

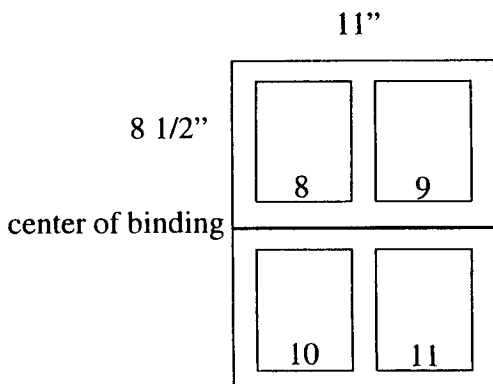
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Xerox Reproduction of Words of Truth, Edited by F. G. Patterson.

Words of Truth was edited by F. G. Patterson from 1867 through 1876 in 11 volumes. Present Truth Publishers plans to make these available in two, 8 1/2" x 11" Buckram, hardcover volumes. Each of the pages of these two volumes will contain two side by side pages of the original, Xeroxed from the original. The print quality is not the best because of the condition of the originals, which varied. However, these are readable. To illustrate the page layout:

Most of FGP's books and pamphlets did not appear in these pages, though we think answers to querists are his. While many articles are not signed, some are -- by brethren who also had other articles in other magazines. There is much good material here.



To keep the cost down: For this initial offer these books will be sold direct, not through retailers, at the low price of only \$66.00 for the set -- plus postage. Delivery will probably be in late April 1997, if the Lord will.

To order: do not send any money. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and indicate the number of sets you want. You will be notified when to send a check. Please inform others of this opportunity which likely will not be repeated at this price.

Important: Your order must be received by Feb. 15, 1997.

The writings of F. G. Patterson are being collected and entered into a computer for type setting. It is hoped to produce a volume, or two if required, of *Collected Writings of F. G. Patterson*.

“A Man in Christ”

Ephesians 4:1, 2

We have seen in the first three chapters of the epistle the believer's standing in Christ, and God's thoughts about the Church. The practical teaching which follows is divided into four classes, according to the believer's relationship

with the Church (ch. 4:1-16),
the world (4:17-5:21),
the family (5:21-6:9),
and the powers of darkness (6:10-17).

We shall see how, in each of these positions, the rule of conduct given him corresponds with his standing as shown in the earlier part of the epistle.

The apostle describes himself as a “prisoner in the Lord.” This is an interesting circumstance, and throws much light on the Lord's present ways. Although, as Peter told the Jews, “God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ,” yet His lordship is so far from being recognized by the world that His most faithful servant and ambassador is now a prisoner in the hands of the world's ruling power. This could not have been if the kingdom in its proper or prophetic form had been established. In that day Christ will cast out His enemies, and exalt His faithful followers. Now, however, tribulation and rejection are the portion which God's people are told to expect. This does not at all interfere with the lordship of Christ. David was as much God's anointed king when he hid in the cave of Adullam as when he reigned on the throne in Zion; but in the one case his dignity was discerned only by faith, in the other by sight. So with the great Antitype. Christ's lordship exists now as much as it will when He comes to reign over the earth. But it is now only seen by the eye of faith; and the world may go on despising Him and rejecting His people without calling down immediate judgment. Jesus has taken in grace the position of a dependent and obedient man; and He retains His position as man, though glorified at the right hand of God. He waits till the world shall be given Him by His Father. Till then, vengeance belongeth unto God, and Jesus, like David, leaves His case in God's hands. His followers are called upon to share His patience and rejection; and hence the foremost apostle is now nothing in the eyes of the world but an obscure prisoner in a Roman goal.

He begins his exhortation in the fourth chapter with the word “therefore.” This word really resumes the sentence commenced in the first verse of the third chapter, and interrupted by the long and wonderful parenthesis of which that chapter consists. It refers, therefore, to what has been said before in Eph. 2, that is, to the calling of the Gentiles and Jews into one “new man,” the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between them, and the building of them both into “an holy temple in the Lord,” of which Jesus Christ Himself was the chief corner-stone, the apostles and prophets the foundation course, and believers the materials, “builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” And this call was from a condition of deadness in trespasses and sins, a state of distance and alienation from God, to which no promises and no covenant relationships attached, so that all was of simple

grace, the believer having no claim to any portion of the blessing he receives in Christ.

Such, then, being the character of the saints' standing, the apostle beseeches them "that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1). But what walk is worthy of a vocation in which all is of simple grace? The most humbling thing in the world is the reception of boundless and undeserved favor; and the first point therefore which the Spirit urges on believers as worthy of their calling is that they should walk "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:2). Nothing is more becoming in a believer than "lowliness and meekness," but perhaps there is nothing more misunderstood. In too many instances these beautiful Christian graces are transformed, through the craft of Satan, into doubts dishonoring to God and destructive of the believer's peace. Now God never calls it lowliness and meekness to doubt the truth of His word, or the efficacy of Christ's work. On the contrary, He counts it pride and presumption. The simple child-like faith which bows to the word He has spoken, which says, "Let God be true, but every man a liar," alone pleases and honors Him. Abraham was commended, not because he questioned God's truth, but because he trusted it, and even "against hope believed in hope"; not because he doubted whether God would fulfil His word, but because he was "fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." And what was the effect? Did it puff him up? Just the contrary. Because he was "strong in faith" he gave "glory to God." The very fact that there was no power in himself only magnified God's grace. And so it must be with the believer. The more fully we lay hold of what grace has done for us, the more completely are we abased in God's presence. That we, sinners and enemies, should be chosen by God to be fellow-heirs with Christ, should be predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, can, if really apprehended by faith, only fill us with wonder and praise. Where is the room for boasting when all is so clearly of God? None are so meek and lowly as the crowned elders who fall down and worship in heaven; and the larger our grasp of God's purposes towards us, the deeper our lowliness and meekness will be. So far, then, from being founded on doubts as to the blessings we have received, these graces are the proper fruits of faith, and are always proportioned to the degree in which the blessings are apprehended by the soul.

There is, however, another mistake on which we would touch while speaking of lowliness and meekness. If it is not true lowliness, but Satan's counterfeit of lowliness, to doubt our standing in Christ, neither is it true lowliness for one to shrink from taking the place or exercising the gift, which God has bestowed upon him in the Church. There is a time to speak as well as a time to be silent; and while nothing is more unbecoming than that forwardness and ostentation of gift which seems to have brought disorder into the meetings of the assembly at Corinth; yet, on the other hand, it is quite possible to quench the Spirit, and thus hinder blessing, under the false impression that silence is a display of lowliness and meekness. If God has bestowed a gift, He means it to be used; and to plead lowliness and meekness as a reason for not using it is merely to cloak our unfaithfulness under a pretentious name. So as to prayer, or the giving out of a hymn, if anyone has it laid

on his heart by the Spirit thus to take part in an assembly, is it lowliness and meekness to remain silent? Is it not rather the vanity that shrinks from the criticism of others, or seeks their applause by a feigned modesty? No doubt there is need of spiritual discernment as to when and how to take part; but this will be given where it is sought. It was becoming in Barnabas, when traveling with a more gifted brother, to let Paul be the chief speaker. But would it have been becoming in Paul to decline exercising the gift which he had received, on the plea of showing "all lowliness and meekness" in the presence of Barnabas, who was his elder? It was becoming in Elihu to stand aside in the colloquy between Job and his old friends; but would it have been becoming in him, when they had failed to convince Job, and when the truth was taught him by the Spirit, to remain silent and refuse to utter it? These, no doubt, are very far from ordinary examples, but they serve to show the difference between true lowliness and meekness, and that which, though so easily mistaken for it, is in fact nothing more than the indulgence of the sloth or timidity of the natural heart in opposition to the leadings of the Spirit of God.

"Lowliness and meekness," then, are the first things pressed upon us by the Spirit of God as worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. But closely associated with these, and indeed necessarily flowing out of them, are other graces mentioned in the same verse -- "long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." The man who is prompt to resent injuries and assert rights is the man who has a high opinion of himself. If he sees himself in the nothingness to which grace reduces him, patience under injury, and forbearance towards those who have wronged him, will be the result. But still more will this be the case with those with whom he is made one in Christ. How can the man who is conscious of the grace that has remitted the ten thousand talents seize his brother by the throat and claim the hundred pence due to himself? If there is any sense of the love with which we are loved, and loved in spite of our coldness and deadness, our ingratitude and provocations -- if there is any apprehension of the grace which bought us, and which still bears with us in all our perverseness and folly -- long-suffering will be a comparatively easy thing, and forbearance in love will commend itself as suited to the state of one whose own failures and sins are continually calling for the forbearing love of our blessed Lord.

The key to the whole verse is "love." This is the nature of God Himself, and grace, which is the form love takes when directed towards sinners, is just the very thing which the Son manifested when He came to reveal the Father. For "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The long-suffering and forbearance here spoken of are not the results of a naturally placable and generous disposition, nor of the training which reason and philosophy may give. They have a higher source. They are the outflow of divine love, dwelling in the heart, and shaping the ways in conformity with the mind and walk of the blessed Lord. In Him alone we see all these graces perfectly displayed. Unwearied in devotion, whether to God or to man, "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." How beautifully, too, does the same appear in the ways of His servant who, in writing to the Corinthians, could say, "I will very

gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."

Yet here again, Satan has been busy in setting up an imitation of Christian love which is too easily accepted for the original. To talk of Christian love while there is allowance of evil is to suppose Christian love in which Christ is dishonored. Forbearance and forgiveness towards those who commit evil is surely a very different thing from connivance at the evil itself. Where did love manifest itself in forgiveness so marvelously as at the cross? and where was God's intolerance of evil so fearfully displayed? The blessed Lord's present dealings with us are expressly for the purpose of cleansing us from defilement by the washing of water; for He cannot endure that the least stain should rest upon His beloved people. So, too, the Father's chastening is directed just to this point, "that we might be partakers of His holiness." Under the Levitical economy an Israelite was told, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev. 19:17). So, too, if one believer has been injured by another, he is to go to him and "tell him his fault," not with a view of getting redress for himself, but because "if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." In extreme cases, the discipline of the Church must be called into action, and the offender put out as a "wicked person"; but even here the motive is love, and the object to be sought is, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5).

Nothing therefore can be less in accordance with the love here spoken of than that sort of good-fellowship with believers which refuses to disturb their conscience when they are acting in a way to dishonor the Lord. True Christian love must give Christ the first place, and where the fellowship of believers is preferred to the honor of Christ, the "love in the Spirit" spoken of by the apostle has really been surrendered to the instincts of natural affection. On the other hand, if we are called to show the Lord's faithfulness in dealing with evil, we are called to show His gentleness too. How many a rebuke has missed its point altogether, because the manner in which it was delivered savored rather of the natural legality of the human heart than of the tender ness of Christ. May we be much in His own presence, that His ways may be more perfectly reflected in our walk. This is the only transforming power. Just so far as we are "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are "we" changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

T. B. B., *The Christian Friend*, 1878, pp. 213-221.

I have said, and I repeat it because of its importance, nothing good is in us but by the work of the blessed Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit characteristically distinguishes Christianity, and is the main truth revived among "Brethren" in the present day. The counsels of God, of the Father, are the source; the work of Christ, the sure ground; the coming of the Lord, the bright and blessed hope of our blessings and state; but present realization is all by the Spirit. So in restoring, as to communion, the good thoughts, I doubt not, are wrought by Him.

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Chapter 6.15

Revelation 20: The Binding and Loosing of Satan

The Amillennial View

THE VIEW BRIEFLY STATED

The amillennial view is briefly summarized in the non-dispensational *Geneva Study Bible*:

Amillennialists think that the binding of Satan has already taken place through Christ's death and resurrection (12:9; Matt. 12:29; John 12:31; Col. 2:15). The present spread of the gospel is the result of a restriction of Satan's power to deceive. . . .

The first resurrection is then to be understood as coinciding either with the new birth (John 5:24, 25) or with going to be with Christ at the time of bodily death (6:9, 10; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). In view of the concern in Revelation for vindicating martyrs (v. 4 note), the latter alternative seems preferable. ¹

OTHER BEGINNING POINTS

A. M. Ogden offers a different starting point for the binding of Satan:

. . . if we compute the beginning of the thousand years with the fall of Rome (the Chronological position {he imagines} it holds in the Apocalypse), the period is already longer than the 1000 years. ²

F. E. Wallace, Jr. has a starting point approximately the same, but had him soon loosed again. In this view the symbolic number "1000 years" indicated what turned out to be less than 1000 years:

The purpose of this satanic imprisonment was *that he should deceive the nations no more* -- that is, in the idolatry of Caesar worship, a repetition of the previous symbols of the mark and image of the beast in the heathen emperor worship.

The next clause *till the thousand years be fulfilled* referred to the complete victory over the imperial persecutors, after which Satan was represented as being unleashed to exert influence, not in the form of persecution, but in the spiritual conflict between heathenism and Christianity -- a symbolic representation of the upsurge of heathenism.³

As we proceed, the reader should observe that many writers have Satan released to do something other than that for which he was bound. According to this last writer, Satan was bound with respect to Caesar-worship and he was loosed for something else -- right in the face of Rev. 20:7 which expressly states that when loosed he does the same thing for which he had been bound.

HOW DID SUCH VIEWS ARISE?

Regarding ancient erroneous views, W. Kelly wrote:

The city, the distribution of the tribes, the healing waters, the return of the cherubic glory, all go together and point, not to an imperfect copy of certain points of the temple in the post-captivity state, but to the glorious renovation, the times of restitution of all things, spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began.

Here, as is known, the so-called Fathers fell into the most serious error, even such as looked for the return of the Lord and His future kingdom over the earth. But not one of them, as far as I remember (and my friend Dr. D. Brown has proved the point well), bore witness to the future national restoration of Israel to the promised land. They on the contrary embraced the further error of supposing that the risen saints would be in the earthly Jerusalem: thus ignorantly were the best of them agreeing to blot out the distinctive hopes of both Israel and the church; and so rapid was the departure of the early Christians even from plain prophetic facts. Still earlier had they lost sight of our heavenly relations to Christ, and of the capital truth of the Spirit's presence and action in the assembly here below. The consequence was that then was consummated the fatal scheme of treating the church systematically as Israel improved. Maintain simply and firmly the literal restoration of Israel as wholly distinct from Christianity, and you have a bulwark against pseudo-spiritualism, and a groundwork, if rightly used, for seeing our special and heavenly privileges. The Fathers thought that Jerusalem during the millennium would be the city of the heavenly saints, that the Jews would be Christians, and that all would be together, risen and unrisen, reigning in glory.⁴

Alan Johnson wrote:

In the first place, we may note that the ancient church down to the time of Augustine (354-430) (though not without minor exceptions) unquestionably held to the teaching of an earthly, historical reign of peace that was to follow the defeat of Antichrist and the physical resurrection of the saints but precede both the judgment and the new creation (Jean Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964]; see note on v. 1). To be sure, in the ancient church there were various positions as to the material nature of the

3. *The Book of Revelation* . . . Fort Worth: Noble Patterson, 1966

4. *Introductory Lectures* . . . to the *Minor Prophets*, p. 525.

Millennium (see comments at v. 4), but the true conception of the thousand years was a balance between the worldly aspects of the kingdom and its spiritual aspects as a reign with Christ.

It is well known that the break with this earlier position came with the views of the late fourth-century interpreter Tyconius, an African Donatist, who, partly dependent on the Alexandrian allegorizing of Origen, developed a view of the Millennium based on a recapitulation method of interpretation. In applying this principle, Tyconius viewed Revelation as containing a number of different visions that repeated basic themes throughout the book. Though Tyconius's original work is not available, his exegesis of the Apocalypse can be largely reconstructed through his prime benefactor, Augustine, as well as Tyconius's many Roman Catholic followers. When he came to chapter 20, he interpreted the thousand years in nonliteral terms and understood the period as referring to the church age, the time between the first and second advents of Christ. Tyconius interpreted the first resurrection as the resurrection of the soul from spiritual death to the new life, while the second resurrection was the resurrection of the body at the end of history. The binding of Satan had already taken place in that the devil cannot seduce the church during the present age. Moreover, the reign of the saints and their "thrones of judgment" had already begun in the church and its rulers. Augustine, following Tyconius, "cast the die against the expectation of a millennial kingdom for centuries to come" (H. Berkhof, *Christ the Meaning of History* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], p. 161). The recapitulation method adopted by Augustine continued through the centuries and is not without its modern exponents in both the Protestant and Roman Catholic branches of the church. This is the first main option in modern nonmillennial (or amillennial) interpretations of Revelation 20.⁵

Concerning Augustine, O. T. Allis said:

The view which has been most widely held by opponents of Millenarianism is associated historically with the name of Augustine. He taught that the millennium is to be interpreted spiritually as fulfilled in the Christian Church. He held that the binding of Satan took place during the earthly ministry of our Lord (Lk. 10:18), that the first resurrection is the new birth of the believer (Jn. 5:25), and that the millennium must correspond, therefore, to the inter-adventual period or Church age. This involved the interpreting of Rev. 20:1-6 as a "recapitulation" of the preceding chapters instead of as describing a new age following chronologically on the events set forth in chap. 19. Living in the first half of the first millennium of the Church's history, Augustine naturally took the 1000 years of Rev. 20 literally; and he expected the second advent to take place at the end of that period. But since he somewhat inconsistently identified the millennium with what then remained of the sixth chiliad of human history, he believed that this period might end about A. D. 650 with a great outburst of evil, the revolt of Gog, which would be followed by the coming of Christ in judgment. . . .

At the time of the Reformation the view was widely held that the millennium was then past, and that the Church was in the "little season." It permitted the dating of the millennium from the time of Constantine. Now it can of course be regarded as

commencing considerably later. *

* The fact that approximately a thousand years lay between the conversion of Constantine and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation made this view an attractive one, especially since the Reformers naturally found in the Book of Revelation the prediction of the rise and fall of the Papacy (the Pope being the Antichrist), as the great anti-Christian and persecuting power. Hengstenberg, writing in the last century, dated the beginning of the millennium from the crowning of Charlemagne in A. D. 800.⁶

VARIATION IN VIEWS

The interested reader will here find some of the notions of his brethren of amillennial-postmillennial persuasions. It is alleged that all the prophecies of a return to the land of Israel and a rebuilding of the temple occurred before 516 BC (when the temple⁷ was rebuilt) and thus were all literally fulfilled in the past.⁸

Another view is that these OT predictions were partly fulfilled in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and later; and parts that were not then fulfilled were spiritualized for teaching NT spiritual truths.⁹ Or, the predictions include that temple but also reach forward to the city in John's vision.¹⁰

Sometimes it is affirmed that the specifications given in the vision of the temple rule out the possibility of identifying Ezekiel's temple with the temple of Solomon or the less impressive temple of Zerubbabel.¹¹ There are several other schemes in order to circumvent the literal interpretation of the OT prophets (with due allowance for the use of symbols and figurative language, as in our own language also). One scheme finds the fulfilment in the church now;¹² another scheme equates the vision of Ezekiel 40-48 and the vision of the city in Rev. 21, regarding both as symbolic of the eternal state.¹³ Another variation is to find the temple realized in Christ and the Church and culminating in the new heaven and earth.¹⁴

Others would have it all vague: IF the passage refers to something after our Lord's death, it could be interpreted as a description through imagery of the church;

6. *Prophecy and the Church*, Philadelphia, Presbyterian and reformed, pp. 2, 3, 4, 260n6.

7. 2 Thess 2:4 refers to a future temple in Jerusalem (cp. Matt. 24:15), not the church.

8. W. E. Cox, *The New Covenant Israel*, p. 28. J. Wilmot, *Inspired Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*., pp. 114, 176.

9. L. Boettner, *The Millennium*, p. 80.

10. G. L. Murray, *Millennial Studies*, p. 53.

11. P. E. Hughes, *Interpreting Prophecy*, p. 129.

12. R. Campbell, *Israel and the New Covenant*, p. 145; O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 62; H. Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom*, p. 213; P. Mauro, *The Hope of Israel*, chs. 12 & 13.

13. P. E. Hughes, *Interpreting Prophecy*, pp. 131-135; C. D. Alexander, *No Third Temple*, p. 10; R. Zorn, *Church and Kingdom*, p. 117; L. Neilson, *Waiting for His Coming*, p. 313, has difficulty making up his mind -- no wonder. M. S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 574.

14. G. C. Miladin, *Is This Really the End?*, p. 20.

or, there are resemblances to Rev. 21 and 22.¹⁵

If those who accept dispensation truth were so divergent about a matter, it would be regarded as proof that they did not know what they were talking about. It would be alleged that a false presupposition was the root of such radically different solutions to the felt difficulty.

What is the Character of the Binding of Satan in the Amillennial System?

THE AMILLENNIALIST NOTION

The amillennialist idea is stated thus by the amillennial exegete, W. Hendriksen:

We repeat, the devil is not bound in every sense. His influence is not completely destroyed. On the contrary, within the sphere in which Satan is permitted to exert his influence for evil he rages most furiously. A dog securely bound with a long and heavy chain can do great damage within the circle of his imprisonment. Outside that circle, however, the animal can do no damage and can hurt no one. Thus also Revelation 20:1-3 teaches us that Satan's power is curbed and his influence curtailed with respect to one definite sphere of activity: that he should deceive the nations no more.¹⁶

W. E. Cox wrote:

And many a dog, though bound, has bitten people who came within the confines of his chain. Satan is bound, but with a long chain.¹⁷

Satan is bound, having only such power as God grants Him.¹⁸

A. L. Plueger said,

Satan has been in bonds [Jude 6] ever since he fell. . . That binding of Satan [2 Peter 2:4]¹⁹ was effected specifically by the cross of Christ. The binding is a matter of degree.²⁰

And Homer Haily also agreed:

He walks about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8); but {now observe this about that roving lion} his activity is limited {but it

15. L. Neilson, *Waiting for His Coming*, p. 313.

16. *More Than Conquerors*, p. 190. See R Zorn, *Church and Kingdom*, p. 118.

17. *Biblical Studies in Final Things*, p. 161.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 163. See also G. Murray, *Millennial Studies*, p. 170.

19. {Jude 6 has nothing to do with the original fall of Satan, nor of his angels. These angels are the "sons of God" in Gen. 6, not the Sethites. These angels were already chained before Christ came (cp. 2. Pet. 2:4) and so Christ did not chain them. Must we allow Scripture to mean whatever these brethren wish it to mean? www.presenttruthpublishers.com

20. *Things to Come for Planet Earth*, p. 55.

always was so}, as a dog chained to a wire between two trees. He can operate only within the limited distance between the trees, and to the length of the chain from side to side. In this binding, Satan is divinely restrained from establishing control over nations.²¹

There are a number of implications in this view about the “long chain”²² that we should note.

1. It follows that since Satan is bound in the abyss, the area in which he is doing this damage must also be in the abyss. So the part of the earth where the long chain reaches is in the abyss. And think about this: the Scripture says, “the whole world lies in the wicked [one]” (1 John 5:20). That chain reaches anywhere on the earth!
2. It follows that the humans that he deceives are also in the abyss where he is.
3. Re W. E. Cox’s comments, Satan always had only so much power as God allowed him, as Job 1 shows, when all allow that Satan was not yet bound. So what this really amounts to is that God shortened the chain, for Satan was always restrained by God’s control. As A. L. Plueger said, “The binding is a matter of degree.” And observe that he says that Satan was always in bonds but the binding “was effected specifically by the cross of Christ.”

What would God have said in this book which abounds with symbolism if He intended to convey the complete restraint of Satan? Remember:

... angel ... having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand ... and bound him ... and cast him into the abyss, and shut [it] and sealed [it] over him ... (Rev. 20:1-3).

Moreover, we read of the abyss in Rev. 9:1, 2 and what we see of the complete restraint of Satan is commensurate with what we read about the loosing of the demonic powers from the abyss during Daniel’s 70th week. According to the way amillennialists treat Rev. 20:1-3, these hordes were active all along on the earth, only they must have been more restrained than before the cross.

MORE EFFORTS TO MITIGATE THE BINDING OF SATAN

C. A. Clita has labored hard to account for the reason why Satan is bound in the abyss but is still active. His purpose was to find some uses of the word “bound” which did not mean rendering one immobile. Well, that should be easy enough to do. What a pitiful approach to this matter -- like claiming that the “ark” Moses was

21. *Revelation An Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Baker, p. 391, 1979.

22. There is a rather amusing comment in T. Boersma, *Is the Bible a Jigsaw Puzzle* . . . , St. Cathrines: Paideia Press, p. 64 (1978):

If you are going to read the text literally, you must be consistent. This would involve believing that Satan is actually lying somewhere bound to a very long chain.

Ignoring his all-or-nothing dictum concerning symbols and what is literal, I wonder why he brought “A very long chain” into this?

in must have been huge because we read of the size of the one that Noah was in. We quote only one example to show the reasoning, or rather lack thereof:

Thus in Luke 13:16 we read of a woman who was bound by Satan for eighteen years. She was bound only with respect to a specific physical disability which restricted her freedom.²³

Yes, and Satan will be bound (and locked up, and under sealing) *with respect to* his activity. He will not be active at all.

LOOSING AS WELL AS BINDING

Let us keep in mind that there is loosing as well as a binding. The loosing undoes what the binding bound. The millennium is alleged by some to be the blessedness of those now with the Lord. But if the *binding* of Satan involves the removal of the saints to heaven, from his power, then it follows that the *loosing* of Satan means the reinstatement of the saints under His power. Rev. 20 shows that he is bound so that he may not do a certain thing and when he is loosed he goes and does that very thing. It is well to see that loosing is the opposite of binding. Whatever the binding is, the loosing undoes it. Keep that steadily in view when reviewing notions about what constitutes the binding.

Satan and some Demons Are Presently Loose

SATAN'S PRESENT ACTIVITY IN DECEPTION

When writing on Matt. 25:31-46, amillennialists assert that this passage refers to a general judgment. This, of course, is an error. It refers to a sessional judgment of the nations when our Lord shall have sat down upon His throne of glory at the beginning of the 1000 year reign. However, amillennialists are quite correct that there will be no judgment of nations, as such. It is individuals that are judged.

It is obvious that individuals in nations are deceived today by Satan. Therefore, amillennialists claim that the deceiving of the nations means *whole* nations, i.e., nations as such. Their system requires this, else Satan is not bound per their definition of binding, for he certainly is deceiving people. The definition does sound like an arbitrary device, necessitated by the system and not derived from the symbols themselves.

The OT had spoken of Jehovah's dealing with Satan at the time of the kingdom, as W. Kelly remarked:

On the face of the prophecy this scheme ignores its structure. For Rev. 19 beyond a doubt supposes Babylon on earth fallen forever, and in contrast the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven, followed by the heaven opened, and the Lord with His armies, His saints, emerging to execute judgment on the Beast and

the kings of the earth, and their armies. Thereon, not before, ensues the binding of Satan for a thousand years (not days), and the long predicted reign of the saints over the earth for the same long period. Yet during it {during the supposed present reign} the Beast reigns *also*. not only the 10 horns but his the one great authority to whom the dragon gives his power! What? . . . during the reign of Christ and His saints! Such is Dr. W's scheme.

Hear on the contrary the scriptural expectation.

And it shall come to pass that Jehovah shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth (Isa. 24:21).

In that day Jehovah with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea (Isa. 27:1).

Only the N.T. is fuller and more precise, giving the stages in Rev. 12:2, 20:1-3, and v. 10, of which the present vision is intermediate. The same N.T. leaves no shadow of a doubt that, though the work is wrought by which Satan shall be crushed forever, he is still active in deceiving the nations, as well as in tempting, hindering, and accusing the saints . . . ²⁴

We will now consider some of the deceptions of Satan, keeping in mind that amillennialists believe that "times, time, and a half-time," 42 months and 1260 days refer to the 1000 years, i.e. the present period.

1. Satan certainly deceives individuals now: 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:15; 2 Tim. 2:26; cp. also Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 3:13; Eph. 4:14; Rev. 18:23; 13:14; 2 Pet. 2; Jude; 1 John 5:20.
2. In Rev. 12:7-9 we see "he who deceives {not -- had deceived} the whole habitable world, he was cast out into the earth." What does he do on the earth? He persecutes the woman (alleged to be the Church ²⁵). For how long? For a time, times and a half time (Rev. 20:14), i.e., for the 42 months or 1260 days. This is going on during the period alleged to be Christ's reign, the period during which he is bound!
3. The first beast of Rev. 13 (the coming Roman prince of Dan. 9) overcomes the saints:

And there was given to it to make war with the saints, and to overcome them (Rev. 13:7).

And during the 42 months:

there was given to it authority to pursue its career forty-two months (Rev. 13:5; cp. Dan. 7:21, 25)?

4. The beast, whatever an amillennialist might think that represents, operates during the 1000 years. Concerning the beast's power:

24. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 1:333, 334.

25. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 142. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

the dragon gave to it his power, and his throne, and great authority (Rev. 12:2).

So during the time Satan is bound in the abyss, the 1000 years, this is true. The Beast has Satan's power during this very period. Still, we are confidently told that he cannot deceive the nations during this very time. Satan is the power behind the second beast of Rev. 13, the false prophet, the Antichrist, the Lawless One, who "exercises all the authority of the first beast before it" and therefore does so during the 42 months, allegedly the present period, but in reality the last half of Daniel's 70th week. And what does this false Christ do? He works signs and calls fire down (Rev. 13:13). And what is the result? He "deceives those that dwell upon the earth" That does not sound like Satan is bound in the abyss and can no longer deceive the nations.

5. W. Hendriksen said:

Therefore we conclude that the harlot also represents the world as the center of antichristian seduction at any moment of history.²⁶

I disagree, but assuming his conclusion, what does the woman do? "For by thy *sorcery* have all the nations been deceived" (Rev. 18:23). That does not sound like Satan is now bound and can no longer deceive the nations.

6. It ought to be clear to you that Rev. 19 and 20 give us events in historical sequence. Thus, the binding of Satan will occur *after* the casting of the Beast into the lake of fire.
7. All of this indicates that the amillennialist 'chain' is so long that it's length covers all the nations!

If error appears never stronger than today, and the world and flesh's evil are so little conquered, may it not be because the Church has either forsaken her spiritual weapons, or makes too little use of them!²⁷

Rather, may it not also be because Satan is *not now bound* and the present period progresses in evil as depicted in Matt. 13, and seducers wax worse and worse (2 Tim. 3:1-8), and false teachers increase (2 Pet. 2) and evil men get in (Jude), etc.? It is "the last hour" (1 John 2:18) now.

As a final example of how far one can depart from the statements of scripture, consider the following statements:

The 'binding of Satan' is therefore in reality not for a season but with reference to a sphere; and his 'loosing' again is not after a period but in another sphere; it is not subsequence but exteriority that is suggested. There is, indeed, no literal 'binding of Satan' to be thought of at all: what happens, happens not to Satan but to the saints and is only represented as happening to Satan for the purposes

26. *More Than Conquerors*, p. 168. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

27. R. Zorn, *Church and Kingdom*, p. 153.

of the symbolical picture. What actually happens is that the saints described are removed from the sphere of Satan's assaults. The saints described are free from all access of Satan -- he is bound with respect to them: outside of their charmed circle his horrid work goes on. This is indicated, indeed, in the very employment of the two symbols 'a thousand years' and 'a little time.' A 'thousand years' is the symbol of heavenly completeness and blessedness; the 'little time' of earthly turmoil and evil. Those in the 'thousand years' are safe from enduring his attacks.²⁸

THE WHOLE WORLD LIES IN THE WICKED ONE

Under the heading, "The Loosing of Satan and The Little Season," we shall see that some amillennialists think we may be in the little season (Rev. 20:3) now. As there are posttribulationists who think we may be in the tribulation, thus showing that they do not know what the great tribulation is, nor the marks of its onset, so these amillennialists know not the millennium, its character, the marks of its beginning, nor the character of the little season that follows it. They seem not to know what John meant when he said "the whole world lies in the wicked [one]" (1 John 5:20). The Christian is heavenly :

and such as the heavenly [one], such also the heavenly [ones] (1 Cor 15:48).

God does not look at the Christian as part of the whole world that lies in the wicked one. Though they are in the world, they are not of it:

And these are in the world . . . They are not of the world, as I am not of the world (John 17:11, 16).

Yes, our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20) and we are *ambassadors* for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20). No wonder Peter tells us that we are *strangers* and *pilgrims* here. None of this is truly believed by many Christians.

The **whole** world lies in the wicked one, stated the Apostle John. And in Rev. 12:13 we read of that one, "he who deceives the whole habitable world." He is cast down from heaven in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. This goes on until his binding. But P. E. Hughes claims:

The casting of the dragon into the abyss, therefore, we understand as coinciding with his being cast down from heaven as previously recorded in {Rev.} 12:7-9.²⁹

Theology is an amazing thing! Rev. 12:12 says:

Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great rage, knowing he has a short time.

How strange this is seeing we are told that his being cast down from heaven is coincident with his being cast into the abyss, where he is bound. Yes, theology is

28. Quoted from B. B. Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1929, p. 651, by W. F. Walvoord, *The Millennium*, p. 292.
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

29. *The Book of the Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 210, 1990.

an amazing thing! See how amazing it is when the same writer says:

... the thousand years during which Satan is bound and confined had their beginning with the incarnation of the eternal Son . . .³⁰

Then the casting down of Satan (Rev. 12) and his binding (Rev. 20) so that he could not deceive the nations for the 1000 years must have been coincident with the incarnation!

At any rate, the short time he has after being cast down from heaven in the middle of the 70th week is about 3 ½ years.

We are informed that only one who "lacks the historic sense" cannot see glories of the present millennial age as contrasted with conditions before Christ's ascension.³¹ This is said after a survey of the alleged triumphs of the Church. How sad. Unbelievers to whom we witness about the Savior know this is false. They, as we, know that the history of 'the church' is a history of evil, of cruelty, of murder, of corruption, of lies. And we Christians may know that it is the last hour (1 John XXX) as in John's day.

We also know what evils have been propagated under the name of Christ (Jude; 2 Pet. 2) And Paul warned of what would happen after His departure (Acts 20). He instructed Timothy how to behave amidst the ruin (2 Tim. 3) and the apostle directed *Timothy* to turn from those. Soon Christendom was filled with heretics, relic-mongers, bloody crusades, inquisitions, etc. After all, what was the reformation for? -- and then what became of it? The leaven in the three measures of meal is the spreading of evil after all.

J. N. Darby well pointed out this:

Do you think that all the oppression and wars and wickedness and horrors, which now mark the history of the earth would go on if everything were put under Him? It is Satan, and not Christ, who is now the prince and god of this world. It is strange how many people fancy that the cross put an end to that; it was exactly the contrary. The cross was the one grand demonstration -- and there never was such a demonstration before -- that Satan is the prince and god of this world. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me," said our Savior. Until Christ had been rejected, Satan was never called the prince of this world. Before that, Jehovah was on the earth, and in the temple was the *Shekinah* of glory. But when at last He came into this world in the person of Christ, and the world rejected Him, then from that time Satan is the prince of this world. And it is after this that the apostle says, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2 Cor. 4) When the Lord comes again, He will be the Prince of the world; but till He comes again, Satan

30. *Ibid.*, p. 211.

31. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 189.

is that prince.³²

WHERE ARE DEMONS NOW?

Demons are active in the world. Some are specially active in Christendom (2 Cor. 11:14, 15) as well as directly opposed to Christians (Eph. 6:12). We need not labor that point.

We may note from Rev. 9:1-2 that during the great tribulation demonic powers will be released from the abyss. Observe that the Lord commanded certain demons to go into the abyss (Luke 8:31). This does not mean that the Lord merely reduced their activities somewhat, as the false view of the binding of Satan would lead to. But in Rev. 9:1-11 we learn that the loosed demons had power on the earth after they got out of the abyss, not while they were in it. We do not know how many are in the abyss, but here we learn how some of them came to be there.

So some demons are presently loose and some are in the abyss, to be loosed to serve God's purpose in the great tribulation. But there are some others that we know of. Those are the angels who were cast down into Tartarus in Noah's day (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6),³³ and perhaps afterward also for the same sin. These are not said to be in the abyss and these texts indicate that they will not be active again. It is a misrepresentation of their case to claim that they are among the loose demons though they are in chains and in the deepest pit of gloom, or Tartarus. The sin of the angels referred to in these two texts is not the original fall, else all demons would be bound in chains and in Tartarus. It is the sin spoken of in Gen. 6.

For if God spared not [the] angels that sinned, but having cast them down to the deepest pit of gloom {Tartarus} has delivered them to chains of darkness [to be] kept for judgment (2 Pet. 2:4).

And angels who had not kept their own original state, but had abandoned their own dwelling, he keeps in eternal chains under gloomy darkness, to [the] judgment of the great day (Jude 6).

These are "eternal chains" and so these demons are not in the abyss³⁴ from which the demonic powers will come forth (Rev. 9:1, 2) in the great tribulation.

The Beast, the man, does not come out of the abyss literally (Rev. 11:7; 17:8). What is signified is the diabolical source and character of his power received for the last half-week, when the mortal wound was healed (Rev. 13:2). The beast, then, has the abyss as his moral source whereas the Lord Jesus has heaven as His moral source (1 Cor. 15:47).

Satan will be cast into the place where the demons had no power on earth until

32. *Collected Writings* 11:344, 345.

33. See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:72; *Letters* 2:447; 3:133.

34. Amillennialists confuse these things. Herman Hoeksema, for example, wrote:

The Bottomless pit is the proper temporary abode of the devil and his angels, (Cf. II Peter 2:4), (*Behold, He Cometh*, . . . p. 641).

released from it (Rev. 20:1- 3; cp Rev. 9:1ff). The language is such as to confirm this. We have Satan being bound with a great chain, cast into the abyss, the abyss shut, and the abyss sealed. All this means is that Satan is on a long chain, say some! And to think otherwise is "crass literalism"! Well, Satan is a spirit-being, and while we do not view the chain as a literal chain, we do see the symbolic force of the binding, the shutting, the sealing, and the key; while amillennialists are hindered from acknowledging it because they read the church into the OT prophecies of the kingdom, and so conclude that there is no future kingdom on earth preceded by the binding of Satan.

No doubt all the demon hosts now loose, and all those who will be unleashed upon the earth during the great tribulation (Rev. 9:1-11) will be locked in the abyss with Satan, and loosed during the little time after the millennium.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

Profession and Relationship with God

Another very serious mistake which I refer to as a general principle is, that God owns no kind of relationship with God out of Israel on the ground of profession. The words are these . . . "I repeat, Israel and Israel only, ever had any link with God upon the ground of profession without the reality of internal life." "It is not now Jew or Gentile, but Christ's or the world's." Link is a vague word: real link of course there cannot be. But if it be meant that men are not dealt with as in a recognized relationship with Christ, it is a very dangerous and mischievous mistake. The house of God may certainly be built with wood, and hay, and stubble here on the earth. The apostle warns the Corinthians that Israel were baptized to Moses and partook of the same spiritual meat and drink, referring to baptism and the Lord's Supper, yet fell in the wilderness, and they were to take heed by their example. In John, we read that he who hates his brother is a murderer and has not eternal life. The seven churches are all treated by the Lord as on the footing of churches, though judged, and the last spued out of His mouth. Peter tells us that judgment begins at the house of God. But more, in Matt. 24 the servant who says, My lord delays his coming, is treated as a servant. The lord of that servant comes; and he has his portion with hypocrites. The servant who had one talent is treated as a wicked and slothful servant, and is judged as a servant, cast out as an unprofitable servant. The scripture is full of relationships, bringing judgments according to those relationships, where no internal life is. It is the whole history of Christianity in this world, going on to judgment as such. Involved in it is the weightiest and most solemn thought which can affect the Christian on the side of evil and its consequences, when himself at peace with God.

Collected Writings 15:218.

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Part One

The Antichrist: The Next Avatar and the Director of Religious Affairs in the West

An avater in Hinduism is "the descent of a deity release or released soul to earth in bodily form."³⁵ He will be suitable to the apostates of Christendom and Judaism as well as the new-agers and occultists.

Before taking up the subject of the Antichrist we will consider three persons designated in Scripture that will be opposed to the Antichrist: the two witnesses and also Elijah.

Chapter 1.1

The Two Witnesses and the Coming of Elijah

The Two Witnesses

THE SETTING IS THE LAST HALF-WEEK

The setting for what we are told regarding the two witnesses bears on the question: during which half of Daniel's 70th week do they witness?

And there was given to me a reed like a staff, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship in it. And the court which [is] without the temple cast out, and measure it not; because it has been given [up] to the nations, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty two months (Rev. 11:1, 2).

Here is one of the places that we learn that there shall exist a future temple in Jerusalem. If this 42 months is the first half of Daniel's 70th week, it seems implied that the temple will have already been built by the opening of the 70th week. It has been pointed out from last century to now that there may be a transition period between the rapture and the opening of the 70th week, which allows for some things to develop. On the other hand, the rebuilding of a temple may be begun even before the rapture takes place.

In the middle of the 70th week, Satan is cast down from heaven (Rev. 12). Also the Jewish sacrifices are stopped in the middle of the week (Dan. 9:27). This appears to be the time of the revelation of the Lawless One and the advent of the apostasy (2 Thess. 2) when the image of the first beast of Rev. 13 is set up (Rev. 13:15; Matt. 24:15; Dan. 12: 11). Dan. 12:11 shows that the abomination that makes desolate is set up at the middle of the week. Now, that coincides with the forced cessation of the Jewish sacrifices and the imposition of the new worship of *the Triad* of Revelation: Satan, the Beast (the head of the revived Roman empire -- Rev. 13:1-11) and the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2, the second beast of Rev. 13, the false prophet). We will consider this at length in subsequent chapters, if the Lord will.

Rev. 11:2 indicates this second half-week.³⁶ A change has taken place. The sacrifices have been stopped and a new order of worship imposed. Gentile power supports it. Upon this scene appear two powerful prophets whom God raises up in a sackcloth clothed ministry that is Elijah-like (for a time of apostasy) and Moses-like (for a time of Gentile dominion).

A further point that indicates the last half-week is the characterization of the beast. The beast, the head of the revived Roman empire has two phases. He is of the seven and is an eighth. We shall consider this at length in Part Two, if the Lord will. Suffice it to say here that there is his historical accession to power and subsequent mortal wound and then a world-stunning comeback in the middle of the

36. For the general bearing of Rev 10 and 11, see the *Synopsis* by J. N. Darby and W. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Acts, the Catholic Epistles and the Revelation*, pp. 471-476. These books are obtainable from Present Truth Publishers. W. Kelly does not confine the two witnesses to two persons. Neither believed the two witnesses were Moses and Elijah (W. Kelly, *The Brethren and Their Traducers*, p. 20; *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:254). Concerning the two witnesses JND wrote:

It is very likely there may be literally two witnesses; but the main point, I apprehend, in the mind of the Spirit is, that there is, during the time of the beast's power and the treading down of the ~~Commonwealth~~ ^{Commonwealth} the publishers of the title of the God of the earth (Collected Writings 30:370).

week by the power of Satan when Satan gives him his throne. Thus he is an eighth and is characterized as "the beast who comes up out of the abyss" (Rev. 11:7). This is a statement of character and this is his character from the middle of the week and onwards.

The designations, 1260 days, 42 months, and 3 ½ years in Revelation all refer to the last half-week. Seeing this will help in understanding Revelation.³⁷

There already were martyrs during the first half-week. Their souls are seen under the altar upon the opening of the sixth seal (Rev. 5:9-11). The seven-sealed roll, written on both sides (the book of God's judgments), was taken before the hosts of heaven by the alone worthy One, who had "overcome [so as] to open the book and loose the seven seals" (Rev. 5:5). I suppose the seals were along the edge of the roll, and seal by seal it was unrolled, giving us the events of the first half-week. At the middle of the week the roll is fully open -- and then the trumpet judgments begin. There were witnesses before **the two prophets** came forward upon the occasion of the revelation of the Antichrist, the Lawless One, in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel. The souls of those who had been martyred were seen by John under the altar and their cry was imprecatory, as in the Psalms, suitable for the future time, but not for Christians now. I say this to meet an argument that if the two witnesses prophesy during the last half-week, then God would have left himself without a witness up to that point. The time of the two witnesses coincides with the time of Antichrist.

J. N. Darby wrote:

But, at this epoch, Satan is cast down from heaven, the blasphemous beast comes up out of the bottomless pit -- he whose deadly wound was healed. Thus, incontrovertibly, the last half-week is the great subject of testimony: it alone is referred to by the Lord; nor indeed is the first referred to as a half week when its existence is proved; Dan. 9: 27. Of course, as the prince changes his conduct in the dividing of the week, there must have been a half-week before; but the "confirming" is referred to the week in general. Satan's (to him, probably, unlooked for) rejection from heaven changes the whole scene. He, as to the mass, sets aside the public outward testimony to God. This would account for the witnesses being raised up, as witnesses before the God of the earth; because (Satan being become the Satan of the earth then) God's witness must be there where Satan's power is and refer to it, just as the church's ought to be heavenly now. The particular protection of the witnesses accounts for their subsisting in spite of it. They were as Moses and Elias in reference to the power of evil.

THE ELIJAH-LIKE AND MOSES-LIKE TESTIMONY

God will raise up two faithful, powerful, miracle-working prophets when the great deceptive power of Satan is manifested in the "wonders of falsehood" (2 Thess. 2

and Rev. 13:11-18). The antichrist and the two witnesses reflect what we see in Prov. 14:25. The Antichrist will, of course, be assisted in deception because a judicial “working of error” will be sent to the apostates (2 Thess. 2:11). During the forty-two months, i.e., the 1260 days, i.e., the 3 ½ years, the last half of the great tribulation, the two witness will prophesy being clothed in sackcloth (Rev. 11:3-12; Dan. 9:2, 3). It is the time of deepest distress, yea, the time of “Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30: 4-7). And at the height of iniquity there shall be maintained by God a sackcloth-clothed ministry, signifying their mourning over the apostasy and their call for repentance (cp. Jer. 4:8).

This testimony of the two ³⁸ has two prominent characteristics. It is Moses-like and it is Elijah-like. Consider the displays of power in Mose’s day when the children of Israel were in Egypt under Pharaoh (Ex. 7-12), who said, “who is the Lord that I should obey his voice”? But more, Moses was the great law-giver and Israel will have reached the most wicked departure and apostasy in the reception of him who comes in his own name. And in addition to that, Elijah was the great prophet recalling Israel to the true worship in the day of grievous departure from the law of Moses (1 Kings 17, 18; see also 1 Kings 17:1; Luke 4:25; James 5:17; 2 Kings 1:10). Working through him, God withheld rain in Israel (XXX). How morally fitting, therefore, to see the two chief characteristics of the testimony of the two witnesses remind the Jews of Moses and Elijah, though they are not Moses and Elijah.

They have a divine source of power:

And I will give [power] to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and [and] sixty days, clothed in sackcloth (Rev. 11:3).

Power accompanied by humility, self-denial, and mourning characterize them, as well as steadfastness in the daily testimony, for the 1260 days are marked by Him who sustains them.

We can see that there is a mixture of symbolism and literal statement in connection with the two witness. It appears to me that while the judgments are in the main literal, the fire from their mouths may indicate the force of the Word of God proceeding from them in judgment (cp. 2 Kings 1). For example:

Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them (Jer. 5:14).

It is interesting to observe this mixture of the literal and figurative:

two witnesses	literal
two olive trees	figurative
two lamps	figurative
two prophets	literal

The two witnesses are "two prophets" (Rev. 11:9), not a company of saints, as also the power conferred upon them indicates. And if they were a company, what company is it that is taken up in resurrection power before the Lord appears in glory?

THEIR TESTIMONY

Their Testimony Takes Place in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the place where God's prophets are killed (Luke 13:33) and this is where the two prophets will be killed (Rev. 11:8). The Antichrist, the next *Avatar* for the new-agers, who is the *Director of Religious Affairs for the West*, will be also a king in Jerusalem (Dan. 11:36), henchman to the Beast, the head of the revived Roman empire. The Antichrist will orchestrate the Satanic worship of the West from Jerusalem as its center for worship, where the image of the beast is set in what is a holy place (Rev. 13; Matt. 24). This is the place where the powerful, unstoppable testimony is maintained, the most awful thorn in the side of the Beast who finds them testifying against the religion of the revived Roman empire.

Their Testimony is Earthly.

these are the two olive trees and the two lamps which stand before the Lord of the earth (Rev. 11:4)

They have not a heavenly testimony as we have, but one related to Christ's place on earth. Thus, they stand "before the Lord of the earth" (Rev. 11:4) -- and their testimony is in Jerusalem, the very center of God's earthly ways in government. They stand before the Lord of the earth when His rights shall have been most fully rejected, when the Jews shall have received the Antichrist, one who comes in his own name, even in Jerusalem. Christ is destined to reign as Lord of the earth. Reading the church into this passage betrays ignorance, or rejection, of the heavenly position of saints now as seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6).

Their testimony is to Christ's Two Offices. As two olive trees and two lampstands, they remind us of Zech. 4 -- which speaks of the Messiah in His earthly, millennial glory. There, the two sons of oil (v. 14) symbolize the two offices of Christ's power: the royal power and the Melchizedek priesthood which Christ will simultaneously exercise (Zech. 6:12, 13). The two offices support the light and give character to it. Thus shall He light the earth for God's glory in the millennium. The two witnesses in the time of Jacob's trouble are witnesses to the coming of Messiah to fill these offices (these powers being imitated by the second beast, as seen in its two horns). The two witnesses are light bearers and marked by faithfulness in their testimony (Rev. 11:4).

Upon the Completion of Their Testimony They are Killed.

And when they shall have completed their testimony, the beast who comes up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and shall conquer them, and shall kill them: and their body [shall be] on the street of the great city, which is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified

(Rev. 11:7, 8).

Sustained by God, they are invincible until the appointed time of the completion of their testimony. In this they follow the Lord who was untouchable until the appointed time, as is traced in John 6:8; 8:20; and then 12:23; 13:1; 17:1). Not only is there that similarity, they will be killed *where* their Lord was crucified, they *in* it, He *outside* its walls -- the city having become filthy spiritually as Sodom, and oppressive as Egypt.

This passage does not mean the point in time when the Beast first appears. It is a statement of character. He is *such* a Beast as ascends out of the abyss, is the thought. It is a description of his moral character during the last half-week when he will reign by direct Satanic power (Rev. 13:4). It is *such* a Beast that does this. Observe that their testimony is for 1260 days (Rev. 11:3). They lie dead on the street for 3 ½ days (Rev. 11:9) and that takes us 3 ½ days beyond the 1260 days (from the middle of Daniel's 70th week) of their testimony, showing that the appearing of Christ will not take place on the 1260th day. There is an interval of time till the setting up of the Kingdom on the 1335th day (Dan. 12:12) from the middle of the week. But the day Christ appears in glory (Rev. 19) is not known, though we know His appearing is subsequent to this killing of the two witnesses and there will be a short space of time for the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" (Rev. 16:14). At any rate, after 3 ½ days of lying dead on the street in Jerusalem (v. 8), after the apostates' joy is expressed in the exchange of gifts, the resurrection power of Christ is put forth in another instalment of the resurrection of the just. And though this puts fear into the apostates, it works no repentance. So, neither their testimony, nor the true signs they wrought, nor their resurrection, and being taken up into glory, produce repentance. How truly W. Kelly said, somewhere, "The human heart is invincible." Rejecters of moral free-will understand this.

LEFT ON THE STREET DEAD FOR 3 ½ DAYS -- THEN ASCEND

These are 3 ½ literal days, not 3 ½ years which the historicist year-day theory would require. See comments by W. Trotter in *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*, pp. 405-407.

"Their Body." The nations see "their body" 3 ½ days. They were united in testimony ("their mouth," v. 5) and they are united in death. It is a lovely touch to speak of "their body" being on view, because "they do not suffer their bodies to be put into a sepulcher" (Rev. 11:9).

Seen by Peoples, Tribes, Tongues, and Nations. This does not mean that the Beast is a world-wide ruler. It means that somehow those designated see the dead prophets for 3 ½ days. It might have been representatively by some at Jerusalem.

And [men] of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations see their body
... (Rev. 11:9).

On the other hand, we are now aware of technology which can broadcast pictures

world wide. It will be to the Beast's credit that he has been able to rid himself of those who had showed such powerful opposition for 3 ½ years to the worship of *the Traid* (Satan, the Beast, and the Antichrist), involving the image of the Beast set in what is a holy place in the temple. In view of the power displayed in them, it is no wonder the Scripture uses this language:

... shall make war with them, and shall conquer them, and shall kill them (Rev. 11:8).

The public display indicates the prestige and pride of triumph over them.

The Earth-dwellers Rejoice. This designates a more restricted group than those in v. 9.

And they that dwell upon the earth rejoice over them, and are full of delight, and shall send gifts to one another, because these, the two prophets, tormented them that dwell upon the earth (Rev. 11:10).

Those that dwell upon the earth are mentioned some 10 times in Revelation. Every person who lives on the globe is not intended by this. These are apostates. The expression has a moral force. Cp. Phil 3:18, 19. Their joy is short-lived. 1263 ½ days passed from the middle of the week show the appearing of Christ in glory will soon occur. First there is an earthquake (Rev. 11:13). It is while the celebrations are proceeding that the shock is delivered to the revelers, as happened to Belshazzar (Dan. 5). And then the seventh trumpet sounds, comprehending in its reverberations the outpouring of the awful seven vials, blow upon successive blow, swift and sure, in a very short time, and then follows the coming of the Lord in power and great glory,

in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God, and those who do not obey the glad tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8).

Note also in connection with the joy over killing of the two prophets that we may have a hint here of what God thinks about *exchanging* gifts with merrymaking. Do we hear "the voice of my Beloved"?

They do not Simply Vanish.

And after the three days and a half [the] spirit of life from God came into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon those beholding them. And I heard a great voice out of the heaven saying to them, Come up here; and they went up to the heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them (Rev. 11:11, 12).

In what appears to me to be a poke at the "secret rapture," the posttribulationist Robert H. Mounce remarked:

The triumph of the witnesses is no secret rapture; it is openly visible to all (cf. Mt 24:27; 1 Thess 4:17).³⁹

Well, then it must be a publicly viewed rapture -- *a rapture before the appearing of Christ in glory*. His reference to Matt. 24:27 and 1 Thess. 4:17 indicates that he does have in view what we call the rapture, though, of course, these two texts do not refer to the same occasion, though he thinks they do. Interestingly, he, as some others, who hold that the church will be on earth during the great tribulation, find in the two witnesses a symbol of the church:

It seems more likely, however, that they are not two individuals, but a symbol of the witnessing church in the last tumultuous days before the end of the age. That the church is presented under the figure of two witnesses stems from either the well-known law in Deuteronomy 19:15 which required a second witness for adequate testimony (cf. Jn 8:17) or from the Seer's desire to emphasize the church's "royal and priestly functions" as suggested by the two metaphors in verse 4 (Bruce, p. 649). Some commentators would limit the witnesses to that portion of the church which suffers martyrdom.⁴⁰

So now we conclude, though the writer may not have intended it, that the catching up of the two witnesses is the catching up of the church *before the appearing of Christ in glory*! Well, his book has been described in *Christianity Today*, Jan. 5, 1979, p. 37, as preterist-futurist, "similar to F. F. Bruce, Leon Morris, George Ladd, and G. R. Beasley-Murray." This system is quite defective. Let us take an example from Alan Johnson, another preterist-futurist. He thinks that John is referring in chapter 11 to the whole Christian community⁴¹ and that thought unleashes pages of imagination and vagueness about Rev. 11. Concerning the two witnesses he wrote:

The author of Revelation is simply describing the vocation of certain Christian prophets, indicating that some follow in the same tradition as the former prophets of Israel.⁴²

Not only is there Judaizing in such explanations; observe the vagueness. Vagueness and pliability of text go hand in hand. And if the text expressly states that the city is "**where also their Lord was crucified**," that must give way also. He says:

A city may be a metaphor for the total life of a community of people (Heb. 11:10; 12:22; 13:14). . . . Mounce suggests that "the great city in which the martyred church lies dead is the world under the wicked and oppressive sway of Antichrist" (*Revelation*, p. 227).⁴³

In the hands of such, Scripture seems to be like "silly-putty" with which children

40. *The Book of Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 223, 1977. Leon Morris, *The Revelation of St. John*, Grand Rapids: Tyndale, p. 148, 1973, says: The witnesses are collective rather than individual and stand for the church." This extends the powers of v. 6 to the church. But that will not do so he evacuates v. 6 of any real meaning, as a reading of his notions show. Regarding the two witnesses as a company, say the remnant of Judah, puts that remnant in possession of such powers. Really, what is the problem with there being two prophets?

41. "Revelation," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* 12:499, 1981.

42. *Ibid.* p. 505. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

43. *Ibid.* p. 506.

mold what suits their imagination. And this kind of 'exposition' is sanctified thus:

The spiritually discerning will catch the significance of the threefold description of this city.⁴⁴

This is just casting aside indications that God has given to guide our understanding. This is not spiritual at all. In reality, it is setting aside the words of God. It is this:

Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
Things that are put there by you and by me.

"The great city . . . where also their Lord was crucified" shows us that Rev. 11 has much to do with Jerusalem, and not with the church. The circumventing of this is of a character similar to amillennialists' circumventing Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9, and so finding the church spoken of in the O. T. prophecies anyway.

It is the city where the prophets perish (Luke 13:33; Matt. 23:37). Ed.

Many Truths Besides Church Truth

Though the same truth may be found scattered about and referred to as known, no epistle takes Ephesian ground but the Epistle to the Ephesians itself -- not even Paul's. As to John, he never alludes at all to church truth. All is individual, though he teaches that "as he is, so are we in this world." Let the Christian read Philippians, the most experimental of all epistles, in the third chapter running on to win Christ in glory; the second, looking for his mind on earth; the Church or church truth is never found in it -- could not be; surely it is blessedly consistent with it. But this is what I contend for: that he who is in the Church can be contemplated in the exercises of his soul on other ground, though not on ground inconsistent with it. If we know what it is to be in Christ and united with Him, we all know that there is another ground I am on. There I am perfect always; in fact, down here, a feeble creature, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. I have eternal life, for I have Christ; yet "the end" is "everlasting life," and I am to lay hold upon it. I am sanctified, yet look to be sanctified, body, soul, and spirit, and follow after holiness: God chastises me to be made partaker of His. I am saved and called with a holy calling; yet things turn to my salvation, and I work it out, or should do so, with fear and trembling, though knowing God works in me for it.

Collected Writings 15:223.

Our heavenly calling, let me add, is not, as the author would have it, in itself our union with Christ at all. And it is very important, as I have learnt some twenty-five years, to make the difference. Those who have the heavenly calling may be united. But union with Christ is not a calling but a state, an acquired place and position. Through the calling we may, in God's counsels and by His power, be come into this union; but I believe there are those who are saints of the high places, at least there will be, but who never will be in union. At any rate, a calling is that to which we are called by faith, and is never in itself union, though those called may be united. We are called to something, and our spirit and our walk are to be conformed to it. I may be actually, in a certain

sense, in it in Christ, but this is not my calling. My calling is that which God has set before my soul, as that which is to form my soul, by my heart being set upon it as given to me by grace, and by grace called to it; and scripture constantly deals with the soul on this ground.

Collected Writings 15:225, 226.

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

One During Which:

The Law is Dead;

The Probation of Man Continues; and,

“The Times of the Gentiles” Is not Continuing?

Chapter 1

Outline of L. S. Chafer's Views Concerning an Intercalated Age of Grace

Introduction

The Scripture expression “the end of the age” does not mean the end of a church age, for the saints will be raptured before “the end of the age.” (See my book, *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1.¹) The phrase, *the end of the age* (Matt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20) is really the end of the Mosaic age, which age is the age we Christians are now in. The cross did not change the age; the Mosaic age continues on. The work God is now doing is not an earthly age among the earthly ages. That is, Christianity is not an age among the earthly ages. It is a heavenly thing, above and outside of the ages. So while God is doing the heavenly work, the

1. It has been pointed out to me that in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, the reference to the view that some hold that there is an *intercalated* age, the “age of grace,” did not represent that particular view correctly concerning “the end of the age.” With this criticism I agree and therefore now hope to correct that deficiency and at the same time use the occasion to more fully bring out certain related truths.

Mosaic age (referred to in Matt. 12:32; 1 Cor. 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:21; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10)² continues on -- continues right through the period called Daniel's seventieth week -- until it is displaced by "the age to come" (Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph. 1:12; Heb. 6:5), which is the millennial age, i.e., the administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10). The testing of man ended with the cross. Man had been under probation by God, and the final test was Christ Himself. Since then man is not under probation (testing) any longer. We will review this in chapter two. The intercalary-age-of-grace system that we are reviewing says that man is presently still under testing and is being tested by grace. This system involves a number of other points as well, which we will note below.

The Intercalated Age of Grace and What it Entails

L. S. Chafer (hereafter LSC) was the protégé of C. I. Scofield³ and founded the school now known as the Dallas Theological Seminary. He wrote a number of books, his chief work being a seven volume systematic theology with an eighth volume as an index. The intercalated-age-of-grace system we will review is found in this work. It seems to me that LSC perceived a deficiency in the Scofield scheme that there is an "age of grace" among the earthly ages, namely the matter of "the end of the age." He saw that "the end of the age" cannot be the end of Scofield's postulated "age of grace."⁴ He wrote that:

- ❖ the age of grace is an *intercalated* age and it is intercalated into the Mosaic age;
- ❖ it interrupted the Mosaic age and the Mosaic age will recommence after the rapture of the saints, and will be in force during the tribulation period;
- ❖ this intercalated age interrupted the time during which the law is in force, but the law will be in force again during the tribulation period;
- ❖ moreover, the intercalated age, i.e., "the church age," interrupted "the times of the Gentiles," which means a "setting aside of the Gentile times for the age of the church" (ST4:331). He spoke of the times of the Gentiles as *intercalary*, yet somehow "the times of the Gentiles" did not interrupt the Mosaic age when those Times began -- as the *intercalary* "age of grace" is supposed to interrupt the Mosaic age when it began. Below is a chart that

2. Consequent upon the rejection of Christ, the Mosaic age was stamped with some new features. For example, Satan was then called the ruler of this world (John 16:11) as well as the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4).

3. See *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, Vol. 1 for the Scofield dispensational age-ism scheme.

4. C. I. Scofield wrote:

The present age, then, which began with the first advent of Jesus Christ and ends with His return in glory . . . (Will the Church Pass Through the Great Tribulation? P. 5, 1917.

seeks to represent LSC's ideas.

LSC thus sought to account for the character of the "age of grace," to keep the "age of grace" an unforeseen thing by the OT prophets, to keep the church a mystery and heavenly, and to maintain the Scofield system, which regards man as still under testing (probation).

Now, in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, it is pointed out that the Scofield system is really a system of **age-ism** with some elements borrowed from J. N. Darby (hereafter JND) without which it would not have arisen as a system. However, the Scofield system is different in a number of respects and, very importantly, it violates the truth that the probation (testing) of the first man ended at the cross. Thus the Scofield system proposes an "age of grace" during which man is being tested by grace.

The problems that result from the inserting the erroneous Scofieldian "age of grace" among the earthly ages have thus been increased by LSC trying to "refine"⁵ the Scofieldian age-ism system. LSC spoke of the church as a heavenly age. But ages of time are all earthly and asserting that one of them is heavenly does not make it heavenly. It really is an **earthly** "church age" among the **earthly** ages. Involved in this is the refusing to acknowledge that **the earthly man** ("the first man," 1 Cor. 15:45-47) is no longer under testing (probation) since the cross. What we have, then, is the first man, of the earth, earthy, being tested in a "heavenly age." The end of the probation of the first man in the cross will be reviewed in a later chapter.

Last century many of JND's opposers held that the Christian was under law, in one manner or another. He repeatedly pointed out that the Christian is dead with Christ and the law cannot apply to Christ dead and risen, nor to believers who are *in Christ*. He said, scripturally, that the Christian was dead, not that the law was dead. How easy it would have been to affirm that not only is the Christian dead, but that the law is also dead, if that was what Scripture stated. But the Scripture says the first of these, not the second. Yet LSC, and those that follow the above scheme of his, assert that the law is obviously dead now (but will be in force again in the tribulation period). No, it is not at all obvious that the law is now dead. Scripture does not so state. One extreme is to say that Christians are under the law; the other extreme is not only to say that the Christian is dead but, that the law is dead also. The truth is that the law is not dead but that the Christian is dead to the law and sin. How one thinks about the law (is the Christian under it as the rule of life, or is it dead or not) is connected with how one views the present work that God is doing. In a later chapter we will review the Scriptures brought forward to allege that the law is dead since the cross, until somehow reinstated after the church is removed.

5. Referring to "Scofield's second-generation scheme" R. Zuelch wrote, "Further simplification has occurred in more recent decades, especially since World War II. Modern classical dispensationalists, as represented by the third-generation Walvoord/Ryrie/Pentecost school, have continued to refine dispensationalism." (*CTS Journal* (Chafer Theological Seminary) Fall 1966, p. 15).

The Intercalated Age of Grace and the Times of the Gentiles

Duration of the Times of the Gentiles

The times of the Gentiles measure foreign dominion over Jerusalem, evidently began with the Babylonian captivity, and continue until the present hour and will do so until Israel is returned to possession of her own land (ST7:170).

The latter term was introduced by Christ (Luke 21:24) and measures the period in which Jerusalem will be under the overlordship of Gentiles (ST4:380).

But LSC Really Believes Those Times Run for Only 560 Years

It is thus disclosed that the Gentile times run for 560 years -- 70 of the captivity, and 490 more unto the full realization of all Jewish promises (ST4:338).

If this detached, dissociated age, segregated character of this age {the "Church age"} is not granted, there can be no tracing of God's time-periods as they are revealed; for, as it is clearly indicated in the outworking of Daniel's 490 years for the Jews and the 560 {70 + 490} years for the Gentiles, the divine reckoning makes no place for this unforeseen and unpredicted age of grace, as it is manifested in the Church (ST 4:339).

Here he treats the times of the Gentiles in exactly the same way as Daniel's 70 weeks. As there is a gap between the 69th and 70th week, so he places the same gap into the times of the Gentiles. In reality then, in spite of a few other statements, he really believes that the times of the Gentiles is not in force in the alleged "church age." An acknowledgment that Jerusalem remains under Gentile domination does not change the point.

The Church Age is not Part of the Times of the Gentiles

Strictly speaking, this Church age is not a part or development of the times of the Gentile times (ST4:330).

The Church Age has Interrupted, but Not Ended, the Times of the Gentiles

It cannot be made too emphatic that God's earthly purpose centers in the Jew, and that, apart from the interruption of a Gentile period {i.e., the times of the Gentiles} which is in itself interrupted by the Church age, there would be only the direct outworking and development to fulfilment of every Israelitish covenant. These interruptions, or intercalations, in no way jeopardize the primary earthly purpose in Israel . . . there is a time which also serves for Israel's chastisement, an intercalation of Gentile times; and (3) there is an intercalation of the age of the Church into Gentile times, and therefore, equally into Jewish times and seasons. Daniel is chosen of God to explain the intrusion of Gentile times into Israel's calendar, and Christ and Paul explain the intrusion of the age of the Church into the Gentile and Jewish times (ST4:332).

That determined for Rome, which was interrupted by this age of the Church, will yet be consummated when the outcalling of the Church is accomplished and she has been removed from the earth (ST4:334).

The Church Age is Intercalated Within the Gentile Times

Since Israel's program is that which is incomplete, both the intercalation of the Gentile times and the intercalation of the Church within Gentile times are looked upon as gaps in the predicted Jewish program (ST4:342).

... there is an intercalation of the church into Gentile times (ST4:332).

His view is illustrated on the chart below.

Observe: God Dealt with the Jews After the Cross Via the Romans

Indeed, God "sent his forces, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city" (Matt. 22:7). It is notorious that the destruction of Jerusalem occurred under the Roman armies in A. D. 70. And as Luke 21:24 said:

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive into all the nations."

So it certainly happened in A.D. 70. There is no gap in Luke 21:24. There is no "age of grace" gap in the times of the Gentiles. The Roman empire continued on after Acts 2. It was to Rome that Paul was taken as a prisoner. It was Roman power that banished John to the isle of Patmos. It was Rome that persecuted the saints in Smyrna (Rev. 2). It was Rome that trod down Jerusalem in A. D. 70. Recall that above we saw that LSC claimed:

That determined for Rome, which was interrupted by this age of the Church, will yet be consummated when the outcalling of the Church is accomplished and she has been removed from the earth (ST4:334).

Well, Matt. 22:7 was determined by God for Rome for A. D. 70. LSC boldly affirmed that:

It is clear that Gentile times are now accomplished but for the seven years which will be experienced immediately upon the removal of the Church, which event closes this intercalary age (ST4:380).

God transferred **government** into the hands of the Gentile powers for the times of the Gentiles, but, according to LCS, the times of the Gentiles stopped at the cross, as did Daniel's 70th week. Concerning the feet of the image, the clay represents the democratic principle over against the iron rule. Democracy has already emerged during the alleged "church age" and will be coupled together with the iron after the church is removed.

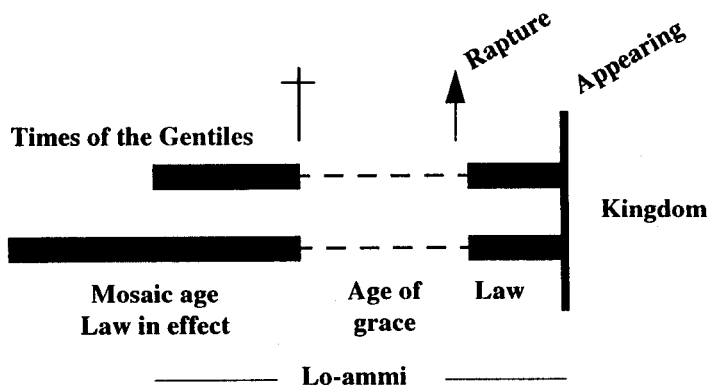
So, according to LSC, the intercalary "church age" stopped the Mosaic age; but the intercalary "times of the Gentiles" did not stop the Mosaic age back in 605 BC when it began. And yet the intercalated "church age" stopped the intercalated times of the Gentiles, which when it was intercalated, did not stop the Mosaic age! With the word "intercalary" we can stop what we want to stop and not stop what we do not want stopped!

Observe: Israel Lo-ammi During the Entire Times of the Gentiles

Moreover, keep in mind that Israel was pronounced Lo-ammi (not my people) from when the times of the Gentiles began. ***The Lo-ammi period for Israel exactly parallels the times of the Gentiles.*** That is, Israel is Lo-ammi during the entire period of the times of the Gentiles. The two go hand in hand.

Now, that brings up the question: are we to believe that the Lo-ammi status of Israel also was interrupted (intercalated) and Israel's Lo-ammi status is in abeyance *now*? But why not, if the parallel period of "the times of the Gentiles" is in abeyance? Israel will be pronounced Ammi when all Israel is saved when Christ returns in glory. See *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations, Ages, Administrations and the Two Parentheses*, available from the publisher. Objections to these age-ism schemes are set out there and in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, Vol. 1-- and Part 8 has a detailed discussion concerning Israel being Lo-ammi.

Lewis Sperry Chafer's Intercalated Age Scheme



LSC claimed that "the age of grace" is an intercalated age and that the times of the Gentiles is an intercalation. Notice that the intercalated "age of grace," supposedly a "heavenly age," interrupts the earthly Mosaic age and the law, and it interrupts the earthly times of the Gentiles; but the intercalation of the times of the Gentiles did not interrupt the Mosaic age when those times began in about 605 BC. Had the intercalation notion been consistently carried out, the times of the Gentiles would have interrupted the Mosaic age, but that would not serve the end to be arrived at.

Moreover, "the times of the Gentiles" period is parallel to the "Lo-ammi" period, starting at the same time and ending at almost exactly the same time. And why would the Lo-ammi period not be intercalated by the "church age" just as in the case of the parallel, interconnected "times of the Gentiles"? -- why, because being not Lo-ammi, i.e., not, not-my-people, means they *would be* God's people during the "age of grace." The truth is that all three, the times of the Gentiles, the Mosaic age, and the Lo-ammi status, continued on. The church, being heavenly, is above and outside of ages.

Keep in mind that during the alleged "heavenly age" the first man, the earthy man, is continued under testing.

Since the idea that "the age of grace" among the earthly ages entails the notion that man is still being tested by God, in chapter two we will briefly review some Scriptures that show that the probation (testing) of "the first man" ended with the rejection of Christ at the cross. In chapter three we will review JND's teaching concerning the law and the Christian, and JND's teaching regarding Christian responsibility. In chapter 4 we will review in some detail the Scriptures LSC uses to show that the law is not now in effect, another erroneous idea that is part of, and required by, his intercalated-age-of-grace system.

Ed.

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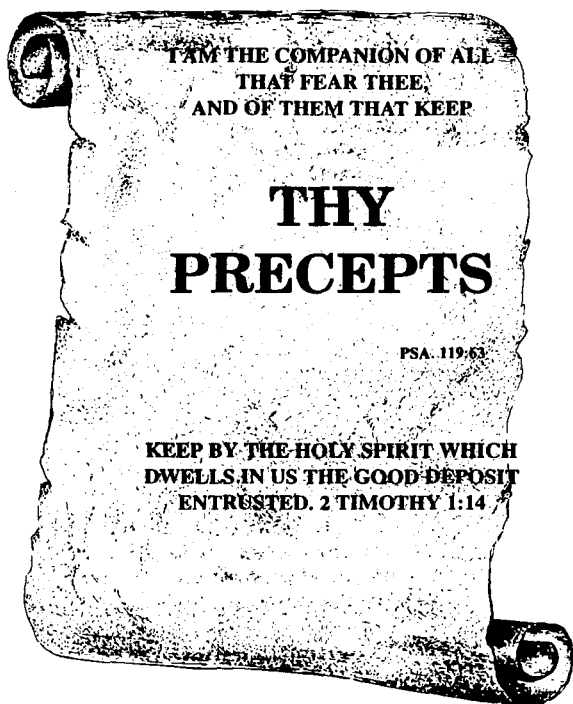
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THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

How could any one born of God entertain for one moment the thought of the Lord Jesus failing? Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God? All these speculations of men which lower the glory of Jesus simply show that they do not really believe that Jesus is God while a man. They do not know what they mean by such a confession as that He is the Son of God to be honored as the Father. They do not truly believe that He is God Himself as truly as the Father or the Holy Ghost; for His becoming a man detracted nothing from it. He took manhood into union with His deity; but the incarnation in no way lowered the deity, while it raised humanity in His person into union with God. Each nature however, preserved its own properties. There was no confusion. Each was exactly what it should be -- human nature, and divine nature, each in all its own characteristic excellence, combined, not confounded, in His person. And such was Jesus, Who came to glorify His God and Father, and deliver us from our sins to His glory by redemption through His blood.

W. Kelly, *Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:79.

It seems that such persons must think of our blessed Lord as if He were two people -- two persons -- so that if He had sinned (i.e., if His humanity had sinned) the humanity-person would go to hell. That is, they must think of His humanity as independent. The truth is, the Son took humanity *into* His Person. That humanity never had an independent existence apart from the incarnation -- else, the Son would have been connected with a second person and there would be two persons.

It has been well said that every human word and work of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it. It is the union of the human and divine in Him which imparts to His every human word and work the infinite value of His Person. So was it with the work of the atonement. It necessarily has the infinite value of His Person.

Present Truth Publishers has available the 48 page paper, *Could Christ Sin?*

Ed.

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.1

The Two Witnesses and the Coming of Elijah

(continued)

THE TWO WITNESSES NOT MOSES AND ELIJAH

For those who hold to the pretribulation rapture, observe that Moses will have been resurrected when the OT faithful will be raised with us (Heb. 11:40) in that stage of the resurrection of the "just" when Christ comes to receive us to Himself. Christ will not raise the NT "just" at the time of the rapture and leave the OT "just" unraised. Moses will not be subsequently sent to earth to be killed after receiving the body suited for the scene of glory above.

What Kind of Body Does Elijah have Now? Elijah is one of two who already are in heaven in their bodies, Enoch being the other.¹ They have bodies suited to that place. Do you think Elijah does not have a new body? -- and that he can die? Well, for example, Henry Morris says he has a natural body now:

Evidently God had a ministry for Elijah which required that he still remain living in his natural body. There he has remained ever since . . . Enoch as the second of the two witnesses . . . Neither he nor Elijah were given immortal bodies when they were translated, however, because it was necessary for Christ to first die for their sins and rise again . . . (1 Corinthians 15:22, 23) . . . Thus Enoch and Elijah have been waiting in heaven in their natural bodies

1. Observe that Heb. 9:27 is the rule, but God can do otherwise. And so Lazarus died twice. It involved a special case for the glory of God. If that, of course, be argued that therefore Moses could die twice, being one of the two witnesses.

through all the intervening ages since their respective translations.²

This must suppose that their natural bodily processes have stopped. Because neither Elijah or Enoch ever died, there have been those who supposed the two witness are these two persons. Heb. 9:27 might be used to bolster this and say that therefore these two must yet die. Not so, for some Christians will not die. God removes them from the appointment stated in Heb. 9:27 and so has He done in the case of Enoch and Elijah. At any rate, Elijah went *up* in the chariot of Israel. I do not receive the notion that these two are in natural bodies in some sort of suspended animation for thousands of years in order to satisfy the supposition that the two witnesses are Enoch and Elijah. And if it is wanted that it be Elijah and Moses, then the false reasoning will evidence itself regarding Moses, to which we now turn.

What Kind of Body Does Moses Have Now? In the posttribulationist magazine, *Watching and Waiting*, March-April, 1960, p. 224, 225, the two witness are viewed as Moses and Elijah. It is a very imaginative article. The writer claims:

Elijah was taken up to heaven alive, without dying; and Moses died mysteriously on Pisgah in the presence of God, and his body was afterwards taken to heaven {really?}. Both their bodies are miraculously sustained in the spiritual realm {really?}, and were real tangible appearances on Mount Hermon, when our Lord was transfigured . . . Their bodies are needed once more for service on earth. In those same bodies they will return again before the end, in which they will minister their remarkable testimony before their final death by martyrdom . . . Both are again mentioned in the final chapter of the Old Testament (Mal. 4:4-5) as testifying "before the coming of the great and notable day of the Lord."

I have marked two of the figments of his imagination in the text. The word says:

And he {Jehovah} buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-Peor; for no man knows his sepulcher to this day (Deut. 34:6).

This writer does not let the Word of God stand in his way! First contradicting re: Moses' body, he next posits with the above writer the miraculous sustainment of the bodies -- all so that the two witnesses are Moses and Elijah, and being capable of dying! I add yet that he has misrepresented the statement of Mal. 4:4. Moses is not "mentioned . . . as testifying . . ." Another example of his misrepresentation of Scripture is this:

Are they not the two "olive trees, and the two candlesticks," referred to by the prophet of the restoration (Zech. 4:3-11-14; cp. v. 4)? As the lampstands

2. *The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndale, p. 194, 1965. David Larsen, *Jews, Gentiles and the Church*, Grand rapids: Discovery House, p. 282 (1995) says "Moses and Elijah perhaps."

which Zechariah saw

Zechariah saw only *one* lampstand. In the Sept.-Oct , 1954 issue of *Watching and Waiting*, p. 75, the writer actually states this error as a *quotation* from Zechariah:

(Rev. 11), "these are the two olive trees" v. 3 (and Rom. 11:13-25) and "the two candlesticks" (Zech. 4:1-14).

What About the Mount of Transfiguration? What about it? How does the fact that Moses and Elijah appeared with the Lord on the Mount of transfiguration demonstrate that the two witnesses are they? You say, Well what does it mean, then, if not that -- as though if it could not be explained, *therefore* it must show that the two witnesses are Moses and Elijah. There is such a thing a showing a subject mind before God's Word that is content to wait for light without forcing a meaning or manufacturing theories, and being content to remain ignorant when a thing is not revealed. This honors God. What is other than that is of the flesh.

First, while it is quite in keeping with the two witnesses having an Elijah-like and a Moses-like testimony, why *must* it have to be that it shows *they* are the two witnesses?

Second, what is wrong with viewing their presence as indicating that the millennial glory of Christ (seen in the transfiguration) vindicates the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah)? Besides which, as J. N. Darby noted:

Moses was the original gatherer, Elias the characteristic restorer of the people of God.³

Yes, and Christ will be the great regatherer and restorer of Israel, and write the law in their hearts. And this explains the presence of Moses and Elijah there on this momentous occasion, for it was a foreview of the Kingdom when Israel would be so blessed.

We may note the interesting fact that Elijah is put first in Mark's gospel, the gospel which emphasizes the perfect service and prophetic ministry of the Lord. Elijah's prophetic service was to recall the people and restore them.

Before leaving the mount, notice the mixture of persons that we have there, (the transfigured Lord, Moses and Elijah from heaven, and the disciples from the earth) a mixture offensive to opposers of the literal millennium, as possibly occurring in the millennium.

The Two Witnesses Did not Restore all Things. I am not aware if anyone who holds that one of the two witnesses is Elijah has explained how he will have restored all things before he ascends up to heaven the second time.

It seems quite clear that at the point when the two witnesses are killed, the restoration of all things will not yet have taken place.

THE TWO WITNESSES ARE NOT ENOCH AND ELIJAH

Robert Govett, a partial rapturist, opted for Enoch and Elijah. His reasoning is this:

1. In Zech. 4 there is a prophecy about two sons of oil, and they stand "before the Lord of all the earth." So do the two witnesses thus stand. And Elijah twice spoke of himself as standing before the Lord (1 Kings 17:1; 18:15).
2. Next, speaking of Enoch and Elijah, he wrote: "But they were still alive and accepted before God in John's day. They were still standing in the presence of the Lord of Hosts. This then absolutely identifies them, as Enoch and Elijah."
3. "That one of them is Elijah is also proved by the promise of Malachi . . . Mal. 4:5, 6." ⁴

Does this really need an answer? Such reasoning marks out a speculative frame of mind concerning divine matters. We might observe here that if the withholding of rain indicates Elijah, how do the Moses-like powers of the two witnesses indicate Enoch?

A SAMPLE FROM HISTORICISM

Historicism refers to the system of prophetic interpretation that regards the entire book of Revelation as a history of the church. It is not in vogue as it used to be, but there still are historicists. Let us take a sample from John Cumming, *Apocalyptic Sketches; or Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, eighth ed., 1849.

. . . The two witnesses I then said were the Old and New Testaments. I have changed my opinion. I am satisfied my arguments were unsound -- my reasons inconclusive (p. 173).

If the "two candlesticks" means the "Church," that is, the Christian people -- the "olive trees" mean the ministers, or those that preach the gospel to them (p. 174).

{Concerning the number two} . . . there have been . . . two contemporaneous lines of witnesses protesting against the Papacy and proclaiming the glorious truths of the gospel; one line called Paulicans, in the East; another line, terminating in the Waldenses, in the West (p. 175).

His new-found opinions were no better than the previous ones. The two witnesses are not two testaments, two sacraments, two principles, etc. In the NT, "witnesses" always refers to persons. For anyone to find the church referred to in the two witnesses betrays a mind not in sympathy with the

heavenly position of the Christian.

W. E. Biederwolf observed that:

The Consecutive Historical School makes them a long line of witnesses for Christ during the 1260 years of the Papal Antichrist preceding the Reformation, beginning about A. D. 533, their death signifies the entire cessation of such witnessing during the few years just before the Reformation, and the three and one-half years indicates exactly the time between the ninth session of the Lateran Council, May 5, 1514, and the posting of the ninety-five Theses on the Wittenburg cathedral door, Oct. 31, 1517, their resurrection, the revival of the Gospel preaching by Luther and his associates, and their ascension the peace of Augsburg, 1555.⁵

Commenting on this Historicist calculation, E. W. Bullinger wrote, concerning E. B. Elliot:

This fulfils the prophecy, he says, "precisely to a day." But, unfortunately, he has to take the three years (from May 5th, 1514, to May 5th, 1517) as years of 365 days, and the half year (from May 5th, 1517 to October 31st of the same year) as a year of 360 days; i.e., two days and a half short of the "precisely to a day." And yet in the face of this he exclaims "O wonderful prophecy! . . ." ⁶

Let us avoid speculation, whether that of dispensationalists or of non-dispensationalists.

The Coming of Elijah

So if Elijah is not one of the two witnesses, that means that He is unaccounted for in the book of Revelation. Yes, that is exactly the case. God has not been pleased to tell us his activities, so let us be content not to know. It does not follow from the silence of the book of Revelation concerning Elijah that therefore John the Baptist was Elijah.

There are two Scriptures prophetic of John the Baptist:

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God! Every valley shall be raised up, and every mountain and hill shall be made straight, and the rough places made plain. And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see [it] together: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken (Isa. 40:3-5).

Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek will suddenly come to his temple, and the Angel of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts

5. *The Millennium Bible*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964 reprint of 1924 ed.

6. *Commentary on the Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, p. 363, 1984 reprint.

(Mal. 3:1).

There is one Scripture prophetic of Elijah:

Behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Jehovah. And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse (Mal. 4:5, 6).

The question is twofold: **A)** was John Elijah; and if not, **B)** what role will Elijah have in the future?

A) The following bears on whether or not John was Elijah:

1. The disciples understood, as did the scribes, that Elijah would literally come (Mark 9:11; Matt. 17:10).
2. John was asked, "Art thou Elias? And he says, I am not" (John 1:21). So John denied that he was Elijah.
3. The Lord quoted Mal. 3:1 for John (Matt. 11:10) but never Mal. 4:5.
4. An angel of the Lord told Zacharias this:

And many of the sons of Israel shall he turn to [the] Lord their God. And *he* shall go before him in [the] spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of fathers to children, and disobedient ones to [the] thoughts of just [men], to make ready for [the] Lord a prepared people (Luke 1:16, 17).

It is most important to observe that the comparison of John with Elijah is in the call to repentance. John was not Elijah, of course, but went before Christ in the spirit and power of Elijah, regarding the call to repentance. ⁷

5. *Faith* could receive that view of John, seeing in John the moral similarity; i.e., John's role in the call to repentance preceding the presentation of Christ to Israel. And this is what our Lord meant in speaking to His disciples about John.

- a) The occasion of speaking about John and Elijah was what happened on the mount of transfiguration. That was the occasion of seeing Christ in His kingdom glory (see 2 Pet. 2:16-18). ⁸ And that was the occasion for bringing up the subject of Elijah coming first, before the establishment of the kingdom in the day of the Lord ⁹

7. In *Notes and Comments* 3:35, J. N. Darby referred to John as a "provisional Elias."

8. Observe that in Mark 9:4 Elijah is named before Moses. Mark is the gospel of the (perfect) service of our Lord, and Elijah will have a future service to perform in connection with the coming of the millennial kingdom.

9. The reader might find profitable remarks in E. Dennett, *Malachi*, on Mal. 3:1 and 4:5, 6. Also see W. Kelly, *Isaiah*, on ch. 40:6. <http://www.thy-precepts.com/Notes-and-Comments>

(inaugurated by the appearing of Christ in glory):

- b) The Lord expressly told them that Elijah would come first and restore all things:

Elias indeed comes first and will restore all things. But I say unto you that Elias has already come, and they have not known him, but have done unto him whatever they would. Thus also the Son of man is about to suffer from them. Then the disciples understood that he spoke to them of John the Baptist (Matt. 17:11, 12).

When did the Lord say this? He said these words, "*Elias indeed comes first and will restore all things,*" *after John was dead.* Faith, then, sees that in the moral sense the forerunner had come and was rejected, and that the one before Whom he came would also be rejected. But *disbelief* will feel the result in a future day, for another forerunner, as it were, will indeed come (Elijah), and so will the rejected One subsequently come. It is clear from the passage in Matt. and Mark that the death of the Lord was left out of the scribes' view, and, no doubt, of the disciples' too. And so the Lord brings that matter in as bearing upon the question of John and Elijah. There is a forerunner suited to each of the two comings of Christ; one for the time here for death, and the other for glory -- John and Elijah respectively. And there is a link between the two in the moral call to repentance. As J. N. Darby said:

Elias shall effectually accomplish his mission before the great and terrible day of Jehovah; in order that the curse of God may not fall upon the land of His delight in that day when He will definitely execute His judgments.¹⁰

Elijah will not be here again to die. It was the other forerunner, John, who died, as did the One before whom he went. Elijah shall be here before the *resurrected* Lord appears. Elijah also has a body suited to the place where he is even now in the body.

6. In fact, John did not restore all things, as would be expected in view of the fact that Christ was rejected. These two facts are morally connected and consonant with one another.
- B) We know only what was quoted about Elijah's role from Malachi. Precisely when he acts we do not know other than one very important fact: he will come *before* the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord (an epoch of time) begins when the smiting stone strikes the image of Dan. 2 on the feet. That, of course, is at the Lord's appearing in glory. Elijah will appear before then and have a role among the Jews involving a call to repentance. He will be present during a state of apostasy from Jehovah,

9. (...continued)

by J. N. Darby. See also *Collected Writings* 2:417, 28, 165, 166, 258, 332, 274; *Synopsis* 3:98, 99, 171. 10. *Synopsis* 2:436.

as was the case when he lived here on earth. And there will be what answers to the '7000' who have not bowed the knee (no submission to Baal) neither kissed him (no affection for Baal) then also. Saying more than this would be speculation, and of no edification -- rather feeding the flesh, as prophecy is turned from its holy purpose of causing us to withdraw from evil, from separating from that which God will judge, to indulging the fleshly mind.

Finally, the presence of Elijah and his role are not compatible with the presence of the church on earth.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

Only One Promise Keeper

The first man, tested under the law, entered upon the promise keeping delusion saying: 'all that the Lord said we will do.' Indeed! Present day "promise keepers" know not the lesson and know little about their own hearts. To take the designation "promise keeper" is a slur on our faithful God.

Ed.

The Lord's Presence and the Flesh

There is a point in your letter I would just touch upon, and that is respecting the exercise of gifts. When the object in going to the Lord's table, and to meetings for worship, or for prayer, is to "exercise gift," it is plain that the true character of such meetings is not understood. I do not go to exercise gift, but to break bread, to worship, to meet Him who has said, "Whosoever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" and "Do this in remembrance of me." The very expression shows a wrong thought in the mind, giving one the idea of a performance, which it too frequently resembles. This was the case with the Corinthians. "They came behind in no gift;" but instead of using them in subjection to the Holy Ghost, to the glory of God and the edification of His children, they were exercising them -- that is glorifying themselves by them. I do not know anything more sorrowful or dishonoring to the Lord, or that has brought more sorrow amongst gathered saints than this. Real subjection to the Holy Ghost, with a sense of the Lord's presence, should at once put a stop to the thought of "exercising gifts." A sense of His presence at once displaces all thought of self. It is indeed most grievous, when we go to wait upon the Lord and to enjoy His presence, to find some forward self-sufficient one making himself the center of the meeting, occupying the time, filling the minds of his brethren with painful thoughts about himself, instead of happy thoughts about Christ, thus marring communion, interrupting worship, and hindering blessing in every way. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" -- a liberty in which the Spirit leads, and not the energy which is of the flesh; then the Lord alone will be exalted, for no flesh shall glory in His presence. Then God is everything and man nothing. May the one object of all our hearts be, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever! Amen.

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Letters of J. N. Darby 1:507, 508.

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Chapter 6.15

Revelation 20: The Binding and Loosing of Satan

(Continued)

The Abyss

SATAN IN THE ABYSS

In Rev. 20:1 Satan is designated in the same four ways as in Rev. 12:9, and in the same order. The **Dragon** brings before us his persecuting political power; **Serpent** bespeaks his religious power and deception. At the end, the first beast of Rev. 13 (the coming Roman prince, head of the revived Roman empire) embodies the dragon character while the second beast of Rev. 13 (the Antichrist, king in Israel) embodies the serpent character. The Dragon is the devil (the accuser) and Satan (the adversary).

Just previous to this binding, Satan's two human agents, the Beast (the coming Roman prince) and the False Prophet (the Antichrist) were taken, and in summary judgment were cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20). God still had work for Satan to do after the millennial reign, when loosed, but he was bound in connection with the rider on the white horse setting up the 1000 year reign, when righteousness will rule world-wide.

We have been considering the length of a chain. Scripture does not so speak but expressly states that it is a "great chain" ¹ to indicate its security. Satan will not succeed in loosing it. He was:

- bound with a great chain, and
- cast into the abyss, and
- the abyss was shut, and
- was sealed over him, and

1. Note that amillennialists change what Scripture states. A *great chain* emphasizes the security, but they speak of a *long chain* to suit their notion of partial restraint.

■ the key indicates that the abyss was locked.

If in symbolic language God was to indicate the complete restraint of Satan's activity, how would he do it if this was not the way?

In scripture, a key denotes authority. In Rev. 9:1 the key to the abyss was given to the fallen star, and it opened the pit of the abyss. The locusts are demonic forces. No, they are not literal locusts. In Ex. 10, where we read of literal locusts, we are informed that "before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them will be such" (Ex. 10:14). You will have to think that what we have in Rev. 9 is not so bad as that, if you think these are literal locusts.

It may well be that this fallen star is the Antichrist, and power was given to him for the release of these demons. In Rev. 19 we see the Antichrist (the False Prophet) cast into the lake of fire. Subsequently the angel that laid hold of Satan has the key. The angel is the instrument of Christ. All authority is in process of being taken up by Him preparatory to His reign.

What about the abyss where Satan is bound with a great chain, bound inside it -- how is this explained away? R. Zorn claimed:

... Satan is presently in the Abyss and will continue to be there throughout this dispensation until released for a short period of time just before its conclusion² by the coming of Christ ... The Abyss, of course, is a symbolic term as is also the chain by which Satan is bound, and can represent a sphere of limited or restricted activity, much as would be true for any of humanity's sons if incarcerated in like manner ...³

The fact is, as already pointed out above, the humans among whom Satan supposedly does damage like a dog on "a long chain" would therefore have to be in the abyss also, for that is where Satan is. That is the abyss that is "shut" and "sealed" over him. On the other hand, R. Zorn has another slant. What R. Zorn said also means that the abyss signifies no more than the chain -- and mention of the abyss, sealing, shutting and the key is a tautology. Scripture says, "and cast him into the abyss, and shut [it] and sealed [it] over him . . ." (Rev. 20:3). Does that *really* sound like "a sphere of limited or restricted activity" on earth?

WHERE IS THE ABYSS LOCATED?

C. A. Clita triumphantly paraded his inability, or perhaps reluctance, to separate speculation from the truth, to score a cheap point actually devoid of the least merit:

The prospect of learned scholars gravely debating the precise location of the bottomless pit must be the *reductio ad absurdum* of the futurist interpretation. Tatford obviously feels uncomfortable with such crass literalism, for he avers the bottomless pit might signify moral distance from God rather than a literal receptacle. Coming from a devout literalist, that is quite a concession, marred only by his literalistic relapse with the words 'if there is a material, it is

2. Note here, again, the error of including the little season within the 1000 years.

3. *Church and Kingdom*, pp. 100, 125. See also "The Book of the Ages and the Millennium" in *The Meaning of the Millennium*, p. 161.

somewhere in space . . .⁴

We reject the notion that Satan will be held by a material chain in a material abyss to which there is a material key. We also reject the amillennialist artifice that tries to foist the absurd idea of all-or-nothing literalism. And, we suggest that the amillennial view of the binding of Satan is one of numbers of "reductio ad absurdum" of Amillennialism.

We do not know anything about the precise nature of the abyss or the location thereof because Scripture has not stated these things. Certainly Satan is not omnipresent. He is somewhere. And the somewhere he will be during the millennium is *in the abyss*. So whatever the abyss means, it will be somewhere -- and that is where Satan will be.

What we do know by this symbolism is that God has made clear the full restraint of Satan for the 1000 years and his subsequent loosing from this full restraint for a short time in order to accomplish God's purpose at the time of closing the history of this world.

Of course there are those who are premillennialists and even "dispensationalists" who have unsatisfactory ideas. Take W. R. Newell for example. He wrote:

That there is a passage from the earth to its heart not only is indicated by Scripture, but was believed by the ancient Greeks, and is today known to the followers of Satan. In Revelation 20:1-3 we find Satan himself cast down there, and the passage sealed for 1000 years. In this latter passage, "an angel coming down out of heaven" has the key of the abyss. In Revelation 9:1 it is a "fallen" one of those beings so often called stars (e.g., Daniel 8:10, 24; Isaiah 14:12) to whom is given the key of the shaft of the abyss. We know from our Lord's words in Revelation 1:18 that He has Himself "the keys of death and of Hades." Inasmuch as the word "abyss" describes the region, and Hades (literally "the unseen") describes the state or class of beings {now, which?} -- spirits who go there -- we judge both words refer to "the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40). For our Lord, we know, during that three days was in the Old Testament Sheol, which is the New Testament Hades. (Compare Psalm 16:10 with Acts 2:25-31 -- both R. V., for the King James version is quite confusing in its varied translations of Sheol and Hades.) In Romans 10:7 also, Paul shows that to bring our Lord up from the dead, was to "descend into the abyss."⁵

Apparently he actually believed that the Lord went into the abyss! This stems from practically making hades and the abyss the same thing. It is a similar confusing of things that differ as amillennialists who have Satan in the abyss and the angels who are now in chains (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4) in the abyss also, yet at the same time have them all loose on earth. Hades, in Scripture, is used for the 'unseen,' not for a place in the earth with the god Pluto over it. Death and hades will be cast into the lake of

4. "The Binding of Satan," *The Researcher*, 14:2, Summer 1984, p. 33. He referred to F. A. Tatford's, *Prophecy's Last Words*, pp. 210-211. www.esentruthpublishers.com

5. *The book of the Revelation*, Chicago: Grace Publications, p. 128, 1945.

fire (Rev. 20:14). In Rev. 6:8 we read:

And I saw: and behold, a pale horse, and he that sat upon it, his name [was] Death, and hades followed after him.

We are not to suppose that a place in the middle of the earth was following Death around. Death refers to the body and hades to the spirit. These are *states*. The body to which death applies has no longer a spirit; and hades applies to the spirit. The spirit is in the 'unseen.' In *the resurrection of the unjust* the body and spirit are united again -- and thus death and hades come together. The casting of the wicked into hell is thus the casting of death and hades into the lake of fire.

There never were two compartments in the middle of the earth housing the wicked in one and the righteous in the other. Christ never went there and preached to spirits in prison, and took the good section to heaven. W. Kelly went to great length to deal with such myths in his *Christ Preaching to the Spirits in Prison*.

Moreover, we deem absurd the idea that there is a shaft going from the earth's surface to the center of the earth and Satan's followers know where it is. And as to Matt. 12:40, it is a reference to Christ being in the tomb.

And, finally, concerning the keys, Christ has two of them in Rev. 1:18. In Rev. 3:7, He has the key of David. None of them are the same thing and none of them are literal keys. The key of hades is not the key of the abyss. These keys refer to different things.

The estimable Henry Morris prefers "bottomless" to "abyss" and then says:

Located at the very middle of the earth . . . A central cavity no more than ten miles in diameter could easily confine the spirits of all the fallen angels and all of lost humanity through the ages, even if each spirit still required as much space as a human body. It is doubtful whether such a cavity could ever be detected by scientific measurements made by geophysicists on the earth's surface, but the Bible says it is there.⁶

The Bible says no such thing. He also mixes together hades and the abyss. We consider these things as bizarre as the amillennial notions, but the bizarre amillennial notions have a vastly more deleterious effect as setting aside dispensational truth.

The Binding of Satan is Future

THE WORK OF CHRIST IS NOT THE BINDING

The binding of Satan is alleged to have taken place at the first advent in connection with the work of Christ⁷; or, it is associated with the first advent of Christ and with

6. *The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndale House, p. 408, 1983

7. Keith A. Mathison, *Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God?*, Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, p. 127 (1995); G. L. Murray, *Millennial Studies*, p. 177; T. S. Salmon, *The Lord's Coming . . .*, p. 72; R. R. Rasmussen, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 212 ("in the atonement and resurrection"); R. Zorn, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 120.

the work of missions,⁸ which makes it a gradual thing (impossible because he is bound for the entire 1000 years). Having treated the character of the binding at length and having seen the amillennialist ideas false, we will be shorter here.

If *the work of Christ* does the binding, it follows that the opposite, namely loosing, is *the work of Christ* undoing the binding. Regardless of explanation to circumvent this, loosing is the opposite of binding. The postmillennialist, L. Boetner, who has nothing better to contribute, has, however, noted this point in criticizing Amillennialism. He said:

The amillennial interpretation that the binding of Satan took place at the first advent of Christ seems rather far-fetched and unconvincing. It is open to the objection that if that is the meaning of the "binding" of Satan, then the "loosing" spoken of in Revelation 20:3, 7, which is the opposite of binding, must mean the reversing of the work of Christ, that is, the annulment of the atonement, or at least a time when it becomes ineffective. But that is impossible even for a little time.⁹

This is a true assessment. Let us look at an example from Floyd E. Hamilton:

That deceptive power of Satan was destroyed in principle by Jesus' life and death and resurrection, and the Gentiles "saw a great light."¹⁰

I do not find that the amillennial writers who make such comments also say how the loosing of Satan affects the life, death, and resurrection of Christ which caused the binding. Not surprisingly, they do not address the matter. Concerning the loosing of Satan, the same writer merely says:

he will be able to stop the preaching of the gospel in the ends of the earth, and will again be able to control the thinking of the nations so that they will become his willing dupes to believe a lie. As we look about us in the world to-day, who can say that we are not perhaps entering on the period of such deception of the nations?¹¹

I would think that integrity requires of one who makes the first of these two statements that he account for why the loosing would not undo the work on cross. For myself, I could not hold such a notion of binding. The loosing does indeed flatly contradict the notion. The amillennial notion of the binding of Satan is a human, absurd concoction imposed upon Scripture by a manifestly unscriptural system of theology. It implies an undoing of the work on the cross!

There are a number of scriptures cited in support of the idea that our Lord during His life and/or on the cross bound Satan in the sense of Rev. 20.¹² Let us examine them briefly.

8. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 188.

9. *The Millennium*, p. 126.

10. *The Basis of the Millennial Faith* Grand rapids: Eerdmans, p. 129, 1942.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 131. Note that he thinks the "little season" may have started (1942).

12. See W. Hendricksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 188. Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p. 212; W. Cox, *Biblical Studies in Final Things*, p. 162.

MATT. 12:22-29; LUKE 11:21, 22; MATT. 4:1-11

Now we have come to the word "bind" (Matt 12:29). It seems that C. A. Clita thinks this so obviously proves his point:

Surely no one will deny that Satan was still very active after he was bound. It is interesting to note that in the synoptic parallel, Luke 11:22, Satan is not bound but overcome. Here we are in the very fortunate position of having a N.T. 'exegesis' of Matt. 12:29. According to Luke, being bound simply means that the strong man has been disarmed and overcome -- his power has been broken. We conclude, then, that the word "bound" in Rev. 20:2 need not suggest or demand a complete loss of liberty.¹³

The loosing of Satan would mean that Satan would be rearmed and no longer overcome. Moreover, what this amounts to is that Satan was bound before the cross -- it was not the work on the cross that bound him. I doubt that that would be acceptable to amillennialists. One could speak of stages in the binding -- something, anything -- in order to avoid that conclusion. The system is very flexible and pliable. As an illustration, consider this:

The question may well arise: "When did this binding take place?" We believe that it is somewhat involved in the incarnation . . . But the process of binding was surely developed in the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Let us observe that this is a very Scriptural way of viewing things.¹⁴

Here the binding is a process.¹⁵ Are we to suppose that the loosing will be a process also? Also, was the millennium, during which Satan is bound, "somewhat involved in the incarnation"?

Our Lord defeated Satan, as seen in Matt. 4:1-11, and then began His ministry, wherein He seized his goods, just as He cast the demon out of the man as noted in Matt. 12:22. This was during His ministry, His work on the cross not yet having taken place. His binding the strong man has to do, then, with His ministry, and it especially involves the casting out of demons, consequent upon his overcoming in the wilderness temptations. What has this to do with Satan not deceiving the nations? The above passages have to do with Christ's power displayed over Satan while He ministered here below. Wherever He went, the power of Satan gave way before Him. And when He sent the 70 out, their power over the enemy, granted by Himself, was an earnest, an anticipation, of Satan's expulsion from the heavens, which will take place in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (Rev. 12).

13. "The Binding of Satan," *The Researcher*, 14:2, Summer 1984, p. 33.

14. G. A. Adams (Principal, Toronto Baptist Seminary), "An Amillennial View of Revelation 20:1-8," *The Gospel Witness*, Feb. 10, 1983, p. 3.

15. The same writer said:

In a limited way it was true in Old Testament times. To a greater degree it was true after the gospel spread from Jerusalem to Samaria to Rome. Satan's binding has been more apparent in some areas than others and in some ages more than others. North Africa was once a fertile field of the Gospel. Today it is almost a desert.

Are we to suppose, then, that Satan has been somewhat loosed in North Africa?

While his expulsion was not the binding of Satan spoken of in Rev. 20, it does have a bearing on that binding. The power of the Enemy gave way before Him when here ministering. What will it be when the Son of man appears in glory to take up the reigns of government of the whole earth? There will then be the *complete* curtailment of the activity of the Enemy -- except that at the end when he is loosed for the final exposure of man's incorrigible heart, another exposure of his depravity. For His coming here *in humiliation* fully manifested the state of man while under probation (under testing); when the answering reign *in glory* of the mediatorial kingdom is brought to its close, then once more the heart of man will be exposed, showing whether in humiliation or in glory, the human heart rejects Him, apart from the sovereign action of God upon the soul.

If "One could say that Jesus bound the devil when he triumphed over him in the wilderness, refusing to give in to his temptations," ¹⁶ then the loosing is the reverse of this. In considering the binding of Satan (Rev. 20), keep in mind that loosing is the opposite of binding. Furthermore, it means that the millennium started when Christ's temptations were finished -- thus even before the work on the cross.

LUKE 10:18

This is alleged to synchronize with Rev. 12:9. When we see Christians regarding Satan as sealed in the abyss at the same time as being outside of it, having the key letting demons out, we can understand some of them thinking that the binding of Satan is a *slow* process, involving missions -- yet think that Luke 10:18 depicts the binding -- as *lightning* falling out of heaven! But surely scripture is not *that* flexible.

The truth is that the Lord's vision was prophetic, anticipatory, of Satan's expulsion as given in Rev. 12, which is still future. The happy experience of the 70 was the occasion for the Lord's remark (Luke 10:17). The subjection of the demons to them was an earnest, an anticipation, of what was to come.

JOHN 12:31

It does seem rather obvious that if the casting out of Satan has been executed, so has the judgment of the world been executed. Neither has occurred yet, though the sentence of judgment has been pronounced. We presently wrestle against wicked spirits in the heavenlies (Eph 6:12). At any rate, it is His death which lays the special basis for the judgment and He speaks of this particular result of His death, which is still future.

JOHN 14:30

This means that Satan would find no response in Christ. After the temptation in the wilderness the devil had "departed from him for a time" (Luke 4:13). In the garden, it seems, the Enemy pressed upon Him the horribleness of the cup, but He took it from His Father's hand in obedience to His will. Satan had nothing in Him. What a blessed Person He is! There was no response in Him to the evil outside. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He is God, and man -- one Person -- who *cannot lie*. He *could not sin*!

God ever blest, we bow the knee,
And own all fulness dwells in Thee.

JOHN 16:11

Could anyone seriously lower this scripture to mean that Satan is bound so as not to hinder the gospel being preached to the nations? Alas for theology! The judgment of Satan is not yet executed. This execution is found in Rev. 20:10. The sentence is already pronounced.

COL. 2:15 - EPH. 4:8

These passages do not refer to the binding of Satan in the millennium, when he will no longer deceive the nations. The bearing of the passage is given by J. N. Darby:

Those "principalities and powers," with whom we have to contend (Eph. 6:12), have been "spoiled"; He has "made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (v. 15). Does Satan come and accuse me? It is all true, but my sins are gone. God has said He will remember them no more. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Why flee? Because of having already met Christ. Is it temptation through the agreeable things of the world, or the sorrows and trials of life, or the power of death? He has been "spoiled," his power is gone for faith (Heb. 2:14). Death, to the believer, is but a departing to be with Christ; all that it could be from Satan, or from the wrath of God, Christ has gone through for him; but He has gone through it, and He is now with God. Dead and risen with Christ, yet here in a dying body, if I put it off, "absent from the body," I shall be "present with the Lord."¹⁷

2 THESSALONIANS 2:6-7

Here the restrainer is the Spirit who indwells the church which He *came in a special sense and capacity* at Pentecost to form and dwell in. At the removal of the saints who compose the church, at the rapture of the saints, He as indwelling the church, will be removed *in that special capacity* -- continuing His operations here in this world as He did also before He came in that special capacity. The revelation of the Lawless one, i.e., the final Antichrist of prophecy, cannot take place while He is thus present in that special capacity. This has nothing to do with the binding of Satan in Rev. 20.

HEBREWS 2:14

Anything gets dragged in to bolster the idea that Satan is bound now. Listen:

Hebrews 2 speaks even more strongly of the binding of Satan than does Revelation 20. Satan is in a real sense "powerless" today because of the work of Christ. And that is essentially what Revelation 20 describes. Satan has been "bound" because of the work of Christ. His power has been greatly curtailed in this age. When Christ returns, the current limitation of Satan's power, accomplished in the death of Christ, will be completely realized

because Satan will be cast into the lake of fire forever.¹⁸

Notice how he left out the loosing in between “the current limitation” and the “completely realized.” And, here we learn that “powerless” means “greatly curtailed.” I have been made suspicious by amillennialist treatments of this subject that the “long chain” by which Satan is bound is also a **very flexible chain**. At any rate, the binding of Satan, his loosing, his being cast into the lake of fire, has not yet taken place.

1 JOHN 3:8

The full results of Christ’s work are not yet realized. The works of the devil shall be undone, but the passage says nothing of the alleged binding of Satan now.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

God’s Assembly is Competent for Acts of Discipline

There are questions which are in their very nature absurd, as involving in themselves self-contradiction. They suppose a thing and its essential properties to be and not to be at one and the self-same moment, which is, of course, obviously impossible. In *themselves*, to a sound mind, they can never be of interest. In the connection in which they are used, they are, however, often deeply interesting, whether as connected with the presenter or with the serious entertainer of them and their circumstances, or with the truth which they may involve. They often, I believe, mark an undetected, and therefore unjudged, presence of the power of Satan, where intellectuality is boasted in; though sometimes they are found in connection with extreme imbecility of mind; for extremes meet. In the presence of God, no sound healthful mind could entertain them.

I give as instances of what I mean, such questions as “Do I exist? — “Oh, my Father, am I thy child?” — as on the mind or lip of an individual; or as a question entertained by the church, “Is the body separated unto Christ by the Holy Ghost competent for acts of discipline?” The question, in each of the several cases, contains the expressed uncertainty of the existence of that which it also affirms positively to exist. “Do I exist?” is, in my saying it, a proof I do exist; in the form in which I speak it, it is the professed uncertainty of whether or no I do exist. So, “Oh, my Father, am I thy child” supposes I know I am a child, and yet do not know I am a child of Him whom I call my Father. And for the church to say, Are we competent for discipline? is really the question, “Are we the church? for it is the being of the body separated by the presence of the Spirit of Christ unto God which constitutes the church; and where the Holy Ghost is, clearly *He* is able for all things, and if *holy* will not brook the sanction of any iniquity.

G. V. W., April 14, 1849

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 2

Is Man Under Probation Today?

Israel Is Lo-ammi During The Times of the Gentiles

Those who claim that there is an age of grace among the earthly ages also claim that God is now testing man in respect to grace. Those who hold that the church is not an age among the ages also know that man is no longer under probation since the cross. That is, man is not now being tested -- and specifically he is not now being tested in respect to grace. And those who are more fully instructed in the heavenly character of the church realize that the present age is the Mosaic age. The Church is above and outside ages.

The Church, properly speaking, the body of Christ, is not a dispensation, it does not belong to the earth; but there is an order of things connected with it during its sojourn here below -- an order of things whose existence is linked with the Church's responsibility. ¹

I know what a person means by "the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven," but we belong to a heavenly thing during an interval, and there are no dispensations in heaven. ²

Yes, there are no dispensations in heaven. What does it mean when someone speaks of an alleged church age as "a heavenly age"? In the age-ism scheme, ages and dispensations are equated. The "heavenly age," then, is a heavenly dispensation. There are no dispensations in heaven. There is no heavenly dispensation on earth. The talk about an earthly age being a "heavenly age" is but an attempt to preserve the heavenly character of the church while imposing an age-ism scheme upon dispensational truth. It is an attempt to circumvent the objection that the idea of "a church age" makes the church an earthly age among the earthly ages. That is exactly what it does; and inserting the word

1. *Collected Writings of J. N. Durnoy* 4:328. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

2. *Collected Writings* 25:244.

“heavenly” in front of the word “age” does not change its true character.

Defect, or feebleness, in view may not apprehend some of these things. But it should be obvious that neither the Jews nor the Gentiles are being tested in an age whose beginning and ending coincides with the time during which God is gathering a heavenly people out of the world.

Long before this time when God is gathering a heavenly people, He removed government from Israel and gave it to the Gentiles. The period during which government is in the hands of the Gentiles is called “the times of the Gentiles” (nations) by our Lord in Luke 21:24. “The times of the Gentiles” is depicted by the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Dan. 2). This period runs from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the smiting stone smashes the image on its feet,³ which smiting depicts the coming of our Lord from heaven, at His appearing in glory, to smite the nations and set up the kingdom. That kingdom is symbolized in Dan. 2 as the smiting stone becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth.

Simultaneous to the transfer of government from Israel to the Gentiles, the nation of Israel was pronounced Lo-ammi (meaning, “not-my-people”). See Hos. 1. The nation remains in that status until the appearing of the Lord in glory to set up the kingdom -- at which time all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26), the rebels having been purged out (Ezek. 20; Zech. 12-14). Then Israel will be the center of earthly government once again. Meanwhile, including at this very moment, the people of Israel are Lo-ammi. The Lo-ammi period runs parallel to the times of the Gentiles. While the Gentiles have the governmental power that was transferred to them, the people of Israel is Lo-ammi. While the people of Israel is Lo-ammi, the Gentiles have the governmental power that was transferred to them from Israel. This has been the case from the time of Nebuchadnezzar and nothing has changed regarding that. There has been no interruption of this status and this status will only be changed when Christ appears in glory. The idea that the times of the Gentiles stopped at the cross and that there remains a future seven year period of it, is no more sound than if one proposed that the Lo-ammi status for Israel stopped at the cross and there only remains a future seven year period for them to be Lo-ammi. And what that would mean is that they are not Lo-ammi now. That is, that would mean that they are *not* “not my people” now -- which would mean that they *are* God’s people now. Of course you must see the error of supposing that the *Lo-ammi status* stopped at the cross. What would make one think that the parallel *times of the Gentiles* stopped at the cross?

So the cross did not change the status of the people nor the status of the times of the Gentiles. Israel began to be Lo-ammi during the age of the law and

3. The fact that the nation was established in 1948 does not mean “the times of the Gentiles” is over. The worst time for the Jews in that land is yet to come (Matt. 24:21-22).

continues to be Lo-ammi for the remainder of the Mosaic age, which age continues up to the introduction of the millennial kingdom, when they will be Ammi (Hos. 2). And the governmental power that was transferred, from those pronounced to be Lo-ammi, to the Gentiles, occurring during the Mosaic age, was not interrupted by the cross. That transferred governmental power continues on through the Mosaic age.

The Final Test of the First Man Was the Revelation of the Father in the Son

The Two Men

The ways of God to accomplish His purpose to glorify Himself in Christ entails His dealing with two men:

The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual: the first man out of [the] earth, made of dust; the second man out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:46, 47).

The designation "Adam" refers to two headships. Men as born into the world stood before God in an Adamic standing while under testing. That is, God took account of man as before Himself for probation. The testing came to the point where it involved the giving of the law to Israel. The nations were never under the law. The law, however, addressed man in Adamic responsibility, *in the persons of the favored nation*. Thus, it addressed the first man -- according to the text above it was the natural man; for first "that which is natural." The law did not address itself to the children of God, as such. It was for the first man, the natural man, but in the persons of the favored Jews.

Observe the order specified: **first** that which is natural, **then** that which is spiritual. The two are sequential, not simultaneous. God is not dealing with the first and second man simultaneously. First . . . then.

When the Lord Jesus was walking here on earth He was the second man in His own person, of course; i.e., He personally was the second man. But that is not the same as being installed into *the place* proper to the second man in the purpose of God. Consequent upon His death and resurrection He was in the place of the second man. His death and resurrection are the great dividing point. The cross ended the place the first man had under the probation of God. The first man's *history, morally speaking*, was closed by the cross. God is done with him, except that having declared men to be LOST, He saves, but that is another matter.

The cross, which was the culminating demonstration of the moral depravity of the first man, is the very instrument through which God is manifested as a just God and a Savior. This reminds me of some lines in a hymn by J. G. Deck:

The very spear that pierced Thy side,
Drew forth the blood to save.

Consequent upon the final failure of the first man, he has lost his place before God, under probation, and has been displaced by the second man, out of heaven.⁴ The first man is *the* man of responsibility and the second man is *the* man of God's purpose. The history of *the* responsible man (who utterly failed in it) is morally ended and He has been displaced before God by the man of purpose, the second man. God does not have the two before Him at the same time. "First . . . then." And we believers are before God in connection with the man of purpose, the approved man, the accepted man, the second man. :

The Presentation of Christ to the First Man

CHRIST WAS PRESENTED TO THE FIRST MAN

Perhaps you have not thought of it that way -- that Christ was presented to the first man. You were thinking He was presented to the Jews. Well, yes He was, of course:

He came to his own, and his own received him not (John 1:11).

And while thinking of that, keep in mind that while the first three gospels trace steps in the rejection of the Lord Jesus, in the gospel of John his rejection is stated at once at the beginning, and John has a very distinct character from the other three. The gospel of John is written, therefore, as assuming that rejection -- and it characterizes that rejection in the most profound and distinctive manner, as we shall see below. But here we should direct our thoughts to the fact that though He came to His own, in the ways of God the first man was being tested in the persons of the Jews. And Christ is the consummation of that testing.

EXAMPLE FROM MATTHEW

First, then, we will note a parable in Matt. 21:

Hear another parable: There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and made a fence round it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen and left the country. But when the time of fruit drew near, he sent his bondmen to the husbandmen to receive his fruits. And the husbandmen took his bondmen, and beat one, killed other, and stoned another. Again he sent other bondmen more than the first, and they did to them in like manner. And at last he sent to them his son, saying, They will have respect for my son. But the husbandmen, seeing the son, said among themselves, This is the heir; come let us kill

4. "Out of heaven" denotes the moral origin of Christ. His humanity did not come from heaven -- He came from heaven and took holy humanity into His person. His humanity came from Mary; and the union of Godhead and manhood in Him was by the overshadowing of the Spirit (Luke 1:35).

him and possess his inheritance. And they took him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the lord of the vineyard comes, what shall he do to those husbandmen? They say to him he will miserably destroy those evil [men] and let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, who shall render to him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus says to them, Have ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which they that builded rejected, this has become the corner-stone: this is of [the] Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes? Therefore I say to you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation producing the fruits of it . . . (Matt. 21:33-43).

Here we see the final test: the last thing that could be done. "And at last he sent to them His son." They did not reverence His son, not then; but they shall! The Lord continued, telling them of some of the consequences. Observe also that this parable is followed by another in Matt. 22, regarding a wedding feast for the king's son, that bears on the same rejection but brings out other consequences. One of these was that:

And [when] the king [heard of it he] was wroth and having sent his forces, destroyed those murderers and burned their city (Matt. 22:7).

We may be sure that God did this even if we did not realize that the Romans did this very thing in AD 70. These Romans were "his forces," for God had transferred governmental power from Israel, about BC 605, to Nebuchadnezzar; and that power thus committed to the head of gold in the image of Dan. 2 was now administered by the iron section (the fourth) of the image: Rome. No, "the times of the Gentiles" was not interrupted by the cross.

Well, Christ's rejection is traced, no doubt, in keeping with the character of each respective gospel. Matthew gives us God's governmental/disciplinary dealings, and dispensational changes, in a very pronounced way. We turn now to John where Christ's rejection is marked by very distinct features in connection with the Son's glory, full of grace and truth.

The Testing by Grace Took Place When The Son Was Here

THE TIME OF TESTING BY GRACE AND TRUTH IS PAST

We already noted that John 1:11 states Christ's rejection at the beginning of that gospel which is characterized by the presentation of the divine Persons, as well as what God is for the children of God.

We have considered some matters concerning the second man: something the Son became. He was not man before the incarnation. On the other hand, He was eternally Son in the Godhead. The divine Persons are one in will; and in omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. But there is distinction of Persons, and God acts in accordance with that distinction of Persons. The Father sends, the Son comes and carries out the Father's will, and does all in the power of the Spirit. In Col. 1:19 we read of what the pleasure of the Fulness was: to dwell in Christ. And Col. 2:9 states *the accomplished and abiding fact:*

For in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

From the instant of conception, from the instant the union of the divine and human took place, there all the Fulness dwelt -- and, of course still does, forever so, my soul. Yes, we shall see Him as He is!

Every word and work of the Son was done in the power of the Spirit in obedience to the Father. All the Fulness dwelt in Christ. He perfectly gave expression to the Father in all things, so that He could say:

He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I [am] in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words which I speak to you I do not speak from myself; but the Father who abides in me, does the works (John 14:10).

We read:

And the word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we have contemplated his glory, a glory as of an only-begotten with a father), full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

The light had appeared but the darkness apprehended it not (John 1:5). Man was dead in trespasses and sins, and knew it not. He had no faculty to see the light, but does that mean the light was not there? Of course not. It was there but men had not the faculty to see Him full of grace and truth. The Lord Jesus was full of grace and truth while here walking before the Father in the power of the Spirit. The first man, in the persons of the Jews to whom He was presented, was tested by Him Who was personally full of grace and truth. Thus man had been tested before the cross by grace and truth in His person. The cross was the end of man being tested by grace and truth. There is no "age of grace" wherein man is being tested by grace. The first man was under testing by grace (and truth) in the person of the Son, up to the cross, where, in the most amazing display of grace, He gave Himself! Calvary is the terminal point for the probation of man, ending in him having rejected Him in whom all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. There is no test after that. *I suggest that it really takes away from Him, from His glory, to claim that man is being further tested.* The notion really implies that the previous testing was not enough! It implies that the Son, full of grace and truth, was not enough to complete the testing of the first man.

THE REJECTION OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

And what is the Son of God's testimony about His rejection?

If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hates me hates also my Father. If I had not done among them the works which no other one has done, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:22-24).

There was no greater test than the revelation of the Father in the Son, in the

power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, this sin (of rejection) is unique. Surely it must be in a class by itself! And so it is. The word *sin* in this text refers to a unique sin. Surely our Lord was not saying that if He had not come and spoken to them sin would have been nonexistent. No. Rather, he is speaking of a unique *sin*: namely, the rejection of the revelation of the Father in the Son, in the power of the Spirit. This then is the pronouncement:

They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.

There is nothing beyond or surpassing that. This is the climax. This fully declares the state of the first man. What kind of a notion regarding testing do they have who continue it on after the cross? While it is not intentionally meant as an insult to the Father and the Son, it is insulting.

The Resultant Judgment Pronounced Upon the First Man on the Occasion of His Climactic Sin

The *sin* we considered when looking at John 15:22-24 is named again, in John 16. The Spirit who is omnipresent, present everywhere, was going to come. Of course, He was here in the world before and He will be in the world after the rapture of the saints, yet He would be sent and He would come. He would come in a certain capacity and for certain functions, among them to indwell the believer and the church. In John 16 we see that the Spirit was to be sent in testimony to Christ's place in glory consequent upon His rejection here. This is what He would do:

And having come, he will bring demonstration to the world, of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe on me; of righteousness, because I go away to [my] Father, and ye behold me no longer; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged (John 16:8-11).

Bring Demonstration. Concerning the word "demonstration," a footnote in JND's translation says:

... his presence and all that he does affords this demonstration.

That men have not the faculty to perceive this does not change the fact. Nor is the "demonstration" the same thing as "testing." Indeed, the present work of the Spirit in bringing such "demonstration" indicates that the testing is over, that man is pronounced lost in view of the conclusion of the testing.

Of Sin, Because They do not Believe on Me. This refers to that unique sin named in John 15:22-24. This was the culmination of all sin, the consummation of the probation of the first man. The Spirit is present here to bring demonstration of this. He has come on account of the fact that this sin has taken place. There is no further testing of the first man at this time while

He is here; nor thereafter, of course.

Of Righteousness, Because I Go Away to My Father. We might have expected the word "unrighteousness" here. But what we have here is reference to the fact that though Christ was rejected and crucified, God has righteously acted in raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand. He was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4). All that proceeds in moral excellence from God was brought into action in raising Christ from among the dead. Christ had glorified the Father and finished the work He was given to do. The Father answers with glory, and through glory. It was righteousness to do so. And the Spirit brings demonstration of this righteousness and Christ's consequent actings from the glory.

Of Judgment, Because the Ruler of This World Is Judged. We need to consider John 12:31 in this connection:

Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

We know that judgment has not yet been executed nor has the time arrived yet when Satan is cast out. The Lord refers here to *the sentence* of judgment: judgment is pronounced, the sentence will be carried out later. These things that our Lord had been saying as given in the presentation of Himself in John's gospel, have in view the rejection noted in John 1:11 and they anticipated the cross. These judgments are based on the accomplishment of His work on the cross. The word "now" has in view the accomplishment of the work on the cross. John's gospel has numerous anticipatory statements, assuming the work is finished.

So he pronounced sentence on the world in view of the cross. There was no need for further testing of the first man. Judgment is already pronounced; the testing was concluded. Moreover, Satan now has received acknowledgment of two titles in John's Gospel in connection with Christ's rejection: he is the *prince* of this world and the *ruler* of this world. He had not been so designated before but was then so designated in view of the termination of the probation of the first man. Returning to John 16:11, the significance is that not only is sentence pronounced on the world (John 12:31), *the world is judged in its head*, its ruler, he being recognized by the Lord in that position in consequence of the world's rejection of the revelation of the Father in the Son, in the power of the Spirit. In another Scripture Satan is also spoken of in a new way. He is called the god of this world (age) -- in 2 Cor. 4:4.

There is another pronouncement in Scripture that resulted from the fact that the probation of the first man was concluded at the cross. And this also involves the recognition that the world is judged, and is judged in its head, its ruler:

The whole world lieth in the wicked [one] (1 John 5:19).

So the Scriptures declare man to be totally lost, the whole world guilty before God; this is the conclusion from the probation. The moral history of the first man is concluded. His state has been exhaustively and fully manifested, and finally so by God sending Him Who is full of grace and truth. God is not now testing man. The first man has been displaced and God has established the second man in resurrection and glory -- and He acts in view of that, forming a heavenly people at present:

... and such as the heavenly [one], such also the heavenly [ones] (1 Cor. 15:28).

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

Meanwhile, the Mosaic age continues on until Christ comes in glory.

Adamic Standing Now Gone

Chapter 3, the next in this series, is composed of quotations from J. N. Darby on the subject of the law and the Christian, finding that the law has not died, but that the Christian is dead. Having died with Christ, we are dead to the law.

But it is a mistake to think that the subject of testing hinges only on whether the law is dead -- as if the law being intercalated, would leave room for testing by grace now. The truth is that the Christian is not merely dead to the law. He is dead to the entire Adamic standing and responsibility of *the* first man -- who, as a matter of fact, had been tested by other things besides the law. Moreover, when the Son was here in manhood, He was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This was displayed, and He was rejected. The first man was tested by grace and truth, and rejected Him who was its full display. And, as we have seen, they rejected the manifestation of the Father in Him, the Father Whom He had declared (John 1:18). God is finished with the entire Adamic standing and responsibility of the first man, as such.

What we have seen indicates that those who place an age of grace into the earthly ages have not apprehended the end of the first man, and his standing, before God. They have given him a present place and, moreover, have not seen that the second man has *displaced* the first. And surely this must have a corresponding expression in Christian practice.

What About Responsibility Now?

We have been considering that *the* responsible man, i.e., the first man, has had his standing in responsibility, as under probation, ended in the cross. Note carefully that this does not mean that natural men are no longer connected with the first man. They are; but the first man's *history*, *morally speaking*, is

closed. God is done with him, except that, having declared the conclusion from the probation that men are **TOTALLY LOST**, He saves; but that is another matter. Concerning individual persons since the cross, though not under probation, they are responsible for their works and will be judged at the great white throne for their works (Rev. 20).

Now, although the ground of man's responsibility is over in the sense of having wholly failed under it, when proved in every possible way, yet as to moral dealing with each individual, the responsibility is there to the full; and as an individual under moral dealing, a man has to go through the history of the process of responsibility and its failure; but he goes through it to bring out this, that he is lost already. He has to prove the truth of God's verdict that in man there is no good thing; and so the result of the principle of responsibility is for him to find out that he is lost, that the responsibility is over; not as if it was not true, but because he is lost and ruined, as the man who has lost all his money by foolish ways. It is important to keep up responsibility, but the individual is brought to the consciousness that on that ground it is all up with him. Man is lost. We have spent every farthing, and have only debts; these we have if that is any good. It is all over with the first man, and no mending of him will do: he is lost and ruined; but Christ came to save the lost.

Now the Second Man is set up. It is not a mending of the first man, but the substitution of the Second. There is no improvement or correction of the first man (although we are practically changed if we come to Christ), but the sins of the first Adam are all cleared away; and, secondly, the tree itself is cut down by the roots for faith. In the cross we see the responsibility met completely; Christ has met all the failure . . . ⁵

Probation of the First Man and the Scofield Age-ism System

Though you may not have thought about it, the Scofield age-ism system is built upon the denial that the testing of the first man ended at the cross. In other words, if C. I. Scofield had accepted the truth that the probation of man ended at the cross, there really would have been no Scofield age-ism scheme. Larry V. Crutchfield wrote a dissertation on the views of J. N. Darby regarding ages and dispensations, and while opting for the Scofield age-ism system, he wrote:

The whole idea of responsibility somehow ending with the cross is completely foreign to Scofield. Here as with the concept of God's governmental dealings with humankind, Scofield applies the principles of dispensational

characteristics more consistently and uniformly throughout his system.⁶

First: notice the use of the word “responsibility” in this statement rather than better expressing what the real issue is: “testing” or “probation” of man in the Adamic standing. Natural man remains responsible to God -- but the probation is over, the first man is judged in the cross, the verdict based on the probation is rendered, and the second man is established before God, having displaced the first man. The first man represents “the responsible man” and the second man is “the man of purpose.” Because “*the* responsible man” was proved incorrigible and irremediably lost, and since the cross he has been declared to be so, it does not follow that individual natural men have no responsibility to God. They will indeed be answerable at the great white throne judgment according to their works (Rev. 20). The era of testing ended at the cross and there are no ages of testing thereafter.

Second: observe that implicit in this is that C. I. Scofield differed with JND that the testing ended at the cross. Let us be quite clear about it: JND taught that the probation of the first man ended at the cross. CIS continued the testing of man after the first man was judged in the cross -- as did L. S. Chafer and as do all who hold CIS’s scheme, and as L. V. Crutchfield does. *The New Scofield Reference Bible* says:

The point of testing in this dispensation is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . The continuing, cumulative revelation of the previous dispensations combines with this fuller revelation to emphasize the utter sinfulness and lostness of man and the adequacy of the historically completed work of Christ to save by grace through faith all who come to God by him . . . (p. 1162).

Third: according to L. V. Crutchfield’s summary remark, CIS did not hold JND’s views on “God’s governmental dealings with mankind” and neither do those who hold to CIS’s scheme. The development of God’s ways in government in the earth is an important subject in dispensational truth.

Fourth: the uniformity of the Scofield age-ism system is schematic and artificial, depending as it does on the denial of important truth. The followers of the Scofield age-ism scheme who say his system is more akin to Isaac Watts than J. N. Darby are correct. And was Isaac Watts a dispensationalist because he distinguished some time periods? Is that really what “dispensational truth” is all about?

Probation of the First Man and the Intercalated Age System

The intercalated age of grace system of L. S. Chafer means that Judaism will be reinstated by God after the rapture of the church:

Upon the completion of the present divine purpose in the Church, Israel's Sabbaths will be reinstated (ST4:111).

The earthly story is taken up at the end of this age precisely where it left off . . . (ST4:167).

. . . the entire system known as Judaism, along with all its component parts, is, in the purpose of God, in abeyance throughout the present age, but with definite assurance that the entire Jewish system thus interrupted will be completed by extension into the kingdom, the new earth, and on into eternity to come.⁷ As the Jew has been removed from the special place of privilege which was his in the past age and leveled to the same standing as the Gentile -- under sin -- so Judaism has experienced a cessation of all its features until the hour when the Jewish program begins again; however, Judaism is to be restored and to complete its appointed course (ST4:248).

Can he have had any correct idea at all about the subject of the probation of the first man, a central teaching of the recovered truth last century, relating to dispensational truth -- and specifically the testing of the first man under the Mosaic covenant and the law? So Judaism will be reinstated according to this system that says that the law is dead now and nailed to the cross. Somehow the law will get off the cross to which it was allegedly nailed; and not only that, but ***Judaism itself will be reinstated*** so as to be there after the rapture. So you see that the testing of the first man is not ended. Surely not, since this system means the Mosaic system is intercalated. The Mosaic system was sanctioned of God. Allegedly, the Mosaic system was intercalated. It follows that the reinstatement of the Mosaic system is from God, continuing where it left off. Thus, the first man will be under test as He was before the cross, under the Mosaic system. And this is supposed to be dispensational truth! The fact is, then, that this system sets aside the truth that the *testing* of the responsible man ended at the cross and that he is displaced before God by the Man of purpose. It means there are two simultaneous standings: one for the Christian, in Christ; the other for the non-Christian -- he having a standing in the flesh before God. God has both before Him at the same time; the first man and the second Man.

Since "Judaism has experienced a cessation of all its features until the hour when the Jewish program begins again," then the Mosaic covenant will be begun again. Is it unfair to ask, concerning this covenant, how this covenant

will be reinstated, what will mark its reinstatement, and with whom will this covenant be reinstated, and on what basis? Not only would that be a setting up of the first man's standing under the law, it means that at that point God will recognize the state of Israel, whereas God is merely watching (Isa. 18). Israel will not be regathered until after the appearing of Christ in glory. Meanwhile, what is transpiring is human effort.

The fact that the Jews will set up a Judaistic system, and that the remnant will be under the law *in their consciences*, does not prove the reinstatement, by God, of Judaism, as such. Nor does Matt. 24 support the idea that God is the Author of such a reinstatement, merely because He is tender towards the consciences of the remnant concerning the Sabbath.

The Jewish system utilized the law in the testing of the first man during the probationary times. The Mosaic covenant *recognized a standing in the flesh* before God. When the Judaistic system became no longer recognized by God, as a consequence of the cross, the standing of the first man, a standing in the flesh, was ended. Because the *standing* of the first man was ended, it does not automatically follow that the law itself, as the law, was ended. The probation was ended; the standing in the flesh was ended; the Mosaic system was ended as being acceptable to God; but the law itself did not die, nor was it nailed to the cross. We will examine the idea of the annulment of the law in another chapter.

There is a distinction between (1) the first man being tested under the Mosaic covenant with this testing coming to an end at the cross, and (2) the law not being annulled. The Jewish system was God's relationship with the first man under the law in his Adamic standing. The testing involved the obedience of the first man in his Adamic nature. That standing in the flesh before God was ended at the cross. God's relationship with man under the law in Adamic standing was then terminated. The probation was completed. Let us be clear about this. The cross necessarily ended the Mosaic system, *as a system under which the first man had a standing in the flesh before God*. The law had a place in the Mosaic system of testing the first man in his Adamic standing. The Mosaic system is no longer recognized by God *because* the testing of the first man ended. But it does not follow that the law itself has been abolished. The law was left where it was -- God's requirement for man. Moreover, the Mosaic age was left where it was. There has been no change in the age, while God meanwhile forms a heavenly people. And there will be no change in the age until "the age to come" (the millennium) begins. Nor is there any testing of the first man now, neither by grace, nor under the law; nor will there be the reinstatement of what was God's relationship with man in Adamic standing under the law. But, no doubt unwittingly, that alleged reinstatement of Judaism, which necessarily involved the probation of the first man in his standing before God, in the flesh, under the law, is just what this false age-ism

system really amounts to. It means the reinstitution of the Mosaic covenant and the reinstatement of the first man in Adamic standing in the flesh, under the law. Moreover, under the system that has man under test by grace now, the first man has not lost that standing, even though the second man, the man of purpose, has been established before God. It ought to be clear that what we are reviewing is not dispensational truth but a false age-ism scheme.

Ed.

(Chapter 2 to be continued, if the Lord will)

Outside the Camp

It is true, He does not always call at once into the place of reproach and suffering. He first brings us into the joy and nearness of His presence. He satisfies us with the perfectness with which Christ has washed US from our sins in His blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. But having done this, He points us to the place of Christ without the camp. "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." This was the very thing that these Jewish Christians were shrinking from, if not rebelling against. They had not made up their minds to suffer: to be despised was odious in their eyes. Nor is it pleasant to nature. But the apostle lets them know that if they understood their true blessing, this was the very part of it that was inseparably bound up with their present nearness to God, as set forth typically by the central and most important rite of the Jewish system. This is the meaning of the blood carried within, and of the body burnt without.

Let us then seek to combine these two things: perfect nearness to God, and the place of utter scorn in the presence of man. Christendom prefers the middle course; it will have neither the conscious nearness to God, nor the place of Christ's reproach among men. All the effort of Christendom is first to deny the one, and then to escape from the other. I ask my brethren here if they are looking to God strenuously, earnestly, for themselves and for their children, not to allow but to oppose as their adversary every thing that tends to weaken either of these truths, which are our highest privilege and our truest glory as Christians here below. What a surprise to the Hebrew believers to find such truths as these so strikingly shown out in type even in the Jewish system!

W. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, pp. 546, 547.

Let us be sure to be outside the elements of Judaism, such as having one between the people and God.

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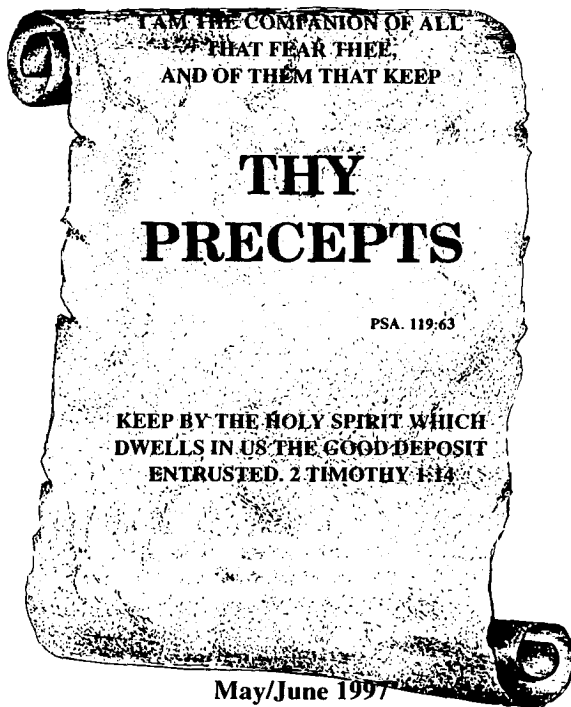
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Balaam Asking Counsel

Num. 22-24

The children of Israel have reached the promised land a second time. Thirty-eight years previously, they found themselves on its borders; but, (dismayed at the report of the spies,) their heart failed by the way, and, as a consequence, they had to turn and retrace their steps to the shores of the Red Sea. Now they have marched afresh towards Canaan. The camp is pitched (at the time the history given us in these chapters transpires), in the plains of Moab, on this side Jordan, by Jericho.

Before making a particular application of this history, it will be well, so as to complete it, to call to mind what Scripture tells us, further, about Balaam. We see from Num. 31:16, that the occasion of the sin of the children of Israel, in the matter of Peor (which drew down the plague on the congregation of the Lord), was through his counsel. Verse 8 of the same chapter shows us the miserable end of one who had said, "Let me die the death of the righteous" {Num.23:10}; --Israel, conquerors of Midian, slay him with the sword, along with the five kings, and all the males, of the vanquished people.

The New Testament mentions him only three times, yet this is done in such sort as to throw great light on the principles and character of the man. In the dark picture drawn by Peter of the unjust, reserved by the Lord unto the day of judgment to be punished, we find, among others, the following features; -- Receiving the reward of unrighteousness, -- counting it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children which have forsaken the right way, are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness: but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with the tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever (2 Pet. 2).

Jude thus describes the triple character of the apostasy (the principles of which were already manifested, and working in the Church, in his day): "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (v. 11).

Lastly, in the epistles of the Lord Jesus to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 2, 3), (regarded by students of prophecy, for the most part, as presenting a picture of the successive phases through which the Church would pass down here on the earth), He who has the sharp sword with two edges, writes to the angel of the church in Pergamos: "I have a few things against thee, because

thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."

Surely, we have, here, declarations of the Word enough, and more than suffice, to show how odious was the character of Balaam.

At present, however, it is not our purpose to search into all that is taught us in this history; but only, as to the dominant trait in the character of the son of Beor.

Balak sends messengers to Balaam, of the elders of Moab and Midian (who take in their hands wherewith to hire the soothsayer), to invite him to come, curse the people of Israel. Balaam (notwithstanding that which is evidently evil in the demand) asks counsel of the Lord, Who tells him, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed." On this, Balaam tells the messengers of Balak: "Get you into your land, for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you."

But Balak returns to the charge. He sends yet again, princes, more, and more honorable than the former, commissioned to bid him come, and he shall be plentifully rewarded. Balaam replies: "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." Yet, he sends them not away; but says to them: "Tarry ye here this night." Anew, he asks counsel of the Lord, to know what the Lord would say unto him more; and God replies, "If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them."

Balaam goes with the princes of Moab. But God's anger is kindled because he goes; and an angel stands in the way, for an adversary against him.

The ass of Balaam, seeing the angel, (with a drawn sword in his hand,) turns out of the way. Balaam smites the ass, to turn her into the way. The angel of the Lord stands in a path of the vineyards, having a wall on the one side and a wall on the other, and when the ass sees the angel, she thrusts herself against the wall, and crushes Balaam's foot. He smites her again. The angel goes forward, and stands in a narrow place, where there is no way to turn, either to the right hand or to the left, and when the ass sees the angel, she falls down under Balaam. Balaam's anger is kindled, and he smites the ass with a staff.

The Lord, now, causes the ass to speak, and she reproves Balaam. He also opens Balaam's eyes, and he sees the angel, who tells him: "Behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me." Balaam says: "I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me; now, therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again." The angel tells him: "Go with the men." So Balaam goes with the princes of Moab.

Arrived in the presence of Balak, he is brought by him, successively, to the

high places of Baal, the top of Pisgah, and the top of Peor, in order that he may see the tents of Israel, encamped in the plains, and curse them. He bids Balak build altars and offer burnt-sacrifices; -- asks counsel of the Lord, who speaks to him; -- pronounces his pithy discourses, -- prophecies, and ceases not to bless Israel. When Balaam asked of the Lord, the first time: "Shall I go?" God replied, distinctly, No; and, as distinctly, pointed out the ground of the refusal. It would seem, He gave this answer, because, either the soothsayer sought counsel of Him, for the first time, or was not sure he should be doing wrong in acceding to the invitation of Balak. But the Lord having told him he must not go, and that Israel was blessed, the position of Balaam was no longer the same. He now knew the will of God. Without the possibility of a doubt, it would be to do evil, to go into Moab. Impossible, he could be longer in uncertainty as to this.

Nevertheless, tempted afresh, he consults God afresh, to know (as he says), what He has more to say to him; and God answers him, that he may go.

But the sequel shows, how, from that moment, there was in Balaam growing blindness; in fact, he understands nothing, or next to nothing, of the efforts of the angel to withstand him. He is never restored; he returns not to the right way; but, on the contrary, becomes, through his abominable counsel, a stumbling-block to Israel. His end is terrible.

Thus, the Holy Ghost says: "Woe unto those, who having forsaken the right way, have gone astray, following the way of Balaam." From what has preceded, we may clearly gather, that the principle which destroyed Balaam was manifested when he asked a second time of the Lord, if he might go into Moab. That which happened to him afterwards, was but a consequence of this. When he asked of God the second time, already his way was perverse, already had he sold himself to the wages of iniquity, and the sequel of his lamentable history is nothing more, than the development of a like state of soul. Thus, it is immediately after this second enquiry, that the anger of the Lord is kindled against him. In the fact of the second enquiry, we discover the main and governing trait of the character of Balaam.

But it needs not long examination to discern, that this distinctive trait, is just in this, that Balaam, having cognizance of evil, asks counsel afresh, instead of forthwith fleeing it.

As Christians, we know full well that God desires we should flee that which is evil, abstain from it, have no fellowship with it. We should be saints, set apart for Himself. His entire word leaves no room for a doubt, and he that sees not this, His will, in plainest evidence, in Jesus on the Cross, and Jesus risen, has not, as yet, or but little, learned Christ.

Who is he, dare say to a thrice Holy God: "Allow me to be a liar, covetous man, fornicator, murderer, for a day"? or, "Allow me to participate to a certain

extent in evil" -- above all, when contemplating the terrible agonies of the Son of God in Gethsemane, and on the Cross; or as having understood, never so little, of his portion in the glories consequent on those sufferings.

With recognition of evil, there needs no further enquiry, no further putting of the question: What is to be done? This question is only legitimate when we find ourselves in presence of, at least, two resolutions, as to which we have to make up our mind; but, evil being recognized, there is only one fit resolution -- to abstain from it. God says; "Cease to do evil"; "Abhor that which is evil"; "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

There is no possible means of sanctifying evil, or participation in it. It is written: "Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Holy Spirit tells us, Abstain forthwith. -- The spirit of Balaam still asks, What is to be done?

Further, let us not encourage ourselves in a wrong position, because, whilst there, we may still, perhaps, be getting light as to the word of God: when Balaam was with Balak, God ceased not to speak to him, even though His anger was kindled against him.

To seek counsel, as to whether a thing be evil, and still to seek counsel, when we know it is evil, are two acts altogether distinct. Not only may we ask of the Lord to give us discernment as to evil, but, more, this is, without contradiction, a duty it behoves us sedulously, and with honesty, to fulfil. Scripture tells us that this discernment is a distinctive characteristic of "those who are of full age" (Heb. 5:14.)

Balaam would know -- What the Lord had to say to him more. Ah! is there need that the Lord, who has driven man out from paradise for one, and on the first transgression, should add anything more? Whence comes it that we look for more? To wait for the Lord to employ some other means, than that of His having discovered the evil to us, is, on the one hand, to risk waiting in vain, and experiencing, like Balaam, a growing blindness, on the other, there is a procrastination which has for its end the quieting of ourselves in a perverse, but self-pleasing, way.

It may not be said that this was all very well in the times of Balaam and under the law, but that it is different under the gospel, under the law of grace and liberty. Jesus came to save sinners, that is very true; but it is to make Jesus the minister of sin, to suppose that He saves in facilitating for us (let it be in what it may) evil, or participation in it. All this is extremely serious. If we act after the way of Balaam, we glorify not our God, and expose ourselves to the losing the sense of His grace, to be left for a time to our blindness, and to be brought back, at last, to a right way, through correction and judgment (2 Pet. 1:9). Doubtless, the sheep of Jesus have no longer to fear the ruin of Balaam, but they should, so much the rather, avoid following in the footsteps of Balaam.

It is the love of their Savior which attracts them. Ah! dear brethren, let us listen to His voice and not to the "wages of unrighteousness."

The "wages of unrighteousness," this, in reality, it is which dulls the soul's eye, here is the great warp to straightforwardness. And the wages of unrighteousness are not merely a thing of money, all that flatters self-love, all that has regard to the well-being of the flesh, in a word, all advantage whatsoever, of which we risk the deprival, or have the certainty or hope of procuring - these may be wages of iniquity. Very certainly he who hesitates, bargains, refuses to abstain, let him search well (if still able to do so), and he will find, that this comes of his being bound by some interest, which is not the interest of Jesus Christ, -- is it a means of subsistence, or some friendship he wishes to preserve, or some acquired position he fears to lose, or a tranquility he dreads having troubled, -- who can enumerate the ten thousand motives, which, at bottom, resolve themselves into self-interest that binds us, blinds us, and urges us along in a perverse way.

God has not spared Himself, to save us, and to redeem us from all iniquity. The Son of God has been sacrificed for us. He is the Lamb of God, He is the Savior. It is the love of God which constrains us -- by His mercies we are besought. Yes, the believer is saved; but "show me thy faith by thy works." The sheep of Jesus are in full security; it is the hand of Jesus which holds them, not they that hold in their hands Him, who is their Redeemer for ever. They are always sheep and never shepherds. Not under law, but under grace, we would not present to the Christian the fate of Balaam, and act upon him through terror, -- it is because of the love of God, it is because he forms part of His ransomed people, His holy nation, of the royal priesthood, that we remind him, that it is those who are led (not by the spirit of Balaam, but) by the Spirit of God, that are the sons of God.

Old paper, Anon.

I will instruct thee and teach thee the way in which thou shalt go; I will counsel [thee] with mine eye upon thee. Be not as the horse, as a mule, which have no understanding: whose trappings must be bit and bridle, for restraint, or they will not come unto thee (Psa. 32:8, 9).

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.2

Introduction to the Antichrist

Preface

Under the general subject title, *Elements of Prophetic Powers and Persons*, we shall examine a number of persons, such as the Antichrist, the Beast, Satan, etc., and powers such as Babylon, etc. The three persons named are related in a way in which others (the Assyrian of prophecy, i.e., the King of the North, and the King of the South, etc.) are not. While Satan and his angels have a world-wide sphere, there is a special emphasis of Satanic activity and interest regarding the Western power of the revived Roman empire headed up by the first beast of Rev. 13. This power and those under its influence (as the Americas likely will be) form a sphere where the gospel had specially gone and where the apostasy of Christendom will be centered. The Jewish apostasy will be centered in Jerusalem under the Antichrist, the second beast in Rev. 13. These two persons will work together under Satanic direction.

Another matter that bears on this special sphere of Satanic action is that the first beast of Rev. 13 (the coming Roman prince of Dan. 9, whom we refer to as *the Beast*¹) is the last holder of the special power committed to Nebuchadnezzar consequent upon Israel being pronounced Lo-ammi (not my people -- Hos. 1). The history of this special power committed to Nebuchadnezzar is depicted in Dan. 2 as a great image. God had given it and God will judge its misuse and abuse at the appearing of Christ in glory. Meanwhile, Satan seeks to spoil what God introduced and will finally produce governmental apostasy when the Beast receives power directly from Satan. The Antichrist will orchestrate the apostasy of Christendom and the apostasy

1. The second beast of Rev. 13 is the Antichrist; and while described there as a beast also, we will distinguish by calling this false prophet the Antichrist and use Beast to indicate the first beast of rev. 13.

of Judaism, while the Beast orchestrates the governmental apostasy.

Satan is the Dragon and the Serpent (Rev. 20:1-3). As Dragon he works in the persecuting governmental power; as the Serpent, we see his working in religious corruption. These are the two things of which he is the father: violence and corruption -- as seen for example, in his going about as a roaring lion, and as the angel of light and his ministers as ministers of righteousness.

In the first three chapters, then, of this series, we will consider these three persons: the Antichrist, the Beast, and Satan.

Stigmatization With A Jesuitical Source

In an article, "Antichrist," J. M. Kik wrote,

As has been indicated previously in the article, some of the early Church Fathers identified Antichrist with some future infidel Jew from the tribe of Dan. In its present form it was originated by the Jesuit Ribera at the end of the 16th century. He tried to remove embarrassment from the papacy by teaching that the Antichrist would come just prior to the second coming of Christ, rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and abolish the Christian religion. He also taught that his tyranny would last 3½ years. This futuristic scheme was revived by the Plymouth Brethren and held by many Fundamentalists.²

Ribera said nothing new in stating *that*. In the second century, Irenaeus wrote,

But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire . . .³

So Hippolytus says.⁴ It is difficult to distinguish this from the "present form" allegedly enunciated by Ribera. J. M. Kik's statement has the ear-mark of attempted stigmatization. Perhaps he would have done better to refer to the Jesuit Alcazar as the father of Preterism.

Many Antichrists and One Final Antichrist

There have been, and are, many antichrists (1 John 2:18). The name denotes an *opposer of Christ* or one who stands *instead of Christ*. The Antichrist will fulfill both these meanings. The refusal to acknowledge Jesus Christ come in flesh is "that (power) of *the* antichrist (of) which ye have heard that it comes,

2. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 1, p. 268.

3. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 568, www.psephism.com vol. 3, p. 218.

4. *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, chapter XX.

and now it is already in the world" (1 John 4:3). What will find its culmination in a personal, coming Antichrist was already at work in John's day.

Another mark of Antichrist is this: "as ye have heard that antichrist comes, even now there have come many antichrists . . . Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? *He* is the antichrist who denies the Father and the Son" (1 John 2:18, 22).

"Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ" (1 John 2:22). The father of lies (John 8:44) will have his way with the Antichrist. This reference to Jesus being the Christ may indicate his work concerning the *Jewish apostasy*. "*He* is the antichrist who denies the Father and the son" (1 John 2:22) concerns the revelation of Christianity and this denial indicates his work concerning the *apostasy of Christendom*. So John distinguishes between the many antichrists and the coming one, called the Lawless One in 2 Thess. 2. He will have an important role in Israel and in the dominions of the Beast during the last half of Daniel's 70th week and also for a very small time beyond that.

The expectation of a coming, personal, final Antichrist is quite correct. It was the teaching received in the apostolic period. "Little children, it is (the) last hour,⁵ and, according as ye have heard that antichrist comes, even now there have come many antichrists, whence we know that it is (the) last hour" (1 John 2:18). The many antichrists were persons as 2 John 7 and 1 John 2:18 show. The man of sin (2 Thess. 2) is a person. It is nonsense to talk of the antichrist as "a body politic" or as a succession of men. Neither was he a Roman emperor or a modern dictator any more than a Pope (concerning which we will have more to consider later). So there have been many speculations concerning who the Antichrist is. I do not understand how any friend of dispensational truth could for one moment indulge in such speculation.

Dispensational truth has delivered us from much error.

J. N. Darby

FUTURISM INSUFFICIENT

Posttribulationists (who believe that the church will go through the great tribulation) fall under the classification of *premillennialists*, this latter word referring to the understanding that the second coming of Christ will precede the Millennium. *Pretribulationists* (who do not believe that the church will go through the great tribulation) are therefore also premillennialists.

A proper *dispensationalist* view includes our entire exclusion from Daniel's 70th week, and numbers of other things such as, for example,

regarding the church as a heavenly people, distinct from the earthly people Israel, and all that entails. The self-styled Progressive Dispensationalists are not really dispensationalists, though at this point in time, they still hold the pretribulation rapture. They are, as I have shown elsewhere, better styled Covenant Pretribulationists.⁶ Now, all of these fall under the description “futurist.”⁷ Its only use, then, is to distinguish from those who are not futurist, but it does not say much about the “futurist” other than that.

J. N. DARBY'S CHANGE IN UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING THE BEASTS OF REV. 13

Neither Ribera, or Lacunza, or the so-called apostolic fathers understood dispensational truth, truth which was recovered through J. N. Darby principally. I can, however, well *understand* adversaries of dispensational truth not understanding, or seeking to hide, the tremendous differences from all else, and withal calumniating J. N. Darby⁸ *without condoning* such behavior.

J. N. Darby understood the pretribulation rapture very early in 1827; and with this that the church did not belong to the world. Along with others he regarded the first beast of Rev. 13 as the Antichrist, but afterward saw that this was a mistake.⁹ The first beast is the coming Roman prince of Dan. 9, the little horn of Dan. 7, that will head the revived Roman empire. The second beast of Rev. 13 is the Antichrist. It appears that he had also once confused the Antichrist with the king of the North in Dan. 11,¹⁰ who is the Assyrian of the other prophets. In 1839 he said:

... I believe the confounding of the Assyrian and Antichrist has much tended to obscure prophecy, and embroil the mind as to the simplicity of its statements.¹¹

In Jan. 1849 his *Enquiry as to the Antichrist of Prophecy* was published¹² and subsequently *The Antichrist Properly So Called*.¹³ These papers more accurately pointed in the proper direction concerning the future powers of prophecy. Some expositors other than “Brethren” followed him in this

6. *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, available from the Publisher.

7. A “futurist” is a premillennialist (Christ comes before the millennium) who sees the tribulation as still future. He may be a posttribulationist (one who views the church going through the great tribulation).

8. See my, *Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby*, vol. 1.

9. *Collected Writings* 8:2; see also p. 184n.

10. *Collected Writings* 8:183, 231.

11. *Collected Writings* 2:226n. This footnote has a subsequent note to it in smaller type, which is an editorial note he added later, as is easily seen by comparison with the actual 1839 printing of *Notes on the Revelations*, London: Central Tract Depot, p.108, 1839.

12. *Collected Writings* 5:215. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

13. *Collected Writings* 5:227.

understanding.¹⁴

Introduction

Before we examine the names of the Antichrist and their import, it would be well to have a brief survey of his place in prophecy. This will subsequently entail some repetition, which, however, may assist the memory.

Wrong Designations

Some friends of a measure of dispensational truth include other designations (which we reject) based on the idea that the Antichrist is the first beast of Rev. 13 and that he will actually reign over the entire earth. Thus in this scheme, Russia must be destroyed, say, for one example, at the middle of Daniel's 70th week¹⁵ in order for Antichrist to reign universally. The scheme confounds the Antichrist and the first beast of Rev. 13, and sometimes the King of the North (the Assyrian). The following designations, then, *do not* apply to the Antichrist:

1. The prince that shall come (Dan. 9:26). This is the first beast of Rev. 13 and the little horn of Dan. 7, who will be the coming Roman prince, i.e., the head of the revived Roman Empire.
2. The king of fierce countenance (Dan. 8:23). He is not Russian nor is he the Antichrist. He is the last holder of the Seleucid power, one of the four powers resulting when Alexander the Great's kingdom was broken into four. This little horn, not to be confused with the little horn of the revived Roman empire (Dan. 7) is the final representative of the power held by one of Alexander's four generals even as the king of the south is the final representative of the power held by one of Alexander's four generals, namely Ptolemy.

The king of fierce countenance (Dan. 8) is the final king of the north (Dan. 11) of whom the famous Antiochus IV Epiphanes is a type. We do not accept the efforts to show that Antiochus Epiphanes is a type of the Antichrist. He is a type of the final power in his own geographical area, not of him who is king in Jerusalem.

In a foreword to the seventh ed. (1911) of his *Studies in Zechariah*, A. C. Gaebelein wrote:

14. For example, A. C. Gaebelein; see also Charles L. Feinberg, *God Remembers, A Study of Zechariah*, Portland: Multnomah, p. 212, 1965; F. W. Pitt, *The Advent Witness* 11:136. *The Scofield Reference Bible*, pp. 1342, 1343, has it correct also.

15. W. K. Price, *The Coming Antichrist* p. 10. See also the article by J. F. Walvoord, "Antichrist" in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*.

We were somewhat reluctant to print another edition. When this book was written the writer did not at all have a clear vision in the prophetic Word concerning the great predicted end events of the times of the Gentiles. Like so many others he did not distinguish between the personal Antichrist and the King of the North. He then held the view, which is still taught by many, that the first beast of Revelation 13 is the personal Antichrist. This belief led into incorrect views about that part of Revelation.

Thus he came more into line with J. N. Darby's teaching.

The Antichrist a Jewish King in Jerusalem

The antichrist will not be a ruler of the entire world as some futurists assert. Nor will he be the great political leader of the West, of the revived Roman Empire. The political leader of the West is the beast (Rev. 13:1-11), a person whom we will consider in a subsequent chapter. The antichrist will be a king in Jerusalem (Dan. 11:36-40; Isa. 30:33; 57:9) but will be the director of religious affairs for the beast (Rev. 13:11ff). As king in Jerusalem he will be hated by an "Arab" confederacy (Psalm 78 and 83) and especially by the king of the north (Dan. 11:40ff) called the Assyrian in other prophets. The king of the south (Egypt) will threaten him also (Dan. 11:40ff). Thus he will have a covenant of protection (Isa. 28:15-18) from the beast with whom he is allied. We do not know when he will first come to power in Israel but we do know that he will be revealed (2 Thess. 2) with the inauguration of the apostasy which occurs consequent upon the destruction of Babylon. This occurs about the middle of Daniel's 70th week.

It is when "the mystery of lawlessness" ends that he shall be revealed. The mystery of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2) is the lawless working of man's will in the sphere of professing Christianity. It will still be working in the whore of Rev. 17, the antichurch, during the first half-week. Also during this first half-week, the Jewish worship will be carried on at Jerusalem (Dan. 9:27). The mystery of lawlessness is a N. T. secret known to any real Christian who wants to know, but hidden from mere professors and disobedient and/or ill-instructed Christians. The open defiance of God and the open lawlessness will occur following the destruction of the antichurch, Babylon. This will terminate the mystery of lawlessness, the secret working of man's will under the pretension of doing God's will. Then will there be unleashed the horrors of the apostasy which will embrace the false professors of Christendom ("them that dwell on the earth", a phrase occurring some 10 times in Rev.) and those Jews who accept the reign of the wilful king, the Lawless One. In another chapter we will discuss the wound of death of the beast as occurring in connection with the destruction of religious Babylon about the middle of the week. The wound of death that the beast of Rev. 13:1-10 will receive will be healed; then the

sacrifices and oblation will be stopped (Dan. 9:27) and the character of Antichrist will be revealed as he fills the religious vacuum left by the destruction of that which professes the worship of the One, true God, whether in Christendom or at Jerusalem. The apostasy (2 Thess. 2:3), then, is comprised of two great characteristics:

1. The destruction of the profession of Christianity will be followed by political apostasy. The first beast of Rev. 13, the coming Roman Prince, will head up the political apostasy in the West, having destroyed religious Babylon, the last vestige of Christian profession on the Earth.
2. The public worship of Satan (Rev. 13:4), the beast (Rev. 13:4, 15) and the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:8) is the second characteristic mark of the apostasy. The religious apostasy, which is inaugurated at the middle of the week, directs worship to a false "trinity" of evil, so to speak.

The work of the *Spirit of Truth* is to take the things of Christ and minister them to our hearts so that they overflow in worship to the Father and the Son. His work is to separate us in heart and walk from this present evil age, that we might be a holy people, presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1,2). The Antichrist will not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh (1 John 4:3). He will speak of the world and they that are of the world will hear him. The apostates of Christendom have their belly for their God, and choose earth for their portion (Phil. 3:19). God will cause them to believe the lie (2 Thess. 2:11) and they will be directed to the worship of the beast (Rev. 13:4, 15). The Antichrist will set himself against the apostolic writings, having this sentence: he is of the *spirit of error* (1 John 4:6).

The implementation of the apostasy in the middle of the week by the Antichrist also has special reference to the godly remnant of Jews. With the forced cessation of the sacrifices and oblation (Dan. 9:27), and with the erection of the abomination that makes desolate (Dan. 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Rev. 13:15), he will try to force the false worship on every Jew, but the godly remnant in Palestine will resist and flee (Rev. 12).

Thus we can see that the religious apostasy incorporates apostasy from Christ on the part of the false professors in Christendom and from the Mosaic ritual by the mass of the Jews. The awful condition of the mass of the Jews in Palestine at this time is seen in Matt. 12:43-45. Israel is figured by the man walking through dry places -- a region of no spiritual refreshment. Israel had been sent into the capital seat of idolatry (Babylon), and the spirit of idolatry was swept out of their house. But the time of return to idolatry will come and they will take seven other spirits (which denote completeness of idolatry) and this will be their worst state. Every form of evil will fully ripen during the apostasy.

Our Lord said, "if these things are done in the green tree, what shall take place in the dry?" (Luke 23:31). The *green* tree is figurative the youth time of their departure from God -- the time when they killed our Lord. And what shall take place in the *dry* tree, i.e., when that departure has aged? "If another (the Antichrist) come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). This is the sequel to their rejection of the true Christ. They will accept the false "Christ" and *perfect* their idolatry and wickedness as seen in what the Lord said about taking *seven* spirits more wicked than in the previous case.

The Worship of the Triad

IMITATION OF THE TRINITY

Since the Antichrist claims to be God (2 Thess. 2), one may ask how it is that he also directs homage to the beast. The answer to this question is connected with a similar difficulty found in Daniel 11:36-40. Let us begin by observing that Dan. 11:40 refers to three persons: the king of the south (Egypt), the king of the north (Syria), and "him." Who is the "him" at whom the others "push"? It is the wilful king of verses 36 to 39. It is a king who is between these two: it is the Antichrist, one who regards not the God of his fathers (i.e., Jehovah), and who is, therefore, a Jew. Nor does he regard the desire of women (evidently Jewish women, who would desire to give birth to the Messiah; cp. Luke 1:28)). This means that He despises Christ. He magnifies himself above all, nor regards any god (Dan. 11:37). Yet we are told that there *is* a god, a strange god, whom he honors. How can this be? In essence, this is the same problem as the question posed above. The answer lies in the relationship of the three evil ones. Satan has his false woman, false city, false Christ, and his false "trinity" also. However, it might be well to reserve the word "trinity" for God and speak of the false three as *the Triad*. The only way in which the Antichrist can magnify himself above all and yet honor a god is for him to be part of this Triad. Thus, Satan also finds himself compelled to share the worship to which his pride aspires with the beast and Antichrist in order to fulfill his schemes. This is the false Triad. If one is honored, so are the others. Satan originates nothing but evil and is ever imitating the true in an evil way.

DANIEL 9:27 AND THE FALSE WORSHIP

A few remarks on the bearing of Daniel 9:27 are in order here regarding the future worship of the Triad during the apostasy in the last half of Daniel's 70th week.

And he shall confirm a covenant with the many [for] one week (Dan. 9:27).

This appears to be a confirmation of an already existent treaty of protection for Israel (regarding the King of the North of Dan. 11, who is the Assyrian of the other prophets). At some point, the coming Roman prince (of Dan. 9:25) will

confirm that already existent treaty for a seven year period.

When the treaty will come into existence we do not know. It may be before the rapture; or, there may be a transitional period after the rapture before the opening of the 70th week when the treaty first comes into existence. And even if first made, by whatever power it may be, before the rapture, there may be a transition period after the rapture.

Scripture does not say that the 70th week opens the day after the rapture nor does it say that it will not.

It seems common to say that in the middle of the week, the covenant is "broken." Scripture does not so state. Dan. 9:27 says that "he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." That is, the Jewish sacrifices will be stopped in the middle of the week. From other Scriptures we know that a new order of worship will be imposed at that time, even *the worship of the Triad*:

- **the Beast** (Rev. 13:1-11; the coming Roman prince, head of the revived Roman Empire),
- **the Antichrist** (2 Thess. 2; Rev. 13:12-18), and
- **Satan** (Rev. 13:4).

The result is, "because of the protection of abominations [there shall be] a desolator {the king of the North (Dan. 11:40, 41)}, even until the consumption and what is determined shall be poured out upon the desolate {the mass of the Jews}" (Dan. 9:27).

Ed.

Double, Double and The four Hallelujahs

... and double [to her] double (Rev. 18:6).

1. **Hallelujah** (Rev. 19:1).
2. And a second time they said, **Hallelujah** (Rev. 19:3).
3. Amen, **Hallelujah** (Rev. 19:4).
4. And I heard as a voice of a great crowd, and as a voice of strong thunders, saying, **Hallelujah** . . . (Rev. 19:6).

Ed.

ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Chapter 6:15

(Continued)

***In Amillennialism,
Satan is Bound Inside the Abyss
and at the Same Time is Also
Outside the Abyss,
and Has the Key to the Abyss!***

Let us hear an expositor of the amillennial system interpret Rev. 9:1-12?:

The fifth angel trumpets. John sees a star that has fallen out of heaven to the earth. Cf. Luke 10:18: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." That is the devil's present condition; having rebelled against God he has lost his holiness, his position in heaven, his splendor. In the vision the apostle now observes that the prince of darkness receives the key of the shaft of the abyss. In other words, he receives power to open the abyss and to let the demons out. The abyss indicates hell before the final judgment (Luke 8:31; Rev. 20:1, 3). After the judgment, hell is called 'the lake of fire' (20:14, 15). When we read that Satan opens the shaft of the abyss, the meaning is that he incites to evil; he fills the world with demons and with their wicked influences and operations. John sees that the shaft, as soon as it is unlocked, begins to belch forth columns of dirty blue-black smoke just like the smoke of a great furnace. It is the smoke of deception and delusion, of sin and sorrow, of moral darkness and degradation that is constantly belching up out of hell. So thick and murky is that smoke that it blots out the light of the sun and darkens the air. The power to bring this about is 'given' to the devil; that is, by God's permissive decree he is not prevented from carrying out his wicked designs in the hearts of the children of men, a wickedness for which he - not God -- is responsible. Let us bear in mind that this, too, is one of the trumpets. God uses even the work of the devil as a punishment and as a

warning for the wicked, a warning in order that they may repent (9:21).¹

He imagines that the abyss is hell. But based on his idea, it follows that: since Satan is still on earth but in the abyss, then the abyss is on earth, and so hell is on earth! There seems to be no restraint to what lengths those who oppose the literal reign of Christ will go in explaining away what blocks their notions.

It does not *seem* to me that our amillennial brethren take the binding of Satan, and his being locked in the abyss, seriously. Based on Rev. 20:1-3, we find him sealed in the abyss. The above expositor sees him in Rev. 9:1-12 outside the abyss, having the key, unlocking the abyss, and letting the demons out.² All of this transpires during the period he is sealed in the abyss, having been put there by an angel of God who had that very key. Amazing!

Albertus Pieters³ avoided the above contradiction in frankly stating that he did not know what numbers of these visions meant.

If you ask me what all this means, and expect that I shall be able to point to something in history that corresponds to the burning mountain cast into the sea, to the falling star called "Wormwood," to the locusts from the pit, or to the terrible cavalry rushing up from beyond the Euphrates, I can not answer. I am sorry to disappoint my readers, and sorry to appear so ignorant, but really, I do not know what these things mean.

I can refer you to some books in which you will find it all explained: E. B. Elliott: "Horae Apocalypticae"; Albert Barnes: "Notes on Revelation"; David N. Lord: "An Exposition of the Apocalypse," and similar works. These writers have found, to their own satisfaction, some explanation for every detail; for the tails of the locusts, the dying of the fish, the long hair, like woman's hair, which the locusts had, and for the fire and brimstone that proceeded out of the mouths of the terrible horsemen. You can find it all there, and in your study of these authors you have my best wishes; but as for me, I must frankly confess that I see no sense in most of their interpretations, and that I suspect they are on the wrong track in seeking any concrete

1. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 120.

2. Herman Hoeksema wrote:

... the supposition is not without grounds, as we shall see, that this star represents no one else but Satan himself.

This star, this prince of the devils, -- or as he appears here, this prince of the abyss, -- opens the pit of the abyss (*Behold he Cometh! An Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, p. 312, 1969).

Homer Haily said likewise:

... it seems not to represent a particular human individual, but Satan (*Revelation, An Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Baker, p. 225, 1979).

3. "Minister of the Word of God and Emeritus Dosker-Hulswitt Professor of English Bible and Missions in the Western Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in America, Holland, Michigan."

interpretations at all.

I do not say that these details have no meaning. They may have, and possibly the early church understood them better than we, although of this there is no proof in the extant early literature. For me they have no meaning, and I am comforted to find myself, in this respect, in the excellent company of men like . . . ⁴

This is a candid statement from one within the camp of the amillennialists who are very critical about the failure of others to interpret symbolism properly. Of course, sometimes there is validity to such criticism, but it does seem peculiar coming from those who treat the symbolic language involved with the binding of Satan in such a gross, uncontrolled, and loose way.

I believe the star seen by John, as fallen, is the Antichrist, to whom power is granted to loose this demon plague. He is seen *falling* (not rising) at the sounding of trumpet three and is called Wormwood. Under trumpet five he is seen as *already fallen*. These demons are also under Satan's authority (Rev. 9:11) and are instruments of the prophet that teaches lies (cp. Isa. 9:13; Rev. 9:10). This will occur during the last half of the future 70th week. But all this is not our subject here.

Why the Future Binding of Satan?

WHY SATAN WAS NOT BOUND IMMEDIATELY

Why not bind Satan immediately? Because the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19). Christ cannot manifest Himself in the glory and in the judgment, nor deliver the world without having delivered and raised the church, nor before the judgment be given to the church as well as to Christ. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2; Dan. 7:22). "Until the Ancient of days comes, and judgment be given to the saints of the Most High." Therefore it is that creation is not yet delivered from the yoke of corruption. The church risen must judge the world with Christ. The world to come {the millennium} is also to be subjected to the same trial. This does not take place during the continuance of the thousand years of Christ's reign -- only at the end of that reign, when Satan comes up out of the bottomless pit. Then, as always, man fails immediately.

While Satan is bound there is no seduction, and, consequently, no combat, no suffering, no victory. God permits these things to take place now, that we may have the glory. The most ordinary precepts of the gospel suppose the superiority of the enemy as to this world, and command not to resist evil; they suppose, therefore, a state of suffering. If the world were really Christian, these precepts would not be applicable, because there would

be nothing to suffer.⁵

THE MORAL NECESSITY FOR THE BINDING OF SATAN

It is true that all wherein the creature has failed is, or will be, made good to God's glory by His beloved Son who came here in holy manhood to accomplish all the Father's will. All judgment has been committed into the hands of the Son (John 5). And He will take the reins of government and discharge its responsibilities *perfectly*. W. Trotter has well written about the moral propriety and necessity that government in the hands of "the first man," and Satan's power, give way to the Man of God's counsels.

It is immediately upon the execution of this judgment, as foretold in Rev. 19 that in chapter 20 we have the binding of Satan, and the reign of Christ with the risen saints for a thousand years. Could there be more decisive evidence that the real character of the Millennium consists in the substitution of Christ's manifested rule, for that of all those to whom human government has been entrusted, but in whose hands (however great a blessing in itself, and on the whole, so long as upheld by God's secret providence) it has been used for self-aggrandizement, oppression of the poor and of God's people, and, at last, for open and blasphemous revolt against God?

Endeavor then, dear reader, to realize what would be the condition of a kingdom, under the absolute government of a monarch so wise as never to make one single mistake, so equitable as to deal even-handed justice to all, so tender-hearted as to rule with the gentlest sway, so pious and benevolent as to seek no object but the glory of God and the well-being of his subjects, and so powerful as to secure the absolute submission of all within the sphere of his dominions! What a kingdom! But when we think of such a kingdom, as extending over the whole earth, and embracing all nations within its limits; and when we understand that Christ Himself is to be its Head and Lord, and that the risen saints are to be His associates on the throne, all language fails, and the heart can only find relief in adoration too profound to be expressed!

...

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the change in the entire condition of things, resulting from the two facts, of Satan being bound, and of the world's government being exercised by Christ and His saints. Now Christ, our life, is *hidden* and Satan is *at large*. Faith knows Christ, trusts Him, feeding upon Him, delights in Him, loves Him, and seeks, however feeble the measure may be, to serve and glorify Him. This faith is produced and sustained by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. But what opposition does He encounter! It is not only that our own fallen nature -- the flesh -- is contrary to the Spirit, but Satan acts by it in order to deceive and enthrall us, and being the god -- the prince -- of this world, all that it contains is at his

disposal⁶ for the furtherance of his treacherous designs. Every sense becomes thus the avenue of temptation; while the tendency of every object on which the senses are exercised, is to hide Christ's glory from our view, and to draw away the heart from Him. They who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, are so kept in spite of everything. This is the time, in short, for the life of faith, the walk of faith, the fight of faith, the trial of faith; and it is by faith alone that we can stand, or conquer, or endure. But when the world's condition is formed and its affairs regulated by the government of Christ Himself and His risen saints; when all outward power is on the side of God, of truth, of obedience; and when in addition to this, temptation is entirely absent, the tempter himself being bound in the abyss, who can estimate the difference between such a state of things, and that which has existed ever since the fall?

Think of the One who is then to "bear the glory and sit and rule upon his throne." It has been well said, and often said, that no man is fit to command who has not first learned to obey. Such a statement applies only to delegated power, and not, as is obvious, to the divine government, supremely exercised by God Himself, who does all things according to the counsel of His own will. But it is His good pleasure to confide the government of the earth to man; and all those to whom it has hitherto been confided, have failed in this first great qualification -- obedience. Not so Jesus. He became man, and took the servant's place and form. To be the servant, He had to *become* man; for as to His essential glory, "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." But "he made himself of no reputation," and while all others *owe* obedience, he "*learned*" it, "by the things which he suffered." And He did learn it!

Who besides has been subjected to such tests as He? Who has had such a path of sorrow, or gone through such depths of anguish and distress? But in all He was obedient -- obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And this is the wondrous title He has acquired to universal dominion. *Acquired*, we say, for it is not to be forgotten that while he has inherent titles of infinite dignity as God and Creator, He has by the incarnation and the cross, by His obedient life and His obedience unto death, *acquired* titles, which must, in the righteousness of God's ways be acknowledged and made good. "Wherefore God also," says the apostle, "hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Be it that even in this given glory He stands alone and pre-eminent; be it that the universal lordship here attributed to Jesus is of a deeper, more essential, and therefore more

6. Luke 4:6 bears solemn testimony to this fact. Satan did thus use all the glory of this world in tempting Christ, and Christ did not in the reply quote the words of Satan, "for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it."

enduring character than that special form of dominion over the earth, which characterizes the thousand years, and is delivered up to God, even the Father, at the close; be it that this lordship of Jesus over all in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, which is the reward of His obedience unto death, can never cease -- never be delivered up; still, it is impossible to contemplate His fitness for the glories of the millennial sovereignty, in which the saints are associated with Him, without adverting to the divine glory of His person, and the infinite reward of His humiliation, and obedience, and death. True, it is as Son of David that He is heir to David's throne. But David's Son is David's Lord. The child born, the son given, according to Isa. 9:6, upon whose shoulder the government is to rest, has for His name, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The Father of the everlasting age, The Prince of Peace." It is "of the increase of his government and peace," that "there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."⁷

WILL SIN CEASE WHEN THE ENEMY IS BOUND?

F. G. Patterson answered this question:

We learn of Israel -- "Thy people also shall be all righteous," &c. (Isa. 60:21). And that the multitude of Gentiles saved through the great tribulation (Rev. 7:9-17) all call on the name of the Lord; "All the ends of the World shall remember and turn unto Jehovah; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Psa. 22:27). But we also learn of the solemn outbreak of sin and sinners at its close, when Satan is once more set free⁸ (Rev. 20:6-9). We also find that during this time of blessing the direct manifested government of God will cut off by judicial death those who sin (Psa. 101, *passim*; Isa. 65:20, &c.). Those, then, who are born in the millennial day will need to be "born again," as much then as now, though those who beget them are the Lord's.

This being so, sin in man's nature, i.e., the flesh, is the same as since the fall; but Satan, who can act upon it by temptation, will be bound, and the "world" (the present great system built up on man's departure from God) -- "all that is in the world, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" -- this moral system will then have passed away, and the renewed earth be under the peaceful sway of Jesus. Consequently the "world" will be no more an evil system to allure the "flesh," through the power of the "devil," and to sin in that day will be willful sin against Christ, in manifested power and glory.

"The evil heart of unbelief" will show how "evil" indeed it is, in a day when all is light and manifestation, should it be unbelieving at such a time;

7. *Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects*, London: Morrish, pp. 496-498, new ed., n.d.
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

8. See Psa. 18, 66 and 81, as to the "feigned obedience" of the nations, at that time, to Christ.

in contrast to that in which we have to walk in what is unseen and eternal.⁹

The Loosing of Satan

The loosing of Satan is the opposite of the binding of Satan. To say that the incarnation bound Satan, or that the work on the cross bound Satan, is, though unintentional as it may be, a negative reflection on these great truths. And, are we to regard these truths as connected with the binding but not with the loosing? If the work of Christ on the cross

cast him into the abyss, and shut [it], and sealed [it] over him (Rev. 20:3),

will the work of Christ on the cross remove the seal, open the abyss, and bring him out of the abyss? And just why not? Why, that is absurd, isn't it? But so is the scheme that has the work of Christ bind him in the abyss during the time the church is here. If the work of Christ on the cross bound Satan, what could have the power to undo that work?

Some amillennialists think Satan has been released from the abyss already:

The question remains as to whether we today are living in the time of Satan's release. All we can say is that there are many indications that Satan is free now. However, we are not permitted to engage in calculation and speculation. Only when Christ returns will we learn how long Satan was free, and whether we lived during the "little while" of Satan's release.¹⁰

Notice, he really believes the change will be indefinite, not really noticable!

W. Hendriksen tells us the meaning of the little season:

The meaning then is this: the era during which the church as a mighty missionary organization shall be able to spread the gospel everywhere is not going to last forever; not even till the moment of Christ's second coming. Observe what is happening in certain countries even today. Are certain regions of this earth already entering Satan's little season?¹¹

Does not this indicate that he thinks of the release of Satan as a gradual thing, and as taking part by regions? This illustrates how, in the minds of some, the binding and loosing of Satan is connected with missions. Why, we could have an ebb and flow of binding and loosing -- of Satan being more or less in the abyss, it being more or less "shut," and it being more and less "sealed"! And as to "the key of the abyss"

And then one more point. P. E. Hughes wrote:

9. *Words of Truth* 6:216, 217.

10. T Boersma, *Is the Bible a Living Presence?* St. Olaf Press, p. 69, 1978.

11. *More Than Conquerors*, London: Tyndale Press, p. 195, 1940.

Once more Satan sets out *to deceive the nations*, which he had been inhibited from doing during the one thousand years¹²

We repeat what has been said before:

the whole world lies in the wicked [one] (1 John 5:19).

he who deceives {not -- had deceived} the whole habitable world was cast out into the earth (Rev. 12:9).

For by thy *sorcery* have all the nations been deceived (Rev. 18:23).

The fact is that the deception of the nations has been going on all along. The most horrid aspect of deception is going on in what professes the name of Christ:

And [it is] not wonderful, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers transform themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works (2 Cor. 11:15).

At the end of the millennium the massive deception will take place which will expose all the frauds present during the millennium,¹³ and God will bring down judgment. It is not my purpose to go into that, but I do add that the Gog and Magog of Rev. 20 is postmillennial while the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel is premillennial. Ezek 37 tells us of the regathering of Israel and the uniting of the two houses; Ezek 38 and 39 speak of the final assault of the power from the uttermost north; and that is followed by the millennium (Ezek. 40-48).

Ed.

Getting to be Somebody

What a sorry spectacle it is to see a Christian who had ministered corrective truth faithfully, gradually drift into more acceptable "ministry" and become "somebody." He becomes more popular and deceives himself into thinking he is therefore more influential -- for Christ, of course! not self, oh no.

Ed.

12. *The Book of the Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 217, 1990.

13. Not all born during the millennium will be "born again."

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 2

Is Man Under Probation Today?

(Continued)

Additional Implications of the Idea That the Mosaic System is Intercalated

The Curse on the Fig Tree

The Fig tree cursed by the Lord (Matt. 11:19; Mark 11:13, 14, 20, 21) is representative of Israel under the law. No fruit was produced. Leaves, which speak of profession in Scripture, there were; but no fruit. And from that Fig tree there never will be fruit:

Let there be never more fruit of thee forever (Matt. 21:19).

There will not be a fruitful Fig tree after the rapture of the saints, when the Mosaic system is supposed to be reinstated. Such a notion about reinstatement, which means the probation of man to see if he can produce fruit for God, is like supposing the Fig tree will again be under testing to see if there might be fruit. Are we to suppose that when the Mosaic system is reinstituted by God, that the Lord's curse is going to be reversed? No? What then? Is He going to test for fruit from a cursed tree that has dried up (Mark 11:21)?

The Cutting Down of the Fig Tree

In Luke 13:6-9 there is a parable that indicates that Christ came seeking fruit from Israel for three years and found none. The sentence was: "cut it down; why does it render the ground useless." But there was another year of *exposure* of the state, which, I apprehend, closed with the stoning of Stephen. How does this bear on God allegedly reinstating the Mosaic system, which tested Israel to see if fruit would be borne? Why, that it should mean that God would reinstate

that test of Israel just as if sentence had not been pronounced and as if it had not been executed.

The Olive tree

With the exception of the election of grace among Israel, the natural branches have been broken out of the Olive tree (Rom. 11). The natural branches will be grafted in again (Rom. 11:23) when the Deliverer shall come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26). That, of course, is when He appears in glory after second half of Daniel's 70th week. How does this bear on God allegedly reinstating the the Mosaic system, under which system the natural branches had not been cut out of the Olive tree before the cross? Are we to suppose that the cut out branches (Jews in whom was no faith) will be reinstated by God under the Mosaic covenant, under which system (before the cross) they were not cut out, but in the future they will be under the Mosaic covenant but remain in the cut-out position? Or then when still in unbelief, will they be grafted in again?

Jettison the False Age-ism System

The notion of the reinstatement of the Mosaic system just where it previously was interrupted is as plain and patent a denial of the end of the testing of the first man as could be found. It reinstates in the future the testing of the first man under the pre-cross Mosaic system. And this age-ism system has done so by alleging a dispensational testing scheme, that in actuality destroys this basic dispensational truth that the testing of the first man is terminated. Why not just jettison the unscriptural intercalation-of-a-church-age notion? The fact is that the notion is altogether incompatible with the truth that the testing of the first man is concluded and he no longer has a standing before God. This is a very basic truth of Scripture and the Scofieldian age-ism system, made even worse by the "intercalation" notion of L. S. Chafer, is at war with this basic dispensational truth. Of course, what that means is giving up Scofieldian dispensational age-ism and recognizing that it does not really represent dispensational truth. I have explained this in Chapter 1 of *Elements of Dispensational Truth*.

The End of the Testing and Standing of the First Man Explains Two Scriptures

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened to them [as] types, and have been written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. 10:11).

This text also assumes that the trial of man is completed as well as that what transpired under that testing serves as instruction for the Christian.

The expression, "the ends of the ages," which will be found in 1 Cor. 10:11, is rather strange; but to preserve the sense of the Greek, we could not say, "the last times," any more than "the end of the ages," still less "the end of the world." The end of the ages was not yet come; but all the different dispensations by which God had put Himself in relation with man, so far as they were connected with man's responsibility, had come to one point, and were brought to an end in the death of the Lord Jesus. After that -- great as had been His long-suffering -- God established a new creation. We have therefore used the literal translation, "the ends of the ages."¹

Hebrews 9:26

But now once in the consummation of the ages he has been manifested for [the] putting away of sin by his sacrifice (Heb. 9:26).

For consummation, the Arndt and Gingrich *Lexicon* (p. 792) says "completion, close, end." Under the words "End, Ending," W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of new Testament Words* says:

In Heb. 9:26, the word translated "world" (A.V.) is in the plural, and the phrase is 'the consummation of the ages.' It was the heading up of all the various epochs appointed by divine counsels that Christ was manifested (i.e., in His incarnation) "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

It was the heading up of all the epochs of the testing of man, actually.²

1. J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 13:199.

2. It is interesting to notice the way in which *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (p. 803) by The Dallas Seminary Faculty handles this:

By The phrase "end of the ages" The writer evidently meant the climax of the Old Testament eras as well as the imminency of the climax of all things.

I do not know if the writer shared the view that the "age of grace" is intercalated, but if he did, he seems to have forgotten that the Mosaic age is the consummation of the testing of man, and that the rapture of the saints. In such a scheme of ages the climax of the Mosaic age will not be reached until Christ appears in glory.

There is an "age to come" (Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph. 1:12; Heb. 6:5), the millennium, but that age is not, of course, included in the statement about the consummation of the ages. Evidently, then, the phrase "consummation of the ages" does not mean that there will not be any more ages. The consummation of the ages refers to the consummation of the testing of man in the ages up to the cross. The testing terminated during the Mosaic age. The moral history of the world is ended, though the world goes on. The moral history of man is ended, though man goes on. The moral history of the Mosaic age has ended, though the Mosaic age goes on.

J. N. Darby brought before the saints the subject of the testing of the first man, its completion at the cross, and the consequent setting up of the second man. Let us hear what he said about the consummation of the ages:

The "end of the ages," or "consummation of the ages," are all the dealings of God with man to test his general condition. In this general sense the state of innocence comes in; but the proper connection is what is after the fall, yet not looking at man as lost, but testing his state and whether he was recoverable, or was lost and had to be saved. Without law; under law; God manifested in the flesh, were the great features of this. Hence in John 12:31 the Lord says, "Now is the judgment of this world." Though there was testimony there were no religious institutions before the flood, unless the fact of sacrifices. There were after: government; promises to Abraham, showing it was grace to one separated from an idolatrous world and head of a new race; the law; the prophets; and at last the Son as come, not as offered. Then God laid the foundation of His own purposes in righteousness.³ ♦

When God had made this plain, before the law, under the law, by promises, by the coming and presence of His Son, then the work of God takes the place, for our salvation and God's glory, of man's responsibility -- on the ground of which faith knows man is entirely lost. This explains the expression (v. 26) "in the consummation of the ages."

Now this work is perfect, and perfectly accomplished. Sin had dishonored God, and separated man from Him. All that God had done to give him the means of return only ended in affording him opportunity to fill up the measure of his sin by the rejection of Jesus. But in this the eternal counsels of God were fulfilled, at least the moral basis laid, and that in infinite perfection, for their actual accomplishment in their results. All now in fact, as in purpose always, rested on the second {last} Adam, and on what God had done, not on man's responsibility, while that was fully met for God's glory (cp. 2 Tim. 1:9, 10; Titus 1:1, 2). The Christ, whom man rejected, had appeared in order to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Thus it was morally the consummation of the ages.

The result of the work and power of God are not yet manifested. A new

creation will develop them. But man, as the child of Adam, has run his whole career in his relationship with God: he is enmity against God. Christ, fulfilling the will of God, has come in the consummation of ages, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and His work to this end is accomplished. This is the moral power of His act, of His sacrifice before God; in result, sin will be entirely blotted out of the heavens and the earth. To faith this result, namely, the putting away of sin, is already realized in the conscience, because Christ who was made sin for us has died and died to sin, and now is risen and glorified, sin (even as made it for us) left behind. ⁴ ♦

The promise, given to Abraham and confirmed to the one seed (Christ), could not be set aside nor added to by a transaction 430 years after {i.e., after the giving of the law: Gal. 3:17}. God had thus bound Himself, but the law came in by the bye till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made, that is, Christ. Then its function ceased, and consequent on Christ's work, all being sinners, the law broken, and Christ rejected (the last means by which God could seek for fruit from man), the attempt only proving that man hated both Christ and His Father -- that the mind of the flesh was enmity against God, then God's righteousness is revealed without law (the Greek reads "apart from law"), the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ. Man's probation as to the history of it, on the ground of getting good by any means from him, was over. Now, says Christ, is the judgment of this world {John 12:31}. Hence it was Christ cursed the fig-tree never to bear fruit. Hence it is that it is said "now once in the end of the world [the consummation of ages], he hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

When I say the probation is over, it is not that man is not yet dealt with as to receiving the gospel. Of course he is; but what can be made of man in the flesh? It has been tried, and it is not now the question whether he can succeed in making out righteousness for the day of judgment, but, receiving the truth, find out that he is already lost, and righteousness and salvation and indeed glory his as believing in Christ. As a person under probation, ⁵ he knows he is a lost sinner, and finds a new life, a perfect salvation, and divine righteousness in Christ. Now all this clearly shows the place of the law between the promise and the coming of the Seed to whom the promise was made, and how we are created again in Christ Jesus unto good works. It is no longer the law requiring human righteousness from flesh to prove what it is, but a new creature and the power of the Spirit leading us in the path in which Christ walked. We are sons and to walk as God's dear children, to put on, as the elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies -- the whole character and walk of Christ. ⁶

4. *Synopsis* 5:224, 225.

5. He is not using the word "probation" here in the sense that man, as such, is under testing. This will be clear to the reader when he reads the summary.

6. *Collected Writings* 31:335, 336.

Conclusion

by J. N. Darby

At last God sends His Son. He said, "I have yet one Son, it may be they will reverence my Son," and He would try man by His coming. "They cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him." In Matthew 21 we find God seeking fruit from that which ought to have yielded it; and so Christ, when He came, first looked for fruit. He desired to find (v. 18, 19). "He hungered. And when he saw a fig-tree in the way he came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; and presently the fig-tree withered away." He cursed it -- this was nature judged, that flesh should NEVER produce fruit, for there was nothing in man in the flesh to suit God. Plenty of profession, outward show, and assumption to be something, "but leaves only." "There is none good; no, not one." And so He said, "Now is the judgment of this world." The world was judged then, although that judgment is not executed yet; in grace God carries the execution; but still there was the complete ending of all human responsibility as regards the record of it. Each individual may have to come to conviction of it, of course.

But according to the gospel, Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, not in probation whether he would be so. All is proved worthless; for the husbandmen not only killed God's Son, who came looking for fruit, but also rejected all His invitations and Himself come in grace. If God spent His Son in the effort to get man's heart back to Himself, it only shewed that his heart was enmity against God, and would not own Him. He came with perfect grace, and shewed He had power sufficient to bring every blessing to man; all His miracles were blessing to man except the cursing of the fig tree, which was not, because, after all, there must be the judgment of the flesh. The cross then comes in, and proves not only that man is a sinner (we get that in his being turned out of Paradise), but that man is in himself irreclaimable. This closes the first Adam's history--the history of man responsible in the flesh, and it was the end of the world; that is, morally, the world was ended and judged. So the apostle speaks in Heb. 9 26. "Now once in the end of the world" (literally "in the end [or consummation] of the ages," those ages in which God was testing man in responsibility as a reclaimable sinner)--"hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Christ came to seek fruit and they had none for Him. He came to make a feast, as the expression of God's grace to them, and they would not sit at it. In the two parables (Matt. 21 and 22) there is not only the end of the history of man in responsibility, but also the rejection of Christ come in grace. The mind of the flesh is proved to be enmity against God; and we must learn that there is no good in us. But God does not give up His grace, it superabounds over all man's condition as a sinner, and an irreclaimable one.

This is just the difference between the synoptical Gospels and John. The first three -- Matthew, Mark, and Luke -- are the presentation of Christ to man to be received, and with proofs of power sufficient to remove all the effects of sin; but behind all you find the difficulty that man is in the flesh, and the mind of the flesh is enmity against God. John's testimony starts with this, that He was not received, and therefore coming in that grace which was above all the rejection. In chapter 1, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own and his own received him not;" so God comes out in grace. The flesh is looked at in John as having disowned

Christ, and therefore his Gospel all through is election and grace. There is no such language in the other three Gospels as He uses here in speaking of man. He goes to the roots and principles of things in John, and so He says, "Ye are of your father the devil," speaking to sinners, and "no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But He says, I'll have my own sheep notwithstanding what man is. Thus, on the rejection of His word in chapter 8 and His work in chapter 9, He gathers them, whether of the Jews or of the Gentiles, to the one Shepherd, and gives them eternal life. So in John I we find Him received by those who were born of God, not of the will of man. "To as many as received him to them gave he power [that is, title, authority, or right] to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1: 12, 13). There I get the people of God. Man's responsibility is closed: he is a lost sinner; he has been in a state of probation, and it is over.

Now, although the ground of man's responsibility is over in the sense of having wholly failed under it, when proved in every possible way, yet as to moral dealing with each individual, the responsibility is there to the full; and as an individual under moral dealing, a man has to go through the history of the process of responsibility and its failure; but he goes through it to bring out this, that he is lost already. He has to prove the truth of God's verdict that in man there is no good thing; and so the result of the principle of responsibility is for him to find out that he is lost, that the responsibility is over; not as if it was not true, but because he is lost and ruined, as the man who has lost all his money by foolish ways. It is important to keep up responsibility, but the individual is brought to the consciousness that on that ground it is all up with him. Man is lost. We have spent every farthing, and have only debts; these we have if that is any good. It is all over with the first man, and no mending of him will do: he is lost and ruined; but Christ came to save the lost.

Now the Second Man is set up. It is not a mending of the first man, but the substitution of the Second. There is no improvement or correction of the first man (although we are practically changed if we come to Christ), but the sins of the first Adam are all cleared away; and, secondly, the tree itself is cut down by the roots for faith. In the cross we see the responsibility met completely; Christ has met all the failure, the fruit of the tree of responsibility, and has glorified God in so doing. Man has brought in confusion; but Christ came, met the case, and cleared the scene, and triumphed over all. When He came, God's character as to facts was compromised, and there was no escape. If He had saved none, but at once cast off sinners, it were righteousness, but there would have been no love. If He had let all pass, when man was a sinner, and in such sort saved all (which man would call love, but which would not have been divine love, for God is holy), where were the righteousness? But Christ came. Well, surely in the cross there is righteousness against sin, as nowhere else, yet there is the infinite love of God to sinners.

In Him, in Christ, I get both the trees of Paradise united, fulfilled in grace, bearing our sins and putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and becoming life according to righteousness. I am brought to the discovery of what I am, and then I see Christ has died on the cross and has taken the whole thing on Himself. When I see Him-the Son of God-dying on the cross, I say if this is not righteousness -- judgment against sin -- I do not know what is. But whom is He dying for? The guilty sinner. Well, if this is not love, I do not know what is. On the cross we get every attribute of God perfectly maintained --

His majesty and truth, as well as His righteousness and love -- every claim met, and God perfectly glorified in the Person of Christ, the Lamb of God. He was there making atonement for sin that the gospel might go out to all the world; and as to believers, bearing their every sin. The whole thing is met there, and the believer's responsibility cleared away, as to sins, that he may enter into responsibility on a new ground, that of a child of God. He has met fully, and completely, and absolutely, all the fruit of man's eating the tree and all the sins of the believer (his responsibility). This, of course, does not touch the believer's responsibility to Christ or to God as a believer in Christ; for this is of a new order, and comes in upon a different ground.⁷

Ed.

Small Thoughts *Coming out of Big Mouths*

Years ago after ministering the Word somewhere, a Christian of about 20 years of age came after me immediately at the conclusion of the address, for the purpose of setting me straight. While a number of brethren stood about and watched in a rather appalled manner, this young man instructed me to "preach Christ"! I was speaking in a negative manner! Besides, he had been at a "conference" recently and an older brother said that brethren ought to "preach Christ." I asked how old the brother was and then told him of an even older brother (A. C. Brown) who said to me several times, that some say "preach Christ," as if preaching what was due Christ in our walk was not "preaching Christ." I told the young man that he was quite wrong and it was a pious-sounding, but pretentious and unholy, effort to suppress needed ministry of correction and instruction.

A few spoke to me subsequently, apologetically for the (characteristic) brashness displayed by the young brother. But I knew his conduct was in keeping with the home environment. The pathetic father hardly said a word, while his mother was constantly talking, often in a forward manner. The proverbial pants (trousers) were obviously on the wrong person in that family, and the son was reflecting the disorderly conduct of the mother. Well, from the Christian view it is disorderly, is it not? Do you think that because many women wear pants (trousers) now that therefore such conduct is alright? And because they cut their hair and look more and more mannish, that it is alright now? Beware; the obliteration of the divinely appointed distinction and place of the sexes does not lead to the self-delusive "equality," allegedly sought, but rather it leads to the *inversion of the divine order*.

Ed.

GILGAL

Thus we see that Jordan brings us at once to Gilgal. There was no circumcision in the wilderness -- none at all. In the wilderness we do not find that our hearts get weaned and that we are dead; nor can there be any Gilgal for us until we have crossed the Jordan.

And if we want this accomplished in souls, it will not do to lower the tone of our message; in our preaching, we must keep up the standing at its full height, and we must lift up the Object, too, in order to deliver hearts out of this world.

Ques. What if many will not have this, and will not go with you?

They will go on with you pretty much until you seek to take them up to heaven.

In Scripture, there is no such thought as that of the union of Christ with men, be it Christian or worldling, but we find that believers are united to a Christ in glory, otherwise it would be bringing down the new thing which is to replace the old, it would be lowering it to the old. The corn of wheat must die, or else it abideth alone, only through death can it bear fruit; and it was to deliver us out of this present evil world that Christ gave Himself.

The world is a judged world, but those who are united to Christ are with {seated in} Him in heavenly places [Eph. 2:6]. We belong, then, to Christ in heaven, and so we must walk like Him down here. The danger is of getting hold of the truth of this position in Christ, and the world still being gone on with.

There are things all around us which come in in an ensnaring way. They do not come and say, 'I am the devil, will you have me?' If we see the danger of the world creeping in amongst those where these truths are held, it is important then to give them an object in heaven. Sometimes they may want a good rap on their consciences, that will be a question for spiritual wisdom; but where we see the danger, we must present to them an object in heaven. It is of moment to remember that, as a matter of fact, we are living in the world, and only faith it is that lifts us up out of it.

Ques. It is not so much, 'this is wrong,' and 'that is right,' as, 'this is not Christ,' and 'that is Christ'?

Yes; it is put simply enough for us, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." When one comes to the ordinary run of everyday life, such as buying and selling, etc., if a Christian be honest, and cannot buy and sell in the name of the Lord Jesus, he will not do it at all; that is, where there is any conscience.

God has called us to His own kingdom and glory, and if I lose the thought of that, I lose my standard. But if a Christian is growing careless, we may perhaps have to use a hammer to get at his conscience.

I do not believe we can be worldly if we are keeping God's glory before us as our own portion. And further, there is positive progress in knowing more and more of Christ; while he "that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." But if I lose that hope, I have lost my spring. Paul says, "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God"; there he is, cleared out from the law, and he has God to live to.

We must have an object before us. Again, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" -- there we have the life; "And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" -- there we have the Object, the Son of God. All the influence of His love comes in.

This is a great thing, but sometimes it makes one's heart groan to see the lack of this amongst Christians; and then worldliness gets more and more hold of them.

It is not merely a question of open sin that everybody can judge, but it is a slippery thing.

A straw shows which way the wind blows; they used to put up texts on the walls, and at first they were in black and white, but now they have all kinds of beautiful things, and so on. We ought to be careful about such things. Though only a personal matter, I name it to show what I mean: I had slipped in Canada and broken my spectacles, and someone kindly gave me a gold pair of glasses. I took them and thought no more about them, for one does not look a gift horse in the mouth, as the saying is. But in Barbados the brethren meet in rather a dark place, and I used my glasses there. Well, the other day, I got a letter from dear S---- telling me he had spoken to a brother about the rings on his fingers -- as they are apt to wear them, for they are naturally full of vanity -- and at once he answered, 'Oh, they are not a bit worse than Mr. Darby's spectacles.' Got another pair since! This is very practical truth. There is a young woman, say, in a family, and her parents insist on her wearing a certain kind of dress, but others see it and to them it becomes a snare. All this, however, is not like an open kind of sin that everybody can judge. "Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

J. N. Darby, *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 419-421.

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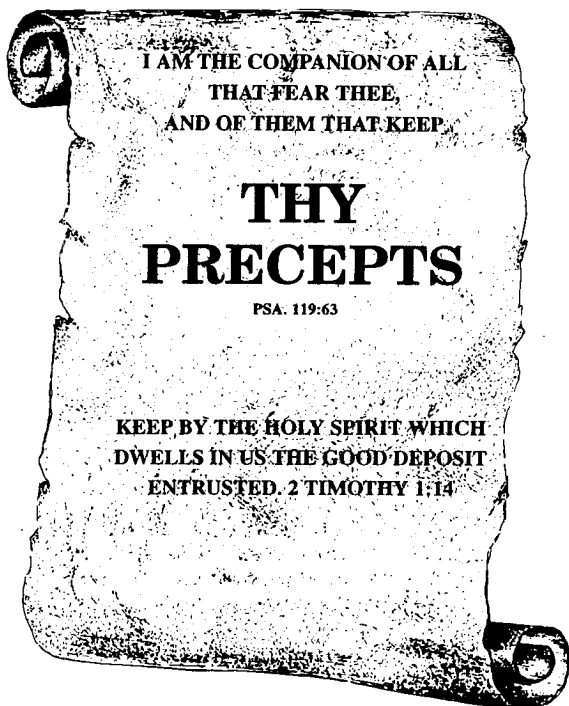
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If the Lord will, we expect to announce in the next issue the availability of a diskette containing two databases our bro. Dennis Ryan is developing. One database will cover *Words of Truth*, ed. by F. G. Patterson, and the other will cover *Thy Precepts*.

We are thankful for the opportunity to make these things available to our brethren in Christ. Those that give of their time and energy to these projects do so as unto the Lord, as does our bro. David Wandelt who patiently works at minimizing typos in *Thy Precepts*; upon which the editor sometimes adds more typos. And it must be acknowledged that the same subsequent addition of typos befalls the proofreading done by our sister Carolyn Ryan on various papers and books.

Ed.

8. Of course, his expositions of books of the Bible are not included.
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The Lord Jesus Knocking

An extract from a letter

by J. Alfred Trench

[Title and subheadings supplied for this printing; D. P. Ryan]

Instead, then, of proudly maintaining that the Church, with all its division and worldliness, is what it ought to be, I trust some of you have hearts to mourn that it is not, and to discern that our proper place is bowed low before God in confession of the Church's failure and consequent ruin.

To repair the ruin is impossible. God has not attempted it; therefore, all man's efforts to accomplish it, by making churches, have failed. By the solemn teaching of the epistles to the Seven Churches of Revelation, we are warned of the gradual spread of evil; until in the last time, just before the Lord comes, opened up in the epistle to Laodicea, we find "the faithful and true witness" spewing out of His mouth the Church which had proved unfaithful and untrue in its place of witness, while there is a promise for any who may be *individually* faithful: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if *any man* hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me." What a promise, we may well say! Shall we not seek to fulfill its conditions, and to enter into its blessing? If the Lord Jesus can own no longer the Church that has proved false to Him, He only prizes the more any hearts that will still open to His voice and let Him in; and this is all that He looks for in these last days. . . .

1 Timothy Shows How Far the Church Has Fallen

Well, then, in saying that we cannot *restore* the state of things existing according to 1 Timothy, am I asserting that the Epistle is a "blot in the canon of Scriptures, and ought to be removed," or that it is "practically useless"? Nay, no more than I assert this of the first three chapters of Genesis, when I say that in them is described the state from which man has fallen, and to which he cannot be restored. If we will fully know the extent of a fall, we must know something of the height from which we have fallen; but as in days, through God's grace past for us, dear brethren, when we had not read the lessons of Gen. 3 aright, and so were trying to regain, by our efforts, the place before God we had forfeited for ever by our sin, when all the time our only *true* place was in self-judgment in His presence — just so it is now. So little has been learned from this Epistle and other Scriptures, of what the Church of God *ought* to be, that few of us estimate how sadly it has fallen, so as to take our only fitting place, in sorrow, shame, and confession, for the dishonor done to the Lord Jesus by that which is professedly His Church and kingdom. When we know that to www.presenttruthpublishers.com gather together in one, the

children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11:52), was one object dear to the heart of Christ in His death, how can we consent to the scattered state of His children now, and not rather be humbled that it is so? But because we cannot remedy it, are we therefore free to take any sectarian position we choose? Nay, rather, but to be found, even if we are there alone, on ground common to every member of Christ.

In 2 Timothy We May Hear the Lord Jesus Knocking

What, then, have we in 2 Timothy, but just the state of things we have been contemplating — of the Church's apostasy and ruin: and when it is no longer possible to restore it to the place, and order, and blessing it has forfeited, the individual path for any who will be faithful to Christ is here marked out. In this Epistle, we may hear, as it were, Jesus standing at the door, and knocking, that, if any will open to Him, He may come in and sup with them. In looking through the Epistle, my brethren cannot fail to be struck with the sad tone that pervades it. Written from Paul's prison, in the last year of his life, it is the last revelation God has given His saints through him.¹ I think it is significant that he does not so much as name the Church. We know how fondly he had watched over it; doubtless, he had hoped much from it: but what a picture of the state of things opening up around him, he gives us! No wonder, I say, he cannot name the Church. All they which are in Asia have turned away from him (1:15). In chap. 2, we find strife about words to no profit, subverting the hearers, so that faithful Timothy must "hold fast the *form of sound words*" (1:13), and "study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (v. 15); then there were profane and vain babblings, tending only to increase unto more ungodliness (v. 16); fundamental truths, too, were being let slip, to the overthrow of faith (v. 18), so much so that Timothy must be exhorted to "remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead according to my Gospel" (v. 8). In chap. 3, we are carried forward into the "perilous times" of "the last days" (v. 1), with many a broad characteristic to identify them with our day: here is one in v. 5: Men having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; and from such our path is "to turn away." Again, we recognize the "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (v. 7); but there is worse to come, for we have resistance to the truth (v. 8), "evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (v. 13). But what shall be our defense in the midst of it all? "The holy

1. It is uncertain when his first Epistle to Timothy was written, but from verse 13 of chap. 4, it seems that it was before his imprisonment. But the publication of time between the Epistles is of no consequence, for most of the second looks forward prophetically to the last days.

Scriptures," able to make wise unto salvation,² through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Therefore, in chap. 4, Timothy is further instructed to "preach the Word, to instruct in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine" (v. 2); for the time was at hand when "sound doctrine" would not be endured; but men would choose and heap to themselves teachers, who would please their ears, by preaching to them doctrine according to their own desire — "fables" substituted for "the truth" (vv. 3,4). Then there was Demas, that had gone back to the world, and at his first answer not one to stand by the servant of the Lord (vv. 10,16). What a scene of evil and confusion! Yet the man of God need not be disheartened; and Paul gives us, as that which sustained him amid the wreck of all earthly prospects — the promises of life, the testimony of the Lord, with its consequent sufferings (for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," chap. 3:12), the knowledge of salvation; above all, the knowledge of Him whom he had believed. Then there was the crown of righteousness, for him and all that love the appearing of the Lord Jesus; and though men forsook him, the Lord stood with him, and strengthened him.

What Was To Be Timothy's Path?

But what was to be Timothy's path? Shall he not attempt to stem the torrent of evil which had come flooding in, and turn back its surge by the exercise of his eldership? It was in vain. The whole Church, over which the office was to be exercised, was fast breaking up in apostasy, to be removed from its place of testimony, and finally, spewed out of its Lord's mouth. So far from the elders having any power in such a state of things, Paul had already told them that "of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). "The House of God" of 1 Timothy, had now become "the great House" of 2 Timothy, with its vessels "to honor" and "to dishonor" (chap. 2:20, 22). To purge the house was impossible, much less to get out of it. We cannot get out of Christendom, until we go to be with the Lord. It only remained for Timothy to look to himself, and "*purge himself*" from the vessels to dishonor, that he might be "a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use;" and, thus, purged to "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with*" any that, like himself, were willing to own the *Lord*, and be faithful to Him. The fact was, "the foundation of God" stood firm amid the rubbish, with its twofold "seal;" "The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let *every one* that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." Timothy must get down to it [i.e., down to the foundation], not to reconstruct out of the ruins the fallen Church, but in individual loyalty to Christ; and be found with any who had made

2. In all the full significance of that word, not only looking back at our past deliverance from the judgment and condemnation due to sin, but taking in also our present conduct through the wilderness, nor stopping short of our entrance into glory.

their way there too. Here comes in the first Epistle again, with important practical bearing on our walk, to enable any thus found together, to take the right *ground* of the Church, though to restore the whole be impossible. In *2 Timothy* some scattered stones get down upon the foundation. *Here* we are given the old plan upon which the House was built in its pristine days of glory, that we may put the two or three together aright thereon.

As to ministry in the Word, there was still Timothy's gift from the ascended Christ, of an "Evangelist" (chap. 4:5), of which he is exhorted to "make full proof;" and the special "gift of God," which was IN him, by the putting on of apostolic hands (chap. 1:6); and if anywhere he found a faithful man, capable of teaching others, he was to commit to him the things he had heard of Paul. And from beginning to end of the Epistle, there is not a single mention of his special office as elder or bishop; or any direction given him that does not belong to any of those, who, in this day, in their varied ministries of the evangelist, pastor and teacher, are the gifts of the ascended Christ to His Body. Ah! how blessed it is for us to know that if the Church, as the vessel for the bright display of God to the world, is broken and scattered to pieces, yet that it is still the Body of Christ, which He nourishes and cherishes as the dearest object of His heart, until the very day He presents it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Let us read Eph. 5:23-32, dear brethren, and shall we not adore and worship Him for love like this, that shines the brighter as we contrast it with our coldness of heart and ingratitude to Him?

And here I call to mind a precious promise of Jesus, given us, I doubt not, in prospect of these very days: — "Where *two* or *three* are gathered together in My name, *there am I* in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). This leads me to say, that if we have lost our formal order, our sign-gifts (1 Cor. 14:22), and much else by the Church's failure, never to be regained, we have *much* left with such a promise. Nay, I am bold to say, we have all that is essential to the *fullness of joy*, for we have Jesus; and "in Thy presence is fullness of joy." Beloved, it needs but the two or three to count upon His promise, and "there am I" satisfies the heart, as only they know who have proved it. We bless Him for His gifts, but much more for Himself. We rejoice to come together at times to hear some minister of His proclaim the ever glad tidings of His grace; but it is still greater joy to gather round Himself, His Spirit present in the Assembly to absorb each thought with Jesus, to fix each eye on Him, to restrain the energy of the flesh, lest it come in to mar our blessing, and to enable us, in the conscious joy of our relationship, to "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.3

Antichrist's Names and Designations

How Scripture Presents Him

The divinely inspired writers of scripture speak of the Antichrist in relation to the themes concerning which they wrote. We might briefly note four of these cases:

1. Daniel refers to him as a wilful king. Daniel speaks much of reigns. He reigns without any regard to Jehovah or Christ (Dan. 11:36, cp. also Isa. 30:33 and 57:9).
2. Paul in 2 Thess. 2 gives us his moral character as profaning the things of God introducing his own religion which is the culmination of the mystery of lawlessness working in the church now.
3. John, who writes of the family of God, says he will deny the Father and the Son, being apostate from fundamental truth.
4. And John, in the book of God's judgments calls him a beast and a false prophet (Rev. 13) who falls under the hand of Him to whom all judgement is committed.

The notion that the Antichrist will be a ruler of the whole world during the last 3 ½ years of the 70th week would result in rejecting the Jewish nationality of the Antichrist. It also results in refusal to acknowledge the false Messiah character of the Antichrist.¹ We do not accept the idea that the Antichrist is a false Messiah merely because Irenaeus thought that he would be a Jew out of the tribe of Dan, based on Jer. 8:16. It may be that he will be a Danite; we do

1. W. K. Price, *The Coming Antichrist*, p. 132ff. It seems strange that one opposed to the idea of false-Messiahship should speak of the Antichrist as "Satan incarnate in human flesh" and "incarnate Satan" (*ibid.*, p. 152). That does sound like an imitation Messiah.

not know positively. It seems to me that the names and designation of the Antichrist, while denoting his character, indicate his falsely taking a place as the Messiah. We will also take notice here how his religious activities are of a character that points to the same thing. Let us examine his names and their import.

***1. The Lawless One*²**

In 2 Thess. 2 he is called "the lawless one." Lawlessness means to act without reference to the will of God, and is therefore self-will. Our Lord always did those things that pleased the Father (John 8:9).

How fearful a matter lawlessness is. It ought to make us shudder, and tremble at God's Word, with a contrite spirit, thanking Him for delivering us from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4). The earth-dwellers, i.e., the apostates of Christendom, who want their portion here and reject heaven, will be sent that fearful and appalling working of error to believe the lie, because they received not *the love of the truth* that they might be saved (2 Thess. 2:10,11). Oh my soul, *love* the truth! Do not only believe it, but love God's truth with all thy heart! The apostates loved unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:12). Our blessed Example loved righteousness and hated lawlessness (Heb. 1:9). Oh my soul, love righteousness and hate lawlessness! Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19). Let us have before us the walk of "the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (2 John 3). Let us cleave to the divine order: "cease to do evil, learn to do well" (Isa. 1:17) and "abhorring evil; cleaving to good" (Rom. 12:9). Never reverse the order: "But the wisdom from above first is pure, then peaceful . . ." (James 3:17). "Love ye then truth and peace" (Zech. 8:19). Mordecai, who wrongly sanctioned the marriage of Esther to the Gentile, contrary to the law, reversed this order (Esther 9:30) as Hezekiah selfishly did also (2 Kings 20:19). The moral order is this: "and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isa. 32:17). "For righteous is Jehovah; he loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright" (Psalm 11:7). And this order is consonant with the very unfolding of the nature of God as light (1 John 1:5) and then love (1 John 4:8, 16). Thus we find in John 1 that light came into

2. In the Sept/Oct 1994 issue of *Thy Precepts* (vol. 9, #4) we began an examination of 2 Thess. 2, which should be read at this point. Verse 1 and its correct translation were considered at length and it indicates the rapture as preceding the appearance of the apostasy, the Lawless One, and the Day of the Lord. Verse 2 occupied us in the Nov/Dec 1994 issue, as verses 3-5 did in the Jan/Feb 1995 issue. There we considered at length that the phrase "unless the apostasy have come first" was not a reference to the rapture. ~~Then in the Mar/April 1995 issue we considered the restraint and the restrainer (the Holy Spirit).~~ <http://www.thyprecepts.com>

the world in the Person of Christ; and in John 3 we find that He is the measure of God's love. This order is divine order, the order of the Word of God, but, alas, not the order of multitudes that profess to the followers of "the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (2 John 3). The wrong order infects multitudes of Christians and in its worst form it is seen in 1 Tim. 3:5 and 2 Thess. 2:10 as rank infidelity.

ISSUE OF THE PRESENT MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

The mystery of iniquity, or better, the mystery of lawlessness, has as its ultimate issue the revelation of the lawless one. He is the Antichrist. In 1 John 2:18 we are told that it is "the last hour" and that there are many antichrists. A characteristic of an Antichrist is that he is a lawless one. He acts on his own will without reference to the will of God. And this acting by man's will without the will of God gives character to the mystery of lawlessness at work even in the apostle's day in the bosom of professing Christendom. It is not only or merely antichrists, though specially embodied in them, but our own wills acting in the Christian profession. All of this has given rise to what is called Christendom. At the rapture, all believers will be removed and the false profession will go on for a short time, as seen in the woman of Rev. 17, the anti-church. Then will occur the revelation of the Lawless One and the consequent apostasy. No longer will there be a *mystery* of lawlessness. Lawlessness will be publicly enthroned in the person of the Antichrist.

HIS APOCALYPSE

2 Thess. 2:8 says:

And then the lawless one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall annul by the appearing of his coming.

The word "revealed" means an apocalypse, the word used in Rev. 1:1 concerning the Lord Jesus. He will be revealed from Heaven (1 Thess. 1). The Antichrist also will have his apocalypse, his revelation. It will take place about the middle of the 70th week, when Satan is cast down from heaven. Subsequently, the second part of Christ's coming will take place -- not the pretribulation rapture, but the appearing of his coming (presence). At the rapture, there is no appearing of his presence to the world. When He comes as depicted in Rev. 19, that is the appearing of his presence. Then the Lord Jesus (precious name to our hearts) shall "*consume with the breath of his mouth*" the thief of the affections due the Lord Jesus. Concerning the thrust of that phrase, W. Kelly remarked that it is "expressive of the inner energy of divine power." Thus shall the true apocalypse displace the anti-apocalypse.

Notice also that the Lawless One has a coming (parousia). His "coming is according to the working of Satan" (2 Thess. 2:9). The restrainer, the Spirit of God, had previously hindered the apocalypse of the Lawless One. Now the

next Avatar was brought forth by direct Satanic energy. But there will follow the Antichrist another apocalypse (of Christ) and that apocalypse is Christ's "appearing of his coming."

SATANIC IMITATION

This false Christ will be endowed with power by Satan to imitate some of the powers of Christ. "Whose coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood" (2 Thess. 2:9).³ "And it works great signs, that it should cause even fire to come down from heaven to the earth before men. And it deceives those that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs . . . And it was given to it to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image should also speak . . . (Rev. 13:13-15). This stands in perfect contrast to Acts 2:22.

This reminds us of the time that fire fell from the sky to ignite the sacrifice on the altar in the Old Testament: consider, for example, the case where Elijah stood firm on the matter of who was Elohim, Jehovah or Baal (1 Kings 18). We can see from this example how God will send the apostates a working of error, for God will allow Satan to grant these powers to authenticate Antichrist's lies. It will indicate his Messiahship to the deceived. Just as stubborn Pharaoh was judicially hardened by God, so will the working of error sent by God harden the apostates in their evil ways and their worship of the false three.

A CHARISMATIC AND A SORCERER

"Charismatic" is a much used, abused and misunderstood word today. But as used in the common vernacular, the Antichrist will be "charismatic." No doubt, too, Christians get caught up in evil things, including the "Charismatic movement," which is the child of Pentecostalism. People are looking for oil (Matt. 25:8-10). They want "spiritual power" but do not understand God's ways concerning this. Christians, ill-taught, get caught up in this, too. The "charismatic renewal" will help on the coming of the Lawless One, spite of certain good appearances. *Of course* snares have good appearances!

No doubt the next Avatar will be the Chief Sorcerer. The greatest occult power will be at his disposal. The practice of "witchcraft" (Rev. 9:21), i.e., sorcery (*pharmakia*, from which we derive the word pharmacy) will be a leading feature at this time. *Pharmakia* involved the use of drugs and incantations for appeals to occult powers. The Antichrist will be empowered by Satan and will be the Chief Priest of Occultism. He will not only be the leading "charismatic," the leading spiritistic medium and Chief Sorcerer; he

3. The three words in this text, power, signs, and wonders, were looked at in the May/June 1995 issue of *Thy Precepts*. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

will also be the leading "psychic." Perhaps he will completely delude "those that dwell on the earth" into belief of "astral travel," "reincarnation" and the stock-in-trade of those taken in by deception and by demonic power now. There shall occur an unleashing of occultic, demonic power under the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21), such as the western nations have never experienced, for God will give them over to their own will and ways. Still, they will not repent of demon worship (Rev. 9:20) nor of their sorceries (Rev. 9:21). As we read in Rom. 1 those awful words, "God gave them up . . ." (vs. 24, 26, 28), so will it be when "those that dwell on the earth" are sent that fearful working of error to believe the lie (2 Thess. 2). The Lawless One will be the chief instrument used by Satan to orchestrate the psychic, occult, charismatic, and demonic, religion that shall engulf the western power and Israel during this time. He is Satan's final effort to bring to fruition his promise, "ye will be as God . . ." (Gen. 3:5), a reflection of His own lust.

THE TEMPLE

He will take the place of God in the temple that shall exist in Jerusalem at that time, showing himself as God. But not for long; for our Lord Jesus will consume him with the breath of His mouth (2 Thess. 2:8; Isa. 11:4). Indeed, the very temple in which the wicked one sat will be destroyed, for Christ will build the millennial temple (Zech. 6:13; Ezek. 40-48) and the counsel of peace will be between Jehovah and the Man Whose name is "the Branch."

2. *The False Prophet*

THE MOUTHPIECE OF SATAN

The Antichrist is "the false prophet" (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10, cp. Isa. 9:15). He is designated the *false* prophet because he will usurp the place of the true Prophet of whom Moses spoke (Deut. 18:15), who was a faithful and true witness (Rev. 3:14). A prophet is the mouthpiece of another, as Aaron was appointed to be the "mouth" (Ex. 4:16) and "prophet" (Ex. 7:1) of Moses. The Lord Jesus was the great prophet of God (John 4:19; Acts 3:22; 7:37). The false prophet is the great imitator of this office of Christ, and speaking as dragon (Rev. 13:11), we see that he is the mouthpiece of Satan.

When the Lord Jesus reigns, He will be a priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13). He will be king as sprung from David through Judah. But our Lord was not a Levite and so His priesthood is not according to the order of Aaron. It is according to the order of Melchizedek.

Concerning the Antichrist, we read: "and it had two horns like to a lamb, and spake as a dragon" (Rev. 13:11). There are three things denoted here. Horns denote power, and the Antichrist's power will be put forth in two ways:

1. As king in Jerusalem.
2. As high priest of the apostasy. He will be the supreme director of religious affairs.

But besides these two things, he is the false prophet speaking lies and so he is depicted as speaking as a dragon (cp. Rev. 12). The dragon is the father of lies. Thus he will be Antichrist as anti-king, anti-priest and anti-prophet.

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS FROM THE MOUTHS OF THE TRIAD

And the sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way of the kings from the rising of the sun might be prepared. And I saw out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as frogs; for they are [the] spirits of demons, doing signs; which go out to the kings of the whole habitable world to gather them together to the war of [that] great day of God the Almighty. (Behold I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watches and keeps his garments, that he may not walk naked, and that they [may not] see his shame.) And he gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16).

A Problem for the World-wide Government View. John F. Walvoord, who believes that the first beast of Rev. 13 is the Antichrist and head of a world-wide government wrote:

The major problem is how a war is possible when there is a world government under the control of Satan and the beast. Some have interpreted this as a gathering of forces in anticipation of the second coming of Christ. More probably, it reflects a conflict among the nations themselves in the latter portion of the great tribulation as the world empire so hastily put together begins to disintegrate. The armies of the world contending for honors on the battlefield at the very time of the second coming of Christ do all turn, however, and combine their efforts against Christ and His army from heaven when the glory of the second coming appears in the heavens.⁴

The various confederacies and powers that would exist at the end time was explained in the 1800s. It is the rejection of this that creates the problems. Satan will have been cast down out of heaven about the middle of the 70th week "knowing that he has a short time" (Rev. 12:12). In the stubbornness of evil he, knowing the time, will proceed in his hostility to Christ and see to it that the various armies of these confederacies and nations will gather to fight against Christ, whatever their motive might have been otherwise. God is in control; Satan is but an instrument in the purpose of God to glorify Himself in Christ

The Triad of Evil. Here the Triad is named together: the dragon and his two puppets, the first and second beasts of Rev. 13. The false prophet is the Antichrist, the second beast of Rev. 13. These two persons will be cast into the lake of fire when taken by the rider on the white horse (Rev. 19).

No doubt v. 13 is symbolic. Satan is a spirit-being and an unclean spirit is pictured issuing out of his mouth. Evidently the number three is meant to indicate something. It is the number of manifestation. God judges evil when it is ripe (as with the Amorites, for example, Gen. 15:16). It is the end-time "when the transgressors have come to the full" (Dan. 8:23).

From the mouth comes forth that which is inward; what the heart is full of the mouth speaks. Here is pictured the unleashing of final Satanic deception and hardening against God and His Christ before the millennial reign. The hosts of Satan's demons go forth, like unclean orators, "as frogs; for they are [the] spirits of demons, doing signs." It may be that there are three particularly powerful unclean spirits that will orchestrate the awful symphony of revolt, with other demons under their direction. The human agents used by these demons are endowed with convincing, deceptive, unclean oratory, accompanied by signs to confirm their words, in order that (God working sovereignly) whatever their plans involving even mutual hostility, the nations will be drawn to the land where Christ humbled Himself the first time He came.

No Battle of Armageddon. Many expositors erroneously think of one final, great battle in which Christ defeats His enemies. I recall W. Kelly remarked somewhere that it is a pious thought that Christ could do this, but is incorrect to think that He will do it that way. In fact, Christ will deal with the various confederacies and nations sequentially and in accordance with their respective characteristic evil. The Day of Jehovah begins when man's day (1 Cor. 4:4) ends, i.e., when the image of Dan. 2 is smashed by the appearing of the smiting stone. This occurs upon the appearance of the Lord in glory (Rev. 19) which initiates the Day of the Lord. There is a short space of time between the appearing and the 1335th day (Dan. 12) when the kingdom is set up. These things have been examined in some detail in *Future Events*, Ch. 6, "The War of the Great Day of God the Almighty," and placed on a chart which appears in *Daniel's 70 Weeks and the Revival of the Roman Empire* and in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, all available from the publisher.

Whose Mouth Shall Prevail? Unclean spirits coming out of the mouths of the Triad signifies the total inner corruption and evil of these three. But there is One of whom it is said:

... and out of his mouth goes a sharp [two-edged] sword, that with it he might smite the nations (Rev. 19:15).

And we read that the Lawless One shall be consumed "with the breath of his mouth" (2 Thess. 2:8). www.presenttruthpublishers.com

3. *Another Beast, Out of the Earth*

He is presented under the figure of a beast with two horns like a lamb (Rev. 13:11). He would imitate the priestly and kingly power of Christ. Our Lord is the Lamb of God (John 1:36), and the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5). Moreover, our Lord is referred to as "thesecond man, out of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47).

A BEAST OUT OF THE EARTH WITH TWO HORNS

A "beast" indicates a governmental power. The Antichrist will be a king over the Jews. See the next description (#4, in the next *Thy Precepts*). He is said to originate from the earth (the Jews) in contrast to the first beast, who is from the sea (the Gentiles). This beast has two horns. Horns signify power. Under the next designation, "The Wilful King," we will consider him as imitating the Lord Jesus as the priest upon His throne (Zech 6:13). I think that these two horns point to these two offices, king and priest, while as the false prophet he imitates the office of the Lord Jesus as prophet of God. Thus he imitates the three offices of Christ and he is an anti-king, anti-priest, and anti-prophet.

His voice is not the voice of the beloved (S. of S. 5:2) nor will it be said of him:

And all bore witness to him, and wondered at the words of grace which were coming out of his mouth (Luke 4:22).

This beast spoke "as a dragon," for he is the mouthpiece of Satan.

ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FIRST BEAST

Here again we have *the Triad*. Not only does it speak with the voice of the dragon:

it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it . . . (Rev. 13:12).

This is an imitation of the relationship of the Father and the Son of man. We read that the Father has

given him authority to execute judgment [also], because he is the Son of man (John 5:27);

the Father . . . has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22).

The Son of man shall indeed begin the execution of this authority when He appears in glory, and the first to be taken and cast into the lake of fire are these very two beasts (Rev. 19:20). But just before the unleashing of that judgment by the direct and personal intervention of the Son of man, this evil imposture of the Triad will have reached the full height of wickedness. The Son of man will exercise all the authority the Father gave Him. And this the second beast imitates that as it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it.

Moreover:

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It causes the earth and those that dwell in it to do homage to the first beast, whose wound of death was healed (Rev. 12:12).

These earth-dwellers are not every human being on the globe. This designation, appearing some 10 times in the book of Revelation, signifies the apostates of Christendom. Having rejected the true Christ, they are sent a working of error to believe the lie, and are caught up in this false worship of the creature. The Antichrist, the Lawless One, orchestrates this wickedness. He is the Director of Religious Affairs in the West, in apostate Christendom, the next Avatar; as well as leading the *Jewish* apostasy -- while the first beast leads the political apostasy as having received his throne from Satan (Rev. 13:2).

IT WORKS GREAT SIGNS

Fire from Heaven. Concerning the Lawless One we read:

Whose coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, and in all deceit of unrighteousness to them that perish . . . (2 Thess. 2:9).

And of this second beast we read:

And it works great signs, that it should cause even fire to come down from heaven to the earth before men (Rev. 12:13).

2 Thess. 2:9 uses the three words associated with what we call miracles; but observe that these are not miracles, they are "wonders of falsehood." J. N. Darby remarked:

In 2 Thess. 2:9 we have the statement that the presence of the wicked [one] will be with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; that is, "in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood." If we compare this with Acts 2:22 we find that the blessed Lord is described as a man approved of God, i.e., proved to be of Him, His mission and truth proved by miracles (powers), wonders, and signs. That is, we have three things which were proofs of the truth and mission of the Lord Jesus, attesting to the eyes of men the title of the wicked one: in this case, *falsehood* is of course added, "lying" or of falsehood; but this does not, as to the terribleness of the case or its character, alter it, because men are given up then to believe falsehood, or what is lying; 2 Thess. 2:11. In their state, it is a complete presenting of the proofs of Christ. If we turn to Rev. 13 we have a circumstance analogous to this, which completes the horror of it (v. 13). "And he doeth great wonders [signs] so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men." Now, reference to 1 Kings 18 shows us that this was the grand and sovereign test of the prophet and messenger of Jehovah. Priests of Baal in vain essayed to produce this proof proposed by Elijah, to make known who was the true God in the solemn declaration to the people, "If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him"; and to preclude any further halting between two opinions, it was decided that the God that answered by fire, He was to be God; and Elijah thereon prays that it might be presented to the people that He was Jehovah's prophet, and

that he had done all this at His word. And effectively at the sight of the fire descended from heaven, the people cry out "Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God." But in these terrible days that are to come, this proof also is given by the false prophet, the beast with two horns as a lamb.* That is, the very thing which was the absolute and well-known test of Jehovah's power and the mission of His messenger now accredits the false prophet. It is in the sight of men, no doubt, but that is sufficient for its object. We have, then, that which bore witness to Christ's mission as of God, as Messiah on earth; that which witnessed and tested Elijah's message as coming and sent by Jehovah -- both accrediting the pretensions of the wicked one and of the false prophet. It is a frightful picture and testimony to the way in which they that dwell on the earth are given up to blindness in that day. I leave to be weighed by your readers the extent to which these circumstances give a Jewish character to the instruments and power of evil referred to in these passages (1 John 2:18), excluding any necessity to restrict it absolutely to such an accomplishment, supposing it is admitted.

* Perhaps better rendered "lamb-like." At any rate, the allusion is evident; and note here, it is Christ in Person who is the Lamb.⁵

We do not know how the Antichrist will accomplish these things but we do know that they are "according to the working of Satan." Moreover, as God finally gave Pharaoh over to judicial hardening of his heart, so in that day

God sends to them a working of error, that they should believe what is false, that they all might be judged who have not believed the truth, but have found pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:11, 12).

The Beast's Image. We come now to another "wonder of falsehood" (2 Thess. 2) wrought by the Antichrist:

And it deceives those that dwell upon the earth by reason of the signs which it was given to it to work before the beast, saying to those who dwell upon the earth to make an image to the beast, which has the wound of the sword and lived. And it was given to it to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should also speak, and should cause that as many as should not do homage to the image beast of the beast should be killed (Rev. 13:14, 15).

Twice we read "it was given to it." Who gave to it? "Whose coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood" (2 Thess. 2:9). He gives "breath," not life, to the image of the beast and causes it to speak. This is one of the wonders of falsehood. Who makes the image? It is attributed to "those that dwell on the earth," the apostates of Christendom, for this is a moral description of them (Cp. Phil. 3:19-21). The Antichrist uses this image in his orchestration of the apostasy as the Director of

Religious Affairs for the West, the Avatar that new-agers will have been looking for. Very likely this is the image spoken of in Dan. 12 and Matt. 24; and in Dan. 9:27 in connection with the protection of abominations -- which in God's judgment will bring upon Israel the desolator, i.e., the King of the North, the Assyrian, the rod of God's anger.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

The mark is said to be put on the hand and the forehead. The hand speaks of service and the forehead of thoughts and ownership. Hands that ought to have been active in service to Christ then serve the beast, the coming Roman prince, the head of the revived Roman empire. As to the forehead, these beast worshipers having their minds filled with falsehood, stand in contrast with Rev. 22:4:

And they shall see his face; and his name [is] on their foreheads.

This is the blessed portion of the redeemed. We shall not see an image, but Himself, our portion eternally. His name is on our foreheads, and our minds will be filled with, and characterized by, worship. What an unspeakable blessedness. Are you waiting to see His face? Yes? Well, are you conducting yourself in this world as if you are waiting?

This subject has given rise to much speculation and many have wasted much time exercising their wits about it, practicing Gematria. We may note that Rev. 13:17 speaks of two forms of the mark: "the name of the beast, or the number of its name" -- either being marked by ownership (perhaps for the forehead) or by his character (perhaps for the hand). His number is a man's number. He is a man, yet is worshiped -- as one of the Triad.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

She Did What She Could

A very great woman, morally speaking, did not appear at the tomb of the Lord Jesus. Of her, our Lord said, in the gospel that presents *His* perfect service:

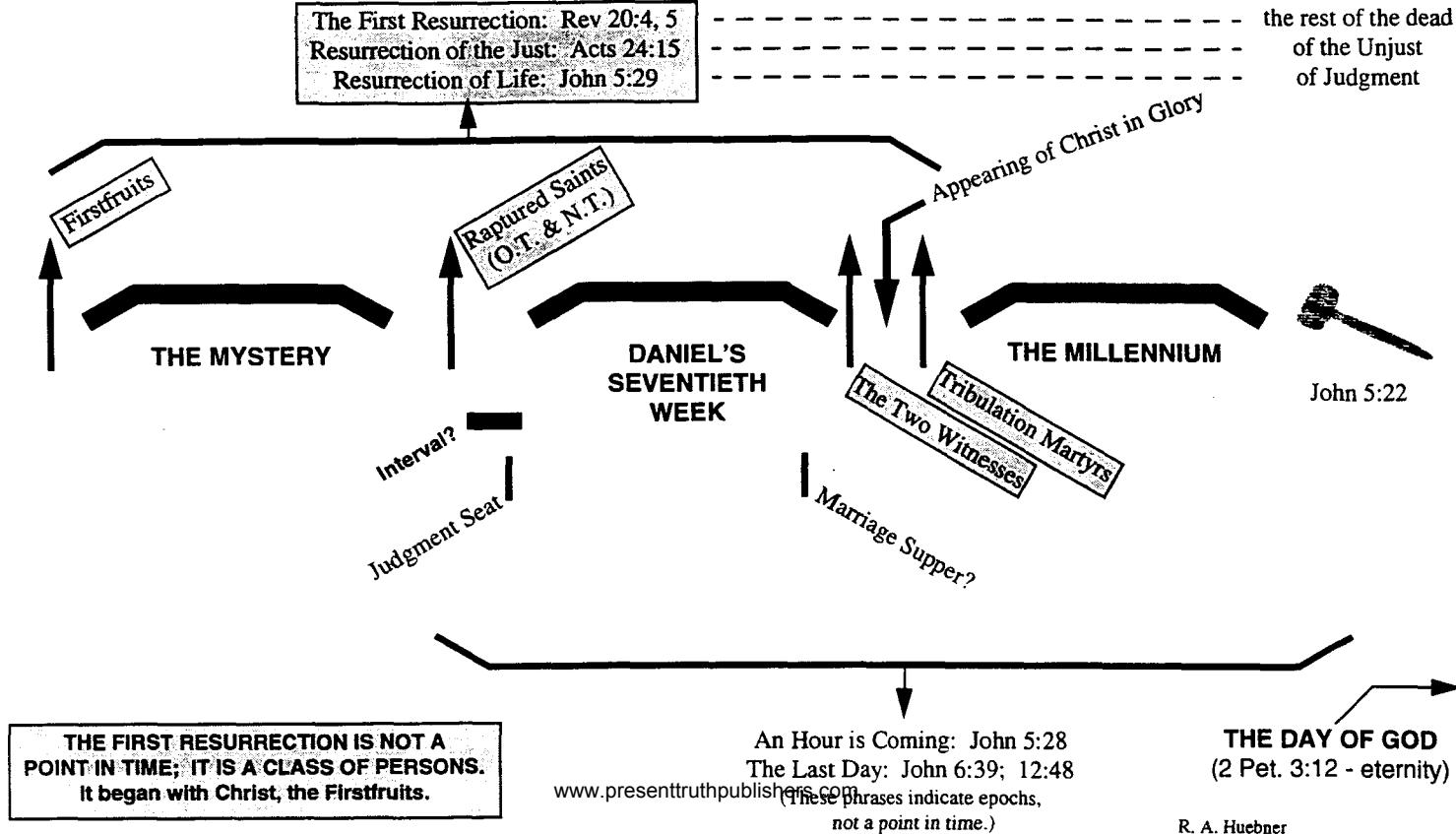
What *she* could she has done. She has beforehand anointed my body for the burial (Mark 13:8).

This was Mary of Bethany, from whom we all may learn much.

Ed.

The First Resurrection: Rev 20:4, 5
Resurrection of the Just: Acts 24:15
Resurrection of Life: John 5:29

the rest of the dead
of the Unjust
of Judgment



Notes on the Chart, The Interposed Heavenly Calling

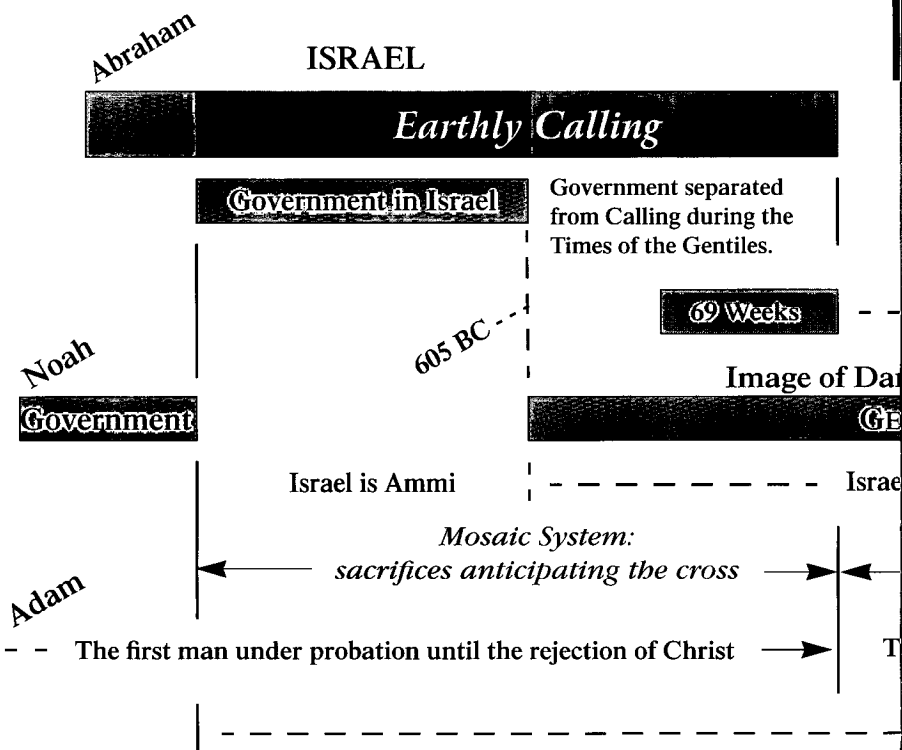
Government and Earthly Calling. As may be seen on the chart, the heavenly calling is interposed in the earthly calling of Israel. When Israel had both the earthly calling and government committed to her, Israel stood as a nation, a nationally recognized people by God. But due to sins, Jerusalem was given over to the Gentiles, to whom government was transferred. This governmental power is depicted in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 2). This image coincides with the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24). It has been well said that Daniel was the prophet of the times of the Gentiles. These times began with Nebuchadnezzar's taking of Jerusalem and continue until the Lord appears in glory as the smiting stone. Consequently, He will take the governmental power and be king, as well as Melchizedek priest, upon His throne (Zech. 6:13) and Israel will again have governmental power. Then once again the earthly calling and government will be reunited and Israel will again be the national, earthly people, acknowledged such by God. The chart shows these epochs on the line beginning with "Israel is Ammi."

No Gap in the Image. Is it really too much to suggest that in his dream Nebuchadnezzar did not see a gap in the legs of the image? Really, there is no gap in the image -- no gap in the times of the Gentiles. Those times have been running uninterruptedly.

No Gap in the Age. There is no such thing as an "Age of the Church," as if the church forms an earthly age among the earthly ages. The church is a heavenly thing. The Christian has a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1). So the chart shows the Mosaic Age continuing on until it is superseded by the "age to come" (Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Heb. 6:5). The phrase, "the end of the age" (Matt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20) refers to time after the removal of the church. It is not the end of the alleged "Church Age," since it occurs after the removal of the church; it is the end of the *Mosaic Age*, which is what "*this age*" refers to (Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10). The "end of the age" is the end of the Mosaic Age. There is no such thing as an *intercalated* "Church age," that being a device to save the "Church Age" idea by an intercalation that stops the Mosaic Age and then reinstates the Mosaic Age where it left off -- including, of course, the Mosaic System, as such.

Separation of Earthly Calling and Government. When the "times of the Gentiles" began, Government was removed from Israel, but not the Earthly Calling. Though Government was removed from Israel, Jews still had that status of Calling, and God continued working with Jews. This continued until the rejection of Christ at the cross. Meanwhile, Daniel's 70 weeks (Dan. 9) started. They have in view the bringing in the blessing for Israel (Dan. 9:24). But there

Israel is God's nationally recognized people - Ammi - only while they have both Calling and Government given to them. The reason why God continued working with the people of Israel after declaring them Lo-ammi is because they still had Calling. This Earthly Calling is restored in the 70th week, when Jehovah works with the Jewish remnant to form them to receive Messiah. And when He reigns, Israel, as His nationally recognized people - Ammi - will again be the center of His earthly seat of government.



The Mosaic System was a form of testing for the first man (1 Cor. 15:47) of the first man ended at the cross, though that left the law and the Mosaic earthly ages. God will not reinstate the Mosaic System during the tribulation.

terposed Heavenly Calling

CHURCH

Rapture

Heavenly Calling

*The rejection of Christ and the
interposition of the Heavenly Calling
interrupts Israel's Earthly Calling
as well as Daniel's 70 Weeks.
The Church does not have government.*

Appearing

ISRAEL

AD 70: God's armies (Matt.
22:7) destroyed the invalid
Mosaic System.

Earthly Calling

Government in Israel

Daniel's Seventy Weeks interrupted

70th

Millennium

times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24)

HAVE THE GOVERNMENT

Ammi - "not My people" (Hos. 1)

Israel is Ammi -
"My people" (Hos. 2)

*Mosaic System rejected:
many days ... without sacrifice" (Hos. 3:4)*

*New Covenant:
sacrifices memorial of
the cross (Ezek. 40-48)
under Melchizedek
priesthood of Christ*

1st Man displaced the first man

"This Age,"
Mosaic Age, continues

"End of
the Age"

Age to Come

had a standing in the flesh before God; and testing/probation
-- for the Church is not earthly and is not an age among the
d, as that would reinstate the standing present in the flesh

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is a gap between the 69th and 70th week. The rejection of Christ at the cross, and the consequent introduction of the heavenly calling, *interposed* both Israel's Earthly Calling and Daniel's 70 weeks. When the Heavenly Calling is ended, the 70th week will commence and the Earthly Calling of Israel will be found with the elect, godly, Jewish remnant that God will form after the end of the Heavenly Calling, to prepare the remnant for the reception of the Lord from glory.

No Reinstatement of Sacrifices by God During Daniel's 70th Week.

While the elect Jewish remnant will have Earthly Calling, that does not mean a reinstatement by God of the Mosaic System, with its attendant standing of the first man. The standing of the first man was once-for-all ended at the cross. It is clear from Hos 3:4, 5 that Israel is declared to be without sacrifice many days -- really, until the King comes. They will have no valid sacrifices until the Melchizedek priesthood (millennial) is exercised, a priesthood founded upon the finished work, thus characterizing the sacrifices, carried on as under that priesthood, as founded on the finished work -- hence they are memorial.¹ The sacrifices in the first half of the 70th week are not acceptable to God. God had once had His armies destroy Jerusalem and the invalid sacrifices (Matt. 22:7). In the 70th week God owns what the temple, altar, and worshipers mean as to the *spiritual significance of those words*² (Rev. 11:1, 2), in spite of the gross departure of the mass. There can be no sacrifices of the Mosaic System and the Aaronic order acceptable to God.

The Law Did Not Die. The Mosaic System, which gave the first man a standing before God, has ended. That left the age and the law itself go on. Neither has been *interposed*. Meanwhile, the Christian is viewed as having died with Christ (Rom. 6) and the Mosaic law does not have to do with a dead Christian. Moreover, the Christian is heavenly, as Christ is (1 Cor. 15:48). In the millennium, under the new covenant, Israel will have the law written in their hearts (Heb. 8:10). Meanwhile, we Christians are under the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2), the rule of the new creation (Gal. 6:14-16).

The Christian Does not Have Government. As the chart indicates, Government was transferred from Israel to the Gentiles. It remains right there until Christ takes it when He appears in glory. The Christian does not have government (Phil. 3:20). Indeed, the Christian is a stranger and a sojourner here (1 Pet. 2:11), as well as an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20).

1. Though sons of Aaron (particularly the sons of Zadok (Ezek. 40-48)) will officiate, they do so under a **new order** of priesthood: the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ.

2. The measuring is symbolic. Moreover, the worshipers cannot go into the temple. The scene is in the last-half week, when God's portion is those who worship in heart (v. 1) and the rest are rejected (v. 2) while the testimony of the two witnesses proceeds (v. 3ff).

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 6.16

Revelation 20: The First Resurrection

The Millennium Will Occur after the Completion of the First Resurrection

THE THREE GROUPS OF SAINTS

There are three distinct groups of saints noted in Rev. 20:4.

1. And I saw thrones; and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them;
2. And the souls of those beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus, and on account of the word of God;
3. And those who had not done homage to the beast nor to his image and had not received the mark on their forehead and hand.

The post-tribulationist, A. Reese, acknowledges that there are three classes, but feels he has a strong case for his view based on the fact that we see "thrones" here.

A decisive conclusion follows from the enthronement of the living saints at 20:4a; it is that Darbyist theories are excluded. These presuppose that the heavenly redeemed, including those who survive to the Parousia, occupy their thrones and are glorified several years before the Millennium. We are to see all this in the Twenty-four Elders crowned and seated in chapter 4. But our passage locates the sitting upon thrones at the beginning of the Millennium. The language is clear and decisive on the point. John says: "I saw thrones"; obviously they were empty. Then he adds: "and they sat upon them"; that is, he sees a company *in the very act of sitting down on their thrones*. It is now, not a generation earlier, that the living saints are rewarded and ascend their thrones. Matt. 19:28, says the same thing of the Apostles, locating their

enthronement at this very time.

(b) John mentions a *second* class that is honored at this time: "I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God" (R. V.).

(c) Thirdly, he speaks of "such as worshiped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand."

Of these two classes we read that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

It is contended by theorists that these two classes consist only of saints who are to be converted and martyred *after* the Church is removed to heaven; they are those who die during, or just before, the Great Tribulation, and have no connection with the Church in Christ Jesus. There is some truth, but more error in these views. It is true that the third class consists of those who fall in the last Great Tribulation.¹

Let us now examine this.

Group One

Group one is composed of those who are symbolized by the 24 elders, the raised and raptured saints. They were also seen as the bride and the guests, and also as the armies of Rev. 19.

Regarding A. Reese's assertions:

1. The most notable thing about this is that he does distinguish three classes. Yet only the first class is seen in the very act of sitting down on their thrones, he alleges. This seems strange if the thrones are reward thrones, for then we would have expected to see all three classes in the act of sitting down on reward thrones. His phrase, "the enthronement of the living saints at 20:4a," states an error on his part. At best it could only be the enthronement of group one.
2. He says elsewhere that J. N. Darby, W. Kelly, C. H. M., etc., believe that the appearing in glory "will be the time for the judgement and rewarding of the heavenly saints for their service on earth."² It is not accurate to say so. Rewards will be *manifested* at the appearing. The judgment seat precedes this for the Christian. Besides this mistake, *he* understands the thrones of Rev. 20 to be reward thrones, then says we believe rewards are given at the appearing, and then concludes it is a contradiction to have the 24 elders symbolize saints on reward thrones. The contradiction is, therefore, imagined by him based on *his* definition of the meaning of the throne.

1. *The Approaching Advent of Christ*, p. 83.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 28. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

3. Christ is now on the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21) not His own throne of glory. Cp Matt 25:31. The central throne of Rev. 4, whatever it may be, is therefore not Christ's throne of glory,.
4. The 24 thrones, on which are seen the Elders, are therefore not thrones associated with Christ's throne of glory. It is God's throne of judgment which with which they are connected.
5. The thrones in Rev. 20:4 are not thrones associated with Christ's throne of glory because all three classes live and reign 1000 years, but only of class *one* is it said, "and they sat upon them." In the vision it is only group one, then, who are seen sitting on thrones. We are told this, I believe, in order to tell us who they are: those whom we saw before on thrones, in Rev. 4.

The vision of the three classes precedes the final phase of the first resurrection. Those on the thrones are the 24 elders, symbolizing the raised and raptured saints; i.e., OT saints and saints of the present period (Heb. 11:40). That John saw the condition of the saints prior to the final phase of the first resurrection is indicated by the fact that group two is seen as "souls of those beheaded."

Of the three classes, not of two merely, it is said, "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This statement gives us the totality of the first resurrection. "This [is] the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5).

It is in the millennial reign that Christ will sit on His throne of glory (Matt. 24:31). It is the throne of David. It is the throne of Solomon. It is the throne of Jehovah (1 Chron. 29:23). Right now, He is on the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). But *then*, we shall sit in His throne with Him (Rev. 3:21). That is the millennial reign. We shall sit "*in*" His throne. What wondrous association!

The 12 thrones of Matt. 19:28 certainly do not refer to the eternal state, since the apostles will judge the 12 tribes of Israel. The "regeneration" refers to the millennium when Israel is restored. Another identifying mark of group one is that it is said of them, "and judgment was given to them." This refers to the connection between the 24 thrones and the initial throne, from which proceeded the lightnings and the thunderings. The central throne is God's throne of judgment. The phrase we are considering is judgment given to them in connection with the millennium. Do ye not know that we will judge the world? (1 Cor. 6). We notice that the phrase is not applied to groups two and three.

The question of this having any connection with the setting of thrones in Dan. 7:9 naturally arises. It seems to me that comparing Dan. 7:9 with 7:21, 22, shows that the thrones in Dan. 7 refer to the millennial reign, not the 24 thrones of Rev. 4 and 20:4. In Dan. 7, it is the saints possessing the kingdom.

The description of class one ("they") is not vague or cryptic. There is no need to speculate about nations or angels (cp. Heb. 2:5) or the present

dispensation. "They" refers to the armies of Rev. 19. "They" are the saints figured by the 24 elders, the dead in Christ and the living changed at the rapture (1 Thess. 4) and the OT saints raised with us (Heb. 11:40). "They" refers to the bride (the church) and the guests (OT saints) in Rev. 19.

Group Two

Certainly there are martyrs such as Stephen in group one, but what we have in group two is *characteristically* a martyr company. We saw some of these before, under the altar (Rev. 6:9-11). Concerning groups two and three, W. Kelly observed this:

The raising up of these two classes of what may be called Apocalyptic martyrs is a beautiful sample of God's compensating grace. For they only come into the rank of holy witnesses after the Lord will have received the saints at His coming {for them at the rapture}. They do not escape persecution unto death, as others will who are to be delivered when He appears in judgment. Hence they {the martyrs} might seem to have lost much. But not so: dying for Christ, even though they may have known very little of the truth, they are destined of God exceptionally to a far higher place than their fellows who survive. For they are raised at the last moment, so to speak, in order to have their blessed and holy part in the first resurrection; whereas those that escaped death are "the people of the saints of the Most High" (or heavenly places). Those dead and risen are "the saints of the Most High" themselves, and reign; whereas "the people" are reigned over. Only we must carefully notice that the first part of Rev. 20:4 sets out the great bulk of the saints in general from the beginning till the Lord comes to change and translate them to heaven {i.e., group one}. The later classes embrace the twofold martyrs who only come forward after those symbolized by the twenty-four elders are glorified.³

It is objected that in Rev. 20:5, John saw "the souls of those beheaded." John does not see bodies but souls, it is insisted.⁴

We have already seen that if the word souls is taken to mean an embodied soul *and* that such are reigning now, this must be false because these are *beheaded* souls. However, these lived by resurrection. The objectors cited, who say it must be disembodied souls, did not explain how those before the great white throne were resurrected and yet John says, "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne . . ." How dead, if resurrected? Obviously it is not meant they will be dead *then*; and neither are these souls disembodied *when reigning*.

The three groups are not all classed as *martyrs* raised to life in glory with

3. *The Bible Treasury* 18:45. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

4. W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 191; R. Zorn, *Church and Kingdom*, p. 114.

Christ, the rest awaiting the completion of the 1000 years.⁵ To see in this class martyrs in general, including Rev. 6:9-11,⁶ *Judaizes*. Now it is easy to bandy this word about, as so many do against dispensational truth. What I mean in this case is that it puts an *imprecatory prayer* of Rev. 6:9-11 in the mouth of Christians. These imprecations are appropriate during the future Apocalyptic Week, when the prayers of Ps. 78 and 83 are also in order and suitable for the Remnant, as other Psalms will be also. To make of these things proper Christianity is, therefore, to Judaize.

Group Three

Group three consists of those who were victorious over the beast during the second half of Daniel's 70th week (cp. Rev. 15:2), and had died.

This group is characterized as having resisted the beast and his number and mark (Rev. 13:15-17).

AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS

This is the portion of all saints who have ever died. All saints from Adam, to the last one who dies before the final phase of the first resurrection takes place (including those who, as alive, were caught up), will have priestly and kingly functions. We shall all reign with Christ for 1000 years. It includes the living who were raptured for they have the same body of glory as those who were raised. See 1 Cor. 15.

Note how long those who participate in the first resurrection reign. It is not said that Christ will reign for 1000 years and the saints will reign during that time. Based on the amillennial scheme -- that the saints are reigning now -- some saints reign for a longer time than others, since some are born centuries after others. In Rev. 20, however, those who compose the first resurrection reign for 1000 years (Rev. 20:4, 6).

THE REST OF THE DEAD LIVED NOT UNTIL . . .

The fact that saints reign with Christ for 1000 years shows that the first resurrection cannot be the new birth⁷; nor can it be the translation of the soul

5. As stated by L. Morris, *The Revelation of St. John*, pp. 237, 238.

6. As does A. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

7. As alleged by H. C. Heffren, *The Mission of the Messiah*, p. 61; W. Cox, *Biblical Studies In Final Things*, p. 166; L. R. Thomas, *A Symposium on Prophecy*, p. 45; P. Mauro, *Of Things Which Must Shortly Come to Pass*, p. 519; R. Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p. 212. Some speak of it as our salvation, and all reason upon such scriptures as Eph 1:2, John 5:24, 1 John 3:15, Rom 6:1, John 3:1, and even Titus 3:5.

to heaven.⁸

W. E. Cox said:

In speaking of the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5), John said the rest of the dead lived not (the word "again" is not in the original) until the thousand years were finished. This is in perfect agreement with John 5:25, where our Lord said that only those who heard -- believed -- his voice would live. It is, in fact, in agreement with the entire New Testament, which teaches that all unbelievers remain dead in trespasses and sin, while all believers have already been made alive -- resurrected.⁹

This theory that the first resurrection is spiritual rather than physical says that "live" and "lived not" refer to something spiritual. In this case, he says that "live" refers to experiencing the new birth and "lived not" refers to not experiencing it, but remaining dead in sins.

The trouble with the theory is that Rev. 20:5 says that "the rest of the dead lived not *until* . . ." Thus the rest of the dead *will* live; and since the theory says that "live" refers to the new birth, it follows that since the rest of the dead will live, that results in all persons being born again. No doubt this idea would be refused; but, none-the-less, it is implicit in the theory.

In reality, "live" and "lived not" refer to bodily death and resurrection. Those that lived, as seen in Rev. 20:4, have part in the first resurrection, i.e., the resurrection of the just. The rest of the dead lived also. How can you deny it when scripture says "the rest of the dead did not live till the thousand years had been completed"? How can one believe that "lived not" merely means they remained dead in trespasses and sins? This cannot mean that they remained dead in trespasses and sins *until* the thousand years were completed.

A variation is to regard "lived" in Rev. 20:4 as a spiritual thing and "lived not until" as a physical resurrection. The arbitrariness of this is self evident. It shows that human theories are substituted for scripture in an attempt to sustain a false theological system.

P. Mauro curiously reasons that since John speaks of the second "death in the spiritual sense," then "if the second death is not the death of the body, neither is the first resurrection the resurrection of the body."¹⁰ Is not this peculiar reasoning proof of special pleading? It shows that a theory is before the mind. Why not have rather said that since the second death is death in a spiritual sense, the second resurrection must be a spiritual resurrection also?

8. As alleged by W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 192, 193 and A. Hoekema, "Amillennialism" in *The Meaning of the Millennium*, p. 171.

9. *The Millennium*, p. 32. So also R. Zorn, *Church and Kingdom*, p. 116.

10. *The Hope of Israel*, p. 249.

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Why not? Because that, though having more show of reason (but still being false), would not fit the theory, which requires that the first resurrection be spiritual (i.e., the new birth, etc) and the second be physical (for “the final judgment” of all)!

Just as John said “I saw the souls of those beheaded” in order to cause us to connect this with the souls under the altar (Rev. 6:9-11), so the expression “the dead” in Rev. 20:12 is there to cause us to think of “the rest of the dead lived not until . . .” And there is at least one more reason for the wording. We are to *contrast* those called “the dead” with those that “lived” (Rev. 20:4, 5), though it is true that they who have part in the resurrection of the *unjust* live also.

And finally, the words, “This [is] the first resurrection” is an *explanation* of Rev. 20:4, 5. The amillennialists explain the explanation; and in addition explain away the explanation given in scripture.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION NOT A POINT IN TIME

Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20). Since He rose already, it is clear that the first resurrection takes place in at least two stages. There are more than two stages, but the point is that the resurrection of the just is not one point in time. I call attention to this here to remind the reader that the second coming of Christ has two stages: the rapture and the appearing in glory. There are opposers who insist that we really believe in two second comings. Not so -- any more that we believe in two (or more) first resurrections.

Refutation of Postmillennialist David Brown, on Revelation 20

{What follows is taken from W. Kelly, *The Second Advent of Christ Premillennial: A Reply to the Rev. D. Brown, D.D.* ¹¹}

“The rest of the dead” are not to live till that age has run its course, and the resurrection FROM the dead is no longer possible. “And I saw the *dead*, small and great . . . and *the dead* were judged.” The wicked dead are excluded from that age no less than from the resurrection from the dead. The truth is that an *indiscriminate* resurrection (p. 260) is totally unknown to scripture, and the reasoning goes much farther than the millennium. *All scripture* which speaks of resurrection shows a distinct act, if there be only a minute between. Those who are Christ’s are *never* confounded with the rest, whatever the interval (which is naturally made known in a prophecy, that is peculiarly rich in times and seasons,

11. Glasgow: R. L. Allan, 1868. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

days and years).

2. We utterly reject the assertion that Rev. 20:4-6 is an ambiguous revelation. People may have made mistakes about the extent of its subjects; but the thing itself has been clearly held even by men as eccentric as Mr. Burgh. And Dr. B. forgets that *all* premillennialists differ from his opinion of the *subjects* of the final resurrection, and most of them from his view of its character and results.

3. His last presumption, viz., that any other description of the resurrection of the saints is *catholic*, while this is *limited*, is a mere but decided blunder. *Dr. B. omits the first clause of Rev. 20:4* ("And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them"). Having thus decapitated the verse, having deprived it of a clause which, in our judgment, was purposely written in the most general form, so as to take in the saints of the Old and New Testaments, no wonder that he finds in the rest only *dissecta membra*. But then the mutilation is his own deed, as will be seen more fully by and by. At the same time we must do our author the justice to say that he discards the old objections, grounded on "*souls*" (not bodies) being named, on the want of particular mention of the *earth*, as the theater of the millennial reign, and on the word resurrection, as if it did not denote the *restoring of life to the dead*.

His nine arguments admit of distinct and conclusive refutation:

I. Dr. B. reasons that "this is the first resurrection" "seems to be figurative, because contrasted with the second death." *Why*, it is hard even to imagine. The first death is the wages of sin in this world, the second death is the full and final wages hereafter. Dr. B. has overlooked the fact that *both* are *explanations*, and not the symbols to be explained. If the two deaths are literal, though they may differ, the two resurrections may differ, but are equally literal.

II. We are almost ashamed to speak of the objection to the clause "on such the second death hath no power," taking for granted that the first resurrection is literal. "Is it likely," says Dr. B., "that the Spirit of God means nothing more here than such a truism?" Such hyper criticism would make fearful carnage of the living word of God. It is the habitual way, especially in the psalms and prophets, of causing the reader to pause and ponder well their comforts or their warnings. Dr. B. will scarcely deny the parallelistic structure which pervades the scripture, and not least the Apocalypse. Nor is anything more common than to mark doubly, what was meant to impress the soul, i.e., both positively and negatively, as here. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." The second death is so awful a reality as to make God's gracious assurance of exemption from it anything but a needless repetition.

Indeed, (says Mr. Birks, p. 116) the words are a distinct proof that the resurrection is literal. For the second death is never named except with reference to a first death which has gone before it. The church of Smyrna is the only one which receives the command, "Be thou faithful unto death"; and hence it receives the special promise, "he that overcometh shall not be hurt of

the second death." It is not to saints as living but as having suffered death, or about to suffer it, that exemption from the second death is promised. This character does not apply to millennial believers, who are exempt from the first death during its continuance, but applies fully to the martyrs, and indeed to all believers who have died in the faith before the Lord comes.

III. There are but two alternatives in this prophecy, says Dr. B., -- the first resurrection, or the second death. Into which are we to put the millennial myriads? *Into neither*, as far as the millennial *saints* are concerned, who, not dying, will not rise, but be changed doubtless. The rest, dying before, or destroyed in the Gog and Magog insurrection, will be cast into the lake of fire. On Dr. B.'s view, the blessing is reduced to the character of the millennium as one of prevailing spiritual life: but thus, as another remarks, all the emphasis is lost, since believers in any age are blessed and holy, and are equally exempted from the power of the second death.

IV. The limitation of the reign to 1000 years is no difficulty. Rev. 20 shows that the book recognizes the reigning for ever and ever, while Rev. 20 takes up the reigning for a special purpose which has an end.

V. The next difficulty, viz., that the rest of the dead do not rise immediately on the expiry of the thousand years, but after the little season beyond, is weaker still. It is nowhere tied to that moment; it could not be *before* -- that is all. On the other hand, there is a difference in the way Satan's period is spoken of -- *μετὰ ταῦτα* δ. αὐ. λ. μ. χ. This formula does connect the loosing of Satan with the close of the thousand years, but it is nowhere used of *the resurrection of the rest of the dead*. The truth, therefore, is *against* Dr. B. and his colleague in the *British Quarterly*.

VI, VII. These are merely the arguments reasoned by Mr. Gipps, on the opening of the book of life, and on the sea, death, and hades delivering up their dead, only in connection with the great white throne, not with the first resurrection. But we have already replied enough on these heads to show that they are appropriate where they are, rather than elsewhere, on the literal scheme. Besides, a book is not like a seal which can be opened but *once*; and *here*, say what Dr. B. will, it is connected solely with those *not* found in it. The other images are not of blessedness, but of trouble, sorrow, &c., and therefore are fitly joined with the wicked.

VIII. The next objection to the literal sense is that it is exclusively a *martyr scene*. But this is simply to repeat the mistake of the third presumption. Dr. B. objects to Mr. Elliott's way of stating the case, that he makes St. John to specify particularly, as *conspicuous* among those seen seated on thrones, the martyrs and confessors; whereas, according to his own interpretation, they *only* are seen. The fact is, that Mr. E. has understated the matter. For the beheaded saints, and those who refused the beast's overtures, are two classes *added* to those who were already seen enthroned. The apostle saw certain thrones filled, and judgment committed to those who sat there. Besides, he sees souls of slaughtered saints; and, moreover, there were such as had rejected all connection with the beast; and these two

classes, who for the time seemed to have lost all, are reunited to their bodies, and reign with Christ no less than the rest. Dr. B. speaks of the verb ἐκάθισαν ("sat") as a virtual impersonal. This is not doubted; but it in no way connects the clause with what follows, which is his desire. If it had been put in the sentence *after* the other clauses, there might be ground for such a supposition. As it is, there is none. *The first clause leaves room for all the heavenly saints*, save the added Apocalyptic sufferers and faithful, which the next clauses distinguish and subjoin. Christ and these heavenly saints quitted heaven together, in Rev. 19; Christ and they reign together over the earth, in Rev. 20; and all those who suffered from, but who really overcame, the beast, are there too, not as Israel reigned over, but reigning with Christ as those who had gone before them. On the figurative view, what can be more absurd than a revival of martyr-spirit, when it is least needed, when all is unprecedentedly happy and prosperous for the Church?

IX. The last objection is, that our view can offer no consistent explanation of the "judgment" that "was given unto" the enthroned saints. We must be forgiven for pronouncing such a remark somewhat perverse. It is not expressly connected with the slain martyrs, though no doubt they had it as well as the rest; and this, therefore, dissolves the narrow limits which Dr. B. seeks to borrow from Rev. 6:10. We do not deny that there may be a link; but we affirm that the Lord God's judging and avenging the blood of His slain ones is a very distinct thing from judgment being given to others seated on thrones, nay, to themselves there. Dr. B.'s object is to bind together, in the judgment given, both the slain and their slayers, so that if the saints be personally present their persecutors must be also in the same personal way; and if the latter be spiritually understood, so the former. But, as we have seen, this is not the force of judgment being given to *men*. In his sense, God *had* already avenged the blood of saints and prophets in Babylon; and the beast and the false prophet, with their instruments, had met their terrible doom from the Lord, *before* the enthroned saints had judgment given to them, or began to reign with Christ.

Are we mistaken in affirming that our ingenious opponent has wasted his time, his research, his labor, in vainly assaulting the impregnable fortress of a first resurrection? Is it not as true for all saints who suffer with Christ, as the second death is sure for all sinners who despise Him?

Ed.

(To be continued, if the lord will)

He Ran with no Message

And Joab said, Why wilt thou run, my son, seeing that there is no news suited [to thee]? -- But come what may, let me run. And he said to him, Run.

And the king said, Turn aside [and] stand here (2 Sam.)

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Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 2

Is Man Under Probation Today?

(Continued)

The End of the Testing Explains Two Scriptures

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened to them [as] types, and have been written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. 10:11).

This text is in keeping with the fact that the trial of man is completed; and, what happened to Israel while under that testing serves as instruction for the Christian.

The expression, "the ends of the ages," which will be found in 1 Cor. 10:11, is rather strange; but to preserve the sense of the Greek, we could not say, "the last times," any more than "the end of the ages," still less "the end of the world." The end of the ages was not yet come; but all the different dispensations by which God had put Himself in relation with man, so far as they were connected with man's responsibility, had come to one point, and were brought to an end in the death of the Lord Jesus. After that -- great as had been His long-suffering -- God established a new creation. We have therefore used the literal translation, "the ends of the ages."¹

They are the "ends in the sense that this is the purpose God had in mind for the ages from their inception.

Hebrews 9:26

But now once in the consummation of the ages he has been manifested for [the] putting away of sin by his sacrifice (Heb. 9:26).

For consummation, the Arndt and Gingrich *Lexicon* (p. 792) says "completion, close, end." Under the words "End, Ending," W. E. Vine's *Expository*

Dictionary of new Testament Words says:

In Heb. 9:26, the word translated "world" (A.V.) is in the plural, and the phrase is 'the consummation of the ages.' It was the heading up of all the various epochs appointed by divine counsels that Christ was manifested (i.e., in His incarnation) "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

In actuality, it was the heading up of all the epochs of the testing of man.²

There is an "age to come" (Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph. 1:12; Heb. 6:5), the millennium, but that age is not, of course, included in the statement about the consummation of the ages. Evidently, then, the phrase "consummation of the ages" does not mean that there will not be any more ages. The consummation of the ages refers to the consummation of the testing of man in the ages up to the cross. The testing terminated during the Mosaic age. The moral history of the world (i.e., the history of probation of the first man) is ended, though the world goes on. The moral history of man is ended, though man goes on. The moral history of the Mosaic age has ended, though the Mosaic age goes on. The moral history of the first man, as the first man, is closed, though time goes on and individuals are, of course, responsible to God.

J. N. Darby brought before the saints the subject of the testing of the first man, its completion at the cross, and the consequent setting up of the second man. Let us hear what he said about the consummation of the ages:

The "end of the ages," or "consummation of the ages," are all the dealings of God with man to test his general condition. In this general sense the state of innocence comes in; but the proper connection is what is after the fall, yet not looking at man as lost, but testing his state and whether he was recoverable, or was lost and had to be saved. Without law; under law; God manifested in the flesh, were the great features of this. Hence in John 12:31 the Lord says, "Now is the judgment of this world." Though there was testimony there were no religious institutions before the flood, unless the fact of sacrifices. There were after: government; promises to Abraham, showing it was grace to one separated from an idolatrous world and head of a new race; the law; the prophets; and at last the Son as come, not as offered. Then God laid the

2. It is interesting to notice the way in which *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (p. 803) by the Dallas Seminary Faculty handles this:

By the phrase "end of the ages" the writer evidently meant the climax of the Old Testament eras as well as the immanency of the climax of all things.

I do not know if the writer shared the view that the "age of grace" is intercalated, but if he did, he seems to have forgotten that if there is an intercalated age the Mosaic age is to be reinstated after the rapture of the saints. In the intercalated "church age" view, the climax of the Mosaic age will not be reached until Christ appears in glory.

foundation of His own purposes in righteousness.³ ♦

When God had made this plain, before the law, under the law, by promises, by the coming and presence of His Son, then the work of God takes the place, for our salvation and God's glory, of man's responsibility -- on the ground of which faith knows man is entirely lost. This explains the expression (v. 26) "in the consummation of the ages."

Now this work is perfect, and perfectly accomplished. Sin had dishonored God, and separated man from Him. All that God had done to give him the means of return only ended in affording him opportunity to fill up the measure of his sin by the rejection of Jesus. But in this the eternal counsels of God were fulfilled, at least the moral basis laid, and that in infinite perfection, for their actual accomplishment in their results. All now in fact, as in purpose always, rested on the second {last} Adam, and on what God had done, not on man's responsibility, while that was fully met for God's glory (cp. 2 Tim. 1:9, 10; Titus 1:1, 2). The Christ, whom man rejected, had appeared in order to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Thus it was morally the consummation of the ages.

The result of the work and power of God are not yet manifested. A new creation will develop them. But man, as the child of Adam, has run his whole career in his relationship with God: he is enmity against God. Christ, fulfilling the will of God, has come in the consummation of ages, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and His work to this end is accomplished. This is the moral power of His act, of His sacrifice before God; in result, sin will be entirely blotted out of the heavens and the earth. To faith this result, namely, the putting away of sin, is already realized in the conscience, because Christ who was made sin for us has died and died to sin, and now is risen and glorified, sin (even as made it for us) left behind.⁴ ♦

The promise, given to Abraham and confirmed to the one seed (Christ), could not be set aside nor added to by a transaction 430 years after {i.e., after the giving of the law: Gal. 3:17}. God had thus bound Himself, but the law came in by the bye till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made, that is, Christ. Then its function ceased, and consequent on Christ's work, all being sinners, the law broken, and Christ rejected (the last means by which God could seek for fruit from man), the attempt only proving that man hated both Christ and His Father -- that the mind of the flesh was enmity against God, then God's righteousness is revealed without law (the Greek reads "apart from law"), the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ. Man's probation as to the history of it, on the ground of getting good by any means from him, was over. Now, says Christ, is the judgment of this world {John 12:31}. Hence it was Christ cursed the fig-tree never to bear fruit. Hence it is that it is said "now once in the end of the world [the consummation of

3. *Letters* 3:442.

4. *Synopsis* 5:224, 225.

ages], he hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

When I say the probation is over, it is not that man is not yet dealt with as to receiving the gospel. Of course he is; but what can be made of man in the flesh? It has been tried, and it is not now the question whether he can succeed in making out righteousness for the day of judgment, but, receiving the truth, find out that he is already lost, and righteousness and salvation and indeed glory his as believing in Christ. As a person under probation,⁵ he knows he is a lost sinner, and finds a new life, a perfect salvation, and divine righteousness in Christ. Now all this clearly shows the place of the law between the promise and the coming of the Seed to whom the promise was made, and how we are created again in Christ Jesus unto good works. It is no longer the law requiring human righteousness from flesh to prove what it is, but a new creature and the power of the Spirit leading us in the path in which Christ walked. We are sons and to walk as God's dear children, to put on, as the elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies -- the whole character and walk of Christ.⁶

Conclusion

by J. N. Darby

At last God sends His Son. He said, “I have yet one Son, it may be they will reverence my Son,” and He would try man by His coming. “They cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.” In Matthew 21 we find God seeking fruit from that which ought to have yielded it; and so Christ, when He came, first looked for fruit. He desired to find (v. 18, 19). “He hungered. And when he saw a fig-tree in the way he came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; and presently the fig-tree withered away.” He cursed it -- this was nature judged, that flesh should NEVER produce fruit, for there was nothing in man in the flesh to suit God. Plenty of profession, outward show, and assumption to be something, “but leaves only.” “There is none good; no, not one.” And so He said, “Now is the judgment of this world.” The world was judged then, although that judgment is not executed yet; in grace God carries the execution; but still there was the complete ending of all human responsibility as regards the record of it. Each individual may have to come to conviction of it, of course.

But according to the gospel, Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, not in probation whether he would be so. All is proved worthless; for the husbandmen not only killed God's Son, who came looking for fruit, but also rejected all His invitations and Himself come in grace. If God spent His Son in the effort to get man's heart back to Himself, it only shewed that his heart was enmity against God, and would not own Him. He came with perfect grace, and shewed He had

5. He is not using the word “probation” here in the sense that man, as such, is under testing. This will be clear to the reader when he reads the summary.

6. *Collected Writings* 31:335, 336. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

power sufficient to bring every blessing to man; all His miracles were blessing to man except the cursing of the fig tree, which was not, because, after all, there must be the judgment of the flesh. The cross then comes in, and proves not only that man is a sinner (we get that in his being turned out of Paradise), but that man is in himself irreclaimable. This closes the first Adam's history-- the history of man responsible in the flesh, and it was the end of the world; that is, morally, the world was ended and judged. So the apostle speaks in Heb. 9:26. "Now once in the end of the world" (literally "in the end [or consummation] of the ages," those ages in which God was testing man in responsibility as a reclaimable sinner) -- "hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Christ came to seek fruit and they had none for Him. He came to make a feast, as the expression of God's grace to them, and they would not sit at it. In the two parables (Matt. 21 and 22) there is not only the end of the history of man in responsibility, but also the rejection of Christ come in grace. The mind of the flesh is proved to be enmity against God; and we must learn that there is no good in us. But God does not give up His grace, it superabounds over all man's condition as a sinner, and an irreclaimable one.

This is just the difference between the synoptical Gospels and John. The first three -- Matthew, Mark, and Luke -- are the presentation of Christ to man to be received, and with proofs of power sufficient to remove all the effects of sin; but behind all you find the difficulty that man is in the flesh, and the mind of the flesh is enmity against God. John's testimony starts with this, that He was not received, and therefore coming in that grace which was above all the rejection. In chapter 1, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own and his own received him not;" so God comes out in grace. The flesh is looked at in John as having disowned Christ, and therefore his Gospel all through is election and grace. There is no such language in the other three Gospels as He uses here in speaking of man. He goes to the roots and principles of things in John, and so He says, "Ye are of your father the devil," speaking to sinners, and "no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But He says, I'll have my own sheep notwithstanding what man is. Thus, on the rejection of His word in chapter 8 and His work in chapter 9, He gathers them, whether of the Jews or of the Gentiles, to the one Shepherd, and gives them eternal life. So in John 1 we find Him received by those who were born of God, not of the will of man. "To as many as received him to them gave he power [that is, title, authority, or right] to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1: 12, 13). There I get the people of God. Man's responsibility is closed: he is a lost sinner; he has been in a state of probation, and it is over.

Now, although the ground of man's responsibility is over in the sense of having wholly failed under it, when proved in every possible way, yet as to moral dealing with each individual, the responsibility is there to the full; and as an individual under moral dealing, a man has to go through the history of the process of responsibility and its failure; but he goes through it to bring out this, that he is lost already. He has

to prove the truth of God's verdict that in man there is no good thing; and so the result of the principle of responsibility is for him to find out that he is lost, that the responsibility is over; not as if it was not true, but because he is lost and ruined, as the man who has lost all his money by foolish ways. It is important to keep up responsibility, but the individual is brought to the consciousness that on that ground it is all up with him. Man is lost. We have spent every farthing, and have only debts; these we have if that is any good. It is all over with the first man, and no mending of him will do: he is lost and ruined; but Christ came to save the lost.

Now the Second Man is set up. It is not a mending of the first man, but the substitution of the Second. There is no improvement or correction of the first man (although we are practically changed if we come to Christ), but the sins of the first Adam are all cleared away; and, secondly, the tree itself is cut down by the roots for faith. In the cross we see the responsibility met completely; Christ has met all the failure, the fruit of the tree of responsibility, and has glorified God in so doing. Man has brought in confusion; but Christ came, met the case, and cleared the scene, and triumphed over all. When He came, God's character as to facts was compromised, and there was no escape. If He had saved none, but at once cast off sinners, it were righteousness, but there would have been no love. If He had let all pass, when man was a sinner, and in such sort saved all (which man would call love, but which would not have been divine love, for God is holy), where were the righteousness? But Christ came. Well, surely in the cross there is righteousness against sin, as nowhere else, yet there is the infinite love of God to sinners.

In Him, in Christ, I get both the trees of Paradise united, fulfilled in grace, bearing our sins and putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and becoming life according to righteousness. I am brought to the discovery of what I am, and then I see Christ has died on the cross and has taken the whole thing on Himself. When I see Him -- the Son of God -- dying on the cross, I say if this is not righteousness -- judgment against sin -- I do not know what is. But whom is He dying for? -- the guilty sinner. Well, if this is not love, I do not know what is. On the cross we get every attribute of God perfectly maintained -- His majesty and truth, as well as His righteousness and love -- every claim met, and God perfectly glorified in the Person of Christ, the Lamb of God. He was there making atonement for sin that the gospel might go out to all the world; and as to believers, bearing their every sin. The whole thing is met there, and the believer's responsibility cleared away, as to sins, that he may enter into responsibility on a new ground, that of a child of God. He has met fully, and completely, and absolutely, all the fruit of man's eating the tree and all the sins of the believer (his responsibility). This, of course, does not touch the believer's responsibility to Christ or to God as a believer in Christ; for this is of a new order, and comes in upon a different ground.⁷

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead

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This book contains virtually all the numerous articles on prophecy known to me, plus several books on prophecy, by Wm. Kelly (but his *Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (a 400 page book) is not included.)⁸ It is divided into six major parts according to the subject matter, such as Interpretation, Daniel, Revelation, Historicism, Postmillennialism, and Misc. It is a rich and helpful resource in the study of prophecy. A large Scripture Index as well as a Subject Index enhances the usefulness of the book.

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If the Lord will, we expect to announce in the next issue the availability of a diskette containing two databases our bro. Dennis Ryan is developing. One database will cover *Words of Truth*, ed. by F. G. Patterson, and the other will cover *Thy Precepts*.

We are thankful for the opportunity to make these things available to our brethren in Christ. Those that give of their time and energy to these projects do so as unto the Lord, as does our bro. David Wandelt who patiently works at minimizing typos in *Thy Precepts*; upon which the editor sometimes adds more typos. And it must be acknowledged that the same subsequent addition of typos befalls the proofreading done by our sister Carolyn Ryan on various papers and books.

Ed.

8. Of course, his expositions of books of the Bible are not included.

“God and I”

Faith sets a man with God, and as an individual, alone with God. Abel acted as an individual; Enoch walked alone with God; Noah found grace in His sight; Abram was called out from all, and was the friend of God. Joseph and Moses, and Samuel and David, and Daniel, and all the worthies of Faith's household, each found his springs to be in God -- and his guidance to be from God.

How individual, and solitary too (not only on the ground of His being the only sinless, the only perfect One, but also in the mode of His walk), was the Blessed Lord! “Lo! I come to do thy will, O God.” “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” These were the mottos of His life here below.

How beautifully, too, in the thief upon the cross do we find his faith (divinely taught) setting him alone with God -- able to condemn, not only his own past course, but all that the religious of that day were doing; and able to give to Christ a title true of Him alone from among men. “This man hath done nothing amiss.” He adds, Lord! remember me . . . in thy kingdom. And the Lord's word to Peter is to be noted, “If I will that he [John] tarry till I come, what is that to thee, FOLLOW THOU ME.”

The secret of all practical holiness in a believer is found in this individual walk with God -- a walk which, as it keeps him in the light, where Christ is at the right hand of God, keeps him in humble self-judgment, because he sees the contrast between Christ and himself -- yet in firmness, because he has to do with God, and acts for and from God.

Directly I can say, God's word proclaims a thing to be unholy, I am to cease from it at once. It is unholy to me at least, and to tamper with it would be defilement. Every godly soul (that knows even Rom. 14) would assent to this: every godly soul must say, “Obey God rather than man; obey God according to your light -- and do not go beyond it.”

I have been asked (alas for the askers!) when so acting, “Are you infallible? are you going to lord it over the conscience of others?” My answer is simple; I walk with God, and judge myself; not an inch for me on the road God's word seems to me to prohibit; right onward where the word enjoins me to go forward.

’Tis replied, “How do you know you are right?” I answer, “While walking in dependence upon God alone to lead me to see His mind, that I may do it -- do you think He will not be faithful to Himself? (John 7:17.) And as to the conscience of others, I lord it over no soul. Let each walk with God; but only let each remember that if my walk is with God, alas! for him whose walk is not in the same pathway; be he before me or behind.”

There is no holiness in communion, no “communion of saints” apart from this solitary walk with God -- of the saints as individuals.

The restless inquietude of many around convinces me they are not walking with God.

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.4

Antichrist's Names and Designations

(Continued)

4. The Wilful King

The Antichrist's Nationality

COMMON CONFUSION

It is fairly common to confound the Antichrist with the first Beast of Rev. 13 and the coming Prince of Dan. 9:26. And, taking the king in Dan. 11:36 to be the Antichrist, he is regarded as a Jew, as the phrase "God of his fathers" indicates (Dan. 11:37). This satisfies the thought that the Jews would only accept a Jew as the (false) Messiah.

Now, it is most objectionable to have ever regarded the coming Prince of Dan. 9:26 as a Jew. The people of this coming Prince destroyed the city and the sanctuary (Dan. 11:36). Clearly, the city is Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24). Obviously, this happened from the Roman armies in A.D. 70. Clearly, the people of this coming Roman Prince were Romans. Is that so difficult? If the people of the coming Prince are Romans, what nationality do you think he will be? Is that so difficult? -- no, unless you have a prophetic scheme with which this interferes. The coming Prince is a Roman, not a Jew.

THE ANTICHRIST IS A JEW

So now what? Are we going to:

1. say that the King in Dan. 11:36 is not the coming Prince? -- and learn to properly distinguish between the passages that speak of this Prince (the first beast of Rev. 13, and the little horn of Dan. 7) and those that speak of a Jewish Antichrist?
2. -- or, are we going to pronounce the King of Dan. 11:36 to be, after all, a

Gentile who is the Antichrist?

Choice 1 will lead to what J. N. Darby taught. Choice 2 is one more attempt to adjust a scheme that confounds future persons of prophecy and leads to erroneous views.

There is movement, I am sorry to say, to the view that the Antichrist is a Gentile. This involves removing the guidance God has given us to distinguish between the nationality of the coming Roman Prince and the Antichrist. The objective is to have a gentile Antichrist. First, let us have the verse before us:

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god {*el*}, and speak monstrous things against the God of gods {*el elim*}; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that which is determined shall be done. And he will not regard the God {*elohim*} of his fathers, nor the desire of women; nor regard any god {*eloah*}: for he will magnify himself above all. And in his place will he honor the god {*eloah*} of fortresses; and a god {*eloah*} whom his fathers knew not will he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones and pleasant things. And he will practice in the strongholds of fortresses with a strange god {*eloah*}: whoso acknowledgeth him will he increase with glory; and he shall rule over the many, and shall divide the land [to them] for a reward (Dan. 11:36-39).

This is how John F. Walvoord did it, claiming that there has been overlooked

a most decisive fact that the word for "God" here is *Elohim*, a name for God in general, applying both to the true God and to false gods. If the expression had been the usual one when referring to the God of Israel, *the Jehovah of his fathers*, the identification would be unmistakable. Very frequently in Scripture, the God of Israel is described as Jehovah, "the LORD God" of their fathers . . . Although Daniel uses "God (*Elohim*) of my fathers" in Daniel 2:23 in view of this common usage elsewhere in Scripture, for Daniel to omit the word Jehovah or LORD, (KJV) in a passage where a specific name for the God of Israel would be necessary, becomes significant. The expression should be rendered "the gods of his fathers," that is, any God, as most revisions translate it.¹

It seems to me that the arguments amount to this:

1. *Elohim* is sometimes used for "gods" and this use of *Elohim* here is a decisive fact. (Of course, it is no such decisive thing.)
2. Scripture often uses the name Jehovah in connection with *Elohim*. That is not the case here and therefore *Elohim* here means "gods." (Scripture does not always use Jehovah with *Elohim* when the true God is meant.)
3. Although Daniel did, in fact, use the expression in question regarding himself, namely "*Elohim* of my fathers," that does not matter because the

passage in question has to have the word *Jehovah* in it.

We are told that "Jehovah the God of his fathers" would be required here if *Jehovah* was meant. This is a phrase often used in the Old Testament. The argument is stated in spite of the phrase in question appearing also in Dan. 2:23. These are the only two uses in the book of Daniel. If Dan. 2:23 had the word *Jehovah* in it, then the difference with 11:37 would have been pressed as indicating a difference of intention in the phrases. Accordingly, we press the similarity of expression and deny that the phrase indicates "the gods of his fathers," withal acknowledging that *Elohim* may be appropriately translated "gods" when the reference is the heathen deities. Specifically, we deny that there is any necessity why "Jehovah" should appear in the phrase, except that it would be necessary in order to convince some who think Antichrist will be a ruler of the entire world. The phrase indicates that this wilful king is a Jew, as does another phrase in the next verse where he is seen to honor "a god (Eloah) whom his fathers knew not." This god stands in contrast to "the *Elohim* of his fathers." If *Elohim* here is not the true God, then we have God informing us that this king will honor a god whom his fathers did not honor. The triviality of this is its own refutation.

This is how Leon Wood did it:

There is evidence against this view, however, in the plurality of the word "gods" (*elohim*) as here used, which is truly indicative of plurality in this instance, since the singular form *eloah* is used twice in the next few words.²

The "logic" here is stunning! -- the singular is used several times, therefore the plural must mean a multiplicity of gods; it *cannot* mean God! The only thing of which this is *evidence* is the desire to have it so, in order to make the Antichrist a Gentile.

This is a reflection of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 918, where we read:

The expression "God of his fathers" (v. 37) has been held to indicate that the "king" is an apostate Jew, but this does not accord with Dan. 9:26, which was fulfilled by the Gentile armies of Rome. The "little horn" is an apostate, but from Christianity, not Judaism (cf. 1 John 2:18, 19).

Of course it accords with Dan. 9:26. The Coming Prince is a Roman while the Antichrist is a king in Jerusalem. Is that so hard to understand? Moreover, the little horn of Dan. 7 is the Prince of Dan. 9, not the wilful king of Dan. 11. Nor does 1 John 2:18, 19 prove that the Antichrist is not a Jew. He also denies that Jesus is the Messiah. Besides, how do you know that he might not be a Jew who had professed Christianity and apostatized from Christianity?

2. *A Commentary on Daniel*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973, p. 306. George M. Harton, "An Interpretation of Daniel 11:36-45," *Grace Theological Journal* 4:2 (1983) 211, follows suite.

One of the editors of the SRB, Arno C. Gaebelein, certainly disagreed with the SRB about this, as his comments in his *The Prophet Daniel* show. He held views quite similar to J. N. Darby, W. Kelly, etc. regarding the identity of future persons of prophecy.³ Concerning the phrase in question, he contradicted the SRB, saying:

The King, Antichrist, shall not regard the God of his fathers. Here his Jewish descent becomes evident.⁴

And Charles Lee Feinberg, we are happy to note, wrote:

This expression "the God of his fathers" is the usual one in the Old testament for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of the Patriarchs; the God of Israel. This is the name that is used in the prayer book of the Jews to this very day.⁵

He also rejected the confusion in the SRB, believing that

in the end times a great political leader will arise as the head of the revived Roman empire. Scripture refers to this leader as "the little horn" in Daniel 7:8-11 and as "the beast" in Revelation 13:1-8. In alliance with him -- but living in Jerusalem -- will be the counterfeit messiah, the Antichrist.⁶

William Kelly wrote:

This reference of course is to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁷

In 1849, J. N. Darby wrote:

"The God of his fathers" -- as strong a claim on nature as we know, and owned in Judaism, nor the desire of women"⁸ -- that posterity naturally wished for, but of which Christ was the center of hope among the Jews (for in this verse it evidently refers to religious-traditional objects and influence), none of these things have any influence over him . . .⁹

Even E. J. Young concurred that "God of his fathers" means Jehovah:

3. Indeed, in *Daniel the Prophet*, Grand Rapids: Kegel, p. 187, 1955 reprint, he wrote:

During the last seven years, the final prophetic week, when the prince of the Roman power makes {confirms} a covenant with the Jews, they will build the temple in Jerusalem. In the middle of the week this wilful King will come and claim divine worship. Then Satan will be working in great power, signs and lying wonders. This wilful King deceives them that dwell on the earth (Rev. 13:14) by the means of those miracles.

This identification of the wilful King with the second beast of Rev. 13 is correct. It is the Antichrist.

4. *Daniel the Prophet*, p. 187.

5. *Daniel, the Kingdom of the Lord*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 174, 1981.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

7. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:196.

8. {Cp. Luke 1:28.} www.presenttruthpublishers.com

9. *Collected Writings* 5:221.

The phrase has a Jewish emphasis and has reference to the Jewish religion. The one who has no regard for this Jewish religion is himself a Jew, the Antichrist. I fully agree with Gaebelien's statement, "Here his Jewish descent becomes evident." ¹⁰

The reader should see that the text does not require "gods of his fathers." It is faulty views concerning the Antichrist that lead some Scofieldians to that idea. Moreover, the text would then mean that the wilful king has a god that was not among the pantheon of gods his fathers worshipped. This is reducing the matter to the trivial.

GENESIS 49 HAS A HINT

In Gen. 49, where Jacob tells his sons what shall befall them, there is a hint that Dan shall give himself to the serpent character. It is the Antichrist that answers to the biting adder, the serpent by the way. In Lev. 24:11, a Danite blasphemed the Lord; and in Judges 18 we see the tribe engaged in idolatry. It has been much noticed also that the tribe of Dan does not receive sealing among the 144,000 in the Revelation. That may also be an indicator. Though Dan is omitted in the list of servants in Rev. 7, mercy is shown where he is mentioned first (Ezek. 48:1), coming into blessing and having a place among the tribes in the land under Messiah's reign before His ancients, in glory. ¹¹

These reasons, and indeed the previous general exposition, show that the Antichrist is not a ruler of the entire world, that he is a Jew, that he will be king in Israel, and that he will head up the Jewish and Christian apostasies, being the director of religious affairs for the coming Roman prince, the next Avatar for the occultists and new-agers in the West.

How Does the Antichrist Regard No God, Yet Honor One?

The statement that "he will not regard the God of his fathers" shows that he is a Jew; nor will he regard the one whom Jewish women might hope to give birth to, the Messiah. We read that he will not "regard any god: for he will magnify himself above all. And in his place will he honor the god of fortresses . . ." How is this if he directs worship to the Beast, the head of the revived Roman empire? J. N. Darby remarked:

Is it not said in 2 Thess. 2 that he owns no God? The answer is "Yes."; but the difficulty is completely removed by the testimony of Dan. 11, where we see that he does not "regard any God"; while at the same time he honors his God Mahuzzim. Outwardly before the Jews, he will have a god; inwardly, he has none. In 2 Thess. 2 it is, to my mind, religious and moral.

10. *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Grand Rapids: Erdmans, p. 249, 1949.

11. See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:110, 25:304, *Notes and Jottings*, p. 144.

But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces"; viz., in the place of the true God he shall honour Mahuzzim for God -- some idolatry; for Mahuzzim signifies fortresses or high places fortified. There is probably some connection between this and the forces of war upon which the king reckoned. "And a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold," etc. It is to some invention of a god that he does this. Verse 39: "Thus shall he do in the most strong holds [Mahuzzim] with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many [the many,] and shall divide the land for gain."

A difficulty here presents itself: "he shall cause them to rule over the many." Who are they whom he shall cause to rule? It appears that he will establish certain powers in connection with these false gods, and he will be there with these Mahuzzim in these fortresses, and then it will be the instruments of his power, who will join themselves to him. He will make them (the instruments) rule over the mass of Jews, and he will divide their land into lots as a recompense. This seems to be so far the history of this king.¹²

War to the Knife

Yes: War! even to the knife, to all indifferentism (in the heart of the sinner saved by grace) as to the honor of Christ the Savior, and as to the holiness and unity of the church of the living God.

Christian! does it seem a strange thing to you to be called upon to circumcise your heart of all superfluity of naughtiness, and to purge it of all indifference and carelessness as to the God that gave His Son for you, -- as to the Son of Man that bore the curse for you (He the Just One, in place of us the unjust)? Is it a hard saying, -- is it, in any way, unnatural to you to be called upon for a little bit of zeal for Christ, in the feelings of the new nature and of the Spirit? Unnatural! when every servant of every earthly monarch is held responsible for the honor of that monarch; if so, go to the Army and Navy, and see how, there, responsibility and British feeling pervade and fire every loyal heart as to Her Majesty's honor.

And has God in His Sovereignty called me (chiefest of sinners as I was¹³) to be a son and heir of God! Has Christ, in life here below, -- in death upon the Cross, -- in resurrection labored for me, and has He, in ascension glory, called me by name, made Himself known to me by faith, and given me His Spirit to lead me to glory -- and do you suppose I desire to be lukewarm to Himward? No, cursed is, and cursed be, all that which prevails to hinder that love of His from entering and warming the heart. We love Him, because He first loved us. Blessed be God for that love of His shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. May the love of Christ constrain us -- bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

S. S.

12. *Collected Writings* 28:354.

13. {Paul was the chiefest of sinners.} www.presenttruthpublishers.com

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Part 7: The Bride, the Lamb's Wife, in the Millennium and in the Eternal State

Chapter 7.1:

Will Israel be an Eternally Distinct People?

Introduction

Before considering Rev. 21 and 22, we will examine the Scripture indications for believing that Israel will not have an eternally distinct place. The reason for doing this first is because many come to Rev. 21 and 22 with the idea that Israel will have an eternally distinct place and that idea is forced to fit into Rev. 21 and 22. And that mistake leads to others. Isa. 66:22 is pointed to as proof that Israel will have an eternally distinct place.¹ J. D. Pentecost wrote:

By a translation out of the old earth Israel will be brought into the new earth, there to enjoy forever all that God has promised to them.²

1. See, for example, W. R. Newell, *The Book of the Revelation*, Chicago: Grace Publications, p. 344, 1945. He wrote, "This is *eternity* for national Israel, and no escaping it!"

So William Hoste, after quoting Isa. 65:17 and Isa. 9:7:

If such words are to be interpreted merely of the millennium, then words cease to have any definite meaning . . . the earthly kingdom will be as everlasting as the heavenly (*The Visions of John the Divine*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, p. 170, n.d.).

2. *Things to Come*, Findlay: Dunham, p. 581, 1958.

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There are a number of things that this notion entails:

1. The new covenant is also called an "everlasting covenant," and several texts concerning this also speak of the "seed" and "offspring." If this is carried into the eternal state then that would involve eternal procreation of people -- a mind-boggling, infinite number of people -- as well as other unacceptable notions.
2. It does not take into account that there are also other "everlasting" covenants, which if also carried into the eternal state result in parallel, unacceptable notions.
3. It violates the contexts of Isa. 65:17 and Isa.66:22 -- which are millennial in application.
4. It contradicts Rev. 21:1-3 which speaks of those on earth as one class: *men*. We will notice later the idea that Rev. 21:9-22:5 depicts the eternal state. It does not. The city *is* the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9, 10).

Examination of What the Mistaken Idea Entails

We will now examine some of the implications of the idea that Israel will eternally have a distinct place.

THE NEW COVENANT IS AN "EVERLASTING" COVENANT The Texts Which Speak of the Everlasting Covenant with Israel.

... and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples: all that see them shall acknowledge that they are a seed that Jehovah has blessed (Isa. 61:8, 9).

And I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever. And my tabernacle shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I Jehovah do hallow Israel when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever (Ezek. 37:26-28).

And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me all [their] days, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not draw back from them ... and I will assuredly plant them in the land ... and fields shall be bought in this land ... (Jer. 32:40).

... and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant (Ezek. 16:60).

... and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the sure mercies of David (Isa. 55:3).

... an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten ... (Jer. 50:5).

What is the Result if the Everlasting Covenant Applies to the Eternal State? If, then, this “everlasting covenant” reaches beyond the present heavens and earth and on into the new heavens and earth, the conclusion must be that:

- ◆ Israel will be eternally procreating (Ezek. 37:26-28) --and then why not the nations also? -- and where will this infinite number of Israelites dwell?

While I can well imagine the efforts to circumvent what the text says, Henry Morris (consistently) does not hesitate to take “everlasting” as applying to the eternal state. He wrote of the “nations of the saved” (a false textual reading):

Then, perhaps, they would be sent out to colonize and develop other terrestrial planets throughout God’s infinite universe, worlds without end.³

Interestingly, he regards the universe as infinite (or, as the case may be, the new heavens and earth as infinite). Well, with eternal procreation, it seems it would have to be infinite to house the infinite number of persons on an infinite number of planets, “world without end”!

- ◆ And there will be an eternal sanctuary in the midst of Israel (Ezek. 37:26-28), which sanctuary must eventually involve an infinite number of Israelites connected with that sanctuary as they procreate eternally throughout the new heavens -- to dwell where, in reference to the sanctuary?

The “everlasting” covenant with Israel is the new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34.⁴ Ezekiel 40-48 describes the order to be carried out by Israel for the new covenant.

- ◆ The new covenant is an “everlasting” covenant; hence, if you project this into the eternal state, you must hold that there will be eternal sacrifices, in Palestine, for an infinite, ever increasing number of Israelites spread throughout the new heavens. Think of the infinite space travel to bring the fruits of eternal, infinite husbandry as sacrifices to Jerusalem on the earth (Ezek. 40-48), which, of course, could not deal with it. There is much

3. *The Revelation Record*, p. 459.

4. L. S. Chafer wrote:

... the earthly people, Israel, go on forever in the glorified earth that is to be (cf. Isa. 66:22; Jer. 31:36-37) ... (*Systematic Theology* 4:419).

Why did he not accept the statement in Ezek. 37:26-28: “and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever”? Eternal multiplication of Israelites means, as Henry Morris said: “colonize and develop other terrestrial planets throughout God’s infinite universe, worlds without end.”

more that is quite gross as a result of the notion that Israel will have an eternally distinct place, but let it pass.

So it is not a matter of merely fastening on a texts like Isa. 65:17, Isa. 66:22 and Jer. 31:36-37 and acting as if someone opposed to the notion of an eternally distinct place for Israel is flying in the face of plain Scripture, and saying that then words would have no meaning. Not so; it is just the reverse. If you do not acknowledge offspring and human procreation under the everlasting covenant, it is yourself that is flying in the face of plain Scripture:

And I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and *I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever.* And my tabernacle shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I Jehovah do hallow Israel when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever (Ezek. 37:26-28).

The explanation for these things is to not believe that part of the everlasting covenant is for eternity, but that another (distasteful, perhaps) part is not for eternity. The true explanation for these things is to give all of Scripture that bears on these matters its place.

Why the New Covenant is Called an Everlasting Covenant. W. Kelly remarked:

This is an additional word of the Lord about the new covenant; it will be an everlasting one; He will never turn away from His people.

We know that the Jews have never yet inherited their land according to the new covenant, still less according to the everlasting covenant. They are to inherit under both titles; the new covenant to distinguish it from anything that ever was before, the everlasting covenant to show that the new covenant will never be put out of date, or grow obsolete, but will always be effectual and valid for their possession and their blessing.⁵

But that is so, as W. Kelly believed by taking all Scripture into account, for as long as the present heavens and earth remain. Is it not much better to acknowledge that this “*everlasting*” covenant means its *uninterruptable stability as long as the present heavens and earth continue*?

THE USE OF “EVERLASTING” WITH OTHER COVENANTS

The next objection to Israel having a distinct place in the new heavens and earth is that there are other covenants said to be “everlasting”; and applying these to the eternal state also leads to absurdities.

Rainbows Everlastingly? As a further help to seeing that the word “everlasting” relates to the present earth so long as it exists, consider what God

5. *Jeremiah*, on 32:40, in *loco.* www.presenttruthpublishers.com

said to Noah:

And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living soul of all flesh that is upon earth (Gen. 9:16).

We are not to conclude from this that on the new earth there are going to be animals and that the bow will be there, implying that it will rain on the new earth in the eternal state, when there is no more sea. The rainbow is for the present earth as long as it exists.

Days of the Week in the New Heavens and Earth? Moreover, Ex. 31:16, 17 speaks of the observance of the Sabbath as an everlasting covenant:

And the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations -- [it is] an everlasting covenant. It shall be a sign between me and the children of Israel forever. . . .

Though the Mosaic covenant is disannulled, Israel will observe the sabbath in the millennium (Ezek. 44:24; 45:17; 46:1, 3, 4, 12) showing that it will be in effect under the new covenant, which, as we saw, is referred to as an everlasting covenant; and, which if carried over into the new heavens and earth implies days of the week, the rising and setting of the sun, etc. Also, the showbread would continue to be set in order throughout eternity (Lev. 24:8), which implies growing crops eternally. Additionally, there would have to be wave and heave offerings carried on eternally (Num. 18:18, 19) and that implies an eternal husbandry to carry this on. But these things are for the present earth only.

There are other physical features that we need not trace here which also bear on this matter.

The Everlasting Covenant With Abraham. There are other scriptures which speak of a covenant that is everlasting; for example, the everlasting covenant with Abraham:

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I give to thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession (Gen. 17:7, 8; cp. v.v. 13, 17; 1 Chron. 16:17; Ps. 105:8-11).

If this is taken to apply in the new heavens and new earth, then again we have an eternal procreation of Israelites and with the land of Canaan given to them everlastingly. An infinite number of Israelites will not fit in Canaan. Moreover, the thought implies that the new earth will be similar to the one now in order for Canaan to exist, as such. The land promise certainly seems limited to the present earth, as does the procreation of seed -- though the *spiritual* blessing of the forgiveness of sins that will be realized in the millennium is of a different order of blessing and will not be changed by the creation of the new heavens and earth.

The Davidic Covenant: Messiah's Reign Over Israel as Long as the Sun and Moon Endure. The error that Israel will be an eternally distinct people also entails the false notion that the Davidic kingdom will be an eternal kingdom. And so L. S. Chafer wrote:

... the Davidic kingdom which is earthly and to be centered in Jerusalem will continue forever and ever (cf. Isa 9:6-7; Dan. 7:14; Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 11:15).⁶

To wrongly understand the use of "everlasting" in the above cases that we reviewed also involves the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 23:5; 1 Chron. 16:17; see Isa. 55:3). When we look at Psa. 89:3, 28-29, 34-36, we see that the endurance is compared to the endurance of the sun and moon:

His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me; It shall be established forever as the moon, and the witness of the sky is firm. Selah.

L. S. Chafer, having even cited that passage for proof of an eternal Davidic reign, went on to quote from Psa. 72:

... a Psalm of the kingdom reign of Christ, it is written, "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. . . . His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed" (vss. 5, 17).⁷

It seems he was oblivious to the real thrust of these passages, which explicitly links the word "forever" to "as long as the sun and moon endure." But the sun and moon that the Psalmists speak of are part of the present heavens. The Davidic covenant, like the rest of the *everlasting covenants of the OT, are for the present earth*, not the new earth. Just as the David kingdom in the hands of Christ will not pass, or end, as long as the present earth endures, so the new covenant with Israel, through which the covenant with Abraham is fulfilled, is for the present earth, not the new heavens and the new earth.

L. S. Chafer quoted at length various texts that he says supports an eternal Davidic reign.⁸ It is all useless, because they refer to the present earth -- and moreover, he ignores what the notion entails. But his quotation of texts was preliminary to dealing with 1 Cor. 15:24-28, concerning which he wrote:

Over against this array of positive Scripture which so clearly assert the everlasting duration of Christ's reign on David's throne is the one passage thought by many to teach the limitation of Christ's reign to the thousand-

6. *Systematic Theology* 4:419.

7. *Systematic Theology* 5:369. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

8. *Systematic Theology* 5:369-371.

year kingdom age . . . (1 Cor. 15:24-28).⁹

What about the “array of positive Scripture” that has been quoted showing the absurdities the notion entails -- Scriptures that he has ignored. And so he speaks as if “one passage” is opposed to his scheme (which he will then explain away). The fact is that he is guilty of:

- ❖ ignoring many Scriptures we have considered that show the mind-boggling results of his notion about “everlasting,” and about an eternally distinct place for Israel (and nations also, of course);
- ❖ ignoring the limitations that “forever” in some of the texts he himself quoted means “as long as the sun and moon endure”;
- ❖ and then ill-using this procedure against the express statement of 1 Cor 15:24-28.

The truth is that the idea of an eternal Davidic reign is not supported by the texts cited in its support. Some of them contain evidence of the limitation to the present earth, and many other OT passages show that the idea entails utterly absurd consequences. Our findings from what the OT shows is that Israel’s new covenant, which is referred to as an “everlasting covenant,” along with the Davidic covenant, will be in uninterrupted force as long as the sun and moon endure; namely, for the duration of the present heavens and earth. 1 Cor. 15:24-28 expressly confirms this fact; and the general category “men” in Rev. 21:3 is quite in keeping with this.

The Reign of the Son of Man Ends in Triumph Over the Last Enemy.

Rev. 11:15 (and see Rev. 22:5) indicate that there is indeed an eternal reign. It does not automatically follow that it is Davidic in character. It is written of Christ that:

. . . he gives up the kingdom to him [who is] God and Father . . . But when all things shall have been brought into subjection to him, then the Son also himself shall be placed in subjection to him who put all things in subjection to him, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:24, 28).

That marks the end of the *kingdom of the Son of man*, an expression of wider scope than *Davidic kingdom*, but inclusive of it. The Son will have perfectly discharged that rule, and will have cast death, the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26), into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14). Then comes the immense change concerning the new heavens and earth, when God shall “be all in all”; cp. Rev. 21:3. Concerning this, W. Kelly remarked:

In 1 Cor. 15:23 we read that every one is to be raised in his own order:

Christ the first-fruits [who is raised already]; afterward they that

are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when he delivers up [which is the true reading] ¹⁰ the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall put down all rule and authority and power.

This is the task of Christ during the millennium: He will abolish all opposing rule, subjecting to Himself every adversary and all things unto the glory of God the Father; for such is the ultimate object of His exaltation, as we see from Phil. 2,

For he must reign, till he hath put enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

This exactly harmonizes with Rev. 20-21, where we find, first the reign of Christ, then death destroyed, and after that the new heaven and earth, which is the time when Christ is said in 1 Cor. 15:24 to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. Not that Christ will cease to reign divinely: but the special human reign of Christ will terminate -- that is reigning for a given period over an earthly people, and the world at large, which the heavenly saints in glory will share along with Him. This will end. All the righteous will at last be in a risen or changed condition, all the wicked dead cast into the lake of fire, and the kingdom closes. Its surrender to God the Father in no way touches the personal glory of the Lord Jesus. The kingdom that Christ has during the millennium is not what He has as God, but as the risen man -- as the One who was humbled, but has been exalted. This He delivers up to God, even the Father (Himself also as man taking the place of subjection in glory, as of old He did in grace on the earth), that God -- Father, Son, and Holy Ghost -- may be all in all -- God as such having the place of supremacy throughout eternity. ¹¹ But although the human or

10. "Giveth up: παραδῶ (Text. Rec.) KL and most cursives, &c., παραδίδοι (or -ῶ)," W. Kelly, *Notes on 1 Corinthians, in loco*. See fifth word under "deliver," *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*; see p. 614, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, sec. ed., Gingrich.

11. {In his *Letters* 3:268, 269, J. N. Darby wrote:

If a kingdom be delivered up by man to God, that God may be all in all, it is that the human holding of it should cease -- its mediatorial character παραδίδωμι signifies giving up to another. I admit the emphasis on the word God, because man has held the kingdom, but it is precisely what shows the force of the passage. He must reign till -- and then He will give up the kingdom. Nothing can be more simple. It is not Christ who makes all things new, but God. Christ reigns, subdues all things, work that God the Father has entrusted to Him, all in this creation. Then comes all things new of the new creation, where justice does not reign but dwell.

Citing 2 Sam. 7:13 is confounding His reign as Son of David with the universal glory spoken of in the New Testament, which is a totally different thing. Dan. 2:44 is the worldly kingdom also; 7:14 also -- peoples, nations, tongues, languages. Luke 1:33 is the kingdom over Jacob, the throne of David. 2 Tim. 4:1 proves nothing at all save that His appearing is the time of His kingdom. 2 Pet. 3 proves the instability of created things against those who based their hopes on their stability, and laughed at the coming of the Lord. None of these passages, nor any in the Old Testament, touch the

mediatorial kingdom of Christ will terminate, not so the divine kingdom; and therefore we, being made partakers of the divine nature, are said to reign for ever and ever (Rev. 22). So in Rom. 5 it is said, "We shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Of course, partaking of the divine nature does not touch the incommunicable glory of the Godhead. But it remains true that we have an eternal life, and that its endless character flows from the fact that it is given to us by One who, though truly man, is a divine person, by Him, who is the living One and was dead, and, behold, is alive for evermore. "We shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ"-- a reign which is not limited in time any more than sphere.¹²

With the introduction of the new heavens and the new earth, the ages of time are ended. There will be no new dispensations either. Nor is eternity a dispensation. Eph. 1:10 refers to the millennium.

SEVERAL OTHER REFERENCES TO THE NEW COVENANT

In one of Zechariah's prophecies of Israel's future blessing we read of the blood of the new covenant:

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I will send forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water (Zech. 9:11).

Of course, this is the precious blood of Christ. The new covenant is an unconditional covenant and God will act sovereignly to bring His ancient people into that covenant. When the epoch for this occurs, not every Israelite will be brought into the covenant. Besides the purging of the ungodly that will go on in the land by the overflowing scourge (the Assyrian of the prophets, the King of the North of Dan. 11), God will do a tremendous work of purging of the rebels from those gathered from the nations into the wilderness, for the ungodly will not be permitted to enter the land when Messiah reigns before His ancients in glory. Listen:

[As] I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, verily with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will reign over you. And I will

11. (...continued)

universal headship of Christ spoken of in the New Testament, the eighth Psalm alone giving in its general language the connecting link. In another sense, Christ does reign for ever and ever, and so do the saints; but it is not the human kingdom in contrast with God's being all in all. "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty," is the language of Rev. 11 -- the worldly kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, that is, it is the power of God as contrasted with man, begun in His taking in hand judgment and rule in the world; and that power could never cease. The kingdom thus viewed is God's in contrast with man's evil, and that is for ever. In 1 Cor. 15, which is as clear as possible, it is Christ as man having held it for purposes of subjection, who gives up this special kingdom which puts down other authority, to God that the power may be God's exclusively. As partaking of the divine glory we reign for ever and ever (Rev. 22), but it is not in war or in judgment given to man.)

12. *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, London: Morrish, n.d., pp. 468, 469.

bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I [am] Jehovah (Ezek. 20:33-38).

Mal. 3:1 might refer to the Mosaic covenant, but perhaps to the new covenant, or to both.

ISAIAH'S PROPHECY OF THE NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH

Related to this subject is Isaiah's prophecy concerning the new heavens and earth. Persons reason from what Isaiah says about this and conclude that Israel must be eternally distinct, without considering other Scriptures and what that thought entails. Note in the following quotation that W. Kelly has reached a judgment in view of "all the scriptures which treat of the subject." And having done so, he did not accept the thought that Israel will have a distinct place eternally. Commenting on Isa. 65, W. Kelly wrote:

The true key to this is that the predicted change from the present things begins at the commencement of the day of the Lord {at the appearing of Christ in glory}, and is only complete before that day gives place to eternity. This alone, as is plainly revealed, will be found to reconcile all the scriptures which treat of the subject. So in Christ the Christian can even now say that "old things are passed away: behold all things are become new"; while in fact this will only be literally verified when he is changed into His image at His coming {for the saints at the rapture}. Just so the beginning of the day of the Lord {when He appears in glory} will be an incipient accomplishment of "new heavens and a new earth," when Jehovah creates Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, but the absolute fulfilment awaits the close of the millennial day, when to the fullest all things shall be made new, the earth and heavens that are now being not shaken only but dissolved, the sea for ever gone, and a new heaven and a new earth appearing, wherein righteousness shall dwell, and God shall be all in all. The New Testament naturally dwells on the full issue ultimately involved in the prophecy, as we may see in 2 Pet. 3:12, 13, and in Rev. 21:1-3. But the Jewish prophet, as naturally, was led of the Spirit to dwell on the earliest pledge of this blessing in its dawn on the land and capital and people of Israel.

That Isaiah does embrace this earlier phase as bearing on the Jews and Jerusalem will be manifest to every attentive reader. For the entire description here suits the millennium rather than eternity. The special place of Jerusalem and her people has been already pointed out. Now this of itself

suffices to prove it; for though the new Jerusalem possesses an abiding character of special glory, the New Testament is explicit that on the new earth all such distinctions as an earthly city or people melt away for eternity.

Next, v. 20 is decisive against the notion. "There shall be no more thenceforth an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not completed his days; for the youth shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner [being] a hundred years old shall be accursed." Thus death is not wholly extinct in the state of things prominently before our prophet. It is exceptional, but still exists as an instrument of judicial infliction. Man will then fill his days, which he has never yet done -- not even before the flood -- no, not even Methuselah himself. Not one as yet has stretched across ten centuries. This will be the rule for the righteous who are found alive on earth when the Lord reigns for the thousand years. So thoroughly will death be not the rule but the exception, that one dying a hundred years old will be but a youth; and even so he that dies at a hundred years will be a sinner under some express curse. In eternity death does not exist.¹³

There are others who realize that it is inappropriate to hold that Israel will be eternally distinct that view this passage a little differently -- as surely as God will create a new heavens and earth, just as surely will He create Jerusalem a place of rejoicing, *in the millennium*.

VIOLATION ALSO OF THE CONTEXT OF ISA. 66:22

It is plain that the context is the regathering of Israel to the land (vv. 19-21) and their establishment in the land (vv. 23, 24). The new heavens and the new earth shall remain before Jehovah, and just so shall Israel remain before Jehovah thus regathered in the land. That is the land during the present heavens and the earth. It is an assurance that once regathered, they shall not be thrust out of the land as in the past.

Moreover, it is not to be supposed that carcasses will be looked upon (v. 24) during the eternal state. All the wicked will be raised at the great white throne judgment and cast into the lake of fire -- after the millennium. When that takes place is not stated in this passage, only that they will lie under everlasting judgment. It is in the present earth that there are carcasses.

ISRAEL'S IDENTITY GONE AT THE CHANGE OF THE EARTH

At the rapture, the church enters upon its eternal state. The bringing in of the new heaven and new earth does not affect that distinction, and the implication of this is that the other saints in heaven have their assigned place also, but not merged with the church. The Church is eternally distinct.

Concerning the earth, that is another matter. God's ways in government

13. *An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah*, London: Hammond, p. 386, 1947 ed. See also W. Trotter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*, London: Morrish, p. 557, n. c.; *Synopsis* 2:240.

in the earth, with Israel as the center, will have come to an end with the closing of the millennial kingdom. In connection with the dissolution of the present heavens and earth, note that at that point humans on earth undergo a change ("Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5)) and are introduced into the new earth in a new condition suitable for the eternal state. Nations then exist no more on earth, with all there falling under the category "men" (Rev. 21:3).

As JND remarked:

If an eternal state be spoken of, then these are not Israel's ancient promises. What is peculiar to and prophetic of Israel, will then be done with.¹⁴

... No earthly people distinct from the inhabitants of the earth. These are God's people, and God is with them Himself, but withal His tabernacle is with them. This is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. The assembly has her own character, is the habitation of God in a special way, when the unchanging state comes, and all is made new.¹⁵

His dwelling place is with men. It is no more an individual or national thing ... God's dwelling-place is no longer with the Jews, but with men.¹⁶

In his major work on the book of Revelation, W. Kelly, commenting on Isa. 65, wrote:

Clearly this is a very bright change, but it is an earthly condition. There are infants and old men here; and though the description is purposely contrasted with anything the world has yet seen, still it is a time-state of blessedness, and not of eternity. The apostle John shows us in the Revelation the new heaven and the new earth, not in a relative sense but in the most absolute. In the Old Testament they are limited, because connected with Israel upon the earth. So it is said of the Lord, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." This is an Old Testament hope, though said in the New, and it means of course that He shall reign over the house of Jacob as long as it exists as such upon the earth. When the earth disappears and Israel is no longer seen as a nation, they will be blessed, no doubt, in another and better way; but there will be no reign of Christ over them as an earthly people here below; so that this kingdom, while it has no end as long as the earth subsists, must necessarily be limited by the earth's continuance. It is thus that I understand the new heavens and the new earth spoken of in Isaiah. The New Testament uses the phrase fully and absolutely, as an unending state; but in the Old Testament it is tied down to the earthly relations of which the Holy Ghost was then speaking.

What makes it still clearer is that the next verse (Isa. 65:21) goes on to say,

14. *Collected Writings* 8:108.

15. *Synopsis* 5:420.

16. *Collected Writings* 16:136. See also 2:257; 5:95; 30 *in loco*. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit . . . mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord," &c.

Now all this is most cheering. So again,

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

Glowing and beautiful as this picture is of what the Lord can accomplish, it is in connexion with the earth and an earthly people. It is not the eternal state, but an exceedingly glorious day, when death will be the exception and life the rule. I say that death will be thus rare, at least in the Holy Land, because of that verse, "The child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." The meaning is, that if a person dies at a hundred years old, he will still be comparatively a child; and that even when death occurs at that age, it is only as the result of an express curse of God. Thus will it be during the millennium.

And this seems to answer a question often asked: What will become of all the righteous people during that wonderful reign? If the first resurrection is then past, and in the second resurrection none but the wicked dead are raised, what can be the destiny of the righteous who live during the millennium? The truth is, there is no scripture proof that such die during the thousand years. What is said supposes the contrary. Therefore, if they die not during the millennium, there are no righteous to be raised at the end of it. The resurrection at the end remains consequently for the wicked dead solely. The righteous will be raised before the millennium. The wicked after it. The just who live during the reign of Christ are not called to die at all, as far as scripture informs us. We may be sure that these millennial saints will be changed into the likeness of Christ; they will be transplanted into the new heavens and earth. We are not called upon to conjecture how this will be. It is sufficient for us to know that, though they are not described as dying during the millennium, and therefore do not need to be raised; yet when the new earth appears men are found upon it quite distinct from the New Jerusalem (i.e., the symbol of the glorified heavenly saints). I believe that verse 3 warrants this statement. "Behold, the tabernacle of God [or the city that descends] is with men," &c.

Another proof that Isaiah does not speak of the eternal state described here is this: When the new heavens and earth are seen by the New Testament prophet, the old are said to be passed away, and the sea no longer exists. Not so in Isaiah's prophecy. There it was rather the spirit or pledge of the new that came into the old; a shadow of what was to be, and not the very image or accomplishment of the thing. They are said prophetically to be "new," because of the great joy and blessing that God will give to His people Israel in their land. In the Revelation "there was no more sea." In the Old Testament, on the contrary, the abundance of the sea (it is said) shall be

converted unto thee . . . Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first" (Isa. 60). There can be no just doubt that this chapter speaks of the same time as chapter 65. "For thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." This and other passages prove that there is still to be sea at the time spoken of by Isaiah: the isles and ships necessarily suppose it; and "the isles afar off" are introduced between the two statements of the new heavens and new earth in Isa. 65 and 66.

Here in Revelation not merely the present dispensation but the present heaven and earth have passed away, and give place to "all things made new." Doubtless the new heaven and earth will be made out of the old. Just as the resurrection-body will be formed out of the present body of humiliation by the power of God, so are the present earth and heavens destined to a kindred transformation. After the dissolution they will reappear in the form of the new heavens and earth. "No more sea" would be impossible without a miracle, as long as life in its present condition has to be maintained. The sea, as my reader knows, is absolutely necessary to animated nature as it is. Man could not exist without it; and so with regard to every animal and even vegetable upon the face of the earth, not to speak of the vast world of waters. But when time is done -- when there is no longer the natural life that is sustained by God -- when the millennium shall have yielded the brightest witness to this as well as to every other fruit of His wisdom and goodness and power -- a new state of things altogether will ensue, and this perfect and everlasting. There will be new heavens and a new earth; for the first heavens and first earth are passed away; and there is no more sea. Perfection is come for the universe.¹⁷

Ed.

Dispensation Does Not mean an Age

As the verse {Eph. 1:10} contains several words and clauses which are not generally understood, it may be added in this note that the word "dispensation" (οἰκονομία) has no reference to a particular period or age (which is in the New Testament expressed by (αἰών)). It means "stewardship," or rather "administration," the particular form here meant being the summing, or heading (ἀνακεφαλαιώσεις) up of all things, heavenly and earthy, under Christ. This will be in the age to come, when Christ shall be displayed as Head over all things, and the glorified saints shall reign with Him. It is neither this age, during which Satan is still permitted to reign as the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air; nor is it the eternal state, when all government is over, and Christ will have given up the kingdom, that God may be all in all. It is the intervening millennium. This will be the fulness of the times, previous periods having been the necessary preparation for it. Meanwhile, redemption through Christ's blood having been effected, the Holy Ghost seals the believer, and is the earnest of the inheritance.

(W. Kelly, *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Ephesians*, London: Morrish, p. 27, note, n.d.)

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 3

Is the Law Dead? No. And What is the Christian's Responsibility? Comments Collected from J. N. Darby

The Great Truth as to the Christian and the Law

But another question, as we are all aware, connects itself with it -- the place the law holds in the ways of God. This connects itself, or rather identifies itself, with the question -- Is the purpose, which is inseparable from the grace of God, the first thing in His ways, or the responsibility of man, that is, grace or law; in fact, the first Adam or the Second? Here the old Aristotelian adage becomes true -- *Ἀρχὴ τῆς θεωρίας τέλος τῆς πράξεως*. That law in principle, and ultimately the law as given in fact, identifies itself with, and is the measure of, responsibility in the first Adam, will hardly be questioned. That it is not in itself grace is evident. It requires from man, and does not give to him sovereignly or contrary to what he has deserved. Yet both are divine and true in their place. It is because the relative place of each of these is not seen that the difficulty has, I believe, been insoluble. If both be of God, both must be maintained: His authority in respect of man's responsibility; sovereign grace abounding over all. God's title in both must be maintained. The difficulty lies in this, that while God's title is involved in both, in their nature they contradict one another. To require and to give are necessarily opposed to one another. If a thousand pounds be due, it is very just to require it, but it is not grace. If I pay it so as to free the debtor, when he has no claim on me, it is pure kindness and grace; only righteousness is satisfied by the payment.

But we shall find that this is not all. I affirm, then, that purpose and the Second man and eternal life in Him came before the question of responsibility in the first, but that responsibility and law came actually first in the history of man and of this world; that both meet in Christ, and in Him only the difficulty is solved -- a difficulty which heathens have reasoned on as well as Christians, because it lies in the nature and state

of man. When I have unfolded this from scripture, I will apply it to our question and to the rest of God.

The truth that the purpose and full promise and grace of God was before the world, and in the last Adam, the Second man, not in the first, involves this additional truth -- that, whatever its collateral blessings for the world (and they are many), it is not of the world, not directly part of its history and government, though it be developed and find its place in it, and God's secret and overruling government order all things for good to those who are faithful to Him in it. As was true of Christ, so of Christians, "Ye are not of the world, as I am not of the world."

But I will proceed to the scripture proof of my proposition, that the purpose of grace, though revealed after, came before the responsibility of man (I do not say the predestination of persons here, but the purposes of grace); while the bringing in of the accomplishment of that purpose came after the question of the responsibility was settled in the first Adam. . . . (CW10:270-272). ♦

The great truth is this: we have died on the cross to our whole standing in Adam, and to the law that was the rule for it; and we are risen with Christ into the new creation in Him, alive from the dead to give ourselves to God. We have the treasure in earthen vessels, but our place before God is that in Christ, and Christ in us. We have died from under the law, but therein died to sin, and are alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. We are in a wholly new position, and, though the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in one whose life Christ is, it is because he walks after the Spirit, and does not put himself under law. He cannot (Rom. 7) have two husbands at a time, Christ and the law. Remark here that I am speaking, as the passages I refer to are, of practical righteousness, a godly life, but if we are under the law for that, the law also curses us. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, and if the curse is not executed, the authority of the law is gone. If we are under law, we are under a curse, or its authority destroyed. If Christ has borne the curse, we have died with Him out of the position in which the law reached us; by the law dead to law, that we might live to God, crucified with Christ, yet living, but not we, but Christ living in us. He will not live wrongly. I do not enter here into failure, or Christ's blessed advocacy if we do fail, but only bring out the principles of the life in which we do live to God (CW31:333). ♦

Now the doctrine is that we have died in Christ. The law supposes living, responsible men, as, of course, as children of Adam we are. The law has power over a man as long as he lives. Dead, it cannot deal with him as a present responsible person. I cannot accuse a dead man, as a present thing, of evil lusts and self-will. The apostle puts the case of the marriage relationship (in Rom. 7); death dissolves it, and leaves the person free; we have died under law, but so are dead to law, and now are married to another, a risen Christ, who is, as man, put in a wholly new place, after the question of sin is settled, and then gives the experience of the soul under the first husband, the law, not now as to guilt, but as to the power of sin dwelling in us (CW29:302). ♦

The law is not dead. It is still in full force against the unrighteousness of the man who is under it; but I have died under it. The law has condemned me, and spent its full curse on me in Christ (CW26:71). ♦

... {Rom. 7:6} should be, "having died in that wherein we were held." It is not the law that is dead, but I am dead. The law is the jailer, I am the prisoner. The mistake people are making is that they are killing the jailer instead of the thief. The jailer is not dead, the thief is (CW21). ♦

However, it is not the law which dies, but Christ died under the law; for as many as have sinned under the law shall be condemned by the law; and the law is good if a man use it lawfully (Rom. 2:12; 1 Tim 1:8) (CW7:130). ♦

The Consequence of the Same Truth

In {Romans} chapter 7 he considers the consequences of the same truth as to the law. The law, he says, has dominion over a man so long as he lives; he then gives the tie of marriage as an explanation of it. As long as the first husband lives, the wife cannot be to another man without guilt. The first husband then represents the law, the second is Christ raised from the dead. Christ when living on this earth was Himself under the law; and thus we cannot be at the same time under the law and united to Christ raised from the dead. However, it is not the law which dies, but Christ died under the law; for as many as have sinned under the law shall be condemned by the law; and the law is good if a man use it lawfully (Rom. 2:12; 1 Tim. 1:8, 9). If it were ourselves who were dead under the law, we should be lost; but Christ died for us. And because He is risen from the dead, our souls are united to Him, the law having no longer a hold over a dead man. Therefore, now, Christ, He who is raised from the dead, is our only husband. Thus the resurrection of Christ has delivered us from the law, as well as from sin and condemnation (CW7:129). ♦

In {Romans} chapter 7, the apostle applies the doctrine of death to the law, and he opens it in this way, "Know ye not that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" It is true even of human law, and physical death. He proceeds with the analogy of husband and wife. You cannot have two husbands at one and the same time -- we cannot have Christ and the law both at once. We are bound up with one or the other, as a principle, to God. The woman cannot have two husbands. "Wherefore ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." It is not that the law has died, we are dead; the image, so far, changes, but the bond is broken; and this difference is blessed, because I hold also my old evil nature for dead, and this is by the body of Christ. In His death, as we have seen, I reckon myself dead. The law was never abrogated, and the principle of it was sanctioned as of God, and those that have sinned under it will be judged by it. Verse 6 correctly reads: "but now we are clear from the law, having died in that in which we were held." It is not then, that the law is dead, but we are dead to that by which we were held. Hence, note, death to sin goes with it. Therefore, the apostle says, we are dead to the law by the body of Christ, because Christ was made a curse for us, and died under it, as bearing the curse. But how? Why the law applied its full curse to Him, as willingly offering Himself, and He died under it.

The law as a weapon took its full effect on Christ. It did everything it possibly could, by way of its curse coming upon Christ. The curse of the law was the death of the

sinner, and Christ in grace was made sin for us; therefore, what could the law do more than spend its full curse on the head of Him, who was made sin for us, who died under the law? Christ was born under the law and kept it. He puts Himself under its curse, and goes through it all, and rises entirely out of it. And faith applies Christ's position to the believer. But alas! to how many Christians law is Christianity. But Christ comes as a Mediator, and takes my place, my whole cause: and faith has received all that. He thus was in my place, bringing all the good of it to myself, as if I were in His place. He is not speaking of union with Him now, as in Ephesians. I come and have my place actually and livingly in Christ, for He is the quickening Spirit, the last Adam, who comes and gives me a portion with Himself in His present position. All question of the claims of the law upon the believer has passed away in Christ, for in Christ he has died to the life and position in which he could be under it; and now I have a life in Christ after the whole question of law is settled before God. I am married to another husband, to Him who is raised from the dead.

The Jew is still fully under the law. The believer has died to it in Christ. Does this weaken the power of the law? No, not at all, it has all its power. See Galatians 2:19, 20 (CW26:68, 69). ♦

The Law Still Has Its Authority¹⁸

Deliverance from the law is not by abrogating its authority; that could not be, for it was God's, and was the necessary and right rule for living man, alive in this world (CW10:160). ♦

We were in the flesh, and then the motions of sin could be excited by the law. We reckon ourselves, being baptized to His death, dead to sin, and alive to God; Christ risen, our life; so that we walk in newness of life. But this is our deliverance from law; because He who was under it has died and satisfied its claims, and come from under them; law having dominion over a man as long as he lives -- and we are dead, and alive with a new kind of life, out of the state and place where law reached us. We

18. It is asked, "What is that which subsisted *de facto*, not by divine authority, not yet actually set aside, which Christians were called to come out of?" It was Judaism at Jerusalem. It did subsist *de facto* till the destruction of Jerusalem; had no real divine authority after the cross, but was left by the patience of God, not yet set aside; and Christians, that is, Jewish Christians, had remained in it by thousands, nay, wanted to subject Gentile Christians to it, though God did not allow that; and the Jewish Christians were now called to come out of it. A great many of the priests even, it is said, were obedient to the faith. This was now to close (*Collected Writings* 15:223).

{Heb. 8:4}. For if He were on earth He should not be a Priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law. Therefore, at the very time when the heavenly priesthood was being unfolded to the Hebrews, there existed on earth another priesthood, which though no longer recognised, was yet in operation. This was a time of transition between the two dispensations. We gather from this that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written before the fall of Jerusalem. For what object? First, to show the Hebrews their heavenly privileges; but also to bid them go forth without the camp (*Collected Writings* 28:20; see also 27:379, note).

have died wholly out of that, as truly as Christ has died and risen into another, God's true place for man in Christ. It is a new creation in us, and by which we are placed in the new creation, where the old things are passed away and all things are new (CW10:159). ♦

I believe the law to be the perfect rule of life for man in the flesh, but it supposes sin, and applies to sinful flesh, to man in the flesh; and, being on the principle of requirement, and rightly so (for it is a very important principle and maintains God's rights), it condemns me as to righteousness, and is no help to me, but the contrary, as to sanctification. If then the law be holy, just, and good in its contents, why not be under it? why not maintain it? Because I am then in a relationship with God which involves condemnation and the power of sin. Law is law, not grace, and the strength of sin is the law. Maintain the law as law and you destroy its authority if it be not law to you; and if it be law to you, it is the strength of sin, and sin will have dominion over you. It must, as law, have external authority, God's authority as such. If you weaken that, you have destroyed it as a law.

And here I separate from both parties who have discussed it. They both, in my judgment, really destroy its authority, one unintentionally, the other declaring it is abrogated, buried, and the like. The former are obliged to yield a great deal, desiring to maintain its authority, because they cannot help it; the latter destroy its authority and make it to be abrogated. I do not abate one jot or one tittle. I do not raise the question of Gentiles not being under it, though historically true; because, if not, they are lawless, and I admit the law to be a perfect rule for man in the flesh. I say I am not on Gentile ground, though a Gentile; not *ἀνομος Θεῷ* lawless in respect to God, but *ἐννομος Χριστῷ*, I do not say under the law to Christ (that is an utterly false translation), but duly subject to Christ. Yet I do not say the authority of the law is weakened or done away, but that I AM DEAD TO IT. The law has power over a man as long as he lives -- and can have it no longer; and I am no longer alive in the flesh.

I reject the altering, modifying, the law. I reject christianizing in it; that is, weakening its legal character by an admixture of grace that is neither law nor gospel. I maintain its whole absolute authority. Those who have sinned under it will be judged by it. It will have its own authority (that is, God's) according to its own terms in the day of judgment; but I am not under it but under grace, not under the schoolmaster but a son, because faith is come, and I have the Spirit of adoption. I am on another footing and in another relationship with God; I am not in the flesh, not in the place of a child of Adam at all, but delivered out of it by redemption. I have died and risen again; I am in Christ.

Let us see what scripture teaches on this point. Positive transgressions are blotted out by the blood of Christ. The law, we are told, as a covenant of works is gone in Christ's death. Now I say that scripture teaches more than that, teaches what applies to the old man as regards our standing before God, and that we have, for faith, died out of the place and nature in which we were under the law. Take the fullest and clearest case -- a Jew actually under it: I do not doubt it will be practically realized by a Gentile as a principle. What is the judgment of law on my old man, my being as in flesh? Condemnation only as a covenant? No death. It is not merely a new motive,

a new spring of conduct afforded, by which, law being maintained as law, I keep it. Law is (2 Cor. 3) a ministration of death as well as of condemnation. But what then? "I through the law am dead to the law." It has killed me, "that I might live to God." "Add not to his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." You might say it is abrogated as a covenant of works but not as a rule of life, though scripture does not say so: it is a mere human invention. But you cannot say I am *dead* to it, but it is to be my rule of *life*. That is nonsense.

I am dead to the law by the law. It has done its work and killed me as regards itself; I do not exist as regards the law, or it has failed in its power. And I am dead to the law that I might live to God. If I have not done with it, I cannot live to Him. And how? "I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." That is not law. When faith came, says the apostle, we were no longer under a schoolmaster, that is, under law. Note here: It is not Christ bearing our sins that delivers from law at all. True deliverance is wrought there as regards our sins. But, in freeing me from law, God is not delivering me, a living child of Adam, from the dread consequences of my sins. He is doing another work. It is I who have died with Christ. Nor is it forgiveness of sin which is spoken of in such case, although through this death of Christ it is not imputed. We die to sin -- not sins, not for sins, but *to* sin. "He that is dead is justified from sin."

If the obedience of one has constituted me righteous, why cannot I say then I may live in sin? How can we that are *dead* to sin *live* any longer therein? The reasoning of the apostle in the end of Romans 6 is fatal to the use of law as a rule of life. We have nothing to do here with a question of a covenant of works. It is a question of life, living in sin, obedience, holiness, -- what the principle and rule of it is. Am I going to sin, to be what is called an Antinomian, because I am not under law? No. What principle, what rule of life, have I? Reckon yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God. As alive in Christ, I am to yield my members as instruments of righteousness unto God. I can do it, obey, not a law, but a person, God Himself absolutely. Why? I am not under law but under grace. *I yield myself*. What an occasion to explain that we were not under it as a covenant of works but that we were as a rule of life! But now living rules of life are treated of; how we arrive, and on what principle, at sin not having dominion over us. It is this (not justification) which is arrived at by not being under the law. Will that lead us to sin? Again what an occasion to tell us, No, you know it is still a rule of life. But no. Silence, ominous silence. They had been the servants of sin, and what now? They had obeyed from the heart -- the law from having new motives? No; the form of doctrine which had been delivered to them. They were not under law: if they were, sin would have dominion over them. But they had obeyed the new form of doctrine. They were slaves to righteousness, slaves to God, and had their fruit unto holiness. Sin's wages were death, God's gift eternal life. The law does not come in at all, save to shew that those who get under it would be under the dominion of sin. Nor does the covenant of works come into the question, but life, walking in sin, its dominion, obedience, holiness -- but we are not under the law. But this must be treated of specifically.

Is not that it? Read and see. Well, I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ that I may be to Another. And then, mind, I am bound to Another who has authority over me, and I cannot have anything else come in and claim authority. I have seen Moses and Elias disappear, having served God in their generation, and have heard the Father's voice saying, This is my beloved Son, hear Him. I have been prepared by the sixth chapter to see that it is not disobedience and living in sin, because, being dead to sin, I live to God through Christ, and am obedient to Him. I now find, in detail, that, thus dead as I am, the obligation to my first husband is closed, become impossible. I am married to Another; I am bound to Him: the bond and obligation is absolute. I can hear only Him. I cannot even say, I go by my second husband to know what my first means and commands. I have but one: His authority is complete and absolute. We have nothing to do here with justification or covenant of works, but -- to whom am I bound? One paper I looked at tells me the chapter means "The death of Christ dissolved our old relation to the law as a covenant of works, and left us at liberty to contract a new relation." Did anybody ever read such an effort to elude scripture? -- a new relation with what? With the law over again? What old relation to the law is spoken of in the chapter? We have died, so that there is no more relationship at all, and we are married *to another* -- Christ raised from the dead. Where is a covenant of works spoken of or alluded to in the chapter? Further, what constitutes the whole point of the chapter, our being dead, is not alluded to by the author. "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." If I wanted a proof that I have to do with a writer who had a system which hindered him from daring to look scripture in the face, this sentence would be it. But I do not seek controversy, so I take no further notice of it. I add here it is well known that in verse 6 we should read as in the margin: "having died in that in which" -- ἀποθανόντες not ἀποθανόντος. Else those who say the law was abrogated and buried would have this text to lean upon. If we have then died with Christ, we can also say, we have been quickened together with Him, and raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places.

The Christian is a heavenly person though walking through the wilderness, and he is the epistle of Christ in it. What is his rule? To walk as Christ walked. Every part of scripture, law and all, may furnish him light, and he may use it to convict of sin, for natural conscience owns the righteousness of it. Paul governed his conduct by a prophecy of Isaiah 49. And thank God the New Testament abounds in precepts to guide us. Nor are we to ~~new dispensation~~ ^{new dispensation} ~~wherein~~ ^{wherein} ~~we live~~ ^{we live} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~new~~ ^{new} ~~dispensation~~ ^{dispensation}. Because if we did

everything right, nothing would be right if it were not obedience, and command expresses authority. Still we ought to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The spiritual man judges all things. I can only speak of the principle and standard here. I may surprise perhaps my readers when I say that the conduct of *God* is made our standard, as being made partakers of the divine nature. It is not the perfect rule for man in the flesh, but the divine conduct for man in the Spirit. The apostle can say, "When we were in the flesh," and describe in the seventh of Romans the conflicts of a renewed man who is not set free by known redemption, but is still under his first husband -- the law, knowing it is spiritual, consenting to it, delighting in it, but never keeping it. But he can, when he has known deliverance, say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free," knowing that God has not forgiven but condemned sin in the flesh, but in Christ a sacrifice for sin, and that, now a Christian, not in the flesh but in the Spirit, his place and standing are changed -- alive thus in Christ, created again in Christ Jesus unto preordained good works that he may walk in them, renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. What are these good works? I have said, scripture has said, he, perfect before God in Christ, is to imitate God. Where to find the image of this in a man? Christ is the image of the invisible God. United with Him in heaven, the Christian is to walk like Him on earth, in grace as manifesting God, looking to Him above, and so changed into His image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Let us see the scripture account of this. First, the Father's ¹⁹ name being revealed, not the legal name of Jehovah, we are to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. He loves them that do not love Him, He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil. But more precisely in Ephesians 4, 5, this is fully developed. We have subjectively and objectively the pre-ordained walk of the Christian: subjectively -- the putting off the old man, and putting on the new, and, secondly, our bodies being the temple of the Holy Ghost, the not grieving the Spirit of God by which we are sealed to the day of redemption; then the objective rule -- Be ye kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ hath forgiven you. We have then the two essential names of God, given as that to be realized, and Christ presents the realization of them in man: "Be ye imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, a sacrifice and an offering to God for a sweet smelling savor." We are to be imitators of God, His love in Christ being our pattern.

And here we find the superiority of the Christian principle to law in its very nature. Law taught me to love my neighbor as myself -- made my love to self the measure of my duty to my neighbor. Christianity looks for having no self at all, but giving up ourselves for our neighbor. Two principles form the perfectness of this: He gave Himself *for* others and *to* God. This last is needed that the principle may be

19. This is the name of Christian relationship in eternal life, and was revealed by Christ even when here. Jehovah was the name of relationship for Israel, Almighty (El Shaddai) for the Patriarchs. The Most High will be God's millennial name.

perfect. The affection must have a perfect object as well as be perfectly, and in order to be perfectly, free from self, and perfect in itself. For affections have their character and value from their object. But the principle of legal perfection is another, and wholly short of this. The rule was not what a man ought to be as such, but to be an imitator of God as a dear child of his Father, Christ being the manifestation of love in this and the measure of it. To compare the mutual love of oneself and another, and make it the same as the absolute self-devotedness of Christ, is a mere abuse of terms, because the word love is used in both. The other name of God is Light. We are light in the Lord: we are to walk as children of light. Again Christ is referred to: "Christ shall give thee light." Thus perfect love in self-sacrifice, imitating God therein, walking as being in Christ, in and of the light which manifests everything, Christ being the model of it. Such is the rule of life of the Christian. He is dead, and his life hid with Christ in God. If he believes, it is Christ lives in him, he is not living (alive) in this world. People may resist such views, but, if they do, they must resist scripture.

The great secret of all is, that we are not, as before God, and responsible to Him, alive in the Adam life at all. Christ is our life -- Christ who is risen. I am dead, have been crucified with Christ, to sin or the flesh and the lusts thereof, to the law by the body of Christ, to the world, and the world to me. The whole scene of a living man, this world in which the life of Adam develops itself, and of which the law is the moral rule, I do not belong to, before God, more than a man who died ten years ago out of it. I come, having the life of Christ, having the Son and so have life, into the midst of it, to walk in the path which He has traced through it. And now, what is the Sabbath the rest of? This creation. I am not of it. It is a new creation I am of, old things are passed away. If I had known Christ after the flesh, as belonging to this world, down here and under the law, I know Him no more. And what is the rest of the new creation to which I belong as having died and risen, Christ being my life? The heavenly rest of which the Lord's-day is the intimation, the day of Christ's resurrection (CW10:283-289). ♦

Ed.

The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus

For the law of *the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* has set me free from the law of sin and of death (Rom. 8:2).

Read it again and see what this law is the law of -- *the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus!* Then observe that it is by this that I obtain liberty -- *set free from!* Next, note that:

... where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is, there is] liberty (2 Cor. 3:17).

It is quite clear that the man in Rom. 7 had the "inner man" (v. 22) but was "wretched" (v. 24). Moreover he wanted to be "delivered" (v. 24). Why, then, would you say that he had the Spirit? -- for you could hardly say he had liberty. Yet, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The notion that he had liberty but merely thought he was in bondage is, plainly, a device to contradict Scripture in favor of a notion.

1 Corinthians 11:1-16

There is no real difficulty in this scripture if it be borne in mind that these directions are given, not for the assembly, not for sisters when gathered together with the saints, but for their private guidance and instruction. This is certain on two grounds; first, that it is not till the 17th verse that the apostle begins to deal with order and conduct in the assembly; and, secondly, that in this very epistle he enjoins silence on women "in the churches" (cp. 1 Tim. 2:12). It is clear therefore that the reference is to praying or prophesying in private, or in their homes, or in places other than in the public assemblies. Nor is the praying of necessity audible prayer; for the term would undoubtedly include every act of prayer, whether the woman were the mouthpiece, or whether bowing in concert with others in the presence of God. The fact indeed that the woman's special place in relation to man, not solely the place of a wife with her husband, is introduced, would point to the inclusion of those occasions when men, such as in family prayer, or in household or private readings of the Scriptures accompanied with prayer, might be present. It should also be observed that prophesying is not preaching. We read that Philip, the evangelist, "had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts 21:8, 9). In those early days of the Church, before the New Testament Scriptures were written, God was pleased to send inspired communications to His people through chosen vessels, and these were termed prophets. (See 1 Cor 14:29-33). But, as the scripture already cited shows, women were never so used in the assemblies, and hence the prophesying of the daughters of Philip, as well as the prophesying of the women here, must have been on other than public occasions.

The prescription then for the covered head applies in this passage to those seasons when women were praying or prophesying in the manner mentioned. And another has called attention to the fact, that "to decide this question, simply of what was decent and becoming, the apostle lays open the relationship, and the order of the relationship, subsisting between the depositories of God's glory and Himself, and brings in the angels, to whom Christians, as a spectacle set before them, should present that of order according to the mind of God." The foundation, therefore, on which the apostle directs women to pray with covered heads is the divine order which God has ordained: "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (v. 3). Man, "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God," and as such representing God's authority, ought not to cover his head; but the woman being the glory of man, is under authority, and, as a sign of it, is to be covered. This is distinctly stated on the introduction of the second ground of the exhortation; viz., the relationship of the woman to the man in creation (vv. 7-10); for it is then said, "For this cause ought the woman to have power" (i.e., the symbol of it, as being subject to it (authority)) "on her head, because of the angels" (v. 10),

inasmuch as these, whose characteristic is obedience (Psalm 103:20), are the delighted spectators of submission to God's order on the part of His people. The apostle urges yet another consideration -- the teaching of nature. He says, "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God (and these words are very absolute, seeming to include all acts of prayer) uncovered? Doth not nature itself teach you," etc. (vv. 13,14).

A few remarks may be added. First, the hair, long hair, is evidently not, as it is sometimes contended, the covering indicated by the apostle; for he says in verse 6, "If the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered." The covering is thus something in addition to the long hair. Secondly, the instruction is for women, not wives only, but for women, and not for children {???}. Finally, it will be helpful to observe that this is no prescription for women's dress, but simply and solely a direction concerning what is seemly and suited for them when they are praying {or prophesying}.²⁰

E. Dennett, *The Christian Friend*, 1888, pp. 277-279.

Women Teachers?

A magazine article concerning how women can serve said this:

As Teachers

Scripture forbids women to teach in some circumstances (1 Tim. 2:12) -- and yet it tells them to be teachers in others (Ti. 2:3). There is no contradiction! Nor can we just choose the part we happen to like. Both parts of the truth must be put together to get the whole picture. Women are not to preach publicly and/or authoritatively in the assembly. They are, however, encouraged to share the truth with men, women and children provided that it be done in appropriate situations. Older women are also encouraged to teach younger women, as is often done in women's camps and conferences.

...

Because women can teach privately and informally, they should prepare themselves to do so by studying and meditating on the Word. Often words of a godly woman spoken privately are far more effective than thousands of words spoken by men publicly.

Do these two paragraphs really fit together? "Women can teach privately and informally" -- and, "Older women are also encouraged to teach younger women, as is often done in women's camps and conferences"! Perhaps in "women's camps and

conferences" women are teaching "privately and informally"? Apparently so, for "Women are not to preach publicly and/or authoritatively in the assembly." The women teaching in "women's camps and conferences" must, according to these remarks, be doing this "in appropriate situations"! It would seem that the writer's intention was to instruct his readers properly about this matter. How? He said, "Both parts of the truth must be put together to get the whole picture." I suggest that we have here a spoiled picture of what we find in Scripture. It is evident that a doctrinal basis is being sought for unscriptural practices.

Because Scripture says "elder women . . . *teachers of what is right; that they may admonish the young women,*" etc., is it a correct representation to refer to women "as teachers"? -- particularly in the present era of widespread violation of Scripture in setting up women preachers and teachers? This seems to me verbal juggling to lessen the distinction that Scripture sharply draws between "teachers," as *domata* (Eph. 4:9), that God has placed in the church (1 Cor. 12:28), and elder women teaching younger women the things noted in Titus 2. Elder women are *not teachers*. That is a period after the word "teachers." They are not teachers, period. What is italicized and bold-faced, above, is the language of Scripture. Departure from it is the sure sign of an agenda of departure from its direction. An appearance of Scripture support for what is really the setting aside of the divine order is what this is about.

Do the words, "as is often done in women's camps and conferences," indicate that other than that is done in these settings? Are these "women's camps and conferences" merely for the purpose of carrying out Titus 2:3-5? Come, let us be honest about this.

A few comments from W. Kelly are appropriate here, where we are not examining the various useful services to the Lord that Christian women render, but to the order of God's house.

But there is more here. "I permit not a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a man, but to be in quietness." This clearly is not limited to the assembly; as the apostle traces the ground of it in the constitution and natural character of woman. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." Her subsequent formation out of the man is never to be forgotten by such as fear God and believe His word. All other thoughts are presumptuous theory in forgetfulness of the truth which goes up to the beginning. An individual woman may be comparatively able and well-instructed; but under no circumstances is leave given for a woman to teach or to have dominion over a man; she is to be in quietness. Thus absolutely does the apostle guard against any reaction from the abject place of women in ancient times, specially among the heathen; or any imitation of the peculiar prominence given to her sometimes in oracular matters, as among the Greeks and especially the Germans of old.¹

It was fitting from their age that they should be "teachers of that which is

good." By good in this clause he does not mean benevolent practice, but what was honorable (*καλοδιδασκάλους*), what befitted themselves, and themselves in relation to the Lord. Aged women would have considerable opportunities. Set free from the calls on young and vigorous life, they have in old age a no less suited sphere of usefulness. Let them look to it that they be teachers, with the weight which experience gives, of that which is upright and comely. Whatever may be the tendency of nature, and the inclination from habit, grace brings in the name of Christ, and from Christ flows out all that becomes the saints, precious in God's eyes, whether they teach or are taught.

Next, the apostle looks at their relation to younger women, with whom they would as the rule have a strong influence. How were they to use their opportunities? "That they may train the young women to be lovers of husbands, lovers of children." Here they would be admirably in place, and with the Lord before their eyes their experience would prove invaluable for those that have to face the daily difficulties and dilemmas of human life. Not merely were they to school their youngsters to be subject to their husbands; to cultivate affection in the home circle is particularly pressed. This would win with an adversary of the truth, where godliness might at first be repellent; along with it love to a husband and to children is indispensably to be cherished by the wife and mother. Christianity was never intended to enfeeble the affections. If Christ governs, He is also the spring of sure unfailing strength. There is no trial with the husband or the child to which His grace would not apply; and the elder women were of all the most suited to cheer and confirm the hearts of their youngsters, that they should not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.

But there is another exhortation which fits in most suitably. They were to school their younger sisters to be "discreet" or right-minded: they might be liable to enthusiasm on the one hand, or to carelessness on the other. Discretion is therefore a most needed quality to preserve on the true path of godliness and wisdom in the midst of the difficulties of ordinary life.

Further, purity claims a great place in the exhortation of the elders to their youngsters. They were to engage them to be chaste, "in deed, word, and spirit"; where the Spirit of God, revealing Christ, is of all power. How little it was known among the Greeks, and even among the Jews to their shame! Their very religion defiled the Greeks; it was the consecration of every corruption, and made them far more polluted than if they had none. So mighty and so essential a quality is purity in Christianity, that it outwardly and really proved a wholly new element, where grace was forgotten and truth almost effaced. Yet even then and there the very artists of Christendom, the sculptors and painters, not to speak of poets, manifested how deeply the light of Christ had penetrated their conceptions, as compared with the voluptuous remains of ancient art. But here it was no question of a surviving or novel sentiment, but of a deep unprecedented rectitude, proper to the relationship and due to the sex (to say nothing of the other), as God made it, and now brought under the grace of Christ. Purity a selfish Jew, or a dissolute Greek, would not fail to

appreciate in his wife and in family life.

The next thing pressed is that they be devoted to domestic occupation, -- "workers ² at home." One cannot but feel the gracious wisdom of such an exhortation as this; and it must have struck those who lived in heathen circumstances even more than ourselves, accustomed to the blessed contrast with heathen habits in days of Christendom, however degenerate. It is a fine example of the way in which the Spirit of God adapts Himself to the most ordinary duties in the present scene. See it in Christ, Who lived for so many years of His life subject to His parents, and Who, in the obscurest of conditions, advanced in wisdom as well as favor with God and man. It is He Who makes all these exhortations as simple and easily understood as they are morally elevating. He brings in His own grace as applicable to women as to men. He shows us the way in every sense, the pattern of obeying God, undoubtedly beyond all comparison; yet how many has He not led, and fashioned, and blessed, in that narrow path He trod in a wilderness where there is no way!

The next exhortation is of great value, following diligence in home-work. It is that the younger women should be "good (ἀγαθὰς)" in the sense of kindness. If Christ were not before their eyes, home-work might be despised as drudgery. But if the work were ever so well done, is this all that would satisfy or please a husband? Goodness diffuses happiness all round. Christ sheds a heavenly light on every earthly duty, answering to the riband of blue which God commanded the Jews to attach to their garments. But the exhortation to kindness in this sort has special wisdom in following home-work. There is no place where it is more valuable and less frequent. Nothing short of the Lord's grace could make it a constant habit, where countless little occurrences would inevitably turn up to try patience. But with Christ before the heart goodness would hold on its unobtrusive way. They would labor and persevere as seeing Him Who is invisible.

Last, but not least, is the unvarying call for wives to be in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not evil spoken of. What more irritating to a husband than the readiness on the wife's part to question his authority, or interfere with his plans? The habit of subjection is of all things the most suited to win a husband's ear; and assuredly the knowledge of Christ would give the secret of wisdom, whether he were a Christian or not. If he had experienced the danger and the evil of slighting advice, given very probably at his own desire, it would have the effect of producing the wish to hear again. But the wife's unjudged insubordinate spirit would completely counteract this happy influence, and make even what might be good to be shunned and disregarded. It was therefore of the greatest moment that the elder women should instil it into their youngers to be in subjection to their own husbands; and this not merely for the peace and profit of the household in general, and for the happy relation of the wife and husband, but "that the

word of God be not blasphemed," or of evil report. The failure of a wife in adorning the doctrine of God our Savior by subjection, even in that intimate tie, would not fail to bring reproach, not merely on herself individually, or her associates, but on the word of God itself. This may not be quite just; but it proves what men expect from such as claim the possession of His favor; and these are bound to acknowledge their responsibility.³

The complaint may be that I am not being fair to what was said. But that complaint may spring from the supposition that "women's camps and conferences" have a scriptural standing; and from those disposed to think that way, I expect such complaint. At any rate, I hardly think such innovations in God's house are consonant with the expositions we have just read above. And I heartily concur in that exposition.

Ed.

The Incompetency of Conferences

... I deny strongly and absolutely the competency of whatever conference to decide the most little point of discipline or doctrine for the most little assembly of Switzerland. Such a meeting would tend to crush by the weight of its opinion the conscience of a small faithful meeting; it can deal with questions and problems for all the assemblies, but it has no right at all to resolve the most little question, it has no competency at all to do that. The Lord himself did place the responsibility and the authority elsewhere. He did promise his presence in an assembly gathered in his name -- and not in a conference assembled for discussing. The responsibility rests on the flocks {assemblies}, the authority finds itself there; not that the individuals have that authority, but because the Lord has promised there His presence, and in stead of denying an assembly as assembly [I do not speak about brotherly remonstrances that, as I think, are always permitted, being done in love], I would accept the disciplinary judgment of the most little assembly walking in the unity of the Church, in the things that do concern it . . ."

(From *Messenger Evang.* 1891: Extract of a letter of J. N. Darby [20 Dec. 1863], translated and submitted by J. J. P.)

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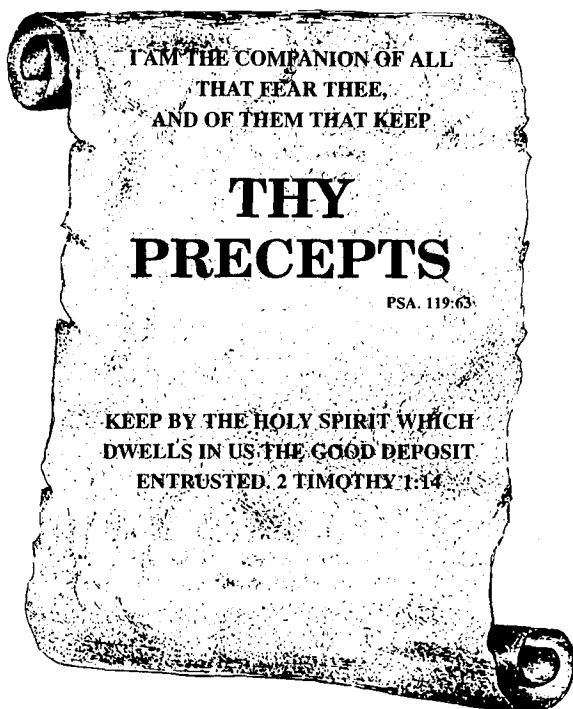
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Christ Received up into Heaven, and the Holy Spirit Come Down from Heaven

No one can understand the course of God's action in this time, who does not apprehend in faith, that while our blessed Lord has left this scene where we are, for heaven, the Holy Spirit has come to us from heaven. We must hold these truths definitely. We must not consider first what would be the effect consequent on such an exchange, ¹ as we might say -- even that the Lord, who had resided here, has been received up into heaven, and the Holy Ghost, who hitherto had never resided here, has come down from heaven to reside here. The truth is simple and obvious enough; but the more distinctly it is adhered to, the better shall we be able to grasp and delineate the new thing, entirely unprecedented, which is now God's work on the earth.

Every believer understands something about Jesus being on the earth, when, in unspeakable grace, He effected our salvation. He died for our sins, and rose again according to the scriptures. Every believer shares in this grace; but believers now are called to know more than this great truth. Unless they understand that Jesus has been exalted to God's right hand, and that from there He sent down the Holy Ghost, they never can arrive at the new and peculiar position to which the assembly is called. None but saved souls could take any interest in this exchange of places by Christ and the Spirit. It is evident that if much had been effected before this exchange occurred, something very new, and hitherto unknown, must arise from it; and it is our duty and interest to search fully, not only into the intention of God in this exchange but into the nature and scope of the new blessings to us which are consequent on it. Without controversy the blessings are new, and as they are consequent on, and derived from, this remarkable exchange -- the Lord going away, and the Spirit coming in His place -- we must confine our inquiry, as to the nature of the blessings, to this change from which they originated.

It is evident that salvation through the work of Christ could be preached

1. {In using the word "exchange" (of position) the writer did not deny the fact that as God, both the Son and the Spirit are omnipresent. The fact is that the Son did come here to earth, in incarnation, in a very special sense and capacity. And another fact is that consequent on Christ's taking His place above, the Spirit was poured out from the glorified Man, for being here in a very special sense and capacity (Acts 2:33), though always omnipresent as God. In this special sense and capacity, the Spirit will be removed (2 Thess. 2) when the saints that compose that body here below, formed consequent upon His coming for that purpose (1 Cor. 12:13), are caught up. Other of His operations, which are outside of those in connection with that body, shall take place in this world -- though He will be taken out of the way in that very special sense and capacity for which He came in connection with the formation of the body and His subsequent actions with respect to that body. -Ed.}

and received, without this great change to which I have referred being known. Hence we must ascertain what would be the effect of it on a soul already assured of his salvation, through faith in Christ dead and risen. Cleared of judgment in the place of judgment, and from the old man which had exposed him to judgment, he is in the wilderness, with the hope of heaven surely, but not there in present possession. In saying so much, I have conceded to believers much more than they generally enjoy. The evangelist or the teacher who has not learned the consequence of the exchange I have spoken of, cannot place nor instruct souls beyond the wilderness.² It is vain for either to affect to lead any before their own faith. It may be urged, as to the evangelist, that his work is the safety of the soul. I admit this; but if the evangelist were to trace his gift to its source [Eph. 4:11], he would find that he had received his commission in heaven from an ascended Christ. Certainly everything derives its character from its source, and seeing the source of his gift could not lessen, but greatly add to, its value and use. But how many gifted men really believe that they have received their gifts in heaven, and from a Savior who, when He had ascended, and had led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men? I might be asked, What mark would they bear when they do trace their ordination from the Lord in heaven? This is not the place for me to try to give any marks. What I desire now is, to press the great consequences which would accrue from either an evangelist or teacher accepting that the gift is from heaven, while the sphere where he is to use it, is the earth. To my mind it is even more marked in the teacher. According to his devotedness, the self-denying walk on earth, of one he inculcates in doctrine and practice delivered from his sins, just as we find in the Romans. Surely, one might retort, when this is lacking, there is no use in proposing any advance. This is but too true; but what we are engaged with now is, the difference in the scope of the teaching, of the one who knows he has come from heaven to teach, and the man who has only seen his deliverance from judgment, and necessarily Christ's claim on him not to be conformed to this world. The better way is not to expose defects, but to present as fully as possible the true; and thus to show that any one not in keeping with it is defective. If no part of Christianity were previous to the ascension of Christ, it would be comparatively easy, for then Christianity would not be connected with anything prior to Christ's ascension. Christianity, as I have already stated, dates from Christ's death and resurrection, though the entirely new thing which was to characterize it, dates from Christ's exaltation to God's right hand in heaven, and the consequent descent of the Holy Ghost. The salvation of every believer was secured before Christ sat down at God's right hand, but it is from that date that the believers of this present time are, by God, called into a new

2. {The Christian may be viewed, as in three different places, in the wilderness, or across the Jordan to Gilgal, or in Canaan proper. -Ed..}

and hitherto unknown relationship to Christ, altogether dependent on, and originating from, the new place taken by Him and the Spirit. If this change of places be not maintained in living power in our souls, we shall never truly understand the wondrous consequences to us from it; an entirely new order of blessing, which did not precede, and which will be completed during the present places of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Hence everything must be circumscribed, and confined to the effects which arise from their present places. I dwell long on this, because a main point is gained when we see that the singular character of the blessing depends on it.

Let us now try and trace some of the effects derived from their present places. Christ having gone to heaven, and the Holy Spirit having come down, all the work here must relate to Christ, the Head in heaven, and must be effected by the Holy Ghost. We cannot diverge from this course.

The evangelist, enlightened as to God's calling, sets forth with heavenly power, because he is heavenly, both by calling and gift, the perfect efficacy of the work of Christ to free every believer from the judgment lying on him here, with the zeal and fervor of one who knows that all the way to the Savior in heaven is clear. He can declare even more than the angels to the shepherds, who were the first evangelists coming from heaven, "We bring you tidings of great joy." The higher a man is morally, the better can he remove the darkness that obstructs, and is too remote for a lesser power. The sun frays away many a darkness that no star can reach. So the evangelist, controlled by the truth of Christ's present place, and the Spirit's, would doubtless present the gospel as one who, in a peculiar way, is under the immediate counsel and direction of his ascended Lord, who is the Head of the body, and has given him to be an evangelist, to gather out a people for His name. He is absolutely dependent on the Spirit sent down from heaven; he feels that he cannot swerve from the Head, on the one hand, nor, on the other, from the Spirit sent down by Him to testify of Him: for it is evident that it is only the heavenly man who can be in the line of the Spirit's testimony of a glorified Christ. True his work might be very unseen, and much unknown, but that is of small account, if he is in the line marked out by the One in heaven, and carried out through him by the One down here. I feel I cannot convey the distinct, singular, and circumscribed course of an evangelist accepting and adhering to the true nature of his commission. He might have to go a long distance for a soul, as Philip to Gaza; or suffer much as Paul for the jailor, but they would be well-finished cases -- his "joy and crown of rejoicing" in the day of the Lord {day of Christ, rather}.

Well, then, what shall I say of the teacher, or how describe the character of his teaching? Oh! if saints throughout Christendom could be awakened to the poverty of the food in the present day, they would be in constant supplication to the Lord that He would raise up faithful men who would learn

the things taught by Paul (2 Tim. 2:2); and surely no one can venture to say that the teaching current in the present day contemplates, in its best range, anything beyond the wilderness. Of course, the teacher knows the gospel; he must begin where he finds souls, but this much he must remember, that however he may lead them on, and however they may advance, like the growth of a tree, the truth first received, the very rudiments of the gospel always advance with every additional growth. The teacher who comes from the Lord, and is altogether supported by the Spirit, not only supplies what souls require, but awakens desires in them for more; for his heart yearns to lead them up to Him from whom he has come. He feels he has plants to cultivate here, which are not of man, but of God, and that nothing but Christ can really serve them. It is an entirely new man, and therefore it is neither by man, nor from man. Not only is the Corinthian levity denounced, but also the Galatian legality; while the Colossian religiousness will be most carefully guarded against, and refused. It is here that the teacher proves himself heavenly, or rather that he is truly from Christ, and for Him only. The Colossian error is the snare that the more advanced fall into -- the attempt to conform the old man to the new thing. In several specious ways this has been attempted. Perfectionism, of one kind or another, holiness by faith, and so on, extending into natural feeling, in manner and expression. Thus baptism became the mode of introducing the old man into the Christian position, on the ground that it was to bear the mark of what was inwardly possessed -- "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." The old was to be introduced into the standing of the new. The teacher from Christ desires in his heart that every believer should come to a "perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." He might not see any up to it, but the counsel of the Lord is in his heart. As a parent bird tends its offspring, not only until it is matured, but until it can fly, and explore for itself; so is the teacher, according to his faithfulness, in great conflict for the saints, that they should reach up in apprehension to the mystery of God. There is before his mind the body of which Christ is the Head, united together by the Spirit, through whom all nourishment comes from the Head. He looks not at anything seen or done among men; he has, through faith, an apprehension of what the church is in the mind of God. Much obstruction may be in his path, and hinder his service; but undeviatingly he pursues his course, knowing the counsel of the Lord, and that it shall stand. Christ preeminently occupies him, or, to make it clearer, faith in Christ. I feel we do not sufficiently apprehend the value of faith in Christ. Many dwell with much interest on faith in God, but faith in Christ would produce a result of a very different kind; for while the former would secure for one the help of God, the latter would separate me practically from man's hopes and ways, the rudiments of the world, and so on. The acme of his labor is, that each should be perfect in Christ, and that His life may be expressed in every detail of daily life. The life of a wilderness man, however unimpeachable or unblemished, is not enough for

him; he seeks to have Christ seen in everything.

In Romans there is nothing said of a man's family. In Peter there is nothing said of one's children. In Colossians, where one is going to heaven, they are spoken of; but it is only in Ephesians that there are specific directions about them. It is only the one who has gone up to the source who has power or capacity to touch divinely the extremities, if I may so call the domestic duties; hence such a teacher as this proposes a practice of the highest order.

I must conclude, though I feel I have not conveyed in any measure, to my satisfaction, what the stature of the fullness of Christ is, which can only be apprehended as we seize by faith Christ's present place, and the Spirit's place; for as soon as they change from their present places, Christ's body will no longer be here, for then comes the rapture. The Lord awaken us to the greatness of God's calling.

A Voice to the Faithful 17:307-319.

Note on the House and Body

It will be observed that, in speaking of the body of Christ, we speak of the fruit of God's eternal purpose and own operation; and, although the Spirit may apply this name to the assembly of God on earth, as accounted to be composed of real members of Christ, nevertheless the body of Christ, as formed by the quickening power of God according to His eternal purpose, is composed of persons united to the Head as real members. The house of God, as now set up on earth, is the fruit of a work of God, here entrusted to men, not the proper object of His counsels (though the city in Revelation {ch. 21} in a measure answers to it). In so far as it is the work of God, it is evident that this house is composed of those who are truly called of God, and so God set it up, and as it is spoken of here (compare Acts 2: 47). But we must not confound the practical result of this work, accomplished in the hands of men, and under their responsibility (1 Cor. 3), with the object of the counsels of God. A true member of Christ can no one be without being really united to the Head, neither a *true* stone in the house [of God]; but the house can be the dwelling-place of God, although that which is not a true stone may enter into its construction. But it is impossible that one not born of God should be a member of the body of Christ.

J. N. Darby, *Synopsis* 4:305n.

The Church of God

God has "A Church": God has not been ashamed to connect His name with one church -- the church of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15). Oft He calls it "The Church of God" (see Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:5). This it was which Christ called (Matt. 16:18) "My Church." And oh; how wondrous! (Eph. 1:22). Christ given of God to be head over all things to the church, *which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all* (see also 3:10; 5:23, 25, 27, 29, 32; Col. 1:18, 24).

Child of God! can you show me this church? I have a picture of it, dear to my heart, in the Scriptures; but I have sought that which the Word of God describes as the church, and have not found it, as it could once be found at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, &c.

What am I to do? Humble myself down into the dust, so far as I know how (and I have sought to do so these last 25 years), not because saints are scattered but because of man's entire failure in responsibility to God as to the church? Then you will say, "You look to see what God will do for you and His saints as to communion." Not so; if my eye be single, look then to see what God will do for His own honor, and for the glory of Christ, *with all* His believing people, under these circumstances; and this is quite another thing. He may count it to be for His honor and for the glory of Christ, and for our blessing in the Spirit, to make us taste the fruit of man's doings, and the failure, and taste it with inward bitterness and individual experience. May God do with us as seemeth Him good. No union, no communion which is not that of the church of God, in the power of the name of the Lord Jesus, could satisfy the Spirit of God in us.

Has not *our* taste of communion of saints assumed a wrong place in many hearts? Are not many shirking the cross, of bearing, outwardly a state of things which God has brought up to make us realize what we had concealed from ourselves as to failure?

Let the Lord do as seemeth Him good. Do thou study His word to see what the church of God is, and avoid on one hand the narrowing down of truth to human forms and rigid crystallizations, and on the other, the neutralization of truth by confounding multitudinous association, and intercourse with communion of saints. And, above all things, judge self, and correct self, rather than the churches. The formative truth which acted on man's heart, to form the church at first, remains . . .

S.S.

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.4

Antichrist's Names and Designations

(Continued)

The Antichrist's Location

ANTICHRIST WILL BE KING IN JERUSALEM

Dan. 11:36, 37 describes him as "the wilful king." The Son said, "To do thy good pleasure, my God, is my delight" (Psa. 40:8). Notice, too, that this wilful king will be located between the king of the north and the king of the south, i.e., he will be a king in Israel (Dan. 11:40). He is also called "the king" in Isa. 30:33 and Isa. 57:9.¹ It is clear from these Scriptures that he will be a king in Israel. The title written on the cross really did belong to the Lord Jesus. *He* is the King of the Jews. The Antichrist will claim that title.

HE WILL BE QUITE ACCEPTABLE TO THE JEWS

He will be quite acceptable to the Jews. He will come in his own name and be received (John 5:43), a thing unlikely if he is a Gentile.

HE IS IN THE LAND

The worthless shepherd is in the land. He is a worthless shepherd of Zech. 11:15-17 whom God will raise up *in the land*, as a judgment by God, of course. But he will be raised up in the land and be received by the Jewish apostates. The argument that Rev. 13:11ff indicates a world religion without a Jewish character and that therefore the Antichrist is not a Jew has no force

1. J. N. Darby called attention to this reference to Antichrist in *Collected Writings* 5:188, 225. See also his *Notes and Comments* 4:176 and 190. Spalding's commentary by W. Kelly in his *An Exposition of Isaiah*, *in loco*.

whatsoever. (It is interesting that the power to cause fire to fall from the sky would indicate an Old Testament phenomena among the Jews as authenticating the acceptance, and power, of God). We are not talking about Jewish-type religion. We are talking about the man who heads up apostasy -- apostasy from Christ and apostasy from Moses. Dan. 9:27 shows that the Mosaic ritual will forcibly be stopped. Dan. 12, Matt. 24, and Mark 13 show that an idol will be set up. Rev. 13 shows that Satan and the beast will be worshiped while 2 Thess. 2 shows that the Antichrist will also be worshiped. This is not a Jewish type religion. He will be an antichrist and a false Christ. The fact that this worship is non-Jewish does not prove that he is not a Jew. He will create a religion for the apostates from Christ and from Moses, but authenticating it by the fire from the sky (Jewish; and by the works of power, signs, and wonders of falsehood [Christian]).

The Many (Dan. 11:39). W. Kelly wrote:

There again we see the unmistakable marks of a Jewish king in the land. We recognize in "the many" the technical word for the mass of the Jews; as "the land" in Daniel can legitimately be no other than Palestine.²

He Places the Image of the Beast in a Holy Place. The activity of the second beast of Rev. 13 is that of the Antichrist. He gives breath to the image. It appears to be the abomination that makes desolate (Dan. 12:11; Matt 24:15). These things take place in the land.

He is Located Between the King of the North and the King of the South. We know the area occupied by these two kings from Dan. 8. They are two parts of Alexander the Great's empire that was broken into four pieces, one of which was north of Israel and one of which was south of Israel. The earlier part of Dan. 11 describes wars between these rival countries. Dan. 11:36-45 describes the hostility of these two powers toward each other, with the wilful king in Israel in between. W. Kelly wrote:

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships" (40).

Can there be more positive proof sought that "the king" in these verses is quite distinct from the two contending lines hitherto described {in the earlier part of the chapter}? Here it is beyond doubt that on the contrary the kings of the north and of the south attack him. How could he be the same as either of the assailing parties?

But there is a yet more important series of details to point out now, about which there have been often great disputes in the minds of Christians, simply because they have looked at the wrong time and place. The Spirit of God says

a little more here about this lawless king. We learn that the king of the south appears to be the first in opposing him. This is resented by the king of the north who comes down with still greater resources, indeed, as it is said, "like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships." From this point to the end of the chapter the account is of the king of the north. Impossible to ask fuller proof that it is no longer the wilful king in the land, but the king of the north that is described henceforth, ravaging but destroyed beyond help, as in the end of Dan. 8.

One may be asked why "the king" should be dropped here without telling what becomes of him. Great pains had been taken elsewhere to mark him out as devoted to destruction when the Lord shines from heaven at His appearing. Of course one does not heed the disgusting fiction, with which the Talmud speaks of Armillus. But the Jews, apart from traditions, were aware they will have to do before Messiah comes with a terrific and lawless chief in the land. Whence did they get the ground of their ingrafted fables? Isaiah 11 clearly reveals him, and his end at that time: "With the breath of his lips shall he (Messiah) slay the wicked (one)." This is the man. The text is referred to and applied by the apostle in 2 Thess. 2:8, "And then shall the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the appearing of his coming." The king is the same person who is designated "the wicked" in our version of Isaiah 11 and "the lawless one" in the R. V. of 2 Thess. 2. It is a single individual, and "lawless" more precisely describes him than "wicked." He is the man who defies all law, all authority of whatever sort, every object of reverence, every heathen god, yea the true God, in order to set up himself above all. Not merely does he trample upon law and gospel, but on God Himself, and his image he sets up in the temple of God. As he reigns over the Jews, it is natural that for this he should choose the holy place in Jerusalem. "The prince that shall come," or Roman emperor in the coming day, of whom you were hearing in Dan. 9 is not referred to in this passage. But the prince of Rome in the latter day is to support the lawless king of the Jews, as its chief {Pilate} had the guilt of gratifying the Jews in crucifying the true King. The Roman prince or emperor of that day will be a strong ally of the Antichrist that reigns over "the land." Rome will then have got clear of the Popes, but instead of being better, it also will rush to perdition. The Roman emperor with his satellite kings will have turned upon Babylon, consumed her flesh, and destroyed her with fire.³

The Wilful King's Character

THE HUMAN HEART IS ITSELF AN ANTICHRIST

The Wilful King is the Lawless One, the Man of Sin, of 2 Thess. 2. Wilfulness is loved by our hearts in their lost estate. This will be enthroned through

Satan's power in the Antichrist of prophecy. J. N. Darby wrote:

We may observe, that this Antichrist will unite in his person the characters of wickedness which have appeared from the beginning [of man's history]. First, man has always wanted to have his own will; secondly, he has exalted himself against God; thirdly, he has put himself under the guidance of Satan. These are just the three things which will be reproduced in the Antichrist -- all the energy of man exalting itself against God, the king doing according to his will, his coming after the power of Satan. It is the ripened fruit of the human heart, which is itself an Antichrist.⁴

WILFULNESS

A word about our own wilfulness is in order here. W. Kelly remarked:

The Jews are in the land. In what condition? Are they under Christ? Alas, there is another and a terrible scene that must first be enacted there. "The king" that we have read of is there, and the course he pursues is just what we might expect from the landmarks of the Holy Ghost. "The king shall do according to his will." Ah! are any of us sufficiently aware what a fearful thing it is to be the doers of our own will? Here is the end of self-will. It was the first great characteristic of sin from the beginning. It is what Adam did, and his fall and the ruin of the world were the immediate result. Here is one who at that day may seem to be the loftiest and most influential of men. But he does "according to his will." And nothing worse. Are we to read such a history as this without moral profit to our own souls? To forget what an evil thing it is ever to be the doers of our own will? Let none suppose that because they may be in a position to rule, they are therefore outside the danger. Alas! it is not so: no one thing so unfits a person for righteous rule as the inability to obey. It is good first to know what it is to be subject. Oh, may it strike deep into all our hearts that "the king," the Antichrist, is first stamped as one doing his own will! May it test us how far we are seeking ours! -- how far, under any circumstances, we are doing or allowing anything that we would not wish every soul in this world to see -- perhaps even those that are nearest to us. Alas! one knows from experience and observation the difficulty and danger in these things from one's own heart. Yet there is no one thing more contrary to that Christ whom we have learnt. We are sanctified "unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." It is not only to the blessing in the sprinkling of the blood, but to the *obedience* of Jesus Christ -- to the same spirit and principle of obedience; for this is the meaning of the expression. We are not like the Jews who were put under the law, and whose obedience had the character of obligation to do such and such things under penalty of death. We are already alive unto God, conscious of the blessedness in which we stand, and awakened to see the beauty of the will of God; for His will it is which has saved and sanctified us. This is our calling, and our practical work here below. Christians have no other business, properly speaking, than to do the will of

Another. We have to do God's will according to the character of the obedience of Christ -- as sons delighting in the will of the Father. It does not matter what we may have to do. It may be one's natural daily occupation. But do not make two individuals of yourselves -- with one principle in your business or family, and another for the Church and worship of God. Never allow such a thought. We have Christ for everything and every day. Christ is not a blessing for us merely when we meet together or are called to die; but if we have Christ, we have Him forever, and from the first moment we are emancipated from doing our own will. *This* we learn is death; but it is gone now in Christ's death. We are delivered, for we are alive in Him risen. But what are we delivered for? To do the will of God. We are sanctified unto the obedience of Jesus Christ.⁵

THE PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE

Zech. 6:12, 13 reads:

Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold a man whose name is [the] Branch; and he shall grow up from his own place, and he shall build the temple of Jehovah: and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

It is the Lamb of Rev. 4 that is the coming One that will fill that throne without wrong. He is the appointed Melchisedec priest (see the book of Hebrews) who will hold the office of the high priest in that coming day, under whom the sons of Zadok will minister (Ezek. 40-48). And thus will be fulfilled to faithful Phinehas the promise of the priesthood for His posterity -- when *He* reigns who will bring all under the order decreed by God.

The "two horns like a lamb" in Rev. 13:11 indicate the power of these two offices of Christ that the Antichrist will imitate; namely, king and priest, while "spake as a dragon" indicates his prophetic imitation, for He is the servant and mouthpiece of Satan.

THE PROFANE, WICKED PRINCE OF ISRAEL

Under the word Mitre, the Bible dictionary published by G. Morrish said:

Mitre. The head-dress of the high priest. It was made of fine linen: to it was fastened by a lace of blue "the plate of the holy crown of pure gold," on which was engraved "Holiness to the Lord." This plate came across the forehead. The mitre was emblematical of the upholding of purity, righteousness and holiness by the Lord Jesus as the Minister of the sanctuary, or holy place. Ex. 28:4, 37, 39; 29:6; 39:28, 31; Lev. 8:9; 16:4.

The word is *mitsnepheth*, and (translated 'diadem') occurs again in a remarkable reference to the "profane wicked prince of Israel," which though referring to the then king, Zedekiah, seems to point to the future Antichrist in

conjunction with the Roman beast, for he {the Antichrist} is represented as wearing the mitre and the crown, which shall be removed. God will overturn, overturn, "until he come whose right it is: and I will give it him." Ezek. 21:25-27. With this agrees Isa. 28:5: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a 'mitre' of beauty, unto the residue of his people." In Zech. 3:1-8, where Joshua the high priest, as a representative of the people, is delivered from the resistance of Satan, and is cleansed, a fair mitre (*tsaniph*, a kindred word to the above) is set upon his head, and he is clothed with garments. The Lord Jesus as the BRANCH comes forth, and blessing follows.⁶

The prophecy of Ezek. 21:25-27 has to do with Zedekiah. But the prophecy looks on to one who crowns the wilfulness of Zedekiah with the culmination of self-will, when the transgressors are come to the full (Dan. 8:23). The phrase in Ezek. 21:25, "the time of the iniquity of the end," points to the end of God's patience with Israel, no doubt, but it foreshadows the time of the wilful king in Jerusalem. He imitates the priest upon His throne, taking, as it were, both the mitre and the crown, but to no avail. In reality, the mitre and the crown had been removed from Israel, for they are Lo-ammi (Hos. 1 -- not my people). God's promise is:

I will overturn, overturn, overturn it! This also shall be no [more], until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it [to him] (Ezek. 21:27).

So we see that the royalty and the priesthood were overturned. There was an overturning in Zedekiah's day, a foreshadow of the final overturning when He whose right it is personally overturns the Antichrist.

His Covenant of Protection Against the King of the North

The following comments by W. Kelly distinguish between the Wilful King, i.e., the Antichrist in Jerusalem, and the king of the north who is, of course, north of Israel; withall remarking on the accomplishment of the *indignation*⁷ spoken of in Dan. 11:36.

In Isa. 28 you will observe that there are two great powers of evil connected with the land of that day -- one "the king," who is in relation with the people, and in the

6. *A New and Concise Bible Dictionary* (now called *Concise Bible Dictionary*), London: Morrish, p. 536.

7. Comments on this indignation may be found in: *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 5:155, 156, 190, 210; 6:249; 7:153; 9:209-212, 253, 276; 11:326; 30:196, 201, 224; 32:274; *Synopsis* 3:219, 330, 333, 342; *Notes and Comments* 4:65, 77, 168, 169, 190, 193

land; the other the king of the north, who comes down as an antagonistic power.⁸ We shall find both these in this chapter. First, Ephraim is mentioned, and Jehovah pronounces woe upon "the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower . . . Behold Jehovah hath a mighty and strong one, which, as a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand." There, I apprehend, you have the inroad of the Assyrian [i.e., the King of the North] as the dreadful storm from the north that would break forth upon Ephraim. If we look at the middle of the chapter, we shall find another thing. We have seen what was the condition of Ephraim, who dwelt in the outskirts of the country. But what was the destiny of Jerusalem, the capital? "Because ye have said (ver. 15), We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement." There we have evidently what is connected with "the king" who will be in Jerusalem, and who will form a compact with "the beast," the great imperial power of that day (the coming Roman Prince of Dan. 9, the first beast of Rev. 13), to whom Satan will have given his throne. There is full harmony between what we have in Isaiah and the Revelation and Daniel. "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us." Mark that. The overflowing scourge is the king of the north, the outside power that then comes down on them. They of Jerusalem have made a covenant with death and with hell (with the instruments of Satan's power) in that day: and they hope by this means to escape the king of the north. I have already shown that "the beast," the imperial power of the west, will be in connection with "the king" at Jerusalem -- that the western parts will be the seat of the beast -- that he will command all Europe that properly belonged to the Roman empire. When that empire is re-organized, he will be the main instrument of using its strength. "The king" will have made a covenant with him; or, as was said in Dan. 9, he, that is, the Roman prince, will make a covenant with the mass of the Jews. At the close both are found in Jerusalem, fighting against the Lord and His saints coming from heaven {Rev. 19:19, 20}. They will trace their supposed strength to this covenant, but it will not stand. The overflowing scourge (the Assyrian) sweeps on, and half the city of Jerusalem is taken. How marvelously does Scripture hang together! Then (Isa. 28:16) comes in the reference to Jehovah's laying a foundation-stone in Zion, which is evidently a word for the faithful remnant of that day, however true for us who believe now.

Isa. 29 is the last portion to which I wish to refer. There we have the closing

8. Mr. Elliott {a learned historicist} (*Horae Apoc.*, 5th ed., vol. 4, p. 735, note 4), makes it to be an essential part (!) of the futurist theory that the Antichrist is, during part of the last three and a half years, to be occupied in besieging Jerusalem from without. That some writers, ancient and modern, have fallen into this stupendous mistake, is plain enough; but Mr. E.'s assertion is *totally* unfounded. The truth is (and Mr. E. ought to know it well), that very many authors, both historical and futurist, have been guilty of confounding "the king" with "the king of the north," at the close of Dan. 11 and elsewhere; but it is false that the error is essential to futurism more than to the Protestant school {Historicism}. Not a few beside myself had seen and avoided this confusion before Mr. E.'s book was written. See the "Christian Witness," vol. 2, p. 281 (Plymouth, 1838).

desolation of the city. "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt. . . . Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee." This is the siege spoken of in Zech. 14. "And thou shalt be brought down and shalt speak out of the ground," etc. Such is their condition when they are desolated. But mark, in v. 5, "Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust. . . . Thou shalt be visited of Jehovah of Hosts with thunder and with earthquake. . . . And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel . . . and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night-vision." Jehovah has gone forth and fought with those nations as He fought in the day of battle. Sufficient evidence is thus brought from various parts of the word of God, which entirely falls in with, and throws light upon, the very interesting portion of Daniel now before us. All concur in showing most clearly that there is a terrible future for the apostate Jews and their western associates; and no less terrible for their confederate eastern adversaries. The covenant with hell will not stand. When the great power of the world will have, apparently, swept all before them, and have gathered for the last great struggle before Jerusalem, God will take that opportunity for dealing with them after His long term of patience. It will be the closing scene. They will think that universal monarchy is to be in their hands; but it will be God's day for summoning them to judgment. Here I speak of a judgment of nations and of kings -- not of the dead before the great white throne (Rev. 20:11-15).

As there is no ground to identify "the king" (Dan. 11:36-39) with Antiochus Epiphanes,⁹ so neither ought he to be confounded with any succeeding king of the north, not only because what is said of him applies to none, but for the absolutely conclusive reason that he is the object of attack to the king of the north as well as to the king of the south. He is therefore distinct from and contrasted with both, and, as lying between their territories, cannot be the pope of Rome (as Mede and the two Newtons imagined), or any other than "the king" in Judea; and as none has yet appeared in the least answering to the description, he must be monarch there in the future. It is evident that the prophecy is committed to details as minute here as in any preceding portion of the chapter, the accuracy of which induced enemies to affirm, with a folly almost equal to the impiety, that it must have been a history written after the events in the days of Antiochus, not by Daniel when the Persian empire had just supplanted the Babylonian. All this is a vain and wicked dream, which not only slights the most abundant external and internal evidence that the prophet lived and wrote at the time he declares, but overlooks the plain statement that, before "the king" is in the land of Israel, and in the presence of his enemies from the north and the south, we have a clearly indicated transition to "the time of the end."

God is about to deal with the earth -- with men in the midst of all their plans. The regeneration of the world will be the great day when the Lord, having weeded out of Israel the transgressors, and used "the king" himself, and the judgment that

9. {For more on Antiochus Epiphanes see: *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 5:156; 6:260-264, 312; 9:210, 213; *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:521.} www.presenttruthpublishers.com

fell upon him, to separate the true ones of Judah from the wicked, will cause the hour to chime when the account must be settled with the nations. This appears to me to be the simple straightforward statement of the truth of God that we have here. We are not to suppose it is merely a question of one great power but of all. Different principles will be at work. And it is an awful thing to think that these lands, where we enjoy such privileges, are to be then overspread with the deepest darkness. The covenant with death and with hell is predicated of an alliance made with the highly civilized western world. What a humbling thing for the pride of man! Civilization, in a day that is past, did not keep the mightiest minds from degrading idolatry and filthiness. Alas! we shall have a still worse scene at the close. Christendom will end in restored idolatry, in novel false gods, in man himself worshiped as God. Such, I believe, is the predicted future of this age. But love can keep the heart true to Christ Himself from being entangled with all that leads to it. May we be occupied with Him, not building upon men's foundations, not hoping their hope, not trusting to progress nor even to religion so called! If Christ is the object in everything, safety is found there, and nowhere else.¹⁰

The Wilful King's End

W. Kelly wrote:

"The king shall do according to his own will, and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself" -- not only above every man, but "above every god." And it is not only that he takes his place above these so-called gods, but "he shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods." And, strange to say, (if one did not know the perfect wisdom of God, and could not wait for His counsels to be matured,) in spite of his fearful profanity, "he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done." The clause contains a word that gives us the key to the passage. For some have found immense difficulties in this portion of the word of God. Many have transported into this verse the pope of Rome; others, Mohammed, or Bonaparte. But here we find that "the king" is to prosper till the indignation be accomplished. What, or about whom? Has God now indignation against His Church? Never. This is the time, too, of God's patience with man, not of His indignation. With whom, then, is it connected? The word of God is perfectly plain. It is when dealing with Israel that God speaks of "indignation": I have already shown this fully from Isa. 5; 10; 14, and other passages, as it is entirely confirmed by the whole nature of the revelation here. For we read of one that would be the king of Israel -- not in Constantinople or Rome, but -- in Palestine. And the time is a future outburst of indignation against Israel in the promised land. He (the false king) shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.¹¹

Ed.

10. *Notes on Daniel*, London: present publishers, 2014-2018. See letter of J. N. Darby 1:522.

11. *Notes on Daniel*, London: Carter, pp. 195, 196.

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.2:

The Eternal Distinction of the Church

While Israel and the nations will not have an eternally distinct place on earth, it does not follow that the church will not have an eternally distinct place. We should bear in mind that when God creates the new heavens and earth, the persons on earth will have to undergo a change by God to suit them for the eternal state. But God will not have to make a change in the church at that time; because, the saints in heaven will have been previously changed for suitability for the heavenly sphere. That applies to the church and to all who participate in the first resurrection. The new heavens and earth does not refer to *the third heaven* to which Paul was caught up. The *new* heavens and earth refer back to the *old* creation of the heavens and earth, not to heaven where our Lord is. And there in heaven where our Lord is, the raptured and resurrected saints will be, 1000 years before the new heavens and earth. So the dissolution of the first creation and the introduction of the new heavens and earth does not affect their heavenly status.

THE ETERNAL STATE IN REVELATION 21:1-8

In Rev. 19 we see the Lord come forth from heaven. Next, in Rev. 20, we have the binding of Satan for the duration of the 1000 years (the millennium), then the revolt at the end, then the judgment of the wicked. Next in Rev. 21:1-8 we have the eternal state. But then in Rev. 21:9-22:5, and following, we are returned to the millennium. John is shown the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9, 10), and when shown the bride, what did he see? He saw a city. This is symbolic of glories invested in the bride, the Lamb's wife. The city is the bride viewed in millennial glory, as the heavenly seat of the administration of government in the millennium. It is the church, called in Rev. 21:10 "the holy

city, Jerusalem.”¹ If the reader lays hold of what Rev. 21:9, 10 shows, namely that the city *is* actually the church, and not a literal city, he will be preserved from much speculation. The city spoken of is the bride, the church, seen symbolically. What basis is there for thinking that the bride, the Lamb's wife is other than the wife of the Lamb spoken of in Rev. 19:7-9? What basis is there to think that when the angel said that he would show John the bride, the Lamb's wife, he showed him something other than that?

Moreover, if the reader discerns that “the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God, as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2), is that same church, but now viewed in connection with the eternal state of the new earth, rather than as viewed in connection with the earthly conditions of the old earth (Rev. 21:9 and following), he will have the key to much.

THE CHURCH ETERNALLY DISTINCT

There is a special glory that accrues to God through Christ in connection with the church:

... to him be glory in the assembly in Christ Jesus unto all generation of the age of ages. Amen (Eph. 3:21).

That he might display in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7).

And there came one of the seven angels which had had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and spoke with me, saying, Come here, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife ... and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9, 10).

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea exists no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice out of the heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people,² and God himself shall be with them, their God (Rev. 21:1-3).

1. The reader should try to obtain *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, by W. Kelly, and also his later, and smaller book, *Revelation Expounded*, for more details.

2. The United Bible Societies Greek text, fourth ed. gives the plural -- peoples. R. H. Mounce wrote:

It is interesting that most recent translations have the plural, peoples (“they shall be his peoples”) rather than the singular, people. (to this he footnoted the following). Metzger confesses it is extremely difficult to decide between λαοί and λαός. Chiefly on the basis of slightly superior manuscript evidence (N A 1 2059s 2329 pm Ir TR), the committee preferred λαοί (TCGNT, p. 765). (*The Book of Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 372, 1977.)

Robert L. Thomas also accepts this textual criticism and explains the use of the plural thus:

... marks an expansion beyond the boundaries of Israel, usually referred to by the

In Rev. 21:1-3, we learn that the bride, the Lamb's wife (cp. Rev. 21:9, 10) remains distinct in the eternal state. Eph. 3:21 very clearly shows the eternal distinction of the church.

In Rev. 21:3, the church is referred to as "the tabernacle of God" and it is "*with men*." Israel is not seen as distinct. The city is not a literal city; it is the church; it is the tabernacle of God. The church is "built together for a habitation of God in [the] Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). And it is seen as distinct from men on earth in the new heaven and new earth condition. In view of Eph. 3:21 and 2:7, that is not at all surprising. The church, the body of Christ subsists eternally as such.

But, though the name of Jerusalem be symbolically used, it is the saints themselves in glory, viewed in their unity as the bride, the Lamb's wife, who are new Jerusalem. And therefore the distinction is between new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and men on the new earth; if such subsist. The tabernacle of God is with men. And this was connected with the descent of new Jerusalem from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. So that if this be so, she is seen in this distinctive beauty in the new earth also . . . to be the tabernacle or dwelling place of God in the eternal state, and in the nearest possible union with Christ, will surely be infinitely precious to the saint who really estimates things spiritually as he ought . . . this particular city has its own

2. (...continued)

singular λαός (laos, people). God promised He would make Abraham a blessing to all peoples of the earth (Gal. 3:8, 16, 26-29). Many nations, not just Israel, will participate in the fulfilling experience of enjoying His presence (cf. John 10:16) (Alford, Swete, Bullinger, Charles). John updates the traditional concept of a singular people to include the many peoples represented among the redeemed (Jer. 7:23; 30:22; Hos. 2:23; Rom. 9:25). (*Revelation 8-22 An Exegetical Commentary*, Chicago: Moody, p. 444, 1995.)

These two writers reflect the textual criticism of the Westcott-Hort text with its undue emphasis on the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts.

The reader should observe that in the editions of J. N. Darby's translation that contain the critical apparatus, his footnote to the word "people" (λαός, singular) points out that the word is singular. W. Kelly also shows this. See *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament*, p. 743, lower right. This valuable volume is available from Present Truth publishers. W. Kelly read the singular here in *The Prospect* 1:163 (1849) and in his work devoted to the textual criticism of the book of Revelation, *Revelation of John*, 1860. In a series of articles criticizing *The Revised New Testament* (which was based on the Westcott/Hort text), he wrote:

. . . but the mass, with B P and the old versions, supports, as in the Complutensian edition, the singular, which Tischendorf thinks more probably an emendation. It appears to me that αὐτοῖς might rather influence a scribe in favor of the plural and thus bring in the various reading (*The Bible Treasury* 14:272).

We noticed above that the TR (Textus Receptus) supports the plural. Interestingly, *The Majority Text*, by Z. Hodges and A. Farstad, gives the singular. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

proper place of distinctive glory, and the rest come under the title of men.³

J. N. Darby rightly referred to "the assembly, the true heavenly and eternal metropolis of glory. . . ." ⁴ God will display His glory in the assembly for eternity. Christ will never cease to be head of that body, whatever else changes. Nor will all saints be merged into one -- as if all become part of that body. A clear distinction is made in Rev. 21.

. . . He remains eternally the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, I do not think that the church loses its place as the bride of Christ and the habitation of God. (See Eph. 3; Rev. 21.) ⁵

Moreover, we read:

. . . and to [the] assembly of the firstborn [who are] registered in heaven; and to God, judge of all; and to spirits of just [men] made perfect . . . (Heb. 12:23).

Here the distinction is made between the assembly of the firstborn and the spirits of just men made perfect. No Scripture warrant has been produced to justify the notion of merging them -- merely theological presumption. Rather, He who is the Firstborn among many brethren shall eternally retain that place, so shall those brethren among whom He is the Firstborn, namely, the assembly of the firstborn, retain that place in relation to Him, the Firstborn.

Those who say all will merge into one in the eternal state not only fly in the face of Scripture, they deny the peculiar glory of God in those heavenly saints who are *in Christ*. When persons say all will share equally in glory, I suggest that they do not understand that glory. They remind me of the mother who stood before Solomon and said to divide the baby. As she had not the real heart of a mother, and was ready to share the baby, so the theological systems cloud that glory of God in *Christ and the church* by sharing it, thus destroying its true character.

In replying to a posttribulationist, T. M. {Mansell?}, J. N. Darby wrote:

But T. M. assures us "that when they (Jews and Gentiles) pass out of them into an eternal state, these distinctions vanish." The distinctions of Jews and Gentiles has vanished now in the assembly, because it is an eternal thing -- is what remains. But where does T. M. find that the church's distinctive position, which he cannot deny here, vanishes in another world? ⁶

Concerning the word "nations" in Rev. 21:24 and 22:2, it is in a millennial context, not the eternal state. Rev. 21:1-5 refers to the "holy city, Jerusalem," the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9, 10) in the glorified state during the

3. *Collected Writings* 8:315.

4. *Synopsis* 4:62 (Stow Hill ed.).

5. *Collected Writings* 22:364 www.presenttruthpublishers.com

6. *Collected Writings* 10:250.

millennium. That state will not change for her, though the display of it may change in accordance with the passage of time to the new heavens and earth. Rev. 21:2 shows her in what we are calling the eternal state (of the new heavens and earth); she is still prepared as a bride adorned for her husband -- eternal, unfading beauty.

It is well to leave with God how He will move millennial saints to the new earth. Is there nothing else to do than idly speculate about all kinds of questions that might arise in the mind? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.⁷

THE CHURCH ETERNALLY HEAVENLY

There are many Christians that think that the new Jerusalem will be on earth in the new earth.

Observe that the words,

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God (Rev. 21:2),

is essentially the same as,

the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God (Rev. 21:10).

The second quotation is from the millennial section and certainly the city does not come to earth at that time. It seems that the idea of the new Jerusalem actually being on the new earth is taken from the words "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev. 21:3).

In view of the heavenly character of the Christian and of the church, it

7. It has not pleased God to tell us in Rev. 21 about the millennial or eternal portion of the other saints in heaven, i.e., those who are not part of the church. That silence seems to be intolerable to certain minds. For example, F. C. Jennings, reasoning about this, said that the references to a city in Gal. 4, Heb. 12, Rev. 3, and Rev. 21 must refer to the same thing, and puts all saints not on earth during the millennium into the city, and said:

Thus I judge this heavenly Jerusalem is not exactly equivalent or co-terminus with the Church, but includes all who, partakers of grace, have no earthly place in which that grace blesses, consequently it must be heavenly. The Church is included; nay, more, as she is the fullest and supreme expression of this wondrous work of grace, she may be looked upon as if she were the whole city: that is, titles and relationships (as being the Bride) may be predicated of her alone when she is alone on earth, wending her pilgrim way home, that may be found to belong to all the redeemed in heaven when that home is reached (as in Eph. 5) (*Studies in Revelation*, p. 554).

Concerning the saints in heaven during the millennium, all reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4-6). Those who were "called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9) ought not to be somehow merged into what we are told is the bride (Rev. 21:9). Faith leaves them with God, and does not engage in the reasoning, like that of F. C. Jennings, that sets aside the distinctions revealed in the Word of God.

seems to me that it would be better to regard those words as indicating a closeness of association with men on earth, not an actual residence on earth in the eternal state. Everything will have been brought into moral change and relationship suitable to God. The tabernacle of God being with men in the new heavens and earth is a moral thought, rather than a spacial, or geographical, location.

THE CHURCH OUGHT TO DISPLAY THE GLORY OF GOD NOW

The heavenly city comes down from God out of heaven. It is of, and from God, where all is good. God is the infinite and eternal source of good, and in the person of Christ we get the form and fulness of it. If it is righteousness it is from God; if holiness it is from God; if love, it is God's nature. We being made partakers of grace all that is thus displayed in us comes directly from God. So that in a secondary sense, the Church even down here, is the manifestation of the glory of God; though here there will spring up that which is of man and is corrupt. But there, all that is of us disappears, and all that is displayed in us comes from God. And I would, here add, that there is not a single grace that, in the power of the Spirit of God, ought not to be manifested by us now, poor failing ones as we are. There was not one which Jesus did not manifest, for He was the Son of Man in heaven when walking here on earth; and we who are the epistle of Christ ought to be known and read of all men.⁸

Incapable Persons

"Incapable persons" may rise up to teach and exhort in gatherings of believers dependent upon the present action of the Spirit of God; but if an assembly is faithful, and the "more excellent way" (the way of Love, 1st Cor. 13) be walked in, the brother will quickly discover his mistake. Such cases are, I rejoice to say, somewhat rare.

An Enquiry as to the Scriptural Position of the Plymouth Brethren, (So Called) A Dialogue (London: Morrish, 1868, p. 40).

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 3

Is the Law Dead? No. And What is the Christian's Responsibility?

*Comments Collected from J. N. Darby
(Continued)*

True Christian Responsibility Flows From the Place we are In; Not from the Law

Now, although the ground of man's responsibility is over in the sense of having wholly failed under it, when proved in every possible way, yet as to moral dealing with each individual, the responsibility is there to the full; and as an individual under moral dealing, a man has to go through the history of the process of responsibility and its failure; but he goes through it to bring out this, that he is lost already. He has to prove the truth of God's verdict that in man there is no good thing; and so the result of the principle of responsibility is for him to find out that he is lost, that the responsibility is over; not as if it was not true, but because he is lost and ruined, as the man who has lost all his money by foolish ways. It is important to keep up responsibility, but the individual is brought to the consciousness that on that ground it is all up with him. Man is lost. We have spent every farthing, and have only debts; these we have if that is any good. It is all over with the first man, and no mending of him will do: he is lost and ruined; but Christ came to save the lost.

Now the Second Man is set up. It is not a mending of the first man, but the substitution of the Second. There is no improvement or correction of the first man (although we are practically changed if we come to Christ), but the sins of the first Adam are all cleared away; and, secondly, the tree itself is cut down by the roots for faith. In the cross we see the responsibility met completely; Christ has met all the

failure, the fruit of the tree of responsibility, and has glorified God in so doing. Man has brought in confusion; but Christ came, met the case, and cleared the scene, and triumphed over all. When He came, God's character as to facts was compromised, and there was no escape. If He had saved none, but at once cast off sinners, it were righteousness, but there would have been no love. If He had let all pass, when man was a sinner, and in such sort saved all (which man would call love, but which would not have been divine love, for God is holy), where were the righteousness? But Christ came. Well, surely in the cross there is righteousness against sin, as nowhere else, yet there is the infinite love of God to sinners.

In Him, in Christ, I get both the trees of Paradise united, fulfilled in grace, bearing our sins and putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and becoming life according to righteousness. I am brought to the discovery of what I am, and then I see Christ has died on the cross and has taken the whole thing on Himself. When I see Him -- the Son of God -- dying on the cross, I say if this is not righteousness -- judgment against sin -- I do *not* know what is. But whom is He dying for? -- the guilty sinner. Well, if this is not love, I do not know what is. On the cross we get every attribute of God perfectly maintained -- His majesty and truth, as well as His righteousness and love -- every claim met, and God perfectly glorified in the Person of Christ, the Lamb of God. He was there making atonement for sin that the gospel might go out to all the world; and as to believers, bearing their every sin. The whole thing is met there, and the believer's responsibility cleared away, as to sins, that he may enter into responsibility on a new ground, that of a child of God. He has met fully, and completely, and absolutely, all the fruit of man's eating the tree and all the sins of the believer (his responsibility). This, of course, does not touch the believer's responsibility to Christ or to God as a believer in Christ; for this is of a new order, and comes in upon a different ground.

But in the cross God's character is not only maintained but fully glorified; for the death of Christ is the perfect putting away of sin¹ and of all that belonged to the first man. We, therefore, as believers, are crucified with Christ; we are not in the flesh but in Christ. We are dead to the condition in which we were as children of Adam, and we are in a new position altogether; in Christ we are children of God. All that we were has been met and settled on the cross, and a new life has been given to us, so that now we are not in the first Adam but in the Second Man. The fruit of the first is all taken away, and the tree itself cut up by the roots for our faith; we have died with Christ, been crucified with Him. The responsibility is met by the atonement, and He Himself is the eternal life; so the two trees of Paradise are fully reconciled.

Now the counsels of God come out, because He could not bring them out till redemption was accomplished, and righteousness fully established, and in respect of all that, too, which called it in question. The ground we stand on is not now

1. This, in its fullest effect, reaches, I doubt not, to the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But the believer knows its efficacy for himself now. I do not here speak of those who believe not. They are doubly guilty.

God's forbearance, because what we have is not promise, but the accomplishment of promise. It was forbearance He exercised towards the Old Testament saints, passing over their sins, but it is in the atonement *we* see His righteousness in doing this. Now God is righteous in saving a poor sinner-just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; and because righteousness is now established, my standing is not founded on responsibility as a child of Adam, but on redemption as a son of God. It is a new footing and foundation. Not only are my sins put away, but that which has put them away has so vindicated the righteousness of God, and glorified Him, that man has a place at the right hand of God in glory.

With regard to this Christ could appeal to the Father righteously to give Him that place. "I have glorified thee," He said, "glorify thou me," and Jehovah answered, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thy foes thy footstool." This puts the Son of man in the glory of God; and God has given us a place and standing in Him, clear of all the responsibility of the first Adam. But there is responsibility now for us, and it flows from and is measured by this very standing.

We have thus the two trees in grace -- the tree of life, and the tree of responsibility. Under the law we saw it was responsibility first, and then life. In grace it is first life, then responsibility.

Not only are my sins gone, but I and everything belonging to me buried in the death of Christ; the "I" merged into Him as to life, as it is written, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," and the life I now live is in the Risen One. He rose, and is now seated in glory in virtue of what He did as man, and has sent down the Holy Ghost to unite to Himself as Head (having taken this place as man in heaven) believers as members of His body, and to reveal all the counsels that were about us before the world was; and this is the church. The Christian is united with Christ, where He now is, we are seated there, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him. The Head is there, and we, the members, are, by the Holy Ghost, united to Him.

Now comes in the responsibility of the Christian. True responsibility flows from the place we are in -- not as having to get into the place, but as being in it. Seeing our place we can learn what our responsibilities are; else we never can assume responsibility. You are not responsible to me as children or servants, because you are not my children or my servants. If you were my servant, your duties and responsibilities would flow from your being so. You have totally failed as a child of Adam; and now, if a believer, God says you are a child of God. Well, now, let us see if you are walking as a child of God in all your ways. This is our responsibility. We are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, and are left in this world to shew out the character of such. We are the epistle of Christ, and have to see that we are a good one, known and manifestly so before all men. Christ should be so seen in us that he who runs may read.

If you are in Christ, Christ is in you; and our place is a settled one. Christ is before God for us, and we are before the world for Christ. What is laid on us is not responsibility before God as a child of Adam, but as a child of God. I am not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and the life of Jesus is to be manifested in our mortal bodies.

There is our responsibility, and it is an individual thing. You will see the individual put always first in scripture, because the individual must be put right before there can be any church. The epistle to the Romans deals with the individual, so also does the first chapter to the Ephesians, till we come to the last verses. We always have truth brought out for the individual before corporate blessing is unfolded or responsibility is enforced. We are saved by Christ individually and owned as brethren.

This leads on to relationship with Christ and with one another. Our relationship with the Father is that of children; our relationship with Christ, first, that He is not ashamed to call us brethren, and then as members of His body, and so baptized into one body by the Holy Ghost. This is the effect of God's work, and we are created unto good works, which God has fore-ordained for us. The ground we stand on is not our works: Christ stood on that ground once for us, and if we did we should be lost. We stand on Christ's work and are saved, and the Holy Ghost has come down and united us to Christ as His members; and he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit (CW 32:236-240). ♦

Where Does Christian Responsibility Begin? Not in the Law

Christ was there {with His disciples} and could not be in them. He was with them but had to go away. The Holy Ghost is in us, and stays with us. Christ was amongst them here, but not in them. He was absolutely alone in that sense -- most accessible, affable, but alone. This other Comforter stays here, abides with us and in us. It is a thing that is only known by having it; but the effect of having it is that I know I am in Christ. He gives the consciousness of being in Christ. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. On the other side we know Christ is in us. Thus we get our full complete blessedness before God on one side, and the measure of our practical responsibility down here on the other. I am accepted in the Beloved; I have got a new place -- not in the flesh at all. Responsibility as a child of Adam is completely and entirely over -- not as a Christian, but as a man. There is none righteous no not one. I do not want the day of judgment to tell me what I am. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost. It is not a state of probation. Man has plenty of debts and not a farthing. You come and tell me how to conduct myself, but I have nothing to live on. My standing and responsibility is that of a child of God, in Christ not in the flesh. Christ has answered for my sins not in the first man but in the second; the debts are all cleared. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. There is the blessed place I am in. The sealing of the Holy Ghost comes at the recognition of the grace of the forgiveness of sins. There we are white as snow. The Holy Ghost says "I will dwell in that man." God cannot seal an unbeliever, He seals a believer. It is a blessed place, high above angels. When once I believe that the Son of God became a Man and died for

me, glory is only a natural consequence. Nothing is too good for us; all the rest is easy to believe.

The other side of that is where Christian responsibility begins. Saved, in Christ, sealed with the Holy Ghost, there is no responsibility; I could not get into a better place in heaven. But if that is true another thing is true: if I am in Christ, Christ is in me down here, and I say, now let Him be seen. Conflict is consequent upon that. The Lord does not enter into conflict with Satan for us, till He takes His place. My place is settled in Christ and my duties are settled by Christ being in me. It is not a question of what I am doing, but of Christ being in me. I am to manifest the life of Jesus and nothing else: it requires watchfulness and diligence. I ought to walk as He walked. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ. What is the obedience of Christ? He never had a will of His own. The Father's will was the source of all He did. In Matt. 4 Satan said, "If thou be the Son of God, command." "Nay, I came to obey and serve -- not to command -- I have no word out of God's mouth." The obedience of Christ was having God's will as the origin and motive of all He did, not only the rule. "If I am a Son I do not depart from the place of a servant." That is the way Satan was perfectly silenced. There is no harm in eating when hungry. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He can do nothing without that word, and Satan can do nothing.

It is Christ who is our life dwelling in us, that life living "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." If I had a direction telling me all I ought to do, it would not do. I want to know His will to test my state. If God has not a will I am to do nothing. But it needs spirituality to discern His will -- "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." When I am uncertain, there is something that hinders, and I detect it. If the eye is single the whole body is full of light. As I get then the full blessedness of being in Christ, so I get Christ in me. That brings on the present dealing and government of God with us in this path. "If ye love me keep my commandments." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me . . . and I will love him and manifest myself to him." We get the positive enjoyment of the place; and that does depend upon the conduct -- the place does not. "Grieve not the Spirit of God." If I grieve Him He grieves me, and the effect of the Spirit's presence in me is to make me unhappy -- conscious of having grieved Him if in disobedience. Some people are afraid of commandments; I am not. If I did everything right, and it was not obedience, I should have done nothing right. Commandment brings in authority and therefore I like it. He adds "If a man love me He will keep my words." There must be obedience. He leads me in the path (*Misc. Writ. 4:56, 57*).

Holding Fast the Head #1: Loyalty (2 Sam. 20)

When the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven at God's right hand has a thought, then the members of His body, the assembly down here that He died for and loves, should know His mind and do His will. The oneness of Christ and His assembly is thereby displayed in a practical way. Now, most of us know that, when the members of His body down here suffer persecution or trial, He feels for us in heaven. So on the road to Damascus, He asked Saul of Tarsus, "Why dost thou persecute me?" (Acts 9:4) But does the connection between the Head and His body only go one way? Is the connection only a matter of our pain and sorrow being sensed up there?

Now the human body, a picture of Christ and His assembly, is marvelously made. It has nerves that carry sensations from the members of the body up to the head. It has also a second set of nerves that give impulses to the members according to the thoughts of the head. These two kinds of nerves work together in perfect agreement to join the head to the rest of the body in practice. Disconnection of either kind of nerve produces profound disorder. The ultimate disconnection is called "beheading" or "decapitation," a horrible and gruesome death.

In the body of Christ, the connectedness of the members to the Head that allows Him to feel our sorrows can never be impaired. He is perfect in His sympathy and love. For this reason, the members of the body of Christ can never be severed from the Head in heaven: the soundness of the connection is part of His glory Who is our great high priest. The connectedness that allows us to know and to do His will is, however, easily disturbed. Communion and knowing His will are fragile things. Toleration of sin in any way by a believer interferes with knowing the will of the Lord. Wilful sin is worse, and open rebellion against the Lord Jesus is worst of all. Lack of loyalty to the head is as horrible as a decapitation. For this reason, the members of the body of Christ ought always to be "holding fast the head" (Col. 2:19).

Holding the head does not refer to the vital connection between the members of the assembly and Christ. As to the gift of eternal life, the Head holds the members securely. He holds us, giving us eternal security and the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins through His once-for-all finished work on the cross. When the members hold the Head, they are knowing His thoughts and doing them. Holding the head is impulses coming down from the Head, and the result is service to the body and promotion of its unity together by the functioning of "joints and bands" (Col. 2:19). Thus, every motion of every member as directed by the will of Him Who is the Head is cause for thanksgiving and praise to Him, the Head!

Holding *fast* the Head suggests a certain intensity of attachment to Him. Perhaps, we may long for an increase in this intensity. Perhaps, we may have cause to fear our tendency to drift into a menial, lukewarm condition that is relatively

unmoved by the thoughts that are thought by the Head. Surely, the Scriptures encourage us to hold *fast* the Head and to be ever loyal to Him.

Sheba the son of Bichri

Examples of loyalty and its lack are found in the books of Samuel and Kings, where the history of Israel and Judah is set down so as to display the works of the flesh (in the books of Chronicles, the same subject matter displays the grace of God). For example, Absalom's fleshly rebellion against David's authority as king (2 Sam. 13-19) is not mentioned in 1 Chronicles at all. A second example is the rebellion of Sheba the son of Bichri (2 Sam. 20), where the absence of loyalty increased until he was himself beheaded. The beheading of Sheba brings into the history of his rebellion a circumstance that prompts us to remember the importance of holding fast the head. Understanding the Old Testament account of Sheba's rebellion will help us to understand Col. 2:19.

Rebellion is open resistance to, or defiance of, legitimate authority. The spirit of rebellion in members of the body of Christ leads to the denial of the connection between the Head and the members so that the thoughts of the Head are no longer expressed in the members down here. "We have no portion in David" (2 Sam. 20:2), said Sheba, and those who followed him "went up from after David" (2 Sam. 20:2). David's authority was defied in spoken words, in departure from his presence, and in following a man.

Whenever as believers, we are not holding fast the Head, the moral roots of our condition include disloyal defiance of His authority. If His authority were fully owned, would not His will be known and done? To say, "We have no part in Christ," is too outrageous to imagine on the lips of any true believer. Yet, what does it mean when we act as though His word or will was not relevant? or when being in His presence is no longer a joy? or when following a man takes practical priority over following Christ?

Two hundred men of Jerusalem supported the rebellion of Absalom in ignorance and simplicity. But in the rebellion of Sheba, ignorance was not a factor. The men of Israel had just said, "I have ten parts in the king" (2 Sam. 19:43). This is the "I" of pride and the precursor to disloyalty, but shows that ignorance was not the origin of the rebellion.

Of what did Sheba's rebellion consist? Well, mostly it consisted of running away from David (2 Sam. 20:7, 10, 13, 14). David would have been a good king to Sheba. But, like the prodigal son of Luke 15, Sheba was a runaway.

- * He appears to have run past the great stone in Gibeon (2 Sam. 20:8). Now that is a very sad thing, because the tabernacle of God was pitched at Gibeon (1 Chron. 16:39). But Sheba had no time to stop for worship.
- * Apparently, there was a highway there for Sheba to run upon (2 Sam. 20:12), but he did not use it wisely. "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil" (Prov. 16:17), and the highway of the upright would have kept his life from a horrible end.

- * Then he ran past a field (2 Sam. 20:12). A field in Israel was a place of fruitfulness: "righteousness [shall] dwell in the fruitful field" (Isa. 32:16). But Sheba did not pause to cultivate any fruits for God.
- * He even ran through all the tribes of Israel (2 Sam. 20:14). Perhaps, he was looking for supporters in every place. As he ran, the whole inheritance of Israel flashed before his eyes like scenery before a tourist. But there was no time for him to enjoy the inheritance.
- * He ran until he came to Abel-Beth-Maacah, a city with one wise woman in it (2 Sam. 20:14-16). This city had a wall, and walls in the Bible often symbolize the truth of separation from evil unto the Lord. For Sheba to hide behind such a wall was very inappropriate, because the wall of separation from evil can never be used to shelter disloyalty.

How did Sheba's rebellion come to an end? A word of wisdom led to his decapitation. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10). Reverence to Himself is used by God to prevent many a rebellion. In this case, the wise woman showed her wisdom by making sure she was speaking to the right man (2 Sam. 20:17), by making sure that Joab was listening before she began to speak (2 Sam. 20:17), and by asking for the root cause of the trouble: "Why . . . ?" (2 Sam. 20:19). Then she did not spare the guilty or seek excuses (2 Sam. 20:21). The result was the swift execution of judgment springing from wisdom that honors the name of the Lord.

A little tolerated leaven turns the whole lump from being an unleavened lump into being a leavened one. Suppose, for a moment, that the city of Abel-Beth-Maacah with all its obedient, submissive citizens refuses the wisdom of this woman and decides to shelter Sheba the son of Bichri. Suppose also that they are very careful to keep on paying taxes to king David, to honor King David's name, etc., etc. Their daily behavior does not change at all. What kind of city is it now? It is, of course, a rebellious city already (in spite of the fact that its loyal habits of life remain unchanged)! In time to come, perhaps, the leaven of Sheba's ways would infect others so that some others also would stop paying honor to King David, etc. But already by the act of sheltering the rebel, the city has changed its character and no amount of offended protests ("But I still pay taxes to David!") can clear its name (or the name of any of its citizens) so as to restore its unleavened state. Nor could the city of Abel-Beth-Maacah claim to be an autonomous city and demand time to judge the case of Sheba for themselves. What was needed right then was loyalty to King David! Yes! What was needed was to cast the head of Sheba over the wall! And so they did.

(Is it too far fetched to imagine what would have happened to a city in Israel to whom, not Sheba himself, but only a supporter of Sheba should come? Would such a city have retained the name of a loyal city? Surely not. It would also have become, by the reception of a supporter of Sheba, a rebellious city and David's army would have brought down its walls.)

The grace of God did a work at Corinth that has a similar character to the

execution of Sheba. After they put away from among themselves a certain wicked person (1 Cor. 5), Paul wrote to them about the glory of God (2 Cor. 1:20 and many other passages in 2 Cor.), because they had faithfully maintained that glory. Is it not a little disconcerting then that there is no mention of any glory after the beheading of Sheba? No glory for David followed. The city did not rejoice. If this incident had been written in 1 Chron. (instead of in 2 Sam.), perhaps, there would have been some explicit reference to the grace of God and to a glorious outcome. The history as written in 2 Sam. leaves the readers with a curiously lackluster feeling, because something that was right at Corinth was wrong at Abel. Could there have been some flaw in the wisdom of the wise woman of Abel?

The wise woman of Abel

With what did her wisdom begin in her significant speech to Joab? "They were wont to speak in old time saying, Just inquire at Abel; and so they ended." This is to start from tradition and reputation. She did not start with God's word at all! Like a fly in an apothecary's ointment, so is a claim of wisdom based on reputation for wise words on previous occasions. True wisdom is a gift from God (James 1:5), and those who boast in having been wise before are foolish in their boasting (see James 4:16). Moreover, this tradition of asking at Abel was an evil tradition. God gave the Urim to the high priest in Israel (1 Sam. 28:6). The Urim was the token of light from God to illuminate present circumstances. And even in the days of Saul, it was said, "Bring hither the ark of God" (1 Sam. 14:18) when there were questions to ask. What kind of tradition is it that turns away from God and His word and the priesthood in Israel to settle hard questions at Abel? In old time, men were wont to peep and mutter (see Isa. 8:19-20) too, but a long history is not always a right history. This earth has a long history of men being satisfied if only their troubles can be brought to an end. Just let there be an end, any kind of end, and they are sure that they have been wise. Thus, the wisdom of Abel (to end before asking counsel of God and consulting His word) is only a kind of "earthly" wisdom (James 3:15).

In the second part of her speech, the wise woman claimed to be "peaceable [and] faithful in Israel" (2 Sam. 20:19). Is that the right order? "But the wisdom from above first is pure, then peaceful . . ." (James 3:17). Purity and faithfulness go hand in hand, taking precedence over peacefulness. This wise woman naturally wanted peace so much (and also she was faithful in the second place) that she was willing to kill Sheba to get the peace. But "God is light" (1 John 1:5) precedes "God is love" (1 John 4:8). "Cease to do evil" (Isa. 1:16) precedes "learn to do well" (Isa 1:17). "Peace and truth" (Esther 9:30) has some good in it at Shushan among Jews who did not have the faith to return to God's chosen city, Jerusalem, but that order does not rise up to the prophet's words who said at Jerusalem, "Love ye then truth and peace" (Zech. 8:19). Our natural tendency is to elevate peace over truth, but this is only a kind of "natural" wisdom (James 3:15).

And what was the real point of her words to Joab? "Thou seekest," she told him, "to destroy a city and a mother in Israel. Why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of Jehovah?" (2 Sam. 10:19) Thus, her words accused Joab of the kind

of sin of which Sheba was guilty. She reversed the charges so as to accuse the loyal forces of the king. These were not words of heavenly grace, but of “devilish” wisdom (James 3:15). To accuse another of the same sin that one protects is as crooked as a serpent.

But at least was not her recommendation that she took to all the people (2 Sam. 20:22) real wisdom? Of course, it was. It was exactly the same wisdom as the wisdom of Caiaphas the high priest who prophesied, “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” (John 11:50). But these words did not make Caiaphas a good man, or a wise one. “This is not the wisdom which comes down from above” (James 3:15). The wisdom from above is informed about a vicarious substitute, about repentance and a sacrifice for sin, about the blood of the lamb that shelters the guilty. Of such things, Caiaphas was as ignorant as the wise woman of Abel.

In 2 Samuel, the history of Israel is set out to display the workings of the flesh. And 2 Sam. 20 records more than one case of disloyalty to King David. Sheba was disloyal, but so also, in her heart, was the wise woman! If she was truly loyal to King David, what could she, a mere woman, have done? Well, she could have taken a little cold water out to refresh the king’s loyal troops. Or if the gates were locked against her, she could have baked them some fresh bread and thrown it over the wall to them. Or she could have invited King David’s troops into the city, either before or after the beheading of Sheba. There are lots of things she could have done, but did not do. It was not true of her, “[what] indignation . . . [what] ardent desire . . . [what] zeal” (2 Cor. 7:11). All she managed to do was the bare minimum that allowed Joab to go away. Her loyalty to her hometown is much more obvious than her loyalty to David.

Joab

How much happier it would be to stop our meditation here! But the flesh is thoroughly evil, wholly opposed to God. Besides Sheba and the wise woman of Abel, there remains in this chapter a third case of disloyalty. Remember that Joab knew the mind of David and by the end of the chapter he had done it, accomplishing what King David had commanded. But no mention is made of the grace of God being with him, and no glory followed afterwards. Instead of gathering Israel together back to the King in loyalty, the end of Joab’s campaign was that “they dispersed from the city, every man to his tent” and only “Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king” (2 Sam. 20:22). Where else is it written that the blowing of one trumpet was a signal for dispersal? One trumpet was originally the signal for gathering together (see Num. 10:4) and Sheba blew one trumpet to scatter Israel to their tents (2 Sam. 20:2), so perhaps Joab blew his trumpet of dispersal according to the signaling system of rebellious Sheba. Do we have a sense of spiritual “let-down” here as we read of Joab returning alone? Could there have been some flaw in Joab’s doing of David’s will? If so, what kind of flaw was it?

King David had said to Abishai (not to Joab!), “Take thou thy lord’s servants” (2 Sam. 20:6) but “there went out after him Joab’s men, and . . .” (2 Sam. 20:22).

20:7). Who were these? Who recruited them? Who gave them their identity as "Joab's men"? These were men of divided loyalty! The name of King David was not enough for them. They needed a second name as well. And so far as we know, Joab never rebuked them for using his name in that way. One of them was young: he was a bystander with a big mouth. His words to King David's troops indicate how influenced he was by the name of Joab: "He that favors Joab," he cried, "and he that is for David, let him follow Joab" (2 Sam. 20:11). No man that exalts Joab's name before King David's name has undivided loyalty. No matter how deeply the young man appreciated the high rank of Joab, or Joab's military record, or Joab's leadership ability, there never was any valid reason in Israel to promote any man's name over David's. In so doing, this young man denied the supreme worth of David's name. The believers at Philadelphia had a good testimony that they had not denied the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 3:8). Because the supreme worth of that name far exceeds the worth of David's name, we may be sure that no Philadelphian ever found his self-identity in any other name. Truly, to add a second name always leads to putting the second name in front of the name of the Lord Jesus. Admittedly, names are external things, but external things reflect internal ones.

"Take," said King David to Abishai. But then that Joab took the lead in what followed. Some followed because they knew and did the will of the king; they went out of loyalty to David. Others followed because they honored Joab's name. Where so much honor was being paid to Joab's name, it was easy for him to take over. And Joab went in order to take the first place that he loved (cf. 1 John 9). Notice that Abishai did not return to the king at the end of the chapter to report the success of his mission, but that Joab did (2 Sam. 20:22). So, evidently, Joab took the credit, too. And that explains how Joab took his old job back (2 Sam. 20:23). With Joab, there was lots of taking, but no giving!

In addition, Joab took his coat, his girdle, his sheath, and his sword (2 Sam. 20:8). How do you make a sword fall out of its sheath? Joab's apparent incompetence with his sword (whether it fell out intentionally or not) was a bad example to all of David's army. Joab should have set an example of carefulness, lest he cut himself. Two-edged swords are designed to cut both ways: one edge against the enemy and the other edge against the enemy. Only an incompetent soldier cuts himself on his own sword. For this reason, swords are to be kept securely in sheaths until the enemy is encountered. These are first principles of swordsmanship.¹

Then with the sword and without any command from the King or from Abishai to whom the king had entrusted the pursuit of Sheba, Joab murdered Amasa, his

1. Occasionally, faithful admonitions are rejected because the flesh objects that the admonisher did not use the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, against himself, as though one edge of the sword was to be reserved for self-judgment. On the contrary, the two edges are like two witnesses, sufficient testimony to convict of sin. Self-judgment ought always to precede taking up the sword of the Spirit.

own cousin according to 1 Chron. 2:17. The greeting of Joab is one of the most courteous and gentlemanly greetings in the Bible. Those who take high offense when matters of courtesy are omitted should take note of this case when courtesy set the stage for murder. How much better would it have been for Joab to have greeted Amasa with "Long live King David!" Also, the kiss of Joab was like the kiss of Judas Iscariot (cf. Mat. 26:49). Thus, the murder of Amasa was a murder of very evil character. Was this the mind of David? Was this a part of the pursuit of Sheba? Of course not! Then Joab was no loyal follower of David in what he did to Amasa. In this vile act, Joab did his own, not King David's, will (no doubt, envying Amasa's appointment as commander-in-chief of David's army).

Moreover, Joab slew his own superior officer when he slew Amasa (2 Sam. 19:13). Amasa's tardiness did not justify Joab (2 Sam. 20:5). Joab ought instead to have submitted to King David's authority as delegated to Amasa: the other soldiers did. There was the body of their commander-in-chief, lying in his blood in the middle of the highway. And he, though dead, yet issued an order and all King David's loyal troops heard it, so to speak. "Stop here!" cried Amasa's blood. And they stopped to wait for his murder to be avenged. In this passage, delegated authority (from King David to Amasa) is shown to be a test of loyalty. (Christians ought to recognize the principle of delegated authority in Mat. 18:18).

The last order of Amasa was made of no effect by covering his corpse with a cloth (2 Sam. 20:12). This cloth is called "the love cloth". It is like the so-called "love rug" under which evil is sometimes swept that ought instead to have been judged. Who was carrying the love cloth during the pursuit of Sheba the son of Bichri? And why? Was someone planning on throwing it over the sin of Sheba in order to shield him from the consequences of his sin? We do not know, but in running to do King David's will, the love cloth was just a dead weight. It should have been laid aside (cf. Heb. 12:1). Moreover, in the long run, it did not cover the body very well. In 1 Kings 2:5, David remembered and uncovered what the love cloth was hiding. To hide sin never works, but it is a favorite tactic of disloyal men.

With Amasa's corpse covered, the pursuit went on until Joab reached Abel-Beth-Maacah. Without explaining his purpose (as evidenced by the fact that the wise woman was never told), he began at once to attack the city. First he lifted up himself by casting up "a bank against the city, and it was raised in the trench" (2 Sam. 20:15). From this elevated spot, proud Joab could rain missiles down on the city's defenders. Secondly, "all the people that were with Joab sapped the wall, to throw it down" (2 Sam. 20:15). Now, walls, as we noticed before, are symbols of the principle of separation from evil unto the Lord. David never sapped a wall in all his wars. But Joab did. And when the incident of Sheba was over, do you really think that Joab ordered his men to repair the undermining of the wall? No, they all just went home and left the city with its separation seriously impaired. The tactics of Joab did not bring honor to David's army, because they were not David's way. The way in which the pursuit was arranged was another test of Joab's loyalty.

Unjudged fleshly activity interferes with God's plans and God's ways. The wise woman of Abel and Joab cooked it up so that Sheba should die. But what about the Cherethites? They were present (2 Sam. 20:7) and their job was to be executioners in David's kingdom (see JND's footnote to 2 Sam. 20:23). When other men did their job, their own portion of service to David was stolen from them. Moreover, there were pernicious moral consequences in the souls of the men who did their job, and David's plan would have avoided those consequences. The Pelethites were present also (2 Sam. 20:7 and footnote to 20:23), but Joab sent no messages by these couriers. So far as is known, no courier was sent to David with news of the murder of David's commander-in-chief or with Sheba's head. So David's provisions for executions and messages were subverted. Doing things according to the standard procedures established by authority is a part of the behavior of loyal followers.

Thus, Joab had a very disloyal heart. Outwardly, he was loyal to King David. But really he tolerated followers of his own name, twisted his service to David to accomplish his own agenda (in murdering the man whose job he wanted), and freely indulged in tactics that dishonored David's kingdom.

Loyalty to Christ

Therefore, 2 Sam. 20 exposes the open rebellion of Sheba, the loyalty of the wise woman of Abel to her own city (but not to David), and the loyalty of Joab to his own self-interest (but not to David). No wonder someone lost his head, the gates of Abel-Beth-Maacah were never opened to welcome King David's men, and the troops under Joab were dispersed to their own homes!

And how about ourselves, dear readers? Are we loyal to Christ? Life is too short not to devote ourselves wholly to Him! Loyalty to Christ is the first part of holding fast to Him, our Head. If our loyalty is elsewhere, then we will neither know His will, nor do it. Some of us will become little Joabs. Others will be like the not-so-wise woman of Abel. And a few will be open rebels like Sheba. Nor is it sufficient for us to boast of our loyalty (no doubt, Joab and the wise woman would be insulted by this exposition of their ways). The practical expression of loyalty is a much greater thing than mere words. This chapter demonstrates how loyalty and disloyalty work themselves out in practice. To hold fast the Head in practice means following the sense of these lessons from 2 Sam. 20.

Thus, true loyalty to Christ does not rebel or run away from Him. True loyalty to Christ does not submit for the sake of peace at the expense of truth. True loyalty to Christ does not have a personal agenda to accomplish at the Lord's expense.

True loyalty to Christ honors the Lord in word, in seeking His presence, and in refusing to honor man. It knows no other name but His! It puts the claims of truth before peace. It makes knowing the mind of the Lord and doing it the total agenda. May these thoughts on 2 Sam. 20 enlighten us as to what it means to hold fast the Head (Col. 2:19).

D. P. Ryan, 1997

Torah Codes

Perhaps you have heard of the book, *The Bible Code*, by M. Drosnin, in which he reports on the findings of Dr. Eliyahu Rips (an orthodox Jew and a mathematical statistician at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem) who, with two associates, started this particular Torah Code text-searching -- finding references to Rabbis and also to modern events in the Hebrew of the books of Moses. ¹ Having an advertisement about a book supporting this, from an orthodox Jewish bookstore, I went to look at it; but publication had been canceled because "it is controversial," said the saleswoman. As I left, I said to her:

***Wonderful things in the computer I see;
Things that are put there by you and by me.***

The look on her face indicated that she did not get the point.

At any rate, this Bible codes business is an old Jewish scheme, called the Cabbala, given new life by the use of computer searching of textual material for encrypted messages and information. Searching can now be done very quickly. I thought to myself, what a pity it is that this will sell many books, and worse yet, occupy the time of Christians who ought to be studying the Word, adorning the doctrine, and worshiping and serving the Lord.

And I also hoped someone would apply the method to some non-Biblical text, for I was sure that similar results could be obtained. There is truth to the little two-lined poem above.

Alas, I thought, the de-bunking will likely come from an atheist mathematician. Well . . . Dr. Brendan McKay, who teaches computer science at the Australian National University, has a copyright paper available on the Internet, dated Sept. 9, 1997. In it he quoted a challenge made by M. Drosnin, who said: "When my critics find a message about assassination of a prime minister encrypted in Moby Dick, I'll believe them" (*Newsweek*, Jun 9, 1997). In his paper (*Assassinations Foretold in Moby Dick!*) Dr. McKay gives eight cases. It appears that more will be forthcoming.

Dr. McKay was asked by Barry Golson to include some other "code words" in the Bible search; facetiously, such as "Bill Gates" (who is the very famous computer innovator). The results were made available on the Internet on Sept. 26, 1997. Dr. McKay used the English KJV of the book of Revelation, stripped of all vowels (to simulate the fact that the Hebrew has no vowels -- the lack of vowels makes it easier to get words out of the sequenced consonants that the computer uses). He did indeed find references to Bill Gates.

Now, there are some scientists who have put their approval on the work of Dr. Rips and his associates. And, a paper by him and his two associates had been published in a peer-review statistical journal. Thus, the method is wrapped in an aura of scientific respectability -- and how exciting and attractive this is to orthodox Jews and many Christians. Yes, there are those who need to get into print and tell

1. Others expand beyond this: the Pentecostal, G. R. Jeffrey, *The Signature of God, Astonishing Biblical Discoveries*; Yacov Rambsel, *Yeshua*; and one by J. R. Church. Do not waste your money and your precious time!

the Christian brotherhood the wonderful news of this "proof" of divine inspiration!!! Yes, and there also is money to be made with those wide-selling books. Oh, but the brotherhood *needs to know* about this proof of divine inspiration! Well, rather the true proofs are moral and thus make a moral test of the soul. The truth of God dwells in the soul by having entered via the conscience -- a most important point.

Really, does it take a super IQ to say, "let us wait and apply this computer method to other books before we get all worked up about this computerized text-searching for hidden codes in the Bible"? ²

And there was Ivan Panin, who by his Bible numerics 'showed' that the Westcott and Hort text was the correct one. When things did not always work out, he could add a "1" to a "near miss." He has present day followers -- as does pyramidology re: the great pyramid.

I am reminded of a Christian in Toronto some years ago who discovered a language in the Bible that he called DANTL. He found that Hitler was to be raised from the dead the following year and be the Antichrist. He integrated his findings with the prophecies of Nostradamus and Mother Shipton. Who thinks that a good IQ is a guarantee against foolishness?

Calculations of dates for Christ's return is a similarly objectionable endeavor. The historicists did it repeatedly and the rise of dispensational truth in the 1800s helped to minimize it. But now persons who give themselves out as dispensationalists engage in it. It has sold many books, too. .

And recently an *amillennialist* jumped in with his 1994? Another writer authored a book which substantiated that one -- all to no avail.

***Wonderful things in the Bible I see;
Things that are put there by you and by me.***

Meanwhile, false prophets are held by many in the brotherhood in the same esteem as before -- an indicator of the state of the brotherhood.

I wonder how many Christians with a computer are spending time attempting to make a wonderful discovery and be able to tell the brotherhood about it. How exciting! And especially now -- because they can get their discovery out through the Internet.

There may be useful information that can be obtained through the Internet. There is also not only garbage, but evil things obtainable that way. No doubt the Internet will be, and already is, an instrument for the spread of moral pollution. Certainly parents need to guide their children; and as much as they are able, to keep them from unlimited and unsupervised use of "the information highway" as it is called. You may find that it provides a highway for evil into the mind of your child. "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil."

This is not to say that because printing (or the Internet) can be used to print evil things, therefore there should be no printing (or Internet).

Ed.