*I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine . . .*"

Thus this slippery blasphemer of the Son of God in His holy habitation seeks

6. [FER taught the fundamentally evil doctrine that the Son was not essentially the eternal life in his own Person.]

7. [I do not have Major McCarthy's paper, nor do I trust FER.]

to focus on *procedure* and *exactitude*, as is usually the case with such and their defenders, in order to cover up the real evil; and then fasten guilt on those who withstand the evil. This is the sort of 'integrity' that the opposers of FER had to deal with. Here is a quotation from H. H. Snell regarding support of evil:

[the] attempt of Mr. [J. S. Oliphant] O.'s to justify Mr. R. by bringing forward one of his good sentences to meet a bad one. The error of this was pointed out by Mr. [Charles] Stanley in the beginning of this painful and humiliating controversy. It is an old device of Satan, almost always found with false doctrine . . . When a sentence is brought before Mr. R.'s supporters which they cannot defend, they bring one of his true sentences to meet it. But it is a corrupting principle; and it is clear that no amount of truth added to it can neutralize or justify one unscriptural sentence about our adorable Lord . . . "No lie is of the truth" (2 Cor. 2:17; 1 John 2:21); *A Letter (dated Nov. 19, 1891) to J. S. Oliphant; and, A Few Observations on Mr. Oliphant's "Remarks" on a Letter to Him by H. H. Snell (Jan. 13, 1892).*

### ONE EXAMPLE OF THE EVIL IN FER'S LETTERS, 1963 (P. 22)

I will now refer to a letter of FER that is found in the 1963 edition of his *Letters* (p. 22) which contains several of his fundamentally evil teachings. It contains FER's doctrine that humanity was ever in the Son. W. T. Whybrow wrote:

I append *in extenso* a letter, dated 25th August, 1890, which has been largely circulated in many parts of the kingdom, and gives a clear and complete *expose* of the new doctrine which it inculcates: --

I do not accept that Eternal life is an essential title of the Son of God.<sup>8</sup> I am sure it cannot be maintained. I believe it to be a term, indicating a condition which, according to the counsels of God, was to characterize man, and which has been now made manifest by the appearing of Jesus Christ. What was to characterize man was what had been in the Son eternally with the Father, and has in due time been revealed in the Second Man, the One out of heaven. But what characterized the Second Man could not include all that was true of a Divine Person, as self-existence (having life in Himself), omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a Divine Person,<sup>9</sup> and yet it does include what He was morally in righteousness, love, holiness, and truth, and in nearness to the Father. Hence I said it was an integral part of His Person, but such as could be connected with Manhood (could characterize the Second Man), and be communicated to man. I cannot see how there can be any difficulty in it; Christ is the true God and Eternal life. We see the same thing in 'that which is born of the Spirit is spirit' morally, but is apart from any question of divine attributes; the proper glory of the Son we shall see, but could not share. I cannot imagine how anyone can think

8. [This is fundamental evil.]

9. [This divides Christ's Person.]

that the Second Man covers all that is true of the Son, yet the Second Man covers all that is true of the Son, yet the Second Man was out of heaven, as Eternal life was with the Father. The only time that it is predicated of Christ that He is Eternal life is in 1 John 5:20, and He is presented there as the One who came through water and blood; is thus entirely separated by death from the first Man, in the virtue and power of redemption. We are in Him, and He is Eternal life -- as the full expression and revelation of it, besides being the true God.

Copious extracts of the above letter were sent to the writer of it, begging him to explain the statements contained therein, as well as to show where these things were taught in Scripture. The reply was as follows, dated 23rd Jan., 1891: --

I have no further explanation to give -- the passages quoted do not seem to me to present any great difficulty, though they can hardly be fully understood without the letter to which they were in reply." (Signed F. E. Raven).

I would only ask, Is not the last Adam, the Second Man none other than the Lord Jesus Christ? No doubt we shall bear His image (1 Cor. 25:49) as heavenly ones, but we shall never be either the last Adam or the Second Man. It is Himself alone. If this is true, then the Unitarian character of the letter is evident, for it says, "What characterized the Second Man could not include all that was true of a Divine Person." . . . I cannot imagine how anyone can think that the Second Man "covers all that is true of the Son." He thus abstracts essential deity from the Person of Christ as Man -- the last Adam and Second Man. It is a positive mercy of our God that however subtle the theory, it is thoroughly exposed for any simple believer who reads his Bible, for in this case, as in any other where Man's mind presumes to tamper with the truth of God, it is impossible to make the system square with it in the most fundamental points. Thus it is here. The writer of the letter boldly denies to the last Adam that divine attribute (self-existence, having life in Himself) which Scripture carefully ascribes to Him: "the last Adam, a quickening Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45). This is a purely divine attribute, though Christ's as Man (John 5:21,26), given Him of the Father -- His now, in the glory, still as Man, even as it was His eternally in the Godhead (John 1:1-4). It is not such as can be connected with manhood *in us*, or communicated to us; but we never become the last Adam, the Second Man. The fact is, this teaching is now plainly a direct attack against Christ, and seeks to lower Him to the level of the saint, by denying to Him personally, when associating us with Himself in grace, those attributes which are distinctively divine. Moreover, when the evil is challenged, explanation is now declined, and the statements maintained.

(W. T. Whybrow, *The Truth of Christ's Person: Is it Taught by Mr. F.E. Raven?*)

It should be clear to you how FER's doctrine of the manhood having ever been in the Son, and His bringing that manhood with Him into incarnation, is part of his system that Christ had no human soul and spirit. The body alone does not constitute manhood. So the manhood must have been in the deity that clothed itself with a body. Thus, he taught that manhood was ever in the Son and that He brought that manhood with him. Thus FER held that in Person He is God, in condition He is man, as stated in his *The Person of the Christ*, 1889. He

declaimed against the orthodox teaching of the union of the two natures in Christ.<sup>10</sup> The fact is that the true Christ is gone in this system.

H. H. Snell wrote:

Where, let me ask again, do we find in Scripture such words as --

"The Son of Man, the Second Man, (though not yet revealed) was ever essentially in the Son" (Nov. 21/90).

Again, "He is revealed as last Adam and Second Man, though ever such in His own Person, for the Second Man is 'out of heaven'" (Nov. 25/90).

To justify these statements is impossible; for the thought of the essence of humanity cannot be excluded from them as having been "ever essentially in the Son." Where in Scripture have we such teaching? Where in Scripture is there authority for writing such sentences?

Again, "What characterized the Second Man could not include all that was true of a divine Person, as self-existence, having life in Himself, omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine Person" (August 25/90).

Now this doctrine comes to me not only as without Scripture authority, but as opposed to its teaching. If we turn to the 16th chapter of Matthew, we find: -- "When Jesus asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (observe "Son of Man"). "They said, Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (that is, He was a good man without divine attributes). He saith unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (mark, the Son of Man is the Son of the living God, having therefore the eternal and divine qualities of the living God). And Jesus answered and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The Son of Man is Son of the Father. (H. H. Snell, *A Letter (dated Nov. 19, 1891) to J. S. Oliphant; and, A Few Observations on Mr. Oliphant's "Remarks" on a Letter to Him by H. H. Snell* (Jan. 13, 1892).)

All who tamper with FER became leavened and infected with his spirit and want to hide behind picayune objections. They 'strain out a gnat and swallow a camel.' Their minds become enveloped in a fog of delusion from the Enemy. May God protect our minds.

It is asserted by some that FER was not guilty of holding the fundamentally evil doctrines with which he was charged while he lived. Observe that the Raven-Taylorites do hold those fundamentally evil doctrines with which FER

10. "Where the idea of the unity of a person is got from, I know not. It seems to me perfect nonsense" (*Letters*, 1963, p. 85, Dec. 7, 1893). "I believe the old notion of the union of God and man to be wrong" (*Readings and Addresses in the United States and Canada*, 1902, p. 314). See ch. 7 in my *F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines on the Person of Christ and Their Present Bearing*.

was charged. Is that not the most amazing coincidence that you ever heard of? The truth is that the assertion is part of a *delusion*. The "heavenly truth" FER brought out is *infernal lies*.

William Kelly, in his, *F. E. R. Heterodox*, called FER's doctrines the "light of death" (p. 23). He rightly said that FER had a "mission . . . from an opposing and evil spirit to seduce unwary souls from the truth they once seemed to enjoy . . ." (p. 43). He wrote, "In my judgment only an evil spirit could effect such concatenation of falsehood . . ." (p. 86). WK spoke of "an idea inbreathed by Satan" (p. 92). It is indeed a "pernicious system" (p. 99), "blasphemy" (p. 99) and an "unholy alliance" (p. 99).

### SOME PAPERS REGARDING FER

I will make available copies of the following papers for those who wish to purchase them:

P. A. Humphreys, *Remarks on a Paper Entitled "The Person of the Christ," by F. E. R.* (19 pages/10 sheets) \$2.50.

H. H. Frost, *"What Think Ye of Christ?" Enlarged Edition (Revised), etc.* (16 sheets) \$3.50.

W. T. Whybrow, *The Truth of Christ's Person: Is it Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?* (20 pages/10 sheets) \$2.50.

H. A. Hammond, *A Record of Some Correspondence With Documents and Facts, 1888 - 1891, Revised, With Postscript* (106 pages/53 sheets) \$12.00

R. A. Huebner, *F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines on the Person of Christ and Their Present Bearing*, 150 pages, \$4.50

N.J. residents add 7%  
Prices are postage paid.

## APPENDIX 1

### TABLE 1

Letters written by FER of the following dates, quoted in part or in whole, found in the references cited, do not appear in *Letters of F. E. Raven, New Series*, Kingston on Thames: Stow Hill, 1963.

DATE	REFERENCE	DATE	REFERENCE
06/06/88	HAMMOND 8	10/17/90	ORD 1:80
01/15/89	FROST 22	10/30/90	FROST 17,21;
06/29/89	FROST 15; RAVENISM 10	ORD 1:81	
12/06/89	FROST 16; HAMMOND 17;	11/06/90	FROST 22
	ORD 1:76	11/13/90	FROST 16; ORD 1:76
03/06/90	ORD 1:76; ORD 3:3	12/06/90	FROST 18,21
03/20/90	ORD 3:5	12/14/90	FROST 7

03/29/90	FROST 16	12/16/90	FROST 22; ORD 1:80
06/18/90	ORD 1:79	01/23/91	WHYBROW 2:42
06/29/90	ORD 3:42	05/04/91	FROST 19
07/02/90	ORD 3:42	09/25/91	FROST 14; ORD 1:90
07/16/90 *	ORD 1:76	10/30/91	WHYBROW 1:5
07/24/90 *	FROST 12; ORD 3:9	12/14/92	FROST 7
10/01/90	FROST 17,18	12/13/94	HUMPHREYS 19
		08/23/95	WHYBROW 1:5

TABLE 2

Letters written by FER of the following dates, quoted in part or in whole, found in the references cited, which do appear in *Letters of F. E. Raven, New Series*, Kingston on Thames: Stow Hill, 1963. I do not say that they have not been edited.

DATE	REFERENCE
05/01/88	FROST 18; HAMMOND 3; Ord 1:80
05/08/88	HAMMOND 5
12/24/88	HAMMOND 9
03/21/90	HAMMOND 23
07/03/90 *	WHYBROW 4n; RAVENISM 29
07/25/90	FROST 21; ORD 1:42,76
08/25/90	FROST 20; ORD 1:77; SNELL 2,7; RAVENISM 36; WHYBROW 2:41-43
09/17/90	ORD 1:77,78; RULE 1:214, 216; RAVENISM 37
10/12/90	FROST 21; ORD 1:77; RAVENISM 39
11/21/90	ORD 1:76; SNELL 1:1; RAVENISM 7
11/25/90	ORD 1:44,77; SNELL 1:7; RAVENISM 37
11/28/90	WHYBROW 1:4n
01/29/91	ORD 1:82; RAVENISM 42
08/29/93	WHYBROW 1:5
12/07/93	FROST 9

If I have made several mistakes or overlooked something, the overall thrust would not be materially changed.

**FROST** is H. H. Frost, *"What think Ye of Christ?" Enlarged Edition (Revised), Including a Supplement "A Few Words More," in which are Given Statements Setting Forth the Doctrines of Mr. F. E. Raven of Greenwich, and of Others Associated with Him*, Bristol, n.d.

**HAMMOND** is H. A. Hammond, *A Record of Some Documents and Facts, 1888 to 1891, Revised, With Postscript*, Oct. 28, 1891.

**HUMPHREYS** is P. A. Humphreys, *A Word on Principles*, Bath: Herald Office, n.d.

**ORD 1** is A. C. Ord, *The Glory of the Person of the Son of God: His Title as the Eternal Life, and the Connection of the Believer with Him as Such*, n.d.

**ORD 2** is A. C. Ord, *The Blessedness of the Person of Christ in its Unity as Presented in Scripture*, London: Carter, n.d.

**ORD 3** is A. C. Ord, *The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ*, n.d.

**RAVENISM** is *An Answer to the Challenging Question Frequently Heard, What is Ravenism?*, New York: C. A. Herrmann.

**RULE** is A. H. Rule, *Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule*, Bible Truth Publishers.

**SNELL** is H. H. Snell, *A Letter (dated Nov. 19, 1891) to J. S. Oliphant; and, A Few Observations on Mr. Oliphant's "Remarks" on a Letter to Him by H. H. Snell* (Jan. 13, 1892).

**WHYBROW 1** is W. T. Whybrow, *The Truth of Christ's Person: Is it Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?*, London: Carter, n.d.

**WHYBROW 2** is W. T. Whybrow, *Heavenly Truth. A Review of Mr. Champney's "Letter to the Saints," with An Appendix*, Ealing: Cowell, n.d.

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

### CHAPTER 3.3

#### ACTS 2:30-36

#### IS CHRIST ON DAVID'S THRONE NOW?

Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath, of the fruit of his loins to set upon his throne; he, seeing [it] before, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that neither has he been left in hades nor his flesh seen corruption. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses. Having therefore been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which ye behold and hear. For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he says himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I have put thine enemies [to be] the footstool of thy feet. Let the whole house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him, this Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:30-36).

#### THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT

Opposers would like to connect v. 33 with the O.T. prophecies of the effusion of the Spirit <sup>11</sup> as if this was a fulfillment. One hardly has to look there. Luke 24:49 and John 14:26 are near at hand. And when we are sealed with the Spirit Who formed that body once-for-all formed at Pentecost, we are sealed with the same Spirit Who formed that body, "the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). How simple this is; and in accordance with Rom. 16:25,26; Col. 1:24-26;

11. O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 136.

Eph. 3:9.

The Lord Jesus received the Spirit two times. The first time the Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. This was in accordance with the perfection of His person. He needed no application of blood first, as we do. And then when glorified (cp. John 7:39), He received the Spirit from the Father, as glorified Man, to baptize in the power of one Spirit, into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), those who were cleansed by His precious blood, and were waiting below. Thus were they one body with the Head in heaven. And thus was the promise of the Father fulfilled concerning His sending the Spirit.

### PETER'S MESSAGE

We now come to the O.T. Scripture Peter quoted. Did he quote it in order to tell the Jews that David's earthly throne had just been transferred to heaven? -- and that Christ was just seated on David's throne? -- and that the prophesied reign was changed from a kingdom on earth to a spiritual reign in heaven? Well, theology thinks to load this passage with all that freight.

His message was not those things but that the very Jesus that had just been slain was raised from the dead by God. The O.T. showed that the Messiah would die and he raised. He cited words from David that could not be true of David, but true of Messiah. His soul was not left in hades nor his flesh seen corruption. This meant resurrection. This was true of One Who was to fulfil the promise to David that of the fruit of his loins, one would sit on His throne. All He was exalted by the right hand of God, poured out the Spirit. And there He sits until God makes His enemies His footstool, made now both Lord and Christ.

### WHAT THRONE IS CHRIST ON NOW?

**How Theology Answers.** There is a theological process that involves "spiritualizing" the O.T. prophecies so as to have the church be the subject of those prophecies leaving the O.T. curses for literal Israel and the promises of blessing for the spiritual Israel (i.e., the church). That is the general framework for handling such passages as we are considering. In the process of this spiritual alchemy, the passage we are considering must mean, therefore, that Christ is on David's throne now, even though no N.T. text has been produced that states it. This process involves:

1. Transferring David's earthly throne to heaven;
2. Making the church the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32);
3. Changing David's throne from an *earthly* to a *heavenly* throne;
4. Begin the reign of Christ at Pentecost;
5. Try to ignore the fact that Christ says he is now on the Father's throne;
6. When Christ speaks of sitting on His own throne, more that to the eternal state;

**What Peter Did Not Say.** In Acts 2 we do not find Peter stating or implying what is found in points 1-4 above. These points are mere theological assertions. Peter was proving from the O.T. that Messiah would die, be resurrected and sit down at God's right hand. It was this that reached the conscience of some of Peter's hearers (Acts 2:37). There is not a word here, or anywhere else, that Christ is now occupying David's throne.<sup>12</sup>

**What Throne Is Christ On Now?** He that overcomes, to him will I give to sit with me in my throne; as I have overcome, and have sat down with my Father in his throne (Rev. 3:22).

Here, our Lord's throne is distinguished from the Fathers' throne.<sup>13</sup> He is not on His own throne of glory now. Yet we are told that He is reigning now. What does Scripture say regarding Christ's reign? Psalm 110:1,2 says:

Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put thine enemies [as] footstool of thy feet. Jehovah shall send the sceptre of thy might out of Zion: rule in the midst of thine enemies.

*With respect to His enemies* Christ sits at God's right hand, where He now is, UNTIL His enemies are made the footstool of His feet.<sup>14</sup> Thus, His enemies are told He is reigning now. When will He rule in the midst of His enemies? When Jehovah makes them Messiah's footstool -- when Jehovah sends the sceptre of Christ's might out of Zion.

The Psalm does not speak of the extermination of the enemies, though some will be (Rev. 19, etc.). Some will feign obedience (Psalm 18:44; 66:3). But such shall come to their end in the little time when Satan is loosed from the abyss and deceives them.

The Psalm does not say that while Messiah is at Jehovah's right hand, Jehovah is making, gradually, or in any other way, Christ's enemies His footstool.<sup>15</sup> He is now gathering His co-heirs, as after the rapture He will form a remnant (which the Song of Songs is about). And when He is manifested, we will be manifested with Him in glory (Col. 4:3) when He comes in glory and the armies in heaven with Him (Rev. 19). That is when Jehovah will set the blessed Man of Psalm 1 upon His holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2). Then the people (the Jewish nation) "shall be willing in the day of thy power"

12. See Wm. Kelly, *The Second Advent of Christ*, Glasgow: Allan, 1868, p.67. Also, *The Bible Treasury* 17:173, etc., for a reply to postmillennialism.

13. Incredibly, P. Mauro, *The Patmos Visions*, Swengel: Reiner, 1971 reprint, p. 138 says, "This needs no comment." R. J. Rushdoony (the father of reconstructionism) a postmillennialist, *Thy Kingdom Come*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971, p.127, says essentially nothing. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, Tyndale: London, p.79, 1940, places Christ's throne "in the hereafter," in heaven (p. 191).

14. *With respect to His work on Calvary*, Christ will never get up (Heb. 10:12). Sitting until His enemies are made the footstool of His feet is no more valid an objection to His coming for His own at the pre-tribulation rapture, than is Heb. 10:12 a valid ground of objection. He is also seen standing in Acts 7 to receive Stephen.

(Psalm 110:3) for He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob and so all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26). He will bring them into the bond of the covenant (Ezek. 20); for that covenant belongs to Israel (Rom. 9:4), Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. 9:3); but with all rebels purged out they shall all be righteous (Isa. 60:21) kinsmen. Then indeed they will be willing (Psalm 110:3).

It is at that future that Christ will take His own throne, the throne of David. It will then display its power over the whole earth when Christ heads up both the heavenly and the earthly spheres (Eph. 1:10) for God's glory. Meanwhile He has set Himself down at the right hand of the greatness on high (Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2). At any rate, we have the express statement that it is the Father's throne on which Christ sits. Let us now consider His own, future throne.

### The Throne of the Son of Man. Matt. 25:31-34 says:

But when the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit down upon his throne of glory, and all the nations shall be gathered before him; and he shall separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and he will set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on [his] left. Then shall the King say to those on his right hand, Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from [the] world's foundation.

The Son of Man has never yet come in His glory, and all the angels with Him. This, then, must be future. If Christ is not on David's throne now, then it is very likely that this throne of glory is David's throne. Here we see Christ acting as Solomon did in 1 Kings 1-3. Indeed, it requires both David and Solomon as types of the future actings of great David's greater Son. When the Lord Jesus comes in His glory, there is a short period when He smites the enemies of Israel (typified by David) just preceding the millennial reign (the reign typified by Solomon).

The twelve apostles will have a special place with Christ when He shall sit down upon His throne of glory:

And Jesus said to them, Verily I say unto you, That ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit down upon his throne of glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. 19:28; cp. Luke 22:30).

Cp. Matt. 20:21, where a mother wanted her two sons to sit, one on the right and one on the left, of Himself in His kingdom. But the Father has prepared that place for whom He will. That place will be in the millennial kingdom, not in the eternal state. The 12 apostles did not sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel after Pentecost, nor now. They will do so during the "regeneration". "The force of the word is a change of position; a new state of things. The word is only used here [Titus 3:5], and in Matt. 19:28 for the Saviors coming kingdom" (J. N. Darby). But if one rejects the truth of the future millennial reign of Christ, then this must be relegated to the eternal

state.<sup>16</sup>

See, then, how the system of spiritual alchemy works. The promise to David regarding the sitting of Messiah upon David's throne (Jer. 33:14-18; cp. Micah 5:2; Luke 1:32,33) is transmuted from an earthly throne to a throne in heaven *now*; while asserting that when the Lord Jesus referred to His throne of glory, He is speaking of the eternal state. This is necessitated by asserting that Christ is reigning *now*.

Observe, once again, that the true view of this accords with the fact that Scripture lays it down quite expressly that the church was not the subject of the O.T. prophecies (Rom. 16:25,26; Col. 1:24-26; Eph. 3:8-11). The true view accords, too, with the fact that the death of Christ provided for the salvation of that future righteous nation (John 11:51,52), for our blessed Lord was "a minister of [the] circumcision for [the] truth of God, to confirm the promises of the fathers"; and not that alone, but also "that the nations should glorify God for mercy" (Rom. 15:8,9).

Joel's prophecy will then be fulfilled. Isaiah says,

And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts shall reign on mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients in glory (Isa. 24:23).

Then will Jehovah-Jesus have the throne of David, rule over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32) and over the whole earth in the administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10). The Father's throne is above. David's throne is earthly. It is connected with the development of God's ways in government in the earth. David's throne is not above at the Father's right hand, nor is the Father's throne David's throne. Nor shall David's throne be in the heavens.

**Peter Did Not Spiritualize the Throne.** A Jew reading the O.T. prophecies concerning the throne of David and the Messiah would rightly have believed that that throne was here on earth. Just so would Peter's hearers understand it. Notice that Peter did not spiritualize these prophecies. He did not say Christ was reigning now. He did not say that His enemies were going to be gradually put under His feet over a long period of time (cp. Psalm 110:1-3). He did not tell his hearers that the throne of David, which had been on earth, in Jerusalem, was now transferred to heaven. And this brings us to the next passage for consideration, Acts 3:19-26, where we shall see that the Jews must repent for "the times of refreshing" to come; i.e., the reign of Messiah upon David's throne in Jerusalem.

ed.

16. H. N. Ridderbos relegates this to "the new world . . . Rev. 21:1-5," (*Matthew, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p.360, 1987*) as does W. Hendriksen, *The Gospel of Matthew, Grand Rapids: Baker, p. 730, 1973* who confounds confusion by asserting, "Ranged, as it were, around the throne (cf. Rev. 4:4) there will be twelve other thrones." What imagination!

## "A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS"

(a review)

A periodical I shall not name recently carried an article by the title "A Voice in the Wilderness." I shall not comment on the John-the-Baptist pretension of this title -- covering, really, looseness in divine matters -- nor the entire article. Footnotes will offer some observations on this voice.

So here we have the two principle features that designated the Camp both in O. T. and N. T. times, viz. idolatry and the denial of the Sonship of Christ (John is more emphatic, the Father and the Son),<sup>1</sup> to which also should be added the defunct Jewish legal system.<sup>2</sup> And where do we see the Camp today? Certainly the Papal system is a classic example of it. It perpetuates most of the features of Judaism and adds mariolatry and other blasphemies thereto; yet ironically confesses that Jesus is the Son of God.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, all religious groups that deny the Sonship of Christ and exalt their man-exalting schemes is the Camp in principle.<sup>4</sup> Therefore in this context, we today, need much wisdom in discerning where the truth lies in view of the complex structure of the Christian environment. It is

1. The parable of Matt. 12:43-45 shows that the spirit of idolatry had been swept out. The Babylonian captivity was instrumental in this. The parable means that idolatry will be instituted when the Antichrist appears. His criterion of idolatry thus seems inapplicable -- though, of course he has a purpose in bringing this forward. "Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" (1 John 2:22), seems to have particular reference to the Jewish denial (and the final Antichrist's leadership in the future Jewish apostasy); while "He is the Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son" marks the final Antichrist, particularly, as the leader of the apostasy of Christendom. Meanwhile, the spirit of this is abroad, and therefore "even now there have come many antichrists, whence we know it is [the] last hour (1 John 2:18).

2. The book of Hebrews, wherein the statement about the "camp" is found, discusses at great length the contrast of Christianity with Judaism. Idolatry was wrongly included and the "Jewish legal system" relegated to merely an "added" status, whereas it should have been very prominent. It is already becoming obvious that the "voice" is setting the matter up so as to have more fellowship with the "camp" through a process of minimising the Judaism in Christendom, but eliminating idolators and deniers of Christ.

3. So there is idolatry (which had not been among the Jews for hundreds of years, nor is it what particularly characterizes the "camp") in Rome (perhaps not so among those with whom he seeks a wider fellowship) but Rome denies not the Father and the Son -- though characterized by Judaistic features, which the "voice" "added" on.

4. By this definition 'Jehovah's Witnesses' and the Mormons are "the Camp in principle." Is that the way Scripture views such groups; or are they sects of perdition (2 Pet. 2:1), if even to be counted as part of Christendom?

clear that every true believer has the Altar -- which is in contrast with the Camp; the Altar presumably speaking of Christ, and the two figures speaking of grace and The Law respectively. It is axiomatic, therefore, that to be associated with the Altar is to be outside the camp.<sup>5</sup>

... Oh beloved brethren we are well off the course if we imagine that aloofness from other fellow believers is the path of Christian separation and faithfulness to God. Is it not high time that this separatist idea of religious elitism ought to be eliminated from our attitudes and theology? <sup>6</sup> It is man's invention and entirely unscriptural. Outside the camp is where the Church testifies, and in the Body aspect they contribute -- provided they are in communion with the Head -- to the well-being of the whole. This is more obvious in the local setting. The better instructed believer who finds himself outside the Camp yet separated practically from other Christians, because of their unawareness of Assembly truth,<sup>7</sup> should show his genuine concern by living Christ before them -- showing forth His excellencies -- and such an attitude

5. The Hebrews were told to go outside the camp (Heb. 13). Were they outside of the camp before they were told to go outside? Were they true believers that were told to go outside? The "voice" says "every true believer has the Altar" and "that to be associated with the Altar is to be outside the camp." But the Hebrews had the Altar and yet were told to go outside the camp. By the "voice's" definition they were outside the camp before being told to go outside. His theory does seem opposed to the fact and therefore is unsound. Or is there some undisclosed difference between "have the Altar" and "be associated with the Altar"? At any rate, "the Papal system is a classic example" of the Camp, he says. Thus no one in the system can be associated with the Altar, which he says, "presumably speaks of Christ." Thus, the result of the "voice's" definitions is that no one in the Papal system can be associated with Christ. In Rev 17 we read, "come out of her my people." The "voice" definitely has a notion he is fostering, and it will so come out.

6. These two sentences are mere dust for the eyes to cloud the attack on true holiness in associations.

7. It is one matter if the *only* issue was "unawareness of Assembly truth." The fact is that many Christians are associated with teachers of fundamentally evil doctrine. The Lord had against Pergamos that they had amongst them "Those who hold the doctrine of Baalam" and calls on them to repent. Is it not obvious that to repent of having such among them, such must be put out, or else separation from such is evidence of repentance? The fact is that fellowship with leaven leavens a person and an assembly, whether it be moral evil (1 Cor. 5) or doctrinal evil (Gal. 6). All of the "voice's" talk and definitions concerning "the Camp" clouds the real issues in order to seek a wider fellowship that in reality compromises Christian holiness in fellowship -- while pretending to be kindness and grace and love. Such a tack has had a long and dishonorable and compromising



would captivate. The cynical frown or closed shop<sup>8</sup> is hardly so effective!

Hebrews 13 does not give us authority to classify born again Christians outside brethren circles as coming within the camp.<sup>9</sup> Which poses the question, to what extent may one have fellowship with other members of the Body of Christ who are impeccable in doctrine and practice save in church truth?<sup>10</sup>

I forbear quoting any further. The thrust of the article is plain enough from this much. May we have grace to hold fast sound teaching. Ed.

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The editor would be grateful if a reader would lend him the following magazines for a week. You will be reimbursed for postage.

*Helps by the Way*, volumes 3,4, 5 & 6.

*To Every Man His Work*, volumes 3 and up.

*Words in Season*, volumes 3,5,6,11 and up.

*Fellowship*, all volumes except 1927 (edited by R. Elliot).

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8. If the "voice" deplores what has been called "exclusivism" since 1848, he should have forthrightly said so. If he advocates an "open" fellowship, he should forthrightly have said so. But history has shown over and over again that it is a mistake to look for the loose to be forthright. If there is a measure of faithfulness in associations, it suits such to use words like "cynical frown or closed shop" to describe what they oppose.

9. The "voice" said that "the Papal system is a classic example of it [the Camp]." Are there any born again souls in the Papal system? And if so, are they "outside brethren circles"? If so, the "voice" is false again.

10. The word "impeccable" should be reserved for the Person of Christ. None of us are "impeccable" in doctrine and practice. All of these unbalanced and false notions and definitions cannot be for the glory of God and the holiness in walk and associations required by God. Rather, it is for looseness. Why, there are even Fundamentalists who rightly contend for what they call "secondary separation"; which I would put as -- 'association with leaven leavens a Christian,' (1 Cor. 5; Gal. 6) and such are to be refused at the Lord's table because a little leaven leavens the whole lump. It seems to me that the "voice's" hidden agenda is an attack on this truth of Scripture, whether that is hidden from his consciousness or not. Is a Christian who is associated with leaven "impeccable in . . . practice"? Is a Christian who meets on the basis that association with leaven does not leaven the assembly "impeccable in doctrine and practice"? If a Christian does not separate from vessels to dishonor (2 Tim. 2), is he "impeccable in . . . practice"? [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)