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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

"THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF SAVE WHATEVER HE SEES THE FATHER DOING" (COULD CHRIST SIN?)

The Temptations and the Lord's Omniscience

Was part of the stress of the temptation of Christ the (supposed) idea that He did not know if He would fail or not? I have already cited Peter Cousins in *The Harvester*, an Open-Brethren periodical¹. It is evident that he holds both that the Lord did not know if He would fail or not and also that He could have sinned.² He wrote:

These considerations have led Gerald Hawthorne, writing in *A Bible Commentary for Today*, to make an interesting suggestion. 'Nevertheless, assuming that it was impossible for Him to sin, because of the nature of His person, yet it is also possible to assume that He did not know that this was the case. Mark 13:32 implies that the Son, in His incarnate role, was not omniscient -- there is at least one thing recorded there which He did not know. If, then, there was one thing He did not know, ignorance of other things was also possible, even this concerning whether or not He could sin . . . One must never suppose that His victory over temptation was 'the mere formal consequence of

1. Now called *Aware*.

2. To find such teachings in an Open Brethren periodical is consistent with the fact that certain Open Brethren warn that "exclusives" (the term has been applied to those who refused to receive believers who break bread with evil persons) have docetic tendencies. Traditionally, the exclusives have held the impeccability of Christ's person. For example, F. F. Bruce (who denies inerrancy of Scripture and denies eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked) says: "... verging at times on Docetism, has been endemic in certain phases of the Brethren movement" ("The Humanity of Jesus Christ," *The Journal of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship*, #24, p. 5, Sept. 1973). F. R. Coad, (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, London: Paternoster Press, 1968, pp. 135, 152, 147, 160, 210, 265) is another, who alleges this docetic tendency. This allegation may result from unsoundness on their part concerning the impeccability of Christ.

His divine nature'. Any interpretation of the person of Christ which in any way diminishes the force and genuineness of His temptation cannot be correct.'

From what I know of readers of HARVESTER,³ I have little doubt that they are scriptural in what they believe about the deity of Christ. I have a strong impression that they, along with many other evangelicals, tend not to believe so emphatically in his full humanity. But a scriptural faith will affirm both the deity and the humanity, and will accept the tensions that such a faith entails.⁴

So when he attacks the Lord's holy humanity he also supports the notion that Christ was not omniscient. If you do not agree, then you "tend not to believe so emphatically in his full humanity." Why, you have a docetic tendency! Well, there seems no end to the ways in which our Lord's humanity is attacked. I suggest that what is at work is a *kenotic* tendency, though it is clear that "tendency" is too weak a word.

Of course, not all Open-Brethren hold such teaching, but why do they not *exclude* such teachers from their fellowship? At any rate, one of them, W. Hoste wrote:

The plainest testimony to the omniscience of Christ is ignored or explained away. Again and again we read: "He *knew their thoughts*"; "He *knew all men*, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He *knew what was in man*"; "Neither *knoweth* any man the Father save the Son"; (the knowledge of the disciple can never approach that of the Teacher, when the lesson is infinite); and, lastly, the *unparalleled* (except in John 21:17) testimony of the disciples resulting from His wonderful words just uttered. "Now are we sure *that Thou knowest all things*." What could be plainer? But all goes for nothing with these men, in face of their theory that "our Lord must have been in the position of not knowing what was coming next in order to resemble us." But surely what we are called to is to resemble *Him*, not to drag Him down to resemble *us*. This same writer refers to this theory as "This marvelous experience of His of not knowing." It would indeed be marvelous were it true!

I hope what has been written here will enable the Lord's people to appraise this teaching aright. Let us, however, in closing, quote a few more Scriptures which still further negative this erroneous theory: "Jesus *knew from the beginning*, who they were that believed not and who should betray Him" (John 6:64); "He *knew that His hour was come*," (Chap. 13:1); "Now I tell you *before it come*, that when it is come to pass ye may believe that I am" (v. 19. Chap. 14:29; see Isa. 41:21-23,26); and finally, "*Jesus knowing all things that should come upon Him*" (chap. 18:4).

Is it not difficult to recognize in the Christ these teachers offer us, "who did not know what was coming next," the omniscient Christ of the Gospels, "Who knew all things that should come upon Him" and "all things" besides?⁵

3. This periodical is now named *Aware*.

4. *The Harvester*, Sept. or Oct. 1986, p. 18.

5. The reference has escaped me.

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, "Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?"⁶ Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy consideration is found in *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 8:157-160:

The only real occasion of momentary difficulty presents itself in the third reference now to be alluded to (Mark 13:32). This is the great stronghold, invariably the proof text of all who assert limitation in our Lord's knowledge. Being out of His own mouth also, this apparent repudiation of any knowledge of a superior grade seems all the more forcible. As has been recently admitted, however, the fact that this is the only occasion when there is any approach to a confession of ignorance on Christ's part, and that even so it only refers to a single item not strictly cognate, leaves the contention somewhat inadequately supported. Solitary or not, however, the expression demands most careful consideration. For, on the face of it, it does occasion difficulty, this acknowledgment of ignorance, if such it be. If such indeed it be, for one of the first questions that readily prompt themselves immediately the difficulty is felt is -- Can this really be an absolute and unqualified disclaimer on the Lord's part of any light on the subject? Are we really to imagine Him personally and absolutely as much in the dark as, say, "men" or "angels," concerning what is spoken of? Consider for a moment how strange that would be. After all that Christ claimed to know, and professed to reveal as to the future, that just here the store of His knowledge should give out!

This same prophetic discourse of the Lord's, of which the verse forms a part is, remember, His emphatic reply to the request of His disciples for a sketch of the future. No mere disquisition on things moral, clothed in the imagery of Jewish Apocalyptic literature, is this; but given as true prophecy. And after all this opening out of what that future contains, particularly as given by Matthew in its fullness, the whole course of events evidently before the mind of the speaker right down to the consummation of the age, Himself filling no small but the chief role in them, after all this we are to imagine that Christ's knowledge of the future, as of everything else, was of the same limited kind as our own, because He avows for Himself, in the capacity in which He was then speaking, unacquaintance with the day and hour of His own return and the establishment of His kingdom! In this case, as in the others, reason from what in the passage itself is apparent as to what Christ *does* know, and the kenotic interpretation sought to be put upon it will not stand. Any idea of absolute limitation as to the order or nature of His intelligence is seen to be quite incompatible with both the kind and extent of the knowledge already displayed. Granted that, as their expression has it, a lacuna or blank in His eschatology here appears. What of that? Does it follow inevitably that personally and in an unqualified sense the Teacher Himself was in a state of complete ignorance regarding the detail needed to fill it out. It did not belong to the class of things He was to intimate:

6. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 8:170 truthpublishers.com

does it follow therefore that it was beyond the range of those things with which He was intimate?

Any degree of intimacy, it is said, any kind of knowledge beyond that which men or angels possess, Jesus emphatically disclaims, "knoweth no man, no not the angels, neither the Son!" Is that so? Are we absolutely bound to give the verse just that construction? Does it necessitate that we take the intelligence of the three several parties mentioned, all round and in its entirety, as having a common denominator, so to speak? That would indeed be a large inference. Even the isolated verse itself gives too slender a basis for it. Think of it as applied to men and angels. Is it open to us to argue that the angelic and human intelligences are of the same order, because their non-intelligence of a certain matter is here affirmed as a common feature? Why then are they so clearly distinguished? so particularized? -- "no man, not the angels." Why again in the case of the latter is the negative so emphasized -- "no man, *no*, not the angels?" - - with the additional consideration also that the sphere of their activity (if the bearing of that on the scope of their knowledge is taken into account) so far transcends man's -- "no, not the angels *which are in heaven?*" Not much in common there really between the two orders of intelligences! It seems rather a case where, with quite a different, essentially different, denominator, in regard to a particular matter, and in a particular sense, a common numerator appears.

Only the more emphatically does that apply to "neither the Son." If the fact that here is a matter of which even angels in heaven have no cognisance is so exceptional as to need such emphasis, how carefully must be weighed the still more unprecedented "neither the Son." And if being classed with men in this proves nothing intrinsically in their case, how much less in the Son's. The ministers of prophecy in Old Testament times knew what it was to have to seek out -- "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify" in the revelation of which they were the vehicle. Are we to imagine Christ Himself in the same condition of requiring it to be revealed whereto His prophetic announcement applied? Thereafter, the sufferings and subsequent glory of the Messiah which these announced, with the resulting economy of blessing, gave occasion for desire on the angels' part to look into these things. Was the Messiah Himself in no better case than they when here in the capacity of Prophet He put Himself alongside them in disclaiming knowledge of a time-note in His eschatology?

To understand the Lord's assertion, the great matter first of all seems to be not to carry it beyond the matter concerning which He used it. It applies to something special. Where are we authorized to make it general? This disavowal of official cognisance of the precise date of the prophetic crisis is, by the Kenotics, regarded as an unqualified declaration of nescience, which is to be taken as applying wholesale and all round to the whole sphere of our Lord's consciousness. We are told, "It is the ascription of a real nescience, not of an ignorance operating in one part of His personality and not in the other, nor an ignorance simply assumed for a certain purpose while a real omniscience remained latent, nor yet the pseudo-ignorance which meant that, while He knew this thing as He knew all others, He had no commission from His Father to communicate it to others."

Now, it may be quite legitimate for some to scoff that "a god-man, possessing at one and the same time two wills and two separate kinds of knowledge, and using now this and now that as occasion arises, is at once a

figment of theologians and a contradiction in terms." But, for one who receives the account of the Gospels as inspired of God, the mysterious relation of divine and human, and the presence and activity of each in the sphere of His knowledge, as of all else in Christ's person, revealed there, cannot be so curtly dismissed for the mere lack of an adequate explanation as to either the inter-operation of, or the connecting link between, the two. The fictitiousness of the theological conception is of little account. To it being a contradiction in terms, one must demur, so long, at least as long as there are no proper terms present for it to contradict. What do we know of essence, personality, or consciousness as applicable to God incarnate to make positive assertions as to Him psychologically? In our own personality even are there not depths enough unsounded? How much more in the one Personality where mystery is superimposed on mystery.

With the Gospels in our hand will it be claimed that Christ Jesus, even as incarnate, had, and manifested as occasion called for it, His own intrinsic essential knowledge of things, knowledge proper to a divine person, and differing in kind as much as in degree from our knowledge which is always derivative and limited, that at the back of everything this remained intact. As Prof. Orr says, "Behind all human conditionings are still present the undiminished resources of the Godhead. Omniscience, omnipotence, all other divine attributes, are there though not drawn upon save as the Father willed them to be." Omniscience, present though not drawn upon, quite meets the case of our verse here, "Neither the Son." The idea of absolute nescience, of an unqualified negation of knowledge cannot be entertained if He who made the statement is to remain for us true God as to His person. Become partaker of flesh and blood, He who would not draw upon His omnipotence in commanding the stones to be made bread for His sustenance as a man, would not either in this case fall back upon what in His omniscience He could not but be cognizant of; but observing in full measure the conditions proper to the humanity He has taken, "the times and seasons which the Father hath set within His own authority," are left there, and the prerogative of announcing or revealing them not usurped. In the capacity of Prophet the Son knows not officially of that day and hour.

Further, as the Son, still here in humiliation, though for the future all judgment committed unto Him, and as the God-appointed ruler in that kingdom reserved for Him till the arrival of this unrevealed day and hour, "neither the Son, but the Father" has a moral fitness and congruity all its own. For, in the working out of the divine purposes in regard to that kingdom, it is noteworthy that all is spoken of as carried into execution not by the Lord Jesus Himself; but by God the Father on His behalf. It is no question of Him asserting His disputed rights as divine; but of God the Father establishing Him in righteousness in that place of glory and honor He has so richly earned as man. To man it is, according to God's counsel, that the world to come is to be subjected. And it is as Son of man Christ is to receive the kingdom and reign. All the emphasis is upon His manhood. And, as Bellett would say, morally this is perfect too, for in that consideration there cannot but be remembrance of the humble, emptied condition He assumed in becoming man, the servant-form and servant-place He took for God's glory. Now Mark it is especially whose province it is to present the Son of God in His service, Christ as the true Servant. And in his Gospel alone, as has been often noticed, that last element in our verse, "neither the Son but the Father," is to be found. Are we not then to see in it just such an added moral touch as is suited to the presentation of Him which that Gospel was divinely

designed to give, and find assistance in understanding it from that very fact? How strong and beautiful an expression of the true servant-character there is here then in this abnegation of concern as to what properly lies with the Father to make good. "The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth." It was more than the *form* of a servant Christ assumed in becoming man. The spirit and qualities proper to that position He shewed forth to perfection in the humble path of dependence and obedience He trod. Fittingly from such a servant in such a path comes this disclaimer of knowledge of a matter not belonging to His sphere as such. The kingdom He is to receive in the capacity of a servant. Not by the right and title of what He was as God does He assume control, but on the ground of what He has done, and as the reward of all His toil in that unique path of obedience He trod is He invested by the Father with the administration of all things. All waits on the activity of God the Father for its establishment, and of such things even as the right hand and left hand place of honor in it Christ declares that they are not His to bestow, but are reserved for the Father's appointment. What wonder then if, of the day and hour of its advent, the One who chooses to consider Himself less Heir-apparent than Heir-appointed disavows the knowledge. "Not mine to give" in this one case said the Lord. "Not mine to know" in effect He says here. Entire moral perfection.

May we not consider that the objection founded on this verse is effectually disposed of by such considerations, or, if difficulty remains, that it may yield to further study on such lines? It does, at all events, appear futile to seek light on it, or elucidation of the profound and mysterious question of how divine and human knowledge are united and were related to each other in the person of Christ in the days of His flesh, along the line of metaphysics or psychology. How much worse to found on this verse, and in this way, a denial of their co-existence! It is quite conceivable that we may never come to know the nature of the connecting link between the divine and human in Christ's person. His own declaration, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father," would prepare us for this. Many theories have been constructed to account for the relation between the two, many attempts made to forge an intelligible link between them. It was but to be expected that from the surveillance of theologians this would not long be omitted. Where the word itself had, with its usual disregard for mere mental perplexities, confined its testimony to the bare fact of the two natures in one Person, Christ Jesus, God and man, without concerning itself with explanations of the nature of their relation, dogmatic theology, which considers itself to have been bequeathed the task of thinking out, and construing to intelligence, doctrines implicit in the New Testament, has over and over again essayed to explain such relation. It was characteristic of that working of the human mind upon divine things which we call theology to make the attempt. Yet, the ingenuity of the various conjectures notwithstanding, failure is stamped upon them all.

[J. T.]

Ed.

(Concluded)

The Holiness of Christian Fellowship

Chapter 3

Galatians 5:9 and 2 John 9,10

Gal. 5:9

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil (Prov. 16:17).

DOCTRINAL EVIL AND MORAL EVIL

In Eph. 2:3 we learn that there are two broad areas of sin: bodily and mental sin. We are more aware of, more used to thinking about, bodily sin. We realize too that a personable, amiable, agreeable person may be a fornicator. We seem to understand this. But when the issue of doctrinal leaven is raised among the people of God, discernment flees from many, as history repeatedly has shown. Doctrinal leaven often involves someone well known. It may be an able teacher, a loved evangelist that God has used, or one who has had a noted path of service. He may be a personable brother; he may have ministered precious thoughts of Christ before the saints and shed tears in doing so.

But emotion is not holiness. Pleasing personality is not holiness. Erudition, as well as ignorance, is not holiness. Dwelling on what is called positive ministry, to the exclusion of corrective ministry, is not holiness. Holiness is separation from evil to the Lord and calls for self-judgment of ways and thoughts. We must have Christ before us as our model. All that He did pleased the Father. Consider Him as portrayed by W. Kelly in the following quotation:

Yet is it certain that anger in the true and godly sense of abhorrence of evil formed part of the moral nature of our Lord Jesus. There is no greater fallacy of modern times among not a few Christians than the exclusion of holy anger from that which is morally perfect. Our Lord Jesus on one occasion looked round

about with anger; on another He used a scourge of small cords with indignation; so also He thundered from time to time at religious hypocrites who stood high in popular estimation. The Christian who does not share such feelings is altogether wanting in what is of God, and also in what becomes a man of God. I grant you that anger is too apt to take a personal shape, and consequently to slide into vindictive as well as wounded feeling. It is not necessary for me to say that there was an entire absence of this in our Lord Jesus. He came to do the will of God; He never did anything but that will -- not only what was consistent with it, but only that. But for this very reason He too was slow, not of course to form a judgment, but to execute it on man; indeed, as we know, He refused it absolutely when here below. He could await the due time. God was then displaying His grace, and, as part of His grace, His long-suffering in the midst of evil. And there is nothing finer, nothing more truly of God, than this display of grace in patience.¹

We trust that with many Christians engaged in the palliation of leaven and the consequences of association with it, it is truly ignorance and that the Lord will open their eyes.

C. H. M. remarked:

What is the difference between a teacher of fundamental error and one who knowingly receives him or wishes him Godspeed? . . . Is it not very striking to notice how much more alive people are to bad morals than bad doctrine? A scandalous liver is justly rejected; but a man may deny the deity, or the eternal Sonship of Christ, and be received and honoured in the highest circles of so-called Christian society . . . man thinks more of himself and his respectability than he does of Christ.²

By the fear of Jehovah men depart from evil (Prov. 16:6). Ye that love Jehovah, hate evil (Psalm 97:10).

Doctrinal evil and moral evil³ are both evil from which the saint must separate. However, evil doctrine is worse. Some seem to think moral evil is worse. Perhaps they think of the infamy done to themselves before they think of God, as those did in Judges 19-21. As we see there, Israel had to learn what was due to God, and learn also the spirit in which evil is to be judged.

**EVIL DOCTRINE IS WORSE THAN MORAL EVIL
BECAUSE IT PURPORTS TO COME FROM GOD
AND THUS MAKES HIM THE AUTHOR OF IT.**

Paul's opening in 1 Cor. 1 and Gal. 1 shows that doctrinal leaven is worse. "If

1. *Lectures Introductory to . . . the Minor Prophets*, p. 282.

2. *Things New and Old* 19:83 (1876).

3. I use the terms conventionally. Evil doctrine IS a moral matter also. The distinction intended is illustrated in Lev. 13: leprosy in the body and leprosy in the head.

the foundation be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Another said:

To make a sin of immorality to be a subject for the assembly to judge, and a sin of doctrine a subject for an apostle to judge is sheer ignorance. In either case it is the word of God's grace alone which can shew us what is immoral for a Christian and what is the truth which has to be kept. But in neither case is it other than the Spirit in the assembly which is POWER with us to act and to put away, if there is to be blessing; for if an apostle had acted without the assembly its conscience would not have been cleared, and if Paul, as he feared, had had to act at Corinth IN SPITE OF the assembly, then it would have been to destruction (2 Cor. 10:8), and not for edification. The Spirit of God, to a pure conscience, is quite enough of POWER to enable an assembly to put away evil. His presence too is our warrant for doing it. False doctrine is LEAVEN of the worst kind. Read 1 Cor. 5:6,7,8 and you will see the call to purge out all leaven, that we may be an unleavened lump.

Observe authority and power are two distinct things.

For those who have professed to separate themselves from the so-called churches unto God, and the word of His grace, to vindicate the toleration of leaven of any kind (in word, or practice, in doctrine, morality, or practice) is to build again the things which they have destroyed, and to make themselves transgressors (Gal. 2:18). They are self-condemned too, and are to be rejected. When the question is about doctrine, no doubt can remain. See Tit. 3:10,11; and 1 Cor. 2:19, Gal. 5:20, 2 Pet. 2:1.

Finally, to use the name of the Church as a cover for evil or error of any kind is, I believe, a great sin, and is to dishonour the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For God's Church is the habitation of God through the Spirit, and contains the children of the Father and the Bride of Christ. That there is a spirit abroad who is counterworking, in every way he can, the Spirit of God in His gracious efforts in these days to gather together in one the children of God who have been scattered abroad, I know. The adversary will be judged, and so will all those who work under him for this wicked end. That some are ignorantly going out in this current "in their simplicity, and they know not whither they go" (2 Sam. 15:11), I also believe. Such I would, if possible, pull out of the fire (Jude 23).⁴

THE CHARACTER OF PAUL'S APPROACH TO THE GALATIANS

Some Christians say that whenever Paul corrected the saints he first commended what he could concerning their walk. This is not true. This false idea might stem from mere want of instruction from the Word of God, and we are all in need of instruction. But I fear that there are many cases where this false idea is put forth in connection with a case of evil in order to palliate the evil and use the false idea as a tool against those who desire to see the evil purged out.

Let us examine two cases of a question of leaven to which Paul addressed

4. *The Present Testimony, New Series* 1:400-401 (1868).

himself and observe what, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, he did.

The Corinthians had a fornicator amongst them, as well as other serious problems. In Paul's opening words in 1 Cor. 1, there is commendation. Commendation of what? -- their walk? No. He commended what the grace of God had imparted to them, but he commended nothing in their walk, nothing in their response to the grace of God.

The Galatians were giving ear to evil teachers, teachers of doctrinal leaven. Look at Gal. 1. Did he commend anything in their walk? No. Did he even commend what the grace of God had imparted to them? No! Notice then the difference in how he addressed the Galatians compared to the Corinthians. This IS significant. It shows that doctrinal leaven is worse than moral leaven. This difference is even typified in Lev. 13 where we have leprosy amongst the people of God. There is leprosy in the body (moral evil) and leprosy in the head (evil doctrine held) and leprosy in the beard (evil doctrine taught). The one with leprosy in the head is pronounced "utterly unclean" (Lev. 13:44).

The reason that doctrinal leaven is worse than moral leaven is because it is professed that the doctrine comes from Scripture, thus making God the author of it. Secondly, if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? (Psa. 11:3).

So the idea that Paul always commended what he could in the walk of those he addressed is false. Sad it is when this idea is the setting up of "love and grace" as a 'sanctified' cover for unholiness and evil. The inspired apostle showed love, true love, love according to God's thought in writing just as he did. Let us beware of the habit of sparing self. We thus spare it in others also, just as Saul spared Agag (1 Sam. 15:9). Paul then, after a brief introduction, immediately denounced and reprobated the attack on the gospel. Their very listening to these evil teachers was bad enough and they stood in danger of accepting the evil system.

WHY DID PAUL NOT TELL THE GALATIANS TO EXCOMMUNICATE THE TEACHERS OF THE EVIL GOSPEL?

The question above is usually raised by those who teach that persons who hold doctrinal evil (doctrine of a fundamentally evil character) should not be put away from among God's saints. It would be almost unbelievable to think that Christians could sink so low did we not know something of the depravity and wretchedness of our own incurable heart. May our gracious God preserve us from our own inclinations.

The question above ASSUMES something. It assumes that the evil teachers

were in fellowship. But we are not told this in Scripture. If they were in fellowship, "a little leaven leavens the lump" is sufficient instruction for any spiritual mind to discern what needs to be done (1 Cor. 2:15; 1 Cor. 5:2; 2 John 9,10; Rev. 2:14,15, etc.). The spirit in which this should be done is taken up elsewhere.

The argument for allowing such in fellowship is based on Gal. 5:12 which says, "I would that they would even cut themselves off who throw you into confusion." It is alleged, therefore, that the Galatians were not to exclude them, i.e., cut them off. I believe the evil teachers were outside and Paul's desire is that those evil teachers cut themselves off from any connection with the Galatians.

2 John 9,10 says that we should not greet, or allow in our home, an evil teacher, and persons say that we may "break bread" with them and not be defiled! Some use Gal. 5:12 to support this idea. The denial that association with leaven in the assembly defiles is a very, very serious matter. Not only is the truth of unity expressed in the breaking of bread not understood at all, but the nature of God as light is thus misrepresented.

The same truth, namely, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:6), applies both in the case of moral and in the case of doctrinal evil. We may change the adjective before the word evil, but it remains evil. And if it is evil, i.e., leaven, this direction of Scripture applies: "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, according as ye are unleavened" (1 Cor. 5:7).

Ed.

(To be Continued, if the Lord will)

SELFISHNESS THAT CLOTHES ITSELF . . .

These three passages [Luke 9:46-48; 9:49,50; 9:51-56] point out, each in succession, a more subtle selfishness less easily detected by man: gross personal selfishness, corporate selfishness, and the selfishness that clothes itself with the appearance of zeal for the Lord, but which is not likeness to Him.

J. N. Darby, *Synopsis, in loco.*

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

CHAPTER 5: ZION AND THE JERUSALEMS

GALATIANS 4:21-31

Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons; one of the maid servant, and one of the free woman. But he [that was] of the maid servant was born according to flesh, and he [that was] of the free woman through the promise. Which things have an allegorical sense; for these are two covenants: one from mount Sinai, gendering to bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which [is] now, for she is in bondage with her children; but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.

For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break out and cry, thou that travailest not; because the children of the desolate are more numerous than [those] of her that has a husband.

But ye, brethren, after the pattern of Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him [that was born] according to Spirit, so also [it is] now. But what says the scripture? Cast out the maid servant and her son; for the son of the maid servant shall not inherit with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not maid servant's children, but [children] of the free woman (Gal. 4:21-31).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we read of "the Jerusalem above" (v. 26) but without the indicators found in Heb. 12:22 and Rev. 21 that show us that in Revelation the "holy city, Jerusalem" is "the bride, the Lamb's wife," [i. e., the church] while Heb. 12 distinguishes the "assembly of the firstborn" [i. e., the church] from the "heavenly Jerusalem." "The Jerusalem above" is "the heavenly Jerusalem." This is not the church. Rather this is the heavenly home of the redeemed saints of the O. T. and now. It is a figure of speech for the dwelling of the saints. However, besides that which is common blessing, the church also has a distinct place symbolized by the "holy city, Jerusalem" of Rev. 21.

The teaching of Gal. 4:21-31 is clear in that law is contrasted with grace and

that the two women speak of two covenants, while their respective sons represent those born according to flesh, in one case, and born according to promise (grace) in the other case. The following chart of the passage illustrates a great number of contrasts found in these verses as law and promise (grace) are contrasted.

HAGAR AND CHILDREN

- v. 23 a) maid-servant (slave)
b) her son according to flesh
- v. 24 this represents a covenant
- v. 25 a) from mount Sinai
b) gendering to bondage
c) Jerusalem which now is
d) Jerusalem in bondage with her children
- v. 27 children of her that has a husband
- v. 29 a) Ishmael born after the flesh
b) persecuted Isaac
c) the flesh persecutes now
- v. 30 a) cast out Hagar
b) Hagar's offspring shall not inherit

SARAH AND CHILDREN

- v. 23 a) free woman
b) her son through promise
- v. 24 this represents a covenant
- v. 26 a) Jerusalem above
b) Jerusalem above is free
- v. 27 children of the desolate
- v. 28 Galatians are children of promise
- v. 29 a) Isaac born according to Spirit
b) Isaac was persecuted
c) children of promise are persecuted now
- v. 30 the son of the free woman inherits
- v. 31 Galatians are children of the free woman

Thus those who were listening to law teachers were given to know that slavery, flesh, earthly Jerusalem as she now is, bondage, persecution, and no inheritance go together, while freedom, Spirit, Jerusalem above, promise and inheritance go together.

W. Kelly wrote:

Every religious system which takes its stand upon the law, invariably assumes a Jewish character. We need not look round far to understand this, nor to apply it. Why is it that men have magnificent buildings, or the splendor of ritual in the service of God? On what model is it founded? Certainly they are not like those who gathered together of old in the upper-room. The temple is clearly the type, and along with this goes the having a peculiar sacred class of persons, the principle of the clergy being founded upon the notion of the Jewish priesthood. The service, where that is the case, must depend upon what would attract the senses -- show of ornament, music, imposing ceremonies, everything that would strike man's mind, or that would draw a multitude together, not by the truth, but by something to be seen or heard that pleases nature. It is the order of what the word of God calls the "worldly sanctuary." Not that the tabernacle or temple had not a very important meaning before Christ came; but afterwards their shadowy character became apparent, and their temporary value was at an end, and the full

truth and grace of God were manifested in the person of Him who came from heaven. When Christ was rejected from the earth and went back to heaven, all was changed, and the heart-allegiance of God's children is transferred to heaven. The true sanctuary for us is the name of Christ. What the Old Testament connected for an earthly people with the temple, the New Testament does with Jesus. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." If there were ever so few true to that, they would reap the blessing. It is of great importance to trace things to their principle. When the apostle wrote to the Galatians, only the germs were showing themselves; they had not got to the length of consecrated buildings and castes of men, with all the pomp and circumstance of religious worship suited to the world, which we see around us now, the result of the gradual inroads of error upon the Christian professing body. But still there was the beginning of the mischief, the attempt to bring in the principles of the law upon Christians. And what is the effect? You only fall into the position of Ishmael, out of Isaac's. To be thus identified with the law is to be an Ishmael, to forfeit the promises and to become a mere child of the bond-woman. This is the argument that the apostle uses to deal with the Galatians, who were flattering themselves that they had made immense progress; but it was really a slip out of liberty into bondage.¹

GAL. 4:21

Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law?

There are many who desire to be under law. Notice that the word "the" is not before the first use of the word law. The difference is that without the word "the," the reference is to law as a principle of standing before God. "The law" as used in the N.T. often refers to the law of Moses; or, as in v. 21, it refers to the five books of Moses. So, you who are desirous of being before God on the principle, or basis, of law, do you not listen to what the books of Moses say?

GAL. 4:22, 23

For it is written that Abraham had two sons; one of the maid servant, and one of the free woman. But he [that was] of the maid servant was born according to flesh, and he [that was] of the free woman through the promise.

God had promised Abraham a son (Gen. 15:4) but as time went on and the promised son was not given, a custom was resorted to. Sarah gave her maidservant to Abraham to have an heir that would be hers (Sarah's) (Gen. 16:1,2,3). This was not what God intended. This was not His promise. Rather, it was a resort to a fleshly scheme when faith was tried. How like this we are, we must confess. However, God was over all and brings to pass His purposes of grace in spite of what we are.

1. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, pp. 113, 114, n. d.

This again illustrates the principle given in 1 Cor. 15:46: "But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual" of which, of course, Adam and Christ are the great fulfillment. But the principle is characteristically seen in Genesis where the firstborns did not receive the blessing.

So here we have the great contrast between Sarah, the freewoman, and her son born through the promise, and Hagar, the maid servant and her son born according to flesh. A Jew thinking of this might have thought of the contrast between himself and the Gentile, a grave mistake indeed, as Paul had shown in Rom. 9:

Not however as though the word of God had failed; for not all [are] of Israel which [are] of Israel; nor because they are seed of Abraham [are] all children: but, In Isaac shall a seed be called to thee. That is, [they that are] the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed. For this word [is] of promise, According to this time I will come, and there shall be a son to Sarah. And not only [that], but Rebecca having conceived by one, Isaac our father, [the children] indeed being not yet born, or having done anything good or worthless (that the purpose of God according to election might abide, not of works, but of him that calls), it was said to her, The greater shall serve the less: according as it is written, I have loved Jacob, and I have hated Esau (Rom. 9:6-13).

Isaac was a child of promise, yet he had a son who was not a child of God. And so it might be with the Jew. Not every Israelite after the flesh was a true Israelite. However, the law did not make a distinction between the children of God and those who knew not the Lord. The law addressed the covenant people in their Adamic responsibility. The nation was not a manifested community of the children of God but rather a mixed community. Now, of course, it is God's thought that His children take that place openly and together (John 1:11-13; 11:51,52) as an acknowledged family of children before Him in confidence and consciousness of their relationship, founded on the finished work of Christ with which He is satisfied.

[NOTE: the chart on the following pages is not part of the article that you are reading. It has been inserted in the center of this issue in order to span a sheet of paper. Perhaps some readers may find some help in seeing connections among various truths in Scripture illustrated on this chart.]

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL (Eph. 1:9)

ROMANS

Silence was kept in the times
of the ages (Rom. 16:25,26)

RED SEA

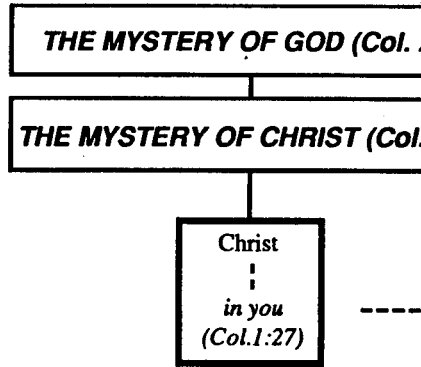
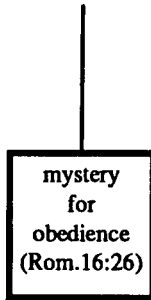
Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6)
Raised for our justification (Rom. 5:24)

COLOSSIANS

Hidden from ages and
from generations (Col. 1:26)

JORDAN

Died with Christ (Col. 2:20)
Raised with Christ (Col. 3:1)



MYSTERY OF:

-
-
-
-
-
-
- Israel's blindness (Rom. 11:25)
 - The Kingdom (Matt. 13:11)
 - Iniquity (2 Thess. 2:7)
 - The seven stars (Rev. 1:20)
 - The faith (1 Tim. 3:9)
 - Godliness (1 Tim. 3:16)

GOD (1 Cor. 4:1)

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE (Eph. 3:11)

EPHESIANS

Hidden throughout the
ages in God (Eph. 3:9)

CANAAN

Raised & seated in the heavenlies,
in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6)
Created in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10)

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP (Eph. 1:10)

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST (Eph. 3:4)

seated
:
in Christ
(Eph. 2:6)

joint heirs,
body and
partakers
(Eph. 3:6)

Christ and
the church
(Eph. 5:32)

mystery of
the gospel
(Eph. 6:19)

the mystery
of God is
completed
(Rev. 10:7)

mystery of
great
Babylon
(Rev. 17)

mystery of
the change
(1 Cor 15:51)
(Phil. 3:20)

Daniel's 70 th week

APPEARING

Antichrist

APTURE

GAL. 4:24-26

Which things have an allegorical sense; for these are two covenants: one from mount Sinal, gendering to bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is mount Sinal in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which [is] now, for she is in bondage with her children; but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.

The Two Covenants. Clearly, the two women represent two covenants. One represents the covenant of law and the other the covenant of promise to Abraham. The New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-10) is also a covenant of promise but that is for the houses of Judah and Israel. The Gentiles were "strangers to the covenants of promise" (Eph. 2:12), where the plural word indicates that there is more than one covenant of promise. The promises spoken of in Galatians are those made to Abraham in contrast to law (Gal. 3:15-21). In this we see the contrast of law and grace because the covenant of promise² was God acting in sovereign grace. Sarah, "the free woman" (v. 23) represents that grace, whereas Hagar, "the maid servant," represents bondage. We are plainly taught in Gal. 4:23-31 that flesh, law and bondage are joined together, while in contrast Spirit, promise and freedom are joined.

Phillip Mauro, who thought that the church was the spiritual Israel, wrote:

The period when Ishmael and Isaac were both under one roof and the former still had the status of a son and heir of Abraham, *answers to the time from Pentecost to the destruction of Jerusalem*. For during that period the natural Israel, "the son of the bondwoman," still occupied the holy land and city, and "persecuted" the true Israel (Gal. 4:29; 1 Thess. 2:15).

But that era of the overlapping of "the two covenants" was of short duration. For "what saith the Scripture? *Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman*" (Gal. 4:30). and the next verse gives us the application of the incident: "So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond woman, but of the free."³

The implication of this notion is that between Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem, (A.D. 70) the Jews still had "the status of a son and heir of Abraham." Now, surely the reader knows that such a thought is clean contrary to Scripture. For example, according to Romans 9 the natural branches were broken out of the olive tree; obviously before A. D. 70.

What he has done is to use the persecution of Christians by the Jews (Gal. 4:29; 1 Thess. 2:15) to claim that what answers to Ishmael has a place until A.D. 70. The fact is that the persecution of a child of promise took place

2. Note that Gal. 3:17 calls it a covenant.

3. *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, p. 244.

already in Abraham's house. There were children of God under the law and often these also were persecuted by the Jews as Hebrews 11:32-40 amply proves. At the cross those born after the flesh persecuted the great Seed of Abraham unto death. Then the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael took place at the cross. However, the fact is that just as it was in Abraham's house, so it was also in Paul's day.

Can you imagine the Galatians reading Gal. 4:30 and wondering when the bondwoman would finally be cast out; and how? But Paul was arguing from what was already true, and since they belonged to Christ they were seed of Abraham and children of the free woman.

P. Mauro has credited the Roman legions (of A.D. 70) with doing what in reality the work of Christ on the cross accomplished.

The Two Cities. Besides the two women representing two covenants, they also represent two cities: the Jerusalem which now is -- in bondage here on earth; and, the Jerusalem above, free, and which is our mother. This again figures, by contrast, law and promise (grace); bondage and liberty.

Many able expositors believe that the Jerusalem above and the city in Heb. 12 and Rev. 21 are all the same. I think that W. Kelly's comments on the city in Heb. 12, distinguishing it from the church, is correct. The city of Hebrews 12 signifies the dwelling of the redeemed including the O. T. worthies, while the city of Rev. 21 is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Concerning Gal. 4:26, W. Kelly wrote:

The truth is that this scripture disproves the hypothesis [that the church is Israel], instead of giving the least warrant to construe Jerusalem of the church.⁴

You will recall that in the article *Not Sinai, But Zion . . .*, W. Kelly pointed out that the city in Hebrews (11:10,16; 12:22; and cf. 13:14) did not refer to the city of Rev. 21 (contrary to what many expositors think). He pointed out that "the Epistle [of Hebrews] never rises to the mystery in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians." It may be replied that neither does the Revelation. However, the city of Rev. 21 is expressly stated to be the bride, the Lamb's wife -- but the city is described as the seat of millennial government, a view entirely consonant with the character of that book. Moreover, the O. T. saints do not constitute part of the bride of Revelation. But there were those that looked for that permanent abode above.

4. *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, London: Hammond, p. 52 (1947 reprint).
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

Heb. 11:10 says that Abraham "waited for the city which had foundations, of which God is [the] artificer and constructor." And v. 16 says, "for he has prepared for them a city." Such saints are not part of the holy city, new Jerusalem, the bride (Rev. 21), yet they have part in this city, no doubt the same as in Heb. 12:22, the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem.⁵

The city, then, in Hebrews, signifies the place of permanency and fellowship above, with the living God. All brought there are brought there by sovereign grace. It is the dwelling place above of the redeemed of all ages resulting from sovereign grace which is seated there; though in addition to that, the church has also a special place.

The Jerusalem above, the heavenly Jerusalem, is the seat of grace, the sphere and scene of the fruits of grace, the company of the redeemed in heaven in the presence of the living God, followed and worshipped here below in transient life, but then enjoyed, and adored in permanent dwelling with Himself. It is the city prepared for faith.

Sarah figures this system of grace. Grace is not bondage but freedom, and is our mother, by which we receive our new nature, and it forms us according to its own character.

5. I confess surprise at J.N. Darby's opposite view. In *Notes and Jottings* (one vol. ed.) p. 134, we read:

Ques. But did not Abraham look for that city [of Rev. 21]?

Yes; not that I believe he has it, but he looked for the blessing that accompanied that state of things."

Here, JND has explained looking for the city as looking for the blessing that accompanies it. No doubt this is an effort to explain it in keeping with the fact that silence was kept in O.T. times concerning the church.

No doubt Abraham did look for the blessing that accompanied that state of things; but I believe that when Heb. 11:16 says, "for he has prepared for them a city," it means that they and Abraham do have a city (but not the city of Revelation 21. It is a figure, of course, not a literal city, but signifies that place of permanency above with the God they worshipped while here. Naturally, then, JND would also regard the Jerusalem in Gal. 4 as the church also. See also *Collected Writings* 34:88; *Notes and Jottings*, p. 391; the *Synopsis*, etc.

No doubt F.W. Grant felt the difficulty of Heb. 11:16 also, judging by this comment:

The mention of a city is very striking, if it means that this was actually, as such, before Abraham's sight. It may mean that this it is in which Abraham's faith will, in fact, find its consummation, or it may be that God had revealed to him much more than we have knowledge of; for even the earthly Jerusalem was not then existent as the city of God; so that the type even was wanting, except it were Melchisedec's Salem; and the city here is certainly the heavenly one. The mention of "the foundations" brings before us the very city of the Apocalypse, with its twelve jeweled foundations. . . (*Numerical Bible*, Hebrews to Revelation, p. 63).

Distinguish the city in Hebrews and in Gal. 4 from that in Rev. 21, as W. Kelly did, and many difficulties are removed.

W. Kelly made the following instructive observations on Galatians:

The Epistle to the Galatians never takes up the standing of the Church properly, not going beyond the inheritance of promise. There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the speciality of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.⁶

The Jerusalem above signifies that there is a sphere of blessing above for all the redeemed who have passed into the heavenly scene. The literal Jerusalem on earth, chosen also by sovereign grace, will be peopled by a saved, earthly company -- and all shall be under Christ's headship. Additionally, the bride, the Lamb's wife, will have her distinctive place also. The church has certain blessings common with all the redeemed, but others that are unique.

GALATIANS 4:27-31

W. Kelly's Translation of Gal. 4:25-31. W. Kelly's translation of Gal. 4:26,27 has a little different punctuation than that of J. N. Darby's, which appears to me to be of assistance in understanding v. 27. We will use

W. Kelly's translation of Gal. 4:27-31 for the remainder (asking the reader to compare vv. 26,27 with JND):

For Agar is Mount Sina in Arabia, but correspondeth with the existing Jerusalem, for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother, for it is written, "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break out and cry, thou that travailest not; for the children of the desolate are many more than of her that hath the husband." But we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him that was according to Spirit, so now. But what saith the scripture? "Cast out the maldservant and her son. For in no wise shall the son of the maldservant inherit with the son of the freewoman." Therefore, brethren, we are not children of a maldservant, but of the freewoman.

There was a time when Israel had a husband under the covenant of the law. Jehovah was her husband (Isa. 54:5) but she committed adultery (Hosea 1:2) and was put away (Hosea 1:9). When married she had born some children (saints), but compared to God's purposes in grace, not many. At the present time (the earthly) Jerusalem is barren -- not bearing children.⁷ However, under Christ's future reign, Jerusalem is again pictured as bearing children.

The future, earthly Jerusalem will be established by sovereign grace acting through Christ. At the present time, we Christians are blessed by sovereign grace, through Christ. Blessing based on sovereign grace is common to both. This does not make the Church the spiritual Israel. *Promise* is the expression of sovereign grace acting. We Christians are Abraham's seed *because we are of Christ* (Gal. 3:29). In Gal. 4:28 we are seen as children of *promise*. Well, certainly so since we are Abraham's seed, as Isaac, the child of promise, was; not as Ishmael was -- because Ismael was born according to the flesh (v. 29), not promise. Christ is in the line of promise, so we as being His are accounted to be children of promise and Abraham's seed. But there are other and greater blessings which are ours -- such as being members of Christ's body and participating in the mystery.

Galatians 4:27. This scripture is quoted from Isa. 54:1 and is a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the millennium. Gal. 4:21-31 is not the unfolding of the mystery, hid from ages and from generations. Because we are Christ's we are the seed of Abraham and also children of promise. It is not in that fact that we are constituted to be members of the body of Christ, a thing unknown in previous ages or by previous generations. Commenting on Isa. 51:1, W. Kelly

7. In another sense, the earthly Jerusalem and her children are in bondage, but they are not the Lord's.

wrote:

When the prophecy is fulfilled in the millennial day, God will count those who now believe to be Jerusalem's children, as well as the race to come in that day. Doubly thus it will be verified that more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife. . . .

It is important to see on the one hand, that though it is according to scripture to regard Christians mystically as the children of desolate Jerusalem far outnumbering those of her married estate of old, the church, on the other hand, is not yet presented by God's word as being in the relationship of the wife, either desolate or married. The marriage is future and on high. The bride, the Lamb's wife, will not have made herself ready till she has been caught up to heaven glorified, and the harlot Babylon, the anti-church, has been judged of Jehovah God. The real position of the church meanwhile is that of one espoused; her responsibility is to keep herself as a chaste virgin for Christ. The marriage will be in heaven, just before the Lord and His glorified saints appear for the destruction of the Antichrist and all his allies. (Compare Rev. 19.)

On the other hand, it is undeniable that the Jews, or Zion if you will, had the place of nearness to Jehovah which is represented under the figure of the marriage-tie, that she had been faithless and played the whore with many lovers (even the idols of the Gentiles), and that in consequence she was divorced, becoming a widow and desolate under the righteous dealing of God. Adultery was her sin, rather than fornication. No one in the least familiar with the prophets can have failed to notice this and more said of Israel. Then it was she became barren and did not bear. Praise is still silent for God in Zion; but the vow shall yet be performed to Him (Ps. 65:1); and the barren one shall sing and be no more barren but bear, astonished to find during those days of literal barrenness such an abundant offspring in the saints glorified on high, whom grace has been the while actively bringing in.⁸

The time will come when the future, earthly Jerusalem, set up on the basis of sovereign grace (not law), will look back upon the time of barrenness and be able to count the children of promise, born now, as her children. GRACE is the key to this. She, barren now, then restored by grace, will look at what grace wrought during her barrenness,⁹ and count those children of grace as her own. Jerusalem on earth will then be composed of children of promise (grace), and she will view the children of promise now (because they are Christ's) as hers. So all the seed of Abraham are reckoned to herself as set up on the foundation of sovereign grace, and rejoice in the great ingathering of children of promise during her barrenness. But none of this touches the subject of the mystery, though, of course, the mystery also exists as the fruit of grace. What

8. *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, London: Hammond, pp. 347, 348 (1947 reprint).

9. Here barrenness does not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Galatians was written before A.D. 70 and declares Jerusalem barren. I suggest that the period called the times of the Gentiles is the period of barrenness. It turned out that Christianity occurred in part of this barren period.

blessedness is there that is not the fruit of sovereign grace? The fruits of grace are wonderfully variegated. Some fruits are common to Israel and the Christian, but the Christian's greatest blessings will not be enjoyed by Israel.

O. T. Saints Are Children of God. The O. T. does not teach that the O. T. saints were children of God. It was necessary that Christ should die before the children had the right to take that place, consciously as a visible community of children (John 1:11-13). Before His death the children of God were scattered; i.e., they formed no visible community of children. There was no manifested oneness. Indeed, the law did not address the children of God, as such; rather it addressed the first man, man in his Adamic standing and responsibility, in the persons of the nation of Israel in *external* nearness, compared to Gentiles afar off (Eph. 2:17). Christ, then, had to die to form the basis for the gathering together into one the children of God.

But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, Ye know nothing nor consider that it is profitable for you that one man die for the people, and not that the whole nation perish. But this he did not say of himself; but, being high priest that year, prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that he should also gather together into one the children of God who were scattered abroad (John 11:49-52).

We see from this that O. T. saints were children and were scattered. Rom. 9:6-13 also shows that O. T. saints were children of God.

Such were born again and the Lord Jesus expected that Nicodemus should have known of the necessity for such a thing -- before the cross (John 3).

The O. T. children of God are referred to as just men in Heb. 11:40, which text also indicates that O. T. believers will be made perfect when we are; namely, at the resurrection and rapture of the saints. "Just men" refers to such as those named in Heb. 11. Note well that this goes back beyond Abraham, right to the beginning. However, I am not aware that it would be correct to designate the just men, the children of God, before Abraham, as "children of promise." Children of promise are "the seed of Abraham." But grace will bring all of the O. T. children of God to heavenly glory, whether or not all are classed as children of promise and seed of Abraham.

O. T. Saints not Part of the Church. A point to be emphasized is this: just because all O. T. saints are children of God and were born again, does not mean that they were children of promise and seed of Abraham. A second point is that just because in the O. T. times there were children of promise and spiritual seed of Abraham, and we are that also, that therefore they are part of the church which is Christ's body. W. Kelly wrote:

The Epistle to the Galatians never takes up the standing of the Church properly, not going beyond the inheritance of promise.¹⁰ There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the speciality of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.¹¹

The Jerusalem above is not a designation of the church. It designates that which is figured as a city in Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:22; (cf. 13:14). It is the capital seat of grace where the children of promise will be who have passed off this scene. The entire first resurrection will reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4). This is "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14), which, note well, describes not a point in time but rather a *class of persons*. As to O. T. saints, they will be made perfect when we Christians are (Heb. 11:40). The tribulation martyrs have their part also in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4).

Meanwhile, we have nothing to do with the now barren Jerusalem; which tells us we have nothing to do with the law for justification or for sanctification, whether "moral" or "ceremonial."

10. [New creation is touched on, but not developed in Galatians.]

11. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, pp. 116, 117, n. d.
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Persecution by the Flesh. We may observe, yet, that at the weaning of Isaac, Ishmael, perhaps 14 or 15 years old, mocked. I doubt Eliezer mocked, or any of Abraham's servants. This son of the maidservant dared to do this. This mocking is here called "persecution," a thing worth noting to check the fleshly tendency within us to mock. Let us teach our children, while we judge ourselves, that Scripture refers to mocking as persecution. And if we are mocked as Christians, those that live godly will thus experience persecution.

The one born according to flesh persecuted him that was born according to Spirit. And think of what the flesh did to the great Seed of Abraham whose very conception was by that mighty operation of the Spirit (Luke 1:35). Moreover, it was flesh pretending to honor the law. It was flesh that cast out the Heir (Matt. 21:38). But what said the Scripture? Cast out the maidservant and her son.

Cast Out the Maidservant and Her Son. Hagar, we saw, corresponds to Sinai, gendering to bondage (v. 25). She has a son and Ishmael, born according to the fleshly course taken by Abraham, figures the flesh. The law is for the first man. Grace is for the true children. The time of the trial of the first man was completed at the cross. The maidservant and her son have been cast out.

When we considered Gal. 3:25, we observed that there was no such thing as a moral tutor and a ceremonial tutor. Likewise, there is no such thing as a moral Hagar and a ceremonial Hagar so that you can place the children of Sarah under the moral Hagar. In effect, doing so is giving the flesh a place, little as you may be aware that that is what it is. You would be allowing Hagar and her son back into the house again. They come and go together.

Children of the Freewoman.

Therefore, brethren, we are not children of a maidservant, but of the freewoman (Gal. 4:31).

The maidservant speaks of bondage and law. We are rather the children of grace. It is grace that caused our birth and it is grace that nurtures and teaches us.

For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous for good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise thee (Titus 2:11-15).

Christ has set us free in freedom; stand fast therefore, and be not held again in a yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1).

We have been brought into *liberty*.

Now the Lord is the Spirit, but where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is, there is] liberty. But *we* all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by [the] Lord [the] Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17,18).

This is freedom from self and self-will to do the will of God, which grace teaches us:

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Is There Room in Gal. 4:10 for Participation by Christians in Hindu Death Anniversary Celebrations?

The religious rites and customs in the world may be divided into three categories: heathen rites, Jewish rites and the rites of Christendom. The purpose of this article is to explore the question of how a real Christian ought to consider the heathen rites that he may encounter in the world around him. In particular we will consider the Hindu death anniversary celebration in order to give a clear focus to our thoughts.

Christians do not believe in reincarnation because they know what really does happen after death. Often, Hindu teachings on reincarnation are so well known that other Hindu doctrines about what happens after death are overlooked. For example, Christian relatives or friends of a deceased Hindu could be invited to a get-together on the first anniversary of the death without knowing what the meaning of the occasion is. The remembrance of the person who died might comfort those who still have a sense of loss; possibly it might turn out to be an occasion at which a word about the Christian gospel could be spoken. Also, not attending such a family function could be interpreted by unsaved relatives as lack of love or interest. Lastly, Gal. 4:10 has something to say to us on this subject, and the teaching of the apostle Paul is the goal to which this article tends. While most readers of *Thy Precepts* have little contact with Hinduism, the principles discussed below may be of practical help to them

if they are ever confronted with other heathen religious rites.

What, then, are Hindu death anniversary celebrations? Hinduism contains so many different, sometimes contradictory, teachings and is split into so many opposing sects that a single answer applicable to all Hindus is probably not possible. Nevertheless, writers on Hinduism assure us that "authoritative opinions" ¹ on Hindu doctrines are obtainable. In particular, the death rite "is still performed today by practically all Hindus, orthodox as well as liberal." ² To answer our question, let us turn to the Hindu customs of the city of Banaras.

Banaras (also known as Varanasi or Kashi), a city of northern India, has a special connection in Hinduism with death. Indeed, sick and dying Hindus from all over India will travel to this city in an attempt to make it the place of their deaths. Their hope is to gain certain benefits after death, but when they die, Hinduism teaches them that their souls remain trapped inside their dead bodies. Here is what happens then:

The cremation rite is called the "last sacrifice" -- *antyeshti*. The rite is, indeed, a sacrifice, having a certain structural continuity with all fire sacrifices in India, from the most complex to the most simple. What is prepared, ornamented, and offered into the fire is, in this case, the deceased. When the body arrives at the cremation ground, after the chanting procession through the lanes of Banaras, it is given a final dip in the River Ganges. It is sprinkled with the oil of sandalwood and decked with garlands of flowers. The deceased is honored as would befit a god . . .

It is the chief mourner, usually the eldest son, who . . . circumambulates the pyre counterclockwise -- for everything is backward at the time of death. . . . He lights the pyre. The dead, now, is an offering to Agni, the fire. Here, as in the most ancient Vedic times, the fire conveys the offering to heaven.

After the corpse is almost completely burned, the chief mourner performs a rite called *kapalakriya*, the "rite of the skull," cracking the skull with a long bamboo stick, thus releasing the soul from entrapment in the body. . . . The members of the funeral party do not grieve openly, for it is said that many tears pain the dead. ³

Thus, Hinduism teaches what happens after death: the soul leaves the body when the skull is cracked open. But where does it go?

Death is dangerous because it is a time of transition. It is a liminal or marginal time, a space between life and life. In this transitional period, the soul is called a *preta*, literally one who has "gone forth" from the body but has not yet arrived

1. K. K. Klostermaier, *A Survey of Hinduism*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989, p. 15.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

3. D. L. Eck, *Banaras: City of Light*, New York: Knopf, 1982, pp. 340-341.

at its new destination.⁴

This is the crucial point for our present interest because the ceremonies performed by the living relatives are, according to Hinduism, what brings the soul to its final (blessed) destination. Meanwhile, a temporary body is occupied by the deceased:

... a body that will be subject to tortures and suffering in relation to the sins committed.⁵

This body is sometimes said to be built up by means of the Hindu rites performed after the cremation.

The rites following the cremation enable the *preta* to become a *pitri*, an ancestor, or more precisely, a "father." Without such rites, one might remain a homeless *preta* for a long time.⁶

These rites begin after the cremation.

The rites ... consist of daily offerings of rice balls, called *pindas*, which provide a symbolic, transitional body for the dead. During these days, the dead person makes the journey to the heavens, or the world of the ancestors, or the "far shore." As a whole, these rites are called *shraddha*, or *pindadana*, the "offering of *pindas*." The rites also include the providing of feasts for a group of brahmins, who take nourishment on behalf of the dead.⁷

The offering of the *pinda* is made with the following words:

May this *pinda* benefit the *preta* of so-and-so of this family so that his ghost may not feel hunger and thirst.⁸

Moreover, failure to perform these death rites will cause the *preta* (the soul of the deceased) to become a *pishacha* instead of a *pitri*.

A *pishacha* is a "fiend" or a "goblin." One scholar describes them as "eaters of raw flesh," "evil elves," "half-fabulous, half-human." *Pishachas* are also the unsatisfied spirits of the dead, especially the spirits of those ... whose death rites were improperly performed. Being a *pishacha* is a wretched in-between state of being, neither in this world nor in the world of the ancestors. ... doomed ... for 300,000 years.⁹

Therefore, the prime object of the death rites is to accomplish the

4. *Ibid.*, p. 342.

5. Klostermaier, p. 182.

6. Eck, p. 342.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 341-2.

8. Klostermaier, p. 182.

9. Eck, p. 339.

transformation of the *preta* into a *pitri* without a hitch.

... the admission of the *preta* into the circle of the *pitrs* is obtained through the *sapindikarana* [the name of the death anniversary ceremony], which normally takes place one year after death.¹⁰

This then is the object and meaning of the Hindu death anniversary rite. On that occasion the soul of the deceased joins his ancestors, avoids becoming a fiend, becomes "a complete being," attains total fulfillment as a man. No wonder this rite is called "one of the most important parts of Hindu cult."¹¹

Now if dying at Banaras is attended with special benefits to the one who dies, why should these ceremonies be performed there just as they are performed in other places?

According to the very cautious, the rites do no harm and one can never be too careful. According to the very thoughtful, these rites and the sense of ongoing connection with the loved one that they engender are as much for the living as the dead. For most Hindus, however, the question of this seeming contradiction does not arise. One always does these things, for they are the right things to do, even in Kashi [Banaras]. It is the *dharma* [duty, law, righteousness; religious duties] of the living to perform rites for the dead.¹²

Thus, what we have learned about death rites at Banaras applies in a general way to all or most Hindus elsewhere. So we must ask, Is it safe, or comforting for the relatives, or a part of righteousness for a Christian, to participate in such a ceremony? Let us look at what Gal. 4:10 has to say:

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

In its context, this means that the Galatians were observing the religious rites and customs of Judaism. William Kelly had this to say about its meaning:

Not to do this now is the wonder. Alas! the Galatian evil is thought a proof of religion. He marks this observance, not merely as an error, but as a proof of idolatry.¹³

"A proof of idolatry" is strong language, but let us remember that our question is somewhat different. We are asking about *Hindu* customs, not *Jewish* ones. So whatever this verse means, we ought not to take the verse exactly as it stands; instead we should take from the verse the mind of the Lord on Jewish

10. Klostermaier, p. 182.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 182

12. Eck, p. 343.

13. W. Kelly, *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians*, Oak Park: Bible Truth Publishers, 1973, p. 103.

rites in order to apply it to the question of participation in heathen religious rites and customs. Is that going too far from the text of the verse?

Well, William Kelly has commented on this passage in such a way as to give his thoughts on those who participate in unscriptural religious rites and customs in Christendom (which he did not confine to Roman Catholicism):

... what a sin to take part in, to countenance or sanction, in any way, that which is idolatry in God's judgment! ¹⁴

Another who labored long in China had this to say about the idols that are spoken of in Gal. 4:8:

It includes the ancestors whom so many worship . . . True Christianity refuses any mixture such as this. Christianity is the most tender, gentle, loving thing in all the world. No sinner is too bad to receive a welcome. But Christianity is also the sternest and strongest opponent of anything and everything that men wish to add to it, or mix with it. True Christianity is the most exclusive thing in all the world. I mean by this exclusive of sin and falsehood. True Christianity will not tolerate having forms and ceremonies added to it. True Christianity will not tolerate any addition, or any mixture, not even God's law. All such in God's sight are simply heathenism and idolatry. You have noticed how fervent, how intense, how stern is the Epistle to the Galatians. What have they done? Have they committed some great sin? Listen, "I am frightened about you: days you are scrupulously observing, and months, and seasons, and years." ¹⁵

Although these remarks on the participation by professing Christians in Jewish holidays and rites (with references both to unscriptural rites in Christendom and to Chinese ancestor worship) are not exactly what we are looking for, can anyone doubt that consistent Christians should stay farther away from heathen rites than from Jewish ones (which have, at least, an Old Testament origin from God)? So the strong language quoted above could be retained and augmented in order to give a correct answer to our question.

There is a passage of Scripture that does directly apply to the question we are considering:

But that what [the nations] sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God. Now I do not wish you to be in communion with demons. Ye cannot drink [the] Lord's cup, and [the] cup of demons: ye cannot partake of [the] Lord's table and of [the] table of demons. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? (1 Cor. 10:20-22).

Here is a verse which exactly meets the specific case of the Hindu death

14. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

15. G. C. Willis, *Meditations on Galatians*, Singapore: Christian Book Room (of Shanghai), n. d., pp. 118-9.

anniversary celebrations that we are considering. The angry spirits, the *pretas* and *pishachas*, of the Hindus are not the spirits of their deceased parents. There is a great gulf fixed that prevents movement of the spirits of the departed so that they cannot come back again. Indeed, it took an act of God to send Samuel to the witch (medium) at Endor who was actually looking for the demon with whom she usually consulted. Yes, these spirits are demons. The *pindas* are set out to feed demons. Those who eat them on behalf of the spirits of their dead ancestors do so on behalf of demons. The moral ground which defines the gathering for that purpose is called in this passage of Scripture a "table of demons." A cup of water poured out for the thirsty *preta* is a literal "cup of demons." There are consequences to those who participate in such ceremonies.

"Ye cannot drink [the] Lord's cup, and [the] cup of demons" is a clear statement of impossibility. Note the word "cannot." Now it is physically possible for a man to participate in such a ceremony on Saturday and to come to the breaking of bread on the Lord's day. What does the verse mean? It means that there is a moral and spiritual impossibility in such a case. The assembly of God must put away from its midst that wicked person to clear itself of being in communion with demons and thus prevent any such thing where the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is in the midst.

Yes, that is just exactly what verse 20 teaches. If an assembly tolerates participation in such rites, the assembly is in communion with demons and the apostle writes, "I do not wish you to be in communion with demons." If the assembly refuses to act, can the Lord Jesus Christ remain in the midst of such an assembly? Perish the thought! The Holy and the True can not tolerate such a wicked communion. No assembly tolerating such an evil can be owned as standing on the ground of the assembly as presented in the Bible.

That sums up what this article has to say on the subject of participation by Christians in Hindu death anniversary ceremonies. May you never run across such a ceremony. But perhaps you will as Eastern religious practices are spreading in the USA. Then what will you do? What would you say about just going to observe, not to eat of the *pindas*? -- would that make you less than a "participator"? What would you say about just joining in with the comfort side of things for the sake of the grieving relatives, leaving before they begin the Hindu part? Isn't that just what the thoughtful Hindus say is what they stress? Or what would you say about just participating in an ecumenical sense, adding a little Christianity to the occasion without endorsing Hindu doctrines? how can you avoid endorsement when you are already there for the occasion? Or would you say that because you feel free to attend a marriage of a living bridegroom and his bride, you also feel free to join in a ceremony whose object it is to offer some benefit to the dead? Is liberty to attend an institution of God (marriage) an excuse for attending at a table of demons? Where will you draw the line? Where does the apostle Paul draw the line?

Dennis P. Ryan, 1992

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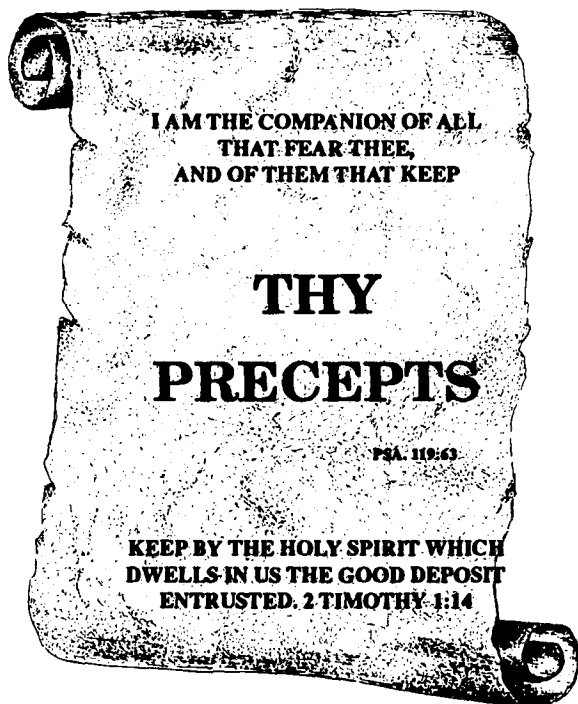
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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

CHRIST'S HUMANITY NOT MORTAL

Shall we treat this mystery of the subjection, the voluntary subjection of the Son of God, with a careless mind? Shall we draw aside the veil irreverently? And yet, if these instances to which I have referred, and others kindred with them, be cited to prove the *mortal*¹ condition of the flesh and blood which the Lord took, we do draw aside the veil with an irreverent and unskillful hand. Yes, and with more than that. We do Him double wrong. We depreciate His person through acts which manifest His boundless grace and love to us, and His devoted subjection to God.

And yet it is now said, that nature or violence or accident would have prevailed over the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus, to cause death as with us. But does not such a thought, I ask, connect the Lord Jesus Christ with sin? It may be said that it is not meant to do so. That may be. But is it not really so? Does it not link the Lord with sin, inasmuch as in the inspired history of flesh and blood -- and we are to be wise only according to what is there written -- death attaches to it *only* through sin? If flesh and blood in His person were liable to die, or by its own nature and condition capable of dying (save by His gracious surrender of Himself), is it not therefore connected with sin? And if so, is Christ before the soul? This suggestion treats Him as one *exposed* to death. It takes such knowledge of Him as leaves Him liable to die in a way which *He could never have taken up* in the fulfilling of His form as a servant. *And beyond what He took up in that character He was liable to nothing.*

There is, indeed, something in this suggestion to make one fear that "the gates of hell" are again attempting the "Rock" of the Church, the person of the Son of God. And if it be vindicated on this plea, that it is designed only to illustrate the Lord's true humanity, the vindication itself becomes matter of increased suspicion. For, is it mere humanity, I ask, I get in the person of Christ? Is it not something immeasurably different, even "God manifest in the flesh"? He would not, as a Savior, do for me, a sinner, if He were not Jehovah's

1. [See note 2. The Lord Jesus was capable of dying, but the word *mortal* carries with it the idea of a necessity of dying and hence is not acceptable as applied to our Lord -- ed.].
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Fellow. Every creature *owes* all that he can render. None but One who thinks it not robbery to be equal with God can *take* "the form of a servant"; for he *is* a servant already, as I have said before. No creature can supererogate, as another has said; the thought would be rebellion. None could be qualified to stand surety for man, but One who could without presumption claim equality with God, and consequently be independent.

True humanity was capable of *sinning*. Adam in the garden was so, for he did sin. We may say, more simply and certainly, that he was capable of *sinning*, than that he was capable of *dying*. The history shows us the first, but forbids us to determine the second; inasmuch as it tells us, that death came in by sin. By nature there was a capability of sinning, but we are not told the same as to a capability of dying.

If, then, by and by, another were to come and, just to illustrate, as he might say, the true humanity of Christ, were to suggest the capability or possibility of His sinning, I ask, What would the soul say to him? We may leave the answer to those who know Christ. But we may, at the same time, be sure of this: that the devil is in all these attempts upon the "*Rock*" of the Church, which is the *person of the Son of God* (Matt. 16:18). For His work, His testimony, His sorrows, His death itself, would be absolutely nothing to us, if He were not God. His *person* sustains His *sacrifice*, and in that way His person is our Rock. It was a confession to His person, by one who was at that time ignorant of His work or sacrifice, which led the Son of God to speak of the "Rock" on which the Church was to be built, and also to recognize that truth or mystery against which "the gates of hell," the strength and subtlety of Satan, were to try their utmost again and again.

And they have been thus engaged from the beginning, and are still so. By Arians and Socinians, the full glory of "God manifest in the flesh" was clouded long ago with either a deeper or a more specious falsehood. Lately, the *moral* nature of the Man Christ Jesus, "over all, God blessed forever," was assailed in Irvingism, and it was blotted and tainted, as far as the evil thought could reach. Still more lately, the *relationships to God* in which Jesus stood, and the *experiences of the soul* in which Jesus was exercised,² have been the unholy traffic of the human intellect; and now *His flesh and blood*, the "temple" of His body, has been profaned.

But one can trace a kindred purpose in all, *the depreciation of the Son of*

2. [I have no doubt that in this extract J. G. Bellett referred, a number of times, to the evil doctrines of B. W. Newton -- ed.].

God. And whence comes this? And whence comes the very opposite and contradictory energy? What is *the Father* occupied with, or jealous about, if it be not the glory of the Son, in resistance of all that would depreciate Him, be it gross or subtle? Read, beloved, the Lord's discourse to the Jews in John 5. there that secret is disclosed, that though the Son has humbled Himself, and can, as He says, "do nothing of Himself," the Father will see to it, that He be not thereby dishonored, or in anywise depreciated; watching over the rights, the full divine rights, of the Son, by this most careful and jealous decree, "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him."

Patience in teaching, patience with the simply ignorant, is surely the divine way, the way of the gracious Spirit. The Lord exercised that way Himself: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?" But no allowance of any depreciation of Christ is the divine way also. John's writings prove this to us -- the most awful portion of the oracles of God, as well as being so peculiar and precious, because they so concern the personal glory of the Son. And they seem to me to show but little, if any, mercy to those who would sully that glory, or carelessly watch over and around it.

And, let me add, other facts in the history of the blessed Lord, such as hunger and thirst and weariness, are not to be used as the least warrant for this thought about the mortality of His flesh and blood. The Son of God in flesh was exposed to nothing. Nothing outside the garden of Eden was His portion. He was hungry and wearied at the well of Samaria. He slept in the ship after a day of fatiguing service. But whatever of all this He knew in the place of thorns and thistles and sorrow and sweat of face, He knew it all and took it all, only as fulfilling that "form of a servant" which in unspeakable grace He had assumed.³

The Holiness of Christian Fellowship

Chapter 5

Galatians 5:9 and 2 John 9,10

2 JOHN 9,10

2 John is addressed to a sister in Christ and her children. She was responsible to know the doctrine of Christ so as to resist uncompromisingly evil doctrine: whether it were a person who once abode in the doctrine of Christ, that is, one who abode in what we had from the beginning, but who now "goes forward" beyond revealed truth (v. 9); or, whether it were a person deliberately lacking something concerning the doctrine of Christ (v. 10), which class thrives today.

What was she to do? Perhaps he is a 'loving' man, kindly and amiable, and much admired. Perhaps a 'harmless', well intentioned man; perhaps even called a brother or a servant of the Lord of long standing. What was she to do? Ah, Lord, raise up the javelin of Phinehas as a standard for Thy people when Thy Christ is so offended! What was she to do? "Do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not." Praise God for every sister who so values the Christ of God. He is coming and His reward is with Him! It was well said that,

A woman having the Word -- as this epistle, for example -- was capable of judging his doctrine, and responsible to do so. Inexorable rigor was to be maintained, if the doctrine as to the person of Christ were touched. The door was to be shut as to whoever falsified it. They were not even to say "I salute you"; for they who did so become partakers of his evil work. It should be to help on the deceptions of Satan.¹

But what if she or you or I, reader, disobey the revealed will of God about it,

1. *The Present Testimony* 12:370.

deliberately refusing to judge evil, condoning it under the plea of love, or what not? Hear the plain statement of God about it: "He who greets him partakes in his wicked works." Instead of the sister uncompromisingly standing with Christ against the evil, she is indifferent to it. That is just what it is -- indifference to the honor and glory of the Son of the Father. Nay, it is helping it on. Another has said,

Moreover, the semblance of love which does not maintain the truth, but accommodates itself to that which is not the truth, is not love according to God. It is the taking advantage of the name of love, in order to help on the seductions of Satan. In the last days, the test of true love is the maintenance of the truth. God would have us love one another, but the Holy Ghost by Whom we receive this divine nature, and Who pours the love of God into our hearts, is the Spirit of truth, and His office is to glorify Christ. Therefore, it is impossible that a love which can put up with a doctrine that falsifies Christ and which is indifferent to it, can be of the Holy Ghost -- still less so, if such indifference be set up as the proof of that love.²

Note too that not a word is said about her believing the evil doctrine. She may not believe it. But THAT question is not raised at all. The point is not that. *The receiving and greeting of the bearer of evil doctrine* is the point. Doing this makes the sister a partaker of his wicked works. She is, in God's eyes, fellowshiping with the evil. She is morally guilty before God of complicity with the evil. The point, I repeat, is not that she imbibed the error. She may refuse the error and accept the bearer. "Partakes in his wicked works," says God. You are guilty too, says God. You are guilty by association. Association with doctrinal evil defiles. You, by greeting and receiving one who brings not the doctrine of Christ, are one who "partakes in his wicked works." You are giving comfort and aid to such a one showing that you are indifferent to the honor and glory of the Christ of God. You may say that you are not indifferent, but your actions show that you are. Another has remarked,

Hence 2 John lays down in the broadest way, not this or that special form of antichristianism, but that if any bring not "this doctrine" (i.e. the true teaching of Christ's person), "receive him not into your house," nor salute him. This is much more stringent than the measure prescribed for the incestuous man in 1 Cor. 5, and of course very much beyond withdrawing from the disorderly in 2 Thess. 3, or the divisionists in Rom. 16. It is the most heinous sin, with which the Christian has to deal, and very precisely was the turning point of our great breach in 1849. For ver. 11 extends the partaking of evil deeds to all who have fellowship with those who do not bring this doctrine.

The reasoning that questions and undermines it is mere unbelief, in direct opposition to God's object in the church; which is bound to purge out all leaven (doctrinal, Gal. 5, as well as moral, 1 Cor. 5). It is in principle to build again

Babylon on the ruins of the pillar and ground of the truth, and more worthy of a worldly man than of a soul that loves Christ and God's word. Yet I doubt not that real Christians have been and are beguiled into this indifference to Christ. But this makes it the more urgent that all who are true to His glory should prove their love to God's children, not by the faithless allowance of the worst evil in a person because he may be a Christian, but by loving God and keeping His commandments. And this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.³

Now, there are saints who refuse fellowship with evil doctrine and hence with the bearer of evil doctrine; on the other hand there are saints who have fellowship with him. The latter are morally guilty before God of complicity with the wicked works by their manifest indifference to the Son's honor. Another has said, "But surely, if a thief's evil deeds are thievings, to be a partaker of his evil deeds is to be partaker of his thieving. Is there any difficulty in understanding that?" What, then, is the course of those who show such fellowship to the bearer of this evil doctrine? They "partake in his wicked works"? What wicked works? They partake in the wicked works of spreading evil doctrine concerning the Christ. This is just what this bearer of evil doctrine was doing. God says that by receiving and greeting such, we are partaking in his wicked works. Some may not believe it so, but God has spoken. Faithfulness to the honor of Christ will resent such actions and disassociate from those who bear such doctrine and from those who partake in their wicked works, whether they imbibe the teaching or not. This is the course of those who refuse fellowship with dishonor to Christ and the propagation of a false Christ.

Will anyone be audacious enough to suggest that while this separation is true as to the home, it does not apply to the Lord's table? What? -- I cannot have him in the house, in which I dwell, but I may welcome him at the *Lord's* table? What an audacious perversion of holiness! Yet this has been said to be right; and under the pretense that since it is the *Lord's* table, we cannot debar one.

If a person does not hold the evil teaching and knows it is evil, but continues to transgress 2 John 9,10, that is worse than blindness as to the evil. What is the moral state of a man who says that he sees the leaven and continues to associate with it?

Another has said,

I am aware that it is stated that we can deal with conduct (with morality), but not with these questions. But this is what appears to me so excessively evil. Decency of conduct is necessary to communion; but a man may blaspheme Christ -- THAT is no matter: it is a matter not of conduct, but of conscience. It

is hinted that perhaps if it be a teacher, he may be dealt with. In truth, the apostle desires even a woman not to let such a person into her house. It is not therefore so difficult to deal with. Just think of a system that makes blasphemous views of Christ, which may amount to a denial of Him, to be a matter of private conscience, having nothing to do with communion! . . . Now this principle is worse than false doctrine; because it knows the falseness and blasphemy of it, and then says it is no matter. I do not own such meetings as meetings of believers. . . .⁴

In reply to a reader, C. H. Mackintosh wrote:

What, think you, would the blessed apostle have said to the elect lady if she were to go "for the summers" to partake of the hospitality of a lady who does not believe in the divinity of our Lord Jesus? We confess we are amazed at your question. We cannot understand how anyone with a spark of loyalty to Christ could think of being the guest of a blasphemer of His Person. You say that "your friend on each of her visits has not shunned to exalt, in a very special manner, the Godhead of the Lord Jesus; but with no apparent success." How could she expect success, when her acts contradict her words? Were she faithful to tell her friend that she could no longer be the guest of one who blasphemes her Lord, she might look for some practical result. Better far to die in some obscure lodging in London, than accept change of air on such miserable terms.⁵

J. A. VonPoseck wrote:

And if the apostle enjoined the Corinthians not even to take a common meal at the same table with that incestuous wicked person, could he have intended to say, think ye, that they quietly might sit down and break bread with those who attacked the very foundations of the Christian faith, nay, the person of Christ Himself and His work? What! associate and break bread with them at the table of the Lord (Whom they had blasphemed) to "show His death till He come"! The very thought of such a Judas-fellowship is so revolting to every Christian sentiment, that I need not say more about it.⁶

Sad to say, this godly "Christian sentiment" is very little in evidence amongst the professed people of God.

ON NEUTRALITY

by W. Kelly

"If any one cometh to you and bringeth not this doctrine, receive him not at home, and greet him not; for he that greeteth him partaketh in his evil works." Now here is one of the most distressing duties that ever was or can be laid on a Christian; and it is laid on the lady and her children peremptorily. Take this illustration. Many years ago a dear friend of mine fell into trouble through being

4. *The Bible Treasury* 3:142.

5. *Things New and Old* 18:311 (1875).

6. *The Bible Treasury* 19:92.

in a Christian assembly which evaded judging similar error. This sister came to live where the assembly did judge the evil thoroughly; but she was slow to allow her responsibility as to it, pleading that she was only a woman, and what could she say or do? Such excuses may sound fair and fine; women might thus act laudably in matters wherein they are not so reserved as they might be. Who expected or hoped to see the evil to be duly judged on that ground? I reminded this "elect lady" of 2 John. This silenced her, for she was intelligent and experienced as well as God-fearing. The issue was that she stood convinced of having shirked her bounden duty.

Where the doctrine of Christ is at stake, one must not hesitate: compromise is treason to the Lord; and if we are not true to Christ, we shall never be true to anything that God has revealed to us. The honor of God is centered in Him through Whom grace and truth came to us. Therefore, if one come, not bringing this doctrine, even had he been once the dearest Christian friend on earth, she and her children were under the most solemn obligation to ignore him for Christ's sake. Here lies the present call of God. If he does not bring the doctrine of Christ, close the door, have nothing to do with an antichrist. To those who do not value Christ's name and word it must seem outrageous, especially in these liberal days, where man is all and Christ is little or nothing; and even professing Christians are so ready to say nothing about it. 'What a pity to disturb unity by these questions! Is it not their chief duty to hold together and avoid scattering, which is the shocking evil? Besides, he is such a nice and dear brother, who may see fit to give up his little notion if you do not fan it into a flame.' **THESE ARE THE NEUTRALS, MORE DANGEROUS THAN EVEN THE BEGUILED MISLEADERS.**⁷

Conclusion

Those who hold that known leaven, unjudged and tolerated, does not leaven a company of Christians and make them a leavened lump, assert, in effect, that Christ and leaven can go on together. Allowed leaven, they must believe, does not hinder Christ's presence per Matthew 18:20, therefore. Such a company of Christians would, in effect, be meeting together on the basis of (on the ground of) sanctioned evil, whether they realize it or not. They would have Christ in the midst to sanction this -- so far as the tendency of their belief is concerned. The teaching implies that God and leaven can go on together. Why, the unholy idea is an attack on the very nature of God as light! Think of it!!!

Cavils raised about Christ being in the midst where there are uneven tempers would be just dust for the eyes and expose more fully the hearts of the advocates of these notions.

Clearly, not every matter is one of excision. We are considering things that the Word of God denounces in the most solemn terms, things which are leaven

7. *Exposition of the Epistles of John*, pp. 404,405.

and must be purged out. It is not a question of the shop or office. It is a question of fellowship and hospitality, and of faithfulness to the Holy and the True.

A little leaven leavens the whole lump means that tolerated evil leavens the whole lump even if all are not fornicators, etc., or even if all do not imbibe the evil teaching. It only requires one wicked person to be tolerated to change the practical character of the lump from a new lump to a leavened lump.

Anyone coming from a leavened lump is, obviously, leavened. The only way to free oneself from this is to judge it and self before God. But if one comes from a leavened lump and wants to break bread, pleading that he personally is not committing a sin such as is named in 1 Cor. 5 or that he does not imbibe the evil doctrine tolerated where he comes from, let us remember that he is part of a leavened lump, partaker of wicked works. And let us treat him as such, remonstrate with him, and refuse him. All that knowingly receive from such a company of Christians put themselves on the same ground of indifference to Christ.

This is the evil of open communion. It shirks responsibility to the Lord, and does so in pious, generous sounding words, and the tendency is to make God the author of this evil system. What has evil at Corinth to do with Ephesus! is the unholy cry. The power of the Lord Jesus Christ may put out a wicked person at Corinth, but the same Lord Jesus Christ may receive him at Ephesus and Ephesus not be defiled, is what this all means. Have such persons the least conception of what is due the Name of Him that is Holy and True? Have such persons the least conception of what "there is one body" means? Have such persons the least conception of what the one loaf on the one table signifies?

Those that practice open communion may say that other assemblies "ought" to recognize discipline. There is no substitute for the truth that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Association with known evil defiles and makes one an accomplice.

Of course, with this is connected the idea of independency of assemblies. The truth that "there is one body" is not understood, even if professed. And, "independency" is no longer strong enough: "autonomous assemblies" is now the word. Let me remind you that Satan is the father of independency (Ezek. 28) and he instilled it into man (Gen. 3).

Think of it. The power of our Lord Jesus Christ puts away a wicked person at Corinth and he is received at Ephesus. No matter, it is said. Ephesus OUGHT not to receive such, but Ephesus is autonomous and can judge for itself. The theory is, in effect -- the Lord Jesus Christ might lead the saints at

Ephesus to receive him. Is this not what all of this means? Do these Christians really think Christ is in the midst according to Matt. 18:20? Let us have no fellowship with this unholiness!

* * * * *

Read *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:288,289 (Stow Hill ed.); concerning many ways in which Satan works, "The Enemy's Work" in *The Bible Treasury* 14:6-10.

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

J. N. Darby's New Testament: Differences Between the Two Common Editions

This article presents a comparison of the 1961 Stow-Hill (hereafter abbreviated SH) edition of J. N. Darby's *New Translation* of the *New Testament* with the Morrish (hereafter abbreviated M) editions of 1884, 1890 and 1922. The 1961 SH edition says that "No change has been made in the wording of the text." But does this mean "no change since the SH edition of 1939" or "no change since the M edition of 1884"? The *Introductory Notice* in the 1961 SH edition states: "A very few needed adjustments, particularly in the use of capital letters"

The 1961 SH edition was scanned and digitized by an optical character recognition program; the resulting files were kindly supplied by Mark Fuller. The 1922 Morrish edition was word processed by hand. The two computer readable files were then compared using WordPerfect's file compare utility. Thus, if the same error was made by scanning and also by word processing, then it could not have been found. All the differences that were found were verified with the published *New Testaments* to remove typos and artifacts. Lastly, the 1922 Morrish edition was compared with the 1884 and 1890 Morrish editions at all the verses listed below and only one very minor possible change was found. This article summarizes the differences that remained: some 944 differences in these two editions of J. N. Darby's *New Testament*.

The 944 differences are grouped in several classes below, roughly from those that make no difference in the sense to those that make substantial difference. Although the original Greek of the New Testament may lack punctuation, English sense depends in part on the use of punctuation. Because the publication date of the SH edition is more recent than that of the Morrish edition, the differences will usually be described as changes made by the SH edition. We ought to assume that the words used by JND in his published New Testament represent his considered judgment at that time. If at some earlier time in his life he wrote differently in one of his books, to change his published New Testament to agree with his former opinion would be a reevaluation of the evidence by the editor who preferred JND's earlier opinion in a case where that opinion had changed.

326 WORDS ITALICIZED IN SH

The first such word is found in Matt. 2:6. "And thou Bethlehem" in M became "And *thou* Bethlehem" in SH. In his *Revised Preface to the Second Edition of the New Testament*, JND wrote,

In St. John's writings I have to remark that the personal pronoun, generally emphatic where inserted, is used so constantly that it can hardly be considered such. I had marked each instance in the first edition, but it arrested the eye inconveniently for the general sense. This the printer has sought to remedy by another and slighter mark.

The 326 extra italicized words in SH appear to be such cases, the personal pronoun being inserted in the Greek and considered by JND to be "generally emphatic." Only once is such a change made in John's Gospel. (In John 1:2 where M has a footnote: "οὗτος. It is emphatic.") The meaning in the 325 remaining cases is hardly affected, if at all. There seems to be slightly more of an impact of a change to italics in the case of such words as "this" (in Matt. 17:5, Mark 9:7 and Luke 9:35: "*This* is my beloved Son"), or "that" (in Eph. 4:14).

Moreover, Acts 7:26 has "Ye" in SH, but "Ye" in M with a footnote that reads: "T. R., with HP 13 31 Memph, has υ εἰς, i.e., emphasis on 'ye;' * A B C E 61 Am omit." So this italicized word may imply that SH has reweighed the MS evidence on this question.

Acts 10:33 has this footnote in M: "There is a slight emphasis on 'thou' and 'we.'" SH places both words in italics. A similar note applies to "I" and "thou" in Acts 26:15. Interestingly, M has / in this verse.

287 ITALICIZED WORDS ARE NOT ITALICIZED IN SH

In John's gospel, SH omits the slight printer's mark mentioned above. This accounts for 286 differences between SH and M. Only one other word is italicized in M but not in SH. This word is found in Mark 4:27: "*he* does not know how." The pronoun is present in the Greek, and perhaps was overlooked by SH.

16 CHANGES IN THE SPELLING OF 12 WORDS

The words are:

M spellings

baptized
Beroean*
Cresces*
denaria*
Jephthae*
pretor
recognized
Sina*
sympathize
wouldst
yes

SH spellings

baptised
Berean
Crescens
denarii
Jephthah
praetor
recognised
Sinai
sympathise
wouldest
yea

Five of the M spellings (marked with *) agree closer with the Greek *New Testament*. For example, Cresces closely matches Χρῆστος. The SH spellings for these words appear to be changes to make the spellings closer to common English or KJV Old

Testament usage. The others are variant English spellings. None of the spellings involve a change in meaning.

6 DIFFERENCES IN VERSE NUMBERING

Marking the verse break after one word or another may be disconcerting but does not change the sense of a passage. See Matt. 28:7, Mk. 6:28, Acts 22:3, 1 Tim. 1:13, James 2:16, and 1 Pet. 3:9.

6 VERY MINOR TYPOGRAPHICAL CHANGES

These include shifting punctuation out of a set of brackets (leaving doubtful words doubtful, but keeping the punctuation -- once a colon in Mark 13:11, once a comma in Mark 15:34, and once a period in Luke 1:28), shifting brackets to more clearly set off doubtful words (without changing which words are marked as doubtful -- see Mark 12:26, Luke 20:37), and using single quotes instead of double quotes (Mark 9:23).

10 CASES OF HYPHENATED WORDS MADE FROM LONGER WORDS

Hyphenation differences are not always easy to assign because words broken with a hyphen at the end of a line may or may not be understood as spelled with a hyphen.

SH has "Bar-jesus" for M's "Barjesus," "first-fruits" for M's "firstfruits" (also in the singular), "bond-men" for M's "bondmen," "wine-press" for M's "winepress."

14 CASES OF HYPHENATED WORDS MADE FROM TWO SHORT WORDS

SH has "body-coat," "market-places," "passer-by," "silver-beater," "trawl-nets," "sabbath-day's," "eye-service" (also plural), "fellow-bondmen" where M has two separated words.

1 LONG WORD MADE FROM A HYPHENATED WORD

SH reads "shewbread" where M has "shew-bread."

9 LETTERS CAPITALIZED

Matt. 21:5, Luke 23:38, John 12:13, 15, and 19:19 have "King" in SH, but "king" in M. Luke 22:11 is "Teacher" in SH, but "teacher" in M.

"Christian" is found in SH, "christian" in M in Acts 26:28 and 1 Cor. 14:16.

"Ruler" is found in SH, "ruler" in M in Rev. 6:10.

4 CAPITALIZATIONS REMOVED

Mark 11:32 reads "they" in SH, but "They" in M.

Rom. 9:29 reads "hosts" in SH, but "Hosts" in M.

2 Cor. 12:4 reads "paradise" in SH, but "Paradise" in M.

Phil. 3:19 replaces M's "God" with SH's "god." This is a change in sense.

3 "OMEGA"S FOR Ω

See Rev. 1:8, 21:6, 22:13. The original did not spell out the name of the letter.

184 ADDITIONAL COMMAS

Most of these additional commas do not appear to change the sense. Some that may are:

Matt. 9:30 reads "See let no man know it" in M, but SH has "See, let no man know it."

Matt. 28:6 reads "Come see the place" in M, but "Come, see the place" in SH. Insertion of the comma shows more clearly that two exhortations were made, both to come and to see.

Mk. 4:36 in M has "they take him with [them] as he was in the ship." SH reads "they take him with [them], as he was, in the ship." That is, they did not take Him because he happened to be in the ship, but they took Him just as He was. This is a change in sense or at least a clarification.

Luke 2:43 could conceivably be misunderstood in M where "they returned the boy" appears. SH adds a comma after "returned" so that it reads, "they returned, the boy Jesus remained."

Luke 24:33 has a comma after "them" in SH. The difference is that the eleven apostles and those with them are both said to have been found, and all were gathered together according to SH. In M, the gathering together could be taken as applying only to those who were with the eleven. Does the verse state that the gathering power of the Spirit was upon the eleven in addition to the others?

John 13:12 has slightly more clarity in SH where a comma after "again" sets off a phrase more completely from the rest of the sentence.

John 19:26 has slightly greater clarity in SH where "by, whom" replaces "by whom" of M. Obviously, "by" and "whom" are not connected as the start of a new phrase in either edition.

Acts 2:10 has a comma after "Egypt" in SH, disconnecting it from the parts of Libya with which it is joined in M.

Acts 13:23: SH's comma after "Saviour" sets off the name of Jesus more clearly.

In Acts 20:21, a comma after "repentance towards God" in SH makes a slight pause before "and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." No comma is found there in M.

Acts 26:16 reads "for, for this purpose" in SH, but "for for this purpose" in M. SH has greater clarity.

Phil. 3:10 has a comma after "him" in SH which separates that part of the sentence into three parts set off by commas, instead of only two as in M.

Col. 3:1 reads "where Christ is, sitting" in SH, but there is no comma in M. This is a change of sense, a present activity (is sitting) being replaced by the verb "to be" followed by an adverbial phrase (sitting, etc.). The Greek has both the verb "to be" and the word "sitting."

1 Thess. 1:3 has a comma after "hope" in SH. This involves a slight change in sense as the words "of our Lord Jesus Christ" can no longer be understood according to SH as being only in connection with "hope."

2 Tim. 3:14 has a comma after "thou" in SH, indicating a direct address of the apostle to Timothy.

13 SEMICOLONS REPLACE COMMAS

These verses have a stronger break between their parts in SH: Matt. 8:34, 13:31, 24:49, 25:15, 27:28, Mark 5:3, 13:14, Luke 8:29, 10:16 (twice), John 4:24, Acts 6:7, Heb. 7:8 (both the 1884 and 1890 M editions have a small ink speck where the upper dot of a semicolon would be in Heb. 7:8 -- could this be an imperfect printing impression?).

2 PERIODS REPLACE SEMICOLONS

Matt. 26:31 and Luke 6:30: here the connection between successive verses is reduced.

1 PERIOD REPLACES A COMMA

John 7:53 ends with a period and a paragraph break in SH. M joins John 8:1 by using a comma. The change of SH causes a much stronger break between the two verses.

1 PERIOD REPLACES A COLON

At the end of Luke 19:34, SH replaces the colon of M with a period. This makes a stronger break between the two verses.

2 CHANGES IN WHERE A SENTENCE ENDS

Matt. 19:5-6 is a reference to Gen. 2:24. If the question ends in verse 6 after "so that they are no longer two, but one flesh" (as in M), then it sounds as if these extra words were being added to Gen. 2:24. SH places the question mark before these words and a period after them, indicating that they were spoken after the reference to Gen. 2:24 had ended, and that they are a statement made by the Lord Jesus Himself.

Mk. 3:13-14 is a similar case. Here, the words "and they went to him" might be joined more strongly to the preceding verse (the call, as in SH) or to what follows after (the appointment to be with Him, as in M).

1 COLON REPLACES A SEMICOLON

In Luke 11:29 after "generation," SH puts a colon for M's semicolon. The tendency of this change is to increase the separation between the two parts of the sentence and to indicate that the latter part depends on the first.

1 QUESTION MARK REPLACES A PERIOD

Mark 13:4 ends with a period in M, whereas SH reads: "Tell us, . . . what is the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" Both punctuations show that a request was made ("tell us") and both show that a question was asked ("when").

1 EXCLAMATION POINT REPLACES "!"

John 3:10 is unique in M in that the punctuation of the verse expresses amazement by "!". In SH this is corrected to "I". Was the "!" a typo in M, or does it reflect JND's understanding of the intensity of the sense of the Greek?

1 COMMA REPLACES A SEMICOLON

See Rom. 14:17.

1 SEMICOLON REPLACES A PERIOD

1 Pet. 1:22 has a semicolon after "fervently" in SH, not a period as in M.

6 MISSING COMMAS

Matt. 2:15 has a comma after "Lord" in M, not in SH.

Matt. 10:14 has a comma after "forth" in M, not in SH. The comma separates "forth"

from "out of that house." Perhaps, this was a typo in M.

In Luke 10:39, the comma after "Jesus" is removed by SH. This results in a slight decrease in clarity because the dependent clause "who having sat down at the feet of Jesus" is no longer set off clearly in the sentence.

John 11:20 has a comma after "heard" in M, but not in SH. This makes the words "Jesus is coming" seem to be a direct quotation in M, but only the sense of the message in SH.

Rom. 8:35 has a comma after "tribulation" in M, not in SH. Thus, SH joins "tribulation" and "distress" as a pair of items within the sentence.

1 Pet. 1:11: SH removes the comma after "manner." The English sense seems so improved that, perhaps, this may be the correction of a typo in M.

13 PLACEMENTS OF ADDITIONAL WORDS IN BRACKETS

Matt. 27:19 reads "that righteous man" in M, but "that righteous [man]" in SH. There is no note in M and the Greek word for man is not in the Greek New Testament, which probably explains the introduction of the brackets.

Mark 5:13, the word "immediately" is discussed in a footnote of M: "εὐθεως, though characteristic of Mark, is doubtful here: A D E Π Σ &c. 33 69 Am insert; K B C L Δ 1 Memph omit." SH places this word in brackets, implying a small change in evaluation of the weight of testimony of the original manuscripts (i.e., from needing a footnote, to needing a notation in the text).

Luke 5:32 SH puts both "persons" and "ones" in brackets. Neither word represents a Greek word.

In Luke 18:39, the words "who were" are placed in brackets by SH. They are not in the Greek or in Bagster's Interlinear, but they are found in the KJV without italics.

Acts 4:23 has "[company]" in SH, not in M. The word "company" is not in the Greek, and is bracketed in Bagster's Interlinear and in W. Kelly's version, but not in the KJV.

Acts 9:37 has "[the]" in SH, but M has "the." The word is not in the Greek; KJV and Bagster's Interlinear have "an," as does W. Kelly in his version. W. Kelly remarks, "Lachmann, following A C E (and many cursives), reads 'the'; but the best and most ancient copies confirm the common reading with all other editors." (Exposition of the Acts, in loco). Inserting the brackets, therefore, involves a question of manuscript evidence.

Romans 15:16 reads "[message of]" in SH, but the brackets are absent in M. These two words are not in the Greek, the KJV or Bagster's Interlinear.

1 Cor. 14:20 has "[men]" in SH, but no brackets in M. The word "men" is not in the Greek, Bagster's Interlinear, or W. Kelly's version; the KJV has "men," not in italics, but in the KJV it stands for the Greek words that mean "full grown."

2 Cor. 8:2 has "[free-hearted]" in SH for M's "free-hearted." The word is not in the Greek, perhaps arising from JND's understanding of the use of "liberality" in this context.

Eph. 2:21 reads "[the]" in SH, but "the" in M, which has a long footnote, which includes the following:

Moral ideas as a rule, where a general term comprises and resumes a multitude

of particulars, have not the article: 'all righteousness,' 'power,' &c., &c., and all like words used characteristically, and so universally, leave it out. It would destroy the sense to put it in.

So SH's brackets show in the text something of the meaning understood by the translator and discussed in his footnote.

2 Tim. 2:21 has these words in brackets in SH: "[in separating himself from them,]." The passage in M has this footnote:

ἐκκαθαρη αὐτο. ἐκκ. is only found 1 Cor. 5:7, 'Purge out the old leaven.' There it was getting rid of it out of the lump; here he has to purge himself from among them (the vessels). Hence we have αὐτο, which, with ἐκ, is rendered by 'separating from.'

SH apparently treats this rendering as akin to the addition of words by the translator to make up the sense, instead of as a word for word rendering.

1 Pet. 1:8 has "[the]" in SH instead of M's "the," where a footnote reads:

'Filled with the glory,' literally 'glorified.'

1 Jn. 5:18 reads "[one]" in SH, but "one" in M. JND's version and the SH edition appear to be inconsistent here if you compare 1 Jn. 2:13,14 and 3:12. The word "one" is not in the Greek or Bagster's Interlinear; it is bracketed in 1 Jn. 2:13 and 14. On the other hand, it is not italicized in KJV or W. Kelly's version, and it is not bracketed in 1 Jn. 3:12 (both SH and M).

8 REMOVALS OF WORDS FROM BRACKETS

Matt. 5:44 in M reads "[bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you,] and pray for those who [insult you and] persecute you." In SH the verse is "[bless those who curse you,] do good to those who hate you and pray for those who [insult you and] persecute you," removing 7 words from the first set of brackets. JND's note in M reads:

These words are left out by many. They are in Luke. They are not in R B 1 22 Syr-Crt Memph; D E L Δ Σ &c. 33 Syrr have them. Verc Ver Corb Am omit only 'bless those who curse you.'

To remove these words from the brackets means that a reevaluation of the weight of the evidence of the original manuscripts was made, but apparently not uniformly. Both sets of brackets are linked to the same note, so the second set of brackets should also have been removed if only the words "bless those who curse you" remain of doubtful authority, being omitted by more of the sources cited.

Mark 8:16: "[It is] because we have no bread." SH uses no brackets here. The words are not in the Greek. The implication is that SH feels that the words are so necessary for the English sense that they need not be bracketed as an addition of the translator.

In Luke 17:36, SH removes the brackets that M uses around the word "men." The KJV and Bagster's Interlinear both have the word in italics, and it is not found in the Greek.

In Luke 23:17 the word "the" is bracketed by M. The word is not in the Greek and not in Bagster's Interlinear.

Luke 23:47 shows "man" without brackets in SH, but M had placed the word in brackets. The Greek New Testament and Bagster's Interlinear have the word.

Acts 15:23 has "elder[s, and the] brethren" in M, but the brackets are not present in SH. A footnote in M reads:

"Many read 'elder brethren,' with R A B C D 13 61 Am; text E H L P 31 Syrr Memph. But 'elder brethren' is not improbably right."

So SH has reevaluated the MS evidence on this verse where JND was not sure of the best reading.

1 Cor. 15:23 reads "that are" in SH, but "[that are]" in M. The words are not in the Greek or Bagster's Interlinear. On the other hand, they are not italicized in KJV or bracketed in W. Kelly's version.

1 Pet. 3:20 reads "the" in SH, not "[the]" as in M. There is no word for "the" in the Greek; Bagster's Interlinear brackets the word.

3 INTRODUCTIONS OF ADDITIONAL WORDS

Matt. 9:19 in M has the wording, "And Jesus rose up and followed him, and his disciples." In SH, "And Jesus rose up and followed him, and [so did] his disciples." In M, there is an unlikely but grammatically possible interpretation that the Lord followed the man and the man's disciples. Adding the extra words shows that the disciples followed also.

Mark 5:35 tells how they came "from the ruler of the synagogue's" but should the word "[house]" be inserted here? SH does so in brackets. The word for house is not found in the Greek, so SH must be adding it as an addition of the translator to make the sense plain.

Luke 6:49, "a house on the ground without foundation" in M is rendered "a house on the ground without [a] foundation" in SH. Perhaps, a very slight change of sense in English results: is "foundation" a general class none of whose members was present or does it refer to a specific construction that was missing?

12 SUBSTITUTIONS OF "SPIRIT" FOR "GHOST"

Each of these is a reference to the Holy Spirit. The first is Matt. 1:18. M reads, "Holy Ghost." SH reads "Holy Spirit." This is not a change in meaning to those who understand the New Testament usage of "Holy Ghost," and to all others it is, no doubt, an improvement.

11 CHANGES OF WORDS

In Matt. 4:18 M reads "cast a net" where SH reads "casting a net." "Casting" may direct our thoughts more to the process, and "cast" may lead our thoughts on to the completion of the act. The change in meaning, if any, is very slight.

In Luke 14:8, M reads "thee" where SH has "thou." What is the difference? Well, "thou" is correct if "than" is a conjunction and "thee" is correct if "than" is a preposition. But "than" is not the direct translation of any Greek word at all; it is added to complete the sense in English. Perhaps, there is no real change in the sense.

In Luke 15:12, SH has "his father" where M has "the father." In the KJV, "his" is in italics; the same is true of Bagster's Interlinear version. The Greek word is an indefinite pronoun form. This appears to be a difference of sense.

Acts 17:15 reads "quickly" in SH where M has "quick." One of the dictionary meanings of "quick" is "quickly." Perhaps, some will think that SH has greater clarity of expression here.

Romans 7:21 has "will" in SH, but "wills" in M, which is a slight grammatical improvement in that "who" is a pronoun that here stands for "I" and "I will" is correct, not "I wills," in spite of common contrary usage.

Romans 12:1 reads "compassions" in SH, but "compassion" in M. The Greek word is a genitive plural; KJV has "mercies." Could this be a typo of M that has been fixed?

Heb. 12:23 reads "registered" in SH where M reads "enregistered." There is little, if any, change in the sense.

Heb. 13:4 has "for" in SH, but M reads "but," with a footnote:

Many read 'for,' with R A D M P Am Memph; ⲅⲉ C K L 17 37 47 Syr-Pst.

This change in word implies a reevaluation of the weight of the MS evidence.

1 Pet. 3:14: "for righteousness'sake" in SH has an apostrophe but "for righteousness sake" in M does not. This may be the correction of a typo of M.

Rev. 9:12 reads "passed" in SH, but "past" in M. One of the dictionary meanings of "past" is "passed."

Rev. 20:8 reads "in the four corners" in SH, but "on the four corners" in M. The Greek is *ev*, usually translated "in." Perhaps, this is a typo of M being corrected.

CONCLUSION: WHICH EDITION IS BETTER?

Does the SH edition reflect the peculiar doctrinal positions commonly associated with that publisher? Apparently not. The SH edition is different from the Morrish edition in:

Emphasized words are italicized more uniformly (but the slight printer's mark in John is lost).

Changes in punctuation (especially the addition of commas) add pauses to sentences or strengthen them (e.g., where a period replaces a comma).

A few small changes approach closer to the KJV or to better grammar.

In 6 places it appears that some reevaluation of manuscript evidence may have been made.

Capitalization is used to show that several words are understood in the SH edition as referring to specific individuals (e. g., King instead of king).

Only rarely does a change alter the sense of a passage: in most of these cases the result is more clarity of expression.

In six cases, perhaps, typos of the Morrish edition were fixed.

Some people, perhaps, will feel that every change, no matter how small, is significant. Nevertheless, the differences listed above show that these two editions are identical for almost all practical purposes, showing the hand of an editor at work almost entirely in technical improvements of the kind that an editor ought to make. Of course, JND might not have called all the changes improvements, but the final result has probably been that SH has introduced more in the way of improvements to the text than it has introduced new blemishes. Some, however, may well regret the loss of the longer footnotes of the Morrish edition with its critical apparatus. Where can you get the SH edited text with the Morrish footnotes and with re-introduction of the slight printer's mark in John?

Dennis P. Ryan, 1992

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

CHAPTER 5: ZION AND THE JERUSALEMS

(continued)

GALATIANS 4:21-31

Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons; one of the maid servant, and one of the free woman. But he [that was] of the maid servant was born according to flesh, and he [that was] of the free woman through the promise. Which things have an allegorical sense; for these are two covenants: one from mount Sinai, gendering to bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which [is] now, for she is in bondage with her children; but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.

For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break out and cry, thou that travailest not; because the children of the desolate are more numerous than [those] of her that has a husband.

But ye, brethren, after the pattern of Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him [that was born] according to Spirit, so also [it is] now. But what says the scripture? Cast out the maid servant and her son; for the son of the maid servant shall not inherit with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not maid servant's children, but [children] of the free woman (Gal. 4:21-31).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we read of "the Jerusalem above" (v. 26) and we do not have the same indicators as in Heb. 12 and 21 that show us that in the latter case it is the bride, the Lamb's wife and in the former that the church of the firstborn ones is distinct from the heavenly Jerusalem. However, the teaching of Gal. 4:21-31 is clear that law is contrasted with grace and that the two women speak of two covenants, while their respective sons represent those born according to flesh, in one case, and born according to promise (grace) in the other case. The following chart illustrates the great number of contrasts found in these verses

as law and promise (grace) are contrasted.

HAGAR AND CHILDREN

- v. 23. maid-servant (slave)
- v. 23. her son according to flesh
- v. 24. this represents a covenant
- v. 25. a) mount Sinai
- v. 25. b) gendering to bondage
- v. 25. c) Jerusalem which now is
- v. 25. d) Jerusalem in bondage with her children
- v. 29. Ishmael born after flesh
- v. 29. persecuted Isaac
- v. 29. the flesh persecutes now
- v. 30. cast out Hagar
- v. 30. Hagar's offspring shall not inherit

SARAH AND CHILDREN

- v. 23. free woman
- v. 23. her son through promise
- v. 24. this represents a covenant
- v. 26. Jerusalem above
- v. 26. Jerusalem above is free
- v. 28. Galatians are children of promise.
- v. 29. Isaac born according to Spirit
- v. 29. was persecuted
- v. 29. children of promise are persecuted now.
- v. 30. the son of the free woman inherits
- v. 31. Galatians are children of the free woman.

Thus those who were listening to law teachers were given to know that slavery, flesh, earthly Jerusalem as she now is, bondage, persecution, and no inheritance go together, while freedom, Spirit, Jerusalem above, promise and inheritance go together.

W. Kelly wrote:

Every religious system which takes its stand upon the law, invariably assumes a Jewish character. We need not look round far to understand this, nor to apply it. Why is it that men have magnificent buildings, or the splendor of ritual in the service of God? On what model is it founded? Certainly they are not like those who gathered together of old in the upper-room. The temple is clearly the type, and along with this goes the having a peculiar sacred class of persons, the principle of the clergy being founded upon the notion of the Jewish priesthood. The service, where that is the case, must depend upon what would attract the

senses -- show of ornament, music, imposing ceremonies, everything that would strike man's mind, or that would draw a multitude together, not by the truth, but by something to be seen or heard that pleases nature. It is the order of what the word of God calls the "worldly sanctuary." Not that the tabernacle or temple had not a very important meaning before Christ came; but afterwards their shadowy character became apparent, and their temporary value was at an end, and the full truth and grace of God were manifested in the person of Him who came from heaven. When Christ was rejected from the earth and went back to heaven, all was changed, and the heart-allegiance of God's children is transferred to heaven. The true sanctuary for us is the name of Christ. What the Old Testament connected for an earthly people with the temple, the New Testament does with Jesus. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." If there were ever so few true to that, they would reap the blessing. It is of great importance to trace things to their principle. When the apostle wrote to the Galatians, only the germs were showing themselves; they had not got to the length of consecrated buildings and castes of men, with all the pomp and circumstance of religious worship suited to the world, which we see around us now, the result of the gradual inroads of error upon the Christian professing body. But still there was the beginning of the mischief, the attempt to bring in the principles of the law upon Christians. And what is the effect? You only fall into the position of Ishmael, out of Isaac's. To be thus identified with the law is to be an Ishmael, to forfeit the promises and to become a mere child of the bond-woman. This is the argument that the apostle uses to deal with the Galatians, who were flattering themselves that they had made immense progress; but it was really a slip out of liberty into bondage.¹

GALATIANS 4:21

Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law?

There are many who desire to be under law. Notice that the word "the" is not before the first use of the word law. The difference is that without the word "the," the reference is to law as a principle of standing before God. "The law" as used in the N.T. often refers to the law of Moses; or, as in v. 21, it refers to Gen. -- Deut. So, you who are desirous of being before God on the principle, or basis, of law, do you not listen to what the books of Moses say?

GALATIANS 4:22, 23

For it is written that Abraham had two sons; one of the maid servant, and one of the free woman. But he [that was] of the maid servant was born according to flesh, and he [that was] of the free woman through the promise.

God had promised Abraham a son (Gen. 15:4), but as time went on and the promised son was not given, a custom was resorted to. Sarah gave her

1. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, pp. 113, 114, n. d.
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

maidservant to Abraham to have an heir that would be hers (Sarah's) (Gen. 16:1,2,3). This was not what God intended. That was not His promise. Rather, it was a resort to a fleshly scheme when faith was tried. How like this we are, we must confess. However, God was over all and brings to pass His purposes of grace in spite of what we are.

This again illustrates the principle given in 1 Cor. 15:46: "But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual" of which, of course, Adam and Christ are the great fulfillment. But it is characteristically seen in Genesis where the firstborn does not receive the principle blessing.

So here we have the great contrast between Sarah, the freewoman, and her son born through the promise, and Hagar, the maid servant and her son born according to flesh. A Jew thinking of this might have thought of the contrast between himself and the Gentile, a grave mistake indeed, as Paul had shown in Rom. 9:

Not however as though the word of God had failed; for not all [are] of Israel which [are] of Israel; nor because they are seed of Abraham [are] all children: but, In Isaac shall a seed be called to thee. That is, [they that are] the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed. For this word [is] of promise, According to this time I will come, and there shall be a son to Sarah. And not only [that], but Rebecca having conceived by one, Isaac our father, [the children] indeed being not yet born, or having done anything good or worthless (that the purpose of God according to election might abide, not of works, but of him that calls), it was said to her, The greater shall serve the less: according as it is written, I have loved Jacob, and I have hated Esau (Rom. 9:6-13).

Isaac was a child of promise, yet he had a son who was not a child of God. And so it might be with the Jew. Not every Israelite after the flesh was a true Israelite. However, the law did not make a distinction between the children of God and those who knew not the Lord. The law addressed the covenant people in their Adamic responsibility. The nation was not a manifested community of the children of God but rather a mixed community. Now, of course, it is God's thought that His children take that place openly and together (John 1:11-13; 11:51,52) as an acknowledged family of children before Him in confidence and consciousness of their relationship, founded on the finished work of Christ with which He is satisfied.

GALATIANS 4:24-26

Which things have an allegorical sense; for these are two covenants: one from mount Sinai, gendering to bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which [is] now, for she is in bondage

with her children; but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.

The Two Covenants. It seems to me to be quite clear that the two women represent two covenants. One represents the covenant of law and the other the covenant of promise to Abraham. The New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-10) is also a covenant of promise but that is for the houses of Judah and Israel. the Gentiles were "strangers to the covenants of promise" (Eph. 2:12), which indicates that there is more than one covenant of promise. The promises spoken of in Galatians are those made to Abraham in contrast to law (Gal. 3:15-21). In this we see the contrast of law and grace because the covenant of promise² was God acting in sovereign grace. Sarah, "the free woman" (v. 23) represents that grace, whereas Hagar, "the maid servant," represents bondage. We are plainly taught in Gal. 4:23-31 that flesh, law and bondage are coupled together, while in contrast Spirit, promise and freedom are coupled.

Philip Mauro, who thought that the church was the spiritual Israel, wrote:

The period when Ishmael and Isaac were both under one roof and the former still had the status of a son and heir of Abraham, *answers to the time from Pentecost to the destruction of Jerusalem*. For during that period the natural Israel, "the son of the bondwoman," still occupied the holy land and city, and "persecuted" the true Israel (Gal. 4:29; 1 Thess. 2:15).

But that era of the overlapping of "the two covenants" was of short duration. For "what saith the Scripture? *Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman*" (Gal. 4:30). And the next verse gives us the application of the incident: "So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond woman, but of the free."³

The implication of this notion is that between Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem, (A.D. 70) the Jews still had "the status of a son and heir of Abraham." Now, surely the reader knows that is clean contrary to Scripture. For example, according to Romans 9 the natural branches were broken out of the olive tree; obviously before A. D. 70.

What he has done is to use the persecution of Christians by the Jews (Gal. 4:29; 1 Thess. 2:15) to claim that what answers to Ishmael has a place until A.D. 70. The fact is that the persecution of a child of promise took place already in Abraham's house. There were children of God under the law and often these also were persecuted by the Jews as Hebrews 11:32-40 amply proves. At the cross those born after the flesh persecuted the great Seed of Abraham unto death. Then the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael took place at

2. Note that Gal. 3:17 calls it a covenant.

3. *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, p. 244.

the cross. So the fact is that just as it was in Abraham's house, with Hagar and Ishmael cast out, typifies the case in Paul's day.

Can you imagine the Galatians reading Gal. 4:30 and wondering when the bondwoman would finally be cast out; and how? But Paul was arguing from what was already true, and since they belonged to Christ they were seed of Abraham and children of the free woman.

P. Mauro has credited the Roman legions (of A.D. 70) with doing what in reality the work of Christ on the cross accomplished.

The Two Cities. Besides the two women representing two covenants, they also represent two cities: the Jerusalem which now is -- in bondage here on earth; and the Jerusalem above, free, and which is our mother. This again figures, by contrast, law and promise (grace); bondage and liberty.

Many able expositors believe that the Jerusalem above and the city in Heb. 12 and Rev. 21 are all the same. I think that W. Kelly's comments on the city in Heb. 12, distinguishing it from the church, is correct. The city of Hebrews 12 signifies the dwelling of the redeemed including the O. T. worthies, while the city of Rev. 21 is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Concerning Gal. 4:26, W. Kelly wrote:

The truth is that this scripture disproves the hypothesis [that the church is Israel], instead of giving the least warrant to construe Jerusalem of the church.⁴

You will recall that in the article "Not Sinai, But Zion . . ." W. Kelly pointed out that the city in Hebrews (11:10,16; 12:22; and cf. 13:14) did not refer to the city of Rev. 21 (contrary to what many expositors think). He pointed out that "the Epistle [of Hebrews] never rises to the mystery in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians." It may be replied that neither does the Revelation. However, the city of Rev. 21 is expressly stated to be the bride, the Lamb's wife -- but the city is described as the seat of millennial government, a view entirely consonant with the character of that book. Moreover, the O. T. saints do not constitute part of the bride. But there were those that looked for that permanent abode above.

Heb. 11:10 says that Abraham "waited for the city which had foundations, of which God is [the] artificer and constructor." And v. 16 says, "for he has prepared for them a city." Such saints are not part of the holy city, new Jerusalem, the bride (Rev. 21), yet they have part in this city, no doubt the same

4. *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, London: Hammond, p. 52 (1947 reprint).

as in Heb. 12:22, the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem.⁵

The city, then, in Hebrews, signifies the place of permanency and fellowship above, with the living God. All brought there are brought there by sovereign grace. It is the dwelling above by the redeemed of all ages resulting from sovereign grace which is seated there; though in addition to that, the church has also a special place.

The Jerusalem above, the heavenly Jerusalem, is the seat of grace, the sphere and scene of the fruits of grace, the company of the redeemed in heaven in the presence of the living God, followed and worshipped here below in transient life, but then enjoyed, and adored in permanent dwelling with Himself. It is the city prepared for faith.

Sarah figures this system of grace. Grace is not bondage but freedom, and is our mother, by which we receive our nature, and it forms us according to its own character.

W. Kelly made the following instructive observations on Galatians:

The Epistle to the Galatians never takes up the standing of the Church properly,

5. I confess surprise at J.N. Darby's opposite view. In *Notes and Jottings* (one vol. ed.) p. 134, we read:

Ques. But did not Abraham look for that city [of Rev. 21]?

Yes; not that I believe he has it, but he looked for the blessing that accompanied that state of things."

Here, JND has explained looking for the city as looking for the blessing that accompanies it. No doubt this is an effort to explain it in keeping with the fact that silence was kept in O.T. times concerning the church.

No doubt Abraham did look for the blessing that accompanied that state of things; but I believe that when Heb. 11:16 says, "for he has prepared for them a city," it means that they and Abraham do have a city (but not of Rev. 21). It is a figure, of course, not a literal city, but signifies that place of permanency above with the God they worshipped while here. Naturally, then, JND would also regard the Jerusalem in Gal. 4 as the church also. See also *Collected Writings* 34:88; *Notes and Jottings*, p. 391; the *Synopsis*, etc.

No doubt F.W. Grant felt the difficulty of Heb. 11:16 also, judging by this comment:

The mention of a city is very striking, if it means that this was actually, as such, before Abraham's sight. It may mean that this it is in which Abraham's faith will, in fact, find its consummation, or it may be that God had revealed to him much more than we have knowledge of; for even the earthly Jerusalem was not then existent as the city of God; so that the type even was wanting, except it were Melchisedec's Salem; and the city here is certainly the heavenly one. The mention of "the foundations" brings before us the very city of the Apocalypse, with its twelve jeweled foundations. . . (*Numerical Bible, Hebrews to Revelation*, p. 63).

Distinguish the city in Hebrews and in Gal. 4 from that in Rev. 21, as W. Kelly did, and many difficulties are removed.

not going beyond the inheritance of promise. ⁶ There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the speciality of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. ⁷

The Jerusalem above signifies that there is a sphere of blessing above for all the redeemed who have passed into the heavenly scene. The literal Jerusalem on earth, chosen also by sovereign grace, will be peopled by a saved, earthly company -- and all shall be under Christ's headship. Additionally, the bride, the Lamb's wife, will have her distinctive place also. The church has certain blessings common with all the redeemed, but others that are unique.

GALATIANS 4:27-31

W. Kelly's Translation of Gal. 4:27-31. W. Kelly's translation of Gal. 4:25-27 has a little different punctuation than that of J.N. Darby, which appears to me to be of assistance in understanding v. 27. We will use W. Kelly's

6. [New creation is touched on, but not developed in Galatians.]

7. *Lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, pp. 116, 117, n. d.

translation of Gal. 4:27-31 for the remainder:

For Agar is Mount Sina in Arabia, but correspondeth with the existing Jerusalem, for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother, for it is written, "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break out and cry, thou that travailest not; for the children of the desolate are many more than of her that hath the husband." But we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him that was according to Spirit, so now. But what saith the scripture? "Cast out the maidservant and her son. For in no wise shall the son of the maidservant inherit with the son of the freewoman." Therefore, brethren, we are not children of a maidservant, but of the freewoman.

There was a time when Israel had a husband. Jehovah was her husband (Isa. 54:5) but she committed adultery (Hosea 1:2) and was put away (Hosea 1:9). When married she had born some children, but comparatively, not many. At the present time Jerusalem is barren -- not bearing children.⁸ However, under Christ's reign, Jerusalem is again pictured as bearing children.

What about the Christian believers now? We are Abraham's seed *because we are of Christ* (Gal. 3:29). In Gal. 4:28 we are seen as children of promise. Well, certainly so since we are Abraham's seed, as Isaac was; not as Ishmael was -- because he was born according to the flesh (v. 29). Christ is in the line of promise, so we as being His are accounted to be children of promise and Abraham's seed. But there are other and greater blessings which are ours -- such as being members of Christ's body.

Galatians 4:27. This scripture is quoted from Isa. 54:1 and is a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the millennium. Gal. 4:21-31 is not the unfolding of the mystery, hid from ages and from generations. Because we are Christ's we are the seed of Abraham and also children of promise. It is not in that fact that we are constituted to be members of the body of Christ, a thing unknown in previous ages or by previous generations. W. Kelly wrote:

It is important to see on the one hand, that though it is according to scripture to regard Christians mystically as the children of desolate Jerusalem far outnumbering those of her married estate of old, the church, on the other hand, is not yet presented by God's word as being in the relationship of the wife, either desolate or married. The marriage is future and on high. The bride, the Lamb's wife, will not have made herself ready till she has been caught up to heaven glorified, and the harlot Babylon, the anti church, has been judged of Jehovah God. The real position of the church meanwhile is that of one espoused; her responsibility is to keep herself as a chaste virgin for Christ. The marriage will be in heaven, just before the Lord and His glorified saints appear for the destruction of the Antichrist and all his allies. (Compare Rev. 19.)

8. In another sense, Jerusalem and her children are in bondage, but they are not the Lord's.

On the other hand, it is undeniable that the Jews, or Zion if you will, had the place of nearness to Jehovah which is represented under the figure of the marriage-tie, that she had been faithless and played the whore with many lovers (even the idols of the Gentiles), and that in consequence she was divorced, becoming a widow and desolate under the righteous dealing of God. Adultery was her sin, rather than fornication. No one in the least familiar with the prophets can have failed to notice this and more said of Israel. Then it was she became barren and did not bear. Praise is still silent for God in Zion; but the vow shall yet be performed to Him (Ps. 65:1); and the barren one shall sing and be no more barren but bear, astonished to find during those days of literal barrenness such an abundant offspring in the saints glorified on high, whom grace has been the while actively bringing in.⁹

The time will come when the future, earthly Jerusalem, set up on the basis of sovereign grace (not law), will look back upon the time of barrenness and be able to count the children of promise, born now, as her children. GRACE is the key to this. She, barren now, then restored by grace, will look at what grace wrought during her barrenness,¹⁰ and count those children of grace as her own. Jerusalem on earth will then be composed of children of promise (grace), and she will view the children of promise now (because they are Christ's) as hers. So all the seed of Abraham are reckoned to herself as set up on the foundation of sovereign grace, and rejoice in the great ingathering of children of promise during her barrenness.

O. T. Saints Are Children of God. It did not form part of O. T. teaching that the O. T. saints were children of God. It was necessary that Christ should die before the children had the right to take that place, consciously as a visible community of children (John 1:11-13). Before His death the children of God were scattered; i.e., they formed no visible community of children. There was no manifested oneness. Indeed, the law did not address the children of God, as such; rather it addressed the first man, man in his Adamic standing and responsibility, in the persons of the nation of Israel in *external* nearness, compared to Gentiles afar off (Eph. 2:17). Christ, then, had to die to form the basis for the gathering together into one the children of God.

But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, Ye know nothing nor consider that it is profitable for you that one man die for the people, and not that the whole nation perish. But this he did not say of himself; but, being high priest that year, prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the

9. *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, London: Hammond, pp. 347, 348 (1947 reprint).

10. Here barrenness does not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Galatians was written before A.D. 70 and declares Jerusalem barren. I suggest that the period called the times of the Gentiles is the period of barrenness. It turned out that Christianity occurred in part of this barren period.

nation; and not for the nation only, but that he should also gather together into one the children of God who were scattered abroad (John 11:49-52).

We see from this that O. T. saints were children and were scattered. Rom. 9:6-13 also shows that O. T. saints were children of God.

Such were born again and the Lord Jesus expected that Nicodemus should have known of the necessity for such a thing -- before the cross (John 3).

The O. T. children of God are referred to as just men in Heb. 11:40, which text also indicates that O. T. believers will be made perfect when we are; namely, at the resurrection and rapture of the saints. "Just men" refers to such as those named in Heb. 11. Note well that this goes back beyond Abraham, right to the beginning. However, I am not aware that it would be correct to designate the just men, the children of God, before Abraham, as "children of promise." Children of promise are "the seed of Abraham." But grace will bring all of the O. T. children of God to heavenly glory, whether or not all are classed as children of promise and seed of Abraham.

O. T. Saints not part of the Church. A point to be emphasized is this: just because all O. T. saints are children of God and were born again, does not mean that they were children of promise and seed of Abraham. A second point is that just because in the O. T. times there were children of promise and spiritual seed of Abraham, and we are that also, that therefore they are part of the church which is Christ's body.

The Jerusalem above is not a designation of the church. It designates that which is figured as a city in Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:22; (cf. 13:14). It is the capital seat of grace where the children of promise will be who have passed off this scene. The entire first resurrection will reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4). This is "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14), which, note well, describes not a point in time but rather *a class of persons*. As to O. T. saints, they will be made perfect when we Christians are (Heb. 11:40). The tribulation martyrs have their part also in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4).

Meanwhile, we have nothing to do with the now barren Jerusalem; which tells us we have nothing to do with the law for justification or for sanctification, whether "moral" or "ceremonial."

Persecution by the Flesh. We may observe, yet, that at the weaning of Isaac, Ishmael, perhaps 14 or 15 years old, mocked. I doubt Eliezer mocked, or any of Abraham's servants. This son of the maidservant dared to do this. This mocking is here called "persecution," a thing worth noting to check the

fleshly tendency within us to mock. Let us teach our children, while we judge ourselves, that Scripture refers to mocking as persecution. And if we are mocked as Christians, those that live godly will thus experience persecution.

The one born according to flesh persecuted him that was born according to Spirit. And think of what the flesh did to the great Seed of Abraham whose very conception was by that mighty operation of Spirit (Luke 1:35). Moreover, it was flesh pretending to honor the law. It was flesh that cast out the Heir (Matt. 21:38). But what said the Scripture? Cast out the maidservant and her son.

Cast Out the Maidservant and Her Son. Hagar, we saw, corresponds to the Sinai, gendering to bondage (v. 25). She had a son, and Ishmael, born according to the fleshly course taken by Abraham, figures the flesh. The law is for the first man. Grace is for the true children. The time of the trial of the first man was completed at the cross. The maidservant and her son have been cast out.

When we considered Gal. 3:25, we observed that there was no such thing as a moral tutor and a ceremonial tutor. Likewise, there is no such thing as a moral Hagar and a ceremonial Hagar so that you can place the children of Sarah under the moral Hagar. In effect, doing so is giving the flesh a place, little as you may be aware that that is what it is. You would be allowing Hagar and her son back into the house again. They come and go together.

Children of the Freewoman.

Therefore, brethren, we are not children of a maidservant, but of the freewoman (Gal. 4:31).

The maidservant speaks of bondage and law. We are rather the children of grace. It is grace that caused our birth and it is grace that nurtures and teaches us.

For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous for good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise thee (Titus 2:11-15).

Christ has set us free in freedom; stand fast therefore, and be not held again in a yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1).

We have been brought into *liberty*.

Now the Lord is the Spirit, but where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is, there is] liberty. But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by [the] Lord [the] Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17,18).

This is freedom from self and self-will to do the will of God, which grace teaches us (Titus 2:11-15).

Ed.

EXTRACT ON ROMANS 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the compassion of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service" (Ver. 1). It is the detailed application of the principle laid down in chapter 6, where we first hear of the Christian reckoning himself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus, under grace, not under law. From this there is no receding to law now, as the tone of the exhortation itself testifies. But the compassion of God are morally to form the believer within and without. Just as in chapter 10 the apostle had taught the value of confession with the mouth as well as of believing with the heart, so here the brethren are entreated to yield their bodies as a sacrifice to God. Many then as now would have been disposed to have professed an inward devotedness with license for the outward man. The possibility of this self-deception is here precluded, the more strikingly as the exhortation is made not to Jews with their system of external observances, but to Christians who know that without faith it is impossible to please God. Thus is secured the service of the man as a whole; just as the apostle says elsewhere in his desires for the Thessalonian saints, "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." Again, the word "to present," or yield, is so put as to convey the idea of a completed act summed up in its conclusion. It is not mere effort as under law, but a thing done once for all, though of course stamped on the entire christian walk up to the last according to that beginning. The Spirit of God contemplates nothing less for every soul called of God out of this world, reconciled by the death of His Son and to be saved by His life. How could He lower the standard of Christ?

W. Kelly, *Romans*

The Cardinal Principle

It was a hand behind moved the springs: first, the enemy, I believe, to destroy; but, behind that, I believe, God, to approve and vindicate the cardinal principle -- that the church must judge evil if it comes before it, or that it ceases to be the church before Him, must prove itself clear -- and to show Himself with them in it however weak.

J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 20:148.

Forgiveness Without Confession?

How can a man who does not forgive another pretend to enjoying the forgiveness of his own sins before God? There is a righteous government on our Father's part, and the particular sin which grieves the Lord is not forgiven till we confess it to Him. "If ye do not forgive," says our Lord in Mark 11:26, "neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your offenses." It is the cherishing a spirit entirely antagonistic to the Spirit of the Lord. If there is a child in a family going on in a course of self-will, there would be a bar for the time to mutual good feeling. So with God our Father; if there were a persistently bad spirit towards another, so long the Father does not forgive as a question of communion and of daily intercourse with Himself. It ruins the intelligence of Scripture to make it all a question of eternity. In the Epistles of the New Testament the remedy or duty in such circumstances takes the form, not so much of asking forgiveness as of confession, which goes far deeper. To ask for forgiveness is easy enough, and quickly done (as you may learn from your child); to confess one's fault in all its gravity is a very humiliating process, and if not with a view to forgiveness and the restoration to communion, it is a mockery of God. To confess, to judge oneself, is therefore far beyond asking forgiveness.

W. Kelly, *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*, from ch. 11.

Is a Christian to forgive another Christian when he asks for forgiveness *if* he did anything wrong (i. e., without confession)?

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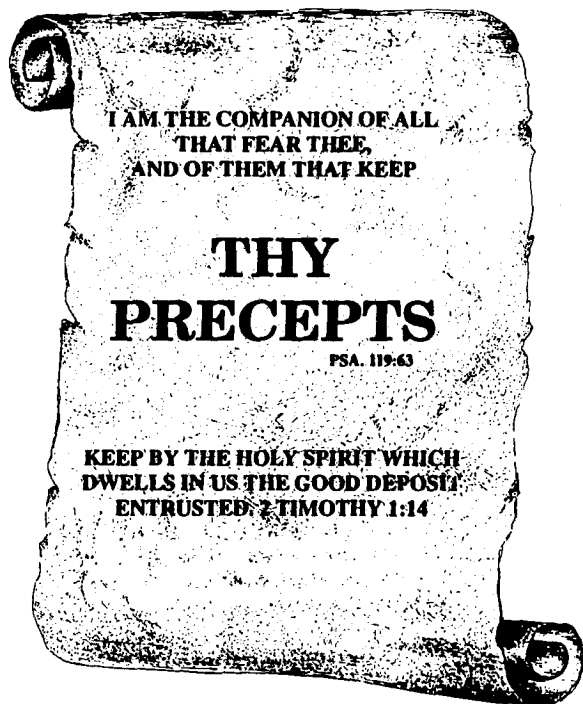
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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

God Manifest in the Flesh

Throughout St. John's Gospel we may perceive that a sense of glory of His person is ever present to the mind of Christ. Whether we follow Him from scene to scene of His public ministry (chap. 1-12), through His parting words with His elect (chap. 13-17), in the path of His closing sorrows (chap. 18, 19), or in resurrection (chap. 20, 21), this is so.

This full personal glory that belongs to Him is declared at the very beginning of this Gospel (chap. 1:1), and there recognized by the church, conscious, as she is, that she had discerned it (chap. 1:14). But, as I have just said, it is always present to His own mind. He is in the place where covenant arrangements put Him, and He is doing those services which care for the manifestation of the Father's glory laid on Him; but still He takes knowledge of Himself in the fullness of the Godhead glory that belonged to Him, essentially and intrinsically His. (See 2:21; 3:13; 4:14; 5:23; 6:46, 62; 7:37; 8:58; 9:38; 10:30, 38; 11:11, 25; 12:45; 14:15; 16:15; 17:6; 19:30; 20:22).

The Spirit in the saint, after this manner, glorifies Him still. The saint may recognize Him in the place of covenant subjection or think of Him in His sorrows and sufferings, but (like Himself in the days of His flesh) never loses the sense of that personal glory which is essentially and intrinsically His. Christ's own way when He was here, and the saint's present experience, are thus in perfect concord. And when we look a little at the epistles, we shall find something still in harmony -- I mean in this particular. The Spirit in the apostles does not meet an injurious treatment of the person of Christ in the same style that He does wrong, [as in the case of] dealing with the truth of the gospel. And this difference in style is very significant. For instance, in the Epistle to the Galatians, where the simplicity of the gospel is vindicated, there is a pleading and a yearning in the midst of earnest and urgent reasonings. So there are measures and methods recommended (such as charging, rebuking, stopping the mouth, 1 Tim. 1 and Titus 1), and not a summary process and outlawry at once,

when Judaising corruptions are dealt with. But when the person of the Son of

God is the thing in hand, when His glory is to be asserted, there is nothing of all this. The style is different. All is peremptory. "They went from us, because they were not of us." "Receive him not into your house." "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." ¹ The Spirit, as I may say, holds the decree most sacred, and guards it its with instinctive jealousy, "that all should honor the Son, even its they honor the Father" (John 5:23) .

All this about His full divine glory is precious in the thoughts of His people. We are, however, led to look at man in Him also, and through a succession of conditions we see in Him man presented to God with infinite though varied delight and satisfaction. I have, long since, traced Him in the following way as man in all perfectness:

1. *Born.* The material, so to speak, moral and physical, is presented in Jesus as the born one. He was a taintless sheaf of the human harvest. Man in Him was perfect as a creature (Luke 1:35).
2. *Circumcised.* Jesus, in this respect, was under the law, and He kept it, as of course, to all perfection. Man in Him was thus perfect as under law (Luke 2:27).
3. *Baptised.* In this character Jesus is seen bowing to the authority of God, owning Him in His dispensations, and man in Him is perfect in all righteousness, as well as under law (Luke 3:21).
4. *Anointed.* As anointed, Jesus was sent forth to service and testimony. In this respect man is seen in Him perfect as servant (Luke 3:22).
5. *Devoted.* Jesus surrendered Himself to God, left Himself in His hand to do to His utmost will and pleasure. In Him man was therefore perfect as a sacrifice (Luke 22:19, 20).
6. *Risen.* This begins a series of new conditions in which man is found. This is the first stage of the new estate. John 12:31, 32 intimates a new course in man, as here said. The corn of wheat, having fallen into the ground and died, is now capacitated to be fruitful. Man in the risen Jesus is in indefeasible life.
7. *Glorified.* The risen man, or man in indefeasible life, wears a heavenly image. The new man has a new or glorious body.

1. The eating of herbs only, and the observing of days, if fully interpreted, are customs which depreciate the gospel, or affect the full beauty of the truth. But such things are to be borne with (Rom. 14) [in a Jew, Ed.]. But our souls have the full sense of this, that depreciation of the person of the Son would not receive a decree in its favor after this manner.

8. *Reigning*. The risen and glorified Man receives, in due season, authority to execute judgment. Dominion is His. The lost sovereignty of man is regained.

Scripture leads us through this series of contemplations on the Son of man. And though I speak here of the Man, as before I did of the divine glory, yet I divide not the person. Throughout all, it is "God manifest in the flesh" we have before us.

From *The Bible Witness and Review* 2:273-275.

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

6: *The Pretribulation Rapture*

Introduction

My purpose in section six is to restate, in some detail, the truths regarding the second coming of Christ that were recovered to the church during the 19th century. This will be done, if the Lord will, with a view to posttribulationist criticism regarding these truths. Amillennial and postmillennial objections will also receive some notice.

Chapter 6.1 will be of an introductory nature and will review the words used in Scripture that refer to the Lord's second coming whether in connection with the pretribulation rapture, the posttribulation appearing in glory, or in a general way. Chapter 6.2 will consider the saints' waiting and watching and the way that the heavenly hope is presented in Scripture. Chapter 6.3 will review how the first century saints were put into an expectant posture with respect to the Lord's return. After that, such Scriptures as John 14:1-3, 1 Cor 15, etc. will be examined in detail to see what they teach about the proper Christian expectation in view of efforts to make our Lord's coming a link in the chain of prophecy instead of it properly being the Christian's expectation.

Chapter 6.1:

The Use of the Words Connected with the Subject of the Lord's Second Coming

GENERAL SURVEY OF THE SUBJECT

Christ's coming has two parts, often distinguished by the words "rapture" and "appearing." By the word "rapture" is meant the coming of Christ for His saints (1 Thess. 4) that will occur before the opening of Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9). By the word "appearing" we refer to the phase of Christ's coming when He appears in glory to the world (Rev. 19). We do not mean by this two comings. Rather, there is one second coming, but it will occur in two phases. Let me refer to what Scripture designates as "the first resurrection." This is also called "the resurrection of the just," a phrase which denotes a **class of persons**. Do not think of the first resurrection merely as a point in time. Recall that Christ is the firstfruits; but the resurrection of the dead noted in 1 Thess. 4 has not occurred yet. Because Christ is part of the first resurrection, and saints noted in 1 Thess. 4 are part of the first resurrection, it does not follow that there are several first resurrections -- just because the Firstfruits (Christ) was raised over 1900 years ago, and others will be raised later. The first resurrection occurs in stages. Analogously, there is one second coming having two parts; or, two stages or, two. I mention this because critics complain that some people actually believe in two second comings. We believe neither in several first resurrections nor in several second comings.

The general word for the Lord's coming is *parousia* which means presence. Note that presence does not necessarily mean visible presence. We suggest, in fact, that Christ's coming for His saints before Daniel's 70th week is not visible as seems implicit in the phrase, "the appearing of His coming" (2 Thess. 2:9), i. e., the *epiphany* of His *parousia*. The Lord Jesus will annul the lawless one (the Antichrist) by the *epiphany* of His *parousia*. This refers to the visible phase of the *parousia*. We shall consider this in more detail later. Suffice it to say here that if the idea of visibility was inherent in the word presence (*parousia*), the "appearing of His presence" would be tautologous.

The rapture, by which we mean the catching up of the dead and the living

when Christ comes for His saints, refers only to the first part of His coming. The word "coming" (*parousia* -- presence) refers to either part of the second coming (the pretribulation part and the posttribulation part) according to the scripture context.

The words *revelation*, *manifestation* and *appearing* refer EXCLUSIVELY to the second part of Christ's coming, as does the phrase "*the appearing of His coming*."

Let us now consider the relationship of the coming to Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks found in Daniel 9. After the 70th week is completed the full blessing of Israel shall occur. Christ is going to appear in power and the Deliverer will turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26). Having purged out the rebels from among the 10 tribes before bringing them into the land (Ezek. 20:38); and having passed Judah through the fire (Zech. 13:9); that nation which shall be born in a day (Isa. 66:8) shall all be righteous (Isa. 60:21), for His people shall be willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3).

The 70th week just precedes these wondrous events for Israel. The 70 weeks began with the decree that Nehemiah received (Neh. 2) and end just before Christ appears. A "week" is a "hebdomad," meaning a "seven" and it denotes seven years. After 69 weeks (= 483 years) from the time Nehemiah received the decree, the Messiah was cut off -- and had nothing (Dan. 9:26), i. e., no kingdom that the prophets spoke about. No doubt the 69th week ended with the Messiah's entry into Jerusalem on the 10th of Nisan, in fulfillment of Zech. 9:9. Then, inspected by His enemies to see if there was any blemish in Him (Matt. 21 ff -- and He was the spotless Lamb of God), they crucified Him on passover, the 14th of Nisan.

The 70th week remains to run its course. It will commence after the rapture of the saints, when Christ comes to take His own to the Father's house (John 14:1-3). There may be a space of time following the rapture before the 70th week commences. There may not be. I am not aware that scripture states either case.

But there *will* be a short space of time between the end of Daniel's 70th week and the appearing of Christ. The last half-week is described in the following way, beginning from the "middle" (Dan. 9:27):

1. Time, times and a half-time: Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14
2. Forty-two months: Rev. 11:12; 13:5
3. 1260 days: Rev. 11:3; 12:6

Yet, Christ will not appear on the 1260th day. We know this for at least two reasons:

1. The two witnesses lie dead on the street in Jerusalem for 3-1/2 days *after* the 1260th day.
2. The 7 bowls are the seven *last* plagues and there must be a short time in which they are poured out following the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

If the description of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15-19) is carefully weighed it will be seen that it is vast in its scope. It includes within its scope "the time of the dead." *That* is the great white throne judgment (after the 1000 years) of those described in Rev. 20:5 as "the rest of the dead." Thus, the seventh trumpet **embraces within its scope** all that subsequently unfolds from the time of its sounding. While the seventh trumpet sounds at a point in time,¹ its effect continues to the great white throne judgment.

Therefore, the seven last plagues follow the sounding of the seventh trumpet and also fall within the scope of the seventh trumpet. The six trumpets appear to have the dominions of the beast in view especially (falling on "the third part") but the bowls have a world-wide scope. The bowls are the final, sharp blows preparatory to the introduction of the Firstborn into the world to reign.

The appearing of Christ, then, follows the seven bowls, or occurs with the pouring out of the seventh bowl. His appearing will be followed by a short period of time called "the war of [that] great day of God the Almighty."² Armageddon is *symbolic*, not a literal place, and designates the awful slaughter that will occur during the war of the great day of God the Almighty, during which His Christ will deal with the chief enemies one by one.

Finally, the 1335th day from the middle of Daniel's 70th week will arrive (Dan. 12:12). I suggest that this will be the 15th day of the seventh month, the beginning of the feast of Tabernacles. On the first of this month, the 10 tribes will be regathered (blowing of trumpets (Lev. 23)) and on the 10th day will be the day of atonement (Lev. 16; 23) when all Israel will mourn (Zech. 12:12). On the 1335th day the full blessing commences, Gog having been crushed after the 10 tribes are regathered (Ezek. 38,39). Having considered briefly the setting of the two phases of Christ's second coming with respect to Daniel's 70th week, the destruction of Christ's enemies, etc., we will now turn to some of the characteristic differences and objectives of the two phases of Christ's second

1. Keep in mind that these are not literal trumpets.

2. For more about this, see www.precept Ministries.org, is available from the publisher.

coming.

THE RAPTURE AND THE APPEARING CONTRASTED.

The Christian is looked at in scripture as waiting for both the rapture and the appearing. These two phases of Christ's coming have different objectives in view with respect to the saints.

1. In John 14:1-3 we have the heavenly hope -- of Christ personally coming for us to take us where He is, even to the Father's house above. *All* will have the same place of nearness to the Father, as His children, in those "abodes." This signifies dwelling with the Father, in sweet and eternal nearness to Him. This is the fruit of grace and not at all the result of service and obedience. Dreams about big and little mansions, and geographical places, are just that -- dreams.

2. We are also waiting for the revelation (1 Cor. 1:7). Rewards will be displayed at the revelation. The revelation, or appearing of Christ in glory, will manifest what was of Christ in the service of Christ's servants; and it will manifest what was *really* obedience in the saints.

Responsibility and faithfulness are connected, in the Word, with the appearing. See 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1,7,8; Titus 2:12,13; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 John 1:28; 1 John 3:1-3; 1 Cor. 1:7 (gift implies responsibility to serve); 1 Pet. 1:7,13; 4:13.

A Christian may be very uninstructed about these things yet he is said to be waiting. He may be so uninstructed as to think Christ's coming for Him is death; yet the Scripture says, "the Spirit and the bride say, Come" (Rev. 22:17). What is stated of the Christian is what is proper of a Christian, as such, as indwelt and energized by the Spirit. How short we come of it!

The rapture results, then, in an equal place of nearness to the Father in His house. The rapture does not have distinctions and reward in view, but the appearing does have distinctions and reward in view.

I anticipate a post-tribulationist objection here. It may be said that a passage like Rev. 3:10 contradicts the above paragraph because we say that that verse shows that the church will not pass through the tribulation and yet it seems to be a reward for faithfulness. But all obtain this equally and so it only confirms the point. Rev. 3:10 has nothing to do with the appearing, the time that Christ and His saints are manifested to the world (Col. 3:4). The rapture does not manifest faithful service. Rather, the consequences of our walk will be openly seen when Christ comes *with* His saints, i. e., at the appearing.

Referring to 1 Tim. 6:14, F. W. Grant said, "The appearing is the goal of responsibility; the time between this and the end of the path here would not affect the matter of the exhortation; and no one would contend that the apostle meant to guarantee that Timothy would live until the appearing."

Let us note also that Luke 14:14 tells us that recompense is obtained in the resurrection of the just. It was pointed out above that the resurrection of the just refers to a class of persons. The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4,5) does not refer to a point in time. Christ has part in the first resurrection as firstfruits (1 Cor. 15). The firstfruits is surely part of the harvest! O. T. and N. T. saints will be raised together (Heb. 11:40) when the N. T. saints are raised at the rapture (1 Thess. 4). The two witnesses will be raised just after the great tribulation (Rev. 11) and then the tribulation martyrs must be raised in order to live and reign 1000 years with Christ (Rev. 20:4,5). When the first resurrection is thus complete, *then* the saints will reign. It is *then* that faithfulness will be manifested. It is *then* that rewards are manifested.

We should note also that the appearing connects with the government of God, i. e., government whether in His dealings with the world, the apostates, Israel generally, the faithful remnant of Israel or the rewards to the glorified saints.

We await the appearing:

... as the great eventful act of God's government, in which Christ is glorified, as that which will set the earth right, as that in which all responsibility will be brought to its manifest result. It is the grand act of that display of power which sets everything in its place according to the divine judgment, and by which evil power is set aside. But they do not expect it as that which is to fulfill and accomplish their own personal blessedness according to sovereign grace in their own relationship with Christ (that is in the Father's house.) Christ's appearing will be the full establishment of divine power in government, and the result of responsibility; the rapture of the church, and its entrance into the Father's house, [is] the accomplishment of sovereign grace towards the saints in their own individual blessedness -- of the hope which communion with the Father and the Son has given them. Another special result will follow for the church -- the marriage of the Lamb (J. N. Darby).

THE WORDS CONSIDERED IN MORE DETAIL

Coming -- Parousia

What does the word coming, i. e., parousia, mean?

This word signifies 'presence with' in contrast with 'absence', and the fact of

becoming present after having been absent.³

The *parousia* of the Lord, then, is not a mere fact of coming, but the state of being present in contrast to His absence. The epiphany or shining forth of His *parousia* most naturally intimates that this presence in itself is not necessarily visible.⁴

His 'presence' is the larger term and leaves room for His coming before the 'day', i. e., before He appears, reveals, or manifests Himself.⁵

The word "coming" here, and frequently elsewhere, is *παρουσία* which denotes not barely the arrival (like the verb *ερχομαι* in scripture and like the substantive *ελευσις* in Greek ecclesiastical writers), but the circumstance or state of being present; that is, "presence." Nevertheless, as the presence of a person, who is now absent, necessarily supposes his coming, the latter is often and fairly enough given as its English equivalent, though the former is the full meaning.⁶

This is quoted to give an example of what J. N. Darby and William Kelly taught, which is representative of what they and those in fellowship with them held and taught; they apply the word, as scripture does, to both phases of the second coming. "Presence" does not necessarily imply visibility as is noted above in the second quotation; therefore the reason for the wording of 2 Thess. 2:8, that the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, will be dealt with by "the appearing of his coming", i. e., that phase of the coming which is the display in power. This intimates that the world will not view what is noted in 1 Thess. 4:15-18; but the world will view the appearing of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8).

Following is a list of places where *parousia* is used in reference to the coming of the Lord and of which phase I believe it speaks.

Pre-tribulation phase

1 Cor. 15:23
1 Thess. 4:15
1 Thess. 5:23
2 Thess. 2:1
James 4:7,8

Posttribulation phase

Matt. 24:3,27,37,39
1 Thess. 2:19
1 Thess. 3:13
2 Thess. 2:8
2 Peter 1:16
2 Peter 3:4
1 John 2:28

3. J. N. Darby, *Notes and Comments on Scripture* 4:152.

4. *The Bible Treasury* 6:240.

5. William Kelly, *Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom*, London: Broom, p. 206 (1865).

6. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:379.

The manifestation of rewards is connected with the posttribulation phase. It is then that we will be manifested. The results of our service will be openly seen then. If this point be clearly grasped, many difficulties in understanding this subject will vanish.

Come -- Erkomai

The word *erkomai* means *to come*. In the list of Scriptures below, a number of them have been placed under the heading "The Fact of the Coming Stated." In these scriptures, one believes, the Lord did not give direct reference to a particular part of the coming but only states the fact that He will indeed come. The passage where we find Luke 12:36, 37, 38, 40, 43 and 45 stresses moral preparedness especially.

Matt. 24:1-44 speaks of the faithful remnant of Israel during Daniel's 70th week. Matt. 24:45-25:30 concerns saints of the present period, but does not view them in their standing in Christ, as members of one body, but rather as professors in the kingdom.⁷ There are true (those who have oil) and false (those who took no oil). Matt. 25:31-46 refers to the judgment of the quick (the living) when the Son of Man shall have sat down upon His throne of glory. At this point it is a question of Gentiles.

With the light of further revelation, we understand the parable of the midnight cry. The virgins went to sleep with respect to the expectation of the Bridegroom. This expectation was reinstated and an expectant posture was again resumed.

Speaking of the parables in general, T. B. Baines remarks,

It is, then, the Lord's coming that is here spoken of, but its two parts are not distinguished. They form portions of a whole, and are so represented, the different times at which events occur not being noted. Some receive reward, others punishment, and whether these begin when the Lord comes *for* His saints or when He comes *with* them, is immaterial to the object of the parables.⁸

7. It is ignorance not to allow for the different relations of the Christian; for example, child of God, servant, member of Christ's body, disciple (whether true or false), etc.

8. *The Lord's Coming, Israel, and the Church*, p. 50.
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

However, we know from other scriptures the order of these events.

Pre-tribulation part	Post-tribulation part	The Fact of the Coming stated
Matt. 25:6,10,19,27	Matt. 24:30,42,44	Matt. 24:46,48
John 14:3	25:31	Mark 13:36
1 Cor. 11:26	26:64	Luke 12:36,37,38
Rev. 22:7,12,17,20	Mark 8:38	12:40,43,45
	13:26	
	14:62	
	Luke 13:35	
	18:8	
	19:13,23,38	
	20:16	
	21:27	
	23:42	
	1 Cor. 4:5	
	1 Cor. 15:35	
	2 Thess. 1:10	
	Heb. 10:37	
	Jude 14	
	Rev. 1:7	
	16:15	

Revelation -- Apokalupsis: & Revealed -- Apokalupto

This means "coming forth from being concealed." ⁹ It means to uncover from concealment. The Lord Jesus is presently concealed from the world (not to the eye of faith) but He will come forth from this concealment to take the kingdom and then reign.

This word always applies to the posttribulation phase of the coming (*parousia*) of the Lord when used in connection with His coming.

Following are the scriptures where it is so used:

Apokalupsis

Rom. 8:19
1 Cor. 1:7

2 Thess. 1:7
1 Pet. 1:7,13;
4:13

Apokalupto

Luke 17:30

Rom. 8:18

1 Pet. 5:1

Let us be reminded that the display of rewards is connected with the posttribulation phase of His coming (*parousia*). We wait for both events contrary to what G. E. Ladd ¹⁰ thought; he told us that according to pretribulationism, the posttribulation part of the coming has nothing to do with rewards. ¹¹ Quite the opposite is the truth.

Manifest -- Phaneroo

Manifest stands in contrast with being previously hidden though in existence, though known to be so." ¹²

This word only applies to the posttribulation phase of the coming of the Lord and is used in this connection in the following scriptures:

Col. 3:4

1 Pet. 5:4

1 John 2:28

1 John 3:2

Once more we should be reminded that the manifestation of rewards is connected with the posttribulation phase of His coming.

Appearing -- Epiphania

But appearing is not the act of coming forth as revelation, but the state of shining forth so as to be visible." ¹³

This word is used in connection with the coming of the Lord in the following scriptures, and only applies to the posttribulation phase of His coming, when it does not refer to His first advent.

2 Thess. 2:8

1 Tim. 6:14

2 Tim. 4:1,8

10. *The Blessed Hope*, p. 65.

11. *The Blessed Hope*, p. 69.

12. J. N. Darby, *Notes and Comments* 4:152.

13. J. N. Darby, *ibid.* 151. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

Titus 2:13

Shall see -- Optomai

This word means "to see."

The scriptures listed below are the places where it is used in connection with the Lord's coming.

Matt. 24:30; 26:64

Mark 13:26; 14:62

Luke 21:27

Heb. 9:28

1 John 3:2

Rev. 1:7

SUMMARY

In summary, we have observed this:

1. Coming (*parousia*) is used in connection with both the rapture and the appearing. There is a mode of language that is sometimes seen in print which seems contrary to this. The phrase is: "the rapture and the second coming." This is a false distinction. The second coming includes both the rapture and the appearing. Reserving the term "second coming" for the appearing is contrary to Scripture. There is only one second coming but it has two parts or phases.
2. Revelation (*apokalupsis*), manifest (*phaneroō*) and appearing (*epiphania*) refer only to the second part of Christ's coming again. These words denote something connected with making His coming visible and are associated with His coming in glory, and the judicial aspect of His coming, which introduces the day of the Lord.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

On the Role of Elders in Making Assembly Decisions:

Comments on a Letter by B. W. Newton And the Good Example of Sir Alexander Campbell

A letter addressed to J. G. Deck by B. W. Newton in late 1845 or shortly thereafter is to be found in the Christian Brethren's Archive. In this letter, B. W. Newton (BWN) presents what he calls a "relation of facts" in connection with a controversy that then existed between him and J. N. Darby (JND). Along with the "facts" presented in the letter, BWN discusses the role of elders in making assembly decisions. His remarks on this topic shed light on the controversy and on assembly truth.

In all that follows, remember that the controversy between BWN and JND was multi-faceted. Nevertheless, in late 1845 and for some time later, the most serious doctrinal aspects of the controversy were still hidden and played no part. Also, differences in views on prophecy had been out in the open for some years and are not central to the point we will be looking at here. At least neither BWN nor JND made their differences as to prophecy the ground of their differences on the role of elders in assembly decisions.

In turning to BWN's letter, we first find that he refers often to certain persons in local assemblies. He calls them "fellow laborers," "those who were watching over" the assembly, "those who might be however feebly watching over the saints," "the rulers in the church," "the church's guides," "Soltau and others here, who are watching over the saints," and "local overseers." He links "to reject the counsel" of these with "to disobey." By these expressions, it is pretty clear that BWN refers to those who take the lead and exercise oversight in a local assembly. It is his comments on such persons in responsibility that will be examined below.

BWN writes that a proposal was made that he "would consent to a general meeting of the saints being called, that Mr. Darby should there repeat his accusations, that I should defend myself, and the saints judge." His response to that proposal included the following remarks that bear on our topic:

... we had from the very first strenuously opposed the dissenting method of Church government, that the church was never regarded in scripture as holding the place either of a jury, or of a deliberative assembly, that they could not determine any matter except by voting ... As regards the general question it is very needful to distinguish the various senses in which we use the word "judge." The Church does not judge in the sense in which the House of Commons or a jury determines a question, but it does judge in the sense in which the Chief Justice judges when after the facts have been proved, he pronounces sentence

according to the law, in which sense it is used in 1 Corinthians, the rulers in the church deliberate but the church acts.

Again the church has always a right to ask if it please for information. To inform the church is one thing, to make it a deliberative assembly is another. If the church has confidence in its guides, it may not care to enquire for itself into the facts of each particular case, but it has always a right to demand satisfaction on these points if it please. . . .

The proposal to tell me to come to the bar of the church and there to accuse another before the saints as a deliberative assembly (for this is one of [Sir Alexander] Campbell's proposals) is not only entirely contrary to scripture as regards the proper place of the church, but is the very principle which Popery has adopted to extend its tyranny over individual liberty. . . .

First, let us note that BWN presents no scripture to support his statement that the local church is not a "deliberative body," save a general reference in one place to 1 Cor. But there is a scripture that he could have pressed into his service. Acts 15:6 shows how "the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." Then in Acts 15:22 the whole church joined in the action, having been excluded from the deliberations. Of course, there are no apostles left alive anymore to lend their authority to such a procedure. And most recognize that the book of Acts has a transitional character so that not all things written in it which an apostle and the elders approved were written so that we should do likewise (see Acts 21:18-25). Still, such a passage could, no doubt, have been used by BWN if he had only thought of it.

In the second place, BWN presents no arguments based on propriety and good manners. But he could have added that arguing over objections or discussing various tangential concerns before the whole assembly is improper because babes in Christ and others weak in the faith who might be easily stumbled would be more harmed than helped by a public deliberation before the whole assembly. Confusion and disorder are horrible to contemplate in connection with the assembly of God. So BWN could well have added such arguments as these.

Thirdly, it is unfortunate that BWN could not have appealed also to the authority of the local meeting of overseers or guides at Plymouth. This useful arrangement for minor difficulties and practical matters had lapsed at Plymouth at that time. JND claimed that BWN had systematically caused those who did not agree with him to stop coming to this meeting a few years previously, so a role for it in the troubles at Plymouth would have been a role, perhaps, that came in strongly on BWN's side.

On what grounds, then, does BWN's letter rest?

1. On the necessity of the saints to obey their leaders.
2. On a refusal of the notion of voting in the assembly.

3. On the conclusion that the only role for the assembly as such when gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is to pronounce the sentence previously determined by the elders. In his words, "the rulers in the church deliberate but the church acts."

Now whatever one may think of BWN's course, his understanding of the nature of the assembly and especially of the role of local elders as regards the making of assembly decisions is clearly stated in this short letter of two pages. Unfortunately, not all that JND wrote has the same virtues of clarity and brevity. However, in light of this clear position taken by BWN, JND's writings of 1846 can be scanned (they amount to most of volume 20 of his *Collected Writings*) to find his understanding also of the nature of the church as regards the making of assembly decisions. The papers of *Collected Writings* 20 include many many things not directly relevant to our purpose here. An attempt will be made, however, to display a representative selection of the portions most related to our subject.

Here then are JND's comparable thoughts from the same era:

"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Now the presence of Jesus, though of course in Spirit, implies many associations of heart which His name peculiarly bears, and His authority too as Lord. But when met, the Holy Ghost is the acting power in every ministration which is not mere fleshly worthlessness. . . . The church is the habitation of God through the Spirit. It is by the Holy Ghost God dwells in the church, though He cannot be separated from the Father and the Son. It has been formally, and expressly, denied that the presence of the Holy Ghost should be looked for in the assembly. It has been perhaps affirmed too.

Attention should be paid to the date of this extract from a long paper of JND about the troubles at Plymouth: September, 1846. That is to say, this is evidently and obviously (because of the statements made and their occasion and context) a part of his response to BWN's thoughts on the church as detailed above. Below the implications will be briefly traced in his own words.

First, then, we may note that JND opposes the position of BWN on this issue largely without reference to specific scriptures except Matt. 18:20. For example, there does not seem to be any discussion of Acts 15 in the first 202 pages of this volume of JND's *Collected Writings* (although all these pages take up the troubles at Plymouth). Perhaps, JND did not think of that passage either. Yet he does stress elsewhere in these pages that Paul does not appeal to elders at Corinth, mentioning this fact more than once. This is a powerful appeal to what the scripture teaches by omission. Moreover, later in the same volume 20,

Acts 15 is taken up. In connection with the use of this chapter to support episcopal bishops, JND wrote:

There could not be stronger evidence against an individual superior authority in the churches, against episcopacy, than that which scripture affords. The only semblance of anything of the kind is James at Jerusalem: we find him closing the debate in Acts 15, and saying, "Wherefore my sentence is," etc. . . . We have thus clearly one who had great influence amongst the Jewish Christians, not always a happy one. It led Peter into dissimulation, Paul into the temple, so that his public ministry, as far as scripture goes, was closed. God may have overruled their effects and shown perfect and blessed grace -- assuredly He did; but so it was in fact. But in his history there is no trace of episcopal care.²

From this we may, perhaps, glean how he would have responded to any attempt at using Acts 15 to support BWN's views of the role of elders in church decisions. Acts 15 is, to him, not a "happy" example for the church.

In the second place, JND answers some fleshly thoughts about what might be proper or improper in church meetings for assembly discipline. He wrote:

It may be alleged that young saints are unfit to judge such things. I believe there are many things a young saint would, in these days, judge better than many an old one. But that is not the question. Individuals are not called on to judge as such. The objection brings out a further point -- the denial of the Holy Ghost acting in the body so as to guide it in a common act. And this is the real root of the whole matter.³

Thirdly, JND did not write against the practice of private meetings of elders or guides or overseers, but neither did he claim that such meetings deliberated and that the assembly then pronounced the sentence agreed upon beforehand. On this particular point, more will be said below.

Let us turn then to JND's comments on the three main arguments of BWN that were listed above:

1. On the principle of obedience to elders in the church:

And now as to the circumstances connected with rule and authority. It is alleged that we are radicals, and look for democracy. I trust brethren will seek nothing but the guidance of God's blessed Spirit.⁴

Further, I recognize that guides, elders if you please in principle, can inform and clear up the consciences of a body of Christians. . . . But to impose a verdict which cannot be debated is the most monstrous thing that ever was heard of. It is pure unmasked popery -- the clergy dictating to the conscience of the church, which can only register and give their weight to its decrees. Is the conscience of the church

2. *Collected Writings* 20:308.

3. *Collected Writings* 20:79.

4. *Collected Writings* 20:24-5.

to be disposed of thus by others, be they ever so wise? A thing may be urged on the church, insisted on; let it be that rebuke be given; but it is always to *bring the conscience of the church* up to the right level. This Paul did with Corinth, where, note, elders never appear at all; but he never acts for them without it. "You have proved *yourselves clear* in this matter." This is the principle the apostle goes on. No doubt he could guide and rebuke them too, and tell them that he had judged the case already; but to impose a verdict on their consciences they could not debate, not an apostle even attempts. How could that be proving *themselves* clear? It is monstrous. No one who reads scripture can question, however weak we may be now, that there were guides, leaders, who watched for souls as accountable to do it, men of reputation, and at that time appointed elders. But it is a very different thing to govern, or rule, or guide the church, which is scriptural, and to govern instead of and for the church, which is popish . . . And even so the apostle declares he was as a nursing mother with the saints. And the government of the church is not a setting of points right, but of souls right, and therefore nothing is done unless the conscience of the church is carried into the act.⁵

From this we may conclude that passing the verdict through a meeting of elders or guides or through a brothers' meeting first and subsequently demanding that the church ratify the verdict without deliberation would have surely appeared to JND as just another "monstrous" notion.

2. On the notion of voting in the church:

And now as to the dissenters' principle. . . . the principle here alluded to, I believe should be utterly and entirely rejected, for the same reason that I reject that here proposed, namely, that the presence of the Spirit in the body is not owned by it. Among the dissenters they vote, and though there may be happy unanimity, and the Lord guide them, as I doubt not He often may, yet they do vote on the questions, and a majority determines the matter. Now it is quite evident a minority *may* be the most spiritual. In the case of Corinth all, as far as appears in public, were gone wrong, and allowed, and were puffed up about, evil. A majority, judging *as such*, cannot be said to have the Holy Ghost guiding them, because they are a majority. This is quite manifest. It is a mere human principle, such as the world is obliged to act on, because it has no other way of getting out of its difficulties. But the church of God has. It has the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost. The dissenting principle (for I doubt not in practice they are often guided by the Spirit according to the grace of the gospel), their *principle*, I say, denied this presence and guidance; they acted on another. The brethren believed this guidance of God could be reckoned upon. Hence they denied the necessity of the other human extreme -- the popish one of a clergy settling the matter among themselves, and announcing it publicly, and the church having nothing to do but add its weight by its acts to a decision pronounced by the authority of others, which they were bound to receive implicitly, and as a conclusion arrived at for them, which could not be debated.

The brethren denied the necessity of this alternative. They affirmed that the presence of the Spirit of God was in the church, and that He would guide them in the faithful love of Christ to a right mind; that it might require, especially in the present state of things, patience, humble waiting upon God in the sense of weakness, a working out as in the *absence* of apostolic power, with fear and

trembling; but they believed that it could be because GOD worked in them to will and to do. They did not deny in the least that there were those among them, who through greater spiritual wisdom and maturity could help and guide them in this - it would have been quarrelling with their own mercies; nor would they refuse the help and godly assistance of any brother of spiritual attainments and wisdom from elsewhere -- it would have been resisting the unity of the Spirit and body, and God's authority in the church, and the common comfort of the saints, the increase of God by what every joint supplied. They might not see clearly all at once, and they would have to wait in any given case; but they believed in the faithfulness of the Lord to guide them. Their being obliged to wait might shew them the failure of their own state of conscience in spiritual power and do them good. Now the principle of these Plymouth leaders denies all this. It declares positively and openly here, that this is the alternative, either the dissenting principle of debating, voting, and majorities, or a verdict imposed by the clergy without any debate at all. That is, *they entirely deny the guidance of the body by the Holy Ghost -- His practical presence there* -- the very point as to this, which the brethren were called out of God to bear witness to, alike against the dissenting and popish principles.⁶

3. On the church "acting" without debate:

The guides pass the verdict; the body are to register it without a debate. The judgment of their consciences is in the hands of a self-appointed clergy. I can well suppose this reply to the plain and evident truth of the case: "We do not deny the presence of the Spirit in the body. But, God having put this office into the hands of those who have addicted themselves to the ministry, the proof of the Spirit being in the body is their submission *⁷ to the judgment of those whom God has placed over them. And thus the verdict is the verdict of the body by the Spirit." This is what is claimed (page 12), "This the church does: it debates its verdict, we believe, through those of its members capacitated by God for such service." Now this is exactly popery. The verdict *there* is alleged to be the verdict of the church, and the body are called upon ["required"] to act, and do act, as a body upon it. But it is arrived at by the clergy. It is in vain to say that it is presented, on these new principles, to the body when arrived at, which the Roman clergy do not. Even admitting this, the body cannot debate it. In this particular case, in tea-meetings in private, *⁸ they were allowed to question Mr. Newton. And this is called in to screen the flagrancy of the principle. The exclusive nature of the meetings is too barefaced to call it the action of the church. Were it so, the principle is *wholly abandoned*. The church *question and examine Mr. Newton*; and suppose someone had said, "Well, now we should like to hear the other side too; let us call Mr. Darby, Mr. H., and Mr. R--e, and Mr. S--s." "Oh no," is the answer, "the church cannot hear witnesses, and debate its verdict." Would not any honest man in the world be ashamed to be associated with such a transaction? Would not any spiritual one have revolted against calling such a thing the acting of the church of

6. *Collected Writings* 20:142-144.

7. *I say *submission*, not *accordance*, because if they cannot call it in question, it is idle to call it *accordance*. Paul leads the *body* to act, however decided *he* was, by divine light. . . . And again note, that there is no question of elders in 1 Corinthians at all. Paul addresses himself to the *body*. I doubt not he did it of God, to guard this very point, and shew the conscience of the *body*, the state of that conscience, to be the very point, the real matter in question. . .

8. *. . . They declare positively the church has *itself searched* into it, when the leaders have announced the verdict.

God, as an insult against God Himself? I have been obliged to notice this, because otherwise it would have been alleged that it *was* brought before the saints in the right way. Now, either they were forced to hear one side only, and there was liberty only for that, or they would hear witnesses; and this is what is refused them. Besides, after all, they must not debate their verdict. They must take what is given them. For, supposing that they are dissatisfied with the verdict stated, what can they do? Debate it before they make it theirs? No, this is positively refused. Examine witnesses? No, this is denied them. What then? Submit, or leave. *⁹ The answer will be, "But God is with His church; and He will guide the leaders into a right judgment, and they will only propose clear evident cases." That is, the clergy are not only to be guides but infallible guides, for *they* have come to the conclusion, which is to be taken to be by the leading of God Himself. If the verdict be undebatable, it certainly *ought* to be infallible.

Is debate to be desired then? *¹⁰ It is just this alternative which is denied. The conscience of the church must be satisfied, for it to act for God and before God. If it is not, the conscience of the body is not clear. It may be gracious to do some act not yet done. It may be right, at the suggestion of some, nay, one godly brother, to prosecute the inquiry farther by the persons who originally inquired, as I have seen done at Plymouth. God is in the assembly without having any debate at all. *¹¹ The Holy Ghost may there [in the assembly] suggest some step not yet thought of, the neglect of which would destroy the weight of the judgment, even if a right one. It is specially when speaking of discipline, and looking to the Lord for producing the unity of mind of two or three, that the Lord says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." *¹²

On what grounds, then, did JND stand? On the necessity of the assembly to clear itself by the exercise of its collective conscience as an assembly, on the necessity of the assembly to look to the presence of the Holy Spirit for guidance and power in such action, and on the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst as the authority for the actions of the assembly as such. Let the reader judge.

In conclusion, let us go back to the letter of BWN, with which we began, and listen to his account of the deeds of Sir Alexander Campbell. When BWN refused the proposal that JND's accusation be brought before the whole church as a deliberative body, he explained himself to Sir Alexander Campbell in

9. In fact, . . . not one [of these meetings] took place but led to the secession of some half-dozen persons . . .

10. * The word *debate* is just used as alarming a quiet godly conscientious mind -- innocent in the hands of the leaders where it is assumed to be a godly spiritual weighing of the matter, and implying a discussion in the case of the assembly; but, guides or assembly, the godly weighing together before God what is His will where our conscience is concerned, is *debate* neither in one nor the other.

11. * As a fact, it may be well to notice, that there was a good deal of debate, on subjects involving a mixture of discipline and principle, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles -- debate which Paul (for so God ordered it for larger purposes of His wisdom and grace) himself could not terminate.

12. *Collected Writings* 20:144-146 www.presenttruthpublishers.com

person and the letter quoted above gives the substance of that very same conversation. They were interrupted at the end of BWN's explanation of his understanding of church truth and the role of elders in assembly discipline, but the next day they met again in the presence of Lord Congleton. The letter reads that the conversation continued then:

"by Campbell's saying that although he did not concur with Darby in his charges yet that he should withdraw on the ground of differing from us as to the mode of church government."

Think of that! He did not agree with Darby's accusation. So it was not matters of conduct or of who-said-what or who-did-what or what-procedure-is-proper that moved him. No, but he was going to withdraw from fellowship with BWN on ecclesiastical grounds, on the question of the "mode of church government." Is it really going too far to say that Sir Alexander Campbell must have felt that the two views of the role of elders in assembly decisions set forth above were sufficiently different so that one could not with a good conscience remain in fellowship with both? could not stay in fellowship with one while convinced that the other was correct?

Of course, he could have meant more by his words than is evident to us on the surface of BWN's report. There could have been other facts that weighed on his mind. But I do not really think so (although some other facets of the controversy may have tended to the same practical result). And he himself said that his decision to withdraw was made *in spite of the fact that he expressly did not concur with JND's other charges*. What were these other charges? "He was accused, to state it in few words, of clericalism, sectarianism, and untruth." *Collected Writings* 20:160) So Sir Alexander Campbell did not have to wait to see if BWN were guilty of these other (serious) charges before he decided to withdraw: the very ground taken by BWN in the letter quoted above was sufficient for him *apart from the other evils JND asserted were allowed at Plymouth* because, no doubt, *the issue of the role of elders in the making of assembly decisions in matters of discipline displays the very ground upon which an assembly is standing*. And he *did* withdraw from fellowship with BWN! JND wrote:

Sir A. C. . . . did not break bread any longer.¹³

Of course, this interpretation depends on our taking BWN's testimony about Sir Alexander Campbell's words at face value. Still, if we believe him, then we may conclude that Sir Alexander Campbell has left us a good example.

Dennis P. Ryan, 1992

13. *Collected Writings* 20:135, first published in Dec. 1846 or shortly thereafter.

Extract of a Letter Regarding Divorce

Dear brother,

... I have been much exercised about your marital circumstances since visiting with you again. What I have to offer may not be new, but it may bear repeating, if our Lord Jesus sees fit to use it for your blessing. I trust you will not feel I am being contentious with you, as that is the furthest from my thought.

In Matthew 5, 19, and Mark 10, we find God's view of the marriage relationship. First of all, it is an institution of God, and therefore not to be put asunder. We see also, from Romans 7 that death breaks the tie, and in Matt., fornication also breaks the tie. Thirdly, the man who puts away his wife by divorcement, and marries another, is guilty of adultery. As well, he causes his wife to commit adultery by putting her away if she be to another. He who marries her also commits adultery. It may not even go so far as marriage in these cases; the act of coming together (fornication) produces adultery. Now this is quite plainly from these scriptures **GOD'S VIEW**. Now man has over the years developed **MAN'S VIEW** of all this, and now divorce is accepted, and remarriage as well, for the most insignificant reasons (incompatibility being one). Yet, if a man puts away his wife, or she him, because of incompatibility, he is breaking the tie according to **MAN'S VIEW** and **MAN'S LAW**, but **NOT** according to **GOD'S VIEW!!** Only death or fornication can break the tie. This is not my thought, but plainly written in the four scriptures above.

In the faithful ministry of those who have gone before us, it has been made plain that when the laws of the land take a lower moral position than God's Word, we must obey God rather than man. It has only been in very recent years that the laws of the land have looked favorably on divorce for any reason, clearly showing degeneration as in all else in this world. We cannot afford to take a lower moral standard than **GOD'S VIEW!**

So in view of your situation, your wife divorced you, but that did not break the tie in **GOD'S VIEW**, as long as your wife has not come together with another man. Sadly, as you know, you in effect broke the tie by fornication with another. Of course, since then in confessing this, you expressed the desire to get right with your wife. It certainly is not outside of **GOD'S VIEW**, for the Christian to retrace his steps, and be restored in this way, especially if his partner has not been unfaithful, and he has judged a sinful action. So what I am saying is that, though in **MAN'S VIEW** and according to **MAN'S LAW**, you and your wife are divorced and the marriage tie broken; in **GOD'S VIEW** (and

according to His much higher moral standard), your wife did not break the marriage tie by divorcing you. Unless you want to say that you broke it by fornicating. If so, by the confession of your failure and sin in that, could you honestly consider yourself free to marry another according to GOD'S VIEW?!

Also, I believe, it is clear from these scriptures that God does not contradict Himself or lower the standard for Christians by allowing desertion [without fornication] as a means of breaking the tie (1 Corinthians 7), or for remarriage. . . . it **LOWERS GOD'S STANDARD**. God does not set a standard for His people lower than what He has set for yet unsaved mankind. These things may seem hard, and I may have written plainly, but I can assure you that it has not been without earnest love and care for your spiritual blessing and happiness. If you have anything to add or question, please do not be afraid to say so. . . .

Yours by grace,

Larry Newton

Stated, but not Exclusive, Ministry and Restraining Ministerial Flesh

Introduction

Observe that footnotes in brackets, [like this], are explanatory footnotes by the editor, for quoted material.

During the 1800s brethren gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ held that **Christian ministry is the exercise of gift**. Each Christian has one or more gifts. (In the first century some of these gifts were sign-gifts (not among Christians now) and others were not. Among the gifts that were not sign-gifts, some were gifts of public utterance and others were not). The gifts of public utterance (for ministry of the Word of God) are given to relatively few of the Lord's people.¹ The use of gifts for public utterance were referred to

1. "Ministry in the word is . . . the exercise of a gift in subservience to the glory of the Lord Jesus. It is consequently the calling of a few for the good of the many -- of all" (*The Bible Treasury* 7:175).

as a 'stated, but not exclusive, ministry.' Acts 13 illustrates what this means, as we shall see below. The "ruin of the church," a truth also held by these brethren, did not mean that there is a ruin of ministry. These brethren did not hold that though there was such a ministry at the beginning of the church's history, that because the church was now in ruins, there is no longer a 'stated, but not exclusive, ministry,' in the 1800s (or, in the 1900s).

What is Stated, but not Exclusive, Ministry?

Regarding the bearing of Acts 13:1 on the subject of ministry, W. Kelly wrote:

"And there were in the church" (or assembly) "that was at Antioch [certain] prophets and teachers." What is commonly called a stated ministry was there. All should give full weight to facts which if denied or overlooked would only weaken the testimony which God has given.²

It is the continual effort of those who oppose the truth of the church, and who deny the present ruined condition of it, to insinuate against such as have learnt from God to act on His own word, that they set aside ministry, and more particularly what they call "stated ministry." They do nothing of the kind. They deny an "exclusive or one man ministry. . ."³

But it is important to affirm that none understand the action of the Spirit who expose themselves and the truth (which is still more serious) to the deserved stigma of denying the real abiding-place of ministry. This is in no wise the question. All Christians who have light from God on these matters acknowledge ministry to be a divine and permanent institution. It is therefore of very great importance to have scriptural views of its source, functions, and limits. The truth of scripture, if summed up as to its character, amounts to this -- that ministry is the exercise of a spiritual gift. This I believe to be the true definition of it.⁴

J. N. Darby wrote:

And let it be here remembered, that stated ministry has never been denied, but always in exercise amongst us -- always owned in principle. In half or more of the services, one who has gift has exercised his gift on his responsibility to Christ. This is known to every one. And for my own part I recognize it fully, be it one or two, if they agree together to do it. The teachers have waited on their teaching. It is an utter untruth or sheer prejudice to deny or lose sight of this. It is only in the meetings for worship, when the saints assembled as such, that this has not been the case. The profit of a stated ministry, all that is true in a one man ministry, has been in the fullest exercise among those called brethren.

2. [I suggest that this sentence is a warning that to deny or overlook this teaching will weaken . . .].

3. [Thus, when Silas, a gifted man in ministry of the Word, came to Antioch, he took his place among those there who were stated to be prophets and teachers].

4. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of Acts, the Catholic Epistles, and the Revelation*, London: Broom, pp. 90, 91 (1869). See also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 3:281, 282.

In their worship they have not sought sermons, but the presence of God -- the accomplishment of that promise, that where two or three are gathered together in His name, He will be in the midst of them. I avow I do not go there to hear a sermon; nor do I like to hear one. I go to worship, to find the Lord, and worship Him. And I judge that if brethren are become incapable of enjoying this, it is a very bad sign. I do *not* go with my ears there to hear man, however gifted, but to worship God; and I beg to press this on brethren. I feel thankful if any one be led of God (I trust we may be forgiven for still thinking this possible, in spite of the efforts to rob us of it), to give a word of exhortation or comfort. I know that the flesh has abused this, forgetting the word "*swift* to hear, *slow* to speak" -- "my brethren, be not many teachers." But I add, *most decidedly* that, though I have seen liberty used for license (and "*where* the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"), I have found where God was owned incomparably more of His presence and blessing than where man's arrangements have taken the place of God. There might be evils to deplore and to correct; but there was God to enjoy, because God was owned. Elsewhere I have found decent things of man, a fair show in the flesh, but a sepulchre. The God I found my delight in was not there. For even God's grace or gift in teaching is a wholly different thing from God's presence in the way of worship. But I add that, where in worship this latter is slighted, I never found even the former. It is written, "*Cursed* is the man who putteth his trust in man." Correct the evils, brethren; but let us not disown God nor His goodness. If you cannot know His presence in worship, nor what the blessing of this is, humble yourselves. You have suffered great loss, you have spiritually declined. Forgive me! But if (which I cannot believe, for I at any rate have found it among you) you have forgotten this joy -- pardon me here also -- I, poor as I am, and I feel this unfeignedly, I have not forgotten it. I shall, with His grace, continue to trust Him.⁵

A few quotations from some brethren of the last century may be helpful in seeing the view that they took of this matter, according to Scripture.

Neither a humanly-appointed nor a self-appointed ministry will ever suit within the hallowed precincts of the Church of God. All must be divinely gifted, divinely taught, and divinely sent.⁶

I define Christian ministry, then, to be, according to the Word of God, the exercise of a spiritual gift. Ministry in the word is the exercise of a gift which has the word for its subject-matter

Ministry means far more than a Christian speaking truly on scripture; it is the exercise of a positive gift from Christ

There may be flesh in both ways -- the vanity of coming forward, and the pride that shrinks from being thought vain. Both are wrong.

But it may be asked, "May not believers be mistaken?" Certainly; but where simply gathered to the name of the Lord, and instructed in the word of God, it is rather a critical experiment for an individual to get up and minister. Vanity and pride may be found everywhere, and are always evil; but assuredly of all places it is hardest to speak where the word of God is really weighed and

5. *Collected Writings* 3:353-355.

6. C. H. Mackintosh

intelligently applied. He who has not something from God is pretty sure to be found out there; and, if there is Christian plain dealing in love, he is sure to be discouraged⁷

. . . nobody among us holds that all are teachers or preachers, or any save those whom the Lord gives and sends.⁸

It is not a question of ministry, nor even of what people call "stated ministry." Who doubts stated ministry? At the same time who can deny that God uses servants of His who are not stated? I believe that He maintains His own title in the church of God to raise a man up to say a word, and it may be an important word, who might not be called on to speak again, -- only used for a particular purpose.⁹

Such is a far cry from an every man ministry and the idea that all persons in an assembly may prophesy in the assembly, founded on a misuse of 1 Cor. 14. The following is cited from the excellent paper by W. Trotter, *Five Letters on Worship and Ministry in the Spirit*, pp. 8, 9.¹⁰ W. Trotter is here actually quoting from, and endorsing, an earlier paper by G. V. Wigram.

E. I have heard that you assert that every brother is competent to teach in the assembly of the saints.

W. If I did so, I should deny the Holy Ghost. No one is competent to do this who has not received gift from God for this very purpose.

E. Well, but you believe that every brother in the assembly of the saints has a right to speak, if he is able.

W. Indeed I do not. I deny the right to any one, save God the Holy Ghost. A man may in nature be very able to speak, and to speak well, but if he cannot 'please his neighbor for good to edification,' the Holy Ghost has not fitted him to speak, and he is dishonoring God his Father, grieving the Spirit, and undervaluing Christ's church, if he does speak; and is showing moreover, his own self-will.

E. Well, what is the peculiarity which you do hold?

W. You may think it peculiar to me, perhaps, to believe, that as the church belongs to Christ, He has, in order that its attention may not be wrongly directed and its time mis-spent in listening to that which is not profitable (pretty as it may be), given gifts to it, by which alone it is to be edified and ruled.

E. No. I admit to that, and only wish that there were a little more coveting of

7. W. Kelly in *Christian Ministry*.

8. W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 9:96.

9. W. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to Acts, The Catholic Epistles and the Revelation*, p. 317.

10. In *The Bible Treasury*, Feb. 1858, edited by W. Kelly, the following commendation of W. Trotter's paper appeared:

It is with great pleasure that we recommend to our readers this plain, sound, and seasonable tract www.presenttruthpublishers.com

such gifts from God, and more caution to put a stop to the use of every other means, however accredited by human power or eloquence.

W. I hold also that the Holy Ghost gives gifts to whom He pleases, and also what gifts He pleases. And that the saints ought so to be united together, as that the gift of one brother should never make the exercise of the real gift of another irregular, and that there should be an open door for the little as well as the great gifts.

E. That is a matter of course.

W. Not so; for neither in the Church of England, nor in Dissent, do I find 1 Corinthians 14 acted upon. Moreover, I assert that no gift from God has to wait for a sanction from the church ere it is used. If it is of God, He will accredit it, and the saints recognize its value.

E. Do you admit a regular ministry?

W. If by a regular ministry you mean a stated ministry (that is, that in every assembly those who are gifted of God to speak to edification will be both limited in number and known to the rest), I do admit it; but if by a regular ministry you mean an exclusive ministry, I dissent. By an exclusive ministry I mean the recognizing certain persons as so exclusively holding the place of teachers, as that the use of a real gift by any one else would be irregular, as, for instance, in the Church of England, and in most dissenting chapels, a service would be felt to be irregular which had been made up by two or three persons really gifted by the Holy Ghost.

E. On what do you build this distinction?

W. From Acts 13:1, I see that at Antioch there were but five whom the Holy Ghost recognized as teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul. Doubtless, at all the meetings it was only these five, one or more of them, who were expected by the saints to speak. This was stated ministry. But it was not an exclusive ministry: for when Judas and Silas came (chap. 15:32), they were pleased to take their place among the others, and then the recognized teachers were more numerous.

E. And what connection would this have with the giving out of a Psalm, *etc.*, or with praying, or reading a portion of scripture?

W. These would fall like the rest entirely under the Holy Ghost's direction. Alas for the man whose selfwill chose to give out a hymn, or to pray, or read a scripture, without the guidance of the Spirit! In doing these things in the assembly of the saints, he is professing to be moved and guided by the Holy Ghost; and to profess this where it is not true is very presumptuous. If the saints know what communion is, they will know how very difficult it is to lead the congregation in prayer and singing. To address God in the name of the assembly, or to suggest to it a hymn as the vehicle for the expression of its real state to God, requires great discernment, or else a most immediate guidance from God.

W. Kelly exhorted:

... let him remember, *he is wholly mistaken in supposing that we consider all Christians to be ministers in the word.* It is a few in the Church who are thus

gifted for the edification of the many.¹¹

No Such Thing as Prophets for the Occasion

The notion of a prophet for the occasion, an abuse of the order given 1 Cor. 14, is a violation of the whole subject of gifts. God does not give 'come and go gifts,'¹² here this meeting, gone the next meeting, and come again the one after. Christian ministry is the exercise of gift.

I suggest that W. Kelly would label the notion of 'prophets for the occasion'¹³ with the word "folly." What the notion does is violate the truth of stated ministry and make of the prophets of 1 Cor. 14 something different than the prophets of 1 Cor. 12. Here is what W. Kelly said about that:

In coming to chapter 14, then, we have not the principle (that we have in ch. 12) nor the spring of power as in ch. 13, but the practice, the application, of the great truth. It is true -- and I make the remark because I have seen it objected to not very long ago -- that we hear little about gifts in chapter 14. The reason is because God supposes that we have read chapter 12. He does not write the word to save people trouble, nor is it written in texts; by which the scriptures are divorced, and their strength in connection destroyed . . .

In Chapter 14 the gifts, of which the apostle had been speaking in chapter 12, are supposed. To argue as unbelief does, as if there were nothing in ch. 14 of the same nature as in ch. 12 is mere folly.¹⁴

The prophets of 1 Cor. 14 refer to the prophets of 1 Cor. 12. W. Kelly wrote:

As to the fullest ordering of the assembly in scripture, it is found in 1 Corinthians 14, as grounded on 1 Corinthians 12.¹⁵

R. Holden wrote:

. . . on any given Lord's-day there might be present in the midst a dozen other divinely-gifted persons, through any of whom it might be the Spirit's wish to

11. The "Brethren," Jersey: Tract Depot, p. 26.

12. This, of course, does not preclude God withdrawing a gift from a person in connection with his governmental, disciplinary ways.

13. It is possible that God would extraordinarily use a man once, no doubt for much needed rebuke, just as God could use even Balaam's ass, if He so sees fit, but obviously this is not what is under discussion here.

14. *The Action of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, p. 38, 39 (1984 reprint). www.presenttruthpublishers.com

15. *The Bible Treasury* 10:350. See also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 3:336, 337.

edify the flock of God¹⁶

J. N. Darby said:

We have the doctrine in chapter 12, and the exercise of gifts in chapter 14.¹⁷

I believe, if we were to act on I Corinthians 12, 14, farther than power exists to verify it, we would make a mess.¹⁸

A mess? I suggest that ultimately that is just what the notion of "prophets for the occasion" must lead to. Such a notion is, in fact and reality (even if unintentionally), a denial of ministry by gift. J. N. Darby did not hold the notion of "prophets for the occasion." Of course not! That notion is clean contrary to a stated, but not exclusive, ministry. At any rate, JND wrote:

Only two of three prophets were to speak in the assembly; there might be twenty that had gifts in it, but the order of the assembly was for men: for women it was to hold their tongues. The possession of a gift by a man did not warrant their breaking the rule laid down by the apostle¹⁹

The notion of "prophets for the occasion" amounts to the idea that all males in an assembly are prophets at different occasions. Another wrote:

Many men now, and sometimes women, having merely ability and readiness to convey their impressions, assume to and undertake to declare the gospel and the word of God. Now while heartily I should say, "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" yet I feel that we must not lose sight of the solemn and holy business and calling of a "minister of Christ." If a man is assured that the Lord has entrusted to him a commission to preach or to teach, then he is bound to fulfil this ministry. And if this be the case, he will not only be assured himself, but the spiritual (those whose judgment is of any weight), will be able to recognize the gift of the Lord in him²⁰

It is obvious that only those that had the *gift* for it were to speak. J. N. Darby wrote:

The prophets were to speak two or three, and the others judge; if they had not the gifts, of course they were to be silent²¹

16. *Ministry of the Word, Eldership, and the Lord's Supper*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, p. 16.

17. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 26:286.

18. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:95.

19. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:330.

20. "Is Every One a Preacher?" *A Voice to the Faithful* 1:178 (1867).

21. "What the Christian has amid the Ruin of the Church," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 3:289.

1 Cor. 14:29 is not the definition of stated ministry. It is, however, a part of it. Teachers are part of stated ministry also (Acts 13:1).

And what about those who spoke in tongues and those who interpreted? Moreover, 1 Cor. 14:29 is ripped out of its context in chapter 14 when it is made to mean prophets for the occasion. Consider that there is no such thing as a 'come and go' gift of tongues; i. e., a gift of tongues for the occasion only. It was a gift noted in 1 Cor. 12. Besides that, those who spoke in tongues were to be silent if no interpreter was present (1 Cor. 14:28). Interpreters were recognized persons; stated persons, if you will. The saints knew who they were. There was no 'come and go' gift of interpretation; i. e., a gift of interpretation for the occasion only -- which is expressly contradicted by 1 Cor. 14:27,28.

This false notion also makes the prophet of chapter 14 different than the prophet of chapter 12. As W. Kelly remarked, you are expected to read ch. 12 before you come to ch. 14.

Moreover, the false notion is fostering 'ministry' which is not by actual gift and therefore is not Christian ministry. What is it, therefore? Why has there been generated this setting aside of stated ministry? What is the reason this is being fostered? And, why would not this sanctioned disorder, of which God is not the author, foster a fleshly state; and the fleshly state more disorderly 'ministry'?

Note that putting forward a doctrine about "prophets for the occasion" is really a repudiation of the recovered truth about 'stated, but not exclusive, ministry.'

Observe that 1 Cor. 14:31 does not mean that "ye can ALL [males] prophesy." Rather, it is a corrective instruction to the prophets who were cutting off one another and/or speaking at the same time as another prophet. Ye [prophets of vv. 29,30] may all prophesy ONE BY ONE. (For more on this I refer the reader to my *The Word of God Versus the Charismatic Renewal*, which contains a lengthy verse by verse exposition of 1 Cor. 14, along with many quotations on the subject of ministry.)

Ministry -- and the Ruin of the Church

Brethren held the truth that the church was in ruins, and wrote the things quoted above while recognizing the ruin, but said that ministry is a divine and permanent institution. There are places where practice has changed and a

doctrine has been generated to sanction it. The flesh has ever increasingly been allowed in practice; and it surely follows that it would be increasingly allowed in "ministry" until that which is not Christian ministry is tolerated. Indeed, not only is it tolerated, but, as in the case where the doctrine of the Nicolaitenes (Rev. 2:15) followed the practice of the works (Rev. 2:6), so it must needs be that where ministerial flesh is tolerated, it will become protected by changing the teachings once believed and practiced. In connection with such a state, even the teaching regarding the ruin of the church will be tampered with in order to tolerate ministerial flesh. For example, it may be said that there is also a ruin of ministry.

I do not accept such a notion as 'the ruin of ministry' or 'ministerial ruin.' Such notions are gotten up for some unscriptural, and unfaithful, objective. In reality, even if with no such conscious intent, it makes provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. The fleshly state, visited with fleshly ministry, makes excuses for such ministry, and this reciprocally fosters an even worse, fleshly state.

Regarding the bearing of the ruin of the church upon ministry, W. Kelly wrote:

I thoroughly hold ministry to be a divine institution, and I do not believe that the ruined state of the church touches ministry in the smallest degree. There are persons over us in the Lord, but the moment you touch the source of ministry, that moment you separate ministry from the principles of the word of God. Now I believe that both the church and ministry are divine institutions, but in order to preserve their divine characters they must be regulated by the word of God and not by men's new inventions and shifting ideas.²²

The more we have the sense of the ruin of the Church, the fuller our confidence that God's principles always remain intact and as obligatory as on the day of Pentecost . . .

But exclusive ministry, I am bold to say, is an interference with the rights of Christ and with the action of the Holy Ghost. God has caused to be felt in these last days the ruin of the church more than at any epoch known to me in its past history; but He has also made souls learn and feel that no ruin of the Church destroys a divine principle. What was the truth for the Church is the truth for him who believes. The original principle of ministry ever abides the only principle which He sanctions or we ought to follow.²³

Such notions as coupling some kind of alleged 'ruin of ministry' or 'ministerial ruin' with the truth of the ruin of the church, appear to me to be an effort to excuse and/or palliate the toleration of ministerial flesh instead of faithfully disciplining it.

22. *Jeremiah* . . . , London: Hammond, pp. 30, 31 (1938 reprint).

23. *Lectures on . . . Ephesians*, London: Morrish, pp. 206, 207, n. d.
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Persons abusing ministry is not 'ministerial ruin'; it is ministerial flesh. The ruin of the church is a corporate matter and there can be no restoration to the unruined condition. Ministry did not undergo a ruin. There simply is no such a thing as a ruin of ministry that parallels the ruin of the church. Ministry is a question of gift, which is an individual matter.

We should pause to observe, however, that the state of an assembly may affect what it receives in ministry.²⁴ J. N. Darby wrote:

There [in the epistle to the Corinthians] the Spirit is looked at as present, and operating in the body generally, in the power of *God*, "as God has set in the church" -- witness of, and subservient to, the Lordship of Christ, and therefore including that in which it was the witness of this to the world; and therefore the gift in its exercise is dependent in many respects on the competency of the Church by its state to stand as a witness, or the wisdom of God in so using it.²⁵

The state to which he refers was the fleshly state at Corinth, before the ruin of the church. Why, of course the state of an assembly can have an affect upon the ministry it receives; and the carnal Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:1) had plenty of flesh active in ministry, in the assembly (1 Cor 14). But it was not a 'ministerial ruin' due to the ruin of the church, which ruin of the church had not yet occurred when Paul wrote to the Corinthians. A Corinthian state can be present at any time in history, and the effect of that state on ministry can be felt. And what is the answer? Is the answer toleration of it, because the church is in ruins? Has God taught us about the ruin of the church for the purpose of supplying us with a basis on which to tolerate the flesh? -- to refuse the Scripture teaching of stated, but not exclusive, ministry? -- to teach that the prophets of 1 Cor. 14 are come-and-go prophets? -- that the tongue speakers and interpreters were come-and-go gifts?

Read the following very carefully:

Many have left efficient ministry in system, in obedience to the Word as to the gathering of the saints, and the sovereignty of the Spirit; it is hardly to be expected they should be satisfied with worse, however under the deprivation of any. There is then ministry, and that of the Word, and all are not gifted for it. If it is confined to few, when we may safely be trusted with more we shall have it. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest."²⁶

The reader needs to be alert to the fact that what underlies the false views on ministry that we are reviewing is a willingness to adjust the truth to make

24. Smallness of a particular gift, or lack of gift, is not ruin of gifts concomitant with, or paralleling, the ruin of the church, which is something gotten up so as not to deal with our state.

25. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:135.

26. *The Present Testimony* 4:137 (1853).

provision for going on with, for tolerating, ministerial flesh -- which answers to a fleshly state -- which generates more fleshly ministry.

The reader should be alert to the fact that the false views amount to a repudiation of the teachings given during the 1800s concerning stated, but not exclusive, ministry. They alter the truth about ministry. But those who do this do not want to acknowledge that fact. They prefer to put a false construction on what has been taught about these things. "Ruin" was used by some during the 1800s also to circumvent order, but the faithful then resisted that abuse. J. N. Darby was among those that resisted the false use of ruin:

Ruin has nothing to do with duty, except as it may incapacitate me, as a matter of fact, from carrying it out. No failure alters the character of responsibility, though the Lord may in mercy say, He will be satisfied, if we but act up to what we have got. But no direction of Scripture becomes invalid by reason of the state of ruin. The directions touching "tongues" are applicable as much as ever, only we cannot apply them because there are no gifts of tongues now.²⁷

Some supporters of Bethesda denied the ruin while others used the teaching to foster allowance of unholiness and the flesh. W. H. Dorman testified:

There was a time when brethren acknowledged the power of the Lord in bringing them together; and, in their association, rejoiced in His holy presence with them. Their whole souls would have shrunk from the thought of connecting with that presence anything that was evil in doctrine, or immoral in practice. They would have feared thus to grieve God's Holy Spirit; -- their present Guide and Comforter. It was never dreamt that "the ruin of the church" was to bind the allowance of evil upon their consciences; or that it took from them the power to disallow whatever was contrary to holiness and the honor of Christ.²⁸

A. C. Ord wrote:

It is a wretched plea, that the ruin of the Church is a reason for submission to evil, and subversive of all moral principle and sense of what is due to Christ.²⁹

Restraining Ministerial flesh

It is clear that these writers rejected an every man ministry as strongly as they opposed the "exclusive ministry" of the clergy system. They held no such idea that 1 Cor. 14 indicates an every man ministry or that it contemplates "prophets for the occasion." Following the order regarding 'stated, but not exclusive, ministry' would relieve saints of ministry that God does not send -- even in

27. *Notes and Comments*, p. 360.

28. *A Review of Certain evils & Questions* . . . , p. 16 (1849).

29. *Is There Not a Cause?*, p. 18, n. d.

cases where nothing unscriptural might be said. Ministerial flesh should be restrained.

And here I begin by admitting that what is called open ministry [1 Cor. 14] has given occasion to the flesh. But I do not think the remedy for it is to deny the presence and operation of the Spirit of God . . . And I will add further that, while I admit that the flesh has taken occasion from spiritual liberty to take license to itself (as God has warned us it would), and while I think that flesh acting thus ought, as in every other case, to be judged by the Church if the individual does not judge it for himself³⁰

Men of spiritual intelligence in scripture . . . assume no authority to interdict, unless error or other evil should draw out open rebuke or even more.³¹

With regards to speaking, I am quite clear those who speak error ought to be stopped, and those, who speak merely from the suggestion of the flesh, ought to be first warned of it. Anyone may do it in love, but those who guide may, if it be needed, take it up, and that *for their own sakes* who have done it; and if there were habitual unprofitable speaking, I think it ought to be stopped . . . I desire the fullest liberty for the Spirit, but not the least for the flesh. . .

On the other hand, I am very jealous of meddling, merely because there is not the same refinement, or people being puffed up for one against another; that is just the flesh in another shape. The poor often get profit, where a refined ear would be offended. It is a holy loving wisdom which must order this. In [cases] of error, the act should be prompt, in cases of profit, patient. But I must say I have not the least idea of subjecting myself to the self-will of another's notion, that he is to speak when he cannot profit the church. I should take the liberty of going away in such an extreme case, and try the question summarily if driven to it. I never knew the Lord desert me, or rather the act of obedience to His own will. In such a case, I have no right to wrong the whole church of God, making them unhappy, and *hindering the gathering of the saints*, to humor the flesh of any.³²

As to the second point, that of teaching meetings, if I remember, the same difficulty had occurred before, but it appears to me the matter is very simple. I scarcely understand the difficulty, as it seems to me to deny the exercise of a gift, which I am bound to exercise according to my responsibility to Christ. As to the circumstances of its exercise, they are comparatively immaterial. That one teach, or that more than one take part if united in work, is a matter for them to judge of, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Paul and Barnabas assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. He who has the gift of teaching is responsible to Christ for the exercise of his gift; it may be exercised in private; in the meeting together of brethren, if so led, on the Lord's day; or he may assemble them to teach them if he has the capacity for it, for he is acting then on the responsibility which lies on him to trade with his talent. That this should be done with the concurrence and in the unity of the brethren, is natural where charity exists, and desirable: but if one has a gift of teaching, one is

30. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 3:319.

31. *The Bible Treasury* 14:299. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

32. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:30.

accountable for its exercise in charity where it can be blessing to the church. Only, if in the assembly he act in the flesh, that, not his gift, is a subject of discipline -- as when tongues were used for vain glory. It is a question of edifying. Charity uses a gift for edifying, but charity is bound to use the gift for edifying. Besides, if there are brethren who in conscience do not approve of it, their path is easy, not to sanction it by their presence; but they ought not to make their conscience or scruple the law of others' conduct, where it is matter of spiritual judgment.³³

The reader who is interested in pursuing further the subject of ministry (and why not?) would find more in the following publications of Present Truth Publishers:

A Few thoughts on Ministry in the Assembly, or, The Lord's Messenger and the Lord's Message.

The Word of God Versus the "Charismatic Renewal" which contains a verse by verse exposition of 1 Cor. 14.

Some Considerations Concerning the Subject of Ministry in the Assembly and "Reading Meetings."

W. Kelly, *The Action of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly.*

R. Holden, *Ministry of the Word, Eldership, and the Lord's Supper.*

Ed.

Truth and Worldliness?

What use is full doctrine, blessed as it is, if the saints walk [as if] full truth and worldliness can go together? It is worse than nothing.³⁴

What I dread is the world slipping in. What use are they if it does? Very full truth compatible with worldliness -- that is a poor testimony, and cannot last. God will not allow it.³⁵

33. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:57.

34. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:400.

35. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:423.

[Following is a report by the editor of, let us say, a 'conservative' Open Brethren periodical, Milk & Honey, Mar. 1993. I also draw attention to the fact that the editor of *Interest*, the character of which may be gleaned from the critique below, has recently published a 'history' called *Family Matters*, which, among other things, is a non-disguised slamming of J. N. Darby.³⁶]

From A Different Perspective

There is a high probability that by the time you read this article, *INTEREST* magazine will have given a glowing report on the recent Decade of Promise conference. It will no doubt be filled with many reports and pictures, maybe even showing some of the few conservative brethren who attended.

The magazine will probably speak of the 1,600 people who attended the conference, and about the wonderful time that was had by all. However, there will be a number of things they will most likely not report. Among these will be --

Interest Ministries subsidized the expenses of many who attended.

The four-day conference cost over \$1,000,000.

People were literally dancing in the aisles during a concert by Ken Medema.

Remarks which belittled "Brethren traditions" were frequently made.

Benny Hinn's book, *The Anointing*, was among the books sold at the conference.

(Saying it mildly, Hinn is an extremely charismatic preacher in Orlando, FL.)

The Lord's Supper was "shared" at the end of the "Arkansas banquet."

In one comedy routine it was announced that "Madonna would be signing her new book at the author's autograph table."

Speakers made comments such as;

"Priesthood is a myth in the assemblies."

"If your church is going to stress worship, you need the right musicians."

"It's good to be here for the beginning of the Charismatic Brethren Movement."

"Dispensationalism gives us a double whammy;

we are reading someone else's mail in the Old Testament and we neglect the words of Christ who is supposed to be our center."

"We need 'Power Encounters' (Healing, demonic deliverance, etc.) to demonstrate the Gospel to pagan cultures."

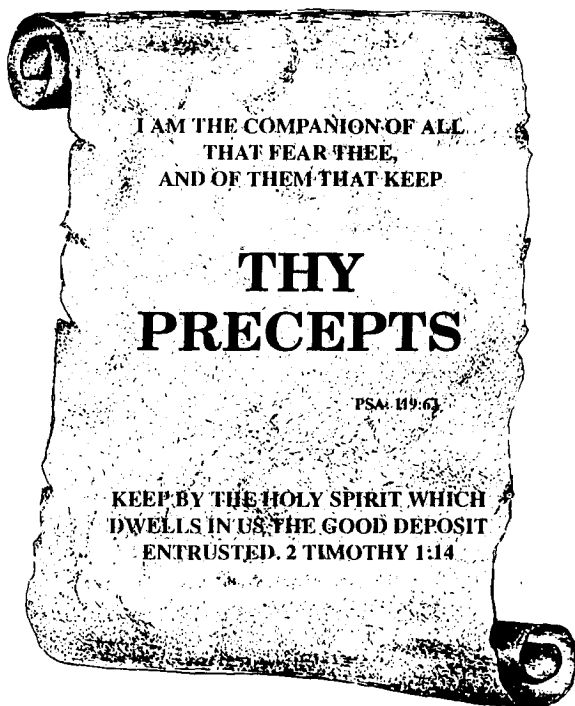
May the Lord give us the strength to stand against a bold, ecumenical, and charismatic movement which is determined to force itself into the assemblies

Editor

36. The reader will find much corrective help in *Precious Truths Revived and Recovered* thru J. N. Darby. (See add on p. 65.)

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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

Did the Incarnation Dissolve on the Cross?

If Christ did not have a human soul and spirit, it follows that when He on the cross dismissed His spirit, He "dismissed Himself," i. e., the deity left the body; and that means that the incarnation dissolved. The truth is that He had a human soul and spirit, which remained united to the deity while His body lay in death. Along with other blasphemous doctrines, F. E. Raven taught that the deity was the spirit in the person of Christ. He was followed in this by J. B. Stoney, C. A. Coates and James Taylor, Sr., etc., as we shall see.

W. Kelly rightly said of F. E. Raven:

This man's mission is not from the Holy Spirit, but from an opposing and evil spirit to seduce unwary souls from the truth they once seemed to enjoy into a whirlpool of confusion and corrupting error.¹

FER's teaching concerning the incarnation, W. Kelly rightly denounced as Apollinarian.²

1. *F. E. R. Heterodox*, London: T. Weston, 1902, p. 43.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 124. The doctrine may be summarized as follows:

Apollinaris at first asserted that the Logos united with a human body only. Afterwards he modified this, by asserting that He united with a body and an irrational soul . . . Apollinaris, from the account given of him by Gregory of Nyssa (*Adv. Apollinarem*) seems to have blended and confused the human and divine natures even in the Godhead; for he asserted a human element in the divine essence itself. (W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, vol. 2A, p. 312).

A creed called the Chalcedonian creed was issued in 451 A.D. by the Council of Chalcedon in response to a number of attacks on the Person of Christ. Apart from the use of the phrase "Mother of God" it is sound.

With the followers of Apollinaris, called Apollinarians, in view, this creed stated:

Perfect in Deity and perfect in Humanity, Truly God and truly Man,
Of a rational soul and body,
Consubstantial with the Father according to His Deity,
Consubstantial with us according to his Humanity, Like us in all respects, apart from sin .
...

The expression, "Of a rational soul" (those who consider man to be tri-partite, and rightly so, www.presenttruthpublishers.com (continued...))

FER's Apollinarian doctrine was enunciated in a paper titled, "The Person of the Christ," printed in June 1889, one year before Bexhill acted in June 1890 to separate from Greenwich, which was sheltering FER. In this paper he said:

The second error maintains that the truth of Christ's Person consists in the union in Him of God and man . . . The idea of the unity of the Person in the sense asserted is not found. It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.

He is here arguing against the orthodox statement that Christ is God and man united in one Person. The "union in Him of God and man" means that man as human body, human soul, and human spirit was united to the deity. This is the truth FER here denies. His teaching, the "Person in a condition," means the Deity clothed Itself, as it were, in a human body, so that the Deity was the spirit of the body. That body, this means, had no human spirit. He also said,

[Christ] is not a man in the sense that He is God . . . In Person He is God, in condition He is Man.

Gal. 4:4. The same Person abides, though the condition be changed, in His coming of a woman.

Every Scripture which definitely refers to the incarnation speaks of it as the assumption by Christ of a form or condition.

In the expression, 'Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit' I judge that the Lord takes up an expression suited to the position in which He was. But it is the Person who left the condition, which He had assumed, to take it again . . .³

Look at the wickedness of the last statement. "The Person who left the condition" means the Lord did not dismiss a human spirit. According to FER, what He dismissed as the spirit of the body was the Deity. Therefore, as his followers expressed it, **He dismissed Himself.**

Query - Why is He not personally Man?

Mr. Raven - He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man.⁴

J. N. Darby wrote:

I am quite aware of and accept the ordinary orthodox statement of two natures

2(...continued)

will find the rational faculty in the spirit, 1 Cor. 2:11) was aimed at the Apollinarians. In addition to FER's denial that Christ had a human spirit, he also had some such doctrine concerning manhood and deity, for he taught that all that characterizes manhood He brought with Him.

3. (*Quemerford Notes*, pp. 145-6). Cited in B. M., *A Brief History of Ravenism*, p. 5.

4. *Truth for the Time*, Part 7, May, 1895. Cited in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren*, 2:547.

in one person . . . And this last statement, that Christ had no human personality, no ego, which is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person), and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His person, when He had said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father" . . . ⁵

FER would not confess the union of God and man in one Person, which all fundamentally sound Christians confess.

I believe the old notion of the union of God and man to be wrong. I do not think it was meant wrongly, but, in the light of what has come out now, it was incorrect. ⁶

Consider FER's blasphemy concerning the Son's emptying Himself (May 2, 1896):

. . . the Son emptied Himself -- in mind took a place lower than that of God in which He could say, "My Father is greater than I" . . . ⁷

Since Christ had, according to FER's teaching, no human mind, these words really mean that in the divine mind, which is the Deity, He took a lower place than God. What revolting blasphemies! He continued,

I hardly care for the expression 'He took human nature into union with Himself.' I do not like the term 'union' in this connection. It is hardly the scriptural way of speaking of the incarnation. There it is "become flesh," "took upon him the form of a servant," etc., etc., none of these passages convey the thought of union, but rather identification of a Person with a state or form assumed. ⁸

W. Kelly wrote:

Without that union there must have been two distinct personalities, the divine and human. It is the union of both in one Person which alone secures the truth according to Scripture. F. E. R. with shameless self-confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy. He does *not* "bring the doctrine" of Christ. . . who utters his scornful unbelief of Christ's Person in terms which must have ensured his expulsion with horror from all fellowship of saints in former days. ⁹

The notion that a divine Person was the spirit of the body of our Lord would in

5. *Collected Writings* 29:322, Morrish ed.

6. [American Notes, 1902, p. 314.] Cited in, B. M., *A Brief History of Ravenism*, p. 5.

7. *Letters of F. E. Raven*, Stow Hill, 1963, p. 117.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

9. *F. E. R. Heterodox*, p. 123, 124. FER misrepresented his opposers. He is not to be excused as if this was unintentional. He wrote:

These [the two natures] may be said to be mysteriously blended in one, the unity of the Person, but that is as great a mystery as if they were spoken of as distinct and apart in Him. (From, "The Person of Christ.")

Thus he set up a phoney opponent. That is not what his opponents were teaching.

effect mean that when He advanced in wisdom (Luke 2:40), the divine Person advanced in wisdom. That is absurd. The notion means, furthermore, that when He delivered up His spirit (John 19:30), "He dismissed Himself." Thus, since in FER's scheme the Lord only had a body (no human soul and spirit), when He died, the divine Person was no longer connected with manhood in any way. It follows that in death, on the cross, He was no longer man. The incarnation dissolved. Furthermore, the resurrection then amounted to another incarnation, i. e., He came into 'the condition of manhood' once again. These two scriptures alone would be sufficient to show the evil of his views. The truth is that while Christ was dead, the human soul and human spirit remained united to the Deity. However, this would not fit the system, as the following quotation shows:

The doctrinal basis of Mr. R.'s doctrine is that Christ, at incarnation, took the first man's condition of humanity -- but an impersonal one, which was "not commensurate with the spiritual being" ("Some Letters," pp. 7, 8, 12). Therefore its inadequacy and incompetency to exhibit eternal life, and consequently the necessity that that condition should be laid aside, and moreover, that from that condition of humanity. "Christ was wholly separated by death, in order to be eternal life" -- "a new man" -- and to accomplish reconciliation, it had to be "terminated judicially in the cross, in the Man Christ Jesus" ("The Person," page 2). What follows this ending of Christ's incarnate impersonal humanity? Mr. R. teaches that a risen and glorified Christ is as to His humanity a new creation, a new man., which he affirms equally of Christ and of us ("Some Letters," page 5; "Eternal Life," by F. E. R. page 7). In His incarnate humanity Christ was the "old" in contrast to the "new" which He now is ("Eternal Life," page 3; "The Person," page 2).¹⁰

The reader will comprehend these remarks by observing that in the evil system the resurrection of Christ really amounts to another incarnation, as was pointed out above. The fundamental evil opened a totally new sphere of doctrine for the instrument of Satan to mystically apprehend, and propound as new light and advanced truth among those who refused to bow to the Bexhill action of June 1890, separating from FER and Greenwich, which supported him. When was there ever put forth a more evil system?

In a letter dated July 1, 1895 FER wrote:

---- accuses me of not holding the real humanity of Christ because I will not accept his idea of a complete man 'spirit, soul and body,' distinct from Deity. He seems to me to have no idea of the Son becoming Man and giving a spirit to manhood, in fact of the incarnation.¹¹

C. A. Coates, who imbibed FER's system, said:

10. *An Answer to . . . What is Ravenism?*, p. 10.

11. *Letters of F. E. Raven*, New Series, p. 107

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A divine Person has come into manhood¹²

. . . the Son of God, a divine Person in manhood¹³

The Lord's spirit went to paradise the moment He died¹⁴

It shows, too, how entirely He has taken the place of man, because **His spirit was Himself**.¹⁵

That is a sample of the new form of language -- it clothes the Apollinarian doctrine. "His spirit was Himself" means that the "spirit" was the Deity; that He had no human spirit as you and I have.

J. Taylor, Sr. wrote:

Our Lord Jesus, though really man, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the divinely-overshadowed vessel, was uncreate, though He entered His own creation, and His holy humanity had no link with that of fallen man. As to **His spirit, it was Himself** -- the Son . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. The omission of 'in spirit' in [Luke 2] verse 40 is important as confirming that His spirit was Himself personally and could not be spoken of as in our case.¹⁶

His spirit was Himself.¹⁷

The shift in which teachers of evil doctrine often express themselves is illustrated in the following quotation from J. Taylor, Sr.:

"Every soul that loves Him and bows to scripture would surely admit that while becoming flesh He changed His estate He could not and did not change in any way His personality, and still more would reject any suggestion that henceforth there became embodied in Him two personalities. The thought is abhorrent! Nor would any reverent soul assert that He received, as we, a *created* spirit. Yet HE HIMSELF, THE SON, became and abides forever really, actually Man, in all that holy manhood involves. Having become Man, how could His *spirit* be other than human though never ceasing to be divine? for He brought into manhood all that was perfect in manhood according to God. It was surely as was said, *Himself*, for passing into death, in Luke, He commends *His spirit* to His Father. His death was a reality, as His burial attests." (p.279).

"At the same time, to speak of Him having a *human spirit* savors of dividing up what scripture does not, and might seem to imply something

12. *An Outline of Luke's Gospel*, p. 293.

13. *Ibid.* pp. 283, 286).

14. *Ibid.* p. 291. He means by "spirit" the Deity, as the next quotation shows.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

16. Cited by F. B. Hole in *Modern Mystical Teachings and the Word of God*, p. 38, from *Mutual Comfort*, pp. 172, 199, (1920). Found also in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:588. See also p. 599 for another citation.

17. *Letters of James Taylor*, p. 372. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

added to Him." (Note to page 279.)¹⁸

C. A. Coates wrote:

As to waxing strong in spirit, you have no doubt noticed that the Editors omit "in spirit," which leaves the expression as to waxing strong a general one, which is quite easy to understand as going along with advancing in stature, and belonging, of course, to the condition into which He had come . . .¹⁹

CAC made the same point about "in spirit" being omitted as J. Taylor, Sr. did. CAC said, "because His spirit was Himself." J. Taylor, Sr. said, "As to His Spirit, it was Himself."

Regarding the Lord's dismissal of His spirit, F. E. Raven said:

But it is the Person who left the condition.

All three agree; the spirit that left the body was the deity and did not involve a human spirit. All three were Apollinarians.

It seems incredible that a man who believes the spirit of Christ was "the divine Person" could explain Luke 2:46 thus: Christ's answers

. . . were not what He knew as God, but what He had learned from God in the place of an instructed One²⁰

Since his view is that the immaterial part of Christ was only the divine Person, this involves a divine Person learning. We might think it is difficult to know whether the stupidity of these notions exceeds the blasphemy or not; but see what leaven does to the mind.

And now we come to J. B. Stoney. His mystical system was at work during the last few years of J. N. Darby's life. An examination of articles appearing in J. B. Stoney's magazine, *Voice to the Faithful*, vol.11 (I do not know if JBS authored those criticized by JND) is found in *Letters of J.N.Darby* 3:482-491 JND referred to "a settled system" (p. 488); says, "Your remarks, I think, are constantly fancies" (p. 489); warns, ". . . Satan found opportunity to mix your own imagination with it, and introduce what tended to sap the reality of truth" (p. 491). A few more remarks are found on pp. 472, 473. Further remarks are found on life and new creation in vol. 3, pp. 14, 15 and concerning related matters on pp. 54-56. An article received by JND in 1875 (vol. 3, pp. 439-441), found in *Food for the Flock* 2:1, tends in the same line. (That article was not

18. J. Taylor, Sr., *Mutual Comfort*, p. 279 (1920), as quoted by N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2: 599. Italics in the quotation were added by N. Noel.

19. *Letters of C. A. Coates*, p.301.

20. *Letters of C. A. Coates*, p. 300.
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written by J. B. Stoney). JND rejected the system which many think was "new light."

While JBS had many good things to say, he was moving into mysticism that also ensnared F. E. Raven. It is likely that JBS developed FER who in turn led JBS into supporting and personally holding and propagating fundamentally evil doctrine.

On Dec. 19, 1895 F. E. Raven wrote,

For myself I can say that there is no one on earth whose ministry and self have produced so lasting a moral effect on me as Mr. Stoney.²¹

Let us now examine some things that appeared in Mr. Stoney's magazine. B. W. K. wrote:

Those who say that the Son of God, or the eternal Son, the Christ, and eternal Life are identical or interchangeable terms (and there are such) have evidently lost the all important distinction between the blessed Lord as a divine Person and as Man²²

Thus, Mr. Stoney allowed the printing of blasphemy in his magazine. This doctrine means that the Son was not eternal life essentially in His divine, eternal Being.

The *Voice*, 1891, p. 257, says, "Things and people continue in ordinary agreement until a greater light from God is made known, and then a division ensues . . ." This is sanction of F. E. Raven, not ignorance of what he was really saying. I do not know if JBS wrote that article.

While no editor of any magazine would agree to accept responsibility for every expression and notion printed in his magazine, when such vital truth is touched, an editor is responsible.

Query - Why is He not personally Man?

Mr. Raven - He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man.²³

Compare that with the following from J. B. Stoney:

The truth is that God was manifest in flesh; the divine Being, a Spirit, took bodily human form . . . The opposers want to have two persons in one, man and God, one time to act as God and at another to act as man. They really do not see

21. *Letters of F. E. Raven*, Stow Hill, 1963, p. 111; also p. 135.

22. *Voice to the Faithful*, 1891, p. 11 (J. B. Stoney, editor). The division from FER and those supporting him, came in 1890.

23. *Truth for the Time*, part 8, May 1895. Cited in *N. Noel, History ...* 2:547.

the incarnation. They do not see that He who was God became man and hence a man out of heaven. They would have Him to be a man in flesh and blood, and in a way distinct from His being God -- whereas He is God, and He, that same Person, became a man in flesh and blood, but He came from God, He brought everything with Him.²⁴

This is the same Apollinarianism as in FER; and not only that, but the same doctrine that the second man was ever essentially in the Son, in eternity, is also in this statement. It is an integrated system of fundamental evil.

In 1893 JBS said:

The divisions among us all spring from not understanding the mystery, and the nature of Christ; they are intimately connected.²⁵

If this statement is true, then JBS did not understand the mystery because he, along with FER, was fundamentally unsound on the Person of Christ.

Mr. Stoney, we see, imbibed the main parts of FER's evil doctrine. In June 1894, FER stated in a letter:

I know of no divergence of thought between myself and J. B. S.²⁶

W. Kelly wrote:

It is to join Apollinarus of Antioch (the Son). He too made the Logos simply form Christ's Person, as F. E. R. does, and was therefore justly branded an Antichrist . . . F. E. R. with shameless self confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy.²⁷

J. N. Darby wrote:

. . . He was a true man, body and soul, and, one may add, spirit. This was called in question by heresy as soon as His deity was.²⁸

Persons who hold such doctrines (as FER, JBS, CAC & JT, Sr.), are antichrists and heretics.

* * * * *

The above article is essentially formed from extracts from the book, F. E. Raven's *Evil Doctrines* . . ., available from the publisher: \$6.75 postage paid.

24. *Letters from J. B. Stoney* 1:127. The cover on my copy says "New Edition" while inside it says "second series." The Ravenite publisher is Stow Hill. Also cited by the Ravenite, A. J. Gardiner, *The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth*, p. 142.

25. *Ministry of J. B. Stoney* 2:455.

26. *Letters of F. E. Raven*, Stow Hill, 1963, p. 90.

27. *F. E. R. Heterodox*, p. 124.

28. *Collected Writings* 23:478 (Morrish ed.).
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The Holiness of Christian Fellowship

4

Chapter 4.1:

2 Timothy 2:16-22: Organized Evil and Our Responsibility

The Church on Earth

It is not our purpose to enter into an examination of the nature and unity of the body of Christ, but we should briefly review a few points in connection with the subject of the holiness of Christian fellowship. Those who object to the thought of the "ruin of the church" ¹ often do so from the standpoint of a certain conception of the church of God or, to state it more in accordance with their general mode of speech and conception, "the churches of God." Thus, in their minds, "local churches" are not necessarily ruined, hence there is no ruin of the church. Besides, since they allege that there is no such idea presented in the Scripture as "the church on earth," they believe that the church is not in ruins. They fail to see, or will not see, that Scripture does view the church on earth in corporate responsibility and they fail to see that there is an aspect of the church that involves mere profession as well as reality.

1. See J. N. Darby, "The Public Ruin of the Church," *Collected Writings* 32:392-407; "What the Christian Has amid the Ruin of the Church," *Collected Writings* 14:272-300; see also *Collected Writings* 3:270ff; 4:10; 1:169ff; "Practical Hints on the Ruin State of the Church," *The Bible Treasury* 13:346-348 www.presenttruthpublishers.com

The body of Christ is looked at as complete ON EARTH in 1 Cor. 12. "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it" (1 Cor. 12:26). Saints in heaven are not suffering with us. They are OF the body, but not IN *the activity of it*. All of us will be displayed together in the glory in the day of manifestation, as the body of Christ. But let us not mix truths and times. Those who are OF the body and are with the Lord are not in view in 1 Cor. 12. 1 Cor. 12 views the members as on earth and the body as complete at every moment. Gifts are not for heaven. They are given till we all arrive at the unity of the faith (Eph. 4:13). Gifts are for the body on earth. They are set "in the church" (1 Cor. 12:28). Apostles were not set in some local assembly. There existed on earth many local assemblies and there existed on earth something called "the church" into which were set "first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28). This thing called "the church" was persecuted by Paul (Phil. 3:6, Gal. 1:13, 1 Cor. 15:9). He did this in many places (Acts 26:11). ² He never said that he 'persecuted the churches of God.' Let us simply bow to Scripture about it and we will get more light.

In keeping with the truth that there existed something on the earth called "the church," the Spirit divided men into three groups: "Give no occasion to stumbling, whether to Jews, or Greeks, or the assembly of God" (1 Cor. 10:32).

"The whole body" (Eph. 4:16)! Dare anyone say that this is a local assembly? The men looked at as gifts (Eph. 4: 11) are given with a view to the edifying of the body of Christ which is neither looked at here as in heaven nor is it the local assembly. It is "the whole body" of v. 16. These gifts are given for the arriving at "the full-grown man" (v. 13). What? the local assembly will be a full-grown man? The truth is that Jew and Gentile were reconciled "both in one body" (not both in the "local assembly"), and so the two are formed "in Himself into one new man" (Eph. 2:14). It is "one new man" because the church did not exist in the Old Testament; and it will be a "full-grown man" when Christ comes.

"And He is the head of the body, the assembly" (Col. 1: 18). This Scripture applies right now. Christ is not viewed as "a head" of "a local assembly." This is the body on earth. Paul says, "And I fill up that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ in my flesh, for His body, which is the assembly" (Col. 1:24). This is not suffering for "a local assembly" any more than the words "of

2. The effort to set aside the truth of the unity on earth by pointing out that some of the members of the body are with the Lord (i. e., no longer on earth) ignores the fact that Paul persecuted the church after, for example, Stephen was killed (i. e., after some members were no longer on earth). Scripture teaches a view of the church on earth, and it was *that* which Paul persecuted.

which I became minister" (Col. 1:25) mean that he was minister of a "local church." Nor was he suffering for those in heaven: neither was he a "minister" (servant) of those in heaven.

The notion that each assembly is "a temple," "a pillar and ground of the truth," "a house of God" is as untrue as stating that each church is "a bride of Christ." But each assembly has these characteristics, and each assembly should be the faithful, local expression of these things.

We should observe also that 1 Timothy is filled with instructions for the maintenance of order in the house of God (which is viewed as on earth, and does not mean the local assembly, although the order of God's house should be expressed locally). On the other hand, 2 Timothy contains instruction for the faithful amidst the ruin which had come about in the apostle's day.

We have only briefly touched on this line of precious truth, having noted enough so that certain false notions that interfere with apprehending our responsibility in the Christian fellowship, as given in 2 Timothy 2, might be removed from minds of saints who are subject to Scripture.

The Ruin of the Church

In 1 Timothy we have directions concerning the proper *order* for God's house, "which is [the] assembly of [the] living God" (1 Tim. 3:15). The word *order* has been emphasized because that is the characterizing thought³ brought before us regarding the assembly on earth viewed as God's *house*. *His* order is to be maintained. Man's order ruins what God has established. The house of a Christian might become disorderly -- to the point where it could no longer be seen as a Christian house. So has it happened to what God set up at the beginning regarding the assembly, which is God's house.

Indeed, in 2 Timothy we find an altogether different character than in 1 Timothy, for by the time 2 Tim. was written, the church had fallen into ruin, irremediably so. The occasion of prophecy is failure; i. e., the reason prophecy comes in is failure, as is often illustrated in the O. T. In the book of Revelation we characteristically have prophecy. And we see in Rev. 1 that the Lord has assumed the position of Judge among the assemblies. The fact that the book of Revelation was written is a standing witness to the fall and ruin of the church. Sadly, few Christians realize this, and many who have this brought before them reject this truth, for it does not fit in with their ecclesiastical notions and

3. When we think of the church as the body of Christ, the characterizing thought is *unity*.
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schemes. It is such ecclesiastical notions and schemes which have contributed to the character of what is likened to a great house. In 2 Tim., then, we do not read about "God's house," but rather about "a great house" (2 Tim. 2:20). **The difference in these two expressions denotes the characteristic difference in the two letters of Paul to Timothy.**

It is professing Christianity which is compared to a great house. The house of God has received a character from the failure of professing Christendom whereby that profession is here compared to a great house. It is greatly swollen in size, with features contrary to the holiness due God's house.⁴ It is God's house, though perverted from its proper character by the will of man:

He is likening Christendom to "a great house" -- He does not call Christendom "the great house," it is an analogy. It is always the "House of God," in its responsible place, because the Holy Ghost has not left it, even though wood, hay, and stubble have come in [1 Cor. 3].⁵

There is an order, but it is man's order, not God's, and in contrast to divine order it is really disorder. It is the expression of man's will in the organization of evil rather than God's order, which always rests upon separation from evil. We see the progressive character of leaven, not in 1 Cor. 5 or Gal. 5, but in Matt. 13:33 (which speaks of the corruption of the food of God's people. It is the spread of evil doctrine in Christendom where the whole becomes corrupt (cp. Rev. 3:16; Rev. 17 and 18). This leaven has worked; and its working has resulted in a change whereby the profession is likened to a great house. No longer does the house of God, as instituted in the beginning, meet the eyes of the world. No longer is the body of Christ and the house of God coextensive as it was at the beginning. What was instituted then has been generally corrupted (though the body of Christ is real). It is likened in 2 Timothy 2 to a great house and was there already before the apostle's eyes. This is what is meant by the "ruin of the church," namely, that the character of the profession has been irremediably altered and corrupted so as to be compared to a great house, with directions to the faithful concerning purging themselves individually from evil -- which does not mean, of course, trying to leave what is likened to a great house

There are four special marks of evil noted in 2 Timothy, one in each chapter.

1. Mark # 1 -- 2 Tim. 1:15 notes a general defection from Paul (not apostasy from Christ) involving a defection from "the testimony of the Lord."

4. This is similar to the growth of the mustard seed in Matt. 13.

5. *Words of Truth* 4:112 www.presenttruthpublishers.com

2. Mark # 2 -- 2 Tim. 2:16-20 speaks of the introduction of evil doctrine and of unbelievers.
3. Mark # 3 -- 2 Tim 3:8 shows how truth is withstood through imitation.
4. Mark # 4 -- 2 Tim. 4:4 calls attention to the result of these evils, namely, turning the ears away from the truth to listen to fables.

2 Timothy, the last epistle that Paul wrote that is in the canon of Scripture, was written in view of the ruin that came in. In ch. 3 he spoke of the character of the "last days." Some christians speak in a manner that indicates that they think that the last days began in the 20th century. This seems to be done so as to excuse themselves from being faithful as they ought to be. "It's the last days; what can you do?" they say. The answer is that 2 Timothy tells them what to do, but they do not want to do it. Moreover, the last days referred to in 2 Tim. 3:1 had already arrived when Paul wrote 2 Tim. to tell Timothy about its character and how to be here for the Lord in such a day. After describing the awful character of men characterized by the flesh, in Christendom, he directed Timothy: "from these turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5). The condition was present and Timothy was told to turn away from such. John said that "the last hour" was present (1 John 2:18). The ruin of the church, the advent of the last days and the advent of the last hour took place in the **first** century. There is no excuse for now saying that it is the last days, what can one do? Since we are considering some issues in 2 Tim. 2, notice the following directions, concerning what to do, in this chapter:

- profane, vain babblings *shun* (v. 16);
- *withdraw* from iniquity (v. 19);
- *purified himself* from these (v. 21);
- youthful lusts *flee* (v. 22);
- foolish and senseless questions *avoid* (v. 23).

Hymenaeus and Philetus

Hymenaeus ("a wedding song") and Philetus ("beloved") were men who had advanced very far along the road of impiety (2 Tim. 2:18). What may we learn from their names? It is this: our concern is not with how nice a man might sound or how nice he may be, but does he bring sound doctrine (cp. 2 John)? These two things often pervert the discernment of many, i. e., when one is pleasant to the ears ("a wedding song") or when one is very personable and has an ingratiating manner (who presents truth in a pleasant way), we judge according to what suits

US? It even seems that some think an ingratiating manner is the same as godliness! We usually have self at the bottom of such conclusions since our tendency is to judge with reference to how a thing pleases self.

But error ever advances, and more error is needed to bolster previous error. The error concerning the resurrection, noted in 2 Tim. 2, should be well noted. Why is it singled out? I believe it is singled out because this **KIND** of error gives **character** to what is referred to in a subsequent verse as "a great house." I say this *kind* of error because there are others, more or less potent, which tend to have the same effect. These men taught a "spiritual resurrection." There are other ways of spiritualizing -- not that all other ways have the same degree of result (i. e., overthrowing the faith of some), but effecting many of the same results that this error would produce.

William Kelly said:

But the error of the resurrection already past is fatal to this endurance meanwhile. It would, if true, entitle us now to reign as kings, to take our ease, to enjoy present honor and glory; and thus it is directly framed and calculated by the enemy to thwart the will of our Lord, Who calls us to share His sufferings till we are glorified together. Hence it is false as a doctrine, it is ruinous for practice, and it destroys all communion with Christ, as sharing His affections in separation from the world. It would be hardly possible to discover any delusion more opposed to the truth in its character and consequences for the soul and the walk, as well as in counteraction of the moral glory of the Lord. Well can we understand therefore that its teachers "overthrow the faith of some." And if it were so then, how much more widely extended and settled do we find the mischief now, when Christ's coming is no longer before the saints as a constant living hope, and the resurrection of the body is practically nothing to them, satisfied that after death their souls go to heaven! The world becomes then a scene of present enjoyment. Association with a once dead and rejected Christ is unthought of. They flatter themselves that they have attained to a wisdom higher than was known by the apostles in those earlier days, now that they have learnt to enjoy the best of both worlds.⁶

We should note that the context is ministry, and the truth. Cut it in a straight line; avoid vain, profane babblings for the final issue is doctrinal evil, i. e., fundamental error, called leaven in Galatians 5.

The Foundation and the Seal

Yet the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, [The] Lord knows those that are his; and, Let every one who names the name of [the] Lord withdraw from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19)

6. *An Exposition of The Two Epistles to Timothy*, pp. 227,228.

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For the day of ruin, the Christian is comforted and assured that there is that which is firm, indeed immovable. The ruin has not, really cannot, cause it to fall. It stands, and we can rest on it. It is suggested that the figure of the foundation is abstract.⁷ God is for us in all that He is, and in spite of what we are in ourselves. The foundation being firm and standing ministers comfort to the one who obeys the commands of the Lord. This foundation has a seal; and thus the authority of God is bound up with this foundation, for this seal of God denotes that, and man cannot undo it. Moreover, the seal is double-charactered -- of two complementary features:

1. The first feature affirms the comforting omniscience of the Lord; He knows those that are his, which reminds us of Jehovah's having reserved to Himself 7000 that had not bowed the knee to Baal, nor had kissed him (1 Kings 19:18) in an evil day in Israel. Their worship and affection went to Jehovah, but it was His doing, His preservation.
2. The second feature is the solemn and peremptory command to every one who names the name of that Lord⁸ to act in accordance with the requirements of His holiness. To withdraw from iniquity is the only suitable, obedient and compatible thing to do in connection with professing Christ's Lordship. God is light (1 John 1) and all that He does involves this fact concerning what He is in His nature. All that call on the name of the Lord must reflect that light -- which is incompatible with iniquity, and association/fellowship with iniquity. "Lord" denotes His authority, and where His authority is truly owned, this, His charge, will be obeyed.

We are commanded to "withdraw." This calls for separation from something. That something is "iniquity," or, as W. Kelly translated: "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness." The word *αδικία* is not always, but usually, translated unrighteousness⁹

7. Answering a query, W. Kelly (as I suppose) commenting on JND's translation wrote:

The position of the article proves that *στερεός*, "firm," *cannot* be a predicate, but is an epithet forming an integral part of the definition. The only possible meaning, therefore, is, "the firm foundation of God stands." . . . But I see no reason for giving it a special application, believing, with the translator referred to [JND], that the figure is used abstractly (*The Bible Treasury* 5:128).

8. J. N. Darby remarked:

The Lordship of Christ is not the ground [basis] of gathering at all. Lordship applies to individual responsibility. The Lordship of the assembly is not scriptural, nor the Lordship of the body (*Collected Writings* 20:221).

9. See *The Englishman's* www.presentwithpublishers.com

Withdrawing from Iniquity

J. N. Darby wrote:

I must depart from iniquity wherever I find it. Whatever the leaving it involves, I must cease all iniquity -- depart from it. If it be bound up with an ocean of good, I am not master but slave in my responsibility of conscience; I must depart from iniquity. That is a settled thing, a divine exigence which nothing can meet but acting on it. It is owning and abiding with God Himself in my conduct. Nothing can be so good, or doing so much good, as doing His will.

"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Is any given thing iniquity? Is it wrong according to the light Christ has given me? I depart from it. I am told, "But you will lose opportunities of usefulness, of serving the Lord, of doing good; and you must leave other Christians. With whom will you go?" I answer, I know nothing of all this. That thing is wrong: I must depart from it; I dare not do otherwise. "But you will find wrong in everything." Not for me -- for a Christian -- to sanction. He may fail in doing right, but not deliberately accept any doing wrong, however small, if he fears God. I name the name of the Lord; I cannot abide in what is not right. It is destroying all responsibility, and denying God's authority over me to allege any motives for not departing from evil. None could have a better excuse than Saul when he lost the kingdom. There was one simple thing in the whole matter -- he did not obey. "He that will *serve* me, let him *follow* me" -- a weighty word of the Lord's.

But the confusion which evil has brought into the church, and the enormous system of evil which bears its name, may create difficulties in many a sincere soul, when what bears the name of the church of God is the seat of the power of the enemy. To this the apostle turns. "But in a great house," continues he, after speaking of these mischievous teachers, and the general principles which secured and directed the heart of the faithful. "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor." The professing church -- what bore the name of Christ in the world -- would become like a great house, where one finds vessels of every kind, and for all uses. What was to be done -- leave the Christian profession -- become unbaptized? That was impossible. There was no going out of the great house. Whatever state it was in, Christ was the Master of the house. We cannot be heathens, or Mahomedans, or strangers to Christian profession. What, I repeat, was to be done? Remain with those that dishonored Christ because they also were in the great house? Not so. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." What defiled the house was worse, as such, than heathenism or the darkest ignorance.

Am I then to remain isolated in separating myself from these vessels to dishonor? Not so; I am to follow what becomes saints--righteousness, faith, charity, peace *with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*. Nothing seems to be plainer. Vessels to dishonor, I must expect would be found in the house; I must separate from these. But there are those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. With those I am to associate, and follow after every Christian grace with them. If the house, once builded on the earth of choice and goodly stones (I am not aware that it is ever said that God positively built and

formed it, I do not think it is), has become a great house in which vessels to dishonor are found, my path is clearly traced for me. The extent of the evil does not affect the principle, and other guiding ones may come in for other points of conduct. But this I have; I separate myself from the vessels to dishonor. I associate myself with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

It is not a question of local discipline, but of public and personal conduct. The responsibility of all in the house remains grounded on the place to which they pretend, in which they have outwardly stood. This is clearly taught in Matthew 24 where the evil is viewed as a whole (v. 48). "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." Here the servant is treated as a servant, but as an evil one, as a hypocrite by the Lord. He considers himself so too. He says "My Lord" he is so dealt with -- *the Lord of that servant*. What a lesson for the professing church, and particularly for the hierarchical part of it! What makes this more remarkable is, that he is treated as the same servant, as *to position*, as the other who will be made ruler over all his Lord's goods. Nay, he is treated as the same servant changed in character, "But and if *that* evil servant, *o kakos doulos ekeinos*."

It is indeed a solemn thought for those who take the place of rulers in the church called of God. But my object at present is only to lay before the reader the view scripture gives of the church's responsibility, and the fact of the existence of that house in which vessels to dishonor are -- how scripture looks at it. We cannot, with impunity, lose any part of scripture truth, and especially on points which commit us to grave points of action. We *cannot* begin the church over again: God is not beginning it. We cannot accept any evil in what is called by that name; less than elsewhere. That is a matter of absolute Christian responsibility.

The Character of a Great House

But in a great house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen; and some to honour and some to dishonour. If therefore one shall have purified himself from these, [in separating himself from them], he shall be a vessel to honour, sanctified, serviceable to the Master, prepared for every good work (2 Tim. 2:20,21).

In connection with the ruin of the church, the profession of Christianity is compared to a great house with various vessels and vessels in several states. Both the comparison to a great house and the vessels are of importance. What has given rise to such a comparison of Christendom with a great house? We saw that Paul laid the foundation and others build on it. He specifically warned, "But let each see HOW he builds upon it" (1 Cor. 3:10). He then described two classes of materials which might be built upon the foundation. I assume that the reader knows that PEOPLE are built upon the foundation. It is the professing

church. But there are false professors as well as saved professors in that vast mixture which presents itself to the public eye as the church of God. We are now considering the PROFESSING church composed of real and false, precious and non-precious, with evil doctrines and evil teachers, and good doctrines and good teachers. This is the professing church. 1 Cor. 3 views the church in the aspect of what is committed to man's responsibility. Man builds with two classes of materials:

- (1) **Gold** -- those who have divine righteousness.
Silver -- those who are redeemed.
Precious stones -- those who reflect the light of God.
- (2) **Wood** -- those who are a natural production.
Grass -- man according to the flesh.
Straw -- what man provides.

One class stands the fire, but the other does not. It is the inclusion of the latter class, among other things, that gives character to that superstructure which is likened to "a great house." In 2 Tim. 2:20 we again see two classes of vessels: precious and vile. That which appears before the world, the professing church, once was composed only of believers, and was the true church, but false professors have entered the ranks of that which presents itself as the church. This is one of the causes for the professing church to be compared with a great house with various classes of vessels. So corrupt has it become that in addition to wood, grass and straw, earthen vessels are mentioned. The first three grow in the earth; but now we see the world right in the professing church. The wooden and earthen vessels represent unsaved persons. The one may be burnt and the other dashed in pieces.

But there is something else to notice. There are also:

- 1. vessels to honour, and
- 2. vessels to dishonour.

How different this is from what Paul called "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15)!

When we consider the affection of the church for Christ, we properly speak of the bride of Christ. When we think of the unity of the church, we think of the body of Christ. When we think of the order proper to the church, we think of the house of God. The truths concerning our membership in the body of Christ speak of our privileges. The house of God, however, brings in the responsibility side. It is His house and therefore His will and order should be carried out. He orders the service and the servants, and the relationships of

those connected with His house. But man grossly marred the carrying out of this aspect of the church.

Now, that great structure which presents itself to the eyes of the world as the church (the professing church) contains (a) saved and lost, and (b) vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour. This awful mixture presents itself before the world as the house of God. I recall seeing the words "My house shall be called the house of prayer" engraved on a so-called "church" building, and on the billboard it said "card party," "cake sale," etc. etc. Obviously, the building is not the, or a, church, nor is it the house of God. But man has defaced the outward presentation of the truth of the house of God. Instead of God's order, instead of the liberty of the Spirit of God to use whomsoever He will (1 Cor. 12 and 14), etc., man has introduced his own order and organization based on principles he thinks best suited to secure the ends that he judges are convenient to himself and suitable to God. Man orders the service and servants. Man sets up boards, authorities, societies; man ordains those who are then permitted to preach, and then the sheep vote for their shepherd. Man sets the ritual of worship. Man controls the ministry of God's Word and will not give room to properly follow out 1 Cor. 14:29, Eph. 4:16-17, etc. Some call themselves Christian priests. And there is a mixture of Judaism and paganism with Christianity. It is not a question of weakness, but of the introduction of principles and evil doctrine subversive of God's order and will.

These are things that give Christendom a character likened to a great house. In such a house there is organization and control. It is a perversion of God's house. Man's will is reigning there. This is the superstructure that man has built on the foundation laid by Paul (1 Cor. 3).

Observe that the person that was removed in 1 Cor 5 was called "the wicked person" (v. 13) and "leaven" in v. 7, though he turned out to be a Christian. Evil teachers have part in the Christian profession: for example, Hymenaeus and Philetus. Just as the man in 1 Cor. 5 was called wicked, so here we have examples of one kind of vessels to dishonor. They, too, are wicked. We must separate from all such. Hymenaeus and Philetus are examples of vessels to dishonor.

Christendom has become filled with professors, sown with tares, become like a tree so that birds roost in its branches (compare Matt. 13:32 and Rev. 18:2), and leavened with evil teaching concerning the things of Christ (Matt. 13:33). This will finally issue into the great whore of Rev. 17 and 18, for which the groundwork is presently being laid, and then finally the revelation of the Lawless One (2 Thess. 2).

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

6: The Pretribulation Rapture

Chapter 6.2: The Way in Which the Heavenly Hope is Presented in Scripture

Our state of soul, our affections and our conscience are affected by our watching for Christ's coming for us. So, we will now briefly survey the teaching of Scripture to see that the Christian has been placed in a posture to expect Christ in his lifetime. Surely that is meant to quicken affections and longing to see Him face to face and to be like Him.

In the next chapter (6.3) we will spend a little more time on the words *watch* and *wait*, and have occasion to observe Scripture warnings about the affect of in our hearts delaying that coming, making of it a deferred hope, rather than a proximate hope. The remainder of the present chapter is composed of an extract and two articles.

Ed.

Extract from

The Rapture of the Saints

Three several ways of presenting the return of Christ are found in Scripture. There is, first, the general fact. We do not expect things to go on to an unknown end of dissolution; we are converted to wait for God's Son from heaven. Nothing precise and distinctive is here presented. We do not think that things go on as they were from the creation of the world. Christ will come again, and we wait for Him. This is the abiding thought in every instructed Christian, whatever degree of light he may have as to details. He expects Christ, so that, morally, the fashion of this world is closed for him: the object of his hope is elsewhere.

Next, the scene of this world is confusion and evil to his spirit; he knows that it will ripen into rebellion, and that God will judge this world by that Man whom He hath ordained -- that Christ will therefore judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom--that He will set up His earthly kingdom by judgment--further, that the effect of His governmental judgment will be manifested in the saints at that time--that if it be the day of the Lord for this world, it is the time when the responsibility of the saints will be brought to its manifested issue or result. He will return and take account with His servants, and set one over ten cities, another over five. He knows that the appearing of Christ is naturally and necessarily connected with manifested judgment; hence he finds responsibility always referred to this in Scripture.

Thirdly, besides the facts of Christ's coming and manifested righteousness, there is, through grace, special privilege, the proper association of the saints with Christ, which must have their accomplishment also. No doubt the saints will be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of themselves to God; but this is not separated from privilege, for they arrive there already like Himself. Yea, He has come Himself to fetch them there. This special association with Christ is made good, not by Christ's appearing, as we have seen (though manifested there), but by His coming to receive them to Himself where He is; His introducing them into His Father's house, and in the kingdom placing them in the heavenly seat of government with Himself. This is effectuated by His coming, and causing them, raised or changed, to come up and meet Him in the air. This is the rapture of the saints, preceding their and Christ's appearing: at that they appear with Him. So that at their rapture He has not appeared yet.

Such is the general doctrine of the rapture of the church--a doctrine of the last importance; because it is immediately connected with the relationship of the church to Christ, its entire separation from the world and its portion. It is the act which crowns its perfect justification. This rapture before the appearing of Christ is a matter of express revelation, as we have seen from Colossians 3:4.

As to the time of this rapture, no one, of course, knows it. But the difference, in this respect, between it and the appearing is very marked, in what is most important. At the appearing comes the judgment of this world: hence it connects itself with, and closes, its history; and before it that history must have run on to its revealed result, revealed events must have occurred, and the objects of judgment must have appeared on the scene and accomplished what is predicted of them. The church is associated with Christ already gone, is not of the world as He was not, is risen with Him, has its life hid with Him in God. There is no earthly event between it and heaven. It must have been gathered, and Christ rise up from the Father's throne to receive it: that is all. It is this conviction, that the church is properly heavenly, in its calling and relationship with Christ, forming no part of the course of events of the earth, which makes its rapture so simple and clear; and on the other hand, it shows how the denial of its rapture brings down the church to an earthly position, and destroys its whole spiritual character and position. Our calling is on high. Events are on earth. Prophecy does not relate to heaven. The Christian's hope is not a prophetic subject at all. It is the promise that Christ will come and receive him to Himself, that where He is the Christian may be also.

The Lord is at Hand

This inspired, inspiring cry was vouchsafed to the Church almost as soon as the Lord had taken His place the right hand of God. Nay, ere He left His disciples on earth, He encouraged their drooping spirits with the assurance of His speedy return; and after His ascension, in almost every communication addressed to His own through inspired penmen, He recalled their hearts to this blessed truth, finally closing His last message with the thrice-repeated word, "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. 22:7, 12, 20).

If, moreover, the connection in which this truth is found be carefully examined, it will be seen that it has always a practical application. If the soldier is weary of the conflict, or daunted by the power of the foe; if the laborer faints in his service; if he who runs the race grows careless, by losing sight of the goal; if the oppressed the sorrowing, and the afflicted are becoming through the fiery nature of their trials, the anodyne, the consolation, the encouragement, the administered is the hope of the Lord's speedy return. The step of the weariest traveller becomes elastic, the thirsty soul of the pilgrim, passing over the sands of the desert, is immediately refreshed, the almost defeated combatant is at once nerved with new courage and sufferers of every kind are cheered and sustained under the power of this blessed hope.

It is a characteristic indeed of this truth that it is never formally stated or defined, but is rather inwoven with the very essence of Christianity. Left out, therefore, Christianity is incomplete, and lapses into worldliness or Judaism. The calling and position of the Christian, the character of the church, and indeed the future of this world, would alike be an enigma apart from the second coming of our Lord and Savior. The fact of its having been forgotten immediately upon the death of the apostles (for not a trace of it, in its Scriptural statement, can be found in any extant writings from the end of the first down to the close of the eighteenth century), explains the character of Church history. The annals of Christianity, said an unbelieving historian, are the annals of hell. Whatever abatement may be demanded from this verdict, it would yet be difficult to discover more unblushing sin and iniquity than was often seen in the bosom of the professing church during this period. Adopting the language of the prophet, it might be truly said that "darkness, gross darkness, covered the people." There were undoubtedly, and God be praised for it, thousands who, amid the prevalent corruption, maintained, by the grace of God, holy and devoted lives--lights shining in the dense gloom that had settled down upon the Church; but these only rendered the general darkness more visible.

It was, then, a most signal mercy when God caused the hope of the Lord's return to be revived amongst His people. And the fact can never be overlooked that this was connected with the restoration of the truth of the Lord's table. It must have been so. The Lord Himself inseparably linked these two things --the truth of His table and that of His coming--in the words given to Paul, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Thus it was that, when the simple commemorative character of the Lord's supper became corrupted, when the eucharist was turned into a sacrament, and even into a sacrifice, and the idea of a completed redemption was thereby utterly lost, of necessity the hope of the Lord's return was extinguished. But when the Scriptural teaching concerning the Lord's Supper exposed the superstitions of patristic and

sacerdotal inventions, and the Lord's table was again duly ordered to the joy of His people, the beams of the bright and morning star immediately gladdened their hearts. There are some now living who passed through the blessed experiences of this signal period, when the Bible once again resumed its rightful place in the hearts of God's people, and when they searched it daily as for hidden treasure, while its pages seemed to glow with a light that shone down directly from the presence of God. They found in these days that the Word was both living and powerful; and they, on their parts, delighted to lay bare their inmost souls to its searching, convicting, and sanctifying power.

It was no wonder, therefore, that they lived in the power of the expectation of their Lord. This was seen in many ways. In the first place, they began to judge themselves, their houses, their surroundings, associations and pursuits in the light of His presence for whom they waited. Was this, was that, they anxiously enquired, suitable to His eye? The knife was unsparingly applied according to this test. As a consequence, they became unworldly. Their hope was fixed on One outside of this scene--on One who was coming at any moment to receive them to Himself, and perforce they assumed the place of strangership in this world. Henceforward they *knew* what it was not to be of the world even as Christ was not of the world; they now recognized that their character and calling were heavenly, and could not, therefore, have community of feeling with the world in its ways, habits, and pleasures. Another feature of that day was, that those who received this truth were drawn together in the most intimate bonds of Christian fellowship. As in the days of Pentecost, though in feeble measure, they that believed were together, and (in principle, at least) had all things common. Together with this -- and this feature should never be omitted -- there was intense activity in the ministration, in various ways, of the truth of God. It is sometimes alleged that those who profess to be waiting for the Lord's return are careless as to the publication of the gospel; but the history of that, as well as of more recent times, proves the statement to be utterly unfounded.

Fifty years have passed away, and instead of hundreds there are thousands who now declare their faith in the Lord's second coming. Other men have labored, and we, without a struggle, and in many cases without an exercise, have entered upon their labors. What was revealed to them after long meditation, fervent prayers, and painful experiences, has come to us by inheritance. These witnesses have departed--departed to be with Christ, there to wait still in fellowship with Him; and their torches have been put into our hands. It is this fact, beloved, that suggests so many questions--questions which crowd upon us even as we write these lines. Do we, then, really expect, wait for, the return of our Lord? Is this our constant attitude of soul? Just as a man may read the Scriptures, and, seeing clearly, assent to the truth that all are guilty sinners, and yet never take the place of such before God for himself, so is it possible to hold the doctrine of the second coming of Christ without being influenced by it. Indeed, we might be able even to state the truth to others without one particle of response to its claims. We need to challenge ourselves on this point. Are we, then, we again ask, in the power of the expectation of seeing our blessed Lord? Is this blessed hope daily before our souls? Does it govern our actions? mould our conduct? Does it detach us from the world and worldliness? show us the vanity of the world's distinctions, manners, and ways? St. Paul could write of some in his day, "In every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad;

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so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; *and to wait for His Son from heaven*, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:8-10). Would this description in any measure be true of us? Do our ways before the world proclaim that we have no resting-place here? that we are only sojourners waiting to be fetched by our Lord? Do our homes and households, in their ordering and arrangement, proclaim this blessed truth? In a word, is this the testimony of our lives, of our walk and ways?

Questions like these may soon be answered, if we are honest with ourselves, and the very attempt to answer them would lead to blessing. For in how many instances would it lead to the painful discovery that with this truth on our lips we have been denying it in the life; that while we have been *saying* that we are but strangers and pilgrims here, we have been settling down in ease and comfort, making plans for worldly advancement, if not for ourselves yet for our families, seeking to raise ourselves higher in the social scale, and striking root in every direction in the soil of this world? Is it not possible that God has a controversy with us on this account? that this will explain the sorrows that have befallen us -- the sicknesses that have so often visited ourselves and our families? For God must have reality with His people. He loves them too well to permit them to go on in self-deception -- deceiving themselves and deceiving others also. Therefore He is speaking to us by His manifold dealings and chastenings, warning us of our danger, and recalling us to the sense of our responsibility as His witnesses in the world. May He Himself give us the opened ear to His voice, that we may humble ourselves before Him in lowly abasement and self-judgment, and seek His restoring grace, so that in all the fervor of our first love we may testify once again in living power to the truth of our Lord's return.

Another observation may be permitted. Nothing so tends to obscure our vision of the bright and morning star as the thought that signs are to be expected before He descends from heaven. We have been plied with temptations of this character. Voices other than that of the Good Shepherd have beguiled even saints. Pyramids and conjunctions of planets (which after all were of no extraordinary kind) have been adduced to prove that the Lord is at hand. The carnal wisdom of men has thus been allied with the teachings of the word of God. If we build upon such things our faith will soon be rudely shaken. God needs no confirmation from, nor will He be indebted to me. These things, indeed, are a wile of the enemy to divert our gaze from the Coming One to circumstances or to earthly events. No, our hope rests alone on Christ and His word. According to the words of a French hymn -- "He has promised, He will return." -- this, and this alone, is the foundation of the "blessed hope." It is quite true that the moral characteristics of the "perilous times" will be discerned by the instructed soul; but these are detected by a knowledge of the word of God. Our danger lies in being lured from the voice of our living Lord to listen to the words of men. The more we are shut up to the Lord Himself and His own word, the more intense will be our expectation of His coming.

To some it may seem that He has long tarried. But if He yet wait, it is but while God is still working in the activities of His grace to gather in His elect -- the co-heirs with Christ. While therefore He would have us to be ever waiting and ever

expecting, it must be in full fellowship with His own heart. If we wait, He also waits; if we desire His return, much more ardently does He look forward to the moment when He will rise from His seat to claim His own. But the moments of waiting will soon now be over. Louder and louder the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and it is He Himself who puts this word into our lips, while He responds, "Surely I come quickly." What then can we do but bow our heads in His presence as we reply, "Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus?"

The Christian Friend 1881, pp. 281-287.

Joying in God and Waiting for Christ

There are two things, which constitute the joy of a Christian, to be his on the road, and the object constantly before his heart. The first is, the hope of the coming of the Lord; and the second is, present communion and fellowship with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these two cannot be separated without loss to our souls; for we cannot have all the profit without both of them. If we are not looking for the coming of the Lord, there is nothing whatever that can separate in the same way from this present evil world; neither will Christ Himself be so much the object before the soul; nor yet shall we be able, in the same measure, to apprehend the mind and counsel of God about the world.

Again, if this hope be looked at apart from present communion and fellowship with God, we shall not have present power, the heart being enfeebled from the mind being too much occupied and overborne by the evil around; for we cannot be really looking for God's Son from heaven without, at the same time, seeing the world's utter rejection of Him, and that the world is going wrong; its wise men having no wisdom, and all going on to judgment; the principles of evil loosening all bonds, etc.; and the soul becomes oppressed, and the heart sad; but if through grace, the Christian is in present communion and fellowship with God, his soul stands steady, and is calm and happy before God, because there is a fund of blessing in Him which no circumstances can ever touch or change. The evil tidings are heard, the sorrow is seen, but his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, which carries him far above every circumstance. Brethren, we all want this. To walk steadily with God we need both this fellowship and this hope.

I do not believe that a Christian can have his heart scripturally right unless he is looking for God's Son from heaven. There could be no such thing as attempting to set the world right if its sin in rejecting Christ were fully seen, and, moreover there never will be a correct judgment formed of the character of the world until that crowning sin be apprehended by the soul. To a Christian who is looking and waiting for Christ to come from heaven, Christ Himself is unspeakably more the object before the soul. It is not only that I shall get to heaven and be happy, but that the Lord Himself is coming from heaven for me, and all that are His with me. It is this that gives its character to the joy of the saint. As Christ Himself says, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also" -- when I find my delight, then shall you find yours also, I with you, and you with me, -- "For ever with the Lord." You may think to find good, or to produce good in man, but you will never find ~~the present truth~~ ^{the present truth} ~~in the world, the first Adam~~ ^{in the world, the first Adam}

may be cultivated, but it is the first Adam still; the second Adam will never be found there, being rejected by the world. And it is the looking for this rejected Lord which stamps the whole character and walk of the saints.

Then again, there is another thing connected with my waiting for God's Son from heaven. I have not yet got with one I love, and while waiting for Him I am going through the world tired and worn with the spirit and character of everything around me; and the more I am in communion with God, the more keenly shall I feel the spirit of the world to be a weariness to me, although God still upholds my soul in fellowship and communion with Himself. Therefore Paul says in 2 Thess. 1 "To you who are troubled, rest with us." So then I get rest to my spirit now in waiting for Christ, knowing that when He comes He will have everything His own way. For the coming of the Lord, which will be trouble to the world, will be to the saints full and everlasting rest. Still, it is not that we are to be "weary and faint in our minds." It is not a right thing to be weary of the service and conflict. Oh, no! rather let us be victorious every day. Still, it is not rest to be fighting.

However, when walking with God, it is not so much thinking of combat, as joying in God Himself.

This I shall know all the better when I am in the glory; my soul will be enlarged, and more capable of enjoying what God really is, but it is the same kind of joy I have now as I shall have when He comes to be glorified in His saints; only greater in degree. And if this joy in God is now in my soul in power, it hides the world from me altogether, and becomes a spring of love to those in the world. For though I may be tired of the combat, still, I feel there are people in the world that need the love I enjoy, and I desire that they should possess it, as it is the joy of what God is for me that sustains me, and carries me through all the conflict. So that our souls should be exercised on both the fellowship and the hope; for if I look for Christ's coming apart from this fellowship and communion with God fills my heart, it flows out towards all those that have need of it, towards saints and sinners according to their need; for if I feel the exercise of the power of this love in my heart, I shall be going out to serve others, as it is the power of this love that enables me to go through the toil and labor of service, from the attachment to Christ which leads to service, though through suffering for His sake. If my soul is wrapped up in the second Adam, attachment to Christ puts its right stamp upon all that is of the first Adam.

When this love has led out into active service, then the conflict, doubtless, will be found as in 2 Cor. 1, where it is present blessing in the midst of trial. But in 2 Thess. 1, it is tribulations, and not rest out of it, until the Lord comes; "that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." In 2 Cor. 1:3, 4, there is present blessing in the midst of the trial -- "who comforteth us in all our tribulation"; so that if the sufferings for Christ's sake be ours, there are at the same time, the comfortings of God in the soul. How rich a spring of blessing is this in return for this poor little trouble of mind! I get God pouring into my soul the revelation of Himself; I get God communicating Himself to my soul; for it is really that. I find it to be a present thing; it comes home to me, to my heart, the very joy of God, God delighting in me, and I in God. He identifies Himself with those who suffer for Him. There is no time for God's coming into a soul like the time of trial, for in no way does He so fully reveal Himself to the soul as when He is exercising

it in trial. There is astonishing power in this; for the amazing power with which Christ is to us present power and consolation is by His coming in, in present living power, even whilst these poor mortal bodies are unchanged. Ours are not yet redeemed with power, though they are bought with a price; but we have in Christ the life and the power; and, in spite of all, God is pouring in these consolations when we are in tribulations, showing the kind of power in Christ by which I am lifted up above every circumstance of trial; "The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

The Remembrancer 10:45-50.

Chapter 6.3:

The First Century Saints were put in an Expectant Posture

INTRODUCTION

It is purposed in this chapter to show that the first century Christians were placed in an expectant posture. They were not to say, My Lord delays His coming. They went out to meet the Bridegroom, though, alas, the saints eventually went to sleep with respect to this truth. The importance of this expectant posture has been noted thus:

As we all know, even unconverted men know perfectly well, if saints were waiting for Christ their whole lives would be changed. There is not a man does not know it. Do you think people would be heaping up money, or dressing themselves in finery to meet the Lord? If this was acted upon, it would change everything in our lives; that is what the Lord gave it for. "Let your loins be girded about" -- a figure for all the heart in order, the state you are always to be in -- like a porter at the door, "that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately." That is what the Lord looks for in the saints. . . .

Accordingly the more you look into scripture, the more you will see not merely that it is a truth taught, but a truth held up before the hearts and minds of the disciples that they should habitually be looking for the Lord. It would change everything; it is no use saying it would not: every unconverted person knows it would. They would do their ordinary duties of course, and be the more diligent in them. This is the special blessing in Luke 12: "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching." He ministers to them heavenly blessing. Then when He goes on to service, "Who then is that faithful and wise servant whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." When I get the state of the heart, watching for Christ, it is heavenly blessedness with Him: when I get service, it is the kingdom.¹⁰

J. N. Darby remarked,

People who attempt to fix time are wholly mistaken. The Father has kept that in His own power. Not that we may not discern the times; the Lord says, "How is it that ye do not discern this time?"

There are moral elements around us that a spiritual mind discerns at once; but the fixing of dates is a mistake.

It is no mistake to be always expecting the Lord to return.

The object of the conversion of the Thessalonians was to wait for God's Son from heaven. . . .

The present constant expectation of Christ stamps its own character on the Christian: "Ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding."

It is by this that the Christian, in his mind and thoughts, becomes associated with Christ Himself. You find this specially in the letter to the church at Philadelphia, for there, besides keeping His word, and not denying His name, you read, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience." Whose patience?

Christ's. Christ is waiting; and He is waiting a great deal more truly and earnestly than we are.

We are waiting for Him, and He is waiting for us, with all the love that the Bridegroom bears to the bride.

True, He is waiting until His enemies be made His footstool; but, for His friends, He has perfected His work; and He sits expecting as to His enemies, and then He will rise up to judgment. He does not know the time in that sense (of course, as God, He does) but it is not a revealed thing yet.

He is waiting, and we wait for Him, but so complete is the association, now in spirit, and then in glory, that save His personal glory, He cannot take any glory until He has us with Him, for we are joint heirs with Him.

It is blessed association with Himself that we find in Revelation 3:8-11.

In the first four churches you find the ecclesiastical order of things in the world closing with Thyatira which goes on "till I come." Thyatira ends entirely the whole moral history of the church of God until Christ comes. Consequently, you get there both the kingdom and the heavenly part of the saints. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." That is the kingdom according to the second Psalm.

"And I will give him the morning star" -- that is Christ according to the New Testament. . . .As soon as he says "morning star" in Revelation 22:16, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come."

In the first four churches, when Christ is spoken of, it is in the terms by which He is described when among the golden candlesticks, but this is not the case in the latter three.

"He that hath the key of David," has no place in that which John saw in Christ in Revelation 1.

But it is Christ's coming which is brought before us.

In Philadelphia we get, "I know thy works," but there is not a word said about them, the saints must be content to wait till the Lord comes.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience," that was Christ's own path down here, and we are to walk in it now -- now that we are at the end of a dispensation, which, as an outward system, has wholly departed from God.

Christ down here had none of the things that belonged to Him. As a man, He simply lived by every word of God. He did not take up the pretension of power, but He walked in obedience, and that is just our place. And mark, they should, consequently, be kept "from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

At, and from, the very beginning, the Lord's coming was presented as the immediate expectation and hope of the believer; while in no case is the thought of the coming of Christ put beyond the life of those who were living then.

The history of the church is not given as a thing that is to continue, but it is all brought out in churches that then existed.¹¹

Let us, then, survey a number of scriptures and see that the heavenly hope is warp and woof of scripture; and once seeing that, let us be assured that this is the answer to objections against the heavenly hope. God has not laid us under obligation to remove every objection opposers make. If, happily, one is enabled by grace to remove objections, as a help to fellow believers, it is a service to Christ, but in nowise incumbent upon the Christian. Let us each for ourselves be expecting our Beloved to take us where He is!

DO THE PARABLES PREDICT A "LONG PROGRAM"?

One of the ways in which those passages that "seem" to teach the any-moment expectation is circumvented is to allege that the parables of our Lord indicate a long program for the age, and by that is meant, of course, a program longer than the life of the apostles. Now, nothing could be more opposed to the patent facts of the case. It is the same wheat planted that is harvested (Matt. 13). The Lord returns in the life-time of the servants (see, for example, Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27, etc.). The parables are so written as to allow the expectation of Christ's return in their life-time. The following trenchant remarks by J. N. Darby on the parable of the ten virgins are very apropos here.

The parable of the ten virgins teaches us the Bridegroom tarried. How long? The picture is all the affair of one night and of the same virgins. That is, it tells us there must be patient watching for an unknown moment (in which they failed); but gives no idea of any prolongation; but it does give a principle which is of the deepest instruction to us, where we have by facts learned the long delay. But this it clearly shows, that not to have been always watching was the culpable

11. *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 84-86. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

neglect of the Church. While He tarried, they went to sleep, and had to be not only awakened but called out unto their original position. **To say that a sudden awakening of sleepers by a midnight cry is the perception of continuous signs by a wakeful heart capable of appreciating them, is worthy of the system.** There has been a protracted scene. That the Church was taught to look for it is deplorably false; and to use the fact so as to lead souls to think that such a constant expectation was false, is the work of the enemy. Ought not the virgins to have been watching? Were they taught that an orderly and detailed system of things was placed before the Church which must be gone through? The conclusion is, "watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." ¹²

The evil servant in Matt. 24:45-51 said, "My Lord delays his coming." And why is this noted in the parable if not because the point is the moral tendency of that thought about delay? He put the coming off in his "heart." It was just what was wrong. He ought to have been expecting. His words betray a cessation of a present expectation.

All of the parables are stated so as not to compromise an expectant posture. But that is a gross understatement. They do inculcate readiness and expectancy and the one noted above condemns the thought of delay. The harvest took place in the same season that the crop was planted (Matt. 13). The Lord returned in the lifetime of the servants (Matt. 13; Matt. 25:14-30 "after a long time" (Matt. 25:19) does not mean "after their lifetime"; Luke 19). We need not labor the point. It is simply incomprehensible how anyone can derive "a long program for the age" from our Lord's parables when they so patently inculcate expectancy. The phenomenon shows what effect a theological system has on the mind and heart.

MY LORD DELAYS HIS COMING

Thus, the parables are so presented as to not compromise the expectant posture of the saints. They depict the Lord coming in one season, or in one night, or in one life-time. We have not considered in detail the parable of Matt. 24:45-51 wherein the evil servant said in his heart "My Lord delays to come." Can anyone really imagine that he ought not to have been expecting His Lord to come? His fault is that *He put it off*.

There are many the tendency of whose teaching is to delay the Lord's coming. His grace keeps His own from the *fully* worked out consequences of that tendency. When the tendency of the thought "my Lord delays his coming" is unchecked by God, the end result is seen in this parable.

A posttribulationist, A. Reese objected:

12. *Collected Writings* 10:414, 415.

Anyone who will consider carefully the Scriptures just cited, will have no difficulty in seeing that what the Lord condemned in the servant was not that he realized that the master had delayed his arrival, but that he proceeded to get drunk and ill-treat his brethren. As [S. P.] Tregelles says: --

His sin is the *use* which he makes of his partial knowledge, instead of his employing it to lead him the more definitely to watch for the promised indication of his master's coming. He who looks for promised events as indications of the Lord's advent, will not rest for a moment in the events themselves; their value is, that they lead on the thoughts and affections to Him for whom the Church is called to watch and wait, and who has Himself promised these signs to His expecting people. To watch unscripturally is really not to watch at all; but to substitute something of emotion and sentiment for the "patient waiting for Christ" (*loc. cit.*, pp. 63-4).¹³

That is, all who are really expecting Christ to come, at any time, apart from signs, are watching unscripturally and so not watching at all! Now, we do not return this foolish remark in kind, for there is a sense in which post-tribulationists may be watching. But it illustrates the absurd statements that will be made and repeated when the plain force of a scripture is rejected. Now, note well, that these writers find nothing wrong in the servant saying, "my Lord delays to come." It was all right. It was partial knowledge. His sin was not in saying it, but in its misuse. A. Reese is worse yet, for *he* says the servant (merely) realized that the master had delayed.

The truth is that it was not the "*use* which he made of his partial knowledge." Rather, his conduct is traced to the thought in his heart which fathered the conduct. That *does* seem rather self-evident.

Thus is the passage harmonized with post-tribulationism and emptied of the warning for *the heart*. "But if that evil bondman should say in his heart, my lord delays to come". . . Let that scripture speak in our very soul! Cp. Luke 12:45. The context of Luke 12:45 also deals with attitude concerning expectancy.

It is not suggested by the phrase, "my Lord delays to come," that the objectors cited are evil servants, hypocrites, as was the servant in Matt. 24:48. I *do* suggest, however, that these objections show the influence of the thought, "my Lord delays to come."

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Extract on Reception

[The following is taken from W. Kelly, *The Brethren and Their Traducers*, London: Morrish, no date.]

Every saint who walks as such is received unconditionally in the Lord's name. This, and no other, is our basis. I am told that it is not so, and that I know it right well! What is the reason for the unbecoming speeches in pp. 27,28? "If a child of God comes to you from Mr. Newton's congregation, would you receive him at your table?" I answer, certainly not, because we are satisfied that such an one, if a child of God is *not* walking as such, and is, therefore, inadmissible at the Lord's table.¹ How could one be suffered to break bread whom we believe to be a partaker of the evil deeds of a blasphemer against the Lord? The general principle of welcoming every Christian, without imposing conditions of ours, is in no way contradicted by the most resolute refusal of those who dishonour Christ's name morally, or of others who bring not the doctrine of Christ -- a still more terrible and fatal form of sin. 1 Cor. 5 is no plainer for parting from an immoral man that is called a brother, than 2 John is for rejecting such as do not hold a true Christ.² It matters not what may seem to be their personal qualities: Christ himself ought to be infinitely more precious; and true love is proved by abhorring that which is evil, as really as by cleaving to what is good. Scripture is too explicit to allow a loop-hole of escape from the positive obligation of the Christian as to this vital matter.

Further, 2 John is decisive that it is not enough to be personally sound in the faith. Even a woman, the elect lady, is instructed by the apostle as to her own direct responsibility, if any one sought her house or fellowship who brought false doctrine about Christ. "If there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine [of Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." That is to say, the principle is distinctly laid down, that the person who religiously countenances those who confess not the Christ of God, becomes a partaker of the *evil deeds* of the deceiver, even without necessarily imbibing the *evil doctrine*. Indeed, a spiritual mind would feel that dreadful as it is to be misled for a time into such heresy, he is incomparably more guilty who, professing to hold the true doctrine of Christ, consents to fellowship with the man who denies it. "Now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

Now this is the attitude of "Brethren" towards the alleged blasphemer and his partizans. *If we suppose for a moment that the blasphemy is a fact*, 2 John not only vindicates the course complained of, but shows that it is an imperative duty, which

1. [Observe that here W. Kelly said that a child of God who has fellowship with a teacher of evil doctrine is not walking as a child of God and is therefore not to be received at the Lord's table.]

2. The remarks in page 29, do not deserve notice. What I censured was the error of making love, in contra-distinction to holiness, either the centre or the principle of unity: whereas love is rather its energetic motive. The truth is, that Christ is the centre, love the active spring, and holiness the principle of unity according to God and His Word. To call these certain elementary truths "hair-splitting," is only to expose one's ignorance to spiritual men.

admits of neither hesitation nor compromise. Had the elect lady, spite of the apostolic warning, deliberately received one who brought not the doctrine of Christ, she would have at once become identified with the guilt of the deceiver, and its consequences. In vain the plea that she was herself a godly christian, and sound in faith: still the Word pronounces -- a "partaker of his evil deeds." She would, knowingly in this case, for her own ease have committed herself to an act of high treason against the Lord; she would have yielded to overt communion with that which to the last degree dishonoured His person: and thus, till she had cleared herself from the sin, in the sight of God and man, she would have sunk morally to the level of an accomplice. If she had better light, so much the worse to behave as if she had none. To receive her, under such circumstances, would be to participate in similar wickedness; it would be receiving her not to the glory of God, but to His shame, because it would be barefaced indifference to the affront put upon His Son. And "whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." "Brethren" have given pretty strong proof that they do not make light of ecclesiastical evil, by separating from all associations which involve departure from God's Word; but they refuse to put such questions on the same platform with deep, damnable, fundamental denial of Christ. The Word of God, not any theory or rule of ours, is the warrant for both. Did we follow our thoughts or our natural wishes, it is folly to suppose that we should pursue a course which separates us from hundreds and thousands, who would desire to be with us on condition of our letting them tamper with this treason against the Lord. Does such a course look much like anxiety for numbers?

Apostasy:
or,
"Thou hast left thy first love."

There can be no doubt, that there is a *particular* work, which the Lord has in view, at any particular period of the Church's history, when He is acting in any power. It becomes, therefore, a matter of particular interest, to know what is the special truth, which the Lord has in view at a given time, because thus, with increased intelligence, we become fellow-workers with Him.

With regard to ourselves and the Lord's special work now, is it not an *internal* one? The Lord's promise was, that previous to His actual return the cry should go forth again, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet Him." That cry was to act upon *themselves*. "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed *their* lamps." What then the Lord has awakened our attention to now, is the solemn fact that *all* have slumbered, wise and foolish together, whilst the Bridegroom has tarried: in fact, the complete apostasy, and departure of the *professing Church* from the truth and position once delivered to the saints. We find that we have been enveloped in *corruption*; the question is, how to escape that corruption?

It is not merely coming out of human ecclesiastical organizations, though that is necessary; we *must* (if we would be found in obedience to the Lord) come out of every body that is not gathered on Scriptural principles, else we never can have even a fair start: still, if we carry with us the seeds of corruption, unheeded and unjudged, the result will be the same again, yea even worse, by reason of our increased light, responsibility, and profession.

If we would then get the Lord's watchword now, I believe it is, "To him that overcometh" (and that is within): and if we would know *what* it is that is to be overcome, I believe it is indicated in that word, "Thou hast left thy *first love*." To suppose that we have not to overcome even *within*, because we have taken a position of separation, even if it were separation sevenfold, would only entirely betray us, and perhaps plunge us in the same corruption. If we then search from the word of God, what are the *causes* and principles of corruption, what the preservative, I believe we shall find them singularly simple. *Resting in present attainment*, I believe we shall find the whole, that is, the general secret of it. Look at Israel, and how distinctly do we find the whole, that is, the general secret of it. Look at Israel, and how distinctly do we find it traced! In Deut. 32, after all the marvellous grace of -- "He found him. . . in a waste howling wilderness, He led him about. . . made him to suck honey out of the rock: butter of kine. . . and the pure blood of the grape " -- how comes in the corruption? He rests *self-complacently* in the goodness of God to him, instead of resting on, and *walking with*, God Himself, as a *present* thing: "Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness;" and, as a *natural* consequence, "he forsook God, which *made* him, and *lightly* esteemed the Rock of his salvation." That whole song is of the last importance; it is, I think, God's anatomy of man's corruption. We get the same account of the process, and God's pain at this leaving of the first love in Jer. 2:2. "Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the *kindness* [or '*deep affection*'] of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of His increase. . . Thus saith the Lord. What iniquity have your fathers found in *Me*?" &c. He reminds them (ver. 6) of the desert land He led them through (ver. 7) "I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof, and the *goodness* thereof; but when ye *entered*, ye defiled My land, and made My heritage an abomination." "My people have committed two evils, they have forsaken Me the Fountain of *living* waters (ver. 13), and *hewed them out* cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." The same is traced with full distinctness in Ezek. 16. "Thy father was an Amorite, thy mother a Hittite. . . I passed by, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood. . . and said, Live. . . I have caused thee to

multiply, . . . thy breasts are fashioned. . . thou was decked with gold, . . . *thy renown* went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through *My* comeliness, which *I* had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. But thou DIDST TRUST in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot BECAUSE OF thy renown;" and so forth. In our Lord's time, there He found them: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have *Abraham* to our father."

Turn now to the Gentile (Rom. 11). Its snare would be, "Be not high-minded." In Rev. 2 we get Christ's own delineation of the corruption. Every evil which we get in Thyatira, Sardis, or Laodicea, has, I believe, its germ in that simple word at Ephesus, "Thou hast left thy *first love*," amidst all the height, to which the Ephesian Epistle evidently shows God had brought them, and Christ's address bears witness too (vs. 2,3).

Surely, then, these things are written before us with a pencil of light: and it must be of no slight importance to the believer to take heed to them. If we would get the preservative, "Christ's love" supplies one, and Phil. 3:13, another aspect: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this *one* thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling [or, rather, 'calling on high'] of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be *perfect*, be thus minded." This, therefore, should be our spring, kept simple and fresh to the *end*: "The love of Christ *constraineth* us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto *themselves*, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." This, I say, should be our motive, simple and fresh to the end. And then, as the apostle says, "forgetting those things which are *behind*." When this is not the case, when the soul rests in *attainments made*, it becomrs *self-satisfied*: it rests in the knowledge, perhaps, previously heaped up, which like the manna, only breeds worms, and becomes corrupt, for want of being gathered day by day. And I would remark that all knowledge of truth gathered beyond our present communion, is not only not a blessing, but an *injury*. We can place *no* limit to the extent to which the Lord may teach and lead us on, but when once knowledge becomes an object to me apart from the Lord Himself, I may as well, and better, be employed about some other object. The hardest conscience of all often to deal with and arouse, is that which knows everything. You can tell them nothing new. Their previous knowledge without communion, is like a foil put upon "the sword of the Spirit," it makes it dull, ineffectual. Further, the being thus laden with vain knowledge, makes the believer restless, like an overloaded stomach, that does not know what is the matter with it. He has no longer an appetite for simple things. He must have something new and overpowering, or something to meet his particular taste.

Well does the wise man say, "The full soul *loatheth* the honey-comb, whilst to the hungry soul every *bitter* thing is sweet." Oftentimes he mistakes this restlessness and dissatisfaction for *spirituality*, not knowing that the complaint is in himself; he is not at the right point for satisfaction (John 6:35), and therefore dissatisfied with everything and every one.

May we not well look to our own hearts: how is it with *our* hearts as to this? Are we as simple and fresh as we once were? The example of Ephesus is full to the point. May we then cultivate that simple taste, cherishing, loving, and receiving *all* that is of God, be it *weak* or *strong* (for one may err either way, Exod. 23:3,6). Let us love the *whole* word of God, not forming to ourselves particular tastes, and choosing particular parts, for "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is *profitable*. . . that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly* furnished." Let us seek grace to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time, our speech characterized by grace, seasoned with salt. Furthermore, whilst remembering the injunction, "prove all things, hold fast that which is good," let us carefully guard against a critical spirit which really saps true spirituality and savours strongly of Phariseism.

"Preach the word," says Paul to Timothy (and that in view of the "last days,") "reprove, rebuke, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" for the love of Christ, for the work of Christ. Do we take as much delight in His word, for its or His own sake, not for mere knowledge? Surely there ought to be an *appetite* about this, "*As new-born babes desire* the sincere milk of the word, that ye may *grow* thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2). But remember the caution in the first verse, which, if not attended to, will cause the appetite to be impaired if not altogether destroyed: "Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings."

I have endeavoured to show then, that the root of all apostasy and corruption (and we know not to what length that may go -- the more has been the knowledge, joy, and activity, the *deeper* it sinks when corrupted), is to be found in resting in *present attainment*, instead of being kept *freshly* in the love of Christ.

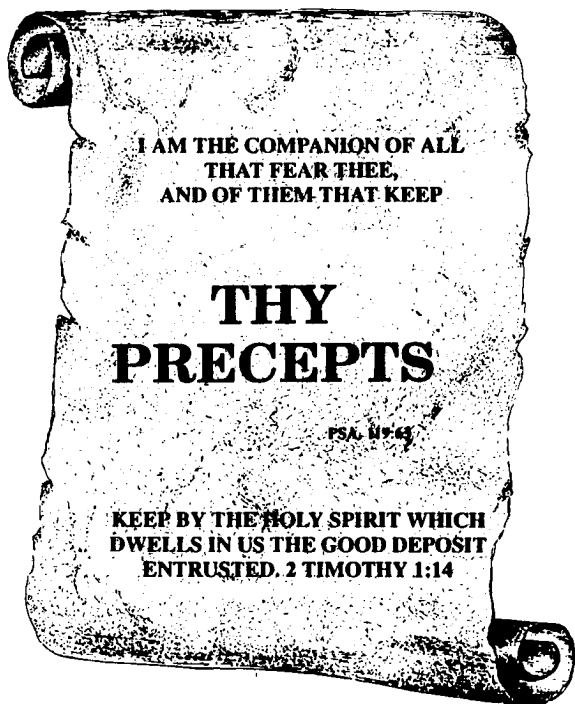
Nothing is more healthful to one's own soul than the carefully bearing forth of the Gospel publicly or privately. Distaste for that is a bad sign indeed.

And if our poor hearts at all feel that we have slipped back, and fallen under the power of corruption, O how blessedly still does *Christ* meet us; "*I counsel* thee to buy of ME gold tried in the fire, that thou *mayest* be rich, and white raiment that thou *mayest* be clothed." To HIM be glory!

The Remembrancer 19:212-220.

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Computerized Index

Two computerized indices are in preparation for use in databases:

1. JNDINDEX. This index already has over 11,000 references in it. If the Lord will, it will be made available in ASCII format.
2. BTINDEX. This index is in process of being computerized at this time. If the Lord will, it will also be made available in ASCII format.

When they are ready for distribution, *Thy Precepts* will carry a notice about that.

Books Written by J. N. Darby

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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

The Glory of the Son of Man as Witnessed in the Cross.

The supreme blessedness of the saints when they shall have their part with Christ above, will be to behold His glory. "Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Such is the desire of the Son of God for the objects of His love. Nothing can satisfy His love, short of having us with Himself, and like Himself, in the place His love has prepared for us in the Father's house. But there, too, He would have us behold His glory -- the glory given Him of the Father, who loved Him before the foundation of the world; and, if He is our all, to behold *His* glory in that day will be our deepest delight. But if such will be the case *then*, can it be otherwise *now* than that the renewed nature should be moved, and that we should be led to adore and worship, as the Spirit of God unfolds His different glories before our wondering eyes?

Let us, as the Holy Spirit enables us, seek to contemplate a little the glory of our blessed Lord as it shines out at the cross.

It was man's hour, and the power of darkness (Luke 22:53). Satan had entered into Judas, and he had gone out in the darkness of the night, to accomplish his foul designs. Jesus knew this, and saw the cross before Him with all that was to be accomplished there for the glory of God amid the deepening darkness of that terrible hour. Conscious of His own personal glory in the presence of this stupendous work, and knowing well what the issue would be, He said: "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).

Here we have three glorifyings:

- (1) The Son of man glorified,
- (2) God glorified in the Son of man,

- (3) The Son of man glorified in God; that is, the Son of man goes into the glory of God.

It is to the first of these we desire to call special attention: "Now is the Son of man glorified." The thought we have before us is, that the work of the cross was the Son of man's glory. There His intrinsic moral and personal glory shone forth with a brilliancy that will never grow dim -- a brilliancy that lightens up eternity, and in the light of which we shall worship forever.

There was not only the question of man's ruin and need: there was the question of God's glory in a scene where His character had been traduced, and where sin had spread its deadly blight on every side. Sin must be judged; God's character, His majesty, His righteousness, His holiness, His truth, His love, must be made good. Who could sustain the glory and majesty of God in His judgment of sin? Who in the presence of this awful judgment could declare and make manifest before the universe that "God is love"? The Son of man. He, and He alone, could do this; and to do this was His *glory*. That a man -- the Son of man -- should do this, will be the wonder of wonders throughout eternity. That this Man is the incarnate Word, the Son, the brightness of God's glory, and the exact expression of His substance, I need hardly say. Yet it is the Son of man we have before us here, and the shining forth of His glory in that work of the cross on which God's glory will rest forever.

In order to get the truth of this more fully before our hearts let us compare other Scriptures.

In Lev. 16, we have Israel's great day of atonement. Various directions are given in the opening verses. Verse 11 gives us the first real action of the day -- the killing of the bullock. This is the death of the atoning victim, the foundation of all. For us it is the death of the Lord Jesus.

Now it might be supposed the next thing would be the sprinkling of the blood; but such was not the case. The first thing after the death of the victim was the burning of the incense: "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail; and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not."

What is this incense? And what is the burning before the Lord? We learn from Exod. 30:34-38, that this incense was a "perfume," "pure and holy," compounded after the art of the apothecary. It was to be beaten small, and placed before the testimony. It was to be "most holy," and none was to be made like it, on pain of death. On the day of atonement it was burnt on the censer

before the Lord, immediately after the killing of the bullock. Out of this burning arose a cloud -- "the cloud of the incense" -- which covered the mercy seat.

The killing of the bullock was in type the death of Christ. That death was under the fire of God's judgment. And what could this cloud of incense be but the sweet savor of Christ -- the sweet and holy perfume which arose out of that awful burning? Not the sprinkling of the blood, but the burning of this pure and holy incense, was the first thing after the death of the holy victim. And the sweet perfume of that most holy and infinitely precious Sacrifice, was the first thing that rose up before God in the death of the Lord Jesus. That death of holy obedience told out the glory of His person, and spread abroad the savor of His perfections.

That tabernacle was the sanctuary of Jehovah's glory. The mercy seat was His throne. Between the Cherubim, over the mercy seat, dwelt the Shechinah, the visible cloud of glory, which witnessed the presence of Jehovah. The glory and majesty of Him who dwelt there must be made good on that day of atonement. And this we have presented to us in type. Out of the burning incense on the censer of the high priest arose a cloud of glory that covered the mercy seat. This was the glory that answered to the glory between the cherubim -- glory equal to that glory -- glory giving its value to the blood of the victim, which was to be sprinkled before and on the mercy seat: and so it was said, "that he die not." In short, it is the intrinsic personal glory and infinite perfections of the Son of man, witnessed in His death on the cross, in which He sustained the full weight of the glory and majesty of God in the judgment of sin, and in that scene of deepest anguish and unparalleled sorrow, made good the truth that "God is love," as well as "light."

Let us turn now to Ps. 22. The psalm opens with the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was the cry of the Lord Jesus on the cross, where He was made sin for us; and where, under the holy judgment of God, He bore our sins. In obedience to the will of God, and for the glory of God, He had gone down under the waves and billows of divine judgment, and out of that abyss of darkness and unequalled sorrow He cried, and was not heard. Oh! where was ever sorrow like His sorrow? The fathers had cried to God, and had been delivered, but to Him the heavens were brass. Lover and friend were far away -- none to comfort; His enemies were against Him; the power and malice and rage of Satan were there; yet all this was as nothing compared with being forsaken of God. It was the anguish of the outer darkness. And yet, while the question "Why?" ascends from those awful depths, no murmur escapes His holy lips; though stroke after stroke of divine judgment falls upon Him for sins not His own, no word of resentment or rebellion is heard. On the contrary He owns the holiness of the hand that was bruising Him for sin; "But thou art holy, O

thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (verse 3). What is this, but the rising up of the cloud of incense from the burning censer, the holy perfume of the glory of the Son of man as tested under the fire of God's judgment?

In Rev. 16 we have the plagues and judgments of God visited upon men because of their wickedness, with the result that a stream of blasphemy against God issues from their wicked and rebellious hearts, the pressure of judgment bringing out just what was there. How different with Christ! The unmingled judgment of God falling upon Him brought forth the utterance of praise -- "Thou art holy." It brought out just what was there -- what He was. Bruise a noxious weed, and it will emit its foulest odors; bruise a lovely rose, and it will emit its sweetest perfume. So with wicked men; so with Christ.

Men ask: If wicked men are punished eternally for their sins, why did not Christ suffer eternally when He took the place of the sinner? The answer is simple. The judgment of God never produces repentance in the sinner. Its only effect is to bring out all the rebellion of a heart that is incorrigible enmity against God. Man's rebellion and enmity continue forever, and God's judgment abides forever. But how was it with Christ? He suffered for our sins, the Just for the unjust. The full weight of God's wrath and judgment fell upon Him during the three hours of darkness. What was the effect? Instead of enmity, resentment or rebellion, there was perfect submission. The only answer to the crushing blows of judgment was, -- "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." This was the holy perfume of the burning incense. I ask, *could* God go on bruising forever that holy and blessed One, when every stroke of judgment only brought out the intrinsic glory and moral loveliness of what He was, the burning of the censer filling the very heavens with the sweet and holy perfume of that precious incense? It could not be. A moment must come when God must say, I am satisfied, I am glorified, and when the sword of divine judgment must be put back in its scabbard. The character of the Victim was such that it must be so. The value of the work was commensurate with the glory of the Person whose work it was.

Oh! what a Savior! what perfection! what beauty! what moral loveliness! what glory! Who would not worship and adore in His presence! Who would not cry, Worthy, worthy, worthy, the Lamb that was slain! In his presence our souls have rest, and our hearts adore, as we gaze upon the glory that shone out amid the darkness of Calvary, -- the glory of Him who not only glorified God, but who has met all our deep need, and in the sweet savor of whose work we stand before God accepted forever, -- yea, "accepted in the Beloved."

The Remembrancer 12:72-80.

The Holiness of Christian Fellowship

4

Chapter 4.1:

2 Timothy 2:16-22: Organized Evil and Our Responsibility

(Continued)

How to be a Vessel to Honour

If therefore one ¹ shall have purified himself from these . . . (2 Tim. 2:21).

J. N. Darby has a footnote to the word "purified" which says:

The word for 'purified' is only found here and in 1 Cor. 5:7, 'Purge out.' There it was to get rid of the old leaven out of the lump; here the one who names the name of the Lord has to purge himself out from among the vessels. Hence we have an additional preposition which is rendered by 'separating from.' Lit. 'purified himself away from these.'

A vessel to honor is one that honors the Lord in his associations. In order to be a sanctified vessel, a vessel to honour, we must purge ourselves. It is only purged vessels that are vessels to honour. Keeping up outward unity with the toleration of evil within is evil -- and this adds to the character of what the Lord commands those who call on the name of the Lord to withdraw from. Commenting on such 'unity,' J. N. Darby wrote:

1. This is speaking about you, not some special servants of Christ.

The unity of the assembly is so precious, it has such authority over the heart of man, that there was a danger, when failure had set in, lest the desire for outward unity should induce even the faithful to accept evil and walk in fellowship with it, rather than break this unity. The principle therefore of individual faithfulness, of individual responsibility to God, is established, and set above all other considerations; for it has to do with the nature of God Himself [as light], and His own authority over the conscience of the individual.²

W. Kelly said:

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" (1 Cor. 5:13). 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 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. 5 is applied to put the evil-doer out. In 2 Tim. 2 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 sanctified 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" (1 Cor. 5:8). 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 purge himself from these vessels to dishonor.³

It is not the question of discipline -- dealing with evil ways; but here we are in a state of things where we are in danger of being mixed up with vessels unto the Lord's dishonor. Nothing can sanction this. I am not at liberty of course to leave Christendom, I dare not get out of the great house at all; indeed I cannot (at any rate without becoming an apostate) leave the house of God, however bad its state may be. This is evidently not the true remedy -- to abandon the confession of Christ: only an apostate could think of it. On the other hand, it is unholy to tamper with evil. Therefore it is incumbent for the Christian to look to this gravely, -- never to be dragged by the fear of breaking unity into accrediting what dishonors the Lord. Now this is in particular a difficulty for saints, when they have revived before the soul the blessedness of maintaining the unity of the Spirit. It can never cease to be a Christian's duty to maintain the unity of the Spirit; but it is not maintaining the unity of the Spirit to couple with

2. *Synopsis, in loco.*

3. *An Exposition of the Two Epistles to Timothy*, London: Hammond, p. 233, third ed., reprint, 1948.

the name of the Lord that which is fleshly and sinful. It is well to be exclusive of sin, but of nothing else. It is well to maintain the largest heart for everything that is really of Christ. But we must exclude that which is contrary to His name; and the very same desire to prove one's love, one's faith, one's appreciation of Christ, will make one anxious not to be dragged into that which is not for His glory.⁴

In Timothy, then, meaning of purging is the same as in 1 Cor. 5, i. e., removal of. However, the ruin had come to the point that the only remedy was that ONE should purge HIMSELF from . . . This shows that a change had taken place in the general condition of the professing church and the Christian might find himself in fellowship with evil that is being tolerated. The purging has in view how a person is a vessel to honor. Clearly, the vessels to honor are persons.⁵ Clearly, then, the vessels to dishonor are persons⁶ also. The vessels do not

4. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, London: Broom, p. 403, 1869.

5. Alan G. Nute wrote:

That departure 'from unrighteousness', rather than separation from individuals, is Paul's intended meaning is plain, because vessels could hardly 'purge' themselves from other vessels . . . (*The New Layman's Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 1667, 1979).

This is absurd. The man of 1 Cor. 5 was purged out. This was purging a vessel out of the fellowship of other vessels.

6. Many will not have it that this is separation from persons. Following is a sample:

"If a man purge himself from these" does not mean one or more servants of Christ separating from other servants, for that would tend to fill with pride and conceit for the separatists, besides contravening Rom. 14:4 -- "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Neither does it mean one or more or many of the children of God separating themselves from other *children of God* -- the subject of association of *persons* not being under review in the context. What is reviewed, however, is the servant of Christ's own moral and spiritual *condition*, as in 1 Tim. 5:22 -- "keep thyself pure," and as in the context, "shun profane and vain babblings" (v. 16) (*Faith and the Flock*, 1908, p. 445).

The brazen impudence of this defiant contradiction of the apostle's injunctions has led the writer into perversion of Rom. 14, which has to do with patience on the part of Gentile Christians with Jewish converts who still have a conscience concerning certain things from Judaism. I suggest reading W. Kelly's comments on Rom. 14 in his exposition of Romans. Moreover, consider his self-congratulating, gratuitous and insolent assumption that the "separatists" will "tend" to show the attitude he paints to frighten his reader. Do you think that JND, J. G. Bellett, E. Dennett, etc. had such an attitude? How many have shed tears on having to act on these Scriptures!

The Scripture-contradicting statement, "association of *persons* not being under review," has the character of what reigns in the very thing that is compared to a great house -- namely, the self-will of man, here set forth in a cloak of piety. The writer did not cite all of 1 Tim. 5:22, especially "nor partake [*koinoneo*] in other men's sins." "If any one come to you and bring not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not, for he who greets him partakes [*koinoneo*] in his wicked works" (2 John 10, 11). "Come out of her, my people, that ye have not fellowship [*koinoneo*] in her sins, and do not receive of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

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represent doctrines or unrighteous acts or noble/ignoble uses. Of course, a vessel to dishonor may teach or hold wicked teaching or act unrighteously. To be personally clear of holding evil doctrine is insufficient.

It is true that we must flee from our own lusts. It is also true that this is not the meaning of "purified himself from these"; not merely because that is obviously just a way to escape the purging of oneself from what is meant by vessels to dishonor, but because, *in addition to purging ourselves*, we are to flee youthful lusts (v. 22). It is plain that the vessels are persons and that the word "these" refers to persons.⁷ Indeed, all of the vessels are persons. Some are

6(...continued)

He has also perverted "shun profane and vain babblings" by implying that it means that Timothy is personally to utter none such. Now, of course he was not to utter such, but that is not the meaning. Hymenaeus and Philetus are cited by the apostle as examples to shun. Notice that the apostle says "of whom is . . .," thus making it clear so as to leave no excuse for this unholy paragraph by the writer. Why, it is *unrighteousness* to put forth such corrupting teaching for the *children of God* for whom he professed concern.

7. Henry Groves, the Son of A. N. Groves, was, as his father, an ardent supporter of Bethesda and the Open Brethren position, and very hostile to J. N. Darby. He edited a magazine, *The Golden Lamp*, in which appear explanations of 2 Tim. 2:19-21. He will not have it that the word "these" refers to persons:

To show the need of rightly dividing the Word, the writer alludes to another oft-quoted passage in 2 Tim. 2:21, from which very much is frequently deduced, by perverting its meaning, as if it read, "If a man *separate* himself from these," &c. . . . the word "purge" in this verse refers to cleansing that which is *within the person*, not to separating from those without; and that the Greek word used, *ἐκκαταίρω*, "I cleanse *out*," removes all doubt on the point (vol. 4, p. 83).

Apparently the Apostle did not do this, because he said, "evil is present with me" (Rom. 7:21). Moreover, at Corinth they had to purge out by putting away the wicked person (1 Cor. 5:13). *That* must also be weakened by him:

No one can *purge* himself *out* (as the Greek implies) from other persons. It might be said of a church that it purged out certain persons; but here it is "if a man," or "if any one." The same word occurs elsewhere in 1 Cor. 5:7: "*Purge out* therefore the old leaven," and there it refers to the putting away of "the leaven of malice and wickedness" (*The Golden Lamp*, New Series 4:47).

He is, in actuality, denying that in 1 Cor. 5, the purging refers to a person! He continued:

It appears therefore that, in 2 Tim. 2:21, by the word "*these*" the apostle refers to the leavening principles and practices of which he had already spoken in verses 14-19, and more or less throughout the epistle, all of which would be included in that "iniquity" from which everyone that nameth the name of Christ has to depart.

Not only did he not tell his readers how to "depart" he also did not mention the two persons in vv. 14-19. The same line of things is brought out again in New Series 9:48. Well, his will is set on having it that no purging out from association is meant -- and thus he helped on the character of what is likened to a great house.

Another Open Brethren publication, *The Northern Witness* 11:142, also asserted that the purging was "from babblings, from foolish questions, from iniquity of every kind; he must 'flee youthful lusts' (ver. 22) In *The Witness*, New Series, 1:16, some progress was made where

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believers and some are unbelievers. In addition, there is another character which marks vessels: some are to honour and some are to dishonour. However, only those purged from the vessels to dishonour are vessels to honour. Moreover, if a man who purges himself from vessels to dishonour is thereby a vessel to honour, then a man who does not purge himself is not a vessel to honour. Thus, being associated with vessels to dishonour does indeed affect a man. Do we understand that?

This involves that little-known (and often, where known, despised) doctrine of guilt by association. For this truth please refer to: 1 Cor. 5; Gal. 1:8; 5:9; 2 John 9, 10; 1 Tim. 5:22; Rev. 18:4; 2:14-16; Luke 11:47-51; 2 Cor. 6:17 with Num. 5:1-4; 1 Cor. 10:14-33; Haggai 2:11-14; Lev. 13-15; 2 Tim. 2.

Spiritual power in an evil day is manifested in separation from evil unto the Lord.

7(...continued)

three persons responded to a question.

Some Open Brethren who have recently written on 2 Timothy do say that we must purge ourselves from persons who are vessels to dishonor; but, interestingly do not comment on the state of Christians who do not do so, unless to say that such become "defiled," whatever that may mean; and the consequences upon fellowship with such is not discussed. But let us see how the well-known teacher among Open Brethren, F. F. Bruce, gets rid of the real meaning of this:

If it is people like these [Hymenaeus and Philetus] who are meant, then not only is it expedient for those who might be contaminated by their teaching to maintain their purity by keeping them at a distance; it is desirable that the Lord's servant, a person of sufficient maturity not be [sic] so liable to contamination (someone like Timothy himself), should deal with them wisely, so as to bring them to a better understanding of the truth and help them to 'escape from the snare of the devil'. This passage has been made the basis for an ecclesiology of separation, but it simply contains sound pastoral advice on the course to be taken when the truth is denied. There is nothing here about leaving the church and forming a purer fellowship (*The Harvester*, May 1986, p 13.)

Well, perhaps that is why he wrote an introduction to Dewey Beagle's attack on the inerrancy of Scripture in *Scripture, Tradition, and Infallibility?* or, an introduction to Budge's *The Fire that Consumes*, a book that promotes the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked? Let us hear a little more:

But for ordinary Christians the best way to 'depart from iniquity' is to cultivate the society of those in the church whose teaching is wholesome . . . Separation from evil is a good thing, but it is not 'God's principle of unity' [this is a jab at J. N. Darby. See the *Collected Writings* 1:353-365; 20:335, 346; 1:350; 14:215] . . . So far as fellow-Christians are concerned, it is far better to take the noble line of Anthony Norris Groves: 'I would infinitely rather bear with all their evil, than separate from their good'. So far as the purity of the church is concerned, it is not for me to decide who among my fellow-members is a true believer and who is not: 'the Lord knows those who are his' (*ibid.*).

Well, that is plain enough to see the unholiness that is at work. What we see at work is inclusion of evil in associations rather than exclusion of evil in associations.

I suggest that a distinction between withdrawal from unrighteousness has to do with acts, while purging from vessels to dishonour has to do with persons.

We can see that Hymenaeus and Philetus, mentioned in v. 17, certainly were overthrowing the faith of some. Certainly they are vessels to dishonour. Those who teach evil doctrines are vessels to dishonour and that term applies also to persons who have the character of the wicked man of 1 Cor. 5. Furthermore, we have just seen that in order to be a vessel to honour we must be separated from the vessels to dishonour; therefore this Scripture compels us to separate from those who teach evil doctrines as do Hymenaeus and Philetus. A professed Christian who continues with a Hymenaeus or Philetus is a partaker of his works (2 John 9-11), and so hardly can be a vessel to honour, SANCTIFIED. He is not sanctified in practice. This is sanctification in practice -- separation from evil unto the Lord. Purging is part and parcel of this sanctification. Refusing this, he is defiled, made dirty, leavened, by an evil association, made a partaker of wicked works.

Concerning evil teachers, their partisans, and those merely misled, J. N. D. remarked:

But in 2 Timothy 2, those who were overthrowing the faith of some, only said that the resurrection was past already, and the apostle calls on the faithful to purge themselves from them (2 Tim. 2:17-21). It is no charity to set people at ease who are teaching or receiving what "eats as a canker." I make a difference. With a teacher I could have nothing to do. It is the duty of positive testimony against him, "knowing such are perverted," if his doctrine touches "the faith of God's elect." With those misled I can make a difference; those deliberately in it I should avoid, they support the evil and sustain it; some are merely misled, and *while I had hope of recovering* them, I might not wholly repulse them, but evil communications corrupt good manners; it is danger to one's own soul to have to say to what the devil teaches, unless called upon by God to meet it. I should not dare to do so. And even with those misled, it is no kindness to go on as if nothing was the matter, when they are really led of the enemy. I do not want to set them at their ease there. As to the word "God speed," [2 John 11] it is associating oneself with their work. He is speaking of those "deceivers" who were "gone out into the world," and going about with this false doctrine; and wishing him well on his journey, was associating oneself with them in it. Such I would not receive into my house [2 John 10]. I trust I have made plain to you what I desired to say from the word. It is one of the great evils of the day to the truth. "Whom I love," says the apostle, "in the truth" and for the truth's sake. None urge this point more than John, whom men count as the apostle of love.⁸

A Christian magazine once came to hand in which the writer stated that he has long questioned the term "vessels to dishonour" and also the teaching that separation is demanded. He attempts, by quoting certain modern translations

and certain "scholarly teachers," to show that *dishonor* has not the thought of disgrace, but rather lowly use or ignoble use; the contrast is *prominence* and obscurity, he thinks: thus proceeds the palliation of evil. The attitude is certainly up to date, however false, unholy and Christ-dishonoring.

Ask, from what are we to purge ourselves -- from vessels doing menial tasks? Can anyone deny that v. 21 tells us how to be a vessel to honour? Let us suppose that it means a "prominent" vessel, as one of this author's scholars indicates. Are we being told how to be a "prominent" vessel? -- rather than an "obscure" one? And how does it tell us to do this? By purging ourselves from "obscure" vessels? All of this reasoning is beneath sober Christians.

The whole idea is an effort to overthrow the true force of this Scripture. The following Scriptures are all the verses, besides 2 Tim. 2:20, as far as I am aware, that use the word *atimia* (see *Englishman's Greek Concordance*, p. 90), "dishonour."

"For this reason God gave them up to *vile* lusts; for both their females changed the natural use into that contrary to nature . . ." (Rom. 1:26).

"Or has not the potter authority over the clay, out of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another to *dishonour*?" (Rom. 9:21).

"Does not even nature itself teach you, that man, if he have long hair, it is a *dishonour* to him?" (1 Cor. 11:14).

"It is sown in *dishonour*, it is raised in glory" (1 Cor. 15:43).

Through glory and *dishonour*, through evil report and good report: as deceivers, and true" (2 Cor. 6:8).

I speak as to *dishonour*, as though we had been weak; but wherein anyone is daring, (I speak in folly) I also am daring" (2 Cor. 11:21).

The reason that the plain meaning is questioned and refused is that we love our own will and ways. We want Christ AND FLESH. We wish to spare SELF and not separate from evil to the Lord, and so, not content with being disobedient, the Scripture must be forced to yield a (false) meaning to soothe the conscience of the self-pleasing, disobedient ones in order to make them feel comfortable in their defiled associations. Let every one that names the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity!

The result of such godly purging oneself is fourfold:

1. he shall be a vessel to honor
2. he shall be sanctified
3. he shall be serviceable to the Master
4. he shall be prepared for every good work

Prepared for Every Good Work

Christians associated with vessels to dishonor (this may be because of fellowship with evil teachers, or doctrines, fellowship with unbelievers in service or worship, or fellowship with unrighteousness) are not prepared unto every good work. Perhaps there are some 'good works' which they are ready to do. In this passage, the first work that they should be ready to do is obey the Lord's command. It is a question of being prepared for whatever the Lord may call upon us to do, which surely ought to be the desire of everyone that calls on the Name of the LORD, thereby professing to do His will in all things. This is more than being ready to serve the Lord. Many who are in all sorts of evil associations are professedly ready and willing to serve the Lord. It means rather that one is in a proper, usable condition. *Fitness* is the point. It would be better if we were more exercised in soul to be in a usable condition than being merely concerned about being used.

A Divine Order

We are instructed to flee youthful lusts. The word 'lusts' is translated 'desire' in Luke 22:15 and Phil. 1: 23, but generally 'lust.' Older people often have youthful desires as well as youth. Such desires are an expression of our own will and are contrary to calling on the LORD. And allow me to draw my reader's attention to what is a very noticeable thing and much needed. **THE NEGATIVE IS PRESENTED BEFORE THE POSITIVE.** Flee; then pursue. The order is, if Scripture is given to govern our thoughts, "cease to do evil, learn to do well." I believe it was C. H. M. who said somewhere that we have a holy precept, namely, "Cease to do evil," and *after we have learned to do that* we have another, namely, "Learn to do well." The reader will note this order in many Scriptures. "Abhorring evil; cleaving to good" (Rom. 12:9). What do we learn from this? Just this; we shall not learn to do well while staying with the evil: we will not pursue until we flee. The thought is not that one will pursue and thus automatically flee. Many thus think. If Scripture is to govern our thoughts and attitudes, we will bow to the divine order as the path that wisdom has decreed.

I once heard young Christians being ignorantly taught through an illustration concerning monkeys. A trap may be laid for a monkey by putting something in a jar. When the monkey seizes the bait inside the jar, it cannot remove its paw, now clutching the bait, through the narrow opening and it will not let go,

thus being caught. However, offer it something better and it will let go the bait and remove its paw to seize the other object. Now, this is supposed to be a lesson for Christians. Do not condemn the bad, but offer something better. Many are taken in with this line and hence there is not true separation from the evil to the Lord. Self-judgment is not learned in this manner. Scripture teaches this order:

"For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things . . . "(Titus 2:12).

The very GRACE of God should have warned against the idea in the above illustration. Grace is GOD FOR US IN ALL THAT HE IS. He is light and He is love. The cross was where God has fully expressed His abhorrence of impiety and worldly lusts. There He was satisfied by sacrifice and thus saves the sinner. And He wants, His grace teaches, a positive rejection of impiety and worldly lust. "Cease to do evil! Learn to do well!" Else the monkey will be forever going back to bait in jars because he never learned first to judge the evil of putting his paw in the jar and in due time will do it again.

Separation from the evil to the Lord involves one's attitude. It is necessarily a judgment of the evil and any complicity with it. It is the deliberate abandonment of the evil. Holiness is separation from evil to the Lord!

The Path of Association with Those of a Pure Heart

And truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And Jehovah saw it and it was evil in his sight that there was no judgment (Isa. 59:15).

To be rightly associated we must first be dissociated from that which the Lord has warned us. Dissociation here precedes association. The 'negative' is first, then the 'positive' (cp. Rom 12:9). That is a divine order. Then, those who have purged themselves from vessels to dishonour are told to "pursue . . . with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart."⁹ This is not a sinless heart.

9. Concerning reception and purity of heart, J. N. Darby wrote:

The question you put as to receiving is to me always a delicate one. The point is to conciliate sound discipline, and being wholly outside the camp, which is of increasing
(continued...)

It very evidently signifies that we are to "pursue" with purged vessels and therefore it is possible to recognize who are such.¹⁰ We morally cannot "pursue" with unpurged vessels or vessels to dishonour. It is casting into the eyes the dust and dirt of unholiness to say that the Christian cannot judge (cp. 1 Cor. 5:12,13). That is pretending to a 'piety' that is really a cover for unholiness, and which unholiness but adds its character to what the Lord is condemning in this passage. Obviously, the passage is not an exhortation to go on with all Christians. It is a directive concerning separation from some and association with others.

9(...continued)

importance, and avoiding being a sect, which I should as anxiously do. Receiving all members of Christ's body is not a sect clearly, and that is the principle on which I unite, but they must walk orderly and be under discipline, and not pretend to impose conditions on the church of God. If therefore they came claiming as a condition liberty to go elsewhere, I could not allow it because I know it is wrong, and the church of God cannot allow what is wrong. If it was ignorance, and they came *bona fide* in the spirit of unity, to that which is the symbol of unity, I should not reject them, because they had not in fact broken [with it], but I could not accept what made us part of the camp, nor any sort of claim to go to both, to be inside and outside. This is equally pretentious and dishonest. . . . But I receive a person who comes in simplicity, with a good conscience, for the sake of spiritual communion, though they may not yet see clearly ecclesiastically; but the assembly is bound to exercise discipline as to them, and know their walk and purity of heart in coming whenever they do. They cannot come in and out just as they please, because the conscience of the assembly is engaged in the matter, and its duty to God, and to Him at whose Table they are. Looseness in this is more fatal than ever now. If a person practically says I will come to take a piece in the body of Christ when I like, and go into sects and evil when I like for convenience or pleasure, that is not a pure heart. It is making their own will the rule of God's assembly, and subjecting the assembly to it, and that cannot be -- is clearly wrong (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:212, 213, 1873).

10. Regarding the fact that the Christian is to recognize them, J. N. Darby commented:

In this state of disorder I cannot know, as at the beginning, all those who belong to God; but as to my own walk, I am to associate with those who have a pure heart. Further, in chapter 3, the apostle teaches us that in the last days perilous times shall come, when, under the form of godliness, its power shall be denied. This is not avowed apostasy, for there is a form of godliness; but it is real moral apostasy -- the power of it is denied. M. Bast says, I ought to remain in and be content with it; the apostle bids me "from such turn away"--whom shall I obey?

When he tells me that "it is impossible to distinguish those who are truly faithful from those who make an outward profession," and the apostle says, Let him who names the name of the Lord withdraw from iniquity, and tells me that I must purify myself from the vessels to dishonor and follow after christian graces with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart -- how can I listen to one who tells me that it is not possible to distinguish? If he tells me that there may be many souls, known by the Lord, whom I do not recognize; I reply, undoubtedly: the Lord knows those that are His. But I have directions for my conduct in this state of things which contradict yours. I am to recognize and associate myself with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart; consequently to distinguish them. I am to purify myself from the vessels to dishonor; consequently to distinguish them. I am to turn away from those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power of it [2 Tim. 3:5]; I must then clearly recognize those who are such (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:97, 98, 1870).

Before the ruin came in, we read in 1 Cor. 1:12, "...with all that in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" After the ruin came in, we read, "with those that call on the Lord *out of a pure heart*."

How are we to find these? How are we to test the heart? Why, by the *ways*. And I find my companions as I walk myself in the path of righteousness, and faith, and love and peace to which I am called . . . *Leaders* I may own, and rightly if, and only as, they can show me the path they lead on has these marks. But I must be shown the marks or refuse the path, no matter what else may commend it to me. ¹¹

There are four things we are to pursue with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart (i. e., purged vessels).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

The **first** of the four things that ought to characterize those who withdraw from iniquity is righteousness. An unpurged vessel may be constitutionally of precious material (gold-silver), but he is not purged from evil associations is not sanctified practically. How, if he has not withdrawn from unrighteousness, are we to pursue righteousness *with him*? Righteousness is consistency with relationship. If one separates from unrighteousness (v. 19), then righteousness ought to characterize him. And this needs particular notice in a day of increasing ecumenicity, a day when we see the foreshadows of the formation of the whore of Rev. 17 and 18, that great "church" system that remains after Christ comes for His saints. The force at work in the ecumenical movement is unity under the pretense of "love," and that at the expense of righteousness. It is right and well that we should keenly feel the dishonor done to Christ by the ruin and sects (called denominations to cover up the shame of sect) that are everywhere. But ecumenicalism, (on large or small scale) interdenomination-alism, joining in services or preaching, or associations of brethren, are not God's program. The path of God's choosing, the place of His appointment, is not found thus.

What is the first thing brought to our attention and for our pursuit in a day of ruin? *Righteousness* ought to characterize God's saints. One has the impression that some of God's people have a difficulty in reconciling righteousness and love. They don't need to be reconciled; they should each have their proper place. But it is obvious that many of the Lord's people have the wrong idea about this. For example, "Love covers a multitude of sins" is read as if it means "Look the other way and hush it up"; whereas, it denotes an

11. *Words of Faith*, 1882, pp. 10, 11.

action with regard to sins in order to correct it, the heart going out in love and care for one's brother, seeking the Lord's honour and his good. There is a vast difference between covering it and cloaking it.

Then it is said that Scripture states, "Be not righteous overmuch" (Eccl. 7:16). Shame on us so to pervert Scripture. Shame on us to so shun the claims of righteousness. The verse is thus used to press someone not to be "too righteous." But the next verse says, "Be not overmuch wicked." Are we then going to be told that we may therefore be somewhat wicked but don't be "too wicked"? The difficulty stems from careless (to say the least) handling of the Word of God, using it to try to justify one's own easy-going attitude rather than asking the Lord to show us His thought in the passage. The context must be understood. These efforts to neutralize righteous acting by using other passages that speak of love are of an unholy character, and such efforts present righteousness and love as if they are in conflict. God is light and God is love, and He never acts inconsistently with His nature. Righteousness and love need their proper relationship, not reconciliation, because they never were antagonistic. There is a wholeness in both together. But the majority will press what it calls "love" at the expense of righteousness. How do we know this? We know it because, in view of the ruin that has come upon what ought to be the vessel of testimony, the call comes to depart from unrighteousness. It is unrighteousness which characterizes what is likened to "a great house," and those that acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord are to withdraw from unrighteousness so that they may pursue righteousness. And what do we see all around being pressed, as I have said? "Love" at the expense of righteousness, which is therefore not the love found in the Word of God. It must follow, therefore, that those who practice this Scripture are going to be called righteous overmuch, division makers, troublemakers, etc. and unloving to their brethren. Unloving to their brethren?

Hereby know we that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments (1 John 5:2)

FAITH

Thus faith is mentioned next. It is faith for the path of separation from evil unto the Lord. One must have confidence in God, wrought by the Holy Spirit, in order to walk in such a path. There must be faith wrought by God that it is the path of His choosing. And this path must control our associations; our associations must not control or modify the path. Faith sees, and has to do with, a living God. It is faith in a great God, and He is our blessed resource in the path, the One upon Whom we may stay our minds. This path, then, is a path of faith; and thus it is not a path of self-will, which self-will characterizes what

is likened to a great house.

LOVE

Now we are ready for the third thing, love. "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as writing to thee a new commandment, but that which we have had from [the] beginning, that we should love one another. And this is love, that we should walk according to his commandments" (2 John 5, 6).

Another has said, "There is no love apart from obedience, and therefore love of necessity makes us walk in faith and righteousness." It is the opposite of love to walk with those who go on with unrighteousness, for three reasons. The first and most important is that it dishonors God. Secondly, it only confirms those who so walk in their course (after protest, ignorance cannot be claimed). Thirdly, it renders the Word powerless in the souls of those who knowingly go on with unrighteousness. Another wrote:

Faith then requires God's word to justify it, in a path whence self-will is absolutely excluded. It thus guards the "love," of which the apostle next speaks, from being taken for the "liberality," so mis-called such on every hand. True love finds within the sphere which the word thus marks out for it, its amply sufficient field of exercise. "Seeking not its own," it teaches no soul to do its own will, or to show large-heartedness by setting aside, even for a moment, its Master's constant claim. It supposes no possible accomplishment, of good to others by swerving from the good and the right way oneself; this whether it be in one line of things or in another: "faith" having taught it, there is, and can be, no matter of "ecclesiastical policy," if you will, or anything else which affects His people in any way which He, who has thought of the covering of a woman's head has not thought of and provided for. To swerve from His mind by way of accommodation to others, or for whatever purpose, would be but the unseemly "liberality" of a servant in things that appertain to his master, -- not liberality, but carelessness or worse.

Righteousness and faith however being maintained as to our course personally, "love" is next surely to be followed -- safely, under these conditions. Our hearts are to embrace not only the brethren, still less only those whom we find walking on the path with ourselves, but, as in "fellowship with the gospel," all men. There is nothing however in which we are so apt to make mistake as we are with regard to "love:" there are so many and subtle imitations. We like people who please us, who minister to our selfish gratification, and we call *that* "love." And if these are the people of God, this may help still more effectually to deceive us. How often does this kind of feeling betray itself by fermenting, on occasion given, into the most thorough animosity! True love, seeking not its own, holds fast its objects with a pertinacity of grasp which never fails: "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." We may be forced to separation, forced to walk alone, forced to judge and condemn the ways of those whom nevertheless we cling to before God with desire which will not admit of giving them up even for a moment. Thus if judgment be passed, it will be expressed as the apostle, "even weeping": truest and most solemn judgment,

where it is not that of an enemy but of a friend; and blessed they who in the spirit of mourners find themselves thus in company with the "Man of sorrows."

We must be content here to point out the order, and the meaning of the order, in which "love" occurs in connection with our path. It does not *form* this (*divine* love has formed it for us, not our own): it is the spirit which is to animate us rather in the path -- not the rail but the motive power -- and here, of course, love to God first, as that from which all other springs.¹²

PEACE

All of this will result in peace. This is a peace which has to do with our collective character. It is peace concerning the path. Those who act on this Scripture may very likely be accused of the thing which God hates, i. e., sowing discord among brethren. In this way is Scripture abused and twisted. It is plain that true peace is the end result of the three previous things, and the sowers of discord are those who will not obey.

"Peace" closes the catalogue. It is the necessary issue to which all this tends. "The fruit of righteousness is peace." Faith walking in wisdom's ways finds that "all her ways are peace" [;] while love seeks the peace of the objects of it, and satisfies itself with what it finds in blessing for them. Every way peace is reached; and only here as the end of the rest -- guarded and defined by what precedes it -- can it be true or safe as an object to be sought after. Here it comes in seemly order and place. May God grant us more attainment of it, such as it is here presented.¹³

Were the Scripture followed, all would pursue these four things. This is the way of peace. The thing which God hates is brought about by those who will not thus act. The wisdom from above is **first pure, then peaceable**. . . .

Ed. Dennett wrote:

How different is this teaching from that which is now current, to the effect that in a day of confusion like the present it is impossible to walk in the path of separation from evil! This word of the Apostle's is the answer to all such reasoning . . .¹⁴

We Cannot Get Out of What is Likened to a Great House

We are to conduct ourselves in the midst of ruin with respect to that which

12. *Words of Faith*, 1882, pp. 12, 13.

13. *Words of Faith*, 1882, p. 14.

14. *An Exposition of Second Timothy*, Oak Park: Bible Truth Publishers, p. 36, 1969.

cannot be ruined. The body of Christ, composed of all those on earth who are indwelt by the Spirit, remains: but alas, how the display of this truth has been marred! We are part of this ruin. But we are not told to separate from the thing which is likened to a great house. We cannot. We cannot get out of the profession of Christianity. But we must separate from the vessels to dishonour found in that profession and then "pursue" with the purged vessels. And such purged ones will not pretend to be *the* church of God, because *the* church of God includes all sealed saints. And they will have a deepened sense of the ruin and the dishonour to God in it all.

Nor, note, are we called upon to purge this ruined profession. We must purge ourselves.

But think, dear reader, have you ever shed as much as one tear in the presence of God, because of the dishonour done to His Name and for the condition of ruin brought by man's will upon what He instituted at Pentecost?

Regulating the Inside and Outside

There are Christians who say that the outside of a person is not so important as long as the inside is all right. The truth of the matter is, however, that if the inside is all right the outside will show it by being regulated by the Word of God. This also applies to the matter of association with vessels to dishonour. Purging (v. 21) is spoken of before a pure heart is mentioned (v. 23). Someone may think that his associations really are not so important as long as the inside is all right. But how does the inside express its condition? A child of God of a by-gone day knew that "by Him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. 2:3). We show love to God by keeping His commandments (John 14; 2 John). This includes the outside, the external, as well as the internal. "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil" (Prov. 16:17), "and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey" (Isa. 59:15). It costs something to regulate the external by the Word of God. How easily the deceitful heart may delude itself into thinking that only the inside is important. The inside cannot be right where the Word of God concerning the outside is set aside.

What About Unpurged Vessels?

We have seen that what is likened to a great house has numbers of vessels: precious and non-precious, and vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour. It

seems implied that there is another class. A vessel to honour is a vessel that is purged from vessels to dishonour and from iniquity. What about a precious vessel that has not withdrawn from iniquity and/or has not purged himself from vessels to dishonor? Such are unpurged vessels (or, otherwise, the only alternative is that all unpurged vessels are vessels to dishonor). The vessels to honour are instructed to "pursue" with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart, i. e., with the vessels to honour, i. e., with the purged vessels. Thus the unpurged vessels are excluded from the right path of association in the midst of evil. What light do we have from the Word of God regarding unpurged vessels?

2 John tells us that those who give greeting to an evil teacher are thereby partakers of his wicked works.

1 Cor. 5 tells us that those in association with tolerated moral evil are leavened; i. e., the toleration of known leaven changes the status of the lump into a leavened lump, one characterized by indifference to the holiness due the Lord.

Gal. 5:9 applies the statement, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" to doctrinal evil.

A solemn instruction is afforded us concerning the rise of evil and its awful results in Judges 17-21, which is a moral appendix to the book of Judges which shows the origins of Israel's sorrows. In chapter 20 we see a solemn lesson concerning the self-judgment that should accompany discipline. The eleven tribes sought to carry out discipline without self judgment and were humbled, but in the end God showed Himself with them in judgment. Benjamin well knew of the infamy, for they had been notified by the sending of the pieces of the woman. Besides, they willfully refused to dissociate from the men of Belial. They all thus came under the sentence. Not only that, but in Judges 21 we read that the NEUTRALS of Jabesh Gilead were also subjected to the same sentence. God hates neutrality in divine matters (Judges 5:23).

The purged vessels are not breaking bread with unpurged vessels since these are not vessels to honour. They do not call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart, which denotes one who has purged himself. Someone wrote:

I cannot, however, accept v. 22 as a guide in any way as to those with whom I may break bread, because I do not believe this is the subject of the passage at all.¹⁵

There are cases of "I cannot" because 'I will not.' Be that as it may, the passage

15. *Faith and the Flock*, 1908, p. 443.

is about our associations, our fellowship. So is the breaking of bread about our fellowship:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not [the] communion {or, fellowship; *koinonia*} of the blood of the Christ? The bread which we break, is it not [the] communion {or, fellowship; *koinonia*} of the body of the Christ? Because we, [being] many, are one loaf, one body; for we all partake of that one loaf (1 Cor. 10:16,17).

The well-know teacher of a past generation, W. Hoste, wrote, in defending Open-Brethrenism:

We totally reject the collateral theory of defilement.¹⁶

Perhaps he wanted collateral fellowship with the possibility of collateral defilement. "Lay hands suddenly on no man, nor partake [*koinoneo*] in other men's sins. Keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22); "... and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes [*koinoneo*] in his wicked works (2 John 11).

The breaking of bread is, among other things, the practical expression that we are one body. We give expression to that in breaking bread together, expressing the fellowship of one body. The Lord Jesus made provision for the evil day; for, two or three could be gathered together to His name (Matt. 18:20).

The toleration of leaven in an assembly involves breaking bread with that tolerated evil. God sees that as fellowship with the leaven. A little leaven leavening the lump means that the status of the lump changes from an unleavened lump to a leavened lump. It is thus characterized by wicked indifference to the evil. The way Open Brethren seek to evade this is to say that the assembly only becomes leavened when everyone in the assembly is personally doing the evil. Such unholy teachings give their character to what is likened to a great house. "Let every one who names the name of [the] Lord withdraw from iniquity."

Let the reader be clear about it: the unpurged are not vessels to honor. The state of the unpurged, therefore, is different than the state of the purged. Let the reader be clear about it: the state of an individual is affected by whether or not he purges himself. It is a fabrication of the flesh to say that I may wittingly be associated with evil, but if I do not engage in it personally, my association with it does not affect my state. Such are not calling upon the name of the Lord out of a pure heart; and we are instructed to pursue ... with those that call upon the

Lord out of a pure heart. In a letter dated Dec. 18, 1849, J. G. Bellett wrote:

The few who call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart form the church ruins (2 Tim. 3 [sic]), where I must be found. And it is a holy question for us, beloved, Are we upholding merely Christian fellowship? or are we dwelling according to the holiness of God within the precincts of a Church ruin. . . .¹⁷

Ed.

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Chapter 6.3: The First Century Saints were put in an Expectant Posture

(Continued)

OPEN UNTO HIM IMMEDIATELY

Compare Luke 12:35-40 with 1 Thess. 1:9, 10. J. N. Darby wrote the following.

But there is another point which is important, and that is not merely that the thing promised is sure. The Lord considers it important that the saints should be always expecting it as a present thing, and wishing for it as a present thing -- I say expecting it as a present thing, uncertain when it will come. Thus He speaks in Luke 12:35-40: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. . . . And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. . . . Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." And again, verses 43,44: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." Here surely they are told to be expecting always. Now, would the certainty that it must be two or three thousand years off not affect this state of mind? ("Nor should we say it at all the less if we were sure his coming would not take place for thousands of years.") I say also, wishing for it as a present thing, as it is written, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And. . . He which

17. *Christian Friend and Instructor*, 1885, p. 168.

testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:17,20.)

The certainty, glory, and heavenly character of the hope, most important as it is, is not all. The Lord insists a great deal on a constant expectation of it, uncertain when it will be; a great deal on the tone and character of mind connected with this state of expectation of the Lord, coming and finding us so in our service. Now I do not deny that particular revelations may have been made to individuals, [2 Peter 1:14] which shewed them that they should depart first, and so far modified their individual apprehensions. And I do not doubt that a saint may have a just and true conviction that his service is not yet finished, and yet be always waiting because he knows not when the Lord may come. But this does not the least affect the general state and expectation of the Church. And is there the least analogy between such a particular revelation, and putting a whole train of events on earth as necessarily to happen before the Church can expect the Lord?

And, indeed, were I to adopt the system proposed to me, I should not expect the Lord at all until a time when I was able to fix the day of His appearing. And this is what we are told is a sober and true way of expecting Him. . . . And this fixing by signs and dates, I am told, is the sober way of waiting. But it is quite clear that it is contrary to the way the Lord Himself has taught me to expect Him. It is clear that, if these signs are to be expected for the Church, I have nothing to expect till they are fulfilled. I may expect them, and have my mind fixed on them, but not on Christ's coming. . . .

This is not what Christ has taught me, and therefore I do not receive it. ¹⁸

JOHN 14:1-3; JOHN 21:22; ACTS 1:6-8

In ch. 6.4 we will consider John 14:1-3 at length. This is the heavenly hope. We shall see that "where I am" means where He is right now -- in the Father's house above. We shall see that He will come Himself to take us, not to earth but, where He is above. This shows us how we can come forth with Him (Rev. 17:14; 19:14) when we are manifested in glory with Him (Col. 3:4) when He is revealed from Heaven (1 Thess. 1). Consonant with this is John 21:22. T. B. Baines remarked:

. . . our Lord first foretells Peter's death; then, being asked what should become of John, replies -- "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:22). Now this could mean that John might live till the end of the world. But neither could it mean that John might go to be with Jesus at his death. In this case, how would he have differed from Peter or any of the other disciples? Moreover, such an interpretation would rob the words of all meaning, making them equivalent to this -- "If I will that he lives till he dies, what is that to thee?" The coming referred to, therefore, is neither the departure to be with Jesus at death, nor His appearing at the end of the world.

Its true character is not far to seek. It is here spoken of, not as one of an

indefinite number of similar events, like the deaths of individual believers, but as a single transaction, of which the disciples had already heard. Such a transaction Jesus had but lately named when He promised to come again for His disciples. . . . He brought it out as a special feature, and it was to this feature that John's heart would turn when he heard the words uttered. What can be simpler? On a solemn occasion Jesus tells His disciples that He will come to take them to Himself. Shortly afterwards He bids them not to be surprised if one of them tarries till He comes. However little the disciples might yet be able to distinguish between the two parts of His coming, there can surely be no doubt that these utterances were meant to bring before their minds the same blessed hope.

These two passages, then, teach us: First, the return of Jesus for His saints, not at death or the end of the world, but at some definite though unrevealed period, when all shall be brought together to the place He has gone to prepare for them; and secondly, that this coming again, though uncertain as to time, might occur before the death of one, at least, of the apostles. So the disciples understood it, for there "went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die" (John 21:23), and though the Holy Ghost corrects this error, we are never told that it consisted in believing that Jesus *might* come in John's lifetime; still less in believing that if He did come, John would not die. Christ's own words expressly authorized the former belief; and other parts of Scripture make it clear that Christians living at the Lord's coming will be translated without seeing death. The disciples' error, therefore, did not consist in this understanding of the words of Jesus; but in adding to those words and thus converting a statement that John *might* tarry into a prediction that he *would* tarry.¹⁹

At this point in time, the disciples were not clear concerning all the order of events. They had expected the kingdom immediately (Luke 19:11), i. e., the kingdom of Messiah in power. They did not grasp the significance of His statements concerning His decease which He was about to accomplish. In Acts 1:6-8 we note them asking if *that* was the time for the restoration of the kingdom. Their expectation was right; their timing was wrong. The Lord never told them there would be no kingdom. Neither did He tell them there was to be a long program for the age.

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

Later we will examine the Lord's coming as given in 1 & 2 Thess. in greater detail. E. Dennett has given us this survey:

Now this scripture teaches that there are some believers who will be alive at the coming of the Lord; and the apostle, speaking by the Spirit, says, "we who are alive," showing that as far as had been revealed to him, there was nothing to prevent the possibility of his being one of the umber remaining until that time, and therefore that the Lord might come during his day. In giving this

19. *The Lord's Coming, Israel and the Church*, pp. 12, 13.

interpretation, I by no means forget that its force is sought to be averted by affirming that the apostle, in the use of the word "we," is speaking corporately of the church -- that he only means, in fact, those who may be left on the earth in a far distant future -- but that, since they will be a part of the church, he links himself with them by the word "we." That there may be examples of such a mode of speech in the Scriptures I am not at all disposed to deny; but that there is any trace of it here I exceedingly doubt. Indeed the context, as well as the object the apostle had before his mind, emphatically forbids its introduction in this connection. Besides, if we turn to the epistle to the Corinthians, we shall find him speaking in precisely the same way. He there also says: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," etc. (1 Cor. 15:51), indicating, beyond a doubt, that the apostle entertained the personal hope that the Lord might come at any time, so that he himself might be found among the number of the living saints at that day.

This conclusion will be strengthened if I draw your attention to the plain distinction which the apostle draws between the return of the Lord for His saints and the day of the Lord -- the day which will be *introduced* on His coming manifestly to the earth to assume His power and to establish His kingdom, as seen for example in Matt. 24. Thus to go back to 1 Thess. After having described the character of the coming of the Lord for His saints (1 Thess. 4:15-18), he proceeds: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*" (1 Thess. 5:1,2). The saints therefore at Thessalonica had been instructed concerning the day of the Lord -- the coming of the Lord in manifested glory -- as recorded in Matt. 24 and elsewhere. They knew about this perfectly; and hence this is a totally different thing from the coming of the Lord for His people, concerning which the apostle had just taught them by a special communication from the Lord. Accordingly he proceeds: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day" (1 Thess. 5:4,5). He thus reminds them that they belong to the day -- that day which would bring such terror upon the wicked, and hence that they would not be upon the earth in the darkness when it dawned.

So also in the second epistle. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled," etc., "as that the day of Christ is at hand" (as that the day of the Lord is present is the correct reading and translation). That is, he reminds them of the instruction given them in the former epistle concerning the coming of the Lord, and their being gathered unto Him; and makes this the ground of his appeal to them, not to be disturbed by the false teaching then current, that the day of the Lord was already come. "How," in effect he says, "can this be, when before the day of the Lord is present you will have been caught up to meet Him in the air?" Then, having disabused their minds of this error, he details some features that must precede that day, revealing to them that the apostasy must first come, and the man of sin be revealed, etc.; features therefore, on this interpretation, which will *follow upon* the rapture of the saints, and precede the day of the Lord (2 Thess. 2).²⁰

1 Thess. 3:13 speaks of Christ coming *with* saints. John 14:1-3 speaks of Him coming *for* His own. It will not do to assert that He will come for and with His saints at the same time. It confounds things that Scripture distinguishes. God will bring *with* Jesus those who have fallen asleep through Jesus when He comes in power. See 1 Thess. 4:14. How can this be? Paul has a word from the Lord to resolve the difficulty and it is found in 1 Thess. 4:15-18. We shall be caught up when He comes for us. This explains how we can be in the armies in His train (Rev. 19:14; Rev. 17:14) when He is revealed from heaven (2 Thess. 1) and we with Him (Col. 3:4).

AWAITING THE MERCY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Mercy, in this scripture, has in view a need on the part of the one who is the object of mercy. Mercy meets need in a somewhat different sense than grace. Jude 21 depicts the Christian as properly "awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This is His coming for us to deliver us from this evil place where the Master and His household is hated. This waiting is an expectant waiting, for we do not wait for this mercy at the end of "a long program for the age." "Unto eternal life" is the consummation, the end of our path here.

It will be a mercy as well as glory when He for whom we wait applies the power of His mighty work to our very bodies and makes them like His own body of glory (Phil. 3:20, 21). Both of these scriptures refer to the rapture; Jude 21 referring to the delivering aspect and Phil. 3:20, 21 to the glorification.

The down-trodden brethren whom James exhorts to have patience till the coming of the Lord (James 5:7) would appreciate that mercy. Was it meant that they were to have patience until the Lord comes after "a long program for the age"? No. James was not a posttribulationist or an amillennialist. "Ye also have patience: stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is drawn nigh" (James 5:8).

THE USE OF "WATCH" AND "WAIT"

The concordance quickly shows that *watch* means to be awake. The ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom and fell asleep. They certainly must have lost the sense of the any-moment coming. It is the history of Christendom. This any-moment expectancy was quickly lost. They slept. I suppose that Christians know the Lord will come and are waiting in some sense. The sleeping virgins were waiting, in a sense. But they weren't awake. They weren't watching.

This is not to say that the word "watch" is always used with reference to an

any-moment expectation. It is not generally so used. See Matt. 26:38,40,41; Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Thess. 5:6; etc.

G. E. Ladd, a posttribulationist, discussed "watching" for 14 pages in *The Blessed Hope*, ch. 6. He evidently feels it important to remove any usage of the word from connection with an any-moment expectation. It is always instructive to observe the moral result of a course or theory. Concerning Luke 12:35-48, he says,

Jesus Himself suggests that there will be delay ²¹ (vs. 45); the important thing is what is done with the interval during which the Lord delays His return. He who "watches" is the faithful and wise steward (vs. 42), who is busy in his master's service. He who does not watch is the steward who begins to beat the servants, and to become drunk vs. 45-6). "Watching" then means faithfulness in service. It means spiritual awakeness. ²²

This view leads to occupation with service instead of Christ. He has missed the true moral bearing and connection of the passage.

It is verses 34-40 that teach directly of waiting and watching. Wm. Kelly well said:

We shall find another blessing a little later on; but the blessing here is the watching -- not so much working as watching. That is, it is not so much occupation with others as watching for Him, and assuredly this is of some importance to feel. Watching takes precedence even of working. There is no doubt that working has no small value, and that the Lord will remember it and reward it, but watching is far more bound up with His person and with His love. . .

Our Lord presented His coming as claiming the affections of the saints, and dealing with their moral state. Their loins were to be girded about, their lights burning, themselves like unto men waiting for their Lord. For, their treasure being in the heavens, their hearts would be there also. This connects itself, too, with immediate readiness in receiving Himself, that "when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him *immediately*." It is the blessedness of *watching* for Christ, with its infinite joy in result. ²³

I believe the posttribulationists' view prohibits them from appreciating this matter properly.

After stating that the delay brought out the true character of the servants (which is true) G. E. Ladd concluded:

21. [Indeed!? The *bondman* says it in his *heart*! The bondman loved the idea of delay! And this was part of the bondman's state.]

22. *The Blessed Hope*, p. 117.

23. *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*, ch. 12, p. 215.

If we apply this line of reasoning to our present situation, a rather unexpected conclusion emerges. We must conclude that we ought not to need an anymoment coming of Christ as a necessary incentive to faithfulness in service and conduct. The true motive is a heart devotion, and even though Christ tarries, the true servant will always watch; he will never lapse into the state of spiritual somnambulance and moral laxity.²⁴

Such is the astounding conclusion! Never lapse into the state of spiritual somnambulance! -- but see Matt. 25:5 and 1 Thess. 5:6. These erroneous conclusions come from seeing *only* faithful service in watchfulness. Apparently it is thought that this is warranted because the unbelieving bondman was not watching for his Lord (Luke 12:46). But the connection in Luke 12:41-48 is watchfulness for the conscience, not merely the affections.

This false view puts service in the place of Christ in the affections. The truth is that the parable of the servants does not take up watchfulness directly. Speaking of the difference between the moral bearing of Luke 12:34-40 and 41ff. W. Kelly wrote:

At the same time, it is important to add the aspect of His coming for the conscience [vs. 41 ff]. The return from the wedding does not present this. . . it has not necessarily the intimacy of personal affection which the continual watching for Him supposes. Man, no doubt, thinks very differently; but we are hearing the word of the Lord, and His word ever judges, and was meant to judge, the thoughts of men. Accordingly, there is a difference in result [cp. v. 37 & 44]. It is not the return of His love [to their watching as seen in His serving them -- v. 37] so much as the post of honor in His kingdom. "Blessed" indeed are both; but the heart ought to need little light to discern which is the better of the two. May we answer His love and be true to His trust, and know this two-fold blessedness as our portion when He comes again.²⁵

This "little light" to discern these moral differences appears to be withheld from posttribulationists by their system. Their "unexpected conclusion," then, is that they need not what Luke 12:34-40 *really* teaches in its moral bearing. And so we conclude that posttribulationism lowers Christianity in its true moral tone! Let us observe again this lowering of moral tone in a lecture at Wheaton on December 4, 1970 (duplicated) by A. Katterjohn in which he made the following sophistical remarks (p. 6).

But doesn't the removal of the doctrine of imminency have a great effect on our motivation to live holy lives? This is what we are often taught, and the answer is NO! First, Christ knows what kind of lives we are living -- He doesn't have to return to find that out.²⁶ And secondly, we live holy lives, not because of

24. *The Blessed Hope*, pp. 117, 118.

25. *Notes on the Gospel of Luke*, p. 218. See also *The Bible Treasury* New Series 1:308.

26. [Was that really ever a question?]

a threat of being caught somewhere we shouldn't be, or doing something we shouldn't do BUT because of our love and commitment to Him. For example, any one of our fine Wheaton young men might be engaged to any one of our fair Wheaton young women, and committed to be married some time far in the future. His faithfulness to her is because of his love and commitment to her and their eventual marriage -- and not because of any threat of her surprising him at any moment by an unannounced visit. I think you get the point, don't you?

We certainly do get the point! These remarks probably do not express so much ignorance of one's feelings as they do the demands of false theory. Let me illustrate.

When an Arminian is contending for free-will (a contradiction in terms), he tells us that if man cannot respond to God's "whosoever will," then he is not responsible. That is, the argument is that if a person has not power to respond then he is not responsible. Now, men reason with the fleshly mind thusly in divine things but they would not do so if their own wallet was concerned. Thus if someone owed this Arminian \$10 million and had not a cent to pay, is he therefore not responsible to pay? Do you see how our minds work when affected by mere theories in divine matters?

A young man engaged to be married to someone whom he loves dearly is not affected differently if he thinks she might come at any moment!? This is the moral effect of the posttribulation system! Every young man who dearly loves his bride-to-be knows what effect the any-moment being with his loved one, and lover, has upon his soul. The effect of the above quotation is to get rid of this. *He* has drawn the analogy, not I; and the true effect of the posttribulation system is clearly seen here. We grieve over the tendency of the posttribulation system upon the moral state and affections of the saints. Often service is substituted for the proper Christian hope -- and there are worse effects besides. Let the reader be aware that doctrine affects moral state and conduct!

Sometimes there is something else at work rather than worldliness or seeking a place here. W. Kelly remarked:

I remember a celebrated author, a servant of Christ, who wrote the biggest modern work upon the Book of Revelation. I once had some correspondence with him on this subject, wherein he conveyed -- "If I could think of the Lord possibly coming to-morrow, I should be much afraid and agitated!" This showed, surely, that his heart was not resting, as a Christian man is entitled to do, on the perfect love of Christ his Savior. You can readily understand the expectant bride waiting to be married to her future husband, and you might say that she was agitated. There might be no little excitement, one could understand; but surely, when there was true and confiding love between the two, it would not savor of alarm. It would not be the agitation of fear. Now, that is exactly what my departed friend acknowledged. And what did it betray? Very likely what is at work among some here, a want of conscious liberty of heart, because of everything being clear between the conscience and God. And the source of that

bondage of fear is the want of simplicity of subjection to what God tells us in His Word that He has found in the blood of Christ for us. The death of the Lord Jesus is of perfect and everlasting efficiency, and it ought to be a point of honor, if I may so say, that believers never should allow aught to overcome their resting in assurance on Him.²⁷

In concluding our observations on Luke 12, note verse 39. If the time was known, the man would not have been expecting the Lord at any moment. "And ye therefore, be ye ready, for in the hour in which ye do not think [it], the Son of man²⁸ comes" (Luke 12:40).

So Luke 12:34-41 is the affectionate, watching servant, and Luke 12:41-48 speaks of the working servant. Both these things ought to characterize us.

In Matt. 24 the subject is different. The appearing of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:30) is after the tribulation (Matt. 24:29). They will not know just when. The exact time cannot be fixed but only approximated. Thus our Lord says to them "Watch therefore. . . ."

Following are scriptures that speak of "waiting" and "looking for."

We are *waiting* (apekdekomai) the manifestation (apokalupsis -- revelation) of the sons of God (Romans 8:19).

We are also *waiting* (apekdekomai) the coming (apokalupsis -- revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:7).

We also *look for* (apekdekomai), [or wait for], the Savior from heaven, Who shall change our bodies of humiliation (Phil. 3:20).

The first two waitings refer to the posttribulation part of the coming while the third refers to the pretribulation part of the coming. Thus, we wait for both parts. And thus the word *waiting*, in itself, does not necessarily imply an any-moment expectation. The force of the word is that we wait earnestly. But we need not exclude an any-moment expectation where that is applicable.

We are *awaiting* (prosdekomai) the blessed hope (Titus 2:13). The appearing of Christ in glory is a hope also (1 John 3:2,3).

It will indeed be a mercy when the saints are caught up out of this sin-fouled scene. Thus we *look for* (prosdekomai) the MERCY of our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 21).

27. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 12:30.

28. The title "Son of man" has a moral force in Luke whereas in Matthew it has a dispensational significance.

We ought to be like men *that wait for* (prosdekomai) their Lord (Luke 12:35,36).

The wicked servant found that his Lord came in a day when he *looketh not for* (prosdokao) him (Matt. 24:50).

We are also *looking for* (prosdokao) the coming of the day of God (the eternal state) and the new heavens and the new earth (2 Peter 3:12,13).

In 1 Thess. 5:10 "wake" is the same word and stands for being alive in contrast with "sleeping through Jesus" (cp. 1 Thess. 4:14). Thus, "waiting" does not necessarily imply an any-moment expectation, though it also does not necessarily exclude it.

THE DAY STAR ARISING IN THE HEART

The great difference is that, as prophecy treats of the earth, so also it deals with times and seasons, with peoples and nations, with tribes and tongues, whereas the heavenly hope is independent of all that. Are these tribes and peoples and tongues on high? Is it any question there in the presence of God of days and weeks and times and years? The difference between earth and heaven is thus easily seen. The christian hope, as it is let into our hearts from heaven, so is it as completely different from any prospect connected with the earth as the light of heaven is from a lamp, which, however useful in the darkness of the world, is as nothing compared with the light of day.

Nor is the figure of the lamp compared with daylight a mere idea of mine, but expressly furnished in the word itself. The Apostle Peter points out the self-same distinction by this very comparison (2 Pet. 1).

In writing to Christians, who were once Jews and who were therefore familiar with prophecy, he tells them that they did well to take heed to the prophetic word. Their being Christians did not set aside what they had from God before. The Old Testament is in no way or degree, either as a whole or in part, blotted out by the New, but on the contrary shines more brightly and is understood incomparably better, when by the Holy Spirit the New is apprehended. Force is thus given to the Old, which enables the Christian to comprehend beyond the Jew. . . .

We see then that Peter, in writing to those christian Jews, contrasts the heavenly hope with prophecy; the difference between them, which really involves and settles the compatibility of the two things, depends on this very distinction. Thus he says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy" (or the prophetic word confirmed), "whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light," really a lamp, "that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." Here prophecy is compared to the lamp that shines in a squalid place; the heavenly hope to daylight with above all the person of Christ as the day star, for that He is thus referred to cannot, in my judgment, be questioned. You will observe it is not "till the day come," "till the arrival of the day of the Lord" or the like. It is "till the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." It is the heart getting hold of the heavenly hope; it is no more than a question of the heart. It is not the day arising as the sun of righteousness upon

the world. It is the heart now having Christ as its constant hope, and so in the spirit and light of the day before it shines on the earth by and by. The apostle says that the lamp of prophecy is excellent until one has a better light, not the earthly lamp brighter, but a different kind of light, even that of day, and above all connected with the person of Christ, the day-star arising in the heart.²⁹

THE THINGS WHICH ARE; AND THE 24 ELDERS

The book of Rev. is divided into three main sections by the statement in Rev. 1:19:

Write therefore what thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to be after these.

1. "What thou hast seen" is what he saw as recorded in ch. 1.
2. "The things which are" are the things concerning the seven churches (chs. 2 and 3)
3. "The things that are about to be after these" are the things following the churches. Hence we read in Rev. 4:1, "Come up here, and I will shew thee the things which must take place after these things." Thus the prophetic events begin after the time of the churches. This is consonant with the truth that the church occupies on earth a parenthesis in God's governmental dealings in the earth. The 24 elders are symbols and the figure is that they are chiefs of the heavenly priesthood, the O. T. and N. T. saints, who shall be perfected at the same time (Heb. 11:40).

THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR

They are in fact the two great subjects in the word, next to Christ and His work: in the O. T. the government of the world in righteousness; in the N. T. the church's union and heavenly glory with Christ, after His rejection on earth. When Christ takes the kingdom, evil will be set aside; now Satan reigns. The effect of faithfulness, till God's great power is taken (Rev. 11:15-18) to put evil aside, is that the follower of Christ has to take up his cross, says the Lord. Hence all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution for it, says the apostle Paul; or as Peter, If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable (grace) with God. We have to swim against the stream till the power of God's world-kingdom comes: then the stream will flow aright. This is at the appearing of the Lord when His power overwhelms all adversaries.

But in the bright and morning star we have the heavenly character of His coming. "And I will give him the morning star," that is, I will give the Christian Myself in this way before the day. The morning star is seen before sunrise by such as watch. When the sun rises, every eye shall see Him; and manifest blessing and peace shall follow the execution of judgment. But Christ gives

29. *The Bible Treasury* 9:368.

Himself to the overcomer before the day. If we are to appear with Him in glory, we must be with Him in order to appear; we follow Him out of heaven after being caught up (Rev. 17:14, 19:14).

Let me put it to any good conscience: -- Is this world what God would have it? Assuredly those are to be pitied who are ignorantly, vainly, trying to improve it; as if man could mend a state which is the consequence of sin, and of sin rising up more and more from Adam to the cross of Christ! The Lord is now exercising grace, not judgment; as the gospel He sends to every creature best proves. He lets the world go on. There are on the one hand signs of a good and wise God; there is on the other hand a state of utter moral confusion in the world. But faith sees another thing: the saints' association with Christ, not only by the Spirit now, but actually by His coming for them before He is manifested. He will give us the "morning star." The believer even now has the light of life in Christ, a child of light and of day (1 Thess. 5:5). We are not of night nor of darkness, but belong to that day. Therefore should we be watching for the "morning star." So in Rev. 22:16, the moment Christ says, "I am the bright and morning star," the Spirit and the bride say, Come.

But there remains the solemn truth that "the day" will come with sudden destruction on sinners unawares. Such is the solemn testimony as to the world. The risen Lord will judge the (habitable) world in righteousness, as the apostle told the Athenians (Acts 17). Beyond doubt the day will come when He shall appear in glory and we together with Him from heaven. But 2 Peter 1:19 speaks of more even now, day dawning and the day star arising in the heart. It is the present possession of the heavenly hope, which might be lacking, even when prophecy was known. Christ will reign in that day, and I shall reign with Him at that time, as the lamp of prophecy discloses; evil will be put down by the Lord, and the world will be set up for divine blessing universally. In the meantime has the heavenly light of the gospel day dawned on me since I believed? Has Christ arisen as a heavenly hope on my heart?

Alas in Sardis we hear of a name to live and yet dead (the world valued, and the works incomplete, not any terrible corruption, such as we see in Thyatira). If you that hear me have a name to live, is Christ the power of your life? Those who have a name to live and are dead are treated like the world, though called the church. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." But if Christ is your life, you are not of the world, even as He is not. How sad for professors of Christ to be threatened as the world is in 1 Thess. 5:2! If any say, Why? Am I not as good a Christian as you? I answer, Is there such a result of your christianity that Christ is the power of your life? If not, having a name to live, you are dead; and that day of the Lord will overtake you as a thief in the night.

Very different is the word in Rev. 3:7-13, which comes to those that have but little strength. Weak as they were, they had kept Christ's word and had not denied His name. This is what pleases God in a day of superstition and infidelity: Christ's word in a world where even professing Christians have departed from it; Christ's name not denied, when humanitarianism prevails. God had revealed, and still in some hearts maintains the truth in the midst of ever rising evil. "Because thou hast kept &c., I will also keep thee (not merely from the judicial day that overhangs men, but) from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world (OTK.) to try them that dwell on the earth." Are

you then keeping the word of His patience? Christ is waiting, and so should we be waiting. I must walk, and worship, and wait like a person that does not belong to the world, in communion with Christ.³⁰

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB AND THE ARMIES FROM HEAVEN

In the figure of the elders in heaven no distinction is made between O. T. and church saints for all are priests; as all shall be who have part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6). O. T. and church saints are raised together as Heb. 11:40 shows, which does distinguish these two companies. The distinction appears again in Rev. 19 where the bride and the guests are distinguished at the marriage which takes place in heaven.

Regarding the armies which come out of heaven (Rev. 19:14), no distinction is made between the O. T. and church saints. Those with Him are called, and chosen and faithful (Rev. 17:14). Christ will have taken those who formed the church up to the Father's house, "where I am" (John 14:1-3), and when He is revealed from heaven (2 Thess. 1) we will be manifested in glory with Him (Col. 3:4). In order to come out of heaven in His train we will have been caught up to the scene of glory previously. The rapture and the appearing are separate phases of the one coming.

COME, LORD JESUS!

How sweetly do the closing appeals tell upon the heart of him who has an ear to hear! "I am the Root and the Offspring of David; the bright, the morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come." It would be to lose or at least to misuse the prophetic sayings of this book, were we to have any other hope than that Jesus is coming quickly (chap. 22:7). It is well to read in their light the signs of the times: knowing the awful end, we can thus detect the principles now at work.

But it is a mistake to construe of such signs obstacles to the coming of the Lord; to say, until I know the arrival of this or that precursor, I cannot in my heart expect Jesus. Blessed be God! such is not the language of the Spirit. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Are these the words of mere feeling, unguided by spiritual understanding of the mind of God? As a fact, we know that the Lord has delayed; but He is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness. He is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But who will say that it is conceivable to be looking for the Lord, wholly uncertain of the time of His advent, and at the same time to have the revealed certainty of a number of events which determine the year, or, it may be, the day?

That Jesus will arise, the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings

30. *The Bible Treasury* 20:45, 46.

(Mal. 4), is clear; and we know that the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13). But "this same Jesus" is far more than the supreme power of righteous government on earth. He is known to the church, at any rate, as the bright, the morning Star. Blessed light of grace, ere the day breaks, to them who watch for Him from heaven during the dark and lonely night! "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." The weakest Christian too can join: "and let him that heareth say, Come."

"He that testifieth these things saith, Yea, I am coming quickly. Amen, come, Lord Jesus."³¹

CONCLUSION

Paul said, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12).

James said, "The coming of the Lord is drawn nigh" (James 5:8).

John said, "It is [the] last hour" (1 John 2:18); and, "the time is near" (Rev. 3:1).

Peter said, "the end of all things is drawn nigh" (1 Peter 4:7).

Christ said, "Yea, I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20).

The evil servant said in his heart "my Lord delays His coming" (Matt. 24:48).

The ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom and fell asleep (Matt. 25).

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

CORRESPONDENCE ON GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S RUIN

My dear Brother,

I have lately felt somewhat perplexed how to answer the following statements, and should be glad if you will kindly tell me how scripture meets this serious question. It has been said, "God is love. He does not leave the poor heathen without divine aid in their darkness. Though the Holy Ghost may not be in them as an indwelling Spirit, yet, as external, He deals with the conscience of *every human being*; in the case of a heathen aiding him towards right convictions and good practice, and helping him so to live that he may be saved, and this, though he may never have heard the name of Christ, and knows not the true God in Christ. Such texts as Acts 17:27; 10:35; Romans 2:7; Genesis 6:3, corroborate this view."

Ever, my dear Brother,

31. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 2:44.

Affectionately yours in Christ,
J.B.P.

My dear Brother,

The doctrine you refer to is widely spread enough. Zwingle held it, all the Wesleyans hold it, and most of the national professors of Christianity. But it is founded on a want of depth and truth in the foundations, denying that we are all lost. The best answer is the very plain statements in the Epistle to the Romans, though these are confirmed by many others. But there is always a want of conviction of sin in these cases; man is not lost, not dead in trespasses and sins, and that is, *I* am not; for if *I* have deserved condemnation, it is no difficulty to think we *all* have. Hence grace, sin, and the Lord's death, all lose their import and value; and the real way of meeting it morally is to deal with the conscience of the individual. "So to live that he might be saved" at once shows ignorance of the ways of God in grace -- in fact of the gospel -- as regards Christ's work.

"Right convictions and good practice" is not gospel. Is he born again? Acts 17:27 does not say a word of the Spirit's acting, and chapter 10:35 says simply that he who is such and such is accepted. It was merely that blessing was not confined to the Jews, as is evident if the passage be read. Romans 2:7, &c., which is the strongest passage, supposes the truth of glory and resurrection known. *If I* found a Gentile so walking, he is as much saved as a Jew. But it is declared that every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God, that there is none righteous, no, not one. The condemnation of the heathen is (Rom. 1:18-3:19) put upon a ground which negatives the idea of such a universal operation of the Spirit. They are, says the apostle, without excuse, on the double ground of having given up glorifying God when they knew Him, and testimony of creation, adding conscience: a reasoning perfectly futile, and without sense, if there was the other ground of condemnation, namely, that they have resisted the Holy Ghost. They that have sinned without law perish without law. The carnal mind is enmity against God, in me, as well as in any other one of the nations. People confound the ground of responsibility with sovereign grace in saving. Genesis 6:3 refers merely to the patience of God in Noah's time.

Men are not saved by grace, if they are as thus stated; because, as the Spirit works alike on all (or the argument is nothing worth), the whole of salvation depends on man's acceptance of and acting on it. As I said at the beginning, our whole state, as scripture puts it, is denied. (See 2 Corinthians 5:14, where the apostle draws the conclusion from grace. Compare Eph. 2:5.) I do not believe the Gentiles more lost than I was myself. But there is no name given under heaven whereby we can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ. Romans 10:13,15 is positive as to the means. Judgment and condemnation is according to the means we have. What brings, by sovereign goodness, salvation to the lost is another thing. But, as I said, does he think himself lost? That is the real question. The source of thousands of opinions is the want of this, of conscience being before God; where it is not, the mind can have a thousand thoughts, all alike to no purpose. But I must close.

Your affectionate Brother in Christ,
J. N. D.

The Bible Treasury 12:288

Tapes and Books Available

Some sets of cassettes of recorded addresses by the editor (8 tapes in an 8 pocket case) on the subject of dispensational truth (re the Old Testament) are available for \$23.00 per set.

Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby. vol. one, 1826-1845, 238 pp., with copious subject index, is available for only \$12.00. This book, besides showing the history of recovered truth, also addresses in detail the charges that J. N. Darby received the idea of the pretribulation rapture from a demonic or occultic or Jesuitical source. Reviews are saying that this book has settled that issue. Highly documented.

J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses, with Scripture index and several charts, includes several lengthy appendices: A Reply to Ultradispensationalism; A Reply to the Charge that Dispensationalism is inherently Arminian; and A Reply to the Charge that the Kingdom Offer Makes God Immoral. The reader will discover great differences between JND's teaching and that of C. I. Scofield, concerning dispensational truth. Indeed, CIS's definition of a dispensation is basically wrong. Moreover his scheme violates the truth of the end of the first man at the cross and omits the very basic matter of the development of God's ways in government in the earth, which is of fundamental importance to the subject. \$10.00

If you want 'newspaper exegesis' of prophetic matters, then the following books will not interest you. If you prefer sober exposition (and why would you not prefer that?) then you may find help in the following foundational books, the first of which contains a five color chart detailing epochs of Scripture from the opening of the times of the Gentiles until the eternal state.

Daniel's 70 Weeks and the Revival of the Roman Empire, 100 pp., with Scripture index; \$5.00.

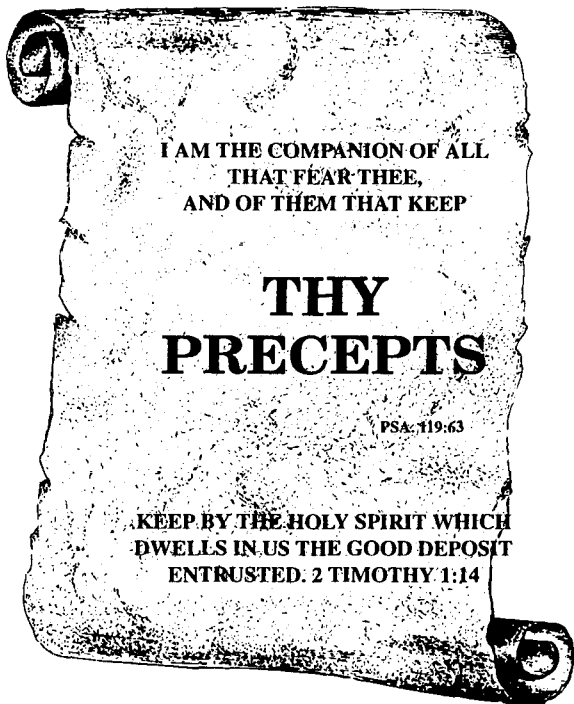
Future Events: ■ Jacob's Trouble ■ The Hour of Trial ■ The Great Tribulation ■ The Day of the Lord ■ The War of that Great Day of God the Almighty; 104 pp., with Scripture index; \$7.00

Add \$1.75 for postage for orders under \$15.00; 10% for orders over \$15.00. NJ residents add 6% sales tax.

It would be appreciated if you would recommend these books to Christian acquaintances.

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Errata Notice

On page 157 of *Thy Precepts* for Sept/Oct there is an error which reverses the meaning of what was intended. The paragraph beginning: "Perhaps he wanted collateral fellowship with the possibility . . ." contains the word "with," which should read "without." Please correct your copy.

REQUEST

W. Kelly's *Elements of Prophecy*, which appeared in *The Bible Treasury*, vol. 9, was printed as a separate volume, with an added introduction. The editor requires missing pages from the introduction -- from the title page through page ix. If you can supply a duplication of these pages, please contact me.

THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

The Babe in the Manger

It is indeed a sorry fact that there is nothing about the Son of God that has not been attacked by professed Christians. Especially is this true in connection with the incarnation of the Son, come here in holy manhood to take a dependent place before the Father. When we contemplate that Babe in the manger, there was the dependent One; at the same time very God, creator and sustainer of the universe. At the moment He lay in the manger, the universe was upheld by the sustaining will of Him Who was God and man in one Person. The so-called "laws" of nature were then and there, as now, the expression of His will. As He lay there, in the manger, "the Mighty God" (Isa. 9:6), "by Him all things subsist together" (Col. 1:17). He was sustaining the breath of Herod who was going to try to kill Him. Lying against the cross, He sustained the centripetal and centrifugal forces as the hammer described its arc to drive in the nails; as He had likewise sustained the spit in its course as they had dared to spit in the face of the Lord of glory.

Such was the place of dependency that our Beloved took, and this led to His lying in the manger. He was a dependent babe, then a dependent boy and then a dependent man. He grew from holy, dependent infancy to holy, dependent manhood, ever the delight of the Father in every station. In every station He glorified the Father. As a dependent babe in the manger, He glorified the Father.

It is sorrowful that on June 29, 1889, F. E. Raven wrote, in a negative way, in a letter:

... Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life. ...

H. H. McCarthy heard about it and in a published paper ¹ quoted FER in this way:

"Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life."

1. If any reader has papers by H. H. McCarthy, such as *The Babe in the Manger*, or other papers, please contact the editor, www.presenttruthpublishers.com

An attempt was made by F. E. Raven and his supporters to conceal what FER had written and to condemn H. H. McCarthy.

Mr. Barker forwarded some questions to Mr. Raven, one of which was:

Is it true that Mr. Raven has owned (as I am informed) that he was the author of the sentence, "Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life"?

Mr. Raven replied:

Greenwich, *March 6, 1890.*

My Dear Brother, . . . In regard to the first point, I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine. It is for Major McCarthy, who I believe is the author of the paper, in which the sentence appears in inverted commas, to prove whence he derived it.

Mr. Barker responded:

Torquay, *March 19, 1890.*

My Dear Brother, -- I shall be very glad if you will place me in the position to say that the sentence with which Major McCarthy's tract begins never emanated from you.

The sentence I mean is, 'Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life!' Possibly in passing from one to another the sentence may have undergone some unintentional change while the substance of the thing remained. So I shall be more than thankful if you can tell me that not only the sentence as it stands, but no such sentence ever came from you.

To this, Mr. Raven wrote:

Greenwich, *March 20, 1890.*

My Dear Brother, -- I thank you for your letter, and hasten to reply, I trust plainly.

I have understood that Major McCarthy printed the words, "Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life," supposing them to be an extract from a letter of mine. I am satisfied I never used these words.

These letters are quoted by A. C. Ord in *The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ*, pp. 3-5, and he commented thus (pp. 5, 6):

What are we to think of such a reply, or of the refusal of Mr. Raven's friends at Ealing to produce the letter in question, which contains some sentence which they at first communicated, and which undeniably embodies a lowering reflection upon the Person of the only begotten Son of God? Where is the care for the glory of God, when the Lord Himself is in question, and when Mr. Raven and his friends at Ealing persist in concealing that which has given so much occasion for distress among those gathered to the name of Christ. "He that doeth truth cometh to the Light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Is the Person of the Lord held in so little estimation that such conduct can be passed over, or is the credit of Mr. Raven's character to be held of more importance? His own statement in reply to Mr. Barker, painful as it is, is a confirmation of the deeper gravity of the sentence they agree to conceal.

But the dishonesty, and the vindictiveness against faithful H. H. McCarthy, came to light; and A. C. Ord placed the following in an appendix (pp. 42, 43).

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, &c.,' occurs. I think it speaks for itself. The exhibition of eternal life is *in the Risen Man*, 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 Divine prerogatives down here. 'The Word was God,' and further, in taking part in human life down here (the life to 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.)

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, against a servant of Christ; and this is maintained 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*.² Hence, if we say that anything that was essentially in Christ was not exhibited in Him, we deny His own Word, "I am altogether that which I say unto you" (John 8:25).

Having shown that F. E. Raven and his supporters lied³ regarding his statement about the babe in the manger, we return to FER's letter of March 20, 1890 for an additional extract.

When an earlier paper of Major McCarthy's appeared, in writing to a brother at Ealing I pointed out the monstrosity of an assertion of the Major's, that the Lord never ceased to be the EXHIBITION of eternal life from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. It was no question of what was there in the babe -- God manifest in the flesh, eternal life, and all else, but of what He was the exhibition, for Major McCarthy meant in detail. He was as a babe the EXHIBITION of infancy in its helplessness, for all else, though there, was for the moment veiled, and it was His glory, for in being made of a woman, becoming man, He came truly and really into humanity in its conditions here, grew and increased in wisdom and stature.

2. See also W. T. Whybrow, *Heavenly Truth*, p. 16.

3. W. Kelly wrote:

To a Christian nothing is so near the heart as Christ, nothing so offensive and evil as His dishonor. Where then are those whose speculations led them to say in substance, whatever the variation of phrase, "Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life"? The unbelief and the irreverence of such a speech seem to have been by no means confined to one; but it was laid, not without ground at the door of perhaps the boldest in the new school [F.E. Raven]. The coolness with which he denied the imputation made one tremble for the zealous brother [H.H. McCarthy], who characterized the affront to our Lord as it deserved. But it comes out long after, without confession or apparently intention but by the evident hand of God, that the actual words were "Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life."

Now the former report (avowedly hearsay) imputes less than what in fact was written. Yet the writer, when appealed to, said he was satisfied he never used these words! Was this Christian candor? or even common honesty? But so it is ever: the truth of Christ lost for one who bears His name is the loss of truthfulness. Nor this only: the brother who resented the reported dishonor of Christ was challenged to produce the letter containing it, in the very place where the letter was, and was known to be unless destroyed! Now what can one think of concealing it deliberately, not only to shield the evildoer, but to subject the brother jealous for the glory of Christ to the charge of unrighteousness, and to threats of more or less discipline? Shame on such as conspired in the Name against that Name! If honest once, to what have error and party spirit and a bad conscience degraded them? Is this the holiness of God's house? It is not Greenwich [the place and assembly of F.E. Raven's dwelling] only: the same fellowship was at work to the same ends at Ealing, and in how many other spots we know not. It is Christ flouted by all such, with moral wrong flowing directly from it as flagrant as the doctrinal error, leaven in both ways.

The New Development 1890, pp. 1, 2.

F. E. Raven withdrew only the word "helpless" as H. H. Frost noted:

The word "helpless" was, under pressure, withdrawn, and thus, as was publicly shown in a large meeting at Brighton, the sentence was made worse, for it thus treats the Lord like any other "babe." The word was withdrawn again on October 7, 1890, sixteen months after it was written. At the meeting referred to on page 10, F.E.R. was asked to withdraw the statement itself. This he refused, saying, "rather than do so he would go out of fellowship." -- "*Some Account*," &c.⁴

We continue now with helpful comments by A. C. Ord.

Though He is rejected by man because of His humiliation (in Matthew 11) -- for the pride of man is "offended" by the lowly guise and form of manhood which He has assumed -- He bows to His Father, who hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes; and we there learn that so glorious and profound is this mystery of His Person, that it is inexplicable to man. But what is most remarkable, and shows how, on account of His humiliation, His sacred character is guarded, it is not so affirmed of the Father; for while it is said that no man or creature "knoweth the Son but the Father," *it is* permitted to us by the indwelling of the Spirit to know the Father. "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, *and he* to whomsoever the Son wills (Βουληται) to reveal Him." There is not in the Father that complex glory which exists in the Person of the Son become man, but pure and simple divine character and nature, which could be revealed and made known by the Son. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (Compare John 1:18, 14:8,9, 16:25, 17:6,25,26.) Hence the glory of the Son who became man, and in consequence exposed Himself to be scrutinized and treated with indignity by the wretched ingratitude of the heart of man, for whose sake He humbled Himself, is safeguarded by the inscrutability which surrounds it. And so jealous is the Holy Ghost, by whom the Gospels are indited, on this subject, that the same truth is repeated still more emphatically in Luke 10:22: "*All things* are delivered to Me of My Father; and no man knoweth who *the Son is*, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, *and he to whom* the Son wills to reveal Him." The difference of the language here observable is remarkable; it is not only "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father," but "no man knoweth (τις εστιν ο υιος) *who the Son is* but the Father," that is, not only His Person cannot be fathomed, but *the manner of His existence is wholly incomprehensible* to the human understanding.⁵

Who, for instance, can form an idea of the effect of the presence, action, and power of the Holy Ghost in that human nature, the seed of the woman conceived of the Virgin by His power? For though it was "the Seed of the woman," and conceived *of her* according to the promise, and thus of her nature and substance, the action of the Spirit was such, in the miraculous conception of that holy

4. *What Think Ye of Christ*, Bristol, rev. ed., p. 19, note. See also N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:553.

5. Thus is rebuked the slighting allusion to this passage contained in the words, "Retiring behind the oft-quoted phrase, 'No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.'" (*Voice to the Faithful*, January, 1891, page 15.) And the dangerous claim to *distinguish*, in this incomprehensible mystery, the human from the divine (pages 17) truth, published by many of these teachers.

humanity, that the angel says that that Holy Thing born of her could, on this account (as well as in His own higher nature), bear the title of the Son of God. Thus all His human life was in the power of the Holy Ghost, infinitely beyond His marvelous action on saints in earlier days. This explains how, in the sacrificial aspect of His giving up Himself to death, it is said by the apostle Paul in Hebrews 9, that He, "*through the Eternal Spirit*, offered Himself without spot to God"; for the Holy Ghost acts in being Himself, in an infinite way, the power of those motives and feelings, which led Him to devote Himself thus for the glory of God, in His death. So again we read, "He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness" to be "tempted of the devil," and "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (Luke 4).

This was signified of old in the type when the fine flour was *mingled* as well as *anointed* with oil. We have pointed out the activity of the Spirit of God from the earliest moment in John the Baptist; how then can we limit His energy, and the effect of His *all-pervading presence* thus specially marked, in the case of our Lord Himself? Before the scene in the temple, even from His infancy, we read what could not be said of another, He was "filled with wisdom." Now wisdom is not only knowledge, but the power or capacity of adjusting the relations of things, or using knowledge rightly. Where can we find another who could tell us what was addressed to Him at the moment of His birth? "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; *this day have I begotten Thee*. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Psalm 2:7,8). We have seen (*The Manifestation of the Divine Nature*) in Psalm 22 how the sense of conscious relationship, confidence, and hope was expressed by the Lord when He was upon His mother's breasts; but this goes even farther, for He declares how He was addressed as Son and heir by the Father, on the day of His birth, and what was then pledged to Him, and on what ground.

Of Him alone, in contrast with all others, it is said, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (John 3:34). A prophet might communicate messages which were given to him, but at other times he spake as other ordinary men; whilst Jesus spake only and always *the words of God*, and nothing else, just because He was God, and spake always by the Spirit of God. If He cast out devils, it was by the finger of God, and by the Spirit of God (Matt. 12:28); but He could also whilst on earth *confer on others* the power of doing the same and working miracles, to impart which is the prerogative of God alone (Luke 9:1; Mark 6:7). What above all marks the import of the passage, that none knows who the Son is but the Father, is the statement in Colossians, twice repeated, that in Him all the fulness (of the Godhead) is pleased to dwell.⁶ Not only this, but "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*." This statement, true of Him when on earth, is

6. "The Father" has been wrongly introduced here (A.V.); for the πληρωμα of "fulness" refers to the Godhead, *i.e.* all the persons subsisting in the divine glory. It expresses the complacency of which the Person of Christ is both the object and the subject; so that instead of being some inferior or subordinate person because he became Man, it is exactly the reverse. The Godhead has been pleased to magnify His Person, by making His human form its dwelling-place, the channel of its expression and display, and His death the means of the reconciliation to itself of the whole scene which has been defiled by sin, as well as of ourselves, *i.e.* persons, who are *now* brought nigh. The word εὐδοκῆσε (was pleased) being in the past tense shows that the former extends to His Person and life when on earth.

generally supposed to express that He is God incarnate; but far more than this is contained in it. *He is corporeally the centre of the presence and action of all the divine Persons.* He is the Son in His own Person. He manifests perfectly the Father in all His blessed nature; for He can say, "I and My Father are one," and, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And all the energies and working of the Holy Ghost, in the scene of evil that surrounded Him, proceeded from Himself as their centre. This is expressed in the Revelation, when He is said to be, both now and in the future, possessor of the seven Spirits of God (originally seen before the throne, and subsequently sent forth into all the earth), first in the address to the church at Sardis, and afterwards when seen as the Lamb that had been slain, in the midst of the throne, with seven horns and seven eyes, emblematic of the fulness of divine intelligence, and of active power which He wields in all the universe (Rev. 1:4; 4:5).

It is important to observe, that in both the passages which specially speak of the Lord before the assumption of humanity, and subsequently to His becoming man, His divine personality is always maintained. Nor did He take another personality by becoming man. It is one and the same Person that Scripture presents to us throughout. In Hebrews 10, "Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God"; "A body hast Thou prepared Me." The statement, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me," comprises all that He fulfilled, *after* that He had taken as well as in taking the body prepared for Him. In what follows we read, "But *this man*, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." In Philippians 2 He who is subsistent in the form and glory of God, empties *Himself*; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbles *Himself*. The divine personality is not lost by His becoming man, but is marked or distinguished even then, by these acts ascribed to Him. Hence He carried with Him the infinite sense of what He was, and what He came to do. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." And the result of His intervention never falls below the height of this infinite purpose and presence, as is distinctly shown in His still *humbling Himself*, and fulfilling what was written in these eternal counsels concerning Him. At no moment of His life, from His birth, when He takes the body prepared for Him, to His giving it up on the cross, could this be wanting.

On this passage in Hebrews 10, Mr. Darby thus comments:

7. Mr. Raven may see only the exhibition of infancy in its helplessness; but Scripture calls Him, the babe, "God with us," and the child "the mighty God," *i.e.* far more than saying "God was in the babe," for God has dwelt in man in the prophets of old by His Spirit, or now, as the apostle John tells us, in us (1 John 4), but never before or in any other were God and man *united* in one for our eternal blessing and to accomplish redemption. Is it possible that Mr. Anstey (*Letter to Brethren on the Continent*, p. 4) can be ignorant of this difference? He denies that "'Mr. R. separates the true Godhead from the manhood,' because He says 'God was IN the babe,'" and adds, "The weakness of such a charge is manifest. Have we never read 'God was in Christ.'" Unitarian and other heretical teachers will admit that God was in the babe, as He was in John the Baptist, who was full of the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb; but they will not admit that the babe was God. Mr. Raven, as the consequence of dividing the Person of Christ, to which his views on eternal life have led him, always thus speaks, "All was there"; but to his eye nothing but "helplessness" was "exhibited," all else, though there, was "veiled." He has repeated this in various ways, so that the withdrawal of the word "helpless" in one instance leaves his teaching untouched. He says, "It was humanity in *its conditions*," to which he then limits the Lord's Person; and, in consequence, the manifestation also.

"Before He became man, in the place where only divinity is known, and its eternal counsels and thoughts are communicated between the divine Persons, the Word -- as He has declared it to us, in time, by the prophetic Spirit -- such being the will of God contained in the book of the eternal counsels, He who was able to do it, offered Himself freely to accomplish that will.

"That of which we have been speaking is *continually* manifested in the life of Jesus on earth. *God shines through His position in the human body*; for He was necessarily God in the act itself of His humiliation, and none but God could have undertaken and been found in it. Yet He was always, and entirely and perfectly, obedient and dependent on God. That which *revealed itself in His existence on earth* was the expression of that which was accomplished in the eternal abode in His own nature. That is to say (and of this Psalm 40 speaks), that which He declares and that which He was here below are the same thing: the one reality in heaven, the other bodily on earth. That which He was here below was but the expression -- the living, real, bodily manifestation of what is contained in those divine communications which have been revealed to us, and which were the reality of the position that He assumed." (*Synopsis on Hebrews*, p. 335, 336.)

". . . He tells us that He took this place willingly, according to the eternal counsels respecting His own Person. *For the Person is not changed*. But He speaks in the Psalm according to the position of obedience which He had taken, saying always *I* and *Me* in speaking of what took place before His incarnation." (p. 334, note.)

How different all this is from Mr. R. and those writers whose reasonings would reduce us to the conclusion that His infancy was practically unaffected by His divinity or by the unlimited presence of the Holy Ghost; thus lowering Him below what was true of John the Baptist, who was "filled with the Holy Ghost from His mother's womb"! . . .

. . . as we have said, they [the gospels] ever keep Him before us in the unity of His Person. No doubt they present, as has been stated, sometimes more of the divine and sometimes more of the human; and doubtless some acts are more characteristically divine in their nature, and others more characteristically human. But even in specifically human acts, to attempt to draw the line, even as to these, or to *exclude* what is divine from them, and *vice versa*, is not permissible; and if reverence and faith and love for that blessed One are allowed to have their place, such an attempt will be at once checked. Take, for instance, the Lord touching the leper. No doubt it was with a human hand that He does so; but that blessed hand conveys divine virtue and power, and dispels the leprosy in a moment. And the words, "I will, be thou clean," expressive of divine title and authority, coming forth from human lips, and a heart filled with infinite love, accompany His touch, which in any other than His would have involved defilement. So when "the whole multitude sought to touch Him," the Spirit of God adds, "for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all." Even in death (which is an act of a specific human character), we have seen that the divine purpose and nature (Heb. 10), not only gave all force and meaning to the assuming the body prepared for Him, but characterized the wondrous offering of that body on the cross; so that God could find His infinite pleasure and satisfaction in it. No man could take His life from Him. He had power to lay it

down, and power to take it again. In a similar way we are not only told, that, whilst voluntarily submitting to it for our sakes, He could not be holden of death, for He was the Prince of Life; but *He gives* His flesh for the life of the world, and He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. This life in Him overcomes all the power of death, and this is here extended distinctly to His humanity.

In this His divine title and exemption from death, save by His own act, as well as His resurrection power, appear. He adds, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again"; *i. e.*, it was the voluntary nature of this act, and loving obedience to His Father in it, that constituted its value.

Thus, though we do not call divine acts human nor human acts divine, the Scripture shows us that, in His acts, the human and divine combine or mingle. If this is denied, His blessed Person is divided, and all the value of what He does, and is, is lost. This does not imply any confusion or transformation of the human into the divine, or the divine into the human; but it implies a union intimate and perfect, in His blessed Person, which will be our joy, as it is the ground of our confidence, throughout eternity. An union which is impenetrable and unfathomable, but because of which it could be said, when He was on earth, "The Son of man which is in heaven."

Ed.

TOLERATION

There is a great cry now-a-days against intolerance and bigotry, and a proportionate laudation of tolerance and liberality; and people are frightened by hard names and deceived by soft ones, and at last, from mere habit, believe what they assert or what others assert to them, and think that toleration must be the right thing. Progress in the search after what the world calls truth is said to be hindered by dogmatic opinions or teaching. In secular things, however, such as natural science, etc., dogmatism may be admitted. In spiritual things, and in those things which concern the truth of God and the salvation of men's souls, dogma is, they say, inadmissible. We are told that what men on these subjects think to be true to-day, may to-morrow be found susceptible of modification, or be proved altogether erroneous; that doctrines and practices, good and true in one age, are unfitted for a succeeding period of the world's history, and may be pronounced "obsolete." What would do very well in times past as the foundation of a man's hope for eternity, is quite unsuited to this more advanced age; the doctrine of which to-day will in turn pass away, and be succeeded by others more advanced, and so on. In the face of such a state of things, we are told that it is presumption for any man to express conviction in a settled opinion upon any religious question or doctrine. Many, indeed, are asking, "What is Truth?" and "Who will show us any good?" but very few wait for an answer.

Toleration, then, is the order of the present day; and men may hold what they please provided they will not interfere with their neighbors' opinions, and limit the suitability of their own opinions to themselves. But it was not always so, neither will it always continue, but it is the cry of the moment, and therefore it is worthy of examination.

What, then, is toleration, and why and what are we to tolerate? The very word implies a state of imperfection. If all were of one mind, there would be no toleration needed; if good universally prevailed, there would be nothing to tolerate; if evil was universal, it would certainly be intolerable, though for all that it must be endured (as it will be in the "place prepared for the devil and his angels"). Toleration, then, implies the co-existence of good and evil, in which evil is tolerated by (that which assumes to be) good, for toleration must necessarily be by the superior towards the inferior.

That in a sense and in degree toleration is right none of course would deny, for God Himself tolerates, exhibits patience and long-suffering. His own word, and every man's experience, teaches this. But with God, toleration has a limit; and it must be so, for though in grace for a time He may "endure with much long-suffering," He could not always do so without a denial of His character. A Being who eternally tolerated evil would not be good, holy, or righteous; and a state in which toleration was eternally called for would not be a perfect one. Toleration, even on God's part, must therefore be defined and limited, both in its extent and its duration.

But there is another side to the question. For though in patience and grace a being who is perfectly good may for a time, and for an object, tolerate evil, toleration, if exercised by beings in themselves not good but evil, assumes another and very different aspect. If a being who is perfectly good tolerates evil, it must be for a good end, or he would not be good; but if an imperfect being exercise toleration, we must suspect both the motive and the end. To speak of evil tolerating evil sounds paradoxical, yet as a matter of fact we meet it constantly in the world, and it is the spirit of that which people call "agreeing to differ."

Toleration, then, on the part of fallible or imperfect beings, springs from two or three motives. Firstly, from such self-condemnation as to render the judgment of others in like doubtful circumstances impossible. Secondly, from inability to force their own views and opinions, owing to a balance of power in those opposed to them; or, thirdly, from lack of certainty, and conviction of the truth of what they do hold.

Now, while the first is true of man in his natural state (Rom. 1:31, 2:1); and

the second undoubtedly underlies all forms of doctrinal error, whether infidel or superstitious; the third, we are assured, is the motive of much that is called religious toleration now-a-days. Men are uncertain in their opinions, have no solid foundation for their belief, no sure prospect for their hopes. In things which concern the soul's salvation (that which the world itself admits to be the most important of all subjects) men hold opinions as wide as the poles asunder, and none dare say in their hearts, much less with their lips, "I have found the truth."

One system of religion alone in Christendom has emphatically claimed infallibility. Whilst that system had the power, it not only asserted infallibility, but, consistently therewith, it exercised intolerance. Another spirit and a superior power has been slowly developing. Man's reason is asserting its claim, and the charity and toleration of our day is mainly ⁸ the fruit of the co-existence and conflict of the spirits of superstition and infidelity. The world will yet experience again the intolerance of an over-bearing power of evil. As the influence of superstition still further wanes, and the present necessity of mutual toleration ceases (for toleration will always lessen as the balance of power tends more and more in one direction, and will cease when such power can assert itself), so will the tyranny and selfishness of man uncontrolled by religion, whether false or true, be developed in the Antichrist -- the man of sin, the lawless, the wicked one, spoken of in the Scriptures (Dan. 11:36; 2 Thess. 2; Rev. 13).

Hitherto we have been speaking of the character and spirit of the toleration now abroad in the world, but we also desire, if the Lord will, to say a few words for the help of those who, desiring to know and do the will of God, are yet in difficulty as to what to allow and what to refuse.

On this subject, as on every other in which the professing people of God are concerned, we can go nowhere for instruction but to God and to His word. His ways must be our example. His word our precept. All will admit that if there be any revelation of God, there must also exist in connection with it a standard of right and of truth, if it be but apprehended. But while this is admitted in a general way, there is the greatest hesitation on the part of men either to grasp this standard for themselves or to admit that others may have attained to it. All Christendom acknowledges Christianity as God's revelation, yet for the most part argue as if the arrival at a divine certainty of God's truth were impossible -- as if, in fact, God, who gave revelation, had not intended, or was unable to

8. We say *mainly*, for we do not deny but that there is a measure of true Christian forbearance also in exercise, and often in combination with less pure motives.

bring it home to the hearts and understandings of those to whom it has been made. Hence dogmatism is deprecated, and strong convictions generally demurred to. Even the one system which in its own self-assertion dogmatizes unhesitatingly, ceases to be dogmatic, or even confident, directly it attempts to deal with the real and primary object of a divine revelation -- namely, the bringing together into acquaintance, confidence and peace, the holy God and His sinful creatures -- and denies that this end can be attained in this life: asserting, in direct opposition to the whole teaching of the New Testament revelation of grace and love, that "no man knoweth whether he be worthy of love or of hate." But for our own part we are confident that God has given an unerring and perfect revelation, wherein He Himself may be infallibly known, and His truth infallibly grasped, all the diversity and uncertainty of men's opinions notwithstanding.

Before, then, we can venture to be tolerant or intolerant, the first point to be settled is the confidence and ground of the individual soul. Unless we know and are persuaded that we have the truth, it is certainly impossible for us with any decency or power to exhibit intolerance of the opinions of others.⁹

What, therefore, is needed is individual personal assurance, founded on divine and therefore a perfect authority, and when this is possessed, what, and what not to tolerate may be soon arrived at. God's truth is the standard of doctrine; His ways, of practice.

That the Christian may not, without terrible risk and responsibility, tolerate that which is contrary to God, His word distinctly teaches. Toleration of sin and of evil doctrine are denounced in many and many places, such as 1 Cor. 5; 1 Tim. 5:20,22; 2 John; Rev. 2:14-16, 3:15,16. The warnings of Christ to the churches are solemn words in the present day, when men tolerate every form of evil under the common name of Christianity, and deprecate the judgment of opinions and teaching the most dishonoring to Christ and His work. How do the words of Malachi 2:17, apply to such -- "Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye say, Every

9. If, for instance, one knows not for himself salvation as a possession, one cannot honestly be intolerant of the views held by others on the subject. One may not approve them, but one must tolerate them. On the other hand, the soul that knows by divine faith that it has salvation from God on the alone ground of the death and resurrection of Christ, has a positive confidence and a standard on this point, which renders him necessarily intolerant of every opinion which may be advanced against it. "I know whom I have believed," is the language of such. There are certain things in which theory will not stand against possession, and this is one. Theories about salvation may be as clear as the day, but the one that has the thing itself alone can judge their value.

one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them." When professing Christians are asked to judge and separate from evil doctrine and practice, they reply, "How are we to judge that to be wrong which is conscientiously held"; or more often they retort, "Who are you, thus to judge others?" And why is this, but that men, calling themselves by the name of Christ, hold not in their own souls the power of Christianity as God's own revelation of Himself; and on this everything turns. If I hold doctrines as mere matters of opinion, how can I contend against contrary views held by others on the same ground and by the same right?

But when the heart and mind are persuaded and pervaded by the truth of God, we do not speak of "my opinions" or "my ideas," and we do not, and ought not to set up our opinions against those of others. It is not that "I think one thing and you another, and we shall never agree," but it is that I believe *God*, that I have submitted to His word, I have accepted and adopted His thoughts. He has answered every question of my heart, and He alone can answer truly any question of any heart. What may be advanced to the contrary is not against the believer's opinion merely, but against the word of God in whom he has believed; and thus false doctrine or opinions contrary to such an one's faith cannot be tolerated, or admitted as having any weight or claim whatever. In dealing with them, grace and wisdom are, however, needed, and the believer has to judge, and has the ability also to judge (1 Cor. 2:11-15) the spirit in which they may be advanced. He will make a difference between the teacher of evil doctrine and those taught and deceived thereby. Whilst after admonition he will reject the former, and tolerate neither the teacher nor the teaching, he will have compassion on the latter -- the one who is ignorant and deceived; and while refusing and correcting the error, will in no wise reject the person. The believer will "have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way"; he will lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for the feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed. In meekness also he will endeavor to instruct those that oppose themselves. Here, however, there is danger of failure. Often we lack patience with those whose hearts are truly upright, but who are unskillful in the word of righteousness, or have been deceived by false teaching. Or, again, in tolerating the person who is ignorant we go too far, and tolerate, or appear to tolerate, his opinions and ways, and thus are unfaithful to the person, and to God and His word. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;" and if the believer sees one in ignorance, even linked with that which in any degree is contrary to the mind and truth of Christ, he must not touch the evil which *he* knows to be evil out of any consideration of love for the other. For instance, one dear to us may be linked with a false system of religious

doctrine, which we know to be contrary to God. Are we to say that he believes it, and therefore we must acknowledge his right to practice it, and aid him in doing so? Surely not! We must no more acknowledge for another the right to believe and practice error than for ourselves. We may not be able to persuade, or even to interfere on the subject, but we can no more aid and abet in it than we could in facilitating the suicide of a friend who assured us on his word that he was weary of life.

But we are well assured of this, that the more our own souls are imbued and satisfied with the truth of God as it is revealed in Christ, the less tolerant shall we be of all that is contrary to it, and yet the more able are we to exhibit the patience and grace of Christ Himself towards the *persons* who may be involved in error. For while in a sense there is nothing so intolerant as truth, yet the one who has truth knows that both "*Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ,*" and he does not therefore separate what God has joined together in the revelation of Himself.¹⁰ To be persuaded in our own souls that so far as we have attained (for we only know in part -- 1 Cor. 13:9; Phil. 3:12,13), we hold the truth of God Himself, gives us an immeasurable superiority in dealing with the souls of others, and enables us, while unsparing towards error, to manifest the toleration and long suffering of God towards those who are deceived thereby. Compassed ourselves with infirmity, having nothing but the grace of God to boast in, we have not to assert *ourselves*, but simply that which is due to Him who has left us here to be witnesses for His truth.

With regard to toleration of the religious opinions of others, which is so strongly advocated now-a-days, we would observe that nothing is more resented by the majority of professing Christians than to have their profession judged. They claim for themselves the liberty which they profess to accord to others. Their position is, however, untenable if judged by God's word. However great the confusion may have become, there is in Scripture a distinct recognition of a "without" and a "within." In Christendom no doubt the line is all but obliterated; but, nevertheless, all who take Christ's name and call themselves Christians, unquestionably take the *inside* place, and are therefore liable to be judged by their fellows. "Do ye not also judge them that are within?"¹¹ (1

10. On the other hand, error knows not grace, and cannot show it. When unchecked by a conflicting power, error propagates itself by force, fraud and cruelty. So with Romanism in the darker ages; so will be infidelity in the latter days (1 Tim. 4; 2 Tim. 3; Rev. 13:14,15).

11. The Christian is not called on to judge the world: "Them that are without God judgeth;" but we are often in difficulties now-a-days from finding those who call themselves Christians, and claim to be "within," so linked with the outside world that it is impossible to know how to class them. All we can say is, that while they make very bad Christians, they are a very good imitation of what is commonly called the World.

Cor. 5:12). Every professing Christian is, therefore, open to judgment, and all that such can require is that they may be judged by the word of God, and not by the measure of another's, or even of their own, conscience. If we can bear that test, we can say with the apostle that with us it is a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment. We fear, however, that much of the tenderness we find abroad on this point arises from inability to bear the test.

Finally, we ask our readers to examine their own position and practice as to toleration, and to ascertain whether their own hearts are persuaded and satisfied with God's revelation (we do not say with man's interpretation of it, but with the revelation itself) -- Christ, the Son of the living God -- He who has the words of eternal life, God manifest in flesh, crucified in weakness, declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead, and now by the right hand of God exalted? Is He so the ground of their peace and confidence? Has the word which reveals Him so laid hold of their souls that they can say, "Let God be true, though (if need be) every man a liar?" Do they believe God rather than man, and know and recognize the immeasurable claim which He has, not only on our love, but on our obedience and life? Lukewarmness is a hateful thing in the sight of One who has spared nothing for the benefit and blessing of those He loves. Where love in one is "stronger than death," how hateful to find Its objects careless and indifferent. To such Christ says, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." But even this is not His last word to them; for He adds, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

(The Remembrancer 12:186-199)

The Holiness of Christian Fellowship

4

Chapter 4.2: Revelation 2 and 3

A wise [man] feareth and departeth from evil (Prov. 14:16).

It is said that we find much evil in some of the assemblies noted in Revelation 2 and 3. And, in an effort to hinder separation from evil, it is pointed out that there is no command to separate from the said evil. The reply to this terrible and unholy argument is given in the following extracts from others.

Moreover, the argument is singularly unhappy, if judged by that view which, to you, "appears the correct one." For, on the protracted scheme of the Apocalyptic churches, Thyatira gives us Popery under the symbol of Jezebel; and you have yourself strongly and repeatedly insisted on the Christian's separation from THAT unclean thing. If, therefore, the epistle to Thyatira forbids not to come out from this evil, the other epistle cannot be said to bind us up with evils else where, when remedy is refused and the godly, if they abide, must do or sanction that which is, in their eyes, false and iniquitous. I entirely coincide with you that to stay in communion with Romish error is to lose all power for witnessing. Why should it be a virtue to stay in communion with that which we account Protestant error? In either case, it would be heartless indifference to truth and holiness. On the scheme you accept, Popery has a place in these churches, prophetically viewed quite as much as a national Establishment; and if it be right, as you own, to separate from Popery, spite of no command from the Lord to Thyatira, it cannot be wrong to separate from nationalism because of no such command to Sardis or Laodicea.¹

I have no doubt that in Thyatira is the Sprit's picture of popery. Do you think people should continue in that? I do not enter into the Seven Churches, because adducing such passages of obscure interpretation to judge the path of plain separation from plain iniquity, is at once condemnation of those who do so, but as you do [enter into the Seven Churches], I ask you this: do you think you should remain in Laodicea to be spued out of Christ's mouth? It [the false use of Rev. 2 & 3] proves too much and therefore nothing. You must not be

1. W. Kelly, *God's Principle of Unity*, pp. 35, 36.

surprised if others decline principles which lead to such a course.²

Even if one does not accept it that Revelation 2 and 3 gives us a foreshadow of church history, if separation from evil is wrong, he should go back to Rome and affirm that the Reformation was a mistake.

It is instructive to note that there WAS a separated number of saints in the city of Thyatira. "But to you I say, *the rest* who are in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I do not cast upon you any other burden; but what ye have hold fast till I shall come" (Rev. 2:24, 25).

The Scripture never warrants the idea of more than one assembly in a city or town. We see this, for example, in the address in several epistles. We see this again in the candlestick in Revelation 2 and 3. Galatia was a province; hence we may speak of the assemblies in Galatia. But in a large city saints gathered together to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, though meeting in several places in the city, were part of the assembly of God there. In the time of ruin in which we live, the few gathered together to Christ's name do not compose the assembly of God in such and such a place, since usually other members of the body live there too. Those so gathered seek, however, to carry out divine principles which cannot be ruined and are gathered by the Spirit on the ground of, i. e., on the basis of, the truth that "there is one body."³

Another has said this about the faithful in Thyatira, who refused connection with the doctrine of Jezebel:

A question may here arise. Does this epistle sanction the continuance of God's people in that which is wrong, for there is no hint for them to leave the assembly? Other scriptures point out what the action of God's people should be with reference to evil in doctrine and practice (1 Cor. 5; Titus 3:10; 2 John). Here however we have the whole local assembly addressed, from which according to God's thoughts we can never get free, as long as we are in the place where it exists. For the assembly at Thyatira comprehended every soul in that city which professed to be a disciple of Christ. To separate from the church there would have been to unchristianize themselves, which they could not do, though separation from evil is a positive christian duty. This those termed by the Lord "the rest" had clearly done. They were apart from evil and because they kept aloof from participation in it, they received this token of His approval, whilst enduring the odium of those from whose ways and doctrines they dissented. A new church they did not attempt to form, nor could they, for there was but one in the place, however many might have been the houses in which the members of it met. To have attempted to form one would have manifested their

2. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:208.

3. See *Letters of J. N. Darby*, index, "Church in a City" www.presenttruthpublishers.com

want of intelligence about the church of God. To have acquiesced in the evil, because there was but one church which God owned, would have indicated ignorance as to the nature of God, and of that which should characterize His children.⁴

Actually, we thus see that a reason to leave (not the assembly of God in Thyatira, but) the evil is given in the words addressed to "the rest."

Another has pointed out a lesson from the address to Pergamos:

A. But does it seem Christlike to exclude so many for the faults of a few.

B. It is for their own sin they are excluded; but you are also seriously wrong in your ideas of our blessed Lord, and -- abusing His blessed character in His personal grace to sinners -- make Him tolerant of evil in His Church, which He never can be. He would deny His own nature were He to be so. Have you forgotten the scourge of small cords with which He drove the intruders out of the temple? Was that grace? Surely something else was required when the condition of God's house and the "holiness which becomes it forever" were at stake. Again, what is His sentence upon the church at Pergamos?⁵ Does He not condemn *the whole body* for the selfsame conduct for which you are now arraigned, because they had those among them who *held* (He does not say taught) the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes? They allowed these persons among them though they did not accept their evil doctrines as a body, and the Lord calls on them to repent of their indifference, threatening that otherwise He will come to them quickly in judgment, besides fighting against the individuals in question. They did not hate the evil, but He did, and "*the fear of the Lord* is to hate evil." Did you hate these things as you ought, you never could allow such connection with them, or plead for it.⁶

Thus it is a false idea that asserts that Rev. 2 and 3 indicates that we may be in associated with leaven. From where do such unholy and antichristian notions come? Rev. 2:14, 15 teaches us, in effect, that we may not allow among us those who HOLD evil doctrine. It does not say anything about teaching it. Persons must not HOLD doctrine which is leaven.

In agreement with Rev. 2 and 3, another has said:

To have among us those that hold false doctrine and those that teach false doctrine is in either case as strongly rebukable as to have those that do the evil things which result from false doctrine, and the allowing any such thing among us is here rebuked of the Lord.⁷

4. *The Bible Treasury* 9:240.

5. His words are, "I have *against thee*, that thou has them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I *hate*. Repent, or I will *come unto thee* quickly," etc. (Rev. 2:14, 15).

6. *Is There Not a Cause?* p. 18.

7. *The Present Testimony* 15:397.

The call to us is to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Many Christians have a hearing problem which results from a heart problem. There is a state of soul that precludes a true and faithful hearing. Our Lord Jesus has warned us, "Take heed therefore HOW ye hear" (Luke 8:18). We do not see the force of Scripture for some moral reason and state of soul. We must be careful about not only what we hear, but HOW we hear, i. e., in what state of soul and with what attitude we hear. The diligent application of Luke 8:18 and 1 Cor. 3:10 would preserve us from ungodly notions and ways.

We will conclude with this extract:

A. But the Lord does not hold one Church responsible for the rest, and it does not seem to me that we are at all involved in what is done elsewhere.

B. You forget that here (in Rev. 2, 3) the Church is not seen at all in its unity, or as the body of Christ, of which He is the Head, for He is *outside* it, -- judging of its state as His candlestick or light-bearer on earth, which it was set to be. Your remark shows ignorance of what the Church of God is, in its nature and constitution. The moment the existence of a divine Person, the Holy Ghost here on earth, is understood as the essential characteristic of the Church, its unity, fellowship, and the judgment of evil necessarily follow. The Holy Ghost cannot act differently in different places, for He is ever one and the same, and forming the body of Christ, *produces by His presence* a unity such as subsists in the natural body; thus only do the epistles ever treat of the Church of God. "There is one body and one Spirit" (compare Eph. 4:15, 16; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13). The presence of God necessarily gives unity, and the corporate responsibility of which we have been speaking. It was so in a lower sense even in Israel of old in the passage to which we have referred, so that God said after the sin of Achan, "Israel hath sinned and *they* have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for *they* have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen and dissembled, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, because *they* were accursed; neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you" (Josh. 7:11, 12). The whole nation was charged with the guilt which existed among them; the whole nation suffered for it, and was held responsible for its extermination. The unity which the Holy Ghost produces now in the Church of God (though flowing from the same cause -- the presence of God) is not national as it then was, but of a much deeper and closer character. It is twofold: we are *living* stones of the temple in which God dwells, as the Apostle Paul says, "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit," and thus the whole building grows unto a "holy temple in the Lord"; secondly, there is the unity of the body of Christ, which also results from the presence of the Holy Ghost, forming the one body united to its Head in heaven; this unity is still closer and more intimate, as my body is much nearer to me than the house I live in; moreover, there is a responsibility which flows from connection or association at the Lord's table, and fellowship in His death, and being united in His Name, so that what is done in that Name in one place is done, as to the principle of it, for all, and is binding on all; reception, discipline, and other acts done in any given place are valid for the whole, and gifts are common to the whole. If this is not recognized, the unity of the Church of God is denied, and the presence of a divine person in it is entirely disowned.

It is evident that the Lord gives the sanction of His presence and authority to even two or three met in His Name (Matt. 18:17-21), and to their acts, for they are in His place and represent Him in what they do. Solemn and blessed thought! Though the Church is in ruins, this principle remains ever true to faith, for Christ

cannot fail in what He has promised, whatever the ruin; so that the essential privileges, action, and discipline of the Church of God remain untouched, though but two or three are there to enjoy or carry them out, and though apostolic authority, appointment, and office, as well as the (so-called) sign-gifts are wanting. It is a wretched plea, that the ruin of the Church is a reason for submission to evil, and subversive of all moral principle and sense of what is due to Christ. Scripture, when contemplating the disorder and confusion that would ensue in the Church, says, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19). Besides, if you are not upon the true ground of the Church of God, you are a sect, the word of God ceases to be applicable, and you have no direction to guide you as to discipline or anything else; without pretending in any exclusive sense to be the Church of God, we can meet together as forming a part of it, and acting in the unity of the body of Christ, seeking to carry out the principles laid down in Scripture for its guidance; whilst the Holy Ghost remains on earth, it would be impossible to do otherwise, notwithstanding the ruin, without ignoring His presence.⁸

Ed.

Elements of Dispensational Truth

6: The Pretribulation Rapture

Chapter 6.4 ***John 14:1-3: The Heavenly Hope***

The Heavenly Hope Was Preceded by a Hope for a Promised Kingdom

The disciples, along with the remnant when our Lord was here, expected the restoration of an earthly, political kingdom, with Messiah reigning. See:

Luke 1:67-69

Zacharias

Luke 2:38

Anna

8. *Is There Not a Cause?*, pp. 20-23.

Luke 19:11; Acts 1:6

Luke 24:21

Matt. 20:20-28

Mark 15:43

Matt. 3:1

The disciples

Two other disciples

Mother of the two sons of Zebedee

Joseph of Arimathæa

John the Baptist

The Magi (non-Israelites, Matt. 2:2), Herod (Matt. 2:3), the scribes (Matt. 2:6), and the fickle crowd (cp. Zech. 9:9 & John 12:13-15 with Mark 11:9-11), also understood the coming kingdom as an earthly, political kingdom, with Messiah reigning.

Every Jew would take the O.T. passages that speak of a reign of Messiah as applying to an earthly kingdom. There was no reason for them to think otherwise. Thus, to refer to the expectation of such a reign as "carnal," as some amillennialists do, is not only unscriptural and shortsighted, but a slur on the remnant at the time our Lord was here. Theirs was a faith founded upon the testimony of O. T. scripture.

John the Baptist proclaimed the kingdom as "at hand." John proclaimed no "spiritual kingdom." He knew of no such thing; and, the people would never have held John to be a prophet had he spiritually alchemized the O.T. prophecies, as many Christians have done. The Lord Jesus proclaimed the same message that John proclaimed regarding the kingdom (Matt. 3:1; 4:17).

The time came in the Lord's ministry when He began to speak of a form of a kingdom unseen by the O. T. prophets. This we may call the *mystery form* (Matt. 13:11). He spoke of this in parables. Note that the teaching concerning this form, or phase, of the kingdom began consequent upon the Jewish leaders saying that the power that wrought in Christ was from Beelzebub. This is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:24; Mark 3:22).

Shortly before He went to the cross, our Lord told the disciples that the kingdom was not going to be manifested *immediately* (Luke 19:11-27). After His resurrection they asked if *that* was the time for the restoration of the kingdom (Acts 1:6-8). They really did not understand yet that a "mystery" phase of the kingdom would occur before the kingdom would be manifested in power -- an expectation that was right in its season.

The kingdom was offered to Israel in a way that would offend and stumble only the carnal, who composed most of the nation. The kingdom was offered to Israel as embodied in the Person of the meek and lowly Lord Jesus. This was a moral test for the nation. Even when they had to acknowledge His wisdom, His moral power, and His works of power, they were stumbled by His Person. Mark 6:1-7 vividly shows this. See also John 7:15,41,42,52; Matt. 12:23;

13:56,57; 15:12; 21:23; etc. The sovereign God, to Whom are known all His works, used that very rejection of Christ to unfold His divine purpose to have a heavenly bride for His Son, and to set aside the kingdom in manifested power for a time, and introduce meanwhile the kingdom in a mystery form.

The offer of the kingdom, that offer being embodied in the presentation and offer of the Person of the King, was refused by refusing Himself.

The flesh being what it is (Rom. 8:7), the refusal of the Person of the Christ by the nation, as such, was an absolute certainty. To say that it would be immoral for God to make such an offer of a kingdom, when He had no intention of it being accepted, and Who had perfect foreknowledge that in accordance with man being totally lost that it would not be accepted, is the fleshly mind in the professing Christian reasoning from what is immoral for a man to do (with his *finite* understanding and knowledge) to what the *Inhabiter of eternity*, Who is infinite in understanding, may do. One might understand an Arminian raising such an objection; but, coming from Calvinists, the objection does seem to evince a low view both of the sovereignty of God and the total ruin of man morally, while proclaiming these doctrines in word.

When the kingdom is inaugurated, it will be inaugurated by divine power. Note that in Mark 9:1-13 the Lord stated that some should not taste of death until "they shall have seen the kingdom of God come ["Lit. 'having come', not 'coming'" (JND)] in power." Six days later three of the disciples saw this (cp. 1 Peter 1:16-18). What they saw was an anticipative display. The kingdom in power shall indeed come, but meanwhile it is displaced by the church, and by the heavenly hope. But God must, and will, honor the O. T. prophecies; and He will do this by power. His earthly people shall be willing in the day of His power (Psalm 110:1-3). The Deliverer will come from Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26). Then shall they all be righteous (Isa. 60:21; 59:21) for the rebels will have been purged from the ten tribes (Ezek. 20:38) and Judah be purged also (Zech. 13:8). He will bring them into the bond of the covenant (Ezek. 20:37) and they shall enjoy Messiah's reign when under the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-35; Heb. 5:8-13).

Knowing how scripture is filled full with accuracies, we might connect Zech. 9:9 and Matt. 21:5, and observe also how the fact of the "postponement" of the kingdom explains the differences in these texts.

Zech. 9:9 says "Rejoice greatly"; Matt. 21:5 says "tell." It was not the time of complete fulfillment. Israel's King has indeed come, but the great rejoicing is still future.

Zech. 9:9 says, "just, and having salvation"; Matt. 21:5 omits this. He came

as the "lowly" one (Zech. 9:9), the "meek" one (Matt. 21:5) but not in the character of putting forth righteousness and salvation for the nation of Israel; for these words refer to the character of His coming reign (cp. Luke 1:72-75). God did not intend to bring in the kingdom in power yet.

The Heavenly Hope Temporarily Displaced the Expectation of an Earthly Kingdom

Turning directly to John 14:1-3, we see that at that point in time, i. e., the night in which Judas delivered Him up, the disciples still did not really grasp the point that He was going to give Himself up in sacrifice to God (cp. Mark 8:31-33; Luke 19:11), and go away. Still, these things were troubling them (John 14:1; 16:6).

Our Lord then told His own, in effect, that He had something better than the kingdom in power for them, even a place of nearness above, in the Father's house. The introduction of the heavenly hope, then, displaced the earthly-kingdom expectation of the disciples. This means that the heavenly hope set aside, for the present interval, the Jewish expectation of the earthly kingdom. It means that the Lord Himself distinguished between the proper Jewish expectation in connection with the coming of Messiah in power as predicted by the O.T. prophets and that heavenly hope concerning which the O.T. prophets knew nothing and said nothing. These two expectations differ in character, object and time. One is connected especially with an earthly people and the other with an heavenly people.

The church, the body of Christ, did not exist in O. T. times and neither was it any subject matter of the O. T. prophecies (Rom. 16:25; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9). Consonant with this fact is the fact that the heavenly hope was introduced when the Lord Jesus was about to depart to the Father and prepare a place above by virtue of His entry as glorified man, having glorified the Father and accomplished redemption.

W. Kelly wrote:

The doctrine of the church is clearly concurrent with the one hope . . . None of the school of interpreters commonly called "the Protestant school" understood by the church anything more, at best, than the Augustinian notion of an invisible company from the beginning to the end of time. None of them, therefore, has an adequate idea of the new and heavenly work which God began at Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The consequence is that, if they read of saints in Daniel, in the Psalms, or in the Revelation, they are at once set down as of the church. If they read of "this gospel of the kingdom" in Matt. 24, or of "the everlasting gospel," it is to their minds the same thing as what Paul calls "my gospel," the gospel of the grace of God preached now. Hence follows, and quite

fairly too, a denial of any specialty in the walk and conversation of the saints since Pentecost, and a general Judaizing in doctrine, standing, conduct, and hopes. It is also a simple and natural result of this, that all Protestant interpreters, if they admit a personal advent at all to introduce the millennial reign, present as the hope of the church that which is, in fact, the proper expectation of the converted Jewish remnant; viz. the day of the Lord, the Son of man seen by all the tribes of the earth, and coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Nor is the truth of the church unknown to the Protestant interpreters only; it is equally an object of dislike to most of the Futurist school. And it is my conviction that the two baleful heresies, which have brought such shame upon the revival of prophetic study towards the beginning and the close of the years 1830 to 1850, are intimately connected with the rejection of this grand truth. For an error touching the church cannot but affect Him Whose personal presence is what is so essential to it; and that which dishonors the Spirit goes far, in the long run, to disfigure or deny the person and work of Him of Whom the Spirit is the vicar.

In the Epistles, it is beyond doubt that the church is continually addressed, as if there were no understood, necessary, revealed hindrances to the rapture at the coming of the Lord. How could this be if the church be the same body as those saints who are described in Daniel, the Psalms, &c., as being destined to certain fiery trials still future from a little horn which is to wax greater to the highest degree, and his satellites who are yet to appear? How comes it that the apostle Paul, when he speaks of the coming of the Lord, never hints at this tribulation, as one through which the church must pass; but always presents His presence as an immediate hope which might occur at one unknown moment to another? That this inspired man understood the just application of these prophecies, better than any since his day, is that which few Christians will question. They were scriptures long revealed and familiar to Jews, and the Lord Jesus in Matt. 24 had very significantly linked fresh revelations upon that occasion with the predictions of Daniel. Yet the Holy Ghost, in His constant allusions throughout the writings apostolic to the future hopes of the church, never once refers to those terrible circumstances as a future scene wherein the church is to enact a part. On the contrary, the way in which the coming of the Lord is put before the saints, as a thing to be constantly looked for, seems incompatible with it.¹

The Setting of the Heavenly Hope in John 13-17

In John 13-17 we see our Lord preparing His own for His departure to the Father. In view of His leaving His own, He said to them, "Believe also on me." This is belief with a view to His *absence* from them. He exhorted them to have Him as an unseen *object of faith* during His absence. "Ye believe on God," Whom ye do not see; "Believe also on me," Whom you also will not see, is the

1. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 2:12, 13.
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

thought of it.

The disciples were expecting the inauguration of the kingdom under Himself as Messiah. The earthly temple which the Lord called his Father's house (John 2:16) is connected with the *earthly* sphere of the coming kingdom. But He had something better for them, even a place above, in the *heavenly* sphere, a place of nearness to the Father in His house above; a place He was about to enter consequent upon accomplishing the Father's will -- completing the work that He had been given to do. Had it been that He had no such thing for them, "I would have told you." He had already told them that the kingdom was not about to be manifested immediately (Luke 19:11 ff). He now told them that He has a better thing for them, above; even spiritual abodes of nearness to the Father.

His impending departure was not really understood by His own (cp. Mark 10:32-45; etc.), yet what He had been saying caused them sorrow (John 16:6). But He told them that His departure need not trouble them (John 14:1). Where was He going? He was going to prepare a place for them and then come again and "receive you unto myself, that where I am ye also may be." Where is this located; this place referred to as "WHERE I AM"?

Christians have imagined all sorts of things or places so long as it does not mean the Father's house above, incredible as that may seem to some. It is evident on the face of it that that is just what it does mean.

And, we ought to see that John 13-17 is one connected discourse and it tells us where He was going. Note also that John 13-17 tells us what other parts of John also tell us:

"I go to him that sent me" (John 7:33).

"But ye know not whence I come and whither I go" (John 8:14).

"His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father" (John 13:1).

"He came out from God and was going to God" (John 13:3).

"I go to the Father" (John 14:12).

"I go away and I am coming to you. If ye loved me ye would rejoice that I go to the Father" (John 14:28).

"But now I go to him that has sent me" (John 16:5).

"I go away to [my] Father" (John 16:10).

"I leave the world and go to the Father" (John 16:28)

These scriptures show us where the Lord was going; namely, to the Father.

John 14:4 says "ye know [conscious knowledge] where I go" though Thomas didn't think he knew (v. 5).

It seems incredible in the face of all this that the words "where I am" could be forced to mean something else than His place above with the Father. Notice the following scriptures:

"For I go to prepare you a place; and if I go and shall prepare you a place, I am coming again and shall receive you to myself, that where I am ye also may be" (John 14:2,3).

"Ye shall seek me and shall not find [me], and where I am ye cannot come" (John 7:34; cp. John 13:33).

"And where I am, there also shall be *my* servant" (John 12:26).

"Father, [as to] those whom thou hast given me, I desire that where I am they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me" (John 17:24).

We ask this then: When our Lord said "WHERE I AM", where does He mean? Let Himself answer:

"I am no longer in the world" (John 17:11).

Here He was speaking anticipatively, as having gone up to where He was before (John 6:62; 13:3), as He also spoke anticipatively in John 17:4. Is this not consonant with, part of, the theme of John's gospel? John presents God eternal, the only begotten Son (John 1; 3; 16, etc.), become flesh to manifest the Father (John 1), to accomplish His will (John 6:38), to glorify Him on the earth (John 17; 8:29,55), and then ascend up where He was before (John 6:62; 20:17).

It is clear, then, that the idea that "where I am" means anywhere He might happen to be is not the thought that He brought before His own. It is exactly contrary to the truth to say it means wherever He would happen to be. The texts, the contexts, and the theme of the book all unite to loudly declare that the phrase "where I am" denotes His place with the Father, above.²

"I go" (John 14:2) does not mean He was going to the cross (though, of

2. This fact in no wise means that when the Lord is manifested in glory we will not be. We shall surely accompany Him in His train (Rev. 19). But that is another subject.

course, that is involved) because He is speaking as if that work was already completed: "I have completed the work" (John 17:4). "I go" should be understood with John 20:17: "I ascend." The PLACE (John 14:3) is the Father's house, and He spoke as if the cross was already accomplished. That place would be prepared by His very entry into the Father's house as the glorified Man Who had glorified the Father by accomplishing all of His will, especially on the cross.

The importance of John 14:1-3 should be, and is, felt. Those who oppose the pre-tribulation rapture feel it necessary to explain this passage in other than the rather obvious sense. It is a sad thing to find lovers of the Lord Jesus zealous to find other meanings for "where I am" in order to avoid believing in a pretribulation rapture, a pretribulation coming of Christ to take His own to those abodes of nearness to the Father, above. For it is evident that if Christ descends into the air (1 Thess. 4) to take us above (John 14:1-3), this explains how we can come forth out of heaven with Him when He comes in power and great glory (Col. 3:4; Rev. 17:14; 19:14). If Christ comes to take us above to the Father's house, then He will not, at that time, come to meet us in the air to take us to the earth, as posttribulationists claim. Later when we consider such passages as Rev. 19:14; 17:14; Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:7; etc., and note that the saints actually come out of heaven when Christ appears, we will remember from John 14:1-3 how they got into heaven previously. This previous entry of the believer into the Father's house is denied by the posttribulation system, and we shall now look at some methods used to destroy the heavenly hope.

The Heavenly Hope Gives Light

Another wrote,

When the Lord Jesus came, on whom the accomplishment of prophecy depends for the realization of the kingdom of God -- for in truth He was the king who brought in the kingdom in His person, and presented it with final responsibility to Israel -- He was rejected. Then came a mighty change of all consequence to the world, when every bright hope seemed blasted, when all expectation of glory for Israel set in clouds and a deeper darkness than before. God made use of that moment of fallen hopes for the earth and the earthly people, and the nations of the world, for "some better thing." He used the cross of Christ to bring in a wholly new state, when Israel vanished for a season -- a state distinct from that which prophets prepared the minds of men of old to expect. For their great testimony is to Israel restored and repentant under the Messiah reigning over the earth, blessed itself beyond example and all creatures, and the nations in happy subjection. The reason for a change so unexpected is simple, and the ground when once taken is plain. The rejected Christ is raised from the dead, and having ascended to heaven, took His seat there to bring in another and heavenly order of blessing. He is seated there until a moment unknown and undisclosed, before which God brings in altogether new things. This is Christianity, which is therefore essentially of heaven. The prophets did not speak of heaven, save

incidentally. Prophecy refers to the earth. No doubt there are here and there allusions to heaven; but by no prophet and in no prophecy is there any real, still less detailed, opening out of what the Lord Jesus is doing now as Head of the church at the right hand of God.

It was not the object of prophecy to do so. Prophecy, the prophetic word, is a lamp, and very useful, to which those who love the Lord do well to pay attention, for that lamp shines in a dark or squalid place; and the earth for the present is so. Such is the revealed use of prophecy; and Christianity recognizes it fully. But there is a brighter light, not *the* day but daylight, as the apostle says, "Till day dawn and a day-star arise in your hearts" [2 Peter 1:19]. What does he mean by this? The accomplishment of prophecy? Not so, but more and better. Till the day of Jehovah comes for the world? In no wise. He speaks of day dawning and a day-star arising *in the heart*, not of the day arising upon Zion and the world. This would be the accomplishment of prophecy; but he is intimating what the Spirit of God delights to bring into the heart of the Christian now. The Jewish believer was encouraged still to use and value the prophetic lamp. Yea, more: the word of prophecy derived confirmation from what was seen on the holy mountain [see Matt. 17:1-8]. Yet there ought to be through the gospel a far clearer light -- the light of day, the brightness of heaven, not of the lamp. They as Christians were already to enjoy its effect. But it might now be so with those slow to learn more. Not only were Christians born of God, as all saints are; they were all sons of light and sons of day (1 Thess. 5:5), and are exhorted not to sleep but to watch and be sober, and here to have their heavenly portion made good in their souls. For the person of our Lord Jesus is our hope, the day-star, not merely the general light of heavenly dawn, but the day-star arising in the heart. This is, as I understand it, the arising of the proper Christian hope in the heart. Many then, as now, were lukewarm and came short.

The actual arrival of the day of the Lord is another matter, and this will be in its own time. It was, however, a good thing to hold fast the prophetic lamp, until one gets a better light. There are far brighter associations into which the Christian is introduced now through Christ Jesus; but of these prophecy does not treat. The prophetic word does not contemplate the arising of the day-star in the heart. There it is the very reverse of Christ. The day-star of prophecy is rather the title of the Lord's enemy, as you may see in Isaiah 14. The day-star that the Christian ought to have arising within is Christ, while He is outside the world in heaven, before He shines as Sun of Righteousness upon the earth.³

Our place is with Him in glory above, not on a renovated earth. In this regard, W. Kelly remarked:

Here be it observed that in my opinion those called premillennialists have often brought a great stigma on the truth, by representing the earth as the future scene of our blessedness. Indeed such an idea is not peculiar to premillennialists; many theologians, such as Dr. Chalmers for example, had the same poverty of thought. A renovated earth for the risen saints was the idea from some of the early Fathers down to our day: which to my mind is not only unscriptural but exceedingly low. The earth, no matter how blessed, will never be the meet abode for the risen and glorified. The heavens are high above the earth, not only in locality but in

3. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:231, 232.

character; and it is in heavenly places that we are blessed, it is there we know our portion in Christ even now. It is not therefore the earth, however transmuted or metamorphosed it may be, that is to form the sphere of our glory and home with Christ. I admit there will be a blessed change in that day on the earth; but this will be for Israel and the nations or Gentiles; whereas we by becoming Christians have ceased to be either Jews or Gentiles. We have acquired our character from Christ, and have a blessing suited to Him on high. Until souls have a knowledge of this, they do not understand Christianity. The christian is not merely a blessed man; for blessed then will be the Jews, and blessed even still the Gentiles. But the Christian is one taken out of all that belongs to him naturally and is put already by the power of the Spirit in a supernatural place. He knows it now by faith. It will be visible to all when the Lord comes. Accordingly, the Lord Jesus, who knew so well the Father's house, announces that He is coming for us and will bring us into the place He is preparing for us now: He will have us with Himself and as Himself.⁴

Is the Christian Heavenly? and Is the Church Heavenly?

Introduction

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of [the] heavenly calling ... (Heb. 3:1).

For both he that sanctifies and those sanctified [are] all of one . . . (Heb. 2:11).

. . . and such as the heavenly [one], such also the heavenly [ones] (I Cor. 15:48).

... 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).

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT

It seems to me to be altogether misguided and fallacious for someone to say that he is a 'dispensationalist' and deny that the Christian and/or the church is not

"heavenly." But this is what *retrograde* dispensationalism has come to under the cover of being "progressive dispensationalism." In view of this present movement in the U. S. A., it is timely to reprint a number of articles under the above general title that bear on the heavenly calling and the Christian's heavenly position.

That the Christian standing and position is heavenly is taught in Scripture is certain. Though the phrase in boldface is not a phrase found, as such, in the Word, what is meant by that phrase is taught there. Just so is it the case regarding the word "Trinity." Though the word trinity is not found in Scripture, what is meant by the word *is* found therein.

Since doctrine affects a Christian's conduct, giving up the heavenly position will move the conduct and thinking of a Christian towards the world and worldly religiosity. The conduct and thinking of the Christian will be correspondingly bent earth-wise. The door to the soul will have been opened to the inroads of Judaistic corruption in doctrine and practice. It is really a shift towards covenant theology.

If the Christian and the church are not heavenly, what then are they? Was Israel of old heavenly? No. Will restored Israel, in the millennium, be heavenly? No. What was Israel's position? Earthly! What is the church's position? Heavenly! But if the church is not heavenly, what is she? You should see that these questions direct the mind to the distinction between Israel and the church. "Progressive dispensationalism," then, is involved in blurring the distinction between Israel and the church. It is involved in blurring the distinction between the development of the ways of God in government in the earth (of which Israel was and will be the center) and His heavenly work during "the heavenly parenthesis" (of which the church is the center). All this involves the glorification of God in Christ, in these two spheres -- two spheres which will be headed up by Christ in the administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10), i. e., the millennium.⁵

... having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself for [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth (Eph. 1:9, 10).

Much is involved in this *progressive retrogression*. You say that those two words seem contradictory? Those engaged in this activity previously held a view of dispensational truth which I suggest was not in accord with the full

5. See my book, *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*.

scope of truth brought out last century; and so, it was already defective. What is going on now is a further, and **critical**, departure, call it what you will. We will now briefly consider a few thoughts concerning the heavenly calling, in an introductory way, before turning to an article on the heavenly calling and the mystery.

INTRODUCTION TO THE HEAVENLY CALLING

In Eph. 2:6, Christians are expressly said to be seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. The book of Hebrews does not view the Christian as seated in the heavenlies, but as a partaker of the heavenly calling. J. N. Darby wrote:

... it was addressed to Christians, and only to Christians; only to persons *then* called to heaven, and who had it as their profession to be so. I freely admit it is not the church, *as such*: we should lose the whole value of it, and of the church, were it so; because the Church is united to Christ in heaven, and here Christians are not so viewed; and the epistle would have no place, for it teaches what Christ is for us in heaven while we are walking in conflict on the earth. Here our earthly condition becomes the occasion of heavenly grace. It is our heavenly calling, not our being there [in heaven] in union with Christ. But heavenly grace to us in an earthly condition, while called to heaven, leads to the knowledge of the love, tenderness, sympathy, faithfulness, interest in all our state and circumstances, which are found in Christ (which our perfection in Him does not). It leads to dependence, confidence in Him, counting on His faithfulness, apprehension of the interest which He takes in us every moment, and looking to the time when we shall see Him as He is, which our being in Him in heaven does not.⁶

With that difference between the way Ephesians and Hebrews views the Christian, we may now consider a statement by W. Kelly on the heavenly calling:

The Heavenly Calling Hebrews 3

It is of no small moment to bear in mind that, while the "heavenly calling," as a developed system, depends on the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven, the faith of the Old testament believers was far in advance of their calling and circumstances. Thus, the Lord called Abram out of his country and kindred and father's house to a land that he would show him; and it was certainly by faith that he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went. But heb. 11:9 shows us the further action of faith; for when he got to the land he sojourned in it as in a strange country, because a ray of the distant heavenly

6. *Collected Writings*, vol. 10. "... we only go in as worshipers. Viewed as seated in Christ in the heavens we do not want [need] a priest. But down here we do. Now Christ has learned the difficulties, and I am to walk in the path where we are, while He helps me" (*Notes and Jottings*, p. 25). www.presenttruthpublishers.com

glory had dawned on his soul. "He looked for a city which hath foundations," &c. Thus he and the other patriarchs died, as they lived, in faith, not in actual possession. Nevertheless, such strangership as this neither amounts to nor implies the "heavenly calling." Doubtless, the "heavenly calling" now produces and enjoins strangership also; but this in no way proves that itself was published and enjoyed of old.

For the "heavenly calling" brought before us in Hebrews, grew out of the position of the Lord, as having appeared, and when He had by Himself purged our sins, as having sat down at the right-hand of the Majesty on high. Hence the earthly tabernacle and the rest in the land, and the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices entirely disappear, for the partakers of the heavenly calling who are addressed in the epistle. This state of things was not true either of the fathers or the children of Israel. Their hope was intimately bound up with the land (no doubt, under the Messiah and a glorified condition, but still their land and the people as the medium of blessing for all others); But the "heavenly calling" was not revealed, nor could be till He came whose rejection led to it and whose redemption and consequent glorification in heaven became its basis. Hence Abram had his earthly altar. Hence he sacrificed, as did his descendants, in due season, of the flock, or the herd, or the appointed clean birds. Then comes the worldly sanctuary and its most instructive furniture and rites, that spoke of better things looming in the future. Nobody that I know disputes that individual saints saw beyond these shadows, dimly perhaps but really, to a coming Savoir and a heavenly country. Still the land to which the patriarchs were called was an earthly land, and the entire polity of Israel was that of a nation governed under the eye of a God who displayed himself on earth in their midst -- in contrast with "the heavenly calling," of which not the less it furnished striking types, *mutatis mutandis*. Accordingly, in Heb. 11, after having traced the precious individual traits of the Spirit in the Old Testament saints, not only from Abraham but from Abel downwards, we are guarded against the error that would merge all in one lump, by the incidental statement of the last verse (see also Heb. 12:23). The elders not having received the promise; they are waiting till the resurrection for that. Meanwhile God has provided unforeseen [in the O. T.] some better thing for us. He has given us not promise only but accomplishment in Christ. He has made us worshippers once purged, having no more conscience of sins [as standing out against us]. He calls us boldly to enter into the holiest by a new and living way consecrated for us. None of these things could be so predicated of them, and yet these things are but a part of the heavenly calling. Truly, then, has God provided some better thing for us, even if we only look at what is now made known through the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. It is also true that they without us shall not be made perfect. They and we shall enter our respective portion in resurrection glory at the coming of Christ. Meanwhile we have no earthly calling, nothing but an heavenly one.⁷

(to be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

7. *The Christian Annotator*, March 28, 1857.

Tapes and Books Available

Some sets of cassettes of recorded addresses by the editor (8 tapes in an 8 pocket case) on the subject of dispensational truth (re the Old Testament) are available for \$23.00 per set.

Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby, vol. one, 1826-1845, 238 pp., with copious subject index, is available for only \$12.00. This book, besides showing the history of recovered truth, also addresses in detail the charges that J. N. Darby received the idea of the pretribulation rapture from a demonic or occultic or Jesuitical source. Reviews are saying that this book has settled that issue. Highly documented.

J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses, with Scripture index and several charts, includes several lengthy appendices: A Reply to Ultradispensationalism; A Reply to the Charge that Dispensationalism is inherently Arminian; and A Reply to the Charge that the Kingdom Offer Makes God Immoral. The reader will discover great differences between JND's teaching and that of C. I. Scofield, concerning dispensational truth. Indeed, CIS's definition of a dispensation is basically wrong. Moreover his scheme violates the truth of the end of the first man at the cross and omits the very basic matter of the development of God's ways in government in the earth, which is of fundamental importance to the subject. \$10.00

If you want 'newspaper exegesis' of prophetic matters, then the following books will not interest you. If you prefer sober exposition (and why would you not prefer that?) then you may find help in the following foundational books, the first of which contains a five color chart detailing epochs of Scripture from the opening of the times of the Gentiles until the eternal state.

Daniel's 70 Weeks and the Revival of the Roman Empire, 100 pp., with Scripture index; \$5.00.

Future Events: ■ Jacob's Trouble ■ The Hour of Trial ■ The Great Tribulation ■ The Day of the Lord ■ The War of that Great Day of God the Almighty; 104 pp., with Scripture index; \$7.00

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