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New Book Announcement

(Offer Repeat - Title not given in last issue.)

From New Birth to New Creation

The full Table of Contents is given only for Chapter 1.1 to illustrate the ease of finding something. But there is also a Scripture Index as well as a Subject Index.

This 158 page, double column book is hard bound in buckram cloth and is 8 ½" by 11" in size.

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Four Animals And One Man

In the creation-realm of God's workmanship it is interesting to learn spiritual truths through natural objects. This is very evident when we read in Scriptures such detailed chapters as Lev. 11 and Deut. 14 of the dietary regulations for the nation of Israel under the Mosaic economy. These regulations of course don't apply today for the Christian in view of 1 Tim. 4:4, which, written against the legalizers, states, "For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing to be rejected, being received with thanksgiving. . ." and nothing therefore to be refused on ceremonial grounds. So we are not going to make any literal application of these types but a typical one.

There are three Scripture portions I will quote and comment on: namely, Jer. 13:23; John 10:27 and 2 Pet. 2:22. We have named: firstly, the leopard; secondly, the sheep; thirdly, the pig; and finally, the dog. In the portion of Jeremiah we have joined with the leopard a man called an Ethiopian or Cushite (Heb.) of black skin, all illustrating some important truth. Our Lord in the NT often used things of nature to illustrate divine truth.

THE ETHIOPIAN AND THE LEOPARD

Firstly, Jer. 13:23, "Can an Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots? [Then] may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil." Here we have skin color of a man and a leopard's spots set before us as characteristics inbred and unchangeable. What does it tell us? It states that what marks us is an unchangeable nature inherited from sinful parents as descendant from fallen Adam. In both the Ethiopian and the leopard it is through no fault of their own they are colored and spotted; but as the end of the verse quoted from Jeremiah applies the nature lesson, we are informed that, as we are morally ruined by sin in the fall as Adam's descendants, so we will demonstrate by practice of actions. "For this [cause], even as by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12) -- no exceptions! The same prophet Jeremiah later in ch. 17:9 tells us: "the heart is deceitful above all things and incurable." In this first illustration we are shut up to the truth that we need a new birth from God to be pleasing to God -- as the religious ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, was told by our Lord (the only sinless Man): "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (fallen) (John 3:6). "And they that are in flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8). See also verse 7 of the same portion. All put together shows the hopeless and helpless condition and futile effort to change the state. We are shut up to the mercy of God and His intervening power to save and give life, implanting a new nature from Himself after the image of His Son Jesus Christ. "Because whom He has foreknown, he has also predestinated [to be] conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be [the] firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Thus our first lesson to learn is our need both inward and outward for a new kind of life and nature. All human efforts of reform, good works, ceremonial baptism, church membership, good behavior, etc., all avail nothing for a real genuine change. "You must be born again," not of blood (of our parents) nor of the will of the flesh (of ourselves), nor of the will of

man (any other will), but of God (John 1:13). Apart from this the man remains what he is as man's offspring. We may think one person worse in character than another but we have the same germ seed nature within us and capable of manifesting itself in sin anytime through temptation or stress. David and Absalom, father and son, are an example for our warning instruction and safety in holding low thoughts of self in distrust and leaning upon Him alone. The leopard's spots remain be he ferocious or tame at times. Many marvelous things has man done in the way of philanthropy, inventions, etc., but he is a rebel against his Maker-God.

THE SHEEP

We come next in consideration to the (dumb) meek and weak sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). Here we have an animal with peculiar character. Number one, left to themselves, they tend to wander off as being inquisitive by nature, too. As lost sheep we have been sought by a faithful and loving Shepherd-Lord. He sought until He found us at any cost to Himself even unto death, as He did go. In Isa. 53:6 the prophet declares "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." Peter, in his first letter, adds and confirms by stating: "For ye were going astray as sheep, but have now returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls" (1 Pet. 2:25). This is the great transaction by repentance unto life that has come about through *His sovereign work* in our souls by the Word of God and Holy Spirit both living and operative today. As the hymn writer, Josiah Conder put it:

'Tis not that I did choose Thee
for Lord that could not be:
This heart would still refuse Thee,
But Thou has chosen me.

As sheep straying we are seen in our lost estate. But now we are marked out as His sheep by hearing His voice and this is the second characteristic of sheep. They have excellent hearing but apparently poor eyesight. So it is not seeing the Shepherd (as in false pictures representing Christ) but as *hearing His voice*. How often are we exhorted, "he that has an ear, let him hear." "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19), so contrary to human nature even though God has given us two ears but one mouth.

Jesus said, when here on earth, "He that is of God hears the words of God" (John 8:47). It is adherence and obedience to the *written* Word that marks hearing His voice today. This is very important with many voices claiming authority to be heard because of positions of power by wealth, knowledge, ecclesiastical connection, or office, etc., etc. The apostle Paul, writing to the saints at Corinth, states, "If any one thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize the things that I write to you, that it is [the] Lord's commandment. But if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant" (1 Cor. 14:37, 38). This does away with man's reasonings on subjects of fundamental issues biblically. Of course, we must rightly read the Scripture in content and dispensationally. For instance, under the Mosaic

economy Israel was to literally fight Canaanites and destroy their culture of wicked codes. That is not now our direction but rather in *spiritual* conflict and with weapons not carnal but with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, overcome the Wicked One. So, 2 Cor. 10:3, 4 directs us along with Eph. 6:10-18. Along with this spiritual conflict we are taught that the Christian inheritance is spiritual blessings and in the heavenlies and heavenly inheritance (Eph. 1:3 and 1 Pet. 1:4). “. . .blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.” “to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance, reserved in [the] heavens for you.” This is a healthy distinction to bear in mind since many take up earthly causes as Christians intent on making this world, that has cast out Christ, a better place to live in; so getting involved in political-moral issues of the day. The early disciples of our Lord were accused as troublemakers because they preached another One called Jesus, not as trying to change society-life (Acts 17:6, 7) by vote-influence, organization groups against abortion, gun control laws, etc., etc. In 2 Tim. 2:4, Paul puts a principle of behavior before Timothy: “No one going as a soldier entangles himself with the affairs of life, that he may please him who has enlisted him as a soldier.” This is an indirect instruction as to our attitude as subject to Him, the Author and Captain of our salvation. So to hear His instruction -- direction by the Word of God -- is a mark of an obedient, subject Christian. How rare a thing in today's liberal-minded Christian outlook of even true believers!

Turning to Lev. 11 and particularly Deut. 14:4-6, we have a list of animals that are ceremonially considered clean, among which the sheep is named. The two characteristics which make the animal clean for sacrifice and eating are that it chews the cud and divides the hoof. What does this teach typically? The divided hoof speaks of a separated life-walk, the believing sheep's walk in this world which is under the dominion of Satan, religiously, politically, and economically. The sheep of God is not at home in the carnal mud of this sin cursed condition. He may fall into the slime or mud, though, through not heeding the Word carefully. “My children, these things I write to you in order that ye may not sin” (1 John 2:1), is John's exhortation to the sheep-children. Careless behavior exposes one to a fall which we call “backsliding” to which we are very prone, as sheep are to wander. But divine life as such does not depend on our behavior but on Him Who gives it *gratis* without condition. Under the Law, continued life was conditional as the statement implies, “This do and you shall live.” No such condition is given under grace but “the *gift* of God is eternal life” (Rom. 6:23). A gift is not conditional. “Fallen from grace,” in Gal. 5:4, has nothing to do with losing one's salvation; but as the context shows, is a return to law-keeping as the legalist does to help maintain or govern his acceptance. “Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ as separated [from him], as many as are justified by law; ye have fallen from grace.” This was

a serious trend indeed by the Christians of Galatia and exposed them to doubt ¹ (Gal. 4:11). True, the enjoyment of our life in Christ is dependent upon "walking in the Spirit" and so not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16); or, as we read in Rom. 8:12, 13, by the Spirit flesh is judged as we thus live practically to God. This is very important indeed for a joy-filled free spiritual path. "Thou wilt make known to me the path of life" (Psa. 16:11) is prophetically said of our Lord in resurrection glory; and as risen with Christ we can enjoy such life even now. The rich pastures are for the sheep to feed upon, profit by, and bear fruit for His glory.

Sheep have a purpose for existing: principally, to provide wool for covering and protection against the elements; and sheep are a sacrificial animal under the law. Our purpose here until He comes is to function for the glory of God and the spiritual well-being of those we contact in daily life -- be they believers or sinners in need of Christ. This will involve sacrifice on our part. We have the only remedy for the need of mankind. Let us use whatever opportunity God gives to fulfill this mission here.

THE SOW AND THE DOG

The Sow. Our next two animals are typical differently as contrasted to the sheep and are called "unclean" ceremonially under the law as having characteristics adverse to what marks a clean animal, i.e., not chewing the cud or not having the parted hoof. See Deut. 14:4-6.

Firstly, the sow of 2 Pet. 2:22. Bearing in mind that we should read Scripture in context, we trace here Peter's exposure of those called false prophets and false teachers and their adherents (2 Pet. 2:1-3). As of old, he states there were wolves in sheep's clothing (see Zech. 13:4); i.e., used the outer appearance to deceive, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. The sow is an apt picture of this external piety because of the divided hoof of external separation without the inward reality set forth in the chewing of the cud as the ruminant does. This applies to all mere profession of Christ without the new nature received by divine life communicated. This is why, in a believer exercising spiritual discernment, it is stated by our Lord as not by their appearance we shall know them, but "by their fruits ye shall know them." Religious works of the flesh may appear very fair and good in the eyes of fellow men but only that which is the "fruit of the Spirit" counts in the eyes of God as from Himself and speaks of the glory of His Son. It is here that faulty judgments are formed taking appearances as indicating godly character. The sow can be washed clean, even decorated, but its nature is unchanged and it will return to wallowing in the mud sooner or later because it loves the mud spite of the bath that is external. On the other hand, a true sheep of Christ may fall into the mud of this world by careless walk but will not love the experience. The apostle John speaks of the "practice of sin" as marking one who is not of God. It is a course of acting,

1. I.e., perplexed or afraid as to them, not as doubting their reality, but continuance in the grace received. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

not a mere fall into sin. See 1 John 3:7-10, JND trans. In such a walk the Holy Spirit becomes grieved in the believer and communion is lost with its enjoyment, for God is holy and cannot give sanction to bad actions. The Spirit does not leave but by His very presence makes the faltering sheep miserable throughout. See carefully Eph. 4:30; it speaks of the grieving of the Spirit in the context of fleshly activity. But the mere professor may make a better appearance in the flesh for a time; but as the sow, he will return sooner or later to the level of fleshly living and give up what was professed. It is a solemn matter to profess like Simon Magus of Acts 8:18-24; yet his love of money was not lost to him. In the parable of the seed that fell on rocky soil or among thorns, it seemed promising for awhile but the end results proved otherwise as the soil was not right.² This is why we have warning after warning in the letter of Hebrews that takes a close look at profession in contrast to possession. See the many references (Heb. 2:1-3; 3:6, 14; 4:1; 6:4-8; 10:26-31, 38; 12:14-17). These scriptures are often misunderstood as applying to true believers -- as if they could be finally lost in perdition rather than to the mere professor having only the externals.

The Dog. The last animal, the dog, has the same setting in 2 Pet. 2 along with the sow, but with this difference. Though both animals under the ceremonial laws would be held unclean, the after-use of their character suggests different applications. The Lord referred to the religious of the day in scathing terms in Matt. 23:25-28 as appearing externally pious, making the "outside of the cup and platter" clean (like the sow washed) but full of uncleanness within, i.e., the nature unchanged. It is the religious hypocrite appearing righteous before men; but God exposes and knows the heart. But the dog is used as a symbol of the profane, especially the non-Jew, i.e., the Gentile who was by nature and position outside the nation of Israel. Matt. 15:21-28 gives the spiritual picture in the Gentile woman of Canaan. Verse 26, "it is not well to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs." When she takes that place of no claim on God, but mercy alone, He meets her. The apostle Paul writes to the saints at Philippi "See to dogs" (Phil. 3:2); and in the last book, Rev. 22:15, "without [are] the dogs." These portions of Scripture suggest one devoid of moral character and teaching doctrines to this end of removing all sense of God-consciousness as a brute beast. So they corrupt themselves and turn back to their own vomit (corruption). It is a sad picture of the direction Christendom is taking in returning to the conditions prevailing in Paganism before the introduction of Christianity. See Jude's epistle which depicts the apostasy or falling away from the revelation of the Son of God in glory and the Holy Spirit down here.

2. THE FOUR SOILS

The four types of soil suggest the following as observed by another:

1. Wayside trodden ground -- indifferent hearer
2. Stony ground -- shallow hearer
3. Thorny ground -- half-hearted hearer
4. Cultivated ground -- sincere-hearted hearer

See verses 4-10; terrible in the fall from known blessing -- like Esau who sold his birthright for a fleshly meal. What do we value most above all earthly offer of splendor, wealth, fame or power? Christ and His reproach was Moses' choice by faith concerning that which is not seen, not yet possessed. Abraham, too, looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. Many a present believer has so judged as to forfeit all desirables of this life; even life itself, at times, for His sake as better. But there is the danger of being a Demus of whom Paul wrote sadly, "Demus has forsaken me, having loved the present age" (2 Tim. 4:10). The dog returns to eat what had been vomited up as supposedly rejected as undesirable, but then re-eaten. The pull of things seen as temporary are so strong to the natural man that only faith in grace can break the spell (see 2 Cor. 4:18 and Heb. 11:25).

O love divine, which broke the spell
Which had our hearts alluréd

May the brief consideration of these typical animals and Ethiopian man cause our hearts to take fresh stock as to what we are by nature and what we have become by divine operations and what we are warned against of fallings on the right hand and the left apart from grace. Amen!

T. J. Knapp

Are You Practicing Abomination?

Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house divers ephahs, a great and a small. A perfect and just weight shalt thou have; a perfect and just ephah shalt thou have; . . . for everyone that doeth such things, everyone that doeth unrighteousness, is an abomination to Jehovah thy God (Deut. 25:13-16).

Do you think that under grace you are now allowed by God to cheat? Cheating is unrighteousness and an abomination. In the OT, the word "abomination" was often connected directly with idolatry. Cheating sets yourself up as God -- you, the decider of (varying) justness on various occasions. This is idolatry -- a form of self-worship that puts you above God. Why would you complain about *double-standard* "liberals" in politics when in your house you have a *double-ephah* by which to measure matters? And that not bad enough, you carry about with you a *double-weight* so that you can engage in this wherever you are.

It is unspeakably sad to have to say that this is not at all uncommon among Christians. Are they blind that they are not aware of acting that way? Just oppose the machinations and politic-ing of Christians engaged in this and LO! amazingly, they *can* see the double standard -- but they profess to see the double standard in those who oppose their corrupt way. This is a quite common procedure of the flesh -- to exactly reverse the truth of the case.

Ed.

Elements of Prophetic Persons and Powers

Chapter 1.4

Antichrist's Names and Designations

(Continued)

5. Antichrist

He is anti-God's purpose in Christ. His most widely known name is "Antichrist" (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; cp. 2 John 2:7). 1 John 2:22 gives us the two areas of the religious apostasy that he will orchestrate:

Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ. *He* is the Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

The first of these two apostasies is the denial that Jesus is the Messiah. This substitutes for the Messianic glory on earth, his own reign. This is the Jewish apostasy and will involve the mass of the Jews in the worship of the Triad. The second of these two apostasies is the denial of the Father and the Son. The revelation of the Father and the Son, by the power of the Spirit, is at the heart of Christianity. Thus, this is the denial of the personal glory of the sent Son of the Father. This denial signals the full apostasy of Christendom and these apostates will join the Jewish apostates in the worship of *the Triad*.

Evidently, then, the final Antichrist of prophecy must come in his own name (John 5:43). In 1 John 4:3, we read, "every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God: and this is that [power] of the Antichrist, [of] which ye have heard that it comes, and now it is already in the world." This involves the personal confession of Christ. For example, He "came by water and blood" (1 John 5:6). The confession of 1 John 4:3 must include the moral cleansing and the expiation provided in the work of atonement. Christ must be personally confessed.

How the Antichrist will hate and deny these things and deceive them that dwell on the earth (a moral expression in the book of Revelation indicating the apostates of Christendom; (cp. Phil. 3:18, 19; Rev. 13:6))!

6. *The Man of Sin*

He is called "the man of sin" (2 Thess. 2) but our Lord was the man of righteousness (Heb. 1). This name is found in the same passage as the Lawless One. In 1 John 3:4 we read:

Sin is lawlessness.

The essence of sin is to have a will of one's own. Observe that sin was in the world before the law was given (the law came by Moses, John 1:17), as we learn in Rom. 5:13. Lawlessness is acting without reference to the will of God, even though the law had not been given. When the law came, violation is called transgression. But the Man of Sin is not styled the Man of Transgression. He is the Lawless One and the Man of Sin.

7. *Another [Who] Will Come in His Own Name*

The true One came in the Father's name, but the Antichrist "will come in his own name" and be received (John 5:43). Every word, work, and way showed that our blessed Lord was here perfectly expressing what the Father is. He could truly say, "He that has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Our Lord said: "Another will come . . ." "Another" what? Another "christ," and in his own name. What word, work, and way will he show forth? Our Lord, as the sent one of the Father, ever wrought all in the power of the Spirit. And what spirit will actuate the one who comes in his own name?

8. *The Worthless Shepherd*

THE PRETENDED SHEPHERD

In Zech. 11:17 the Antichrist is called "the worthless shepherd." Read there how different his character is from the good shepherd (John 10). Notice, too, that *God* will raise up the worthless shepherd *in the land*. This is the false Messiah in Israel.¹

While it is true that his "coming is according to the working of Satan . . ." (2 Thess. 2:9), yet he is the direct affliction from God upon the nation because of what happened to the true Messiah. This is outlined in Zech. 11.

Zech. 11:1-3 depicts the oppression of Israel by the "oppressors" (v. 5, cp. Luke 13:1), i.e., the Gentile rulers. But the Messiah came with the stave of Beauty (i.e., graciousness) to feed those whom the shepherds of Israel had abused (cp. John 10). Alas, He was refused, except by the remnant, the poor of the flock (v. 11) and sold for the price of a gored slave (Zech. 11:12, 13; Ex. 21:32). The result of this (and note that the present period is omitted between

1. See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 5:147; 30:248, 249; *Synopsis* 2:428; *Notes and Comments* 7:157. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

vss. 14 and 15) is:

“For behold, I will raise up a shepherd in the land . . . the worthless shepherd . . .” (v. 16, 17).

It is the Antichrist. God raises him up -- as a chastisement. The nation refused the Shepherd of Israel; they shall have the “worthless,” or idolatrous, shepherd, who shall tear them. He will embody in himself all the evil of the false shepherds that preceded him in Israel (cp. Zech. 10:5, 6), and more.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORTHLESS SHEPHERD

In Zech 11:7, he took two staves. In v.15, personating the worthless shepherd, he again takes something, now the instruments of a worthless shepherd, whatever they may be -- in any event, they are used in such a way as will be detrimental. Six things are specified concerning his conduct: not visit, seek, heal, or feed; and two things that he does, eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hoofs. The four things he does not do indicates what worthy shepherds do, and the order of the items is instructive also. What he does to the sheep is use them for his own indulgence and he causes them to be unable to walk for God.

Just as there are many antichrists and the final Antichrist of prophecy, so Israel has had worthless shepherds (Ezek. 34:2-4), thought there is one final Worthless Shepherd.

Someone, confusing the Antichrist with the first beast of Rev. 13, who had the wound of the sword and lived (that is figurative), took that literally and said the marks of it are here on the worthless shepherd. On the contrary, the sword is a figure for God's judgment on him: his power shall be entirely dried up and his perception utterly darkened

9. *The Son of Perdition*

The Antichrist's destiny is seen in the designation, “the son of perdition” (2 Thess. 2:3). Judas was also called the son of perdition (John 17:12) by our Lord. Is that warrant to think that the Antichrist will be the resurrected Judas? In making the “suggestion” that this is so, J. Carleton Steen wrote:

In both Scriptures the definite article {the} is in the original not simply a son of perdition, but *the* son of perdition, thus identifying the one person with its two usages.

Added to this is:

Then again it is said of Judas what is never said of another man, “He went to his own place” (Acts 1:25). In reading this verse you must be struck with its terrible wording, “He fell *that he might go* to his own place.” We have been reading of him as the son of perdition, and of the Beast we read, “He ascendeth out of the abyss, and goes into perdition” (Rev. 17:8). I think as these Scriptures are carefully read it will be seen that my suggestion of Judas as the

Antichrist is supported by strong circumstantial evidence.²

Well, since I do not accept this, it must be that I have not "carefully read." Be that as it may, the notion is quite objectionable.

1. Subsequently a letter was inserted in this magazine which pointed out that:

"The city of David" is applied to Bethlehem (Luke 2:4). "The city of David" is also employed to designate Jerusalem (1 Kings 2:10) -- the one referring to the place of Christ's birth, the other to the place of His reign. Because the same expression is used that does not make them one and the same.³
2. The idea involves the idea of the *resurrection* of Judas, not a *resuscitation* to natural life as the Lord did with, for example, Lazarus.
 - a. We have seen in the articles on the two resurrections that the first resurrection is not a point in time, but is composed of a class of persons raised at several points in time. The resurrection of the unjust will not take place until after the 1000 years. Because Judas was morally characterized as the son of perdition and went to his own place (one of the unjust), are we to be told that an installment of the resurrection of the unjust will take place in the great tribulation, or before it? The fact is that the resurrection of the unjust is the "resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29). When Judas is resurrected, it will be the resurrection of judgment.
 - b. Perhaps the power of resurrection will be placed into the hands of Satan, so that He can resurrect Judas? One speculation leads to another. It is Christ who is the resurrection and the life. Some, as Elijah and Peter, were given power for *resuscitation* to life, but Judas would require *resurrection* power. Christ will raise the unjust at the resurrection of the unjust, which takes place after the little season, when the last of the unjust have died. Satan has no such power. Even the giving of breath to the image of the Beast and causing it to speak is a "wonder of falsehood."
3. The Antichrist is no more a resurrected Judas because each is called the son of perdition than that he now heads the "destructive heresies" i.e., "sects of perdition" (2 Peter 2:1). Many others will find themselves in perdition also (Matt. 7:13; Rom. 9:22; Phil. 1:20; 3:19; 1 Tim. 6:9; Heb. 10:39; 2 Peter 2:3; 3:7,16; often translated "destruction"), but Judas and the Antichrist have a special position among "the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2) regarding their treatment of Christ, one having delivered Him up and the other will seek to replace Him. Well did W. Kelly refer to the

2. *The Witness* 50:319.

3. *The Witness* 50:344.

Antichrist as “the final Judas.”

4. Observe that the idea requires regarding the first Beast of Rev. 13 as the Antichrist, which he is not.

The Antichrist will be of Jewish descent. He will not be Nero, as some once thought, or Hitler, as some have thought, and even more absurdly, the devil incarnate, for Satan is bound and loosed subsequent to the false prophet being cast into the lake of fire. He is not the Pope, neither the King of the North or a Russian dictator.

10. The Wicked

It may be that the Antichrist is intended in “the wicked” (Isa. 11:4; cp. 2 Thess. 2:8) whereas our Lord is “Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 1). Cp. 2 Cor. 5:21; Acts 2:27; 3:14; 7:52; 1 Pet. 3:8.

11. The Man of the Earth

We read of him in Psalm 10:18. When “the transgressors are come to the full” (Dan. 8), He will be the fullness of “the first man.” What a contrast to “the second man, the Lord out of heaven” (1 Cor. 15:47).

12. The Bloody and Deceitful Man

This designation (Psalm 5:6) stands in marked contrast to Christ: “A bruised reed shall he not break and smoking flax shall he not quench” (Matt. 12:20). There have been many bloody and deceitful men, as there have been many antichrists, yet there shall be the one who embodies this description as none other.

13. The Foolish Man

Psa. 74, looking forward to the time of Jacob’s trouble, says:

Rise up, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee all the day (Psa. 74:20).

Concerning this there is a brief comment by J. N. Darby:

I suppose the foolish man, though of general import, to be definitely exhibited in Antichrist.⁴

14. The Man of the Earth

He is so designated in Psa. 10:18. He is the full development of the first man, who, says Scripture, is of the earth, earthy. This stands in contrast to the second man, the Lord out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:47).

It is instructive to note that the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream was a figure of a man; i.e., the Gentile power during the time of Israel being Lo-ammi (not my people) is figured by an image of a man. This image is a man of the earth. The power given to Nebuchadnezzar will be held by the (first) Beast of Rev. 13, the coming Roman prince, head of the revived Roman empire. The second beast, the Antichrist, "exercises all the authority of the first beast before it" (Rev. 13:12). This is remarkable. The Man of the Earth will exercise that power, before the Beast, figured in the image of the man seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. And these two beasts will be taken at the same time and be cast into the lake of fire -- where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

15. Wormwood

Rev. 8:10 symbolizes the fall of a luminary. His name is Wormwood and he embitters and poisons the waters of moral refreshment. Every moral stream becomes a source of moral death for those in the dominions of the Beast through the Antichrist.

The fifth trumpet shows a star already fallen (Rev. 9:1-11; see J. N. Darby's translation). This again is Wormwood and he is seen as the instrument through whom great demonic forces are unleashed upon the earth.

The opening of the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1) opens fully the book of God's judgments, the Lamb as it had been slain being the only worthy one to open the book (roll) and loose the seven seals thereof (Rev. 5). The opening of the seventh seal, which opens the roll completely, occurs about the middle of the 70th week and then the trumpet judgments occur. Thus, the Antichrist will be revealed in connection with the opening of the second half week as seen in the third trumpet.

A False Christ

MATTHEW 24:24

His activities also point to his claim to be the Messiah.

1. In his role of supplanting God's Prophet, the false prophet will cause fire to fall from the sky. The fire fell for David (1 Chron. 21:26), Solomon (2 Chron. 7:1) and Elijah (1 Kings 18). It was the mark of the power of Jehovah. He will imitate this in order to authenticate his claim to be the Messiah.
2. The Person and word of our Lord were attested by the miracles that he wrought (John 5:36; Acts 10:38). A miracle is a work of power, a sign and a wonder. The Antichrist will work powers, signs and wonders of falsehood (2 Thess. 2:9, 10) in imitation of the true Christ in order to establish his own pretensions to be the Messiah.

3. The "mystery of lawlessness" and "the apostasy" are related (see 2 Thess. 2). The mystery of lawlessness is the work of evil that perverts Christianity by leavening with false doctrine (Matt. 12:33) and imitation as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses (2 Tim. 3:8). Real Christians are privileged to see the true character of the corruption in Christendom while the mass are ignorant of it. However, the time will come when mystery will give way to open renunciation of the true Christ and the acceptance of the false Christ. That is the apostasy. This will occur about the middle of the 70th week. The mystery of lawlessness working in the church will culminate in the revelation of a false Christ/Messiah.
4. During the first half-week, there will be numerous false prophets and false Christs (Matt. 24). When the apostasy occurs there will be but one false prophet and one false Christ -- the same person.

His Judgment

SUMMARILY CAST INTO HELL

In Rev. 19:20 we see him taken by Christ and cast alive into hell (cp. Rev. 20:10). Taken in audacious revolt, the judgment is summary. But in 2 Thess. 2 we learn a little more: "Whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth . . ." (v. 8). We might have said, "Lord Jesus Christ," giving His full name and title of dignity. But the Spirit of God said "Lord Jesus." Can we sense the difference in our souls? If a Christian is in a sudden trouble, a calamity, and he cries out to our Lord, would he cry out "Lord Jesus Christ"? Would he not cry out "Lord Jesus"? What is before his mind in that instant is not the full dignity and title of the Savior, but His Person, his Friend, his Succorer. "Lord Jesus" answers to this. The heart senses it. The statement of a Scots Christian is appropriate here: "It's better felt than telt." Well, it is that blessed Person, Who feels and resents this deceiver and corrupter who has stolen the hearts of His creatures, that comes Himself to seal Antichrist's doom and deliver His people.

Meanwhile the spirit of Antichrist is busy in the sphere of Christian profession and while we all need to beware, the babes in God's family are especially warned (1 John 2:18-27). See also 1 John 4:3 and 2 John 7. The spirit of infidelity is everywhere. Even some who claim the designation "evangelical" and "conservative" deny the total inerrancy of the Scripture of Truth with specious arguments. It is the thin edge of the wedge and in time the wedge will be driven more deeply into Christian truth. It is the spirit of infidelity at work.

CAST INTO TOPHET

W. Kelly wrote:

"For Tophet [is] prepared of old, for the king also it is prepared; he hath made [it] deep [and] large: the pile thereof fire and much wood, the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it" (Isa. 30:33). Tophet is ordained: this shows clearly when and how it will be. Tophet is the figure of the judgment on God's part that is coming. It should be "for the king also," not "yea, for the king." That little change has done much mischief in confounding two important personages. Nobody need deny that the word translated "yea" may be rightly so in certain cases; but the natural meaning of it is either "and" or "also," and the latter is just what is required here. His declaration is, that Tophet is ordained not for "the Assyrian" only, but also for "the king." The king and the Assyrian are so totally different and opposed that it was needful to reveal the same doom for both. The mistranslation was because our translators did not know the difference, but fancied the king and the Assyrian to be one and the same.

"The king" is that false Messiah who will be found with the Jews in the last days. Received in his own name, he will be accepted as the true Anointed, but he is the devil's Messiah. And the consequence is that God's fire or Tophet is prepared for him. The point here is that God will prepare the same fire for both of them; not only for the hostile Assyrian, but for the leader of Judah's wickedness, "the king." For him the fire of Tophet is prepared as well as for his enemy, the Assyrian. God in this marvelous manner, and not waiting for the day of eternity, will cast him directly into hell, even before the devil himself. Lest we might think that he is the only one, it is said, "for the king also," for this personage, who is to reign over the apostate Jews, will also be singled out of God to be dealt with in the same way. Figurative expressions may be used, but they are figures of a terrible reality which Christendom has long forgotten. The more urgent is the need that the believer should wake up to his fuller confession of the truth, in a day when men sink down in a self-complacent dream of an onward progress for the earth, the ritualist being as besotted as the rationalist. "Behold, the Judge standeth before the Door."⁵

To this may be added a few words from *Morrish's Bible Dictionary*, p. 366, regarding Tophet:⁶

The prophet Isaiah gives the key to its being associated in the N. T. (under the name GEHENNA) with eternal punishment.

Not a World-wide Ruler

When errors, such as the idea that the Antichrist is the first beast of Rev. 13 and will have realized dominion over the entire globe, are held, certain confusions result.

5. *An Exposition of Isaiah, in loco*. See also his *Notes on Daniel*, chapter 11.

6. Comments by J. N. Darby are found in: *Collected Writings* 5:211; 11:327; 30:224; 31:132; *Notes and Comments* 4:11, 68, 176, 178.

1. Russia and her allies must be destroyed early in the 70th week.⁷
2. The Antichrist destroys the Russian/Arab bloc.⁸ Basic to this is the erroneous idea that the King of the North in Dan. 11 is the Russian leader.⁹
3. The victory results because God will temporarily side with the Antichrist.¹⁰
4. Shortly after the middle of the week, Antichrist (remember, the first beast of Rev. 13 is meant) will invade Palestine, Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia.¹¹
5. The scheme, of course, transfers to the Antichrist (i.e., the Roman prince in this scheme) the attack of the King of the North (in Dan. 11) on Palestine and the other three nations.
6. What about Armageddon? War between the Antichrist and the Jews will be continuous from the mid-point of the tribulation. The name is used for the continuing war, perhaps begun by the clash of the Antichrist and the Russian/Arab bloc and terminating at Jerusalem at the end of the last 3 ½ years.¹²
7. After Antichrist takes Jerusalem, Christ will come when perhaps celebrating their victory, Antichrist's army will be encamped in the "valley of Jehoshaphat" (Joel 3:2, 12), either the Kidron or the valley of Berachah (2 Chron. 20:26).¹³ (The fact is, the valley of Jehoshaphat is a symbolic name).

No man, be he even the Beast or the Antichrist, will ever reach the actual goal of ruling over the entire earth. This is reserved for Him alone whose right it is. Only He will rule from sea to sea and from shore to shore. The thought of another actually reaching such a goal is not what I find in Scripture; and the erroneous idea results in much readjusting of Scripture to make it work out that way. It is not morally suitable that it should be so. Satan and His minions will not achieve it. Man falls short of what is made good in Christ. Only the Man of God's purpose shall have that place. Amen and amen.

Ed.

7. L. J. Wood, *The Bible and Future Events*, p. 124.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 147.

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.3

Confusing the Cities of Galatians and Hebrews with the New Jerusalem of Rev. 21, 22

Many who believe in an eternally distinct Israel also believe that Rev. 21:9-22:5 describes a literal city in the eternal state, a city inhabited by all those in heaven. Involved with that notion is the idea that the cities mentioned in Gal. 4:26 ("Jerusalem above"), Heb. 11:10 ("the city which has foundations," and see v. 16) and Heb. 12:22¹ ("the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem") refer to the new

1. J. D. Pentecost claimed that:

The destiny of the saved patriarchs and the "just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23) is said to be the New Jerusalem, which can only be entered by resurrection (*Things to Come*, p. 579).

I could not find where it "said" that. Moreover, the saved patriarchs are part of the company called "just men" in this passage. On p. 539 he brings all these passages together as pointing to the same city. He adds, erroneously, that John 14:2 refers to this city.

Charles C. Ryrie wrote:

This heavenly city will be the abode of all the saints (Heb. 12:22-24), the bride of Christ (vv. 9, 10), and the place Christ is preparing for His people (John 14:2) (*Ryrie Study Bible*, note on Rev. 21:2).

The Bible Knowledge Commentary 2:986, 1983, says:

From the fact that the nations (the Gentiles) will be in the city (vv. 24, 26 {this error will be considered later in this series}) -- as well as Israel and the church -- it is evident that the city is the dwelling place of the saints of all ages, the angels, and God Himself. The description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Hebrews 12:22-24 itemizes all those mentioned here and adds, "the spirits of righteous men made perfect," which would include all other saints not specifically mentioned.

Note the refusal in all these quotations to accept what Rev. 21:9, 10 shows, namely, that the bride *is the city*. All of this involves the idea of a literal city in which the saints dwell. The "Father's house" is a different thought.

Jerusalem of Rev. 21 -- each reference being to a literal city. The new Jerusalem of Rev. 21:9-22:5 is, according to Rev. 21:9, 10, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Thus, it is symbolic -- symbolic of the church as the heavenly seat of the administration of government over the earth during the millennium. The other references are not referring to the new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife. Also, in those texts the city is not a literal city in heaven. "City" is used in those texts as a figure of speech to point to something of *permanence* in heaven in contrast to what is *transitory* on earth.

Hebrews 12

Some comments by W. Kelly are much to the point Heb. 12:18-24. We will first have his translation of this passage and then select an extract from his article, *Not Sinai, but Zion, With Other Coming Glories Heavenly and Earthly*.²

For ye are not come to a palpable thing and all aglow with fire, and to obscurity and gloom and tempest, and to trumpet's sound, and a voice of words, which those that heard deprecated that a word more should be addressed to them; for they were not able to bear that which was enjoined: And, if a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and, so fearful was the scene, Moses said, I am affrighted and trembling all over. But ye are come to mount Zion; and to a living God's city, heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels, a universal gathering; and to an assembly of firstborns, enrolled in heaven; and to God judge of all; and to spirits of just made perfect; and to Jesus mediator of a new covenant, and to blood of sprinkling speaking better than Abel (Heb. 12:18-24).

... Next, we read, "and a living God's city, heavenly Jerusalem." There is thus no connection with a dying David's city, but a rise from earth to heavenly glory, as this Epistle testified of Abraham's case when in the land. For "by faith he sojourned as a stranger in the land of promise as a foreign [country] having dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob the joint-heirs of the same promise; for he waited for the city that hath the foundations, of which God is architect and builder" (Heb. 11:9, 10). The same truth is if possible more plainly stated in vv. 13-16. It will be in addition to what their seed will have on earth under Messiah and the new covenant for their joy and the blessing of all the families of the earth; their own seat of glory above as risen saints. Not that we should confound the coming and abiding city on high of which this Epistle speaks with the holy city in Rev. 21:9, which was seen coming down out of heaven from God. For the Epistle never rises to the mystery in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. When "church" is spoken of in Heb. 2 and 3 in this context, it is not in its unity but in its constituents, as of first-borns proves. Its city is a place of glory which risen saints are to occupy. But in the Revelation it is what the church is to be, and not where; not objective but subjective, as men say. For it would contradict

1. (...continued)

The mistake about the use of "city" and confounding this figurative use with the new Jerusalem, is pervasive among Scofieldian age-ists.

2. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:106ff.

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scripture, to infer that Abraham or any other OT saint had any idea of that union as the one body with its heavenly Head which is its essence, being the great mystery expressly declared to be not made known to the sons of men, the mystery or secret hid, not in scripture, but in God, and now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.

Then we hear, "and to myriads of angels, a universal gathering (or, myriads, universal gathering of angels)." A multitude of this heavenly host at the Incarnation hailed with unjealous delight the Divine Savior's birth as man, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men. Here they are seen as the indigenous denizens of heaven in festal assembly, rejoicing in the results of grace for men on earth.

But now follows not only the glory of God seen above supremely, but first an unexpected sight: those who, expressly as lost ones saved irrespectively of special promises (after all seemed a hopeless ruin of Jew no less than Gentile in the cross of Christ), were brought into the nearest association with Him for heavenly places. "And an assembly of firstborns, enrolled in heaven" by sovereign grace as angels are not, and called to reign with Christ which a created angel never is. If we do not hear of them as Christ's body and bride of the Lamb, as the apostles Paul and John speak elsewhere, their being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ is here recognized in the remarkable title of these as individuals. Contrary to nature which admits of but one in human limits, here they were all and equally first-borns, as He who in His own right infinitely above them deemed to treat them as His "fellows," in no way ashamed to call them "brethren" (chaps. 1, 2), His holy brethren partakers of a heavenly calling, not like Israel of an earthly one however grand. They were enregistered in heaven as their proper fatherland in sovereign grace.

Thence we ascend to Him who is supreme. "And to God judge of all." Judicially He had been known, though by few comparatively in OT times, as in the age to come {the millennium} here contemplated He will be universally manifested, proved, and confessed. So for instance He is celebrated in Psa. 50, to take one witness out of many. "El Elohim Jehovah hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth. Our God will come and will not keep silence; fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He will call to the heavens above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather to me my godly ones, those that have made a covenant with me over sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself." Isaiah points out (24:21-23) His action still more loftily and profoundly: "And it shall come to pass in that day Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth. And they shall be brought together, an assembly of prisoners for the pit, and shall be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited. And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts shall reign on mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients [in] glory."

As God is and must be the summit of glory, it is clear that, if another step be added, it is to come down from His throne, and this is just what we

see next. The richest manifestation of grace in Christ is toward the church; and this we had, before we were directed to God in His judicial capacity, the great burden of OT expectation, which is to be displayed in the Kingdom, which our Lord taught us to consist of two distinct parts, not only the heavenly kingdom of the Father, but also the Son of man's kingdom, out of which His angels shall gather all offences and all that do lawlessness. God as judge of all prepares the way naturally for the saints in OT days who knew Him thus, yet walked in hope of Messiah. "And to the spirits of just [men] made perfect" fits those saints more aptly and fully than any other class. They all died according to faith, having promise but in no way its accomplishment; whereas the church of first-borns did not begin to exist as such till the Son and Heir of all things, being rejected of Jew and Gentile, suffered for sins on the cross, rose, and ascended to heaven; whence He sent forth the Holy Spirit to commence and establish that new creation by baptizing those that believe into one body, Christ's body. These spirits are the elders that obtained testimony before the Lord came, and are here grouped as spirits of men who had finished their course, but not yet crowned or enthroned till their bodies are glorified at Christ's coming. No more exact phrase could be used about them, nor any less adapted to the church, even if we had not the church already, which must have a surviving part on earth when the Lord comes, instead of being all separate "spirits."

Galatians 4:21-31

Besides the two women of Gal. 4 representing two covenants, they also represent two cities: the Jerusalem which now is -- in bondage here on earth; and, the Jerusalem above, free, and which is our mother. This is figurative, by contrast, of law and promise (grace) -- bondage and liberty.

Many expositors believe that the Jerusalem above and the cities in Heb. 12 and Rev. 21 are all the same. I think that W. Kelly's comments on the city in Heb. 12, distinguishing it from the church, is correct. The city of Heb. 11 and 12 signifies the dwelling of the redeemed, including the OT worthies, while the city of Rev. 21 is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Concerning Gal. 4:26, W. Kelly wrote:

The truth is that this scripture disproves the hypothesis [that the church is Israel], instead of giving the least warrant to construe Jerusalem of the church.³

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

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

permanent abode above.

Heb. 11:10 says that Abraham “waited for the city which had foundations, of which God is [the] artificer and constructor.” And v. 16 says, “for he has prepared for them a city.” Such saints are not part of the holy city, new Jerusalem, the bride (Rev. 21), yet they have part in this city, no doubt the same as in Heb. 12:22, the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem.⁴

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

The Jerusalem above, the heavenly Jerusalem, is the seat of grace, the sphere and scene of the heavenly fruits of grace, the company of the redeemed in heaven in the presence of the living God, followed and worshiped here below in transient life, but then enjoyed, and adored in permanent dwelling with Himself. It is the city prepared for faith. Sarah figures this system of grace. Grace is not bondage but freedom, and is our mother, by which we receive our new nature, and it forms us according to its own character.

4. I confess surprise at J. N. Darby's thought about Abraham. In *Notes and Jottings* (one vol. ed.) p. 134:

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

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

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

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

No doubt F. W. Grant felt a difficulty regarding Heb. 11:16, judging by this comment:

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

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

W. Kelly made the following instructive observations on Galatians:

The Epistle to the Galatians never takes up the standing of the Church properly, not going beyond the inheritance of promise. There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the speciality of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.⁵

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

5. *Lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians*, London: published by Morris, 1916, 117, n. d.

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 4

Is the Law Dead? Yes, Says L. S. Chafer

Introduction

In chapter 3 we looked at some comments by JND dealing with the death of the Christian with Christ and the result, a new place before God, in Christ. The Christian is dead but the law is not. It remains where it was. Indeed, it is presently usable:

Now we know that the law [is] good if anyone use it lawfully . . . (1 Tim. 1:9).

Indeed, it acted on Paul (Gal. 2:19, 20).

But the “completion of the age” in “the end of the age” was seen by LSC not to be part of the alleged “age of grace”; therefore the Mosaic age, which allegedly was terminated by the death of Christ, would have to be in force again during that future period. His scheme, then, is that the Mosaic age was interrupted (put in abeyance) and will be implemented again. Thus he has the “age of grace” among the earthly ages, with the law in abeyance now. Observe this: I am using the word *abeyance*, which he uses, but his teaching means much more than that, as we shall see. His teaching really means that **the law was crucified**. Also, as part of the Scofield system, he holds that man is being tested now -- man is under probation now.¹

1. “This age is also a period in which man is tested under grace” (*Systematic Theology* 1:41).
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The Law Allegedly Now in Abeyance and to be Reinstated

Elements of the Allegation

THE LAW IN ABEYANCE NOW

Let us hear a summary of L. S. Chafer's view here:

5. The Dispensation of the Law.

This lengthened period began with Israel's assumption of the law at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:8), was characterized by fifteen hundred years of unfaithfulness and broken law, and terminates with the Great Tribulation in the earth. Its course was interrupted by the death of Christ and the thrusting in of the hitherto unannounced age of the church. Thus the church age, while complete in itself, is parenthetical within the age of the law. At the removal of the Church when the Lord comes again to receive His own, the law age will be resumed and continue for that period known as Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:24 27) -- which week is generally conceded to be seven years. Israel's judgments began with her dispersions, were continued in the destruction of Jerusalem and her final scattering among the Gentiles and will end with that hour of her greatest affliction in the coming tribulation. The greatest of her sins is the rejection of her Messiah at the first advent of Christ.

6. The Dispensation of the Church.

Beginning with the death of Christ and the day of Pentecost, a new responsibility is imposed on all men -- both Jews and Gentiles. This responsibility is personal and calls for the acceptance by each individual of the grace of God toward sinners as it has been provided in Christ, with good works as the fruit of salvation. While the primary purpose of God in this dispensation will be perfectly accomplished in the gathering out of the Church, the course and end of this age is characterized by an apostate church and a Christ rejecting world. The judgment will be personal as has been the responsibility. The dispensation of the Church continues from the cross of Christ and the advent of the Spirit to Christ's coming again to receive His own.²

Implicit in the remarks about the dispensation of the law is that the law is now in abeyance, and is so for all men.

In his *Systematic Theology* (hereafter ST) LSC makes frequent reference to the fact that the law is in abeyance:

... the law as an ad interim system did come to its end and a new divine economy superseded it (ST4:18).

... there is the most conclusive teaching concerning the complete ending of the

law by the death of Christ (ST4:111).

The passing of the law of Moses is the Explicit Teaching of the New Testament Scriptures (ST4:234).

At the cross, it will be seen, the divine application of the law ceased even for Jews . . . (ST4:237).

The complete passing, through the death of Christ, of the reign of the Mosaic Law, even for Israel, is the extended testimony of Scripture (ST4:240).

It appears to me that what lies at the base of this is the refusal to acknowledge that the end of the probation/testing of man ended at the cross, and thus closed *the first man's* moral history.

THE LAW AND JUDAISM REINSTATED AGAIN AT THE END OF THE AGE

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.³ 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 is reinstated by 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, as such, will be reinstated by God Himself***, so as to be in force after the rapture. What are the implications of this notion?

- ❖ It means there will be a God-sanctioned reinstatement of the sacrifices under the old Mosaic system. What is the character of such sacrifices? They are not millennial sacrifices (Ezek. 40-48) carried out under the ***Melchizedek priesthood***, when that Priest sits upon His throne (Zech. 6:13) and *therefore* are necessarily memorial. But in addition to that, L. S.

3. {This last phrase is indeed stunning.}

Chafer's view is that there are sacrifices during the tribulation period carried out under a reinstated Mosaic system. The nature and meaning to God of these reinstated, tribulation-period sacrifices does not appear to have been addressed by those who hold to the *intercalation* of an age of the church!⁴ The fact that the Jews will set up a Judaistic system then, and that the *godly remnant* will be under the law *in their consciences*, does not prove the reinstatement of Judaism, as such, by God, as having his sanction for the reinstatement. *It is amazing that anyone calling themselves dispensationalist would adhere to the idea of the intercalation of a church age that necessarily involves the God-sanctioned reinstatement of the Mosaic system.* The reader should perceive clearly that the idea of the *intercalation* of a church age means that when the pretribulation rapture takes place there is necessarily a reinstatement of what was intercalated. It was Judaism that was intercalated by God, in this system, as hence Judaism will be reinstated by God. If the reader will review the chart in the center of *Thy Precepts*, vol. 12, #4 (July/Aug. 1997), he will see, rather, that God interposed the earthly calling with the present heavenly calling.

The Jewish system utilized the law as part of the testing of the first man during the probationary (pre-cross) 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, that means that the standing of the first man, a standing in the flesh, was ended. Because that 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.

There is a distinction between the first man being tested under the Mosaic covenant, and this coming to an end at the cross -- and the status of the law. The Jewish system was God's relationship with man, under 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 finished at the cross. God's relationship with man under the law in Adamic standing was then terminated. The probation was completed. That leaves the law where it was. 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. The Mosaic age is terminated by the introduction of the age to come. There is no testing of *the first man*, as such, now, neither by grace, nor under the law; nor will there be

4. Happily, a number of Scofieldian writers whom I queried about God-sanctioned sacrifices during Daniel's 70th week reject the idea that God sanctions those sacrifices.

the reinstatement of what was God's relationship with the first man in Adamic standing under the law in the Mosaic system.

- ❖ No doubt unwittingly, that reinstatement of the probation of the first man in his standing before God, in the flesh, under the law, under the Mosaic system, is just what this false system of an intercalated age of grace really amounts to. It means the reinstitution of the Mosaic covenant and the reinstatement of the first man in Adamic standing under the law -- though in reality, since the Scofieldian system itself has man under test now, the first man has not lost that Adamic standing in the flesh, according to this system, 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 that is at war with important truth.

The first man, in the persons of the Jews, was tested by grace in the person of the Son when here, as full of grace and truth (John 1:14). God most certainly did test man in every way and the result is stated in John 15:24. It is an insult to the Father and Son to say that the testing of man continues, even though insult is not intended. The cross, the express rejection of the revelation of the Father in the Son, is the great turning point in the ways of God. *The first man was tested by grace in the Son's person.* This is also true concerning the kingdom. The kingdom was offered and rejected. It was there in His person. *The first man was tested by the kingdom in the Son's person.*

It is **PSEUDO-DISPENSATIONALISM** to carry
the testing of the first man beyond the cross.

We will now turn to look at passages alleged to prove that the law itself is dead. Keep in mind that the "intercalation" scheme really means that God will resurrect the law for the reinstatement of Judaism after the rapture.

Examination of the Passages Alleged to Prove that the Law is Dead

Even if the law is dead now, which it is not, the intercalation of a church age must be rejected, as seen above. But let us review a group of passages that LSC asserted show that "the law has passed":

... these Scriptures, by overwhelming revelation, assert that the law has passed, through the death of Christ. They assert that the law has ceased as a means of

justification,⁵ and as a rule of life for the one who is justified (John 1:16-17; Rom. 6:14; 7:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:1-18; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Gal. 3:19-25) (ST4:108).

The doctrine of Scripture is that the Christian is dead; he has died to law and sin. This is true of him *in Christ*. Romans is express and plain about it, along with other Scriptures. But this has proved to be insufficient for Scofieldian ageism. And rather than give up the idea of an earthly "age of grace" among the earthly ages; rather than accepting the truth that the testing of the first man was ended at the cross; and rather than giving the development of God's ways in earthly government its place also; the system is maintained and augmented with additional errors. Let us look at the Scriptures referenced above that allegedly show that the law is dead.

Passages in John

JOHN 1:16, 17

Concerning this passage LSC said:

According to this passage, the whole Mosaic system was fulfilled, superseded, and terminated in the first advent of Christ (ST4:240).

If "the whole Mosaic system was fulfilled," perhaps he had something in mind to account for why he said it would be reinstated at the end of the age in spite of having been fulfilled, but I am not aware that he has explained himself on this point. He had cited this text when he claimed that "these Scriptures, by overwhelming revelation, assert that the law has passed, through the death of Christ" (ST4:108). Not only does this not overwhelmingly support his thesis, it indicates no such thing at all. John 1:17 does not tell us the law is ended. Rather, it tells us that Christ brought something else.

Note that in one statement he speaks of "the first advent of Christ" and in the second of "the death of Christ." Which is it? He did not become full of grace and truth at his death. The fact is that when Christ walked here, He was full of grace and truth (John 1:14). This was as man here, while under the law of Moses! So grace and truth in its fulness, in His person, was here during the time LSC acknowledges that the law was in force. I suggest that John 1:17 states a contrast -- not termination, fulfillment or the superseding of law. This latter has been read into the passage to bolster an erroneous system. Also, see the long footnote to this verse in JND's translation.

JOHN 15:25

... but now they have hated both me and my Father. But that the word written in their law might be fulfilled, They hated me without a cause (John

15:25).

LSC's comments on this passage serve as an example of how a Scripture can be looked at when under the power of an erroneous system. What supports the false system seems to be found everywhere in Scripture. It is true that the upper room discourse looks beyond the cross, as he noted; but then, commenting on Christ's have said "their law," not 'your law,' he makes the stunning leap to his system by saying:

By this Scripture not only is the whole law system definitely declared to be done away during the dispensation of grace . . . (ST4:245).

The Lord cited a fulfillment from the very law that those that hated him professed to keep. It strikes me as very morally appropriate to refer to the law of those that hated him as "their law." Citing a fulfillment of the law in no way announces its end.

Passages in Romans

ROMANS 6:14

For sin shall not have dominion over *you*, for ye are not under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14).

Verse 6 informs us that our old man has been crucified with Christ. What we were in our standing in Adam has thus been dealt with. Moreover, v. 7 adds that "he that has died is justified from sin." And v. 11 tells us to "reckon yourselves alive to God in Christ Jesus." Clearly, the context is not about the law being dead but rather that we have died. The passage does not support, in any way whatsoever, the false notion that the law has died.

ROMANS 7

In Rom. 7, the expression "the law" and "law" are used. A person who has "the inner man" (v. 22) is in view, i.e., one who has the new nature but is not delivered (v. 24). He is not set free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2) working in his members. In conscience, he is before God on the basis of law. That means he is before God for acceptability on the basis of performance of some kind -- "law" -- as a principle of relationship. This may, of course, take the form of "the law," i.e., obviously, the law of Moses. The law of Moses is not merely the principle of law, but "the law." In the introductory part of Rom. 7 the apostle uses an example of two men and a woman. Who in this passage died? Verses two and three, for illustrative purposes, takes the common case of marriage and say a woman cannot "be to" two husbands at the same time, but "if" the husband died, only then is she free to marry another. Paul's point was that one cannot "be to" both the law and Christ at the same time. And yet when it comes to his statement of who actually died, did he say the first husband died? No. Rather, Paul's brethren died (Rom. 7:4). And Christ died. No, the law did not die. Yet LSC wrote:

The law, or obligation, of the wife to her husband ceases with his death. Should she be married to a second husband, she is then under an entirely new obligation. The sacrificial death of Christ was the ending of the reign of the law, which law is likened to the first husband (ST4:241).

First, it is directly taught in Scripture that the Christian is dead with Christ, crucified with Christ. In the case of the Jew under the law, that is how he stands with respect to the law; he is crucified with Christ -- and therefore not in connection with the first husband. Why introduce here the notion that the first husband died? That is not the point to the passage, nor does it even imply such a thing. Moreover, if the law had died, one might be then under some other obligation, who knows what? But we are under Christ. How do we know that? -- because it is *we* who have *died* with him. This is all simple and clear, taught in the Word. But LSC has brought his system to the passage, importing into it the notion that the first husband died when in fact it was the woman who died, and so has no obligation to the first husband. How is it that LCS will have it that the first husband died? What he really believes is that both the woman and the first husband died. There is no such idea in the passage.

ROMANS 7:6

But now we are clear from the law, having died in that in which we were held, so that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of letter (Rom. 7:6).

Ever ready to find the law dead, LSC wrote, concerning "newness of Spirit" and "oldness of letter," that these expressions:

. . . indicate different divine economies which characterize two different dispensations. The age now past is marked off by the letter of the law . . . (ST6:123).

Rom. 7 is not about different economies and proof that the law is dead. This text is about the fact that we, being dead to the law, are in the position of being able to serve in newness of spirit, not a service as under the law. It is self-evident from the passage that the believer, not the law, is *stated* to be dead.

ROMANS 10:4

For Christ is the end of [the] law for righteousness to every one that believes (Rom. 10:4).

Charles L. Feinberg says this verse means that:

The Law as an active force has ceased to exist, because the death of Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the Law.⁶

Arnold Fruchtenbaum wrote:

The clear-cut teaching of the New Testament is that the Law of Moses has been rendered inoperative with the death of Christ; in other words, the law in its totality no longer has authority over any individual. This is evident from Romans 10:4

The Greek word for "end," *telos*, can mean either "termination" or "goal." However, the evidence clearly favors the meaning of "end." ⁷

Charles C. Ryrie stated:

All interpreters of Scripture are faced with the clear teaching that the death of Christ brought an end to the Mosaic law (Rom. 10:4) . . . ⁸

Though it is true that our Lord fulfilled the Law, this passage is not teaching that, but rather that He terminated the Law and provided a new and living way to God. ⁹

One would think from this that the passage had said: "Christ is the end of the law," period! Is not that exactly the meaning given to it by these writers? But it does *not* say that. He is the end of the law *for a particular purpose for particular persons*. The passage says nothing about the law being dead for all mankind. That idea is imported into the passages. Now, this is so *evidently* the case that it warrants saying that these writers are so dominated in their thinking by the notion that the law is dead that they impose it upon a text which actually *expressly limits* this to those who believe. And if they are not able to see this, then what can we expect them to say about the other passages they use?

JND has some good comments on this passage:

But there is another portion of scripture which is relied on to put Christians under the law, I mean the sermon on the mount, and in particular Matthew 5:17; but I apprehend the Lord's words are wholly misapprehended here. I do not believe the law or the law's authority is destroyed. I believe those who have sinned under it will be judged by it. I believe it will be written in the heart of Judah and Israel hereafter under the new covenant, the substance of which we have in spirit though not in the letter. It will never pass till it be fulfilled. But Christ is the end of it -- the *telos*, the completion and end of it -- for every one that believes. We are not under it, because we are dead and risen in Him, and the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives -- applies to man in

7. *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, Tustin: Ariel Ministries, p. 643, 1992. Interestingly, the Dallas Theological Seminary staff commentary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Wheaton: Victor Books, p. 480, 1983 says of *telos*, "It means that Christ is the designed end (termination) or Purpose-Goal of the law (cf. Gal. 3:24), the Object to which the law pointed."

8. In R. B. Zuck, *Vital New Testament Issues*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, p. 79, 1996, repeated from *Bibliotheca Sacra*, "The End of the Law," p. 239, July 1967.

9. *Basic Theology*, Wheaton: Victor Books, p. 303, 1986.

flesh; and we are not in flesh, but in the Spirit in Christ risen: "If ye be dead with Christ . . . why as though living [alive] in the world," &c., says the apostle. In flesh a man must be under law (which is indeed death and the curse, because the flesh is sinful) or lawless, which is surely no better; but in Christ he is neither. He is led by the Spirit in the obedience of Christ.¹⁰

2 Corinthians 3

L. S. Chafer wrote:

In the midst of the strongest possible contrasts between the reign of the teachings of the law and the teachings of grace, it is declared that these commandments were "done away" and "abolished." IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT the old was abolished to make place for the new, which far excels in glory. The passing of the law is not, therefore, a loss . . . (ST4:242).

To this let us add from Roy L. Aldrich:

Three times in 2 Corinthians 3:6-13 it is declared that the Mosaic system is done away or abolished (vv. 7, 11, 13). The participle used in each of these three verses is from the verb *katargeo*, which means *to abrogate, to cancel, to bring to an end*. No stronger term could be found to describe the abolition of the law. It is the very word used to describe the destruction of the Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2:8.¹¹

- ❖ Notice that in the second quotation, the writer equates the Mosaic system and the law. That is an equation they all make. I agree that the "Mosaic system" is abolished. These writers refuse to accept that the probation of the first man is concluded and that the verdict based upon the conclusion of the testing has been rendered in the Word. Next, they confuse the Mosaic system, which utilized the law in that probation, with the law itself. Part of the Mosaic system is the testing of the first man. The testing is concluded. The Mosaic system is concluded, but that leaves the law. The testing is over, the Mosaic system is necessarily ended, the Mosaic system's use of the law in that testing is ended -- but it does not follow that the law, which is God's requirement for man in the flesh, is gone.
- ❖ The phenomenon that we have been observing in regard to this issue about the law being dead, or gone, or in abeyance, is that what Scripture states, concerning the law, to be true for those as *in Christ*, is stated by these writers to be true for all mankind -- i.e., they affirm that the law is gone entirely. Let us read 2 Cor. 3:14:

But their thoughts have been darkened, for unto this day the same veil remains in reading the old covenant, unremoved, which *in Christ* is

10. *Collected Writings* 10:22. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

11. "Has the Mosaic Law Been Abolished?" *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct. 1959, p. 328.

annulled. But unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil lies on their heart.
But when it shall turn to [the] Lord, the veil is taken away (2 Cor. 3:14).

Note that the veil is there "unto this day." Thus the Jews are recognized¹² and the veil lies on their hearts. So the veil subsists while the church is being gathered and that veil will subsist until -- when? -- when "it"¹³ (Israel's heart) turns to the Lord in the future (cp. Rom. 11:26). So this veil was not removed or annulled as a result of Christ's death. It will be taken away when Israel's heart turns to the Lord (Rom. 11:7, 8, 25, 26). It is annulled *in Christ*, of course. Now note that Roy L. Aldrich carefully pointed out that

"Three times in 2 Corinthians 3:6-13 it is declared that the Mosaic system is done away or abolished (vv. 7, 11, 13)."

Yes, it is the *Mosaic system* that is done away, and three times the word is used. So it is true that the old covenant is abolished but our context is dealing with these matters from the perspective of *in Christ*. And this is just the issue with almost all these passages that supposedly prove that the law is gone. It is gone *in Christ*, as is the veil. What authority from this passage did LCS have to state:

it is declared that these commandments were "done away" and "abolished."

-- as if the words *in Christ* were not in the context. Leave the words *in Christ* out of the context and you might have had a show of reason for LCS assertion. Why did the Spirit say *in Christ*? The ignoring of this qualifier shows LCS has read his system *into* the text. JND's translation has a helpful footnote here:

'That annulled,' or 'done away,' may appear a little harsh, but the apostle uses it as a formula for the old covenant done away in Christ. If this be borne in mind, the sense will be clearer by the use of it. It contrasts 'that annulled' with 'that which abides:' so vers. 13 and 14.

Distinguish between the old covenant which used the law in the probation of the first man, and the law itself. The probation ended in the cross, the testing was completed, the Mosaic system set aside, but that left the law itself.

Elsewhere JND wrote:

It is a great mistake to apply the Sermon on the Mount in its positive statements to the law of the Ten Commandments, as if it was a spiritualizing of them. The Law, as a system, is spoken of, taken up in Matthew 5:17, 18, along with the Prophets. Prophecies, ceremonies, and all that is in the Law, were not set aside,

12. "Give no occasion to stumbling, whether to Jews, or Greeks, or the assembly of God" (1 Cor. 10:32).

13. He says that "it" refers to "an individual Jew receiving Christ," *Grace*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, p. 166, 1995 reprint. Though that is not what "it" refers to, his comment means that the Jew is in a particular position recognized by God now.

or annulled, but fulfilled, the body was of Christ, and no doubt the Lord fulfilled its behests and precepts. It was to be kept till all was fulfilled. For faith, it was fulfilled in Christ, and, as to practical righteousness, is fulfilled in the Christian; Romans 8.

- ❖ The intercalated age of grace idea requires the reinstatement of the Mosaic system after the rapture of the church. Hence the reference to the abolition of the Antichrist is strange. No one thinks that after some time he will be reinstated. Why think that the Mosaic system will be reinstated any more than the Antichrist? -- it appears that the *intercalation* requires it.

Let us turn now to some of JND's comments on 2 Cor. 3.

Then we have another contrast: death and condemnation characterized the law in contrast with the gospel, which is the ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit. It is the presence of the Holy Ghost, righteousness being established. The law claimed righteousness and could not get it; now, I have righteousness made out for me, and established. A righteousness being established, the Holy Ghost can come and minister righteousness. In Galatians it is characterized by the Spirit: "He that ministereth to you the Spirit," and so on. Indeed the whole blessing now is stamped with the presence of the Holy Ghost. It is what characterizes the thing -- the ministration of the gospel. It is the presence of the Holy Ghost, and divine righteousness, instead of condemnation and death. The law required righteousness and no lust. This must be death to a man; it is so in his natural condition. "When the law came, sin revived and I died." The old covenant was confined to the law. Only the second time it was under half grace. Moses says, "Blot me out." "No," God says, "I shall not: everybody shall answer for himself." That is the law in principle; yet grace is introduced. God tells Moses to lead the people, but His angel shall go first. The contrast here is, if that which is done away took place in glory, much more that which remains is glorious.

Verse 13 is a very important one, because his argument runs from that to the word "veil." It is "that the children of Israel should not look"; for "could" is not right either; it is about half-way between. The use of the Greek word differs: but here in verse 13 it is not "so that they could not," nor "that they could not," but "so that they should not," as nearly as one can say it. In the words "look to the end," the apostle took the law as so many commandments about sheep and bullocks, without ever looking beyond. Christ is really the end of it all. Moses put a veil over his face, because they could not bear to look at his face. There is no veil now; but they were afraid of the glory. The law being a ministration of death and condemnation, they could not look at that. If you connect the least glimpse of the glory of God with the law, then a man cannot look at it; just as they had before said to Moses when God spoke out of the fire, "You go and speak to God for us, lest we die." The apostle takes the law absolutely here as law -- death and condemnation; but the way in which it worked in Israel then was that it hindered their looking to the end of that which was abolished. So Moses purposed to put a veil over his face, lest they might not see the

glory itself. That was before he went in to the Lord. The veil was not put on in order to hinder, but it was put on to the hindrance of their looking. "It came to pass when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him, and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face."

The reason they were afraid to look at Moses was because the glory was there. They could not look to the end; they did not know when they offered a sacrifice that this was typical of Christ. The "end" is clearly God's purpose in it, and this was what they could not look to. It was a glory which came requiring righteousness, and this too they could not meet. In Christ Himself you have the explanation of all these images of the law. The veil is now done away, but it is on their (Israel's) hearts still. When Moses was turned to the Lord, the veil was taken off, and so it shall be with their hearts when they are turned to the Lord. "It shall turn" (v. 16) refers to Israel's heart when this is turned to the Lord. There was no glory the first time on Moses' face because he had not been in such close intercourse with God. The whole thing is a beautiful picture of grace and law, for Moses was under grace. God says to him, "Thou hast found grace in my sight."¹⁴

Now we have the gospel of the glory, for that glory is not veiled and it is the Christian's privilege to behold that glory (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6).

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

More Evidence of B. W. Newton's Evil Teaching

In vol. 2 of my books, *Precious Truth Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby*, it was demonstrated that doctrines with which B. W. Newton was charged regarding the Lord's being at a circumstantial distance from God during His life, were taught by him subsequent to the Plymouth and Bethesda, England divisions, as well as before. He says in the *Fry MS* that he taught it subsequently in a modified form. Moreover, as an example from a paper of his on Christ's eternal Sonship, his statement that Christ was at an "unspeakable circumstantial distance" from God was quoted. Hence, I referred to this line

14. *Collected Writings* 26:321, 322.

of most offensive teaching derogatory to the person of Christ as B. W. Newton's doctrine of *Christ's unspeakable circumstantial distance from God*. At the time that book was published I did not have a copy of part of a letter of his written in 1896 to W. Lancelot Holland, which was published in his work, *The "Archbishop" of Canterbury and "Modern" Christianity*, London: Lucas Collins, 1898. A defense of BWN appears on pp. 195-202 and contains the usual clap-trap derogation of those who resisted BWN; and W. L. Holland, of course, lauds BWN's soundness doctrinally. Among the things BWN wrote to W. L. Holland is this; and notice the characteristic disarming sentences in what is quoted:

What careful distinction there should be made between the place of unalterable perfectness before the Father, held by the Lord Jesus personally as the Son in the Father's bosom above, and the place that He assumed circumstantially when, by taking flesh upon Himself, He descended into this lost world to be *officially* perfected through sufferings as the Captain of salvation. *Personally His moral nearness to the Father never ceased*; but, circumstantially, how different His place in the manger at Bethlehem; His refuge in Egypt; His tarriance in Nazareth; His rejection in Jerusalem; His place in Gethsemane; and, when bruised under the wrath of God, on the cursed tree! Circumstantially, what could be more different than the place of light and love that pertained to Him above, and that in which He voluntarily placed Himself as the obedient Son and Servant in the earth, that He might through sufferings work out the salvation of God's people. Did He not, from unspeakable *circumstantial* distance from God, but in *essential moral nearness* to Him, work back His way through all the appointed sufferings till God could meet Him as having finished the appointed work, and SO glorify Him? This I believe, and this I have written, and this I maintain. I have written that God could not meet Christ *as having finished His appointed work* until He had finished it, which is a truism. But year after year my words have been quoted *omitting* the words 'as having finished His appointed work,' and I have been represented as having said that God could not have met Christ because of the *moral* distance in which Christ was from God, whereas my contention is, and *ever has been*, that Christ *never was*, and *never could be*, in any moral distance from God at all.

Circumstantial distance in which He was, and from which He worked back His tribulated way to God, was a part of sacrificial obedient suffering, apart from which none could have been saved, and whereby glory unspeakable redounds to God. Refuse to distinguish between circumstantial and personal condition, and close your ear for instruction for ever.

I am not perfect, nor unblameable, but I am not a heretic, and my sole desire is to maintain that which the God of Holiness and of Truth has declared.

It was William Trotter who, in 1857, wrote that if one wanted to know what BWN really meant, he had but to read BWN's papers when he freely expressed

his meaning just before he was exposed as the teacher of evil doctrine concerning Christ. The doctrine of *Christ's unspeakable circumstantial distance from God* is an evil teaching, and while BWN did not refer to it exactly that way before he was exposed in 1847, that was his teaching before the divisions and afterwards, and lo, here it is in 1896. And those sound in the faith are called the evil ones rather than the guilty BWN. Those involved in wickedness generally reverse matters, as has numbers of times been shown in *Thy Precepts*, and here is another example. The truth is that the distinction between Christ's *moral nearness* to God and His alleged *unspeakable circumstantial distance* from God, before the cross, is a figment, an impossibility -- and a slanderous, evil assertion, the source of which is the Enemy of the Lord Jesus.

Ed.

Did Eli Meekly Bow?

And he said, It is Jehovah: let him do what is good in his sight (1 Sam. 3:18).

This is pious-sounding, shirking of responsibility. No doubt it is an indicator of an attitude of mind that characterized his course. As high priest he had authority to even deal with his full-grown sons regarding their evil conduct. It is all so pathetic and deplorable. You say, "What should he have done?"

He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh [them] shall obtain mercy (Prov. 28:13).

Did he confess? Did he forsake? Rather, he was really covering it by not dealing, first with himself, and then with the situation.

Moreover, the tendency of his statement was to teach Samuel to avoid dealing with oneself and the evil allowed, by covering it with pious sounding words. Samuel's truly pious mother, the holy Hannah, prayed thus, even before Samuel was born:

For Jehovah is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed (2 Sam. 2:3).

God does indeed weigh the affronts to the holiness due His house. And in Eli's case, the first visible signal of His displeasure was taking Hophni and Phinehas. Another was when Doeg the Edomite smote the priests at Nob -- descendants of Eli. Do not presume upon the grace of God to set aside His warning that what a man sows, that shall he reap. What God will do when a man prostrates himself before God, in confession and forsaking, is another matter.

Ed.

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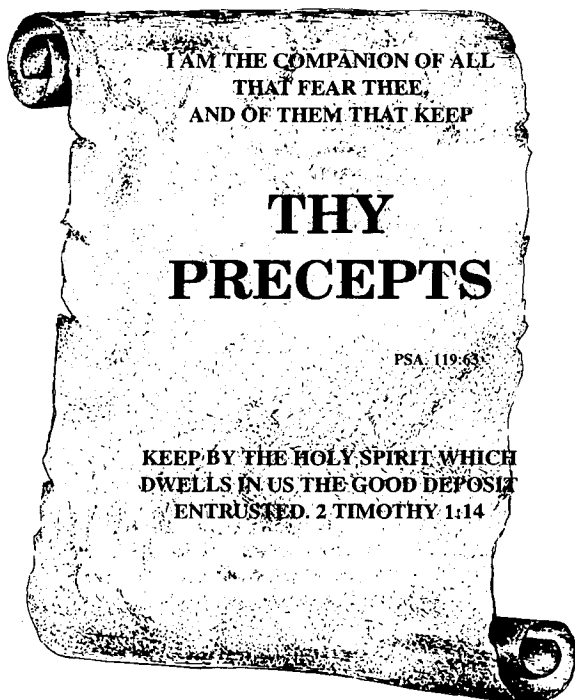
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The Son of God

Our Lord's own words, that "no man knoweth the Son but the Father, may well make us take up with reverence the theme before us. There is none where it is more needful to remember, that it is the province of the Word to judge *us*, not ours to judge *it*. We have only "with meekness to receive," bowing the pride of our intellect, and checking the wanderings of our imagination, and restraining the unholy curiosity which would fain so often indulge itself even in the presence of the "deep things of God."

But while there is no subject as to which controversy is more to be deprecated, there is at the same time no point of faith upon which it is more important to have possession of the Scripture truth in its simplicity. The Person of the Son of God is one of faith's foundations. To touch it is to bring everything into question. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also." The Lord give us, beloved reader, unfeigned humility and subjection to the inspired Word, our only guidance here or elsewhere.

The declaration of the Son of God is given us even in the Old Testament. We know to whom it is said, "Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee (Psa. 2:7). There has been, however, even here, to begin with, a most serious mistake made. The language of the Psalm has been applied to the Lord as a Divine being; and hence the way opened to low and dishonoring thoughts concerning Him; while the forced explanations of those who held the truth substantially did not commend the truth they held.

It should be plain that "this day have I begotten Thee" could only apply to the Lord's birth as man. And the not seeing that as man also He has the title {name} of Son of God, has been the cause of much confusion and perplexity. Yet it is plainly stated in the angel's answer to Mary:

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; *therefore*, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

Here there is no room to question that the manner of his conception is the justification of the claim of the "Man, Christ Jesus," to be the "Son of God."

And in Acts 13, the very passage in the Psalm is in this way applied to His begetting as man:

And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He

hath raised up Jesus,¹ as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

It is not resurrection that is spoken of here, as some have thought, for the apostle goes on to speak of that separately directly after

and as concerning that he raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

But while not seeing this claim of the Lord as man to be the Son of God, has been the mistake of some, and while positive error has in this way come in, others have made this the whole thing as to His Sonship. They have conceived it to be a lowering of His dignity, and inconsistent with His having equal honors with the Father, to speak of Him as eternally the Son. They call it even an "inferior name," unworthy of Him. They maintain that it is inconsistent with co-eternity as well as with co-equality. Hence they believe Him Son only as man, and deny Him to be Eternal Son, ever in the bosom of the Father.²

It is impossible to deny, on the other hand, that some maintainers of the Eternal Sonship have drawn from it conclusions of this very kind; and in this very way the Arianism of the fourth century came in. Scripture, however, which clearly states the doctrine, is in no wise responsible for the conclusions of men, against which, moreover, it carefully and jealously guards us. We have only to cleave fast to it and the simplest and most childlike among us will be certain to go least astray.

Let us turn, then, to the Scripture statements as to this. We are told that:

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God *sent His only-begotten Son* into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9).

The language here is plain and expressive. It surely tells us God had a Son to send. And not, mark, after He was in the world, He sent Him to the Cross; no, but He sent Him into the world. Surely then, before He was in the world, God had a Son to send. Before "that holy thing" was begotten at all on earth, there was a Son, an only-begotten Son, in heaven.

This is so clear that not another word ought to be needed and it is only one out of many like passages. But I have been asked, could not the title {name} of Son be given *by anticipation* here? Might He not have been the decreed, the fore-ordained Son, and so have been spoken of before He actually came into that place, or assumed that relationship?

1. "Again" is not in the original, and should be omitted.

2. The commentators Adam Clarke and Albert Barnes here go on to say, "Others, maintain this."

I would answer by another question. Does not the apostle tell us that this was how God manifested His love to us, in that it was his Son He sent? And would it not in any wise cloud this manifestation if it were not One then in that relationship He sent, but only One who was to become that after being sent?

But again. What glory was it that the disciples saw in Him who when He was upon earth could say, "I and my Father are one," and "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"? Was it anything short of *Divine* glory that they saw in the "Word made flesh"? Let them say then, who had seen it, what it was. What do they say of it? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt ³ among us, and we beheld His glory" -- the glory proper to the Divine Word made flesh: what was it? -- "the glory *as of the Only-begotten of the Father*, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Once more, I do not see how it could be plainer. If it was the Only begotten Son, whom God had sent, it was equally the glory of the Only begotten which shone out from Him while here. Is that, I would ask again, a glory properly Divine or not? Would it be enough if it were the glory only of a Divinely begotten *man*? for man it was, let us remember, true man, that was born of a Virgin; not blended Godhead and manhood. I am sure as to what the heart of every saint will say: it was true and Divine glory. Then I urge, the apostle can find no better way of describing it to us as such, than to say, that it was "glory *as of the Only-begotten of the Father*," -- glory such as that!

And when he goes on to add, contrasting that revelation of God then made with the darkness of former dispensations:

No man hath seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18);

surely it is not one begotten on earth that he has in mind, but one from all eternity in the nearest and dearest and most intimate relationship to the Father, who is come to speak of Him.

And once more, if there be a precise and formal statement anywhere, of the two natures in the One Christ Jesus, it will be admitted, perhaps, such a thing is to be found in Rom. 1:3, 4. What then is the apostle Paul's statement concerning the Lord Jesus there?

Which was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh*;
that is the one, the human side what is the other?

but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection from the dead.

3. "Tabernacled" is the word, as if to assure us it was the full reality of His presence whose glory had filled the tabernacle of old.

Is this also “according to the flesh”? Clearly not, for it is plainly and pointedly distinguished from it. What He was according to the flesh, His human nature, was, He was “of the seed of David.” Outside and beyond all that, He was “SON OF GOD.”

Need there be more said? Surely the Word is not indistinct or uncertain in its utterances here. In none of these places could the thought of the title {name} of the Son of God being anticipatively used of Him before He came in flesh and had the place, be possibly admitted. In the last case, He is definitely stated to be Son of God in *distinction* from what He was according to the flesh.

And as to men’s conclusions, Scripture is not responsible for, but, as I have said, guards carefully against them. If they say, the doctrine supposes the Son not equal to the Father, even the Jews rebuke it, who sought to kill Him because He had said,

that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God (John 5:18).

If, on the other hand, men would draw, as they *have*, alas, drawn, such dishonoring conclusions from the Scripture truth, once more that Word enforces “that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father” (John 5:23).

Can they not understand that the poor human relationship is after all but a faint and broken reflection of the Divine, and that to press resemblance any further than the Word itself sanctions, is to pervert, not to receive, the Word?

“Into the name of time Father, *Son*, and Holy Ghost” are we baptized. That Name is the expression of all with which we are for ever identified. May this Triune God keep His saints true to all implied in it.

Helps by the Way 2:35-40, 1874.

Further Comment on the Eternal Sonship

The divine and eternal Sonship of our Lord is a fundamental, a foundational truth of Christianity. I have written on this matter at length in the book, *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*, available from the publisher. Usually, deniers of the eternal Sonship do not want the matter to be a test of fellowship. But it really is, and 2 John 9, 10 makes it so. These deniers bring not the doctrine of Christ.

Not only is the denial evil, I must say that it is also childish. A child will think of God in anthropomorphological terms. It reasons from its childish mind to what God must look like. And the Word itself uses anthropomorphological terms – but as we mature we understand the use of such terms figuratively. We learn that God is a spirit (John 4). Moreover, Paul wrote:

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I reasoned as a child: when I became a man, I had done with what belonged to the child (1 Cor. 15:11).

It is certainly wicked for a professed Christian to deny the divine and eternal Sonship of Christ, but it is also childish to project on to God the notion that, since father and son means priority, etc., in human relationships, that therefore these must mean the same when applied to God. This is the projection of the human on to the Divine, as the child does with its anthropomorphological thinking about God. The truth is that the denial of the divine and eternal Sonship, on the basis of this projection of the human on the Divine, is childish, absurd, and inconsistent. Take, for example, the Lord's use of the human words "I" and "me" in John 14:9 (and many other cases could be quoted):

Am I so long time with you, and thou hast not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father . . . Believest thou not that I [am] in the Father, and that the Father is in me?

Here, He who is God and man in one Person, uses the human word "I." But the human word "I", as we use it (like "father and son"), does not denote, or connote, a Trinitarian relationship! Yet, the Son, who is in Trinitarian relationship, says "I" and "me." You and I, reader, are not in any Trinitarian relationship -- one in power, and will, and purpose, and nature, but distinct in Person. No. "I" does not carry with it any such meaning in human use. Are we going to be wicked, childish, and absurd, and say that therefore there must either be three Gods (tritheism), each of whom can use the human word "I," or else one God manifesting Himself three ways (modalism as the "Jesus Only" Pentecostals).

Praise God, our Beloved has taken manhood up into the divine glory in the Godhead:

. . . and now glorify me, thou Father, along with thyself, with the glory which I had along with thee before the world was (John 5:17).

The glory in which He was along with the Father as to presence and place, before the world was, He would now enter as man, along with the Father as to presence and place. For the Son had accomplished a four-fold movement, so to speak:

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

Four mighty movements of the Son in accomplishing the Father's will! Count them. And the disciples saw Him leaving the world; and then, as man, He entered that glory with the Father, as to place and presence. This my soul sees, and bows in adoration! Does yours?

Ed.

George Muller and B. W. Newton

In the Jan/Feb 1998 issue there was an article, *More Evidence of B. W. Newton's Evil Teaching*, showing that in 1896 he was propagating his evil doctrine of "Christ's unspeakable circumstantial distance from God."¹

It is well known that George Muller was a posttribulationist, as was B. W. Newton. The Jan/Mar 1998 issue of the posttribulationist magazine, *Watching and Waiting* has advertised a pamphlet by G. Muller, *The Second Coming of Christ* (which I have long possessed) in which his posttribulationist views are in evidence. More interestingly, the magazine quoted a statement by G. Muller (which I have also seen long before) containing the most astonishing statements regarding the soundness of B. W. Newton:

Mr George Muller's appreciation of Mr B W Newton: I consider Mr Newton's writings to be most sound and scriptural, and my wife and I are in the habit of reading them, not only with the deepest interest, but great profit to our souls. His books are certainly most valuable, for they exalt the person and work of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ to the very utmost. As we are receiving a larger number of orphans into our Ashley Down Orphan Homes than usual, as I am now writing the annual report of the Institute, and my time is exceedingly occupied, nothing would induce me to enter into a controversial correspondence with Mr Beaumont. I must therefore request him to refrain from writing to me on this subject, but if he honestly wishes to know what Mr Newton's views really are, let him carefully and attentively read some of his principal writings through, such as 'Salvation by Substitution,' 'Atonement and Its Results,' 'Gospel Truths,' etc., from which he will clearly see, not only that Mr Newton is sound in the faith, but also that his teaching is of a most valuable character. I regard Mr Newton as the most accurate writer on religious themes of the nineteenth century.

Of what real worth were G. Muller's remarks in late 1848 condemning some teaching of B. W. Newton at the time of the Plymouth/Bethesda controversy (1847-1848)?

Ed.

1. That teaching is examined in *Precious Truths Revived and Defended* by J. N. Darby, vol. 2, *Defense of Truth, 1845-1950*, available from Presbyterian Publishers.

Is There an Intercalated Age of Grace?

Chapter 7.4

Is the Law Dead?

Yes, by L. S. Chafer

(Continued)

Passages in Galatians

GALATIANS 3:19-26

Why then the law? It was added for the sake of transgressions, until the seed came to whom the promise was made . . . But the Scripture has shut up all things under sin, that the promise, on the principle of faith of Jesus Christ, should be given to those that believe. But before faith came, we were guarded under law, shut up to faith [which was] about to be revealed. So that the law has been our tutor up to Christ, that we might be justified on the principle of faith. But, faith having come, we are no longer under a tutor; for we are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:19-26).

In one place, after quoting these Scriptures, LSC remarked:

Comment is unnecessary concerning this unconditional declaration relative to the passing of the Mosaic system (ST4:420).

However, we can find a comment:

The distinction between Jew and Gentile is broken down and *all* are "under sin." (ST4:165).

The Distinction between Jew and Gentile Does Continue Before God. And so this last sentence of LSC is 50% false. What is true is that all are under sin. It is false to say that the distinction between Jew and Gentile is therefore broken down. *In Christ* this is true; outside of Christ it is false. The Jew is recognized now as having the veil on him when he reads the old covenant (2 Cor. 3:14-16) and we see that it will continue that way until the heart of Israel is turned to the Lord in the future. There is no thought in Scripture that that veil

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on the heart of the Jew is now gone and that it will be reinstated upon their hearts after the church is removed. 1 Cor. 10:32 recognizes three classes in the world: “. . . Jews, or Greeks, or the assembly of God.” Moreover, Rom. 11 recognizes the on-going distinction between Jew and Gentile. Israel is now under a judicial blinding (Rom. 11:7, 8), except for the election of grace. Indeed, it is one of the mysteries “that blindness in part is happened to Israel,” and for how long? -- until the fulness of the nations arrives (Rom. 11:25).

The truth is, then, that God has concluded all (Jew and Gentile) under sin, but continues to recognize the distinction between Jew and Gentile. In Christ, of course, there is neither Jew or Gentile. No, the cross did not remove the law, and it may be used if a man knows how to use it lawfully (1 Tim. 1:9-12).

Comments Are Certainly Necessary. The passing of the *Mosaic system* is not the real issue. LSC has made the Mosaic system and the law to be the same thing, so that by showing that the Mosaic system is gone, then the law is also. And what underlies these things is that he has the erroneous idea that man is now being tested by grace. LSC thinks it so clear that the law is dead that no comment on this passage is necessary. What he is doing once again is using a passage which speaks of those who are “sons,” who are “*in Christ Jesus*” (Gal. 3:26, 14) to show that the law is gone. A comment that seems necessary is that the chapter is about the blessing of those *in Christ*, just as we saw in 2 Cor. 3:7-16 and LSC wants to get out of the passage that the law is dead. There is not a word about the law having passed away.

“Our Tutor Up to Christ.” Sin was in the world before the law was given. The law made sin take the form of transgressions, to bring it into plain view, “until the seed came to whom the promises were made.” What was the tutor teaching? The lesson was the trial of the first man in the persons of the favored nation. The law was the appointed tutor to teach that “until.” The lesson of the trial of the first man is terminated -- *that* tutoring function, which involves the probation of the first man, is ended, but that in no wise implies that the law is ended. But the word “until” is utilized to say that at that point the law went out of existence. However, the word “until” blocks the reinstatement of the Mosaic system.

1. Why, then, would the *Mosaic system* be reinstated after the rapture of the saints? How is the “until” to be undone after the rapture? It should have said something like “for the time being until the tutor is reinstated.” It is stunning to think persons who call themselves “dispensationalists” believe what amounts to a reinstatement of the “tutor”; i.e., in their view, the reinstatement of the *Mosaic system*!

We read “until the seed came.” That concluded the Mosaic system. Is the seed going to do the opposite of “came,” so as to undo what His coming did, so that the Mosaic system can be reinstituted?

2. LSC will not have it that the testing of the first man is completed; i.e., that man is no longer under probation. *That* is what the death of Christ ended; and therefore the Mosaic system under which man was being tested had to end. But the *system*, under which man had a standing in the flesh before God, ended when the standing of the first man ended. Christ's death left the law where it was as the rule of right for man in the flesh, though God is no longer regarding man in the flesh as under probation. The test has been concluded and the verdict rendered.

The giving of the law "for the sake of transgressions" was part of the testing of the first man in the persons of the favored Jews. The testing terminated in Christ's rejection at the cross. Thus in the ways of God, His use of the law *as part of a system* for this purpose, i.e., the testing of the first man, was until the Seed was here and was rejected on the cross. That leaves the law itself, which had been God's instrument for testing the first man *while under that system*, not now the instrument of testing but, just where it was as the rule for man in the flesh, the blinded nation not having learned from that testing --but pretending to keep it. So the *Mosaic covenant* was temporary, is not in force now, but that leaves the law here. So to speak of the Mosaic system as being set aside does not mean that the law also is set aside.

The Coming of Faith. The coming of faith does not mean that no one had faith in OT times. Its coming refers faith as the revealed and acknowledged way to blessing, involving faith in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. When Paul wrote, "But before faith came, we were guarded under law, shut up to faith [which was] about to be revealed," he means by "we," we Jews, for Gentiles were never under the law of Moses. And when under the law, the Jews were "shut up to faith." At that time faith was not God's revealed and acknowledged way and principle of blessing (though, of course, OT saints had faith -- believed what God had said). The testing of the first man was not completed and the Jews "were guarded under law." But when that testing was completed, God revealed a new thing, namely, "that the promise, on the principle of faith of Jesus Christ, should be given to those that believe."²

The Law Our Tutor Up to Christ. "Our" means the Jews, for Gentiles never were under the law of Moses. The law was not a tutor to bring persons to Christ; it was a tutor *up to that time* -- specifically up to His rejection on the cross. This passage is another indicator that the testing of the first man ended at the cross. Because the law was a tutor up to that point does not mean that thereafter the

2. There is much more to Christian position and blessing than in this statement, but Paul is dealing with the state of the Galatians to get them away from listening to law-teachers and ground them again in the basics of grace.

law was gone. No, but rather that its use as an instrument of God in the testing of the first man was concluded, and that man is not now under testing. The Jew then was no longer "shut up to faith," for God was no longer doing that, though a Jew may keep himself in such a condition, refusing to be "justified on the principle of faith." So that tutoring use of the law, as part of God's having tested man, came to an end, but it does not follow that the law itself is gone. If the Mosaic system is reinstituted, the "tutor" will be reinstituted.

LSC Continues the Testing of Man. The notion that man is now being tested by grace during an age of grace entails reading into these passages that speak of what is true *in Christ*, the notion that the law is gone. It is required by the false system and lo! there it is in these Scriptures. It is but the exigency of the system of intercalating a "church age" into the Mosaic age that fosters this doctrine about the law being dead, and therefore it has to be found somewhere -- but it is really nowhere. There is no "heavenly age" (heavenly dispensation) among the earthly ages during which man is being tested by grace. This ongoing testing notion is another false component of this system that requires that the law be dead so as to be replaced by the testing by grace. It is all a denial that the first man no longer has a status before God and is no longer under probation. In effect, this system means that the first man still has a status before God.

A Summary Statement from JND is Helpful Here.

... all that is of the flesh is finally and hopelessly condemned. Christ, by dying, has closed all possible connection between God and man in the flesh. Man in the flesh has rejected Christ, is condemned, and judgment only remains for him. The law was not given to all men. It was the rule of right for man in the flesh, but given when man was a sinner, whom God knew to be wholly and hopelessly lost, to the Jewish people, to bring out the great truth of man's condition, if righteousness was claimed from him. Sin, death, judgment, were already man's portion, and nothing else. He was lost; he proves it by rejecting Christ. But the law came in to raise the question of righteousness. Christ was perfect here as everywhere, but alone in it. Man in flesh, unless redemption came in, was as alienated from God as ever. But redemption came in by death, and the believer has died with Christ, does not in God's sight exist in the life in which he was in the flesh (and if he were under law, it was in flesh), and he has died away from under it to have his place and portion through redemption in Christ risen, having died as to the life in which he was under the law. He is in Christ, and in Christ accepted according to Christ's own acceptance. The value which Christ has in the sight of God, which is real and meritorious, is the value in which he stands, but as dead and risen. The death of Christ has put away his sin, and all the glorifying of God, in virtue of which Christ as man is at God's right hand in righteousness (he stands in the value of Christ) is his righteousness. He is not

under law at all, but under grace.³

GALATIANS 5:18

... but if ye are led by the Spirit ye are not under law (Gal. 5:18).

LSC included this in a list of Scriptures that he claimed was “decisive language” that showed “that the law as an ad interim system did come to its end and a new divine economy superseded it” (ST4:18). But, of course, he did not explain this text’s “decisive language” that the law is gone. Really, how could anyone suggest such a false meaning for this passage? The truth is that his words are a mere assertion, and it is clear that the passage shows that those led of the Spirit, who are therefore *in Christ*, are not under the law.

Ephesians 2:15

... but now in Christ Jesus ye who were once afar off are become nigh by the blood of the Christ. For *he* is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of enclosure, having annulled the enmity in his flesh, the law of commandments in ordinances, that he might form the two in himself into one new man, making peace; and might reconcile both in one body to God by the cross, by it having slain the enmity (Eph. 2:13-16).

LSC refers to the Eph. 2:15 text in a number of places (ST4:95, 108, 242; 3:112), but does not attempt to show how it tells us that the law is gone. He wrote a book on Ephesians, wherein he correctly wrote:

The removal of both the enmity and the partition between Jew and Gentile is divinely accomplished through the creation of “one new man;” not by renewing individual men, but by forming one new Body -- the Church -- of which Christ is the Head. Thus, in the Church (verse 16), He reconciles both Jew and Gentile “unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” ...⁴

Yes, in v. 13 we read “*in Christ Jesus*” and in v. 15 “*in himself*.” There is not a word here that supports the notion that the law is gone for all men. The passage is speaking of what is true *in Christ*. But Arnold Fructenbaum, ignoring this, plunges ahead with the false notion anyway:

If the Mosaic Law was still in effect, it would still be a wall of partition to keep the Gentiles away; but the wall of partition was broken down with the death of Christ. Since the wall of partition was the Mosaic Law, that meant that the Law of Moses was done away with.⁵

And this is a good occasion to raise a matter that I do not find addressed by

3. *Collected Writings* 10:60.

4. *The Ephesian Letter Doctrinally Considered*, New York: Loizeaux, p.88, 1944 [1935].

5. *Op. Cit.*, p. 645.

LSC, *et. al.*

- ❖ If the **death of Christ** ended the law, i.e., if it was nailed to the cross, and removed the partition *for all men*, then what will un-nail the law from the cross and restore the law and the partition after the rapture of the saints? May we be directed to Scripture which says these things?

Colossians 2:14

And you, being dead in offences and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he has quickened together with him, having forgiven us all the offences; having effaced the handwriting in ordinances which [stood out] against us, which was contrary to us, he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross . . . (Col. 2:13:14).

LSC wrote:

Again, the believer has been delivered from the law by no less an undertaking than the nailing of the law with its handwriting of ordinances to the cross (ST4:109).

It seems to me to be bold to say that the law was nailed to the cross and injurious to that very work on the cross to then affirm that the law will be reinstated after the rapture of the saints, as his system of ages (involving an “age of grace” among the earthly ages wherein man is still being tested) requires. The issue is:

- ❖ If the law was nailed to the cross so as to end it for all men, what is it that un-nails it so as to apply it again after the rapture of the saints?

Yes, it is true that he speaks here of the believer, but he elsewhere included this passage as one of those that so overwhelmingly shows that the law is gone for all. There are several facts to notice:

- ❖ The passage is not about all men, but about those “quickened together with him” (v. 13); thus, the passage is about those *in Christ*.
- ❖ He prejudices the reader’s understanding of the meaning by rewording, so as to fit his notion, thus -- “the law with its handwriting of ordinances.” Observe, then, that the text says no such thing; rather, “having effaced the handwriting in ordinances.”

Moreover, do not substitute the word “law” for “handwriting in ordinances.” JND has a footnote to “handwriting”:

Handwriting, obligation to which a man is subject by his signature.

And again:

The handwriting should be, “the obligation” -- the obligation that existed in

ordinances.⁶

I will quote F. W. Grant here:

It is not the law itself of which he is speaking, but of our *obligation to it*. This is what the "hand-writing" means, and this is what is effaced for us, it being nailed to the cross. The law is not dead, as we have seen in Romans, but we have died to it. It is stated here in another way, but the same thing in effect.⁷

Hebrews 7:12, 18

WHAT WAS SET ASIDE?

For there is a setting aside of the commandment going before for its weakness and unprofitableness, (for the law perfected nothing,) and the introduction of a better hope by which we draw nigh to God (Heb. 7:18, 19).

We have previously distinguished the setting aside of the Mosaic system which regarded the first man as having a standing before God, under the law, in the flesh, and the law itself. The system under which the first man stood in probation was set aside, but the law itself was not abrogated. We shall have to consider it again here. Arnold Fructenbaum wrote:

Hebrews 7:18 states that the Mosaic Law was "disannulled." Because it is no longer in effect, there is now a new priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek. If the Mosaic Law was still in effect, Jesus could not function as a priest.⁸

First, note that the word "commandment," singular, is used in Heb. 7:18. What is meant is the *order of approach* to God under the Mosaic order.

Second, notice that JND translates Heb. 7:12, not "the law" but "law." W. Kelly wrote:

... not of "the law," ... but "of law." There is a totally different principle henceforth.⁹

Heb. 7:12 does not say that there has been a change of *the* law. It informs the reader that there has been a change in the principle upon which God is dealing.¹⁰

6. *Collected Writings* 27:257.

7. *Numerical Bible*, Acts-2 Cor., p. 369.

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 645.

9. *Hebrews, in loco*.

10. Charles C. Ryrie ignores the distinction between "the law" and "of law." Ignoring this fact is necessary to what he wrote concerning this text: "Since Christ is the believers' High Priest, there has to have been a change in the Law, since He could not qualify as a priest under the Levitical priesthood," in R. B. Zuck, *Vital New Testament Truths*, Grand rapids: Kregel, p. 83, 1996. Since

(continued...)

The Mosaic system is annulled, not the law. Concerning v. 18, W. Kelly wrote:

Our chapter however draws a still larger deduction, not only an incomparably higher priesthood, to which Aaron's gives place, but disannulling of a foregoing commandment as weak and unprofitable; for, as is added parenthetically, the law perfected nothing. Christ is not only perfect in Himself but brings in perfection, and in every way. And this is what is implied in Chap. 6:1 -- "let us go on to perfection." It really is Christianity in contradistinction from Judaism . . . There is a doing away of a foregoing commandment, and an introduction of a better hope, by which we draw near to God: the legal state is annulled, and a better hope supervenes now. It is Christianity, and by it we draw near to God, instead of standing at a distance as being essentially Jewish.¹¹

Heb. 7 does not teach that the law is dead, or that it is nailed to the cross. One who wishes to find it so, undoubtedly will. But it really is not there. The *forgoing commandment* refers to *approach to God* via the Aaronic priesthood and system of worship while the first man had a standing in the flesh, in contrast to the introduction of a better hope by which we draw near to God. The priesthood is changed and the Mosaic system is annulled, or set aside. *The law* is left where it was. The point is, as said above, "There is a totally different principle henceforth."

J. N. Darby long ago pointed out that, not the law but, the Mosaic system was set aside:

But, as thus given to man as an external system, it was clearly (and that is admitted on all hands) set aside. There was an annulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof (for the law made nothing perfect), and the bringing in of a better hope by the which we draw nigh to God. God was not to be tempted by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither the Jewish disciples nor their fathers had been able to bear. The whole system, as a system, was declaredly and unquestionably set aside, and Christianity, the faith, not law, came in. After that faith came, that is, Christianity, the system of faith, we were no longer under the schoolmaster. I make a difference as to the ten words, of which I will speak. God spoke them out of the midst of the fire, and added no more. They were laid up in the ark. All this made a difference, but as terms of a covenant, they are clearly set aside with the rest, supposing them for a moment written on our hearts, and we the objects of the new covenant; if that were so, still, as engraved in stones as legal

10. (...continued)

he thinks that the law has to be dead for Christ to be a priest, evidently He does not understand the true character of the heavenly priesthood of Christ. No doubt that is connected with the idea of the existence of a church age among the earthly ages. That idea negatively affects understanding of the heavenly truth.

11. *Ibid.*

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conditions of blessing in the old covenant, all is done away together. What waxed old was ready to vanish away. The old covenant we are not under, and surely the commandments formed the basis of that.

But it will be said, every one admits that: but you must distinguish between the principle of the old covenant and the contents of that which constitutes its main terms, though there may be other details. Precisely so . . .¹²

And in the same paper he affirmed that the law is not abrogated:

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 little. 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 a ἀνόμος Θεῷ (lawless in respect to God, but ἐν νόμῳ Χριστοῦ, 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

12. "The Sabbath: or, Is the Law dead, or am I?" *Collected Writings* 10:281.
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again; I am in Christ.¹³

CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD

The Melchisedec priesthood is an *order* of priesthood different than the Aaronic *order* of priesthood; and the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ

has been constituted not according to law of fleshly commandment, but according to power of indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16).

While the Melchisedec priesthood is not in operation now (it is millennial) Hebrews shows that the Melchisedec priesthood rests upon a totally different principle than law -- *the power of an indissoluble life*. This is a priesthood with which the law has nothing to do, and Christ's present, heavenly activity as High Priest partakes of that character -- *the power of an indissoluble life*. This, therefore, is a priesthood on the other side of death. Christ is outside the sphere of the law. And for the Christian, one who is **in Christ**, the legal state is gone. It is disannulled to the Christian by his being in Christ, not by the law having ended. The setting aside of "the commandment going before" (Heb. 7:18) is in the context of the old approach to God having been set aside by the introduction of a better hope whereby we draw nigh to God. The establishment of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ necessarily means a different approach to God than found in the law. Heb. 7 shows the superiority of the Melchisedec priesthood to the Aaronic, and its superior basis (Heb. 7:16). Then the statement (v. 17) of testimony to it, next that it displaces the basis for the Aaronic priesthood (Heb. 7:18), and then (Heb. 7:19) a better hope is connected with this better approach. For all that, there is no indication that the law itself is dead.

Now notice the erroneous idea stated above that if the law was still in effect, our Lord could not be a priest. Does not that statement mean that if the law still subsists now in the earth, the Lord Jesus could not now be a priest in the power of an indissoluble life, *in heaven*? Let us read Heb. 8:4, 5:

If then indeed he were upon earth, he would not even be a priest, there being those who offer the gifts according to the law, (who serve the representation and shadow of heavenly things, according as Moses was oracularly told [when] about to make the tabernacle . . .)

That is not to say that God regards Judaism as being acceptable to Him as the present way of approach. It is not -- and He was soon going to put an end to the temple through the Romans (in AD 70 -- cp. Matt. 22). My point is that the law was still there, and not gone for all men as the system we are reviewing requires. The reason our Lord could not be a priest *on earth* is stated to be that there are priests (of the Aaronic order) on earth who offer gifts according to the law (Christ's priesthood is in heaven). This is not to affirm that God continued

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 283, 284.

to recognize the Jewish system as valid. He did not. Let us review again what was said in regard to LSC's statements regarding the reinstatement of the Mosaic system after the rapture.

AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

Can those who hold to an intercalated age of grace 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* -- approved of God! -- so as to be there after the rapture. The fact that the Jews will set up a Judaistic system then, and that the remnant will be under the law, *in their consciences*, does not prove the reinstatement of Judaism, as such.

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, that means that the standing of the first man, a standing in the flesh, was ended. Because that 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. This distinction is important.

There is a distinction, then, between the first man being tested under the Mosaic covenant coming to an end at the cross and the status of the law subsequently. The Jewish system was God's relationship with 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 finished at the cross. God's relationship with man under the law in Adamic standing was then terminated. The probation was completed. That leaves the law where it was. Moreover, the Mosaic age was left where it was. There has been no change in the age, while God meanwhile forms *a heavenly people* (1 Cor. 15:48). And there will be no change in the age until "the age to come" (the millennium) begins. Nor is there any testing 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 reinstatement

(continued on page 56)

End of the Test

... that which is spiritual [was] not first - - - - -
The first man out of [the] earth, made of dust, - - - - -

FINAL TESTING

*Tested by the person of
the Son, the Second Man*

And at last He sent to
them His Son (Matt. 21:37)

The perfect King and the Kingdom (Matt.)

The perfect Servant and perfect service (Mark)

The perfect Man and perfect dependency (Luke)

The only-begotten, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

The revelation of the Father in the Son (John 15:24).

Note particularly that the first man, in the persons of the Jews,
was tested by the kingdom in the offer of the King and kingdom;
and **was tested by grace** in the person of the Son. Man
is not now being tested by grace. God has concluded testing
the first man, having shown all to be under sin (Rom. 3:9).

ADAM,
The First Man

UNDER:
Conscience
Government
Law
Priesthood
Judges
Kings
Prophets

"The fulness of the time" (Gal. 4:4)
"In due time" (Rom. 5:6)
(at the end of the time of testing)

"Yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8)
"Still without strength" (Rom. 5:6)
(conclusion at the end of the testing)

**"Consummation of the
ages" (Heb. 9:26)**
(ages of testing)

g of the First Man

----- then that which is spiritual (1 Cor. 14:46)

----- the second man, out of heaven (1 Cor. 5:47)

NOW

*The Second Man has now
displaced the First Man*

**In view of the end of the testing
of the First Man, God declares:**

Wrath of God revealed from heaven (Rom. 1:18)

Every mouth stopped (Rom. 3:20)

All the world under judgment (Rom. 3:20)

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23)

All are dead (2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 2:1)

Now is the judgment of this world (John 12:31)

In due time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6)

Christ died for all (2 Cor. 5:14)

Christ gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6)

Christ is the propitiation for the world (1 John 2:2)

The trial of the First Man ended at the cross. The declaration that man is lost followed upon the conclusion of the trial of man in the flesh. The case is closed and now God sends forth the gospel based on what the Second Man has done.

NOW: Rom. 3:21; 2 Tim. 1:9-10; Eph. 3:10; Heb. 9:26

**God NOW enjoins men
everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30)**

**“Upon whom the ends of the
ages are come” (1 Cor. 10:11)**
(ages of testing)

R. A. Huebner -- Jan. 19, 1998

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of the probation of the first man in his standing before God, in the flesh, under the law, is just what this false system really amounts to. It means the reinstitution of the Mosaic covenant and the reinstatement of the first man in Adamic standing under the law -- though in reality, since the false system has man under test 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 agemism scheme.

An Objection to the Law not Being Dead Now

It may be claimed that if the law is not dead now, then men are still under it, and under it during the age of grace.

First: we saw that *the* responsible man, i.e., *the first man*, has had his standing in responsibility, as under probation, as under trial, ended in the cross. We noted 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 as to probation, except that having declared the conclusion from that probation, that men are **TOTALLY LOST**, He saves, but that is another matter.

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 . . . ¹⁴

Second: God can, and does, use the law to teach individual persons something. In 1 Tim. 1:8 we read:

Now we know that the law [is] good if anyone use it lawfully . . .

We see it being used in Rom. 7 upon one who has "the inward man" (Rom. 7:22). The fact that the law is not dead does not mean that the probation of the first man, when under the law, must therefore now be continuing. Teaching individuals, as such, is not the continuance of the trial of the first man. The law may be used of God to teach an individual what the first man failed to learn when under probation, i.e., when under testing.

Third: the false notion of the intercalation of a "church age" means the reinstitution of the law after the church is removed. What ended the law? The cross, it is said. The law was nailed to the cross. (Precisely what un-nails it?)

And that puts the Jews in Daniel's 70th week back under the law in the pre-cross sense. Before the cross, the first man was being tested by the law. LSC puts the Jews in that position again. If I say that the Jewish remnant will be under the law *in their consciences*, that is not at all the same thing as the *reinstitution* of the law in LSC's system.

Fourth: What LSC's system means, in effect, is that Judaism will be reinstituted *by God* and *recognized by Him* as before the cross. It will then have validity before God. It is worth repeating what JND wrote regarding Judaism:

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?" (Page 10.) 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. ¹⁵

{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 recognized, 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

14. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 32:236.

15. *Collected Writings* 15:223. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

privileges; but also to bid them go forth without the camp.¹⁶

The Mosaic age continues to this very hour. The law continues to this hour. Judaism was overthrown when God sent his forces and destroyed those murders and burned their city (Matt. 22:7 -- AD 70). In the future, the Jews will set up, in the land, a form of Judaism. What will befall them will be worse than the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70:

... for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been from [the] beginning of [the] world until now, nor ever shall be; and if those days had not been cut short, no flesh had been saved; but on account of the elect those days shall be cut short (Matt. 21, 22).

Fifth: keep in mind that this system says the law, which he equates with the Mosaic system, is reinstituted by God. The LSC system means, in effect, that there will be the reinstitution of a God-recognized *Aaronic order* of priesthood.

In the millennium, the Lord Jesus will be a priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13). This is what the Melchisedec priesthood points to. The Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is founded on the finished work. The millennial sacrifices take their character from being offered under the High Priesthood of the Melchisedec order. Looking back to the cross, looking back to the finished work, the sacrifices are memorial in character. The sons of Zadok, offspring of the faithful warrior priest, Phinehas, shall lead in the priesthood (Ezek. 40-48). And though they are sons of Aaron, they do not function under the Aaronic order. They are under the order of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ. Meanwhile, now, He functions in an Aaronic *function*, spiritually, though not in the Aaronic *order*. But this instructive subject is too large to develop here.

The truth is that there is no valid priesthood since the cross other than that of our Lord and what is under Him. Now, all believers are priests. And He is declared priest *forever*, after the *order* of Melchisedec. God only does, and will in the future, recognize this *order* of priesthood. Who, in the future, does LSC suppose will be the High Priest in Israel, of the Aaronic order, functioning according to that order, that God will recognize under the reinstituted system of the law?

Sixth: the sacrifices under the Mosaic system pointed forward to the work of Christ. Those sacrifices were a standing witness to the fact that the once-for-all work was not yet done. What will be the meaning of the sacrifices during the 70th week of Daniel? Keep in mind that the notion is that the Mosaic system will be reinstituted at the point where it was rejected by God!

16. *Collected Writings* 28:20; see also 27:379, note.
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Conclusion

We have looked at the passages brought forward by LSC to warrant his assertion:

The complete passing, through the death of Christ, of the reign of the Mosaic Law, even for Israel, is the extended testimony of Scripture (ST4:240).

We have not found *any* testimony to this effect, much less finding “extended testimony.” We saw that he consistently used passages that show that the law is gone for those *in Christ* as if those passages said that the law is gone outside of Christ. Not only is this an unacceptable process, we have seen that Scripture indicates that the law is still here. But not only have we not found Scripture to teach that the law is gone, LSC has not told us how the law, alleged to be nailed to the cross, is going to be uncrucified, un-nailed, so as to be in effect again after the rapture of the saints. To say that the law was nailed to the cross so as to be gone for all men; to say that the cross removed the middle wall of partition for all men, and then to affirm that the law will be reinstated after the rapture of the saints; to say that the middle wall of partition done away as regards all men, by the cross, will be erected again after the rapture of the saints; to hold a system which, in effect, reinstitutes a valid Aaronic priesthood functioning as before the cross; offering sacrifices that look forward to the work of Christ; is, in my judgment, to say the least, deplorable. The idea appears to be part of a humanly devised system imposed on Scripture, namely, the creation of a “church age” wherein the first man is still under testing. It is a false Age-ism system calling itself dispensational truth – whereas it undermines dispensational truth.

“This age” is still the same Mosaic age. There is no earthly “age of grace” among the earthly ages. The (Mosaic) age goes on; the world goes on; and God is doing a heavenly work now in connection with the Second Man, the first having been set aside. Christianity is not an earthly age among the earthly ages. It is not a “heavenly age” among the earthly ages. The ages spoken of in Scripture that have to do with time are all earthly ages. The idea of a “heavenly age” among them is an expedient of the dispensational Age-ism system. The law is still here and it will still remain after the rapture of the saints.¹⁷ It need not somehow come down off the cross to be reinstated. It never was abrogated. We do not need to solve how the law allegedly nailed to the cross is going to be un-nailed, for the law was never nailed to the cross.

In addition, during the tribulation period God will form a godly remnant of the Jews, under the law *in their consciences*, knowing it is broken, yet looking for Messiah’s deliverance and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel under the new covenant. But that is another subject. Ed.

17. When Christ introduces the “age to come,” i.e., the millennium, the law will be written in the hearts of Israel under the new covenant. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.4:

All of Revelation 21-22:5 is Not the Eternal State

Chronological Discontinuity at Rev. 21:9

INTRODUCTION

We have seen in previous chapters that Israel will not have an eternally distinct place on earth during the eternal state, but that the church will have an eternally distinct, heavenly place. If that is settled in our souls, we will be better enabled to understand Rev. 21 and 22, being relieved of having to find an eternal place not only for Israel, but also for nations, in the passage. We will be relieved from some gross conceptions and pseudo-literalism.

Rev. 21:1-8 follows in chronological order the events unfolded from the coming of Christ in glory in Rev. 19 through the matter of the great white throne; and then in this passage follows the eternal state of the new heavens and earth. The description of the bride in the remainder of the chapter (Rev. 21:9ff) is a retrospective view of the church in millennial glory.

At the end of His reign, the Son of man, having perfectly discharged the government of the millennial kingdom, and after having subdued every enemy, "then the Son also shall be placed in subjection to him who put all things in subjection to him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:27, 28). It is clear that the Son takes another place after the millennial kingdom than during it. This is so that in the new heavens and earth, "that God may be all in all"; God, as Father, Son, and Spirit.

USE OF THE DESIGNATION "LAMB" IN REVELATION

It was very early that J. N. Darby saw these distinctions. For example, in a letter of 1838 he wrote:

To this state I should apply Revelation 21:1-8; the Lamb is not mentioned

there; what follows is descriptive, not continuous history.¹

In his *Notes on the Revelation*, 1839, he specifically places Rev. 21:9-22:5 during the millennium and takes the city to be “the Lamb’s wife, the glorified saints.”²

And what is interesting, besides his correct understanding of the discontinuity between vv. 8 and 9, is the indication of the bearing of the absence of the designation *Lamb* in Rev. 21:1-8, which speaks of the eternal state; and we might notice that of the 28 occasions of the use of *Lamb* in Revelation, seven times it is used in Rev. 21:9-22:5, which speaks of the bride in millennial glory as the heavenly seat of governmental administration. Now, while not suggesting this use of the designation *Lamb* proves that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is a retrospective view of the city, its use does fit this understanding of Rev. 21 and 22. Let us pause and consider this use of *Lamb* in Revelation.

J. N. Darby made this observation regarding the use of “*Lamb*” in the *Revelation*:

As to the word “*Lamb*,” I think its use in Revelation is to show that the suffering and rejected One on earth is the mighty and reigning One, and not redemption, in our sense of it. “*Salvation to our God . . . and unto the Lamb*” is a proof, where used, that it is not the church. Those who appeared on mount Zion were the first-fruits to God and the *Lamb*: they were on earth (Rev. 14). So the immense multitude of Rev. 7 ascribe salvation to God and the *Lamb*: they are millennial names. Only the heavenly {the new} Jerusalem has the nearest relationship to the *Lamb* at that time; it is His wife. It is not therefore a name of general redemption, but of the millennial position of the suffering and rejected One: hence they dread “the wrath of the *Lamb*.”³

Another wrote:

Christ is described as “the *Lamb*”; and this is called an essentially Jewish title {by the writer being opposed here}, referring to the passover, and the daily sacrifices. The fact is that John’s Gospel 1:20, 36 and 1 Peter 1:19 use the different word ἀμνός, the Revelation ἀρνίον in pointed contrast with θηρίον. But in no case is there a limited or Jewish horizon. What can refute this contracted view more flatly than the Baptist’s words, “Behold the *Lamb* of God that taketh away the sin of the *world*?” So Peter lifts the believing remnant he addresses wholly above the nation and the earth and time itself, by pointing to Christ foreknown before the world’s foundation. So does the earth rejected “*Lamb*” of the Apocalypse (glorified on high while the Jews have lost their place and their nation) point to dealings of judgment far wider than the Jews, and to heavenly and earthly glories far transcending those

1. *Letters* 1:28

2. *Collected Writings* 2:257

3. *Letters* 1:426.

secured to Israel according to OT prophecy.⁴

And yet another wrote:

"MY NEW NAME"

The question "What is our Lord's new name?" (Rev. 3:12), is not answered in so many words in the book of "Revelation," but we think that, in substance, the answer is to be found there.

Is it not remarkable that in the book of "the Revelation" we get the new name of ARNION (Lamb) applied to Christ, and that it occurs twenty-eight times the Apocalypse . . . and is found as a name given to Him nowhere else in the New Testament?

When the same writer, St. John, speaks of Jesus as presented to the Jews in the Baptist's preaching, He is termed AMNOS (the Lamb), and when in the Revelation, Jesus is spoken of as the Lamb, the word ARNION is used exclusively; and every scholar knows arnion is a diminutive, and hence a word of disparagement. JESUS, the personal name of the Lord on earth, was nailed over the cross as a name of humiliation, scorn, and rejection; the world treated God's AMNOS as ARNION; and God opens the heavens to the Prophet of Patmos, and by him shows to the Churches, as He shall one day do to the world, the One who was treated on earth as ARNION (i.e., as a diminutive creature, a lambkin not worth looking at) "in the midst of the throne," and "the book" of the title-deeds to the world's dominion given by GOD into His hands!

The whole action of the Apocalypse, is in connection with the enthroning of ARNION on the throne of God -- as He is now on His Father's throne as Son {Rev. 3:21} -- and Christ's promise "I will write upon him my new name," seems to be fulfilled in the end of the book, when His "faithful" followers have the name of Arnion written upon them and they are called "The Bride, ARNION'S Wife" (Rev. 21).

The places where the word "Lamb" (Arnion) occurs in "Revelation" are the following, as above: Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8, 11; 14:1, 4 {twice}, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3.⁵

THE TWO DESIGNATIONS OF THE CITY

It should be noted that in keeping with the distinction between Rev. 21:1-8 and Rev. 21:9-22:5, the city is designated in a different way in the two passages.

4. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1: 347, 348.

5. *The Bible Herald*, 1877, pp., 136, 137.

The Holy City in Two Places

<i>Rev. 21:10</i>	<i>"the holy city, Jerusalem"</i>	<i>millennium</i>
<i>Rev. 21:2</i>	<i>"the holy city, new Jerusalem"</i>	<i>eternal state</i>

The city is necessarily holy and this is seen in both the millennium and the eternal state. However, it is in the eternal state, with the new heavens and earth, that the city is referred to as *new*.

THE NUMBER 12

The number 12 characterizes the city in Rev. 21:9-22:5. The reader could hardly fail to notice it, as well as the wall being 12 x 12, it having 12 foundations, 12 gates, and the cubical city being 12 x 1000 in the three dimensions, etc. The city is viewed in Rev. 21:9-22:5 as the heavenly seat of the administration of government, for we shall reign with Christ. The number 12, in Scripture, is connected with the administration of government -- "the administrative perfection in man."⁶

There will be no administration of government in the eternal state. That is one of the new things in the new heavens and earth. Righteousness will *dwell* (2 Pet. 3:13), not reign, then, when God dwells, or tabernacles, with men (Rev. 21:3).

THE RETROSPECTIVE CHARACTER OF REV. 21:9-22:5

Here we will consider some comments by W. Kelly on the retrospective (or, recapitulation) character of Rev. 21:9-22:5 (which is millennial, not the eternal state, as some claim) just as Rev. 17 and 18 have a retrospective character. Indeed, these two cases are quite parallel.

Here occurs a remarkable change in the sequence of the visions, though easily understood; for it must be evident that there can be nothing to follow this in point of time, seeing that it is the eternal state {Rev. 21:1-8}. Here then {Rev. 21:9ff} we unquestionably go back to be shown an important object in the prophecy which could not, without interrupting its course, have been described before. Yet in this it is as we saw in Rev. 17 after Babylon had been brought before us in the course of the prophecy. Babylon had been seen twice: first, in the septenary of God's warnings and testimonies (chap. 14); and then as the object of God's judgment under the seven Bowls (chap. 16). Afterwards a full description of Babylon and its relation to the Beast and the

6. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 30:402. See especially, *Synopsis* 5:421; and also see *Collected Writings* 11:248; 24:118, 25:136. www.truthpublishers.com

ten kings is given. It would have been awkward to bring in this long description before, because the flow of the prophetic stream would have been interrupted. It is a subsequent appendix in chaps. 17 and 18.

An exactly similar order is repeated here, and it becomes the more apparent from the similarity of the introduction on each occasion.

And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls full of the seven last strokes, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Who does not see that this is precisely analogous to the verse which opened the description of Babylon (Rev. 17:1). Is it too much to believe that God intended this analogy to be noted by us? In neither case is it a pursuance of the prophetic course of time. But this is a description of the holy city previously (Rev. 19:6-8) to our deep interest set before us, just as the other was a description of the corrupt city, whose judgment had been fully announced. We had Babylon with a spuriously ecclesiastical but a really murderous character, and at the same time guilty of corruption with the kings of the earth and riding the beast, with the closing catastrophe.⁷

Rev. 21:9 marks very strongly a discontinuity, just as does Rev. 17:1, from what preceded it. Often in the book a change is indicted by angelic messengers; but here (Rev. 17:1 and 21:9) a very specific angel is mentioned. That has no significance? There is a break here, as there was a break in Rev. 17:1; and that break is for the introduction of a retrospective view in both cases -- and it also invites both a comparison and contrast in the subject matter.

No doubt it is intended by the Spirit of God to be instructive to notice that the angel who showed John the Bride, the Lamb's wife, was one of those seven angels who had had the seven bowls -- and that he showed John from the *great and high mountain*. In Rev. 17 there is another woman and "one of the seven angels, which had the seven bowls," showed him that woman in a *desert*. Each place is morally suitable to what John saw. The harlot was in the desert. She is the great antichurch, the false bride, so to speak. Observe that the harlot of Rev. 17 is also depicted as a city (Rev. 18). And, no; that city is not a city on the Euphrates in Iraq.

These are two opposed things: the true bride and the false harlot; the true city and the false city. The marriage of the Lamb is seen as transpiring subsequent to the destruction of the false. Consequent upon the destruction of the corruptress, she who pretended to be the spouse, but was a harlot, heaven will reverberate with four mighty and thunderous Hallelujahs! You and I will be there to participate in those *four* Hallelujahs (Rev. 19:1, 3, 4, 6); for there

7. *The Revelation Expounded, in loco*. See also "God Dwelling with Men, Revelation 21:1-8," *Collected Writings* 16:136-146.

was to be wreaked upon her *fourfold* judgment.

Double [to her] double, according to her works (Rev. 18:6).

Strong [is the] Lord God who has judged her (Rev. 18:8).

And her smoke goes up to the ages of ages (Rev. 19:3).

To Him be glory in the assembly in Christ Jesus unto all generations of the age of ages. Amen. (Eph. 3:21).

Another wrote:

It is well to notice, that when the angel comes to show Babylon in Rev. 17:1, he describes her wide-spread influence, "sitting by the many waters;" but when here he comes to show the New Jerusalem, there is nothing to be said of her; it is enough to say, that she is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." The harlot could ride the beast, and spread corruption far and wide; she had immense power, but affection she had none. While the harlot is saying, "I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow," the Bride feels that she is not her own, but that she belongs to another. While the love of influence, the "sitting beside many waters" is the spirit of Babylon, the character of dependence marks the Bride. Ah! beloved friends, if we are seeking power or worldly influence, the spirit of Babylon is in us. The only influence we should court, as to service or as to anything else, should be the result of attachment to Christ alone, and dependence upon Him. Affection for Him is the one thing. There will be plenty of trial and difficulty, where this exists: but there will be no thwarted affections when He is the object. We shall never find in Him what does not satisfy. This is happiness. There may be plenty in us needing to be subdued, and this will give us trouble, and 'tis labor, alas, often, to keep the heart up to a sense of His love; but that single word, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife" is quite enough for us; for was there ever an affection wanting in Christ toward us? Never. Never shall we find defect in the object of our affections, though we shall find defect in the affection in ourselves, lack of ability to enjoy the fulness of our portion. A true sense of the abiding love of Jesus to us is that which gives perfect peace to the love that is looking to Jesus. One source of our failure in realizing the love of Jesus is, that our hearts, though enlarged by the Holy Ghost, are too little to answer to it. Herein lies the marked difference as has been remarked between the Book of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. In Ecclesiastes it is said, "What can the man do that cometh after the king, who hath gathered to himself peculiar treasure of all the sons of men?" But the larger his heart was in its intelligence and in its desires, the less there was to fill it, so that everything issued in "vanity and vexation of spirit." But what was wanting in the Song of Solomon -- primarily applicable no doubt to the Jewish remnant -- was a heart large enough to take in the all-satisfying object of its love. And oh, what a thought it is, that Jesus and all the glory He has received is ours! as He says,

“the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them.”⁸

Objections to the Retrospective View

OBJECTION GENERALLY INVOLVES VIEWING THE CITY AS LITERAL

Many do not accept it that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is a retrospective view of the new Jerusalem, but rather regard it all as the eternal state and then want to make the symbolical city a literal city that is the home of the saints. In opting for the entire passage to mean the eternal state, John F. Walvoord wrote:

. . . in view of the fact that all has been chronological from chapter 19:11 up to this point, it would seem most logical for the narration to continue chronologically, having introduced the New Jerusalem now {in Rev. 21:1-3} to describe it in detail. Having introduced the subject in 21:2-8 which most expositors recognize as the eternal state, it would follow that v. 9 also is referring to the eternal state and not the millennial condition. As the details of the city unfold, it is clear that it is not a millennial situation for there is no room for such a large city as the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, to be placed on the Holy land during the millennial kingdom. Scriptures instead describe the city in the Millennium in entirely different terms (Ezek. 40-48).⁹

Actually, the book of Revelation has a number of cases where there is a chronological flow and then a throw-back, or a retrospective view, to take up some matters in detail.¹⁰ His argument could be applied against those cases also. His argument is not valid. It does not necessarily follow that Rev. 21:9 must not introduce a new matter. Verse 9 forcefully indicates that a new matter is being introduced.

The ‘progressive dispensationalist,’ David L. Turner, says that the recapitulation view of Rev. 21:9-22:5 seems “to work from two misconceptions,” the first of which:

posits excessive discontinuity between the Millennium and the eternal state and assumes an ability to divide the two neatly.¹¹

The discontinuity between the present heavens and earth and the new heavens and earth is given in 2 Pet. 3:10, 11. His vacuous objection appears to hinge on

8. *The Present Testimony* 8:321, 322.

9. *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook*, Wheaton: Victor Books, p. 635, 1990.

10. W. Kelly has discussed this matter of retrospective views that occur in the book of Revelation as bearing on the issue that Rev. 21:9ff is also retrospective of the millennial place of the bride, the church, the new Jerusalem. See his *Lectures on the book of Revelation, in loco*.

11. In Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 284, 1992.

the words “excessive” and “neatly.” The two can be divided, but not “neatly”? There is a discontinuity between the millennium and the eternal state, but beware that it is not “excessive”? Well, perhaps the second misconception of those who hold that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is millennial might find his warning formidable:

Second, a misconception of the nature of life in the eternal state may also be at work here. This misconception assumes that there will be no need for growth in redemptive grace in the eternal state. However, the consummation of redemption, often referred to as glorification, does not obliterate the Creator-creature distinction and make finite humans suddenly possess infinite knowledge and holiness. Believers will be set free from sin at the consummation but will still need to exercise faithful stewardship of the God-given means of grace in order to serve God and reign with him. The attempt to separate glorified believers from responsible obedience to God is mistaken.¹²

Is this the sort of thing that the Professor of New Testament and Systematic Theology at the Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary teaches students there? And just who is it that obliterates the Creator-creature distinction? Who is his intended audience for such nonsense, for such inferences? “This misconception assumes . . .” It is *himself* who assumes. Listen once more to a continuation of the second of his two objections to regarding Rev. 21:9-22:5 as retrospective:

Believers will evidently be assigned duties based upon their gifts and their faithfulness in the development and application of those gifts prior to death or rapture (Matt. 19:27-30; 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27; 1 Cor. 6:2-3.) Therefore, the nations will still seek to bring their best achievements into it. Healing will be necessary not in the sense of taking away sickness or sin but in the sense of developing physical, social, and spiritual capacities to serve God, neighbor, and nature more lovingly and faithfully.¹³

What is clear is that *man* is at the center of his thoughts. He reasons and imagines from man, tells us what the eternal state will be like as he thinks it ought to be, and this imagination is put forward as if it refutes the fact that Rev. 21:9-22:5 refers to the millennium.

There is one other character of objection we will note before passing on, given by Robert L. Thomas:

The section {Rev. 21:9-22:5} cannot apply to the Millennium because of the absence of the curse (22:3) that will continue during the Millennium (20:8, 9). The absence of night (21:25) and the elimination of the sun and moon (21:23)

12. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 289, 290.

cannot characterize the Millennium either (cp. Isa. 30:26 with 60:19).¹⁴

I refer to this as a “character of objection” because it has a particular *character*; namely, to take what is true for the city (and for the city *only*, which he denies is the church glorified) and apply it universally, thus concluding that it cannot be the millennium. Therefore, the passage cannot be millennial, he says, because the sun and moon will be present during the millennium -- but the city, which he equates with the new heavens and earth, will have no sun and moon. His conclusion is based on the false premise that the city is not the glorified church. And since he says that there will be no sun and moon in the new heavens and earth, he must explain the reference in Rev. 22:2 to the “twelve fruits, in *each month* yielding its fruit, as meaning that:

... the new creation can have a basis for calendar reckoning entirely different from the lunar calculation familiar to the present creation.¹⁵

What this means is that in the new heavens and earth there is need of a “calendar reckoning”! This really entails that there are literal fruits also, that will be literally eaten eternally, in connection with the eternal “calendar reckoning” of months! As a matter of fact, he actually makes the new Jerusalem to be the same thing as the new heavens and earth:

Revelation 21-22:5 furnishes detailed information about a new heaven and a new earth . . . Another name for them is the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10).

What a stunning comment! Oh, you say -- then what about the dimensions of the city if the new heavens and earth are the same thing as the new Jerusalem? Wait! Theology is equal to that problem! Listen:

The dimensions and layout designs are an accommodation to finite minds, because the new heaven and the new earth, as the handiwork of an infinite God (21:5), will exceed present human comprehension.

Oh, the dimensions and layout design are *an accommodation*! -- so then the city is not a literal city after all? Not so fast:

The details of the description show, however, that the bride-city (21:2, 9) will be a real city with a material existence.¹⁶

I suppose, then, that the dimensions, which are an *accommodation* (read, *not literal*) are not part of the *details* of the description about the literal city, because the *details* of the description show that the city is literal!!!

What gives rise to many imaginings is the notion that Rev. 21:9-22:5 describes the eternal state, with a literal city that is the home of all those who

14. *Revelation 8-22 An Exegetical Commentary*, Chicago: Moody, p.458, 1995.

15. *Revelation 8-22 An Exegetical Commentary*, p.484.

16. The three quotations are from Robert L. Thomas, “New Heaven and Earth,” *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, p. 283, 1996.

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enjoy the eternal state. There are, of course, some variations of this view of the matter. But it all stems from ~~Pseudo~~-literalism.

HEALING OF THE NATIONS

The subject of the healing of the nations was mentioned in the quotation above from David L. Turner, who wrote:

Healing will be necessary not in the sense of taking away sickness or sin but in the sense of developing physical, social, and spiritual capacities to serve God, neighbor, and nature more lovingly and faithfully.¹⁷

Those who regard Rev. 21:9-22:5 as descriptive of the eternal state attempt to deal with this "healing" in various ways. That is one of the ways.

Ford Ottman, while holding Rev. 21:9ff to describe the eternal state, wrote :

The healing of the nations here spoken of does not necessarily involve a return to Millennial conditions. The nations that are in existence at the end of the close of the thousand years of Christ's reign need healing for the full and final blessing which is afterwards to be ushered in. We must insist upon the fact that the terms of John's vision are descriptive, not of the Millennium, but of the heavenly city, and eternity, and their force, under no consideration, is to be weakened in order to escape from the presumed difficulties of their precise application.¹⁸

No doubt he convinced himself that his own "escape" by transferring the healing from the eternal state to the end of the millennium is not a weakening in order to escape a difficulty!

John F. Walvoord has another suggestion:

... the healing is for the "health" of the nations and may be connected somehow to their eternal well-being physically.¹⁹

W. E. Biederwolf remarked:

Says, Morgan, "On the authority of a Greek scholar of repute we may substitute the word *health* for *healing*."²⁰

Morgan, of course, regarded this as in the new heavens and earth and such writers find the word "healing" embarrassing for this idea. When Rev. 21:9ff is seen to be millennial the embarrassment disappears without any artifice.

Here is Henry Morris' idea:

Still another noteworthy aside is that the leaves of the tree of life have great

17. In Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 229, 1992.

18. *The Unfolding of the Ages*, Fincastle: Scripture truth Book Co., p. 472, 1967 reprint of 1905.

19. *Prophecy* . . . , p. 173.

20. *The Millennium Bible*, Grand Rapids: Baker, p. 720, 1964.

value also, serving to bring healing to the nations. Some translators feel it would be more appropriate to translate this word (Greek *therapeia*) as "health," since it seems unlikely that the immortal peoples of the new earth would actually need healing, either physical or spiritual. However, the word basically meant "cure" or "service" in its original usage, and is translated "household" in Luke 12:42 and Matthew 24:45, referring to the staff of servants. In this case, the passage might be read: "the leaves of the tree were for the service of the nations." The chemical ingredients of the rich foliage of the trees might be available for innumerable uses in the economies and industries of the nations of the ages. Possibly it is the economy of the nations which is to be kept healthy by the leaves of the tree.²¹

Let us add to this litany of imaginations with the comments from the massive commentary of R. L. Thomas:

Healing, however, does not necessarily indicate the presence of disease any more than the wiping away of tears (21:4) implies that sorrow still exists in the new Jerusalem. The tears were those caused by the troubles of this creation, tears that will no longer exist in the new creation. Likewise, the disease for which this healing provides is that of the former creation which no longer exists in the new Jerusalem. The very next clause in v. 3 which tells of the absence of the curse demonstrates the impossibility of disease in the new order (Walvoord).

"Healing" . . . , then, must connote a promoting of the health of the nations such as will be an ongoing service in the new creation (Govett, Seiss, Walvoord). This agrees with the identification of the nations proposed in the discussion of 21:24 above. Those who have entered the new heaven and the new earth in an unresurrected state will have a means for perpetuating their health.²²

He here assumes, to help his case, that there will be persons in the eternal state who need a means of promoting health -- because they will have entered it in an unresurrected state! He is really supposing the carry-over of a bodily need in the present earth into the eternal state; yet God said, "Behold I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Think of it; nations, nations in the eternal state need "a promoting of the health of the nations such as will be an ongoing service in the new creation . . ." Likely he envisions plenty of literal leaves for this function, because regarding the fruit he wrote:

The forest of trees will produce "twelve fruit,"

though only *the tree* of life is mentioned. Viewing the new heavens and earth without a sun and moon, he wrote:

The month by month harvest agrees with the picture of Ezek. 47:12 (Lee). The absence of the moon from the new creation (21:23) is not inconsistent with this

21. *The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndale House, p. 466, 1983.

22. *Revelation 8-22, An Exegetical Commentary*, Chicago: Moody, p. 485, 1995.

reference to the twelve months of the year (contra Moffatt), because the new creation can have a basis for calendar reckoning entirely different from the lunar calculation familiar to the present creation.²³

In connection with the forest of trees, Clarence Larkin explicated how there are many trees:

The streets {there is only one mentioned} are to be lined with trees, as are also the banks of a wonderful river. These trees are not mere shade trees, but beautiful fruit trees, called the "TREE OF LIFE" . . . The leaves of the trees are for the healing of the Nations that shall occupy the New Earth. Not that there will be any sickness, but to preserve them in health . . .²⁴

I have quoted these writers in order that the reader may see some of the things involved in the rejection of what Rev. 21:9, 10 shows, namely, that the city is the bride, not a literal city. The "street" is changed to streets; the tree of life into rows of trees; months into a "calendar reckoning entirely different . . ."; healing into service; or healing into health; or, healing moved to the end of the millennium; *ad nauseam*! Anything but that the city should be the bride, the Lamb's wife and that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is millennial. The fact is:

But God declares *it* to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, which we have learned to be the church, and nothing else. It is not even the city wherein the bride dwells. The holy city is declared authoritatively *to be* the Bride; and scripture cannot be broken. It is vain to fly to Heb. 12:22.²⁵

Moreover, it should be clear that the tree, fruit and leaves are symbolic, and have a millennial application. This text about the healing of the nations is clearly a millennial matter, having nothing to do with the eternal state.

What we have been reviewing is *Pseudo-literarism*. Moreover, it is a refusal to bow to the express statement of the Word of God in Rev. 21:9, 10 – just as the advocates of covenant theology refuse to bow to the express statements of Rom. 15:25, 26; Col. 1:26.

DO NATIONS BRING THEIR GLORY INTO THE CITY IN THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH?

In his answer to the postmillennialist, David Brown, W. Kelly wrote:

As to Rev. 21:24, there is not the slightest need that the object and the payers of the homage, the New Jerusalem, and the nations with their kings, should be homogeneous, or in the same state. It is the very thing we deny, the very thing Dr. B. ought to prove and not assume. Why should *not* the nations and their kings be in an earthly condition, the New Jerusalem being surely glorified? Why should

23. *Revelation 8-22, An Exegetical Commentary*, p. 484.

24. *The Book of Revelation*, Philadelphia: Larkin Estate, p. 208, 1919.

25. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series, p. 348, www.truthpublishers.com

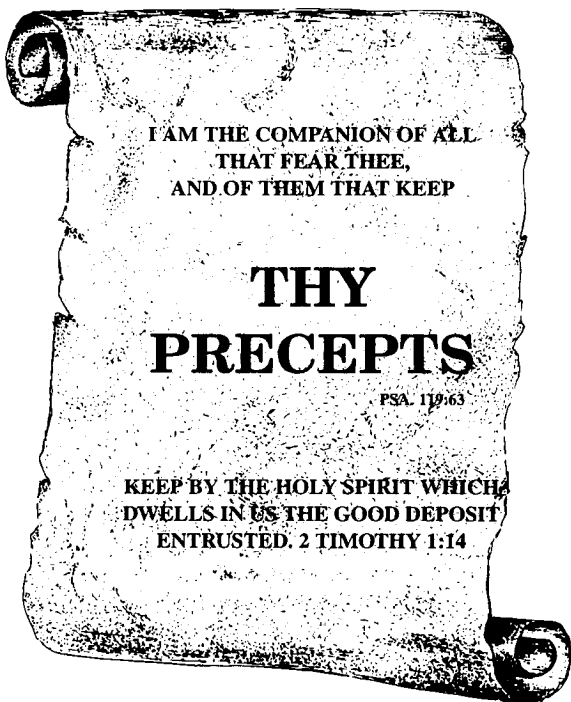
not the latter answer to the transfigured Moses and Elias, and the former to the disciples, still unchanged upon the Holy mount (Matt. 17) (especially as the word *ets* may mean the vague *unto*, the context so requiring it, no less than the more precise “into,” which Dr. B. appears to allow, as indeed he must)? The simple, unforced meaning of the passage presents the conjunction of two different states: a higher and heavenly one; a subordinate, though blessed, earthly one. Nor can this be got rid of by the pretense that it is merely a mysterious prophecy which discloses the coexistence of two different conditions, so abhorrent to Dr. B. One might fairly ask where else it could be so naturally expected as in a book which expressly lifts the veil from the future. Still it is not made known there only. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor 6:2). Dr. B. cannot *here* argue that the “saints” mean *angels*, for the next verse positively distinguishes and contrasts them. “Know ye not that we shall judge *angels*?” There would be no sense if the terms were interchangeable. “Unto the angels hath he *not* put in subjection, the world οἰκουμένην to come whereof, we speak.” This must be in millennial times; for no such order of things can possibly exist after the millennium, and it is clearly contrary to the suffering and subject place which Scripture assigns to the saints before the millennium. The inference is plain and sure. It is the millennial relation of the heavenly saints, not of men in flesh and blood on earth. “Know ye not, that *we* shall judge angels?” Assuredly it is not our employment in this dispensation, or throughout eternity. The teaching of Eph. 1:10 is similar. God hath purposed in Himself, in (for or against) the dispensation of the fullness of times, to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, &c. Clearly the apostle speaks not of the present, but of a future period, and of a grand gathering of all things, earthly and heavenly, under the headship of Christ, we being associated with him as Eve with Adam in his dominion. That is, it is the millennial and not the eternal state; for the millennium is the special display before the world of Christ’s exaltation as King: that over, Christ *gives up* the kingdom that GOD (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) should be all in all. Here, then, we have two states, the things which are in heaven, and the things which are on earth, united in a system of glory; not the earthly things sublimated into heavenly, much less the heavenly things reduced to the earthly level, but both, in their several spheres, under the sway of Christ and his bridal coheir. Probably Dr. B. might tell us here too, as well as in Rev. 21:24 (p. 62), that the commentators agree in applying the verse to one or other of these states, but not to *both*. We regret it of course; but this does not lessen our conviction that *the word* is against them, and that no serious Christian should allow modern tradition, any more than ancient, to make Scripture of none effect.²⁶

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

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A Meditation on the Lord Jesus Christ -- Himself

Beloved fellow believer, is there not a tendency at this time of ours to overlook the Person of the Lord, what He is in Himself, in the common testimony that is now borne so extendedly to His work? Would it not be for His glory, and very highly edifying for us, His people, if we were acquainting ourselves more really with a living personal JESUS? We need His work surely for the conscience, we need HIMSELF for the heart. The region of doctrine may be surveyed, as by a measuring line and a level, instead of being eyed as the place of the glories of the Son of God with an admiring, worshiping heart. And yet, it is this He prizes in us. He has made us personally His objects, and He looks for it, that we make Him ours.

There are surely doctrines to learn, lines of conduct to make ourselves acquainted with but, in doing so, we need to guard against learning doctrines as bare doctrines, or acquainting ourselves with lines of conduct in an abstract way. Rather let us be found, as to the attitude of our hearts when reading the word, sitting like Mary of old, at the feet of JESUS hearing His word (Luke 10:39), having Himself a living Person (whose love we know) consciously before us and finding in Him the living embodiment of the doctrines learnt, and the practical expression of the line of conduct enjoined: then are we truly learning of Him (Matt. 29). Truth so learnt has the effect of producing in us meekness and lowliness of heart (Matt. 11:29), instead of puffing us up (1 Cor. 8:1). And the line of conduct learnt guards against legality, as the affections brought into play and the "love of Christ" becomes the constraining motive.

The Holy Spirit delights to tell of the work of Christ, and to bear it in its preciousness and sufficiency to the heart and conscience. Nothing could stand us for a moment, had not the work been just what it was, and so counselled and ordered of God. But still the work of the Lord Jesus Christ may be the great subject, where He Himself is but a faint Object, and the soul will then be a great loser.

When considering the deeper and more distant parts of God's ways, we sometimes feel as though they were too much for us; and we seek relief from the weight of them by going back to earlier and simpler truths. This, however, need not be. If we rightly entertained these further mysteries, we should know that we need not retire from them for relief; because they are really only other and deeper expressions of the same grace and love which we were learning at the very beginning. They are but a more abundant flow, or a wider channel, of the same river, just because they lie somewhat more distant from the source.

Till this assurance be laid up in the soul, we are ill-prepared to think of them. If we have a fear, that when we are looking at glories, we have left the place of affections, we wrong the truth and our own souls. It is not so by any means. The more fully the glories unfold themselves, the more are the riches of grace revealed.

The rising of a river at its birthplace, where we took in the whole object at once, without effort or amazement, has, as we know, its own peculiar charm; but when it becomes, under our eye, a mighty stream, with its diversified banks and currents, we only then learn why it ever began to flow. It is the same water still; and we may pass up and down from its source and along its channels, with various but still constant delight. And is it not so with "the river of God"? But knowing, as we do, its source, we can survey it in its course, along and through the ages and dispensations. When in spirit (in the way of meditation) we reach "the new heavens and the new earth," we are only in company with the same glorious Person, and in fellowship with the same boundless grace, whom we knew, and which we learnt, at the very beginning.

The same One made real to the soul, and brought near, is what one would desire, in God's grace, to be the fruit of this meditation: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday to-day, and for ever" -- so He is, both in His own glory and to us.

In earlier days there were manifestations of Him, the Son of God, sometimes in veiled, sometimes in unveiled glory. To Abraham at the tent-door, to Jacob at Peniel, to Joshua under the walls of Jericho, to Gideon and to Manoah, the manifestations were veiled, and faith, in more or less vigor through the Spirit, removed the covering, and reached the glory that was underneath. To Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to Daniel, the Son of God appeared in unveiled glory, and He had, by a certain gracious process, to make the brightness of the glory tolerable to them (see Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1; Daniel 10).

The Person, however, was one and the same, whether veiled or unveiled. So, in the days when He had, really (and not as in those earlier days) assumed flesh and blood, the glory was veiled, and faith was set to discover it, as in the time of Abraham, or of Joshua; and after He had ascended, He appeared to John in such brightness of unveiled glory, that something had to be done by Him in grace, as in the case of Isaiah or of Daniel, ere His presence could be sustained (Rev. 1).

Times and seasons in this respect made no difference. Of course, till the fulness of time came, the Son was not "made of a woman." Then it was that "the Sanctifier," as we read, "took part in the same" flesh and blood with the children (Heb. 2:14). For flesh and blood indeed He took then, and not till then; very Kinsman of the seed of Abraham He then indeed became. "It behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren." And all this waited for its due season, "the fulness of the time," the days of the Virgin of Nazareth. But these manifestations of the Son of God in earlier days were pledges of this great mystery, that in due time God would send forth His Son made of a woman. They were, if I may so express it, the shadows of the forthcoming substance. And what I have been observing has this in it -- and which is of interest to our souls -- that those foreshadowings were beautifully exact. They forecast, in forms both of glory and of grace the ways of Him who afterwards traveled and sojourned here on earth in humble, serving, sympathizing love, and is now set as glorified in heaven, the Son of man, the Virgin's Seed, for ever.

It is delightful to the soul to trace these exact resemblances and forecastings. If we have a veiled glory at the threshing-floor at Ophrah, so have we at the well of Sychar; if we have the brightness of the unveiled glory on the banks of the Hiddekel, so have we the same in the isle of Patmos. The Son of God was a traveling Man in the sight of Abraham in the heat of that day and so was He to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as the day was fast spending itself. He ate of Abraham's calf "tender and good," as He did of "the broiled fish and of the honeycomb," in the midst of the disciples at Jerusalem. In His risen days, He assumed different forms to suit (in divine grace) the need or demand of the moment, as He had done of old, whether as a Stranger, or a Visitor, whether as "a Man of God" simply to Manoaah and his wife in the field, or as an armed Soldier at Jericho to Joshua.

Nature, it is indeed true, is not equal to this. It must come from the in-working and witness of the Holy Ghost. Nature finds itself overwhelmed. It always betrays itself as that which has "come short of the glory of God." When Isaiah, on the occasion already referred to, was called into the presence of that glory, he could not stand it. He remembered his uncleanness, and cried out that he was undone. All that he apprehended was the glory, and all that he felt and knew in himself was his unfitness to stand before it. This was nature. This was the action of the conscience which, as in Adam in the garden, seeks relief from the presence of God. Nature in the prophet did not discover the altar which, equally with the glory, lay in the scene before him. He did not perceive that which was perfectly equal to give him perfect ease and assurance, to link him (though still a sinner in himself) with the presence of the glory in all its brightness. Nature could not make this discovery. But the messenger of the Lord of hosts not only discovers but applies it; and the prophet is at ease, in the possession of a cleanness or a holiness which can measure the very "holy of holies" itself, and the brightness of the throne of the Lord of hosts.

The Spirit acts above nature, yea, in contradiction of nature. Nature in Isaiah, in us all, stands apart, and is abashed, unable to look up the Spirit draws us right inward and upward in liberty. When Simeon is led by the Spirit into the presence of the glory, he goes up at once in all confidence and joy. He takes the child JESUS in his arms. He makes no request of the mother to suffer it to be so; he feels no debt to any one for the blessed privilege of embracing "the salvation of God," which his eyes then saw. He through the Spirit had discovered the altar; and the glory, therefore, was not beyond him (see Isaiah 6; Luke 2).

And true still, as true as ever, as true as in the days of Isaiah and of Simeon, are these things now. The Spirit leads in a path which nature never treads. Nature stands apart and is afraid; yea, will rebuke where faith is full of liberty. And these diverse ways of nature and of faith we may well remember for our comfort and strengthening, as we look at the Son of God, and meditate on mysteries and counsels of God connected with Him.

The Remembrancer 19:41-49.

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.5

The New Heavens and the New Earth: God All in All

The Sin of the World Removed

It seems that many Christians are not clear on the difference between sins, as committed acts, and sin, as the root of evil with us. This affects, among much else, understanding John 1:29 and Heb. 9:27. In view of this lack of clearness, and the bearing of the work on the cross as the foundation for the bringing in of the new heavens and earth, wherein righteousness *dwells* (2 Pet. 3:13), a lengthy extract from J. N. Darby on these matters is in order here.

In the first place I have frequently insisted on sin being put away by the sacrifice of Christ, in the sense that the believer stands before God perfectly justified and accepted, the Lord imputing no sin; he is perfectly clear before God. And this, thank God, I believe as I ever did. It is our blessed privilege in Christ. May every quickened soul enjoy it! God forbid that any nicety of expression should enfeeble it. But when expressions, not actually the word of God, are used, and conclusions are drawn from them, as if they were scriptural statements, we are forced to be more accurate. And this has been the case in the statement that sin has been put away by the sacrifice of Christ. This scripture does not state. He appeared once, in the consummation of ages, for the putting away of sin (*eis athetesis*) by the sacrifice of Himself.

I had long ago noticed that the expression, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," would have its perfect completion only in the new heaven and the new earth, though the work on which that state was based was finished by God's Lamb once for all on the cross; but the force of Heb. 9: 26 had not been so especially noted. Yet it is essentially the same truth. Sin, that hated thing, must be put out of that world which God created

for His own glory.

We must not confound clearing our conscience and redeeming us, and putting away sin out of God's world as that which is offensive to Him. Verse 28 speaks of Christ's bearing the sins of many. Thus they are perfectly cleared.

But sin remains in the flesh and in the world, and it must be set aside, all things in heaven and earth reconciled to God; and this will take place. The work on which it is based, in virtue of which it will be accomplished by power, the work in which God is morally glorified perfectly and for ever, is accomplished, and Christ sits at the right hand of God in virtue of it. But the sins of the many who come under grace have been borne by Him, and the believer has been washed from all. Nor is this all as to him. Not only has Christ borne all his sins, but for faith he has died with Christ, and as dead he is justified from sin: the old man has been crucified with Christ. Sin in the flesh was condemned on the cross, and there is no condemnation for him.

It is in this general sense of our standing before God that it has been said that sin was put away, and, thank God, it is so. But the real thought was all guilt and imputation in our standing before God. But the putting away sin has a wider application in scripture; all things in heaven and earth are to be reconciled to God. Righteousness is to dwell in the new heaven and the new earth, and in a modified sense this will be the case even in the reign of Christ. Then it will be effected by power. But the work by which morally that is done in righteousness and for God's glory, in which it is really done in the moral sense, is accomplished, all that God is having been glorified on the cross where Christ was made sin; and faith lays hold on this.

Alas! very few Christians even make the difference of sins or guilt, and *sin*. Our sins are all forgiven, we are perfectly washed from them; and, besides this, as dead with Christ, the old man is for faith put off; its condemnation was in Christ's death. We are not in the flesh, though actually the flesh is in us. But the putting away of sin goes far wider, the putting it away out of God's sight in the world. And this, as a result, is not accomplished, though the work be perfectly accomplished on which that result is founded, and that work is in one sense more important than the fact, because God has been perfectly glorified there, in virtue of which it will be accomplished; and faith knows this work is done, and rejoices that there is no condemnation for the believer before God, the conscience being purged from sins, and sin in the flesh being condemned in the cross. So that there is no imputation and no condemnation. But sin exists. The effect of the work, as in God's purpose, is not as yet made good. Even as to the believer, he cannot say, I have no sin. "He that is dead is justified from sin" (not sins) here; but I have this side to reckon myself dead, Christ having died to sin.

If I say sin is put away, I weaken the force of "putting away," for sin is still there. It is not the world in which righteousness dwells. The sins of God's people have been borne, and the blood of propitiation is on the mercy-seat; so that we can go to the world and beseech sinners to come, as though God did

beseech by us, in our little measure. That work is all done and accepted which enables me to do it. I can say to the believer that he is all dear, white as snow before God. But the putting away of sin is a wider thing. John 1 itself shows this -- the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (not has taken away, nor {does it mean} sins). It is the removal of sin in God's sight in the world, a result not yet accomplished. This passage refers specifically to the result, Heb. 9:26 to the purpose and means of its being done, as verse 28 does to the other question of our actual guilt.

Incorrect expressions I should not make a fuss about; God graciously bears with them, if the heart is earnest and right. I do not stand in the gate to make a man an offender for a word. Here I inquire merely what is correct when the question is raised. Conclusions from what is not in scripture I do not allow. ¹ ♦

You notice it is not "taketh away the sins," nor "has taken" away the sin; you never get either. Often people say Christ has taken away original sin and so on; here it simply says He is the doer of it. It points Him out as such. He is in every sense God's Lamb, He is of God and suited to God, and the effect of the work of this Lamb is the removal of all sin totally out of the world, away from God's sight; He takes it clean away. The first Adam was set up an innocent man; but the moment he became a sinful man, all that God did and does now as to the world He does in respect of sin. If He judges, it is for sins; if He forgives and shows grace it refers to sin, whatever He does in government must have reference to that. There is sin, and God must act in respect of it now; when the new heavens come and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, then the ground of relationship between God and the world will be righteousness instead of sin, or indeed instead of innocence either. It is based upon accomplished redemption which never can lose its value, and therefore the ground of relationship is immutable in the nature of things. And that ground is already laid, though the thing itself has not yet come. We have justification and peace and reconciliation. This is however only one particular part of the result; in the new heavens and new earth the whole result will be completely fulfilled. The result is not produced in manifestation at all as yet. ² ♦

Governmental Reign Ended

In Chapter 7.1 we saw that the Davidic reign and the reign of the Son of man (a wider expression) will end, and not carry over into the eternal state. It would be helpful to review that material at this point. Here, the point is that in the new heavens and new earth, righteousness *dwells*, not *reigns* as in the

1. *Collected Writings* 23:181-183.

2. *Collected Writings* 25:229-230. See also www.seeandhearpublishers.com

millennium. The fact that righteousness *dwells*, rather than reigning, is in keeping with the fact that the reign of Christ, as man, will conclude; and we saw that conclusion stated in 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

Eph. 1:10 refers to the millennium:

... [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth.

The administration of the fulness of times is the time of Christ's reign:

Then the end, when he gives up the kingdom to him [who is] God and Father; when he shall have annulled all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he put all enemies under his feet. [The] last enemy is death (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

This is the time that the church reigns with Christ. The church is seen in Rev. 21:9-22:5 in connection with this millennial reign, characterized by the number 12, a number that has to do with governmental administration. This is not so in Rev. 21:1-8, which is, rather, the new heavens and earth, when God is all in all³ -- the state when Christ, as man, shall have given 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, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).

Another wrote:

But though the mediatorial kingdom {the millennial kingdom} is given up, of course Christ does not cease to be man. It is part of His perfection which remains forever. Instead of carrying on the mediatorial kingdom, when He has put down all rule and authority, He delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father. The result does not pass away. The proper personal glory does not pass away. The mediatorial glory will close, that which is personal never can.⁴

Christ no longer reigns as king, as man, though of course He will eternally, personally, be man. He will reign, of course; but as indicated in these Scriptures, the reign is of a different character. It is as God (Father, Son, and Spirit), God being all in all. As J. N. Darby wrote:

... 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

3. The reader might find three groups of eight things in Rev. 21:1-8. The three reminds US of the divine Three, while eight is, in Scripture, an indicator of that which is new.

4. *The Present Testimony* 8:321.

and ever (Rev. 22), but it is not in war or in judgment given to man. ⁵ ♦

He gives up the kingdom, that is certain, when He has subdued all principalities and power. His divine glory into which He has taken manhood {John 17:5} is immutable, that is also clear. It is a question of His relative place, not His person. We must, I think, distinguish between our relative place and conferred authority. This last Christ gives up. . .

This subjection of all things to His personal authority {as man} He will give up, not merely the millennial reign, but "all things" subjected to Him . . . but administrative authority is given up. ⁶ ♦

And finally, when the reigning and subjecting process is complete, and He gives up the kingdom whose power was needed for that, He takes the simple place as Man in the eternal blessedness of God -- still {Himself remaining, of course} "God over all, blessed for evermore," One with the Father -- but His place as the subject Man perfect, and we with Him. Wondrous thought! ⁷

. . . all administration and human dominion being given up, that the divine glory simply may be universal.

It is not said, "that the Father may be all in all"; because although Christ delivers up the kingdom as Man-mediator, He is none the less God over all things, blessed eternally with the Father and the Holy Ghost. ⁸ ♦

And this is what we find in Rev. 21:1-8, especially v. 3. No doubt, Rev. 22:5, "and they shall reign to the ages of ages," looks on to this new character, ⁹ for there is no need of governmental administration in the eternal state, as there was in the millennial state, during which all enemies were not put under His feet until the very end of it -- for the *last enemy* is death, and it is *at the great white throne* that the last enemy is brought into subjection (Rev. 20:14. The Father had given Him the kingdom; and when all was subject to the Son of man, He gives the kingdom up to Him who is God and Father, so that God (Father, Son, and Spirit) are all in all.

5. *Letters* 3:269. For more detail see *Letters* 1:27, 28. See also *Collected Writings* 34:319.

6. *Notes and Comments* 2:317.

7. *Collected writings* 32:421.

8. *Collected Writings* 2.

9. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* 2:987 (1983), commenting on Rev. 22:1, where the Lamb is seen on the throne, says:

It is significant also that the Lamb is pictured on the throne (mentioned also in v. 3). This makes it clear that 1 Corinthians 15:24 . . . does not mean that Christ's reign on the throne will end but that it will change its character. Christ is king of kings and Lord of lords (cf Rev. 17:14; 19:16) for all eternity.

True, the writer did not state that the two references *say* that this is eternally true -- which it really is not. He distorted 1 Cor. 15:24 to make it fit into his scheme that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is the eternal state describing a literal city. And, the reader will note that *he has withheld from us what the change in character is*. The ~~www.bibleknowledgecommentary.com~~ God (Father, Son, and Spirit).

It might be thought that 2 Peter 3:11 indicates an eternal reign of Christ *as man*:

... thus shall the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior be richly furnished unto you.

Why force this against the other texts? as if it means that there must be, say, a modified millennial reign for all eternity -- unless the object is to have a literal New Jerusalem, and nations, etc., in the eternal state. The eternal reign has nothing to do with governmental administration, which governmental administration is exactly the character of the reign of the Son of man, and which ends, as we saw, as 1 Cor. 15:24-28 asserts. He who is our Lord and Savior will eternally reign in the everlasting kingdom when God is all in all; when God as Father, Son, and Spirit reign in glory, when righteousness *dwells* in the new heavens and new earth.

God's Dwelling With Men

God's Dwelling With Men! Such is the title of a paper written by J. N. Darby and we shall here look at a part of it. God's dwelling with men in the new heavens and earth, with sin put away, and righteousness dwelling, is what characterizes the eternal state, though there be both heavenly and earthly glory. Now, it is *man's day* (1 Cor. 4:4). When the smiting stone of Dan. 2 smashes the image, bringing down the Gentile power, man's day will be brought to an end. This is, of course, at the appearing of Christ in glory. That inaugurates the *day of the Lord*, which commences with the appearing and goes on to the great white throne. It is the time when a King reigns in righteousness (Isa. 32:1). The last thing to occur in the day of the Lord is the passing away of the present heavens:

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, and [the elements, burning with fervent heat, shall be dissolved, and [the] earth and the works in it shall be burnt up (2 Pet. 3:10).

The reason for this event is given in 2 Pet. 3:12:

... the coming of the day of God, by reason of which [the] heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved ...

The conflagration is necessary for the introduction of the *day of God*. That is the eternal state. This conflagration is followed by the new heavens and earth:

But, according to his promise, we wait for the new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness (2 Pet. 3:13).

Three Characteristic Phases of Righteousness

righteousness suffers	righteousness reigns	righteousness dwells
grace reigns through righteous.	King reigns in righteousness	God all in all
man's day now	day of the Lord millennium	day of God eternal state

Now some comments from JND's *God's Dwelling With Men*:

In this part of the chapter {Rev. 21:1-8} we have the end of all things, when the mediatorial work of Christ, even as king in subduing all things, is finished, and He has given up the kingdom that God may be all in all {1 Cor. 15:24-28}; when the final result is produced in the new heaven and the new earth; when the former things have passed away; when everything is in its own essential blessedness in the presence of God, and we have not only got blessing, but this in glory; it leads us in a peculiar manner to see the way in which the thought and counsel of God have been at all times to make man His dwelling-place. This is not always observed in Scripture; but when God's ways are brought out, and also particularly His holiness as it is said in the Psalms, "Holiness becometh shine house, O Lord, for ever," then we have the purpose of God unfolded to us to make man His dwelling-place; and therefore we find the goodness and love of God finally displayed.

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The language is figurative, no doubt; but there is this full and complete effect of God's own dealing and working in the removal of everything that can create a pang. But there is more in this than that tears are wiped away: God shall do it. There is the compassion that has caused the removal of the sorrow, and this is more than that the sorrow is gone. It is God who has removed all. If the evil is gone and the sense of pain, it is God who has put them away from the heart. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Not only has He taken away the evil, but it is never to be any more. That is, there is now full and perfect security and blessedness. All the evil is gone, and all those things too through which man was exercised to bring him to a point where he could really meet God. The love of God takes the place of everything, and, filling all things with Himself, precludes the possibility of evil ever coming in again: the contrast of man's paradise of old, as we all know.

Then come two great principles in verses 6, 7: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." First, there is the one who is athirst, and then the one who overcomes. These are the ways in which the Spirit works; and God always answers the workings of the Spirit. Whenever the Spirit acts in producing desires and wants (it may be at first after holiness or forgiveness, and then after communion and enjoying God), they are all perfectly satisfied in God. Therefore it is said, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life." It is not merely, mark, the water of life that is given here; but there is given "of the fountain," that which springs up in the presence of God. What a thing to find! Thus the soul is perfectly satisfied with the fountain of blessedness for which he is thirsting, even God Himself, whom he is rendered capable of enjoying. He is at the wellspring.

The second principle is that he that overcomes shall inherit. Here we find not desires satisfied, but difficulties overcome. It was so with Jesus Himself, as it is said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." "He that overcometh shall inherit these things," as associated with Christ, "and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." He comes into immediate connection with God. In the one we have the satisfaction of spiritual wants, in the other the relationship wherein we stand. This is the general thought. Such is the state and condition of those spoken of; but there is another point which deserves to be enlarged on a little more, and that is the personal happiness found in it. There is no longer a Mediator, no longer the need of one; there is no more the need of mercy and grace found to help in the time of need.

When we come a little closer, there are other things that claim attention. We have here, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people," etc. His dwelling-place is with men. It is no more an individual or a national thing. Of course the wicked are put away; but God's dwelling-place is no longer with the Jews, but with men. And this too is to be noticed, that the church has a very peculiar place.

The thought of God was to be with men, dwelling and abiding with them. Christ dwelt here among men, but it was a short time, and now He is cast out; but that will be another thing. Nor will it be as He appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Even Christ's stay was to end; but not so the dwelling of God by-and-by. Neither is it simply men made blessed; but God will dwell with them. Such is the distinctive, eternal character of blessing; but also the church is to possess it in a peculiar way, already remarked on in this passage. It is not life only, but the presence of God with men as His abiding place to reveal Himself and bless them fully.¹⁰

The Transition to the Eternal State

The completion of the great white throne judgment initiates the transition to the new heavens and earth. It is said of the present heavens and earth:

... from whose face the earth and the heavens fled, and there was found no place for them (Rev. 20:9).

This is a transition from the day of the Lord to the "day of God"; that is, to the eternal state. It is *in* the day of the Lord that the dissolution of the present heavens and earth take place:

But the day of [the] Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, and [the] elements, burning with heat shall be dissolved, and [the] earth and the works in it shall be burnt up.

All these things then being to be dissolved, what ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, by reason of which [the] heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and [the] elements, burning with heat, shall melt? But, according to his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, as ye wait for these things, be diligent to be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless, and account the longsuffering of our Lord [to be] salvation ... (2 Pet. 3:10-14).

It is on account of the introduction of *the day of God* (i.e., the eternal state) that the dissolution will take place and the new heavens and earth be introduced. It will then be "the day of God," the day when God shall be all in all (1 Cor. 15:24-28), the day following when the last enemy (death) shall have been subjected to the Son of man, and He shall, as man, have completed His reign (perfectly) and have given the kingdom to him who is God and Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:24-28). Thus, the day of God will have displaced the day of the Lord, the last thing in the day of the Lord having been the great white throne judgment conducted by Christ, as man, when death and hades were cast into the lake of fire.

Our Lord said:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall in no wise pass away (Matt. 24:34).

And we also read:

And, *Thou* in the beginning, Lord, hast founded the earth, and the works of thy hands are the heavens. *They* shall perish, but *thou* continuest still; and they shall grow old as a garment, and as a covering shalt thou roll them up, and they shall be changed; but *thou* art the Same, and thy years shall not fail (Heb. 1:10-12).

The Son is Jehovah as is the Father and the Spirit. The Son created the present heavens and earth. They shall perish but God and His Word exist forever.

W. R. Newell insists on the word "exchanged" instead of "changed," supporting the notion of R. Govett, "They are of new materials: not merely a

purifying of the old.”¹¹ It seems that this means an *annihilation* of the present heavens and earth. *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, under “Change,” says:

ALLASO . . . to make other than it is . . . of the final renewal of the material creation, Heb. 1:12 . . . In Rom. 1:23 it has its other meaning, to exchange.

It seems to me neither wise or scriptural for a real Christian to speak of God annihilating anything.

The body that we shall have in the glorified state will be composed of material from this creation, as will the bodies of the wicked when resurrected in the resurrection of the unjust, to appear before the great white throne -- before the new heavens and earth. And in those bodies they will be cast into hell, there to be eternally. My point is that something of this creation *is* carried over into the eternal state. It need not be that the present heavens and earth be annihilated to be in the *new* state. The *new* Jerusalem, and the *new* heavens and the *new* earth, and God making all things *new* (Rev. 21), are *new* in the sense of differing in character. No doubt the change is to us unimaginable, the differing in character beyond our comprehension. But for all that, it is not necessary for God to annihilate all material and energy in the present heavens and earth in order for Him to create the new heavens and earth, any more than you as an individual needed to be annihilated to be a *new* creation in Christ:

So if any one [be] in Christ, [there is] a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold all things have become new (2 Cor. 5:17).

This remains to be made good as touching our bodies when our bodies of humiliation are transformed into conformity to His body of glory (Phil. 3:21).

The universe is tainted with sin and will be dissolved by God. Particularly, “the earth and the works in it shall be burnt up” (2 Pet. 3:12). Not water, as in the flood of Noah (2 Pet. 3:5, 6):

But the present heavens and the earth by his word are laid up in store, kept for fire unto a day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (2 Pet. 3:7).

And the “destruction” of the ungodly does not mean their annihilation either, though some might take comfort in the idea of such an annihilation. It is indeed a fearsome thing to contemplate that they “shall pay the penalty [of] everlasting destruction from [the] presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might” (2 Thess. 1:9). But some want to quiet themselves that the “everlasting destruction” means that the annihilation will last forever. Not so, awful as it is to contemplate it. There will everlastingly be that witness to the great truth that “God is light.” God manifested it on the cross when He who is God and man was made sin for us -- when He imparted the infinite value and glory of His person to that work. What a display that “God is light”! And he who is not cleansed by that work will, outside the new heavens and earth, be an everlasting confirmation and evidence that God is light;

while those in the new heavens and earth show forth, not only that God is light, but that God is love. It is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He infinitely glorified God and God acts in keeping with that work on the cross; Christ's person and work being the basis on which the new heavens and earth are brought into being. Ed.

Reversing the Charge

And the whole assembly of the children of Israel murmured on the morrow against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of Jehovah (Num. 16:41).

Well, Moses and Aaron were greatly outnumbered. Surely so large a crowd, sharing this opinion, could not be wrong. Why, the evidence of the guilt of Moses and Aaron was apparent, there for all to see.

You say, but that is so gross! No doubt it is, but it happened for our instruction, so as not to do likewise (1 Cor. 10). However, it is both humbling and distressing to see Christians engaged in such reversal. And it is not at all uncommon. What they themselves are guilty of, they dress up in a pious garb, and then charge others with their own sin. And that is so gross! The self-deception is awful.

What kind of a fog do you think suffuses itself through the minds of those who act as the Israelites here? The mind is deluded and the eye is not single. What is at the bottom of this is self, *self*, *self*. It is self-centeredness, not Christ-centeredness. Things are referenced to self, not to Christ. It is me, myself, and I, that awful triad. How blessed it is to contemplate One of whom it is written that He pleased not Himself. Ed

Conscience and the Hammer

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.

J. N. Darby, *Notes and Jottings*, p. 420.

The New Covenant and the Church

Chapter 1

The New Covenant and The Lord's Supper

The Church not Under a Covenant

Putting the church under an earthly covenant is Judaistic and obscures the heavenly position and character of the Christian. Among the purposes of this series it is desired to make it clear that the church is not under an earthly covenant.

Moreover, in an effort to solve a difficulty with the subject of the new covenant and the church, and maintain the truth of the heavenly position of the church, a special *church new covenant*,¹ distinct from Israel's new covenant, has been invented. But inventions in divine matters also obscure truth, even if the intention was to preserve and defend other truths. We maintain that Scripture does not teach that the church is under an earthly covenant and that there is no special *church new covenant* instituted by our Lord at the institution of 'the Lord's supper.'

Rom. 16:25, 26, Col. 1:26 and Eph. 3:9 clearly show that the subject of the mystery (Christ and the church) was not the subject of OT prophecy. Silence was kept concerning it. It was not made known in the various time periods and it was not made known to the various generations. It was not hid in the OT; it was hid in God. It is required of covenant theology to circumvent these plain declarations of Scripture. If Scripture says it was silent about it (Rom. 16:25, 26) they want to show that Scripture was *not* silent about it. And when such

1. The idea of a *church new covenant* will be explained in another article. There was no *church old covenant* and so a *church new covenant* seems to be like an oxymoron.

contortion and distortion has been accomplished, then are we to have a discussion of the merits of covenant theology versus dispensational truth? The soul that acknowledges what those three Scriptures *state expressly* is thereby pointed toward dispensational truth and away from covenant theology which finds the church prophesied in the OT. These Scriptures show that the new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 is not about the church.

As in the case of such Scriptures directing us to dispensational truth, so there is a parallel directing us regarding the subject of the covenants. And Romans, which so expressly stated "silence was kept in [the] times of the ages," concerning the mystery, also tells us to whom the covenants belong. This is as plain, clear, and express as the other:

... my brethren, *my kinsmen*, according to the flesh; who are Israelites; *whose [is]* the adoption, and the glory, and *the covenants*, and the law-giving, and the service, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom, as according to flesh, [is] the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 9:4, 5).

The "adoption" refers to the *national* position of Israel in the millennium. Indeed, these things belong to national Israel -- including, note, "the promises." So is it with "the law-giving." The law was for Israel, given to Israel; not to, and for, the Gentiles. And just so is it with the covenants given to, and for, Israel. ² Those covenants were not for Gentiles (and certainly not for the church). Consonant with this is the statement that the Gentiles were:

... strangers from the covenants of promise (Eph. 2:12).

(Continued on page 93)

2. Of course, just as the express statements concerning silence, etc., about the mystery are circumvented in order to connect the church with Israel, so effort may be made to put the church under the new covenant (which covenant is one of the earthly covenants, and Israel will be under it in the millennium). The Christian has "adoption," (Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5), which really is "sonship." This is not the "adoption" in Rom. 9:4, 5, which is a *national* adoption. And so with the others of the seven named things that belong to Israel. Take, for example, "the law-giving." What has that to do with a Christian?

So that, my brethren, ye also have been made dead to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another ... (Rom. 7:4).

On the other hand, the laws of God will be written in the hearts of the Israelites when under the new covenant (Heb. 8:10).

Because the words *service*, *glory*, etc., are used in connection with the Christian's portion, does not mean they refer to the same *thing* as Rom. 9:4, 5. And this reminds me that W. Kelly well remarked somewhere that because Noah was in an ark, and Moses was in an ark, we have not yet learned that they are the same *thing*! Some common words do not prove identity of *application*, nor that necessarily the same *thing* is meant. Rom. 9:4 is express: "my kinsmen, according to the flesh; who are Israelites." Bow to it and the soul receives light!

Notes on the Chart

SUSPENSION OF THE KINGDOM ANNOUNCEMENT

The two pink colored rectangles illustrate periods during which the gospel of the kingdom is preached. The first period is composed of two phases; phase one is the period during which John preached, having come in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17), as the forerunner of Messiah. After John was in prison, the Lord also announced the kingdom as at hand -- until, as we see in Matt. 12, the power of the Spirit working in Christ was attributed to Beelzebub. This attribution was the unpardonable sin. Then in Matt. 13 the parables of the kingdom *in mystery* were given by the Lord, indicating a change in testimony -- from the advent of the kingdom to the coming introduction of a *mystery* phase of the kingdom -- *unforeseen by the OT prophets*. Thus, the announcement of the kingdom as at hand was suspended. This is what is meant by "the postponement of the kingdom." The kingdom was presented in the form of a moral test, as embodied in the meek and lowly One, and this brought out the state of the first man, in the persons of the Jews. Messiah was rejected. The gospel of the kingdom will again be preached during Daniel's 70th week, illustrated by the second pink rectangle -- and Christ will subsequently appear in glory.

"The time is fulfilled" (Mark 1:15) refers to a period of time. The Lord said this in connection with the commencement of His preaching the kingdom as at hand, consequent upon John's preaching having come to a close. I understand the phrase to refer to that period of time occupied by John's preaching, as forerunner. He had completed his work as forerunner of Messiah -- "the time is fulfilled" -- leading to the moment for Messiah Himself to preach the kingdom as at hand.

SUSPENSION OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE AGE TO COME

The commencement of John's preaching, i.e., the breaking forth of prophetic utterance after centuries of silence, marked the arrival of the *epoch* preparatory to the close of the Mosaic age ("this age") and the introduction of the "age to come" (Matt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20); i.e., the millennium, the time of Messiah's reign before His ancients, in glory. However, this *epoch* was not actually followed by the introduction of the age to come. The introduction of the age to come is in suspension -- and the age merely goes on. "This age" (Matt. 12:32; 1 Cor. 2:8; 6:17; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:21) is the Mosaic age, which began at Sinai. We are in a period characterized by the suspension of the introduction of the "age to come." The Mosaic age merely continues on. And, we are in a period referred to as "the end of these days" (Heb. 1:2). The *epoch* called "the end of these days" commenced with the breaking forth of the prophetic ministry of Messiah's forerunner, John. But Messiah was rejected, and the introduction of the "age to come" is in suspension; and "the end of these days" continues on during this suspension. And thus "the end of these days" will still be there when the announcement of the kingdom as at hand is recommenced in Daniel's 70th week.

End of the Testing of The Suspension of the I And the Introduction of The Myst

First man's moral history, and standing in the flesh, ended.

Second Man established before God.

Hidden from
Saints se

THE HEA

"Consummation of the ages" (Heb. 9:26); refers to the testing of the first man and the same ages from which the mystery was hidden.

THE WHOLE WORLD
WHO IS NOW CALL

**TESTING OF THE FIRST
MAN FROM ADAM-FALLEN
TO THE CROSS**

**SUSPENS
THE WORL**

Kingdom announcement as at
hand -- now in suspension.

THE LORD

*"Upon who
10:11); ref
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SINAI

JOHN

THIS AGE (Matt. 1

IS --

**Since Christ's re
"this pres**

"The time is fulfilled" (Mark 1:15); John's forerunner ministry in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) is completed. See also Luke 4:18; Matt. 4:12, 17. Christ begins His public announcement.

*"The end of these
the end of the per
duced" (JND foot
meanwhile in susp*

First Man at the Cross, Destruction of the Age to Come, and The Heavenly Calling Meanwhile

THE MYSTERY

and generations (Col. 1:26)
 of the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6)

THE HEAVENLY CALLING (Heb. 3:1)

IN THE WICKED ONE (1 JOHN 5:19)
 "GOD OF THIS WORLD" (2 COR. 4:4)

GOD'S DIRECT DEALINGS WITH
 CHRIST APPEARS IN JUDGMENT

"the *ages of the ages* are come" (1 Cor.
 testing of the first man and the
 with the mystery was hidden.

Cor. 2:8; Eph. 1:21; 1 Tim. 6:17)
 OF THE LAW --
 it is newly characterized as
 world (age)" (Gal. 1:4)

Heb. 1:2): "A Hebrew expression for
 y, when Messiah was to be intro-
 change to the "age to come" is
 until Messiah appears in glory.

RAPTURE
 APPEARING

MILLENNIUM

CHRIST SMITES
 THE NATIONS

Kingdom announce-
 ment recommenced.

AGE TO COME
 (Matt. 12:32; Mark
 10:30; Luke 18:30;
 Heb. 6:5)

THE END (completion) OF
 THE AGE (Matt. 13:39, 40,
 49; 24:3; 28:20)

70th
 week

MEANWHILE

During the prolonging of "this age," i.e., the Mosaic age, and the prolonging of "the end of these days," and the suspension of the gospel of the kingdom, God has introduced the heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1) and has unfolded the secret hidden from the OT prophets, even the mystery (Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9). The trial of the first man ended at the cross and God has subsequently established the Second Man in His proper place and sphere. "This age" has received from God a new *characterization*, consequent upon the end of the testing of the first man: it is "this present *evil* age" (Gal. 1:4). Also, Satan is *now* declared to be its god (2 Cor. 4:4). Moreover, since the close of the testing of the first man, God has pronounced this conclusion: the whole world lieth in the wicked one (1 John 5:19).

God had been dealing with the world up to the cross; dealing with it in the testing of the first man while he had a standing in the flesh. That the test involved the persons of the Jews does not change this fact. It was *the first man* that was being tested! -- in that Jewish form. The testing having been concluded, God's direct dealings with the world are in suspension until Christ appears in glory to deal with the world directly. Meanwhile, the Christian is heavenly (1 Cor. 15:48), though one could not tell that from the conduct of most Christians!

CHRISTIANITY NOT AN AGE, NOR AN AGE OF TESTING OF MAN

Christianity is not an age among the earthly ages. There was no change in the age at Pentecost. The coming of the Spirit did not inaugurate a new, earthly age. He came to unite believers in one body to Christ, the Head, *in heaven*. There is no earthly (or heavenly!) age of grace. That is a theological figment at war with dispensational truth -- setting aside such important truth as the completion of the testing of the first man at the cross; pretending, even, that man was not fully tested by grace, when He who is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14) was presented to the first man, in the persons of the favored Jews. Grace and truth were hated: "they have both seen and hated both me and my Father" (John 15:24). It is an insult to Christ to say God is now testing the first man by grace.

THE KINGDOM NOT AN AGE OF TESTING OF THE FIRST MAN

We are aware that, particularly as presented in Matthew, the first man was tested by the presentation of the King, as well as by the Kingdom as embodied in Him-- a moral test for the first man that he would indubitably fail; and this was part of the ways of God to bring His eternal purpose to pass, and glorify Himself in Christ in the two spheres: the heavenly and the earthly (Eph. 1:10). The millennial kingdom, then, is not a testing of the first man. The testing was completed at the cross, hence the introduction of all that follows are things based upon the completion of the work of Christ, His resurrection, and His glorification. The millennium is the display of God's glory in Christ, in the earthly sphere, where Christ glorified God. John 17; Psa. 150.

A principle covenant of promise is, of course, the new covenant :

Behold days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers . . . (Jer. 31:31, 32).

A "dispensationalist" knows that this is for national Israel in the millennium, when they receive "the adoption" -- when:

. . . all Israel shall be saved. According as it is written, The deliverer shall come out of Zion; he shall turn ungodliness away from Jacob. And this is the covenant from me to them, when I shall have taken away their sins (Rom. 11:26, 27).

That very covenant spoken of in Jer. 31:31, which has to do with the removal of their sins, is this very covenant when He shall have taken away their sins. For Paul, this was still future, as he develops God's dispensational ways in Rom. 9-11 -- for what God's grace wrought meanwhile (Rom. 1-8) is thus shown to not set aside His promises to Israel. Keep it steadfastly in view that "the promises" are for Paul's kinsmen *according to the flesh* (Rom. 9:4).

It is clear also from Heb. 8 that the covenant of Jer. 31:31 is for Judah and Israel. Spiritual alchemy cannot transmute it into a covenant for the church. Paul writing some time after the church was formed, told us that the covenants belong to His kinsmen according to the flesh, a thing not true if the church is under a covenant. The subterfuge used by spiritual alchemy is, of course, to claim that the church is the spiritual continuator of Israel, and that the Christian is a true Jew and the Israel of God. But Paul said the covenants belonged to whom?:

. . . my brethren, ***my kinsmen, according to the flesh***; who are Israelites; whose [is] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants . . . (Rom. 9:4, 5).

Just as bowing to the express declarations of Rom. 16:25, 26, Col. 1:26 and Eph. 3:9 points to the distinction between Israel and the church, so do the Scriptures concerning the covenants just as clearly point to belonging to Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites.

It might be well to be sure that we understand that the future nation that will be born in a day (Isa. 66:8), will all be righteous (Isa. 60:21); they will all be saved (Rom. 11:25), God having purged out the rebels before He brings them into the bond of the covenant (Ezek. 20:37, 38). What will be left after the purging is those that will be under the new covenant. *They* will be spiritual Israel -- but *they* are also Paul's ***kinsmen according to the flesh***, who are Israelites. To be under the new covenant, one must be Paul's kinsman according to the flesh. The Christian is not such, though a few are Jews by nationality. The church is not under the new covenant!

That the church is under the new covenant is a myth of covenant theology.
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The system transmutes the Christian into a spiritual Jew, but it has not yet learned how to transmute the Christian into Paul's kinsman according to the flesh, who is an Israelite. I might mention in passing that "a true Jew" is an ethnic Jew who knows the Lord as his Savior.³

2 Cor. 3 does not mean that the church is under a covenant. It may suit covenant theology to claim that it is, but that forces a contradiction on Scripture. 2 Cor. 3 will be considered in the next article in this series, if the lord will. The point here is that rejecting the explanation by J. N. Darby concerning 2 Cor. 3. L. S. Chafer invented a new covenant for the Church distinct from the new covenant for Israel.

What the invention of a Church New Covenant means is that when Paul wrote some years after the formation of the church, the church was actually under that Church New Covenant at the very time Paul wrote Romans -- that very Paul who wrote: "my kinsmen according to the flesh . . . whose [is] . . . the covenants" (Rom. 9:4). Explanations by "dispensationalists" who seek to circumvent this are no more acceptable than the circumventions of covenant theology. As the heading for this section states: the church not under a covenant.⁴

The New Covenant expresses what Israel's standing will be, a standing in forgiveness of sins and with the law written in the heart. And what we read in Ezek. 40-48 will be carried out under the New Covenant. These covenants are God's administrative order for an earthly people.

Does the New Covenant express the standing of the Christian? Is to be "in Christ" a New Covenant standing? I am sorry if you think so, for you have not yet begun to understand what it is to be *in Christ*, unless you once had some sight of it but have slipped off into "covenant theology." *Christ's place is our place before God. We are accepted in the Beloved. We are seated in Christ*

3. Rom. 2:17-29 is about Jews. In v. 17, Paul turns from the philosophic moralizer (vv. 1-16) to the Jew: "But if *thou* art named a Jew . . ." Rom. 2:27, 28 refers to an ethnic Jew who has a circumcised heart as a Jew inwardly, not merely outwardly. The meaning of circumcision has been made good to his heart; and as thus answering in his soul to its meaning, is a Jew inwardly.
4. Interestingly, concerning the new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34, Charles L. Feinberg remarked:

It could not be made with the church because no former (old) had been made with her (so Ironside, *Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah*) (*Jeremiah A Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 219, 1982).

Actually, H. A. Ironside put it stronger than that:

It were folly to speak of a new covenant with the Church when no former covenant had been made with us (*Notes on the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah "The Weeping Prophet,"* New York: Loizeaux, p. 163, 1952, original 1905, revised in 1928).

Jesus, in the heavenlies. This has nothing to do with the New Covenant itself, though the blood is the grand foundation upon which God brings us Christians before Himself *in Christ*. To put the Christian under the New Covenant is to say that the New Covenant expresses the Christian's position before God. It is altogether false. It is the lowering of Christianity to the position of millennial Israel. It is to lower the heavenly down to the earthly blessing.

The Use of the Word Covenant in the New Testament

The following survey of the use of the word covenant in the NT is helpful:

In every part of the New Testament where the word {testament} often occurs, I hope to show that it is "covenant," save in Heb. 9:16 and 17, where it is rightly "testament," and not "covenant." In every other passage it ought to be "covenant," and not "testament."

Begin with the first in Matt. 26: 28. Can there be the shade of a doubt here, or in Mark 14:24 (substantially equivalent), about the matter? Our Lord is speaking of the cup that He gave the disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant." First, Where would be the propriety of "new" applied to a "testament" or will? . . . But, secondly, there is another and stronger objection. What has "blood" to do with a testament or will? The moment we turn to the new "covenant" all is in place. The blood of Christ is exactly its foundation. The first covenant may have had the blood of victims connected with it, as its sanction, threatening death on those that proved unfaithful. This is the meaning of the blood in the first covenant (Ex. 24), which said as it were: If you fail to obey the law, you must die, as these victims died. The blood of the new covenant has an altogether opposed character. Christ's blood, as a starting-point, secures a perfect clearance for every soul who believes in Him. So the Lord, in giving the cup to the disciples, says, "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins." What has a "testament" to do with "remission of sins"? What has a will to do with blood? These constitute the strongest proofs that "covenant" is the thought, and that "testament" has nothing whatever to do with this place.

In Luke 22 you will find similarly, where our Lord is speaking on the same occasion. Therefore we need not dwell on it. "This cup is the new covenant," etc. The expression is different, but the same truth appears. It is the "new covenant in my blood which is shed for you." The idea of a will is wholly foreign to the place. If we said, "the new will," what would be the meaning of this? How could there be a "new will" in His blood? "Covenant in His blood" is perfectly intelligible, and is in fact the chief distinction of the new covenant in contrast with the old which sought but found not man obedient. The old had for its sanction the threat of death; the new on the contrary is based on the "blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanseth

from all sin." Cp. also 1 Cor. 11, where the apostle gives language similar to the words in Luke, and therefore calling for no other notice than that "testament" is wholly inappropriate there for the reasons given.

There are places where the Authorized Version {KJV version} gives "covenant," and which we of course pass by, because they are quite right. But we may turn now to 2 Cor. 3, which is the first that occurs in order after these, where "testament" is wrongly given. Ver. 6 says, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament." As we have already seen, "new" is out of place with a will. It ought therefore to be "covenant." It may be observed that there are two words for "new," one of which means "freshly made," which might in some cases have been applied to a testament. The other means "of a different character entirely"; new in principle, whether recent or not. Now this last is the word employed here. What has it to do with a will? "Freshly made one" might sometimes apply; but "one of a totally different character" does not apply to a will, but admirably to contrasted covenants. What the apostle implies is that, although the new covenant is not yet formally brought in to the houses of Israel and Judah, the Christian anticipates the blessing, as the Christian servant is characterized by the new covenant, not in letter it is true, but in spirit. We come under the power of the new covenant {because its basis is grace} before it is actually brought to bear on the two houses of Israel. Oh! what a comfort this is. Thus the notion here, too, is "covenant," and not "testament." In this same chapter he says (v. 14), "For until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament." A great many no doubt, fancy this means the Old Testament scriptures, and so men have adopted that very term as their title. But what really is the "old covenant" here? The covenant of law that condemned Israel. Here again there would be no good sense in reading the "old will." It can only mislead, whereas if we say "old covenant" we can all understand this, which is exactly what the Jews had to do with.

There is only another passage outside Hebrews -- in Rev. 11:19. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in the temple the ark of His testament." And here the Old Testament affirms what one might argue out. "Ark of the covenant" is scriptural; but what is the "ark of a testament"? Has the ark of a will any just sense? As far as my memory serves, I do not recollect any other instance of "testament" employed, excepting in Hebrews, where it has been once or twice before us, and therefore to these I turn to finish the subject, even if it seem a rather minute examination, which I hope may prove a good confirmation of your faith in the word of God as well as in learning how necessary is the Spirit of God to give certainty of understanding the word. Had it not been for these considerations I should not have occupied your time with the matter. In the Authorized Version of Heb. 7:22 we read, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." There again, is not "surety of a testament" strange language? Surety "of a covenant" is as important as intelligible, as even the Authorized Version uniformly renders in Heb. 8 following. Therefore the inference is unavoidable, that the context in every present truth did not have the right counterpart, whether

"covenant" or "testament." But if I am right in interpreting the context in detail, you may rest assured that in the Bible wherever the word "testament" occurs, it ought to be "covenant," except in the two verses immediately before us, Heb. 9:16, 17.

To these, then, let us turn. Can anything be plainer than their reference to a will in order to illustrate the death of our Lord? "For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator." This is sufficiently evident. Were "covenant" said it would not even be true. Where men make a covenant, is it in the least necessary that either of the contracting parties should die? Jacob and Laban made a covenant between them; but did it at all demand, in order to its validity, that Jacob or Laban should die? If either had died, there would rather have been an end of it so far. But when he who makes a testament dies, then only can the children, or others to whom he has devised his property, receive the benefit by virtue of the will. "Where a testament (or will) is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator, for a testament is of force after men are dead." In wills only, and not in covenants, is such a necessity universally found. A man makes a will, but it does not come into force so long as he lives -- only when he dies. On this hinges the apostolic illustration, which is as apt as it is undeniably evident. The effect of a will is only after the death of the testator. Perhaps something may be contingent upon the death of another; as a man leaves to his children upon the death of his wife. But in any case death must intervene, if any are immediately concerned in the property. It is only after one or more are dead that the living heirs inherit. "Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Nothing can be more telling or simple. In the case of a covenant, is there anything of the kind? A covenant comes into force while people are alive. Take Jacob and Laban, where neither was called to die. Take an earlier covenant, where God makes one between Himself and the earth, as revealed to Noah.

I am aware that some try to slip in the death of sacrifices here; but the word means not a covenanting victim, but a "testator"; and all efforts are vain to upset or change the idea. It is the death of the person who made the testament. It is not necessary to insist on more than the principle generally, but if the application be pressed personally, how does this apply to the Lord? Very exactly indeed; for the Lord became a man in order that He might die, to give us (a vast deal more, but also) an everlasting inheritance. He that had spoken at Sinai is the selfsame One that came to die. The figure, therefore, of a testator applies in all its force. He was pleased thus to die, although One who in His divine nature could not die.⁵

Matthew, Mark, Luke and 1 Corinthians 11

Writing about the Lord's Supper as recorded in Matthew, J. N. Darby helps

with some of the differences in the accounts as being in accordance with the characteristic differences in the gospels. He wrote:

The Lord then institutes the supper, putting first Himself, then the blood of the new covenant, then its being shed for many, in the place of the Jewish passover, the old covenant, and the limitation of everything to that people. This is the distinctive character of the supper here, suited to this Gospel. ⁶ Mark's account is essentially the same. Luke's is much more personal and connected with (surely divine, but also) human affection to the disciples. But in all it is the blood of the new covenant, or the new covenant in His blood. In Matthew it is leaving association with them, breaking with men, even with the disciples down here, drinking no more of the fruit of the vine; only in Matthew and Mark His drinking it again with them after a wholly new sort is also spoken of. It was the simple and blessed testimony of the displacing all that was before, man and any previously presented ground of man's relationships with God. ⁷

No new covenant was yet established; but the blood on which it was to be founded was shed, and it could be announced so that Judaism was closed, that is, man's relationships with God as in flesh, and on the footing of man's righteousness; also closing any connection between the Lord come in flesh and man. His body, but His body as dead, was given as meat indeed. This carried the double testimony that there was no possible connection any more between man in the flesh and God; but also, that redemption was wrought, the true passover offered. Hence, as before that, death was death to man, now he lives by death, the death of Christ. It is not here as in Luke, "Do this in remembrance of me," but His separation from His disciples is strongly marked. He does not eat or drink with them, but gives what was the sign of His death to them, the sign of a perfect redemption by His death, but that His death, not His life with them was their portion with Him. This was a total and mighty change, the essence of their whole relationships with Him and having an eternal character. Death was the portion of the Son of God as man down here, and their part with Him and with God was founded on it.

6. {In the account of the Lord's Supper in the Synoptics, the expression, "for the remission of sins," appears only in Matthew, which emphasizes dispensational changes and has the Jews, and the change from Judaism, especially in view. The old covenant made remembrance of sins every year. Here, then, *the forgiveness of sins* by the blood of Christ is emphasized. Moreover, Matthew records that He said that the blood was "for many," i.e., for others besides *the Jews*.}

7. {In Matthew, the disciples (except Judas) are the Israel of God, the true remnant, in contrast to the nation, looked at as connected with the old covenant, from which nation the kingdom was to be taken away. When He spoke of drinking anew in the kingdom of the Father, He said, "when I drink it new *with you*." They will enjoy companionship. In Gal. 6:16 we read:

And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

These are believing Gentiles and believing Jews (the Israel of God) -- not looked at here in the unity of one body in Christ, but associated together, as we all will be when with the Lord.}

The blood was shed for many for the remission of sins, and the new covenant was founded on it; all was dispensationally changed, but all was eternally founded also as to man, the believer's relationships with God. But present association was wholly broken off till renewed in a new way in His Father's kingdom. This is an expression of Matthew's Gospel {peculiar to Matthew} like the kingdom of heaven. It is the higher and heavenly part of the kingdom. In Matt. 13 we find it in the explanation of the tares and the wheat. We read, "The Son of man shall gather out of His kingdom⁸ all things that offend . . . then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," that higher part where they shall be in the same glory as Christ Himself, predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself: only here it is My Father; there, "their." Then Christ will anew, but in a blessedly new way, enjoy companionship with His disciples and they with Him. Blessed place and blessed familiarity! If the Lord has given up the companionship of His disciples, it is to accomplish their redemption; and He waits, as we wait, to renew it in a better place and in brighter scenes, but as truly and more intimately than they could have it here. Nothing more beautiful or touching than this intimation of the Lord at the moment of His departure. He showed where His heart was, His love to us. And they sung a hymn together, and went out to the mount of Olives, His wonted resort.⁹ ♦

The old covenant, it is clear, is the covenant made with the Jews at Sinai. The Gentiles are not there for anything. The new one refers to the old; it will be established really with Judah and Israel, according to the prophecy of Jer. 31:31-34. What then have we to do with the new alliance, we other Gentiles, may we ask ourselves? This is the answer. It is clear that the covenant itself treats with the Jews and with Israel, but upon principles of grace, and based upon blood of perfect efficacy before God. Now, for the moment, Israel is put aside as a nation. It enjoys no covenant.

What then is the state of things with respect to the covenant? It is that the Mediator of the covenant has shed His blood, and thus the basis of the covenant is laid: it is confirmed and established immutable before God. Christ is ascended on high, and we are one with Him, enjoying all the effect which is essentially attached to His person and to His position. We have the

8. {The church itself is *not* a kingdom. The earthly part of the Kingdom (the millennial reign) is the Kingdom of the Son of man and the heavenly part is the Kingdom of the Father. While the church has a higher portion than shining with the righteous in the Kingdom of the Father, the saints that form the church also do, in common with all the resurrected saints, shine with the righteous in the Kingdom of the Father -- just as they also share in common with all who form the first resurrection (of which Christ Himself forms part, as firstfruits of it; the blessing of Rev. 20:6. These common portions of the heavenly saints in that day in no wise alters the eternal distinction and portion of the church, as such. Why deny common blessings with other saints because of distinctive blessings possessed? -- and why, on the other extreme, merge everyone? The church will be eternally distinct (Eph. 3:21).}

9. *Collected Writings* 24:198, 199. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

blood of the covenant. Those who are called to it exercise the ministry of the new covenant. Our position is to be united with the Mediator of the new covenant, and to enjoy all the privileges which He enjoys Himself, as having it established in His blood; though the covenant is not formed with us, it is established in Him before God, and we, we are in Him here below. What is the consequence of it? We drink of blood. If a Jew had drunk of blood under old covenant, it was death: could a man be nourished on death? It is the fruit of sin, it is his condemnation, it is the wrath of God, as the blood in the body was the life; and a Jew had no right to that. But Christ has suffered death. And can the Christian be nourished on death? Yes; it is salvation, the death of sin, the infinite proof of love. It is his life, the peace of his soul, the deliverance from sin, before God. What a difference! We drink of His blood, the proof of salvation and of grace, and the source of life. Nevertheless it is Jesus dead, of whom it is a question here.

There is in Heb. 13:20, another expression to which allusion may be made: God has "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." This shows us that Christ Himself is above, and has been raised according to the efficaciousness of the blood that He has shed to satisfy the glory of God. He, the only and beloved Son of the Father, charged Himself with our responsibility and our sins, and thus with the glory of God in this respect; and if this glory had not been completely satisfied, He could not evidently either rise again, or appear before Him whose majesty required that nothing should fail to the work. But He accomplished this work gloriously, and in that the Son of man has been glorified, and God *glorified in Him*; and He is ascended on high, not only as Son of God, but according to the efficaciousness of His work, in virtue of which He appears before the Father, the everlasting covenant being thus established in His blood. The question here {Heb. 13:20} is not of an old or a new covenant,¹⁰ which refers to particular circumstances, but of the intrinsic and essential worth of the blood of Christ . . .

We see here {in Matt.} that the Spirit declares the value of the blood in a general way; it is shed for many for the remission of sins. The Gospel which treats of the kingdom, and of the Messiah in the Jewish point of view, must necessarily shew that the death of Christ had another aspect. In Luke, where this distinction was not obligatory, because of the non-Jewish character of his Gospel, it is said: "My blood which is shed *for you*." We have then the blood of the new covenant and the remission of sins. The disciples were to drink of it, as they were also to eat of His *given* body. Such is their portion: to be nourished on the death of Jesus, and to show it till He come.

10. {That is, the eternal covenant is not about an old or new covenant. Indeed, the eternal covenant is not the new covenant. The eternal covenant is from eternity past and there is not therefore a question of old or new present tense. But it is not eternal in that way and be new, because there could not have been an old one.}

Until then, He would drink no more with them of the fruit of the vine. They would be nourished on Him, but He would not be nourished with them. The fruit of the vine is the sign of social joy, "wine which cheereth the heart of God and man," which they continually sprinkled in the burnt-offerings and the peace-offerings, that is to say, of a sweet savor. (See Num. 15:5, 7, 10, where the question is not of offering for sin.) Now, of this fruit of the vine He would drink no more, whilst His disciples should drink abundantly of His death, the true drink, but a drink of separation from sin, and of Christ also, as regards His personal presence; the heavens must receive Him until the time of restitution of all things of which the prophets had spoken. Thus His social life with His disciples here below was closed; it would no more even be renewed after the same manner. They would enter spiritually into the power of His death, and would be one day anew with Him in joy in the kingdom of His Father.

In Luke, this is expressed in a manner a little different. It is said: "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come"; and of the passover: "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."¹¹ Here the things are much more left in general forms, because it is not occupied with the order of the dispensations of God on earth {as is Matthew}, but with the moral principles which are bound up with the introduction in grace of the new man.¹²

In Luke we have emphasized that which is very human, for the Son is presented in the perfection of His holy manhood in an emphatic and characteristic way in this Gospel. Hence we read, concerning the passover: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." To the words in Matthew and Mark, "this is my body," there is added here, "which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." And of His unspeakably precious blood -- "precious, precious blood of Jesus, shed on Calvary, shed for rebels, shed for

11. {In the Synoptic gospels the institution of the Supper has the coming kingdom in view. The Kingdom is spoken of in all three accounts. Also, the new covenant, which will be placed in force in the kingdom on earth, is mentioned. The *blood* of that new covenant is not, of course, restricted in application to only those under that covenant, namely, Israel. In 1 Cor. 11 we see the place that the Lord's supper has with respect to the church as well as its bearing in 1 Cor. 10 regarding responsibility in connection with the Christian's associations.

The Lord, of course, knew that the church was shortly to be formed; and the introduction of the supper has that in view also, though the disciples knew it not. Hence the use of the bread and wine so that it might bear that figurative meaning. Israel will yet again celebrate the passover, but commemoratively under the Melchisedec order of priesthood, founded on the indissoluble life of the High Priest -- which looks back to the *finished work*. So the Lord's supper was introduced right after the passover supper. We go, then:

from anticipation	to commemoration
from type	to memorial
from lamb	to bread and wine }

12. *Collected Writings* 24:64-66. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

sinner, shed for me" -- He said: "which is poured out for you."

"This do in remembrance of me."

And the first day of the week, we being assembled to break bread . . . (Acts 20:7).

On the resurrection day the Lord's own assembled to break bread, to do this in remembrance of Himself, given in death for them, His precious blood shed for them. Christians pretend to be wiser now than when the church was in unruined condition and apostles were there -- they hold what they call a "communion service" perhaps once a month, or every three months, or once a year! The first day of the week comes, and lo! they do not assemble to break bread. Where is the heart's answer to the Lord's heart in that?

It was given to Paul, from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:12), to doctrinally connect the Lord's Supper with the church and the truth that there is one body. 1 Cor. 11 gives us the remembrance of Himself and one's responsibility to be in self-judgment (v. 28) -- this is **internal**, so that one would not eat and drink unworthily (v. 27). If we realized the meaning of the bread and cup (the blood, the life given in death), that it was because of our sins, and we judge ourselves, we would not be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, for we would thereby discern the meaning of the body and blood.

In 1 Cor. 10, the loaf is looked at as representing the body (mystical) of Christ. It signifies the mystical body of the Christ -- and partaking of it indicates fellowship expressed. But responsibility comes in, hence the title "Lord." Partaking places upon us responsibility for our associations, as the passage plainly shows -- this is **external** association:

Ye cannot drink the Lord's cup, and [the] cup of demons: ye cannot partake of [the] Lord's table, and of [the] table of demons (1 Cor. 10:21).

Physically it could be done -- on the Lord's day break bread and then go to the heathen temple and partake there. One *can* do that. "Cannot" means *morally* you cannot. Your heathen connection therefore characterizes you; and after unsuccessful admonishment, and failure to secure repentance, the faithful assembly will act responsibly for the Lord by purging you out as leaven.

In 1 Cor. 11 it is the **Lord's supper**, and it is contrasted with *their* supper; in 1 Cor. 10 it is the **Lord's table** and contrasted with another table. There is a far-reaching principle in this -- and note that ch.10 precedes ch.11. This is a moral order. Our responsibility for associations (ch.10) is given first!

And certainly persons put away (1 Cor. 5) are not morally at the Lord's table. The man in 1 Cor 5, who was put away from among themselves, may not have gone to the table of demons, but he was no longer at the Lord's table. Certainly one put away because he went to the table of demons was connected with the table of demons, not the Lord's table.

Moreover, why do you think 1 Cor. 10:18 says:

See Israel according to the flesh: are not they that eat of the sacrifices in communion with the altar?

Why do you think Paul said that? -- to be blithely ignored in order for you to say that *all* Christians are at the Lord's table? Well then, perhaps you would also claim that an Israelite who did not eat of any sacrifice was, non-the-less, in communion with the altar? -- that all Israelites 'were at the altar'? That would be wrong in the face of the apostle's statement. Accordingly, the apostle's statement was an illustration that he was applying to the subject in hand. The subject in hand is the Lord's table and responsibility for associations. A person is connected with the Lord's table because he eats what is on it. We are not speaking of a literal table, of course.

Paul speaks of two cups. One connects himself with demons by drinking of a cup -- and one connects himself with the Lord's table by drinking of the Lord's cup. A person who does not eat the Lord's Supper is not connected with the Lord's table; he does not partake of it (1 Cor. 10:21). That is very plain and very simple, and there is certainly nothing new about saying so:

... we have now identification with the table; the eaters are partakers of the altar. In eating of it, you identify yourself with the body of Christ, for "we are all partakers of that one bread." Someone once wrote to ask what was the proof that it was the body of Christ! And I found from another that it was understood only to speak of the unity of those who were actually partaking. But what the apostle is saying is, If you go and eat of these idolatrous altars, you identify yourself with them. As Israel after the flesh, if they ate of the altar, they identified themselves with it; so if you partake of the table of the Lord, you have a common part with others with it. It is not itself identity with the body, but that which is the sign of it. You cannot partake of Christ and of demons at the same time; this is, "cannot" morally. The peace-offering gives the understanding of it: some was burnt on the altar, but of the flesh the priest ate the part offered to God, and they themselves, the offerers, ate the rest. ¹³◆

1 Cor. 10:14-22 brings out the more blessed place the Lord's table holds in connection with the communion of the saints, and the unity of the body of Christ. It is the place where the fellowship of the saints with Christ, and His death, and with one another, is exhibited, and that on the ground of the unity of the body of Christ.

13. *Collected Writings* 26:250.

I could not go to any loose table as the Lord's. People do and call it the Lord's, of course; but I do not call it so, or I should be there (*Collected Writings* 26:253).

I would never leave an assembly as such, unless I could say when I had left, that it was not God's assembly at all (*Collected Writings*, p. 158).

The assembly is the body of Christ. (See 1 Cor. 11:12, 13.) The Lord's table is the place where that unity is exhibited by the members, all partaking of the one loaf, the symbol of unity. (See 1 Cor. 10: 17.)

This is put in contrast with Israel, and the Gentiles, in 1 Cor. 10:18-22. The Israelites, by partaking of the sacrifices offered on the altar of Judaism, showed their fellowship with that system of worship. The Gentiles, by partaking of the sacrifices offered on their altars, showed their fellowship with that system. But they offered to demons, consequently it was fellowship with demon worship.

At the Lord's table the Christian exhibits fellowship with the Lord, and His altar, His death, and that as a member of the body of Christ with the others gathered on that ground. This would show the Corinthians the utter impossibility of mixing up fellowship at the Lord's table with fellowship with devil worship. Thus we see that the Lord's table holds the very central place in Christian worship; so much so that if saints are not gathered as members of Christ's body to that table, there is no exhibition of the church of God in the place. The Lord's table is where the members of Christ are gathered as members of one body, to show it by partaking together of the one loaf, which is the symbol of unity, and where the authority and claims of the Lord are owned. It is the Lord's table. The Lord therefore invites; the assembly, as representing Him there, receives in His name (Rom. 15:7). ¹⁴ ♦

Before leaving this digression from the subject of the covenant, the reader may appreciate these further remarks from JND:

There is nothing about reconstructing the assembly. There is no assembly to reconstruct; the apostasy is not really come at all, though the principles of it may be at work. The lordship of Christ is not the ground of gathering at all. Lordship applies to individual responsibility. The lordship of the assembly is not scriptural, nor the Lord's assembly, nor the lordship of the body. The assembly (when spoken of as a systematic truth, as A.R.D. does) is always connected with the body. If we meet, and take the Lord's supper, we must meet on the principle of the unity of the body, for we are all one body, for we are all partakers of this one loaf. This is true of all Christians. They are not, properly speaking, admitted at all. *Now* tests are used rightly, because we are separating from evil in the great house (p. 11). But no assembly ever admitted any one, nor at the first were there any tests. But where the unity of the body is manifested, it is what it always was, and never can be anything else, having to act on the principles it always did, as it can rightly act on no other. ¹⁵ ♦

But now a difficulty is presented: the children of God are dispersed; many pious brethren are attached to this opinion, to that corporation, and mixed up for advantage' sake, even in religious things, with the world. There are alas!

14. *Bible Treasury* 12:185. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

15. *Collected Writings* 20:221.

many who have no idea of the unity of the body of Christ, or who deny the duty of manifesting this unity on earth. But all that does not annihilate the truth of God. Those who unite themselves, as I have already said, are but a sect in principle. If I recognize all Christians as members of the body of Christ, if I love them, and receive them, from an enlarged heart, even to the Supper, supposing that they are walking in holiness and truth, calling upon the name of the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Tim. 2: 19-22; Rev. 3: 7), then I am not walking in the spirit of a sect, even although I cannot gather together all the children of God, because I walk according to the principle of this unity of the body of Christ, and seek practical union amongst the brethren. If I join with other brethren to take the Lord's supper only as a member of the body of Christ, not as a member of a church, whichever it may be, but verily in the unity of the body, ready to receive all Christians who are walking in holiness and truth, I am not the member of a sect; I am a member of nothing else but of the body of Christ. But to gather together upon another principle, in whatever manner it may be, to make a religious corporation, is to make a sect. The principle is very simple. The practical difficulties are sometimes great by reason of the state of the Church of God; but Christ is sufficient for all; and if we are content to be little in the eyes of men, the thing is not so very difficult. ¹⁶ ♦

Ed.

The Present Testimony

The thoughts of many, at the present moment, about the testimony of God, appear to me to savor rather of the personal considerations, as to *where they have been*, and *what they have been doing*, than to present a fair expression of what is true as to *God* and His present testimony.

The grace of God, in these last days, found us all (whom indeed it has found) dwelling in a moral Babylon; and there the cry was heard, "Come out of her my people!" And who, that has replied to the call, "I come, Lord," has not found both the inextricable character of the labyrinth, out of which, through grace, he desired to escape, and his own complicity, alas! with the evil of the place?

To move from one street to another in that mystic city is readily allowed; and it is comparatively easy, if expensive, so to do. But none, except He who is stronger than the lord of that city, can bring clean out of it any of those who have been born there and have thus become "dwellers upon the earth"; "dwellers upon the earth" in *avowed* obedience to the name of Christ, and holders of citizenship "where Satan's seat is," *professedly* in the fear of the Lord.

True; and yet, if a man has heard the cry, "Come out of her my people"; and

that by the voice of One whose call is *never in vain*; he must be cautious, and get out, lest he be lost in the confusions of the place. And the more caution will be needed, with minds like ours, so prone to self-deception in the things of God. Alas! when one has been roused to action, how frequently does the heart confound the thought, "I have done *something*," with "I have done *Thy will*, O God." But who needs be told that these are often far from being equivalent?

I do not press the applicability of the doctrine of the Babylon of "Revelation"; yet I note *the fact*, that the Spirit of God has commonly used it on consciences, when He has been leading His people out of unscriptural associations. See, for example, in the days of Luther, and of the Nonconformists, and the movement of today.

But a word as to the so-called present testimony. I will state in simplicity, for myself individually, what I mean by the present testimony, in which, and of which, I desire grace to be found: and, at the same time I must say, I deeply deplore that many beloved children of God either do not see its existence, or make light of it altogether.

No better introduction of my subject occurs to me than the well-known but much abused catechismal term "THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH."

While God was teaching earthly truths and *government*, the Jew was His subject: but, when heavenly truth became the theme, Christ and His grace in the church became the subject.

God *established* upon earth the counterpart and witness of what was in His counsel for the heavens -- a church; and the word of God's grace was about that church; see Paul's conversion. In connection with the church, the individual believer found his position, his privileges, and his responsibilities. It was to be on earth as a widow, Christ-expectant, and serving the living and true God until the Savior and Lord came

I do not go into the question, what is the church? All I assert is, God did establish one; and I ask, where is it?

Chef d'oeuvre of God's workmanship, it came out to light when the Son of man, rejected by all from earth, had found His seat at the right hand of the Father. His God and Father has not changed His truth, nor recalled it yet to give it another form; nor has He changed the place of the Son of man upon the Father's throne.

The "chaste virgin" on earth, espoused to a Heavenly Lord, as a widow waiting -- where is she? Nay; all is changed here, in her appearance, from what once it was; and because of man's utter unfaithfulness we were found, if found by grace at all, in Babylon. But found *by whom*, except by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who retains Him still as Son of man upon the Father's throne. The position and revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are not changed; nor will change (blessed be God) to please us and our narrow thoughts. Divine and heavenly truth about the Son and His church, is still the standing form of God's present display of Himself.

Now what I want you to do is to look into this matter, and in all that I have and am,

by this divine and fatherly love, and to be made to realize, and to exhibit, in the midst of the ruin and wreck of the church here below; that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is still acting down here upon earth as the God and Father of the Son of man, who is at His right hand in the glory which He had with Him before the world was, and *who has a body down here*. The claims of God, and the blessing of my own soul, require this.

It is clear *I cannot*, if I would, break up the truth given to me as one here below; I cannot, because I cannot change God's revelation of Himself, nor the position which His Christ holds, until the church is all gathered at the Father's right hand.

The discovery of this truth tells me *where I am not*, and *what I am not*. It tells of man's utter failure, and of circumstances so changed down here, partly the effects of our wickedness, and partly the effects of the moral judgment of God thereon, -- that one finds that it is God alone can soften one down to the platform of His grace; a platform where all the heavenly divine light of the Son of man, upon the Father's throne, meets the conscience of a member of His body in a place where all is confusion and sin.

"The obedience of faith": how precious is such a position! The knowledge of which involves that God and His truth are not changed; and if the circumstances down here proper to it are changed, God will accept the integrity which seeks to find and to do His will, and He will give guidance to such though He may leave to their own wisdom those who, because they have failed themselves want to make out, either that He is also changed; or that, if not changed in Himself or in His truth, He is not, as the living God, *acting upon that truth now*. No measure short of Christ and the church is our *gospel*; and God is acting upon that truth, and I do most simply, therefore, ask that I may find grace in His sight, not only to know Himself and His truth, but to know myself livingly associated with Him as the living God in His present action. Blessed also is the truth to such a one of the Lordship of Jesus, i.e., that He is not Savior only, but Lord of all also.

I believe it to be a very great sin, and a grief and a dishonor to the Holy Ghost, to deny the church of the living God, and a corrupting of the gospel. To make little of what God is doing, as the living God, is a sin too and this is what they are guilty of who make little of present association with Him as the God so acting. Who would turn back from "the Father," and "the Son of man upon the Father's throne"; the Father acting for the members of the body of that Son -- to grace and mercy as fitted for a soul itself in its dangers and needs? Blessed is the gospel which calls a sinner, and the grace which suits a saint; but I am speaking of the responsibility of unexampled infinite grace.

I believe it to be horrid dishonor put upon *oneself* to be thinking merely of one's own soul, or even of the souls of poor sinners and saints around one, if it be to the forgetting of the central truth -- GOD'S central truth -- of His delight in Christ and His church.

I need hardly say, I do not sanction any disparagement of any babe's attainment

in thus speaking. I speak not of such; but I speak of those who, professing to be "somewhat," and to be making progress into a fuller light and liberty, would set the gospel as their more excellent employment; or who would put aside the thought of a "present testimony" for the gospel's sake.

Now my assertion is clear -- the man of God, who has to do individually with the living God in *His* gospel, knows that gospel to be about Christ and the church; and that, much as man has failed, God, as the living God, holds to that gospel; and holds men of God to see their failure; and if walking with Him as the living God, to own the scope of the truth first given, and to seek from God power to live out, amid all the wreck and ruin, as integral parts of that body, the Head of which is in heaven, and so to be associated, and consistently associated with God's present testimony for Himself. And all I would say is, that if God is ready to vindicate Himself against man and Satan in upholding a few individuals after that sort -- may I be one

NOTA BENE -- We can only be, in truth, a testimony to the complete failure of the Church of God. But, to be such, we must be as true in principle as the thing that has failed. And, as long as we are a testimony to failure, we shall never fail.

The Remembrancer 19:205-212.

I Forgive Him

Thus said Dr. Billy Graham, recently, regarding the President of the United States, who has not confessed anything, much less repented. Thus once again is Scripture trampled upon by one who says that it is the Word of God.

Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother should sin, rebuke him; and if he should repent, forgive him (Luke 17:3).

Moreover, he proceeded to make excuses for the President on account of a supposed hard-to-control libido. And this ungodly excusing was spread across the nation, to the shock and dismay of right-thinking Christians.

Also, as with the case of the former, disgraced Republican President Richard Nixon, whose supporters quoted, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone," so now do the supporters of Democrat President Clinton quote this verse. It is all hypocrisy and distortion of the intent of John 8. We may expect such distortion from unbelievers -- but Christians do the same thing. It is *self*, *self*, *self*; dressing *self* in false piety, furthering their own notions and agenda, while deceiving themselves. There is a dangerous fog of hypocrisy that suffuses itself throughout what we call the mind; and the eye is not single.

Ed.

The Collected Writings of F. G. Patterson

Present Truth Publishers is delighted to be able to offer this first-time collection of the writings of F. G. Patterson into one large book. This also provided a vehicle for the indexing of his writings.

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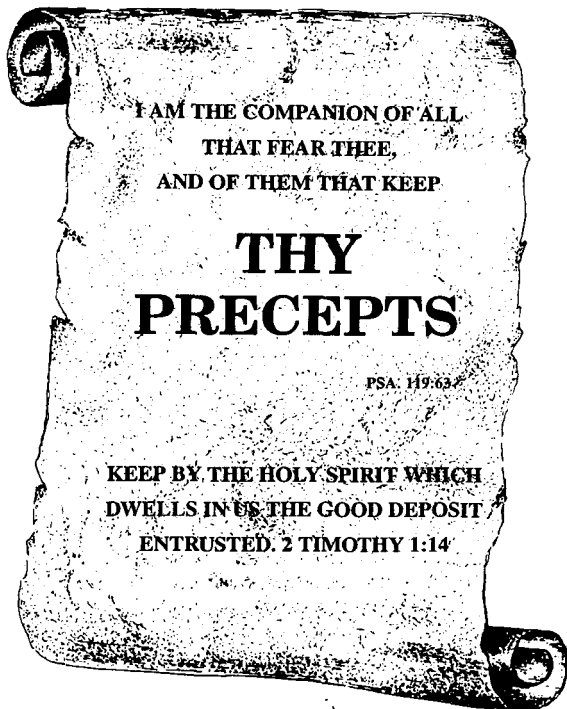
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The Son of God

Our Lord's own words, that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father," may well make us take up with reverence the theme before us. There is none where it is more needful to remember, that it is the province of the Word to judge us, not ours to judge it. We have only "with meekness to receive," bowing the pride of our intellect, and checking the wanderings of our imagination, and restraining the unholy curiosity which would fain so often indulge itself even in the presence of the "deep things of God."

But while there is no subject as to which controversy is more to be deprecated, there is at the same time no point of faith upon which it is more important to have possession of the Scripture truth in its simplicity. The Person of the Son of God is one of faith's foundations. To touch it is to bring everything into question. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also." The Lord give us, beloved reader, unfeigned humility and subjection to the inspired Word, our only guidance here or elsewhere.

The declaration of the Son of God is given us even in the OT. We know to whom it is said, "Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee" (Psa. 2:7). There has been, however, even here, to begin with, a most serious mistake made. The language of the Psalm has been applied to the Lord as a Divine Being; and hence the way opened to low and dishonoring thoughts concerning Him; while the forced explanations of those who held the truth substantially did not commend the truth they held.

It should be plain that "this day have I begotten Thee" could only apply to the Lord's birth as man. And the not seeing that as man also He has the title {name} of Son of God, has been the cause of much confusion and perplexity. Yet it is plainly stated in the angel's answer to Mary:

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

Here there is no room to question that the manner of His conception is the justification of the claim of the "Man, Christ Jesus," to be the "Son of God."

And in Acts 13, the very passage in the Psalm is in this way applied to his begetting as man:

And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He

hath raised up Jesus, ¹ as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

It is not resurrection that is spoken of here, as some have thought, for the apostle goes on to speak of that separately directly after:

and as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

But while not seeing this claim of the Lord as man to be the Son of God, has been the mistake of some, and while positive error has in this way come in, -- others have made this the whole thing as to His Sonship. They have conceived it to be a lowering of His dignity, and inconsistent with His having equal honors with the Father, to speak of Him as eternally the Son. They call it even an "inferior name," unworthy of Him. They maintain that it is inconsistent with co-eternity as well as with co-equality. Hence they believe Him Son only as man, and deny Him to be Eternal Son; ever in the bosom of the Father. ²

It is impossible to deny, on the other hand, that some maintainers of the Eternal Sonship have drawn from it conclusions of this very kind; and in this very way the Arianism of the fourth century came in. Scripture, however, which clearly states the doctrine, is in no wise responsible for the conclusions of men, against which, moreover, it carefully and jealously guards us. We have only to cleave fast to it, and the simplest and most childlike among us will be certain to go least astray.

Let us turn, then, to the Scripture statements as to this. We are told that

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him (1 John 4:9).

The language here is plain and expressive. It surely tells us God had a Son to send. And not, mark, after He was in the world, He sent Him to the Cross; no, but He sent Him into the world {John 16:28}. Surely then, before He was in the world, God had a Son to send. Before "that holy thing" was begotten at all on earth, there was a Son, an only-begotten Son, in heaven.

This is so clear that not another word ought to be needed; and it is only one out of many like passages. But I have been asked, could not the title {it is a name} of Son be given by anticipation here? Might He not have been the decreed, the fore-ordained Son, and so have been spoken of before he actually came into that place, or assumed that relationship?

I would answer by another question, Does not the apostle tell us that this

1. "Again" is not in the original, and should be omitted.

2. The commentators Adam Clarke and Albert Barnes, among others, maintain this.

was how God manifested His love to us, in that it was His Son He sent? And would it not in any wise cloud this manifestation, if it were not One then in that relationship He sent, but only One who was to become that after being sent?

But again. What glory was it that the Disciples saw in Him who when He was upon earth could say, "I and my Father are One," and "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"? Was it anything short of Divine glory that they saw in the "Word made flesh"? Let them say then, who had seen it, what it was. What do they say of it? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt³ among us, and we beheld His glory" – the glory proper to the Divine Word made flesh: what was it? -- "the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Once more, I do not see how it could be plainer. If it was the Only begotten Son, whom God had sent, it was equally the glory of the Only begotten which shone out from Him while here. Is that, I would ask again, a glory properly Divine or not? Would it be enough if it were the glory only of a Divinely begotten man? for man it was, let us remember, true man, that was born of a Virgin; not blended Godhead and manhood. I am sure as to what the heart of every saint will say: it was true and Divine glory. Then I urge, the apostle can find no better way of describing it to us as such, than to say, that it was "glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father," -- glory such as that!

And when he goes on to add, contrasting that revelation of God then made with the darkness of former dispensations:

No man hath seen God at anytime; the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (v. 18);

surely it is not one begotten on earth that he has in mind, but one from all eternity in the nearest and dearest and most intimate relationship to the Father, who is come to speak of Him.

And once more. If there be a precise and formal statement anywhere, of the two natures in the One Christ Jesus, it will be admitted, perhaps, such a thing is to be found in Rom. 1:3, 4. What then is the apostle Paul's statement concerning the Lord Jesus there?

Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

That is the one, the human side: what is the other?

but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection from the dead.

Is this also "according to the flesh"? Clearly not, for it is plainly and pointedly

3. "Tabernacled" is the word, as if to assure us it was the full reality of His presence whose glory had filled the tabernacle of old.

distinguished from it. What He was according to the flesh, His human nature was, He was "of the seed of David." Outside and beyond all that, He was "SON OF GOD."

Need there be more said? Surely the Word is not indistinct or uncertain in its utterances here. In none of these places could the thought of the title {name} of the Son of God being anticipatively used of Him before He came in flesh and had the place, be possibly admitted. In the last case, He is definitely stated to be Son of God in distinction from what He was according to the flesh.

And as to men's conclusions, Scripture is not responsible for, but, as I have said, guards carefully against them. If they say, the doctrine supposes the Son not equal to the Father, even the Jews rebuke it, who sought to kill Him because He had said, "that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18).

If, on the other hand, men would draw, as they have, alas, drawn, such dishonoring conclusions from the Scripture truth, once more that Word enforces "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father" (v. 23).

Can they not understand that the poor human relationship is after all but a faint and broken reflection of the Divine, and that to press resemblance any further than the Word itself sanctions, is to pervert, not to receive the Word?

"Into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" are we baptized. That Name is the expression of all with which we are for ever identified. May this Triune God keep His saints true to all implied in it.

Helps by the Way 2:35-40 (1874).

Christ is the Test of Love

There is nothing to be more cordially abhorred than the pretense of love and unity being used to dishonor Him who is the center, life, and sole object and title of it. There is no devil so bad as the devil who clothes himself with charity. It is the spirit of the day -- latitudinarianism. "Charity {love} is the bond of perfectness," but Christ is the test of this, as of all else, and He makes it so. "The poor ye have always with you, and me ye have not always." Thus we must judge -- judge, I mean our own conduct . . . Local unity founded on abandonment or indifference to the truth, is a miserable hostility (in sparing oneself) to gathering with Christ, the only true and universal unity . . . I do not know what is meant by unity, if the foundations of all unity that is worth anything are denied.

The Girdle of Truth 2:444.

Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.6

The New Jerusalem is Not a Literal City

The City is the Bride

ARGUMENTS FOR A LITERAL CITY

The New Jerusalem Is Both People and a Place. First of all, it is objectionable to say that the New Jerusalem is the abode of the bride. Not so. It *is* the bride, symbolically viewed from the standpoint of governmental administration -- from the standpoint of being the heavenly seat of Christ's reign (Rev. 21:9-22:5). Another error, as stated by Lehman Strauss, is:

From the viewpoint of the people in it, the New Jerusalem is "*the Lamb's wife*." From the standpoint of the place, it is an actual city.⁴

From the viewpoint of John, which is the one given in Rev. 21:9, 10, the bride *is* the city.

Since the Bride is not Literal, the City Must be Literal. An objection about the size is based on taking this to be a literal city, which is an idea that flies right in the face of vv. 9, 10, which clearly show that the city is the bride; i.e., the church. It is not a literal city. Observe how John F. Walvoord attempted to show that it is a literal city:

Actually, the bride of Christ is composed of people, those who have accepted Christ in the present age and who form the church, the body of Christ. In showing John the Holy City, there is a relationship to the bride in that the beauty of the Holy City is similar to the beauty of the bride. Obviously, a literal meaning cannot be that it is both a city and a bride, and so one must complement the other.⁵ ♦

Since a bride is not a city, it seems best to accept the passage as a description

4. *The Book of Revelation*, Neptune: Loizeaux, p. 349, 1965.

5. *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook*, p. 636. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

of a city that is beautifully adorned like a bride prepared for marriage.⁶ ♦

Obviously the bride is not a literal bride -- he has himself indicated *that* in the first sentence quoted here. And he concludes that because the bride is not literal *therefore* the city must be complementary, i.e., literal. "So one must complement the other" does not logically follow; for both could be non-literal, which they are, but which he rejects -- and does so right in the face of Rev. 21:9-10. Moreover, it is like arguing that since a group of people is not a bride, the bride cannot be the church. These are figurative and symbolic descriptions used to designate some aspect of the church, just as in Paul's writings the church is a body, a temple, etc. "Since a bride is not a city," but is the church, how could she have been a temple?

His idea of the "relationship" of the city to the bride is a figment imposed upon the passage. In reality, the bride *is* the city, not merely related to it. What does the text *state*?

Come here, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife (v. 9).

... showed me the holy city, Jerusalem (v. 10).

I ask you, since the angel told John he would show him the bride,⁷ why was John not shown the bride; why was he shown a city (and, allegedly, a literal one, at that!) instead of the bride; if the city is not the bride presented in symbolic form? Why was he rather shown where the bride was going to live, rather than the bride? Yes, why was John not shown the bride when the angel said he would show him the bride? Talking about the city as showing John "a relationship to the bride" is an effort to circumvent the express statement of the text. The angel did not say, 'Come here, I will show you something related to the bride,' but that is the meaning the above quotation attaches to the angel's statement. Is this the way to find out what the teaching is here? Is it not rather an effort to have a literal city, a distinct place for Israel, and others divided into nations, in the eternal state?⁸

6. *Prophecy -- 14 Essential Keys to Understanding the Final Drama*, Nashville: Nelson, p. 168, 1993.

7. See *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:426, 427.

8. William R. Newell really makes numbers of offensive remarks. Let us hear two samples:

2. A second reason to consider the city a literal one, is, that child-like faith in reading the account always regards it as such. As the little girl asked her mother concerning the preacher who said that our Lord's words in John 14, "I will come again," did not mean that He would come back in *person*: "Mamma, if Jesus *didn't* He say what He *meant*?" ...

4. If the New Jerusalem is not to be taken literally, we could not claim that the millennial Jerusalem of Ezekiel 40-48 and Zechariah 14 can be literal. But to deny these is wholly to abandon faith in the accuracy of God's Word! (*The Book of the Revelation*,

(continued...)

Commonly, A City's Name Refers to Both the Structure and Occupants.

Alva J. McClain took this tack:

The name of the city, as in common usage, refers to both the structure and those who dwell there.⁹

Take New York: 'Come, I will show you _____, and he showed me the city New York. Or Rome: 'Come, I will show you _____, and he showed me the city Rome. He *wants* to have the city be literal, and that is what this is about:

If the King of the New Jerusalem and also its inhabitants are literal, there is no reason for balking at the literality of the city itself.¹⁰

Let it pass that there is no such thing as a *King* of the New Jerusalem. He assumes the city has inhabitants and then reasons from that error to his desired literality. The City *is* the bride, portrayed symbolically as that city.

Christ is Building the City Right Now. Having referred to John 14:2, 3,¹¹ Henry Morris wrote:

... there is even now a great city being built by Christ far out in space somewhere. To this city go the spirits of all who die in Christ, there to await His return to earth. When He comes back, He will bring the holy city with Him and set it up for a time somewhere in earth's atmospheric heavens, perhaps orbiting the earth. There will be established His judgment seat, as well as the heavenly temple and its altar, to which John frequently refers in Revelation. The resurrected and raptured saints will dwell in this city, though with occasional visits to the earth, during the tribulation and millennial periods.¹²

Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy wrote:

8. (...continued)
p. 348, 349).

A *child* does not understand the book of Revelation. His remark is ludicrous! The reality is that he has a problem with symbolic language. And, there were many able expositors before W. R. Newell who understood Ezekiel 40-48 literally and the city in Rev. 21 symbolically (J. N. Darby, W. Kelly, etc). The inference from his words is that they abandoned faith in the accuracy of God's word, whereas the real problem is *his*, engaging in pseudo-literalism.

9. *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 511, 1992 [1968]. Herman A. Hoyt wrote:

This is a real city in which the Bridegroom will dwell with His perfected bride, the church (Eph. 5:27; John 14:3). Every detail should be taken literally (*Studies in Revelation*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 142, 1977).

10. *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 511, 1992 [1968].

11. P. L. Tan likewise injected John 14:3 into the discussion (*The Interpretation of Prophecy*, p. 291. So did Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 511, 1992 [1968].

12. *The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndall House, p. 438, 1983. So did Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 511, 1992 [1968].

Jesus told His disciples in John 14:1-3 that He was going to heaven to prepare a place for believers. Apparently the place He is constructing in heaven, at His Father's house, is the heavenly or new Jerusalem. Although built in heaven, it will be earthly in that it is physical and geographical . . . ¹³

Oliver B. Greene wrote:

Jesus ascended back to the Father (Acts 1:10, 11), and for 1900 years He has been preparing a home (the New Jerusalem, the Pearly White City) for His bride. ¹⁴

Is it not right to ask *what is taking the Lord Jesus so long to finish the city?* -- especially since He can move it about so easily, as is implied. I suggest to you that not only does the city *not* refer to the Father's house in John 14:1-3, but also that the place that the Lord Jesus was going to prepare for His own was prepared and ready the instant He was there in glory above. His entrance there as Man, victorious over sin and hell and death, instantly prepared the place for His own. Moreover, "mansions" means "abodes," dwelling places -- not large and small, nor near and far -- of nearness to the Father. It refers to dwelling in nearness to the Father, as does that blessed Man, the Lord Jesus Himself. The Father has given us Christ's place before Him. This is not the subject of the book of Revelation at all. Moreover, the Lord Jesus is in heaven itself and at death our spirits go to be with Himself (2 Cor. 5:8), not in space somewhere in a pseudo-literalist city being built in space (or at the Father's house). It is tantamount to viewing the "Father's house" as a literal city, in space somewhere, being built. Dr. Morris' comments are quite imaginative, not to say distressing to the soul -- distressing because they cloud the meaning of John 14:1-3.

Ingress and Egress. An interesting variation is that of Clarence Mason, who, while taking the city to be a literal city, said he

would like to submit a thought proposed by Ironside, Scott, and others, that the city will not only be the *eternal* abode of the righteous, but that beginning at 21:9 (where a new chapter should begin anyway), we have a description of that city accompanied by a number of statements that would suggest that this city is related to earth *during time* -- that is, during the millennium. ¹⁵

Of course, it was not H. A. Ironside or Walter Scott that "proposed" the point about this being a millennial scene. At any rate, he rightly sees the thrust of such statements as the nations walking in the light of the city, etc., while, sorry to say, he indulges in imagination of various "ingress and egress . . . of the

13. Fast Facts on Bible Prophecy, Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, p. 141 (1997).

14. *The Revelation*, Greenville: The Gospel Hour, p. 510, 1973.

15. *Prophetic Problems With Alternate Solutions*, Chicago: Moody, p. 242, 1973.

great ones of earth”¹⁶ It is taking the city as a literal city that leads to such imaginations. Bow to Rev. 21:9, 10 that John was shown the bride, and you will be restrained from these imaginings.

A Suspended City. Oliver. B. Greene thinks the city will be suspended:

It is my belief that the Holy City will be suspended between Heaven and earth . . .¹⁷

Oh yes -- it will be a literal city; never let anyone tell you this is a spiritual application . . . Certainly it will take a great wall to support a city fifteen hundred miles high . . . Someone may be asking, “Why twelve foundations?” The wall of the city will be fifteen hundred miles high and it will take a good foundation to support such a wall . . . Remember, there are 12 foundations, and the wall rests upon them. I gather that the foundations graduate in thickness, the twelfth one being extremely thick; and they graduate on up to the beginning of the wall which will be 216 feet thick . . . Yet it must be thick and strong because the city is pure gold, with all kinds of jewels and diamonds.¹⁸

If it is suspended, and thus exempt from the operation of gravity, what makes him suppose that such weight will be on the foundation? Weight, as we know it, is a function of gravity.

It is pseudo-literalism which rejects the symbolism of the city. The true literalism, taught by such as J. N. Darby and W. Kelly, gives us the true, and balanced, view of these matters.

Other Cities are Literal. R. Govett, who wrote during the 1800s, reasoned:

We have seen that two other cities are named in this book -- Jerusalem the Old, and Babylon the Great. Are these not literal? They are. So, then, the city which supersedes them both.¹⁹

First, the fact that if two mentioned cities are literal, that does not *prove* a third one is literal. Secondly, the city of Babylon of Rev. 18 is not the literal city of Babylon. The city of Babylon of Rev. 18 is the woman of Rev. 17. The references have to do with Rome,²⁰ which is, of course, a literal city, the

16. In 1844, J. N. Darby remarked, “Of course the inhabitants of earth cannot enter into the heavenly city . . . the city is the bride, the Lamb’s wife. . . it sets aside the whole force of the symbols” *Collected Writings* 8:307.

17. *The Revelation*, Greenville: The Gospel Hour, p. 510, 1973.

18. *The Revelation*, Greenville: The Gospel Hour, p. 518-520, 1973.

19. *The Apocalypse Expounded by Scripture*, London: Thynne, p. 565, 1920 ed., abridged from the four vol. Ed., 1864.

20. P. L. Tan’s reasons why the city should be understood literally. One of them is very interesting:

In the account of the harlot on the beast, the angel by explaining it in great detail
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(continued...)

earthly seat of this woman. The city of Rev. 21 is the woman of Rev. 19:7, 8.

A Literal City May be Portrayed Symbolically. Another variation is given by David L. Turner, already quoted above for his imagination. He tells us a solution to having a literal city without being bound by the description of it:

(P. L.) Tan, who argues that an actual literal city may be portrayed just as it is, never seems to grasp the fact that an actual literal city may be portrayed through symbols.²¹

The fact is that he has no evidence that a *literal* new Jerusalem is being portrayed symbolically. It is merely more imagination in which he indulges freely, a reprehensible thing in divine matters.

A Literal City Fills a Longing. Some who take the city to be a literal city give numbers of reasons for their view of it, but all these reasons need not detain us. However, there is one by P. L. Tan, who advocates taking the city literally, that I will quote:

. . . although a literal, material New Jerusalem may be difficult for theologically trained scholars to accept, it comes naturally and logically to the thinking of most uncritical laymen. A literal eternal city seems to fulfill the longings of the soul.²²

Neither “theologically trained scholars,” as such, or “most uncritical laymen,” as such, have anything to do, as such, with understanding the intention of the Spirit of God in the passage (1 Cor. 2:9-16).

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN REVIEWING IS A PSEUDO-LITERALISM

What I mean by pseudo-literalism is that the idea that the New Jerusalem is a literal city is *not genuine literalism*, as we speak of spiritualization versus literalism in interpretation. It purports to be literalism in Scripture interpretation; but it is not proper scripture literal interpretation of prophecy. It is like taking Dan. 12:2 to mean literal resurrection when in fact the passages use resurrection figuratively, as such are virtually compelled to acknowledge

20. (...continued)

([Rev. 17] vv. 7-18 and ending with the interpretation “the woman whom thou sawest is that great city” (v. 18), identifies that account as a *symbol*. In the account of the New Jerusalem, however, the same angel offers not a word or clue regarding its possible symbolism (*The Interpretation of Prophecy*, Winona Lake: BMH Books, p. 290, 1974).

Not even a *clue*? Really?

Come here, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife . . . and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9, 10).

That is not even a clue!

21. *Op. Cit.*, p. 276.

22. *The Interpretation of Prophecy*, pp. 291, 292.

is the case in Ezek. 37. It is an unfounded concern about compromising "literal interpretation" of prophecy that gives rise to such pseudo-literalism. And now we shall see some things that issue from pseudo-literalism.

Is the City a Pyramid?

Since the city is the bride, we know the origin of the city. If it is a literal city, when was it constructed? Or are we to imagine it existed eternally? The city will come down out of heaven. So at some point there will be this allegedly literal city in heaven itself. We know that the bride will be in heaven. How came this literal city to be there? The truth is that there are no literal cities in heaven, nor horses (Rev. 19:11-14), for that matter.

Observe the following idea from J. F. Walvoord:

Debate continues on whether the city is a cube or a pyramid, although the evidence seems to favor a pyramid shape, inasmuch as the water from the throne at the top of the city flows down its sides (22:1).²³

Where did he read that the throne was at the top -- and that water flows down the sides? Think of it; a 1500 (some say 1380) mile high pyramid, with a base 1500 miles by 1500 miles square, with water flowing down from a throne at the top! -- down all four sides? Where does all the water go? Think of it, water eternally flowing down the sides of a huge pyramid. Does it pour off the pyramid base on to the earth? Either that means an infinite amount of water on the earth, or it is recycled to flow back up and out of the throne again!!! The writer also suggested this:

Though there is little evidence in Scripture to support the concept, possibly the new Jerusalem will be a satellite city above the earth during the millennium.²⁴

Is that possible? -- I mean all this imagination -- a monstrous pyramid satellite, with water going down its sides from a source about 1500 miles above the earth?

The *sanctuary* in the Tabernacle and in the temple was a *cube*, where the Shekinah was. And this city has no temple, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb (Rev. 21:22). Thus the symbolism depicts the church as the dwelling place of God and the Lamb, which is quite in keeping with Paul's doctrine of the church. But the presentation we have of the church here is not viewing it as the body of Christ.

We now get its proper perfection. It is measured with its gates and its walls.

23. *Prophecy* . . . , p. 172.

24. *Prophecy* . . . , p. 170.

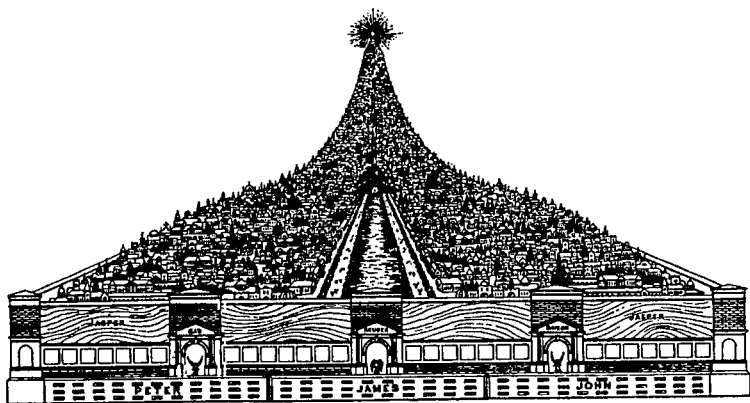
It is finitely perfect. It is four square -- the length as large as the breadth -- its platform was perfect. It was twelve thousand furlongs, the number twelve again marking the administrative perfection in man, only largely multiplied in fact; but it was as complete as its platform was perfect. It was a cube, not merely a square -- a circle or sphere has neither beginning nor end -- a square and cube are equal in every dimension, but each line ends. They are finite perfection; the square in principle; the cube in completeness also. The wall has its perfection, 12 x 12. It is not divine in its nature -- it is the measure of a man, though God measures it by the angel. The wall, its security, is divine glory. The jasper here, is not spoken of as clear. It were out of place. The city is divine righteousness and fixed unalterable purity; as it is said: -- "after the image of him that created him," "and in righteousness and true holiness."²⁵

We may rest satisfied that there is no spiritual reason to bring forward the idea of a pyramid shape, particularly a *literal* city shaped like a pyramid, with water flowing down its sides -- for some imagined necessity for literalism, in the face of the *symbolic* character of the book of Revelation, and in the face of the direct statement of Rev. 21:9, 10 that John was to be shown the bride. Nor does the text speak of streets of the city, but rather of its street. While I am happy to note that Henry Morris was insistent that the shape is a cube, he pointing out that the pyramid is associated with paganism; his taking the city literally led to him imagining and calculating geometrical accommodations for those he supposes will occupy the literal city. It results in 1/30 of a cubic mile for each, corresponding "to a cubical "block" with about seventy-five acres on each face."²⁶

The literal-city-view, pyramidal in shape, was illustrated by Clarence Larkin; and it is included here (below) in the hope that it might help some who hold erroneous views about the city and the eternal state, to divest themselves of such thoughts. In the following chapters an article by J. A. Trench, detailing some of the symbolism of Rev. 21:9-22:5, will be before us. If we clear our minds of the pseudo-literalism, as equally from covenant theology, we shall profit more fully from that article.

25. J. N. Darby, *Collected writings* 30:402.

26. *The Revelation Record*, p. 451.



THE HOLY CITY

(According to Clarence Larkin)

The Heavenly Seat of Millennial Government

While it is true that there are those who regard the city to be a literal city who also understand the shape to be a cube, the notion of a pyramidal shape seems to be closely associated with the literal city idea. The truth is that the city of Rev. 21:9-22:5 is the bride, the church, viewed as the heavenly seat of the government administered by Christ during the administration of the fulness of times (Eph. 1:10), i.e., the millennial reign.

The gates with the names of the twelve tribes . . . the twelve angels . . . The twelve apostles of the Lamb. For God evidently in one way or another connects with the holy city associations of government, whether angelic, Jewish, or apostolic. It is the heavenly seat of the kingdom; and it will display in that day, what is even ours now to say in faith, that "all things are ours." Paul was not given to so describe the church's glory, but speaks of her as the heavenly Eve of the heavenly and last Adam. John, while expressly identifying the Bride, the Lamb's wife, with the new Jerusalem, develops here only the city side.²⁷

There will be an earthly seat of millennial government -- that **WILL BE** the literal Jerusalem here on earth. The hierarchy of manifested glory will be, then, first Christ, and then the new Jerusalem, and then the earthly Jerusalem

27. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:348. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

The names of the twelve tribes of Israel are on the gates of the new Jerusalem. The gate is, in Scripture, the place of judgment and government. This depicts, symbolically, judgment proceeding from the new Jerusalem, via the gates, to Israel on earth, the seat of earthly government. There are also seen angels, God's providential instruments of His will, at the gates. All is in harmony for carrying out the reign of Christ and the administration of all things in heaven and earth by Him who, as man, is in the highest place in the universe.

The new Jerusalem and the earthly Jerusalem, the respective seats of the heavenly and earthly government, express Christ's headship over all. The cube will be found in connection with both Jerusalems. The new Jerusalem is itself symbolized by the cube (and having no temple) while the Jerusalem on earth will have a sanctuary that is cubical. The earthly will have the Shekinah restored; but the new Jerusalem shall have Him who is represented by the Shekinah as its temple (Rev. 21:22). In His very presence we shall have fulness of holiness unto the Lord and unhindered, holy worship:

and his servants shall serve {latreuo} him, and they shall see his face; and his name is on their foreheads (Rev. 22:4, 5).

It is the service of worship. The longings of our hearts to worship without hindrance or distraction will be eternally satisfied! We shall have the unspeakable privilege of beholding forever that face in which His very creatures did spit in their hatred for Him who loves us and has washed us from our sins in His blood. And think of His blessed name in our foreheads. We are His eternally, and all our thoughts of Him.

The Mediating View

There are some Scofieldian age-ists who take the view that Rev. 21:9-22:5 is a millennial scene. This acknowledges the validity of the retrospective view of this passage and solves the problem concerning the nations bringing their glory unto the city, etc. However, this view still maintains that the city is literal, and that Israel will be eternally distinct -- thus ignoring that the "everlasting" covenants in the OT refer to the present earth. They ignore what their view entails (Chapter 7.1 in this series).

J. D. Pentecost took a mediating position. Interestingly, he quotes W. Kelly frequently, but in the final analysis, the only real agreement he has with W. K. is the retrospective view. W. Kelly certainly did not accept the notion of a literal city, OT saints in the city, that John 14:1-3 refers to the new Jerusalem, a distinct place for Israel in the eternal state, and other accompaniments of that view. J. D. Pentecost's survey of the wide range of opinions on this subject is interesting. But we will here give only the summary of his view:

The study has led to the conclusion that the mistake lies in trying to establish an either-or proposition. A mediating view, that the eternal state of the resurrected during the millennium is seen in the passage, is suggested as a better view. When the occupants of the city are described it must be seen that they are in their eternal state, possessing their eternal inheritance, in eternal relationship with God who has tabernacled among them. There will be no change in their position or relation whatsoever. When the occupants of the earth are described they are seen in the millennial age. They have an established relationship to the heavenly city which is above them, in whose light they walk. Yet their position is not eternal nor unchangeable, but rather millennial.

The Lord promised to prepare a place for His own {John 14:1-3}. At the rapture and resurrection of the church the saints of this age are, after judgment and marriage, installed in that prepared place. They are joined by the saints of the Old Testament at the time of their resurrection at the second advent. This dwelling place prepared for the bride, in which the Old Testament saints find their place as servants (Rev. 22:3), is moved down into the air to remain over the land of Palestine during the millennium, during which time the saints exercise their right to reign. These saints are in their eternal state and the city enjoys its eternal glory. At the expiration of the millennial age, during the renovation of the earth, the dwelling place is removed during the conflagration, to find its place after the recreation as the connecting link between the new heavens and the new earth.²⁸

The reader should note that this view does not set forth the proper, distinct glory of the church as seen in the new Jerusalem. Though the Scofieldian ageism system distinguishes between Israel and the Church, it does not give to the church the place that was so well brought out in the ministry of J. N. Darby. I speak generally; while here, specifically, the glories set forth by the symbols

28. *Things to Come*, Findlay: Dunham, p. 580, 1958.

In a recent book, Bruce Larson seems to take a like view:

The New Testament saints who constitute the church and the angels will rule with Christ (cf. Matthew 19:28, "Judging the twelve tribes of Israel"; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; 2 Timothy 2:11-13). Somewhere in this universe there exists the New Jerusalem, the city of God (Hebrews 11:10), which will descend from heaven and exist like a gigantic space module in relation to earth (Revelation 21:1-5). ‡ As described in the Revelation, the garden city of God will be like a huge chandelier over the earth (Revelation 21:10). The saved nations will walk in the light of it (Revelation 21:2). This is literally the rule of the heavens over the earth. This is not heaven through all eternity; it is New Jerusalem in time-space. It is the interim kingdom.

‡Louis T. Talbot was the first in my experience to give this understanding.

Israel and the church share the same sphere, but Israel is forever to be on the new earth and the church will be forever in the new heaven (*Jews, Gentiles & the Church*, Grand Rapids: Discovery House, pp. 311, 321).

are mitigated by making the city a literal city and the home of the raptured and resurrected saints of all ages.

Difficulties Regarding this Subject

The reader should have noticed that different writers come to different conclusions depending on what factors weigh most heavily with them in understanding Rev. 21 and 22. Any particular view will have difficulties associated with it, and it is sought to explain these difficulties so as to have what occasioned the difficulty fit in with the general approach taken to the passage. Regarding Rev. 21:1-8 as the new heavens and earth, but Rev. 21:9-22:5 as a retrospective view of the millennial glory of the church, also entails a few points that appear to be against this understanding of these chapters. Mainly, it involves the bearing of Rev. 21:27 and Rev. 22:14. These passages appear to distinguish the city from inhabitants. This appears to support the thought that the city is not the church and that other saints dwell in the city. And that appears to support the idea that the city is a literal city. It remains to say a few words about this before considering the city itself in some detail.

ENTERING INTO THE CITY

It might be claimed that since several texts speak of entering the city that therefore the city cannot be the bride. But such a conclusion leads to other results. For example, look at this:

Blessed [are] they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and that they should go in by the gates into the city. Without [are] the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone that loves and makes a lie (Rev. 22:14, 15).

It might be said that v. 15 shows that all others, all saints of all ages, must be inside the city, and all persons in the eternal state must be inside. The text tells us who is outside. So there are no blessed persons outside who could go inside. Might it not be well to reconsider the point about going into the city?

WHAT IF ALL SAINTS ARE IN THE CITY?

If all saints are in the new Jerusalem, then various conclusions follow:

1. There is no need of the sun and moon in the new heavens. Perhaps the new heavens and earth do not have them? There shall not be any night in the city (Rev. 22:5).
2. There can be no blessed men outside the new Jerusalem. But if the new Jerusalem is the tabernacle of God and it is *with* men (Rev. 21:3), the implication is that there are men on the new earth that are not in the new Jerusalem.

3. We are told that the glory and honor of the nations shall be brought to it (Rev. 21:24). How so, if only the wicked are outside the new Jerusalem? The nations must be inside the city. But that is a contradiction.
4. How is it that persons enter into it (Rev. 21:27) if all are in the new Jerusalem?

There may be additional reasons to reject the idea that all saints will be in the city. And, we can see that the statements about entering the city need to be rightly understood.

WHAT, THEN, DOES ENTERING INTO THE CITY INDICATE?

The understanding of Rev. 21, 22 is not determined by this one point concerning what enters into the city. Rather, this one point is determined by the proper understanding of Rev. 21, 22.

There was a short answer given to a question concerning Rev. 21:27 in *The Bible Treasury* 2:64:

I take Rev. 21:27, in a general way, as stating who they are that have to do with the new Jerusalem -- those written in the Lamb's book of life. For we must ever remember that the Church, or the bride, *is* that holy city, instead of the city being the mere region of our future glory.

No matter what view of Rev. 21 and 22 one takes, there are difficulties that need to be explained, if indeed explainable. What mainly directs our understanding in these pages is this:

1. We have seen (see Chapter 7.1 in this series) that taking the everlasting covenant with Israel, in the OT, to apply to the new heavens and earth, leads to absurdities like eternal procreation of person, etc.; while other "everlasting" covenants also lead to strange results. In reality, those covenants, once in force, applies as long as the *present* earth lasts. And, therefore, the idea that Israel has a distinct place in the new heavens and earth has no Scripture warrant.
2. Eph. 3:21 shows that the church has an eternally distinct place.
3. The new Jerusalem, the tabernacle of God, is with *men*, in the new heavens and earth (Rev. 21:2, 3).
4. Rev. 21:9, 10 shows that the city *is* the bride, the Lamb's wife; and this answers to Eph. 3:21.
5. The church, having been in heaven before the new heavens and earth were made, does not change (when the new heavens and the new earth come into being), and is not merged with others, nor are others subsequently incorporated into the church.
6. The book of Revelation is for the church (Rev. 1:4; 22:16-21).

I suggest, then, that Rev. 22:14 and 21:27 speak of saints who compose the bride, the city, entering in a figurative way. Actually, it is not a literal city, and thus entering is not literal either; *entering* is a figure of speech. The thought of entering it has to do with partaking of a blessing; namely, partaking of the tree of life. The city itself *is* the bride, the Lamb's wife. But all saints will share in the blessing of the tree of life -- depicted figuratively here as entering in by the gates of the city, having a right to the tree of life.

Ed.

Is It Christ Before My Soul?

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.

Notes and Jottings, p. 420.

The New Covenant and the Church

Chapter 2

The New Covenant In 2 Corinthians 3, Jeremiah, and Hebrews

There Is No Church New Covenant

It cannot, in any sense, be a new covenant with us, because we have no old one. ¹

Concerning the New Covenant of Jer. 31:31-34, Charles L. Feinberg remarked:

It could not be made with the church because no former (old) had been made with her (so Ironside, *Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah*). ²

Actually, H. A. Ironside put it more strongly than that:

It were folly to speak of a new covenant with the Church when no former covenant had been made with us. ³

Indeed. The church had no old covenant. Moreover, the covenants of which we speak have to do with the earth, and the church is heavenly, and our calling is heavenly, as Israel's calling is earthly. The idea of a Church-New-Covenant is a fiction.

1. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 26:319.

2. *Jeremiah A Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 219, 1982.

3. *Notes on the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah*, "The Weeping Prophet," New York: Loizeaux, p. 163, 1952, original 1905, revised in 1928.

The New Covenant Does not Express the Christian's Standing

Israel's standing before God was expressed by the Mosaic Covenant. That was the measure and expression of their standing. Of course, we know that it was part of the testing of the first man, and was a standing in the flesh. The New Covenant expresses what Israel's standing will be, a standing in forgiveness of sins and with the law written in the heart. And what we read in Ezek. 40-48 will be carried out under the New Covenant. These covenants are God's administrative order for an earthly people.

Does the New Covenant express the standing of the Christian? Is to be "in Christ" a New Covenant standing? I am sorry if you think so, for you have not yet begun to understand what it is to be *in Christ*, unless you once had some sight of it but have slipped off into "covenant theology." *Christ's place is our place before God. We are accepted in the Beloved. We are seated in Christ Jesus, in the heavenlies. We are heavenly (1 Cor. 15:48). This has nothing to do with the New Covenant itself, though the blood is the grand foundation upon which God brings us Christians before Himself in Christ. To put the Christian under the New Covenant is to say that the New Covenant expresses the Christian's position before God. It is altogether false. It places the Christian under an administrative order on earth specified by a covenant. This is the lowering of Christianity to the position of millennial Israel. It is to lower the heavenly down to the earthly blessing.*

2 Corinthians 3

... not that we are competent of ourselves to think anything of ourselves, but our competency [is] of God; who has also made us competent, [as] ministers of [the] new covenant; not of letter, but of spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit quickens (2 Cor. 3:6, 7).

The word "the" before "new covenant" is in brackets, indicating that the article is not present in the Greek. A footnote to JND's translation says:

The omission of the article makes it characteristic, as in the sense of 'letter' and 'spirit'; perhaps it may be rendered 'competent [as] new covenant ministers.'⁴

Paul did not speak of being under the new covenant but rather about a character of ministry. The new covenant is an expression of sovereign grace towards Israel. And *grace* is the character of the ministry. It is not characterized by

4. So also *Notes and Comments* 540, www.truthpublishers.com

“letter” (as the Mosaic covenant) but by “spirit” (as the new covenant). It is characterized by grace.⁵

This covenant of the letter {the literal covenant} is made with Israel, not with us; but we get the benefit of it. “This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many.” This was putting away the breach of all obligation by death. Israel not accepting the blessing, God brought out the church, and the Mediator of the covenant went on high. We are associated with the Mediator. It will be made good to Israel by-and-by. Paul was the minister of it in the spirit; but he could not be as to the letter {the literal}. They will need no minister of it, because every one will know it, when God writes it on their hearts; the thing is done -- God will be their minister (reverently), when writing it on their hearts. We have it not in the letter, but in the spirit of it, and so have all the value of it, because the way we get it is that the Mediator of it becomes our life -- we are forgiven our sins -- we are associated with the Mediator. He is our life, and we have all the blessings of the new covenant ...⁶ ◆

“New testament” (v. 6) is the “new covenant,” which we find also in Jer. 31; it is new in contrast with the old. It is characterized by the forgiveness of sins, and a man no more teaching his neighbor. Then the prophet says, that they shall no more say, “Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.” The two chief points are the knowledge of God as Jehovah, and the forgiveness of sins. God’s part of that covenant has been done, and Israel would not take it up: so we now are getting the blessings of it, without its being made with us. Our Lord says at the supper, “This is the new covenant in my blood”; and here Paul calls it the same, saying he is an able minister of it. How could he minister it before it was made? The foundation has been laid, and we have the ministry of it. Christ shed His blood, and then the grace was proposed to the Jews; but they would not have it. Peter, in Acts 3, told them Christ would come back if they would have Him, but they would not. God gives the blessings to others, and announces them by His ministers. But the covenant is not made with anybody. It cannot, in any sense, be a new covenant with us, because we have no old one. “This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel,” God says. “After those days,” it is said, He puts His law in their hearts, He forgives their sins, makes them know Himself: that is the new covenant, and a very important one too.

We are under no covenant, though we have the blessings of it (unless you take in a way the covenant confirmed to Christ). First, there was a covenant made with Israel at Sinai, on condition of obedience -- “If ye obey

5. It is quite erroneous to speak of the new covenant as a “legal covenant.” The Davidic promises and the Abrahamic promises will all be made good in connection with the new covenant. It is “new” because it is not legal. The Mosaic covenant was “letter”; the new covenant is “spirit.”

6. *Collected Writings* 27:381.

my voice," and they said, "Yes." Well we know how they failed. Finally Christ dies, and in dying lays the foundation of a new covenant which was, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them"; and "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," and "They shall all know me." Now that will be made good to them, but meanwhile we are getting the benefits, the ground of the whole having been laid in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the spared Jews will be righteous, but not necessarily those that are born afterwards. As for Gentiles, they never had a covenant. In Isaiah and Jeremiah "my people" is Israel, and has nothing to do with Gentiles. The "blood of the new covenant was shed for many," which is not Israel only.⁷ ♦

That blood of the new covenant is certainly not for Israel only. That blood is for all who are saints, for saints who were in the world before there were any Jews, and for Jews, and for Christians, and for Gentiles in the millennium who will be saints; i.e., the blood is for all others also who are not under the new covenant.

Hebrews 8

SUMMARY STATEMENT REGARDING THE NEW COVENANT

First, let us consider a summary statement written in 1860 by J. N. Darby, and then we will look at some details of this matter:

The work is done -- the blood shed. But the new covenant is not yet made with the two houses of Israel and Judah. Hence, in Hebrews, it is remarkable how the apostle, writing for those who now anticipatively enjoy its spiritual privileges, constantly waives the discussion of its direct application. In fact, *that* is reserved for converted Israel by-and-by. There is really no difficulty. Those of the Jews, and we of the Gentiles, who now believe in Jesus, come into a distinct position as one body, but possessing all the moral blessings of the new covenant. The fulfilment of it pertains to the Jewish people in the last days, when Messiah reigns over them. Jesus died "for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" {John 11:51, 52}. His death will avail for both purposes: the time and order of applying it is another question. In fact, we know that Israel refused the message, and hence the blessing remains in abeyance till the fulness of the Gentiles is come in. Then, and when the Redeemer shall come to Zion and out of Zion (for both are true), "all Israel shall be saved" {Rom. 11:26}. Of course, all the efficacious value for Israel then, as for us now, is in the blood of the Lamb. If Israel will have sacrifices, as well as an earthly temple and priesthood, they will be only commemorative signs of the one great offering of Christ. The epistle to the Hebrews excludes these *for the Christian*. The question of the Jew by-and-by is answered by

their own prophecies.⁸

WHO ARE THE OBJECTS OF THE NEW COVENANT?

In Jer. 31 and Heb. 8 we read:

Behold days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day of my taking them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt . . . (Jer. 31:31, 32).

Amillennialists believe that this applies to the church.⁹ They believe that Israel gets only the curses of the OT.¹⁰ and the church gets the blessings of the OT only in a spiritual way;¹¹ i.e., the OT prophecies are generally spiritualized. They believe that the Christian's blessings are all New Covenant blessings. P. Mauro argues from the fact that we enjoy certain new covenant blessings (and of course in the typical amillennialist confusion and confounding, he mixes in special church blessings -- using words of Scripture the true force of which his system prohibits him from apprehending) to a complete identity of church and new covenant blessing.¹²

An immense system of theology is proved false if the New Covenant has Israelites for its object. Let us see what scripture says.

Those who transmute the prophecies concerning Israel into church blessings must necessarily see reference to the church in the expressions "Israel" and "Judah." This is mere spiritual alchemy. Worse still, P. Mauro says:

We have seen, however, that by Jeremiah God promised the new covenant to "the house of Israel and the house of Judah." But there is no contradiction here, and no change in God's plans.¹³

This seems to mean that the prophecy given through Jeremiah did not apply to Israel even when uttered. There was no change in God's plan, he says and he applies Heb 8:7 to the church.

The reasons for believing that the words Judah and Israel mean just what they always meant are:

1. The *two* houses are separately mentioned as objects of the covenant. This has no meaning for the church, which is *one*.

8. *Letters* 3:324

9. P. Mauro, *The Hope of Israel*, ch. 12; W. E. Cox, *The New Covenant Israel*, p. 12; O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 42, etc.

10. P. Mauro, *The Hope of Israel*, p. 94; O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 278.

11. O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 133.

12. *The Hope of Israel*, ch. 12.

13. *The Hope of Israel*, p. 96. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

2. The words "their fathers" refer to the fathers of Israel and Judah. These fathers are the ones who came out of Egypt (Heb. 8:9) and therefore are what we now call Jews. If the fathers of this Israel and Judah are Jews, so are the houses of Israel and Judah Jews. God does not have the church in view, for these are not our fathers.

The same covenant is mentioned in Jer. 32:36-42, as an everlasting covenant (i.e., for as long as the earth lasts). The same people driven into captivity will be given one heart and one way and God will "make an everlasting covenant with *them*" (v. 40). And just as Jehovah had brought evil on "this people," "So will I bring upon them all the good that I have spoken concerning them" (v. 42).

Isaiah also speaks of "an everlasting covenant with them, and their seed shall be known among the Gentiles" (Isa. 61:8, 9). Here Israel is distinguished from the Gentiles and Israel's seed is designated as objects of the covenant. No doubt the covenant of Isa 59:20, 21 is the same.

In Ezekiel 16:60-63 God says He will establish an everlasting covenant with those with whom He had a covenant in their youth.

Then in Ezekiel 37:15-28 we have the regathering of Israel. Joseph and Ephraim will be joined (Ezek. 37:16, 17). This is why the two houses of Israel are named as objects of the same covenant in Jer 31 and Heb. 8. They will be joined as one nation in the coming day of Christ's glory. "They shall be no more two nations" (v. 22). It would be perversity to try to spiritually alchemize that statement into a church blessing. Verse 25 says they will dwell in the land given to Jacob and wherein Israel had dwelt; and with the offspring of this same people Jehovah would make an everlasting covenant (v. 26); i.e., as long as the present earth lasts.

Jeremiah 50:4-5 again shows the two houses of Israel joined in the everlasting covenant.

Paul speaks of:

my kinsmen, according to flesh; who are Israelites; whose [is] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the lawgiving, and the services, and the promises. . ." (Rom. 9:4).

We can at the least say that the covenant noted in Jer. 31 belongs to Paul's *kinsmen according to the flesh*. Let this fact be steadily kept before the reader. The promises also belong to them. That includes the Abrahamic promises. If the covenants belonged to Israel when Paul wrote Romans, as he states they do, the covenant of Heb. 8 belongs to them too. The amillenialists allege that the new covenant was in force before Paul wrote Romans. But Paul says, "my kinsmen according to flesh . . . whose [is] . . . the covenants." The plain fact is that all the earthly covenants belong to Israel and none belong to the church.

WHY IS THE NEW COVENANT SPOKEN OF IN HEB 8?

The reason the new covenant is spoken of in Heb. 8 is to prove the inferiority of what the Hebrew Christians were hankering after, namely, that which was connected with the old covenant. They needed to be weaned from the things connected with the Mosaic covenant. The arguments used by the apostle to effect this weaning are found throughout the epistle. The one used here is that a new covenant is required because of a defect connected with the old one (Heb. 8:7). It is evident therefore, "In that he says, New, he has made the first old; but that which grows old and aged [is] near disappearing" (Heb 8:13). Indeed the temple service was brought to an end in AD 70 when Titus took Jerusalem and not one stone of the temple remained on another as our Lord Jesus Christ said would happen. Actually, the cross was the end of the Mosaic System, and the destruction of Jerusalem was its grave, as someone said.

The apostle speaks of the provisions of the new covenant. They are unconditional, whereas the old covenant was conditional, and the flesh to which it spoke was not subject to the law of God, neither can be (Rom 8:7). This is the defect. It could not, therefore, bless. God's sovereignty must come in. He will consummate a new covenant based upon His "I will."

God therefore had better things in mind than what the old covenant could do. It was made with those in Adamic standing and could only curse them. And it made transgression out of sin, as we have already seen.

Paul nowhere tells these Hebrews that they are under the New Covenant, but he points out that since God will make a new covenant with Judah and Israel, fault is found with the old. Why do they, then, seek that which is connected with what God has rejected. Meanwhile, they have the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant, and far more.

THE NEW COVENANT IS UNCONDITIONAL

In reading what is said about the new covenant in Jer. 31 and Heb. 8 we find many a time the words "I will" but not one condition stated. The same is true concerning the "everlasting covenant" of Jer 32:36-42; Isa. 61:8, 9; Ezek. 16:60-63; 37:15-28; as is also true in Isa. 59:20, 21. It is just as unconditional as the Abrahamic covenant.

JESUS, SURETY OF A BETTER COVENANT

The designation, Surety, indicates that the certainty of the introduction of the new covenant is bound up with the Man, Jesus. It is His personal name as man, the man that is the Son, Who could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." All was certain in the hands of Him Who became the Surety for the stranger and smarted for it. His very walking amidst men made it certain that God would work mighty blessing for His own. And that which was accomplished by the Surety, for Israel (John

11:51, 52), will be reckoned to those who are under the new covenant.

A BETTER COVENANT ESTABLISHED UPON BETTER PROMISES

Promises under Moses were contingent upon obedience. The new covenant is a better covenant than the old one because the old one was conditional and made demands on the sinner who had no strength and could not be subject to the law of God (Rom 8:7); whereas the new covenant is God's grace -- blessing independently of stipulations. It is established on *better* promises in that the promises given on the basis of the old covenant depended on their performance; whereas the promises contained in the new covenant will be realized by a people that God engages to bring into the path of obedience (Rom. 11:26; Ezek. 20:35-38).

We have already noted that Heb 8:7 does not mean that the essence of the old covenant as setting forth the holiness of God was defective. The fault of the old covenant is that it cannot be the vessel for God's blessing man according to His purpose. It cannot be the instrument of the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham; and it stood in the way so long as it was in force.

WHAT ARE THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW COVENANT?

1. Giving my laws into their mind, I will write them also upon their hearts (Heb. 8:10).

This is in direct contrast to the law given through Moses. It was written on tables of stone. It was a system of religion suitable to man in the flesh, i.e., man looked at as standing in the Adam responsibility. It required strength in man but openly discovered that man was without strength (Rom 5:6). Taking up man on the ground of his Adam responsibility, there was a mixture of believers and unbelievers under the law of Moses (Heb 4:2). It dealt with externals only, though it brought out what was in man's heart. It dealt with externals in the sense that it was written on stone, not in the mind and heart. But in the new covenant God undertakes. It will be made good to them through the new heart of which Ezekiel speaks. God will remove their stony hearts and give them hearts of flesh. See Roman 11:26.

The law of God will be in their minds; i.e., they will have intelligent understanding of them. Not only that, but Israel will love the law in that day, for God will write them on their hearts. They shall all be righteous (Isaiah 60:21).

2. I will be to them for God, and they shall be to me for people (Heb 8:10).

It is altogether erroneous to think that Israel is not the people of God. Consequent upon God's chastening through Nebuchadnezzar, they are declared to be Lo-Ammi (Hos. 1), i.e., not my people. The gift and calling of God are

without repentance (Rom. 11:29). Israel is indeed Lo-Ammi, but what does this really mean? Israel is always God's people but "He has ceased to govern in the midst of them upon the earth." That is the point. They are not publicly acknowledged. God has not cast away His people (Rom 11:1), but He does not rule among them. The Gentiles obtained the government and will reign supreme until Messiah rules in the midst of His enemies (Psa. 110). When that occurs all Israel shall be saved (Rom 11:26) and God will publicly acknowledge them as His people (Hos. 2). They will be recognized, in God's governmental ways, as the people of God *nationally*, and He will be to them for God.

3. And they shall not teach each his fellow-citizen, and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; because all shall know me in themselves, from [the] little one [among them] unto [the] great among them (Heb 8:11).

In the day of the unification of Israel and Judah under Messiah, when the nation shall be the head, and not the tail, "they that are of erring spirit shall know understanding, and the disobedient shall learn doctrine" (Isa. 29:24). God "will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28). "They shall all be righteous" (Isa. 60:21). The reason that all Israel will be righteous is that when they are to enter the land:

I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face . . . and I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I 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 (Ezek. 20:35-38).

And so all Israel shall be saved according as it is written. The deliverer shall come out of Zion; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob and this is the covenant from me to them, when I shall have taken away their sins (Rom 11:26, 27).

The nation, purged of all rebels, will all be born of God:

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God (Ezek. 11:19-20).

4. Because I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and lawlessness I will never remember any more (Heb 8:12).

W. Kelly remarks, "'Merciful' here is not mere pity but 'propitious'".

All that we have been considering as provisions of the new covenant are dependent only on the I WILL of God. The heart of that people shall be bowed as one man before the sovereign grace and power of Jehovah. "Thy people

shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Psa. 110:3).

The new covenant does not go beyond forgiveness, remembering sins and iniquities no more. But it never deals with any entrance into the presence of God in the sanctuary. This, as we have seen, is our place by redemption.¹⁴

Diamonds in the Rough

A well-meaning mother said to me the other day, "I don't know what to do with that boy; he won't mind a word I say."

I said, "How old is he?" She said, "He is four and going on five."

Then I said, and I didn't mean to be discourteous or cruel -- "If you can get along with him three or four years longer, the State will take him off your hands and the State can make him mind. The State has detention homes; reform schools, and penitentiaries for that purpose, and the State can always make a boy mind."

This was not a pleasant thing to say, and it was not a pleasant thing for this selfish, sentimental woman to hear, but I say lots of things that I hate to say; it seems that someone has to say them.

Then I continued: "A boy that is raised to disobey the authority of his mother's will, when he gets older, will disobey the authority and laws of both God and the State.

"That is why we have juvenile courts, reform schools, and penitentiaries, and if your boy gets with the State, to where you say your four-year old boy has got with you, the State will have to shoot him down as a bandit or execute him. The State can and will make the boy mind."

I heard an ex-judge say the other day that about ninety-eight percent of tens of thousands now in the penitentiaries of this country were boys who wouldn't mind their mothers in the home. It is pitiful to think about it and it is worse to talk about it, but what can you do?

After all, the fault is not originally with the boy who, in the end, will have to suffer; no, he was innocent when like a pearl of great price he was dropped into the lap of life. Now at four years, says the mother, "He won't mind a word I say."

I said, "Did you ever punish him for disobedience?"

"Punish him! I don't believe in punishing children. Why, It would nearly kill me to punish or whip him; I just couldn't do it."

"Well," I said -- and this is not a treatise on raising children "there is your trouble; you are not willing to hurt yourself for the good of your boy.

"You allow your own feelings to control you and in doing so you are making a

criminal of your boy, who later will break your heart.

“The best and only genuine love is the love that regards and is willing to suffer for the welfare of the one loved.

“The diamond, to be of value, must be cut and ground and polished. There are many diamonds in the rough in prisons today just because they were not polished in the home lapidary. Some disobedient boy’s mother sits embarrassed and with bowed head and a breaking heart in our courts every week and hears the sentence, maybe of life imprisonment or of death pronounced against her little boy who wouldn’t mind a thing she said.

“Now, don t conclude that I am cruel or heartless; I am not. I love children and would, if I could, save every one of them.

“I would if I could at any cost make honorable gentlemen and ladies of every child of every race and color, but I can t do it. You can; at least you can make such of your own, if you will.”

There was a little boy in the Midwest a few years ago -- I could give the exact location if I wanted to -- just like this little four-year old boy, he wouldn’t mind, and his selfish, sentimental mother couldn’t make him mind, of course.

When he was older (twenty-three, I think) his mother saw him just before his execution. She sobbed brokenheartedly and heard as a last word from her boy an oath with the additional words, “No use to sob now, old woman. You are to blame for this. If you’d raised me right when I was little -- .”

The little boy who wouldn’t mind went to his reward and the mother into unconsciousness.

It’s mighty unfair to boys or girls to let them get away with disobedience.

W. J. Phillips (abridged).

We might add when you tell your child to do or don’t do something, make your word stand. If you don t, you are training them to be disobedient. Do not forget that you need God’s help in this task of raising children which He has committed to your charge, so pray much about it and for them.

Keep yourself under control: don’t allow yourself to lose your temper. Set a good example for your children.

To succeed, by the Lord’s help, in teaching your children to be obedient, they must see that you are living in obedience to the Lord under whose authority you are.

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame” (Proverbs 29:15).

“Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul” (Proverbs 29:17).

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Anon.

Love and discipline are to children like sunshine and water are to flowers.

The Home -- Its Delights and Its Dangers

The days in which we are living are characterized by much activity, rush and bustle which have all too often invaded the privacy of our home life with disastrous results. We hear much concerning juvenile delinquency, which is simply another aspect of the plain Bible word "sin."

When we hear of illegitimate children, illicit love, illegal practices, ill-gotten gain, we often find that many of these ills can be traced back to a breakdown in the home. Of course everything else is blamed . . . The bearing of responsibility seems to involve so much. It may mean inconvenience, personal sacrifice and difficulties and the end result might not bring too much satisfaction. Thus virtues of dependability, willingness to help and such like are becoming scarcer every day.

With these thoughts in mind let us consider some Bible homes, trusting that these lessons may be used of God to guide and direct us as parents, Christian leaders and all with a genuine love for young people everywhere.

A Divided Home

In Gen. 24, Abraham's unnamed servant traveled to Mesopotamia in order to seek out a bride for Isaac. The important question was asked, "Wilt thou go with this man?" and Rebekah replied, "I will go."

During his lifetime, Isaac was continually oppressed by the Philistines, yet in spite of this, he prospered and was blessed of God. It was into this home that division came with all its many problems and distress.

Isaac loved Esau, his older son, because he did eat of his venison, but Rebekah loved Jacob who was the younger. Isaac allowed his appetite to prejudice parental control. He favored Esau whilst his wife favored Jacob. This has always been a dangerous situation. Jesus said, "If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3:25).

Before Isaac blessed his older son, he asked him to go out and bring him some venison. Rebekah overheard her husband's request, disguised Jacob outwardly to look like Esau, prepared a hasty meal of goat's meat and sent Jacob in to his father for the parental blessing. Despite his old age, Isaac detected the voice as Jacob's, but was deceived by the disguise, and bestowed on Jacob the blessing intended for Esau. In this, Isaac showed lack of discernment, and great distress was caused when Esau returned from the field. The sad sequel involved the flight of Jacob for his very life and the consequent break-up of the family. Rebekah would no longer enjoy the fellowship of Jacob her favorite son, and enmity came between the two boys.

The lesson we learn today is that father and mother should work together whether in grace or in discipline. Duplicity and secrets should not be countenanced under any circumstances. Honesty and integrity are indispensable factors so lacking but so necessary in the days in which we live.

A Home of Deceit

Let us now consider Laban's home in Ha-ran. Jacob fled to Haran, to the home of his uncle Laban. Here it was he fell in love with Rachel, Laban's younger daughter. An agreement was reached whereby Jacob would serve Laban for seven years for the privilege of Rachel's hand in marriage.

In typical Eastern fashion the bride was veiled, but on the wedding day, Laban substituted Leah, his older daughter for Rachel. In this way, Jacob received a well-deserved punishment for the earlier deception he had inflicted on his aged father. Jacob received more than he had figured. He was accustomed to making hard bargains but they bounced back like boomerangs.

We are reminded that pretense, falsehood and lies of any kind are all subject to a day of reckoning, retribution and judgment. At the time, Jacob may have thought himself clever in outwitting his father, but now "the shoe was on the other foot." God's holy Word warns, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Jacob reaped an unexpected harvest in uncle Laban's home and came to realize that "the way of the transgressor is hard" (Prov. 13:15).

A Home of Discrimination

Jacob seemed to follow in his parents' footsteps even more disastrously. In his marital life he was responsible for causing friction between Leah and Rachel. Jacob loved Rachel dearly, and Leah felt it very bitterly, knowing that Jacob hated her. Leah nevertheless appeared to be a godly woman and God blessed her. Jacob made a distinction which was most inconsiderate and showed a complete lack of wisdom and discernment in a situation for which he had only himself to blame.

Let us pause to observe that Jacob's life was spent in three houses.

- A. In Isaac's house -- this was his birthplace, his natural home.
- B. In Laban's house -- this would speak of Haran, and a carnal life.
- C. In God's house -- at Bethel, where he was born again, and his name changed from Jacob meaning "crooked," to Israel meaning "a Prince with God."

As Christians, we need to live at Bethel seven days in each week and emulate

the psalmist: "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple" (Psa. 27:4).

Jacob never learned the lesson of equity and justice in his dealings with his large family. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children because he was the son of his old age and he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him" (Gen. 37:3, 4).

This was definite discrimination in Jacob's home. Rachel was dead but Jacob persisted in favoring Joseph. The final outcome was that Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt by his angry and envious brothers. Again the tables were turned as they deceived Jacob, pretending that Joseph had been killed by wild beasts, and producing Joseph's coat dipped in blood as proof.

Some children are equipped with talents and attributes which appear to give them a natural advantage, whilst there are others who may be handicapped by physical, mental or even spiritual problems beyond their control. Let us see to it that we maintain an equitable control, and seek to love each one individually without discrimination. In that lovely home in Bethany (John 11:5) we read, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus."

A Home of Dedication

We have viewed division, deceit, and discrimination in three homes, but we observe a much brighter situation in the household of Amram. Amram and Jochebed his wife, were refugees in an alien land with a solemn edict of judgment hanging overhead. In spite of all these disadvantages, their home was dedicated to God. This situation could be multiplied many times today in the faithful Christian testimonies being maintained despite great opposition in the Communist dominated countries of Eastern Europe.

Little Moses was beset with dangers, yet his parents hid him for three months from the enemy. When he could no longer be hidden, they placed him in the ark of bulrushes and committed him to God's care and protection. The account in Hebrews records: "They were not afraid of the king's commandment" (Heb. 11:23). Miriam, the older sister of Moses, stood aside to watch; soon the baby's cries reached the ears of Pharaoh's daughter and Moses was rescued. The sequel is almost unbelievable. Moses' own mother was engaged by Pharaoh's daughter to nurse the Hebrew baby, and received wages for looking after her own boy, which was a labor of love. Here is then a lesson for all mothers. God will reward all faithful mothers for godly training and upbringing. Moses learned much of true faith in God from his godly mother, and this stood him in good stead amidst the pleasures of sin and the treasures of Egypt.

Fathers and mothers do we delight to teach our young folks the things of God? Do we feed them with the bread of life? Or are we neglecting this daily manna for their soul's welfare? Amram and Jochebed stand out as examples of faith amidst dangers. May we ever seek to dedicate our young people to the Lord and His service, letting nothing detract us from this purpose. We are well aware of interruptions, obstacles and various hindrances which tend to rob us of our devotional times. It is not easy to meditate, but the more we meditate, the more disciplined our lives become. We must practice the lost art of meditation, taking time to behold Him.

A Home of Deliverance

From a dedicated home we now consider the home of Joash. Here we discover a sad situation. Due to their idolatry and wickedness, the children of Israel were in bondage to the Midianites. Gideon, a young man of Manasseh, Joash's son, was called of God to deliver Israel from their oppressors. He was commissioned to throw down his father's altar to Baal, destroy the grove, and build an altar unto the Lord, and offer his father's bullock as a burnt sacrifice.

He obeyed, and together with ten of his father's servants the order was carried out under cover of darkness. In the morning, the people of his city, came out to judge Gideon, accusing him before his father. Turning his back upon his idols, Joash stood up in support of his son Gideon's action.

We learn a precious lesson from this stirring incident. Joash was an unbeliever, but Gideon's faith and testimony influenced Joash for good. In the church, we find many young people from non-Christian homes standing up for God and seeking to maintain a consistent testimony despite much adversity. Their faith in action exposes many who, living an easy and affluent life show no signs of spiritual life. We should ever seek to encourage all such who are saved . . . They need our help and encouragement and we shall be richly rewarded as we watch their development and growth in the things of God.

A Home of Desire, Dishonor, Defeat, Devotion

Israel is again in deep distress, having been delivered into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. With this background we observe Manoah's house. God blesses him with a son who is dedicated from birth as a Nazarite. His name Samson means "Great joy," and he was blessed by God.

The future looked promising, but early in life Samson disappointed his parents by his own carnal desires. He wanted to have his own way. First he

wanted to marry an unbeliever, a Philistine girl. Later he departed from his vows in eating honey from the carcass of a dead lion. Finally he desired Delilah who was responsible for his defeat and downfall. During this downward path we can visualize Manoah and his wife, broken in heart, as they witness Samson's gradual degradation bringing dishonor to the Lord.

Having disclosed the secret of his strength, he was overpowered, fettered and blinded. The saddest part of the story is recorded in Judg. 16:20, "And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." We perceive the validity of Samson's profession, however, in his last hours. He called upon God to restore his strength, and cried out "Let me die with the Philistines." He destroyed more at his death than during his lifetime.

In Judg. 16:31 we read, "His brethren and all the house of his father came down and took him and brought him up and buried him in the burying place of Manoah his father." This truly was a loyal family, evidenced by their devotion and last respects paid to their loved one at his death. Samson's name is included amongst the "Heroes of Faith" in Heb. 11 . . . We can learn from this story that as parents we should never cease to pray for our children . . .

A Home of Devotion

Elkanah's home is a beautiful picture where the father is the rightful head of the household and Hannah (meaning Grace), his wife is in subjection. In response to her earnest petition Hannah is granted a son. Samuel means "asked of God." God is the giver of life in all of its aspects, natural and eternal. Hannah was a woman in touch with God, and it is therefore no wonder that Samuel too was in tune with God. Dedicated from birth, he was brought up to the temple and commissioned for God's service at an early age.

Hannah knew what it was to literally "wait upon God." We need praying mothers like Hannah today. Hannah put first things first. She also composed a hymn of praise to God.

The need today is greater than ever for godly parents and Christian homes. Family worship and prayers cannot be surrendered without bringing defeat and disaster. We are living in days similar to those in the book of Judges when everyone did that which was right in his own eyes. Moral standards are at an all time low. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only standard for the Christian. May we seek ever to direct the young into the ways of Christ.

G. B. Davies.

Historical Note on the Recovery of the Truth of the Any-Moment Coming

The arch-antidispensationalist, and posttribulationist, B. W. Newton supplied information, regarding the recovery of the truth regarding the Lord's coming, in his printed letter, *Is It Wrong to Expect Certain Predicted Events Previous to the Return of the Lord Jesus? A Letter to a Friend*, Plymouth: Tract Depot, Cornwall Street. This paper is listed in the United States *National Union Catalog* for the Boston (Massachusetts) Public Library under date of 1845. The date is not printed on my duplicated copy (not from that source).

Printed on the fly-leaf is:

The following letter was written some years ago . . .

On pp. 1 and 2 we, we read:

When the doctrine of the Lord's return was revived in the Church about fifteen years ago, they who taught it were for the most part accustomed to say that no intervening event was to be expected. This they taught, not because it was believed that the early Churches did not look for intervening events, but because we were considered to be in circumstances different from theirs. It was allowed that they had the whole course of the dispensation before them, prophetically delineated by the Lord and His apostles, and that therefore many events must necessarily have been expected by *them*; whereas *we*, it was said, were living at the close of a dispensation when all prophecy had been fulfilled, and consequently, since the predicted events had come to pass, nothing any longer remained to be waited for.

But when Scripture was more carefully searched, it was found that we¹ had erred in supposing that all the prophecies pertaining to this dispensation had been fulfilled. It was found that the 24th of Matthew, the 21st of Luke, and similar passages, had not been exhausted in the past destruction of Jerusalem -- that Romanism had not accomplished the predictions respecting the last apostasy -- that the 1260 days, so often spoken of in Daniel and the Revelation, instead of being completed, had not yet commenced; and that the greater part of the revelation was as yet unfulfilled.* Thus, therefore, we found ourselves placed in circumstances closely resembling those of the early Churches, having a path before us prophetically marked by events intended as signs of the great approaching end.

If we assume that "some years ago" was about three years ago, then 1845 - 3 = 1842, when the letter was written. Then 15 years before that would have been 1827. Thus, in 1827 (or even 1828) some "who taught it were for the most part accustomed to say that no intervening event was to be expected." To me, that

1. {Does this mean that he also believed in the any-moment coming at first? -- but with wrong notions attached?}

sounds like the any-moment expectation; held about 1827. It confirms the thesis presented in *Precious Truth Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby*, vol. 1, 1826 - 1845, that J. N. Darby understood the pretribulation rapture in 1827.

Moreover, it is another indicator that his relative S. P. Tregelles was engaged in calumniating JND when, in 1864, he made the charge that the any-moment coming was first uttered about 1832 in Irving's church.

And besides that, this date arrived at through BWN's statements predates even Margaret MacDonald's utterances by several years.

That J. N. Darby held the any-moment coming of Christ in 1827 is really beyond reasonable doubt.

I suggest: to those who have a copy of *Precious Truth Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby*, vol. 1, 1826 - 1845, duplicate this article and paste it into the book; and to those who do not have it, purchase a copy.

R. A. Huebner, May 13, 1998.

* Who found this, and when was it discovered? It implies that those who held the any-moment coming were at that time unaware of the *future* 1260 days. Is that believable? To me, this sounds like another example of his self-serving drivel, with a "spin" on the facts to make those he opposed look foolish; particularly, of course, J. N. Darby. In the notes on "The Gospel of John," in JND's *Notes and Comments*, vol. 7, p. 261, there is a date of "Lord's Day, April 8/27." Happily, we have evidence in these notes, written in 1827, that not only did JND see the church with Christ above, during the events of the book of Revelation which were yet to occur, but additionally we thus have evidence once more of BWN's untrustworthiness regarding certain representations about those he opposed. JND wrote in these 1827 notes:

. . . the Apocalypse looks only into a gloomy future of judgment in the Church (the bride of Christ above) . . . (p. 366; cp. pp. 360, 367).

John's gospel shows all the intermediate part, the operation part; that is, in Christ, the Word and Son; in all its scope as to His Person; rejection here, the position of the Church and Himself, and His relation with the Father. The other gospels give details of parts, and while the economy of foundation is given in the Acts, and the detail and order and place of the Church in the epistles, and its apostasy as in man here, the Apocalypse gives the end of all these things, and teaches (as to those of them which pass now) the Church to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus," come quickly. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that *heareth* say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen." Do not I hear, O Lord? In this my heart says, Come. My soul says, Come. We are here so as in a manner to be "sick of love"; yet in spirit so with Thee, and above this world's, living with Thee; set down with Thee; that we can say, "Thy will be done." Be Thy name, blessed Jesus, fully glorified by their power and ways. Yet Thou knowest me to be "sick of love," desiring Thy presence, holy and blessed Savior, Lamb of God, our Lord, Prince of peace, King of kings, the Word of God (pp. 235, 236).

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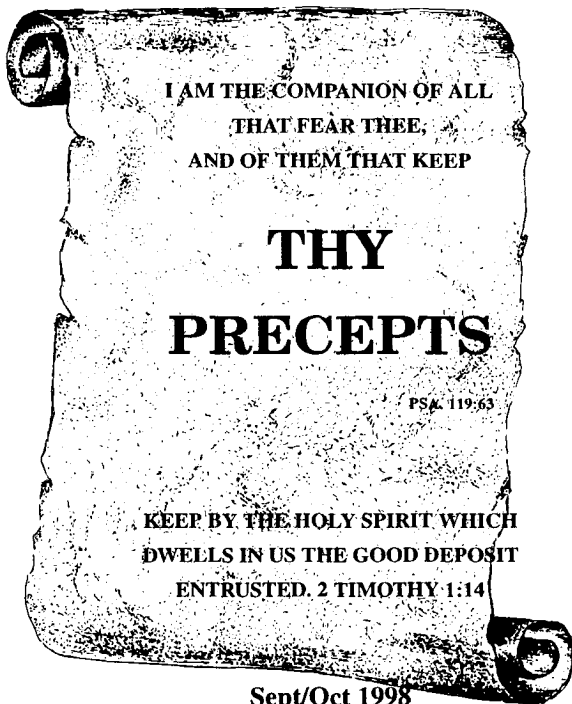
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Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.7

Is the Bride the Church?

*The Mystery*¹

Article by W. J. Hocking

The object of the author of this tract is to show that the “mystery” as used in the New Testament Scriptures has reference to God’s calling out, during the time of Christ’s rejection, a people from both Jews and Gentiles whose position, association, and hope are intimately connected with Christ on high. Of necessity therefore, he rightly condemns the traditional confusion of Old Testament and New Testament saints, which dates the church from the gates of paradise. Nevertheless he himself falls into serious aberration from the truth in regard to this very portion of the subject.

“The Old Testament Saints,” says Dr. B., “are a great burden to Expositors of New Testament Truth” (page 50). So he very kindly undertakes to relieve them of this embarrassment once and for all. While the church forms the body of Christ, we are now told the elect saints of the Old Testament constitute the bride of Christ, the Lamb’s wife. He forbears to blame too severely those who have long held the identification of “the Body with the Bride,” owning that “there is certainly some little excuse for its having been so generally entertained” (page 49).

Having duly noted and acknowledged this gracious remark of Dr. B.’s, we proceed to consider the scripture he advances to show that the Bride is the elect of Israel, and not the church which is Christ’s body.

On page 49 we read, “The Bride in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea, is Israel,

1. *The Mystery*. by the Rev. E. W. Bullinger, D.D. -- Eyre and Spottiswood, London, 1895.

or at any rate the elect of Israel.” This appears fair enough, save that his phrase, “elect of Israel,” has an air of novelty, which amounts to suspicion when it is further explained to be, “those who were ‘partakers of the heavenly calling’ in Israel.” Dr. B. evidently wishes us to see that the OT prophecies concerning the Bride only contemplate a portion of the nation of Israel. He refers to Isa. 54:5-8; 62:4; Jer. 3:14; Hos. 2:16, 17; adding, “These and other passages clearly prophesy that an election of Israel shall be the Bride” (p. 50).

Now before passing on to the development of Dr. B.’s theory, a very slight consideration of the prophecies named will show that they speak of a time when Jehovah will re-assume the character of husband to her who is a widow, -- when in fact Israel will be brought again into relationship with Himself as an earthly people. There is certainly nothing in the prophecies adduced to indicate that the subjects of them were “partakers of the heavenly calling” (a phrase Dr. B. has appropriated from the New Testament, not the Old, to bolster up his theory). Take his first passage, Isa. 54:5. It says, “Thy Maker is thine husband” truly; but the very same verse gives Him another title, “The God of the whole earth.” What is this but earthly blessing in the millennium? So also in v. 3 of the same chapter, speaking of Israel, “Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” We are sure Dr. B., with the regard he continually avows for the congruity of figures, will not seriously connect “desolate cities” with the heavenly calling.

But neither does Isa. 62:4 support. We have there not a celestial but a terrestrial sphere. “Zion” and “Jerusalem” in v. 1 locate the promised blessings, and “righteousness” and “salvation” are for the saints in the “land.” “Thy land shall be married” we read; and therein Israel shall enjoy the corn and the wine (vv. 8-9). Does Dr. B. really expect us to credit that these prophecies refer to a heavenly Bride?

We turn now to Jer. 3:14, “I am married unto you.” This chapter treats of the still future restoration of the Jews to Palestine. We are unable to trace the slightest reference to “the partakers of the heavenly calling.” But treacherous Judah and back-sliding Israel repent and come to Jerusalem, the throne of Jehovah. They will come out of the land of the north to the promised land; and all nations even shall be gathered to Jerusalem (vv. 17-18). Can there be any doubt that the figure of marriage is here applied to the re-establishment of God’s earthly people, and has no sort of reference to the partakers of the heavenly calling?

Hos. 2 is no less conclusive that an earthly people is the subject of the Spirit of prophecy. Earthly judgments first fall upon that guilty nation (vv. 9-15); and then Jehovah promises to make a covenant for her with the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, and to break the bow and the sword, and to make them lie down safely. “And the earth shall bear the corn, and the

wine and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel" (vv. 18-23). It is unquestionably pictorial of a scene of earthly blessedness under renewed relationship to Jehovah. The teaching therefore of the four OT prophecies to which Dr. B. makes reference is that a time is yet to come when Israel will be the "Bride" of Jehovah; and that time cannot be until the chosen nation is gathered into its own land under the sway of Jehovah and His Anointed.

Turning to Dr. B. we are astounded at the position he takes up. He coolly asserts (for it is really without either scripture or argument to support it) that "the elect Saints of the Old Testament will form the Bride," which is the "great City, the holy Jerusalem" of Rev. 21:9-27. This, he contends, "is the city for which all those who were partakers of the Heavenly Calling looked" (page 51); and he refers to Heb. 11:13-16.

As a matter of fact, after observing how many folks Dr. B. seeks to set right in his little treatise of rather less than sixty pages, we were scarcely prepared to fall upon such glaring inconsistency in the author himself.

For, observe, he will have it (page 60) that the saints of old who died in faith are those who form the heavenly Bride of the Lamb. But he quotes four prophecies (pp. 49-50) that refer to Israel's restoration to the land under the figure of marriage. And he knows these are yet to be fulfilled, because he tells us that Israel's blindness will come to an end (p. 10). When that is so, there will be the earthly Bride. So that if Dr. B.'s notions have any foundation, there will be two brides -- a heavenly and an earthly. And he is found to hold the very thing that he himself condemns on page 49 (viz: that there are two brides), and sets himself to disprove. It has rarely been our lot to come across such an instance of thinly-disguised self-contradiction as this.

The truth is that there are two brides; only the heavenly one is the church, and not the saints who died in Old Testament times, as Dr. B. maintains without adequate support.

There were always, he says, those in Israel who lived "by faith" and "died in faith," and were "partakers of the heavenly calling." They looked for a heavenly country where God had prepared for them a city (Heb. 11:13-16). Abraham also looked for a city which hath foundations. Turning now to Rev. 21, we are reminded that the Bride is there introduced under the symbol of a city. Now, exclaims Dr. B. in emphatic capitals, "what are we to understand but that this CITY -- which is declared to be the BRIDE, the Lamb's Wife, is the city for which all those who were partakers of the Heavenly Calling looked; and that these elect saints of the Old Testament will form the Bride" (page 51)? We do not, however, understand the same from these scriptures as Dr. B., even with the aid of his capitals. It surely does not follow that because "city" occurs in Heb. and in Rev., it necessarily symbolizes the same truth in both places. We had not yet learnt that because we read of an "ark" in Gen. 6 and Ex. 2 and

in Ex. 25 of the ark of the covenant, {that} the ark of bulrushes and Noah's ark were synonymous terms. Indeed we must remind Dr. B. that on pages 13-15 he himself has shown that a single word (ecclesia) can be used in several senses. Why, therefore may not the word, "city," be used to convey two different ideas in two books?

In Heb. 11 the word is used to portray that established and permanent abode in heaven for which the Old Testament saints looked in contrast with their temporary and uncertain residence upon earth. Abraham awaited the time when he should exchange his tent for a city, and so did the other patriarchs. But in Rev. 21 the city symbolizes the saints themselves, just as in Rev. 17, 18 another city, Babylon, sets forth corrupt Christendom in the last days. Here then the Bride is the city while the Jewish saints hoped to be in a city, that is, a glorious dwelling place on high. But the holy Jerusalem which John sees seems emblematical rather of a seat of government than a habitation.

In the following page (59) we encounter some extraordinary statements indeed. On the gates of the city Dr. B. finds the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and in the foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. We should have supposed that the names of all the twelve apostles would have satisfied even a divine of the nineteenth century that the holy city was the church of God. But they are no match for Dr. B.; with one stroke of his pen he puts off the whole band. We are familiar with wholesale excommunications by arrogant popes; but even they were never bold enough to turn Peter and the eleven en masse out of the church of which they were the honored foundations (Eph. 2).

But Dr. B. is troubled by no squeamish scruples. What can he do with his theory about the Bride if the apostles form part of the body of Christ? With rare effrontery, urged on by overwhelming zeal for the offspring of his imagination, he declares that the twelve apostles are "separated off from the church!" The church is part of the Bridegroom, but the apostles form no part of the bride! There is therefore, according to our author, not the shadow of a shade of a doubt that those who have regarded Peter and John, for instances, as among those whom God set first in the church, have been the unfortunate victims of an egregious delusion!

The fact that the names of the twelve apostles are seen in the foundations of the symbolical city of Rev. 21 receives explanation from the Epistle to the Ephesians (2:19-22). It indicates, in spite of Dr. B's reveries, that the apostles had a good deal to do with the church. So far from being outside of it, they are as closely connected with it as a foundation is with the building raised upon it. Saved Jews and Gentiles were and are being built upon a foundation which is not of the apostle Paul to the exclusion of the others, but of "the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone." This building under the

workmanship of the Holy Ghost is growing unto a holy temple in the Lord. In that same word the Ephesian saints, with other believing Jews and Gentiles, are viewed by the apostle as forming God a house upon earth, God dwelling in it by His Spirit.

Here then in this Epistle, which specially treats of the mystery, the body of Christ is presented as a building having the apostles for a foundation, and growing to a temple in the Lord, but is even now God's habitation in the Spirit (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 6); while in Rev. 21 a building is again presented to us, having foundations in which are the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Now what more simple and unstrained than to see in both places a figure of the church, the body and bride of Christ?

Nay, says the author of "The Mystery," that cannot be. What are we to do with the promise of Christ to the apostles which has never been abrogated, that they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28) if they form part of the body of Christ (page 52)? But it is puzzling to see how membership of the body of Christ would hinder the apostles from judging the tribes of Israel, any more than it would hinder the Corinthian saints from judging the world (1 Cor. 6:2), or the overcomer in Thyatira from ruling the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27). Will Dr. B. amputate the body still further by cutting off the Corinthian saints and those in Thyatira? The sole justification for his monstrous excision of the apostles is a "comparison of Matt. 19:28 with Rev. 21:14." Let wise men examine for themselves. What necessary connection is there between the names in the foundations and sitting on twelve thrones?

On page 54 Dr. B. sums up in very decided terms, "What is clear and certain is that the church is the body of Christ Himself, and that the members of the body being 'in Christ' (mystical) are PART OF THE BRIDEGROOM, and cannot possibly, therefore, be the bride herself."

Now it is hardly conceivable that our author is unaware of the common danger of confusing the sign with the thing signified. He surely knows also that it is a frequent and well-understood practice to compare an object in two perfectly dissimilar ways for the purpose of illustrating two distinct qualities of that object.

We will give an example of this to make our point quite clear. Let us suppose that an impatient reader, referring to a treatise of inconsequential ideas and vain fancies, alludes to its author as "a goose," and subsequently as "a mule." By the first figure he would probably wish to convey the I general vacuity of thought characteristic of the writer, and by the second his stubborn persistence in wrong notions. And though the figures might perhaps be more forcible than elegant, they would be perfectly admissible. But Dr. B. would contend that they must refer to two different persons. For, he would say, if a man is a goose how can he be a mule? One is a biped, the other a quadruped.

One cackles, but the other kicks; and so on with other dissimilarities. But does he not forget that though a goose cannot be a mule, a man may be both a goose and a mule at the same time, inasmuch as it is quite possible for him to be not only foolish but obstinate as well?

Dr. B. keeps insisting that the body cannot be the bride, when the truth is that it is the church which is figured both as the body and the bride. While it is perfectly true that these figures are allied in character, they are nevertheless used to set forth distinct ideas. The "body" indicates that intimate degree of living unity existing between Christ and His members, and is used particularly of the church during its stay on earth. On the other hand, the foremost thought suggested by the "bride" is that of association. The church is to love and share Christ's glory, reigning with Him. Hence where the professing church is shown as the false bride (Rev. 17), she is seen taking her glory from the kings of the earth with whom she enters into unnatural alliance. But the true bride awaits the heavenly glory of Christ.

We must, however, say a word as to Dr. B.'s treatment of Eph. 5:28, 29, which is another instance of his pitiful trifling with these sacred themes. Here, he says, "the great secret is employed as an argument to the reciprocal duties of husbands and wives. In neither case is it said that the church is the wife or that Christ is the husband. But that as Christ loves His body (the church), so husbands ought to love their bodies (their wives)" (page 54). Now Dr. B. admits in so many words that a man's wife is here spoken of as his body, but where the question is the church as both the body of Christ and the Lamb's wife, he is completely boggled. He simply shuts his eyes, and says the only thing "clear and certain" is that it cannot possibly be.

Now the point in the verses is that a bride is a man's body, that he and his wife are mystically "one flesh." This was literally true in the case of Adam and Eve; for the rib that God took from Adam He builded into a woman; and God called their name, Adam (Gen. 5:2). And these figures are applied by the apostle (we are not so concerned about "New Testament Expositors"), to Christ and the church. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:32). So that the passage bases the love of the husband to the wife upon the identity (in figure) of his body and his bride; adding, that so it is with the Lord and the Church.

Dr. B.'s remarks on Matt. 25:1-13 afford another example of his riding a figure to death. The virgins cannot be the bride, because they are her attendant companions! We wonder if he objects in the same way to the Lord's similitudes of the kingdom of the heavens in Matt. 13. Does he say it is "clear and certain" that the great tree cannot be the leaven hid in three measures of meal, any more than the latter can be the same as the treasure, because it is likewise "clear and certain" the treasure was hid in a field and not in the three

measures of meal? The Lord, however, likens the kingdom of heaven to all three, however they may differ when compared among themselves. In point of fact, just as the types of scripture cannot be understood until we know the truths they typify, in like manner, paradoxical as it may seem, the language of scripture cannot be correctly interpreted without knowing the underlying thoughts. This the Lord said to the Jews, "Why do ye not understand my speech? (λαλιᾶ) even because ye cannot hear my word" (λόγος) (John 8:43). The case of Nicodemus illustrates the same thing, for he utterly mistook the meaning of the Lord's words (John 3:4).

But why does Dr. B., dwelling upon the non-identity of the bride and the virgins, her companions, reiterate the ruler's question, "How can these things be?" Is it not best first to ascertain the purpose of the parable? This is supplied in Matt. 25:13, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Now we can understand attendant virgins slumbering and sleeping; but how incongruous would it have been to represent a bride falling asleep on such an occasion? Do not the "Spirit and the bride say, Come?" (Rev. 22:17). Beside half of them are shut out, a circumstance quite foreign to the figure of a bride, but faithfully illustrating the fate of the mass of professing Christendom, as we are taught in unfigurative language elsewhere. The ten virgins therefore set forth the mixed company of those who take the place of Christians, while the bride figures the church in glory associated with Christ in His public appearing and reign.

Dr. B. maintains (page 55) that Rebekah does not illustrate the church but the bride, that is, OT saints spoken of in Heb. 11. The sole reason given is that the bride (Rebekah) was not to be of "the Canaanites," and Gentiles were expressly "shut out" in contrast with the church which embodies Jew and Gentile. But Dr. B. overlooks that amongst those expressly named in the "great cloud of witnesses" (to which he refers in Heb. 11) Rahab is included (v. 31), who was both a Gentile and a Canaanite. We think this fact rather spoils the symmetry of Dr. B.'s argument; and it is undeniable that theories must give way to facts.

The "better thing" (Heb. 11:39, 40) is said by our author to refer to the position of greater glory and honor the body of Christ will have than the bride; whereas it refers to the present blessing of Christianity which God has now provided for us and which we enjoy already, while they had only unfulfilled promises. Nevertheless both they and we shall be perfected together in the first resurrection (compare the use of "better," in Heb. 7:19-22; 8:6; 9:23).

We have now examined the scriptures that Dr. B. has brought forward to show that the body of Christ is not identical with the heavenly bride of Christ; and we find that not one of them bears him out in his mis-shapen theory. Being over-occupied with the nature of the metaphors employed, he has missed the

truth signified. The “body,” which indicates in a word the nature of present living unity betwixt Christ and the church, is characteristically found in the Epistles; while the “bride” signifying the future association of the church, when perfected and glorified with Christ, is appropriately used in the prophetic visions of the Apocalypse. What is first His body becomes His bride, as in the case of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2), which Eph. 5 authorizes as a picture of Christ and the church.

Until the nuptial day the church awaits with joyous anticipation. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come” (Rev. 21:17). How perverse to suppose that the Holy Ghost is moving the spirits of the departed saints of OT days, who are now on high, to cry, Come! The bride here can only refer to the church, which alone is the habitation of the Spirit. Besides it is the saints on earth, not those in the presence of Christ, who say, Come. The fact is Dr. B.’s theory does not accord with the truth as revealed. He has offered us bread, but we find it is a stone.

{The remainder of this paper examines Dr. B.’s views on when the church started and is omitted here.}

The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol. 1.

Walter Scott’s Evil Teaching

In *Selections from Fifty Years Written Ministry*, London: Holness, 1913, he wrote this regarding the Lord saying “finished”:

The words do not primarily refer to the completion of atonement (p. 70).

Do you wonder why he said this? Try this:

Christ as high priest, and in the Sanctuary above, has made propitiation by His own blood . . . (p. 172).

He bases this on the type in Lev. 16, and he seemed anxious to point out this:

Atonement in all its parts had to be effected on that one day of 24 hours (p. 172).

So slavishly following the type, he would have to conclude that Christ in the disembodied state took the blood to heaven between 3 PM and 6 PM on the day He died, in order to make propitiation in heaven. His appeal to Heb. 9:12 is baseless. That verse does not tell us that Christ entered *with* His blood; and moreover, the verse speaks of Christ’s ascension into heaven, in manhood. He has taught this doctrine in a number of books and used to break bread and preach among Open-Brethren, as he was doing at the time this book was published.

God's Use of Instruments

John spoke of the last days as being already come, because there were even then many antichrists; but God's patience has been going on, until at the close perilous times have come.

And now, I will add a word as to how we are to walk in the midst of such a state of things. It is clearly by the word of God, i.e., by immediate reference to it. Not that God does not use ministry. Ministry is His own ordinance. Still for authority we must turn to the Word of God itself. There is found direct authority of God, as determining everything. And we have the activity of His Spirit to communicate things.

It is an unhappy thing if a person only goes to the Scripture, refusing help from others; and so much the worse for him.

And again, it is a different thing for you to look at them as a direct guide, and deny the Spirit's place.

A mother ought to be blest in the care of her children, and so should a minister among saints; that is the activity of the Spirit of God in an individual -- he is an instrument of God. But while owning that fully, we must go to the Word of God, and to that directly; that is what we have to insist upon. We all say that the Word of God is the authority, but we have to insist that God speaks by the Word. A mother is not inspired; no man is inspired; but the Word of God is inspired, and it is direct: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." I never get the church teaching; the church is taught and does not teach; individuals teach. But the apostles and others whom God used in that way were the instruments of God to communicate directly from God to the saints. So it is, Let "the letter be read to all the holy brethren."

This is of all importance, because it is God's title to speak to souls directly. He may use any instrument He pleases, and you cannot object; "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee"; but when you come to direct authority, it is a most solemn thing to touch that. Neither do I talk of private judgment in the things of God, I do not admit it as a principle. You have to discern about many other things, but the moment I get into divine things, am I going to talk of judging the Word of God?

Notes and Jottings of J. N. Darby, p. 77 .

The Value of Being Criticized

One of the unpleasant things in life is to be criticized. Yet it is a common experience, and one, moreover, that can be turned to good account if we learn to accept it wisely.

The Book of Job records the personal criticisms that several friends indulged

in long ago. The world has not changed a great deal in this respect since their day, and none of us can expect to be immune from criticism. We may therefore ask: what should be our attitude in the face of censoriousness?

In the first place it is wise to recognize that some criticism can be distinctly helpful. As much as we fall short of perfection we tend to be blind to our faults. Any candid friend, therefore, who will draw attention to our shortcomings is a friend indeed. We read, 'Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee' (Prov. 9:8) and 'faithful are the wounds of a friend' (Prov. 27:6). We should be careful not to reject out of hand *all* criticism. If we take just criticism into the Lord's presence He may use it to search our hearts. Such can be recognized as part of His loving discipline, as He seeks to bring us to the point to which He eventually brought Job -- that point where we abandon our natural instinct, to affirm, 'My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live' (Job 27:6) and where we will inwardly confess, 'Behold, I am vile' (40:4) and 'I abhor myself' (42:6).

Secondly, having proceeded to accept what is just in such criticism, and having profited thereby, what are we to say about a residue which we feel is still unjust? We can remember that our Lord 'when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously' (1 Pet. 2:23). The Lord Jesus meekly bore the greatest infliction of injustice, and left His vindication in the Father's hands. God's answer to the injustice of man was seen in the resurrection of Christ, and His exaltation into heaven. Supreme vindication will yet be manifested to the world. And one of the great honors bestowed upon the Christian is that of following in the steps of the Master by accepting injustice in criticism with meekness. Criticism, then, may bring us a twofold blessing. It may serve to correct some of our many failings; and it may train us in our fellowship with Christ.

* A true Christian spirit is slow to attribute unworthy motives to others, even where their censures appear to be without foundation. And even where it is clear that they are moved by ill-will our duty is clear. 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you' (Matt. 5:44). The apostle Paul wrote, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good' (Rom. 12:20f f.) Yet in spite of our familiarity with these words it is not until we are unjustly treated ourselves that we can begin to put them into practice. Then we are tested by the way which we demonstrate our love for the Lord.

We are not surprised at Job's resentment. He lived before Christ. We, however, live in the light of the teaching of our Savior, and His supreme example of meekness in suffering should help us in our reaction to criticism when it is either just or unjust. In the latter we may even manifest a true Christian spirit, and thereby draw nearer to our beloved Lord.

The New Covenant and the Church

Chapter 3

An Alleged Leak in The Dispensational Dike

What is the Alleged Leak?

M. J. Stanford made the following statements:

J. N. Darby systematized scriptural Dispensationalism; C. I. Scofield made it accessible by his Reference Bible; and L. S. Chafer presented it on the seminary level. Each of these leaders faithfully sought to establish and maintain complete separation of Israel and the Church, Law and Grace, as the heart and life of Classic Pauline Dispensationalism.

However, in one vital area they each failed to maintain the rightly-divided Word of truth, that being in the relationship between Israel's New Covenant and the Church. We will look at the development of this fatal amalgamation, and then consider the rightly-divided answer. (All emphases ours.)

JOHN NELSON DARBY -- It is especially poignant to see the grand champion of Dispensationalism inadvertently fail to maintain, in one key area, the rightly-divided separation between Israel and the Church. And there was no scriptural finger to be found for this leak in the dispensational dike! ¹

What is the alleged leak? He quotes the following from J. N. Darby:

If a man is under the old [Mosaic] covenant, he is under an "if." If under the new, there is no "if." This covenant of the letter is made with Israel, not with the Church, but we get the benefit of it.

We have it not in the letter, but in the spirit of it, and so have all the value of

1. *The Great Trespass*, p. 1, Nov. 1991.
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it, because the way we get it is that the Mediator of it becomes our life -- we are forgiven our sins -- we are associated with the Mediator. We have all the blessings within the veil, for the very reason that it is not executed with the people for whom it was made (Hebrews, pp. 85, 86).²

Where, in this quotation, does he find the leak in the dike? He thinks that having the spiritual blessing of the forgiveness of sins of the New Covenant, without being under it, is in some way **associating** the Church with Israel's new covenant.³ He faults many for holding such teaching, including C. I. Scofield. Observing that L. S. Chafer said that there were two New Covenants in the NT, one for Israel and one for the church,⁴ he (rightly) rejected the thought that the church was *under* a new covenant (but was the beneficiary of a new covenant -- Heb. 13:20). Next, he says that John F. Walvoord and

2. *The Great Trespass*, p. 1, Nov. 1991. Cp. quote with *Collected Writings* 27:380, which differs slightly. He is going to indicate that W. R. Newell plugged the leak. What we have, then, is:

Darby ---- Scofield ---- L. S. Chafer ---- W. R. Newell ----

It reminds me of the Acts 9 "ultradispensationalists" whose view is:

Darby ---- Scofield ---- J. C. O'Hair ---- C. R. Stam ----

I suggest that the reader will best be helped by:

Darby -----

3. "When the Church is in any way associated with Israel's New Covenant . . .," *The Great Trespass*, p. 5. In another chapter we will review his stunning comment that Israel's receiving the forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant is a receiving of one of the church's blessings!

4. L. S. Chafer departed from C. I. Scofield's view. As LSC *invented* an intercalated "heavenly age" of the church, so he *invented* a new covenant for that age, calling it a:

- heavenly covenant for the heavenly people, which is also styled like the preceding one
- * for Israel a "new covenant." It is made in the blood of Christ and continues in effect
- throughout this age (ST7:98).

Then, of course, it must be explained why this "heavenly covenant" is "new":

Israel's covenant is new because it replaces the Mosaic, but the Church's covenant is new because it introduces that which is God's mysterious and unrelated purpose (ST7:99).

Earlier he had written: "Thus the new covenant of grace through faith in Christ is placed in contrast to the old covenant of works," *Grace*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, p. 98, 1995 reprint. He spoke of "the New Covenant made in His blood, by which every Christian is now related to God, is an unconditional covenant," *ibid.*, p. 69. This is all an *invention*; as changing reasons for why it is "new." The "covenant of grace" words come from covenant theology and he has changed the meaning. The Covenant of Grace of which adherents to covenant theology speak he dismissed thus: "The theological terms, *Covenant of Works* and *Covenant of Grace*, do not occur in the Sacred Text. If they are to be sustained it must be wholly apart from Biblical authority," *Systematic Theology* 4:156. Yes, and that applies also to his "new covenant of grace." Moreover, he wrote: "'The new covenant made in his blood' is in like manner unconditional. It is especially mentioned in Hebrews 8:7-10:25 and includes every promise of God for salvation and keeping for believers in this age of grace," *Salvation and the Kingdom of God* 108, 1991 reprint.

Charles C. Ryrie had at one time espoused that *two New Covenants* idea and had subsequently reversed themselves.⁵ Well, good! After critiquing numbers of others who hold to something the same as, or similar to J. N. Darby's view, he states that the solution to the alleged association with Israel's New Covenant was given by W. R. Newell's comments concerning the eternal covenant of Heb. 13:20. In another chapter we shall consider Heb. 13:20, if the lord will. Here, we will deal with this idea of *association with Israel* because the spiritual blessing of the forgiveness of sins is a blessing of the New Covenant. The fact is that the Christian has a number of things in common with OT saints as well as millennial Israel under the New Covenant, but vastly much more than that. Let us keep in mind that common blessings do not affect, or lower, the distinctive heavenly portion of the Christian, or make a "leak in the dispensational dike." But before we review some of the common blessings, we will pause to note the real leak -- endemic to the Scofield Age-ism system.

What is the Real Leak?

I have shown in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, that JND did not *systematize* dispensational truth. That notion is fathered by those who hold to the Scofield Age-ism scheme and they have projected some of their views onto JND. The "key area" (to use M. J. Stanford's words) of failure is that the Scofield Age-ism system refuses the truth that *the probation, the testing, of the first man ended at the cross*. Thus, the first man, man in Adamic responsibility, is no longer under probation. The trial has been concluded at the cross and man has been consequently declared to be lost, Satan to be the ruler of the world, and the whole world to lie in the wicked one. This line of truth was often expounded by JND, but it is steadfastly rejected by those who hold to the Scofield Age-ism scheme. Indeed, to accept the truth of the termination of the probation of the first man would destroy the Scofield Age-ism scheme. Of course, as shown in the book noted above, without JND there would not even be a Scofield Age-ism scheme. But, to put JND in the sequence as in the first paragraph quoted is really very inappropriate, very incorrect, and really not excusable. The end of the testing of the first man at the cross vitiates the "dispensational" system of C. I. Scofield and the additions by L. S. Chafer. I should add that *individual* men today are responsible to God and will answer for their works. That fact does not in the least mean that the testing, the probation, of the first man was not completed at the cross. This is a great truth of Scripture: every Christian should be acquainted with it and receive it into his

5. Perhaps they did reverse themselves. If so, they appear to have reversed themselves again, at least J. F. Walvoord.

soul.

To use the "leak" thought of the author, *the refusal of the teaching that the probation of the first man, man in his Adamic standing, totally ended at the cross, is really the father of many major, serious leaks in "the dispensational dike,"* though that phrase is not a proper description. Moreover, the Scofield system is an age-ism scheme.⁶

Common Blessings that All Saints Have

In dealing with this charge of a leak in the dispensational dike, we shall first consider the fact that there are some blessings that all saints share in common. This will help us to see that, for example, if Christians have some blessings that OT saints had, these common blessings would not associate the church, as the church, with, say, OT Israel, or Enoch. Later we will see that although believers have the spiritual blessing of the forgiveness of sins which Israel will have under the new covenant (which we have by being one with the Mediator of that covenant, not by being under it) the church, as such, is not associated with Israel. Note well, then, that the fact that there are some things that saints of various periods have in common does not associate them together in what is distinctive.

OT SAINTS WERE BORN AGAIN

OT Saints Were Saints. Look up the word *saints* in a concordance and see how often this word is used. It is the most common reference to them and we often refer to them as OT saints. It is a designation suitable in all ages. It refers to those who belong to God as holy ones. To me it is unthinkable that a person is a saint but is not born of God. It would mean that one is a holy one without having a new nature. What would make them holy ones if not the new nature? And to be one of God's holy ones indicates that the person is "just."

OT Saints Were Just. The fact that there are some things that saints of various periods have in common does not associate them. Observe that Lot was a "righteous man" (2 Pet. 2:8). The OT worthies named in Heb. 11 are called "just men" in Heb. 12:23. The fact that Lot was *just* did not associate him with Israel. Do not be silly and reply that Israel did not exist at that time -- instead, make an effort to understand. Moreover, OT saints, whether Israelites or non-Israelites, have part in the first resurrection, as well as Christians *and also tribulation martyrs* (Rev. 20:4-6). The Lord called it the "resurrection of the

6. See *Elements of Dispensation* www.truthpublishers.com

just" (Luke 14:14) and He Himself is the firstfruits of it (1 Cor. 15:20). OT saints were righteous and just. Is that "a leak in the dispensational dike"?

OT Saints Were Sheep. The teaching of the Lord in John 10 is that there were sheep in the Jewish fold:

And I have other sheep {Gentiles} which are not of this fold: those also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd (John 10:16).

Later, we shall see that this matter of the sheep bears on the subject of the eternal covenant (Heb. 13:20).

Nicodemus Was Told Earthly Things. Moreover, the Lord chided Nicodemus for not grasping what He told him about the new birth (John 3:10). He should have known that God had to do a work of change in the soul by communicating a flesh-heart to replace their stone-heart (Ezek. 11:19; 36:25-27). And the Lord said this to him:

If I have said earthly things to you, and ye believe not, how if I say the heavenly things to you, will ye believe? (John 3:12).

We learn here that the new birth is not included in the heavenly things. But with M. J. Stanford everything seems to be the church. If this is not meant, why write:

To look to Israel's future, earthly law-governed New Covenant for blessings for the Bride who has *everything* in Him -- how could that be? ⁷

It appears that everything is reduced to being corporate. Does the Bride have such a thing as "**the new birth in Christ**"? I suspect that this is the erroneous notion entertained.

The Christian is born again. So were all saints in the OT and so will all tribulation saints and millennial saints be. Is the new birth a spiritual blessing? Yes, it is. Is it one of the spiritual blessings *in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*? No, it is an earthly thing, as we have just seen from our Lord's own words. It is not a distinctive blessing for Christians only. All the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus, are ours. Not some of them -- *all* of them that there are. We lack not one. Does it follow that all spiritual blessings that exist are only blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus? Certainly not. There are some spiritual blessings that exist which are not part of that sphere. For, example, the new birth is common to all the children of God, from Adam on to the end of the millennium, including those whose portion is earthly in character. Does it follow that I may be blessed with all

7. *Pauline Dispensationalism*, p. 31. Note that this statement also rejects the truth of "deliverance" (Rom. 7) as recovered through JND.

spiritual blessings *in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus* without being born again? Certainly not. The new birth is the initial, spiritual work of God in the soul. The spiritual blessings in the heavenlies are above and beyond that, another order of blessing; though, of course, no one will ever be in God's presence above who has not been born again. New birth is not a distinctive Christian blessing. Let us hear some helpful words from J. N. Darby:

"Except a man be born again" (*anóthen*), again in its origin and source, for another means from the very beginning or starting-point, as in Luke 1:3, "from the very first." And this was in reply to Nicodemus, who thought he could be taught and led right by teaching. Further, in insisting on it and answering Nicodemus, who did not see how so totally a new life could be possible and puts the case of a natural new birth, the Lord declares that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, is of that nature, as every animal even is of the nature of that which is born; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit -- has its nature.⁸

I would now remark, for a moment in passing on our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus (John 3 particularly verse 12), where there is an allusion to "earthly things." Previously (v.10) He had said, "Art thou a master [teacher] in Israel, and knowest not these things?" -- namely, the need of being born of water and of the Spirit to enter into the kingdom of God. This knowledge was to be got out of the Old Testament, the source whence the teachers drew their instruction. The passage just quoted out of Ezekiel contains almost the very same words used by our Lord. How! says He, you a master [teacher] in Israel! you ought to understand that Israel must have a new and purified heart in order to enjoy the promises. How is it that you know not these things? If you enter not into My saying that you must be born of water and of the Spirit, and do not understand these earthly things, how can it be expected that you should believe about heavenly things? As if He had said, If I have spoken to you of the things which apply to Israel, if I have told you that Israel must be born again to enjoy those terrestrial promises which belong to her, and you have not understood Me, how will you comprehend about heavenly things -- about the glory of Christ exalted in heaven, and the church, His companion, in this heavenly glory? You have not even understood the doctrines of your prophets. You a teacher in Israel! you should at least have made yourself acquainted with the earthly things, of which Ezekiel and others have spoken.⁹

Man needed to be renewed in the source of his nature, without which he could not see the kingdom. The things of God are spiritually discerned; and man is carnal, he has not the Spirit. The Lord does not go beyond the kingdom -- which, moreover, was not the law -- for Nicodemus ought to have known something about the kingdom. But He does not begin to teach

8. *Collected Writings* 29:195.

9. *Collected Writings* 2:360. www.presenttruthpublishers.com

the Jews as a prophet under the law. He presents the kingdom itself; but to see it, according to His testimony, a man must be born again. But the kingdom as thus come in the carpenter's Son could not be seen without a wholly new nature, it struck no chord of man's comprehension or Jews' expectation, though testimony to it was amply given in word and work: as to entering and having a part in it there is more development as to the how. Nicodemus sees no farther than the flesh.

The Lord explains Himself. Two things were necessary -- to be born of water, and of the Spirit. Water cleanses. And, spiritually, in his affections, heart, conscience, thoughts, actions, etc., man lives, and in practice is morally purified, through the application, by the power of the Spirit, of the word of God, which judges all things, and works in us livingly new thoughts and affections. This is the water; it is withal the death of the flesh. The true water which cleanses in a Christian way came forth from the side of a dead Christ. He came by water and blood, in the power of cleansing and of expiation. He sanctifies the assembly by cleansing it through the washing of water by the word. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." It is therefore the mighty word of God which, since man must be born again in the principle and source of his moral being, judges, as being death, all that is of the flesh. But there is in fact the communication of a new life; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, is not flesh, has its nature from the Spirit. It is not the Spirit -- that would be an incarnation; but this new life is spirit. It partakes of the nature of its origin. Without this, man cannot enter into the kingdom. But this is not all. If it was a necessity for the Jew, who already was nominally a child of the kingdom, for here we deal with what is essential and true, it was also a sovereign act of God, and consequently it is accomplished wherever the Spirit acts in this power. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." This in principle opens the door to the Gentiles.

Nevertheless Nicodemus, as a master of Israel, ought to have understood this. The prophets had declared that Israel was to undergo this change, in order to enjoy the fulfilment of the promises (see Ezek. 36), which God had given them with regard to their blessing in the holy land. But Jesus spoke of these things in an immediate way, and in connection with the nature and the glory of God Himself. A master in Israel ought to have known that which the sure word of prophecy contained.¹⁰

So the new birth was not classed among the heavenly things by our Lord. The new birth is not distinctive Christian truth! Indeed not. The OT saints were born again. Of course they were. There is no such thing as a spiritual relationship to God apart from having the new birth. What OT saints knew, or did not know, about new birth is not to the issue here. All of God's saints were, are, and will be, born of God. You do not think they were born of God?

10. *Synopsis* 3:307, 308. See also *Collected Writings* 10:188-198.
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They were "saints" (Psalms), and had faith (Heb. 11:5, 6), were "just," but were not born of God? Do you also think that millennial Israel under the New Covenant will not be born of God either? The notion that no saints outside the church could have something in common with what a Christian has is utterly unscriptural. It is clear from John 3 that the OT saints were born again -- else they could never see the kingdom of God.

OT Saints Were "Clean." That brings us to the OT saints whose feet the Lord Jesus washed. They were not yet of the church.

Simon Peter says to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus says to him, He that is washed all over needs not to wash save his feet, but is wholly clean; and ye are clean, but not all (John 13:9, 10).

Except for Judas, the Lord here stated that they were "clean." If they had not the new nature, they would not have been clean. There would only have been the flesh there (cp. Rom. 8:7). The OT saints were "clean" but it does not follow that they had the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins as Christians do; and as millennial Israelites will have under the New Covenant. And how much, if anything, OT saints understood about it is irrelevant here. They were cleansed by being born again. These things cannot be confined to the saints now.

When Were the Clean Disciples Born Again? Either the disciples whom the Lord recognized as "clean" were made clean when they were born again, or they were born again when? -- later? And what does *clean* mean, if that be supposed? was the old nature clean? Or were they clean "as persons" without a new nature? Of course not. OT saints were born again.

OT SAINTS WERE CHILDREN OF GOD

Isaac Was a Child of God. And, as having the new birth, OT saints were children of God, though they did not know that fact. There are several texts that speak of them as children. Let us here see that the Word of God shows that Isaac was one of the children of God:

... for not all [are] Israel which [are] of Israel; nor because they are seed of Abraham [are] all children: but, In Isaac shall a seed be called to thee. That is, [they that are] the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed. For this word [is] of promise ... (Rom. 9:6-9).

Ishmael was a child of the flesh, and thus not a child of God, while Isaac was the child of promise -- and thus one of the children of God. Of course, Isaac was not the only OT child of God, but it is only necessary to the issue to show that he was so. And we Christians are after the pattern of Isaac:

But ye, brethren, after the pattern of Isaac, are children of promise. But as then he that was born according to the flesh persecuted him [that was born]
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according to the Spirit, so [also] is it now (Gal. 4:28, 29).

So Isaac was a child of promise and Christians are also "children of promise" because of our connection with Christ -- because Christ is our life. But the point is that there are some things that we Christians share with saints of other periods.

Recall John 3:5, 6. OT saints were "born of water, and of Spirit." This is consonant with the above text -- "according to the Spirit."

There Were OT Saints Under the Law Who Were Children of God. The Apostle Paul said so:

Now I say, As long as the heir is a child, he differs nothing from a bondman, though he be lord of all; but he is under guardians and stewards until the period fixed by the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the principles of the world; but when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, come of a woman, come under law, that he might redeem those under law, that we might receive sonship (Gal. 4:1-5).

Here, the OT saints, the "children," as Paul designated them, under the law are looked at as in their minority. But they were children indeed, although not in the blessedness of "sonship." The Christian is not only a child of God, an openly acknowledged child of God, but in a position, a status, of sonship.

Caiaphas' Prophecy. In the OT, the children of God did not form a visible, manifested community of children. Take the situation under the law. The law addressed the first man, man in Adamic responsibility, represented in the persons of the favored Jews who were the ones under the law. The law did not address itself to children of God, as such. The law provided no basis for those who had divine life in them to assemble together as children of God in separation from the mixed multitude. Thus they were scattered, not gathered together. The work of Christ on the cross has provided for many things. Here are two of them:

But this he did not say of himself; but being high priest that year, prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that he should gather together into one the children of God who were scattered abroad (John 11:51, 52).

The children of God "were scattered abroad" in OT times. There was provision in the death of Christ, not only for the nation of Israel in millennial blessedness for them, but that the children of God would not be in the circumstance of being necessarily scattered as in OT times. And those Jewish children of God, as the eleven (pronounced by the Lord as clean), and others, were brought into oneness as a consequence of the work on the cross (and the consequent

operations of the Spirit).¹¹ So they were children of God before the cross. That they did not know that fact does not change the fact.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST

OT and NT saints will have part in the first resurrection:

This [is] the first resurrection. Blessed and holy he who has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of the Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (Rev. 20:5, 6).

So here there is something that OT saints, believers who form the church, and martyrs of the tribulation period, will share. Rev. 20:5, 6 does not refer to a distinctive church blessing; and neither does the fact that there is this common blessing compromise the *distinctive portion* of the church, which church will be eternally distinct (Eph. 3:21).

CONCLUSION

The fact that there are some blessings, designations, and descriptions common to saints who are *not* part of the church, and to saints who *are* part of the church, does not warrant talk about "fatal amalgamation," "associated with Israel's New Covenant," and "leak in the dispensational dike" -- as if dispensational truth were compromised. What such charges indicate is a grave defect in understanding. I think that there is much more in this system that is erroneous. A clue to this is in the following words:

QUESTION -- Israel's New Covenant, anyone! As recipient of "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" . . . "according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (Eph. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:3), would you hanker for anything from Israel's New Covenant? I trust not.¹²

This is a rather triumphant-sounding close to a paper wherein the thesis is erroneous. It is not a question of "hankering" but of *acknowledging*, and rejoicing in, all that God has done. Later, we will see that this writer himself says that by Israel's having the forgiveness of sins, they have a blessing of the church! But somehow, in his mind, that does not seem to make an association of Israel with the church. That is certainly convenient for maintaining his false system.

Ed.

11. This oneness was manifested in Apostolic times, but division began before all the apostles were gone. The manifestation of the oneness is in ruin, but we will be perfected into one when manifested in glory (John 17).

12. *The Two New Covenants*, p. 9.

The Divine Center

Extract from "All Things of God," by W. T. Turpin

Now I will ask you to turn with me to a scripture or two, so as to bring this great truth, of a divine center, down to ourselves now. And the first scripture that I will ask you to turn to, for a moment, is in Matt. 16:13-16,

Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now mark, beloved friends, how far we have got beyond the truth of the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus Christ, precious and wonderful as the grace and the glory connected with His office as Messiah are; but we have got far beyond that now in this scripture. If we have come to the Christ, the Son of the living God -- and that revelation made known by the Father, and not reached or attained by any mental process of man, or reasoning of man, but a divine revelation from heaven concerning His Person -- see how much we have advanced.

And look at the moment this was brought out too, for it is all important. There were all kinds of curious speculations afloat, about the Lord Jesus Christ, at this time. Men were debating about Him, disputing about Him, reasoning about Him and speculating about Him. The speculations that were in the minds of men about Christ, are in minds about the truth to-day; there is nothing new in these things. Men always speculated, and always reasoned. If they reason about Christ, they will reason about His truth. If they speculated about Christ, they will speculate about His truth; there is no difference. Men reasoned about Christ in His day, and speculated and talked about Him, just as they do about the truth of God now; they reason about it and speculate about it. It is just the same, there is no difference. And if the holiest of all subjects, even Himself, did not prevent that rude intellectuality which marked man then, neither does His precious truth; it is not safe now, any more than His own Person then. It is just the same thing. One said one thing, and one another; and very little was there in any heart, of care as to who He was. Because I suppose it is not too much to say, whether it be Christ, or the truth of God, in proportion as either His Person or His word becomes a mere subject upon which the mental process of our minds is allowed to work, the preciousness and the soul-delight of it are gone. There is no surer way to destroy everything like real soul-enjoyment of, and feeding upon Christ, and upon the word of God, than to subject it to the microscopic process of our own poor, wretched, miserable brains; it is destructive of everything like real profit by, and comfort of, the scriptures. What a profoundly blessed moment when we sit down, with the precious word of God and truth of God, to feed on it! What a different thing that is to merely occupying our carnal minds by scrutinizing it, or examining it, or treating it as a subject to be looked at, as it were, with a microscope,

just as a person would investigate science -- but to sit down really to be fed by it, what a different thing! and this too in the need of our souls, yea, in their deep need. Now you see there is not anything of that here; as to the blessed One Himself, it was all nothing but speculation and curious inquiry.

Now it is very precious to the heart, and comforting too, that the Lord says this; it is the Lord who raises the question, observe; it is not Peter's question. It is not Peter who asks the Lord anything, or that Andrew asks Him anything; not one of them; but the Lord proposes the question Himself -- "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" It is a blessed thing to hear Christ Himself beginning to bring out all these things, but it is Christ who does it; it is not man who brings them out, it is the Lord. And therefore, He it is who proposes the question the bringing of them out, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" He must have it out is the secret of this question of the Lord, "He could not be hid"; blessed, precious reality! It was as if He said, I will initiate it, I will propose it. Just as the blessed God did in the case of Job; it was not Satan began with Job at all. God said to Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" It was God who proposed the subject, just as Christ proposes the subject here. And that question elicited just where they all were. There was curious inquiry, and speculation, and reasoning, and gossip, even about Him.

And now mark further, He says, "But whom do ye say that I am?" He brings it home then to the narrow circle of the disciples. It was not merely the wide circle of men generally, but He brings it home now to the personal circle with Himself -- "Whom do ye say?" How solemn that is! Think of it. The Lord would have this out, and have it out from us too, -- "Whom do ye say that I am?" And then you get from the man that was taught from heaven, taught of God, by a revelation from the Father, those precious words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Oh, what a confession of His Person and glory! what a foundation too, and center of this great superstructure that He Himself was about to raise, was that! Before He says a word, mark you, before there is a hint even about that, before He gives a single utterance as to what was the eternal purpose, and what He was about to do now, the center of it all, the foundation of it all, in His own blessed Person, stands out so blessedly here -- "The Christ, the Son of the living God." How blessed, beloved friends, to look at such a center as that. Oh, what a comfort for us to think, that such an One as Himself is the center, that He is the foundation. The foundation of what? I suppose we should all own, gladly and willingly own that He is the foundation of our souls' hopes for time and eternity; but here it is the foundation, beloved friends, not of an individual, but of the church. He is not merely the foundation of our souls' hopes -- thank God, He is that; and a great deal more beside, for who could say all He is? -- but it is here the foundation of the church, the foundation of the assembly; that upon which the assembly, His body, the church, rests; He is the divine basis upon which the whole superstructure, that He rears, stands. I say, what a comfort that is! I think it an unspeakable comfort in these moments, when everybody is looking at the outward building, and looking at it too, as it is crumbling in the hands of men, to be free enough in spirit to turn and look at the foundation. Oh, let us dwell much upon the foundation; and not only let us see the eternal stability of the foundation, but let us

think of that building upon which no man's hand is lifted up, but which Christ builds.

What a mercy, in any degree, it is to get our consciences, hearts, and souls filled with this divine center, and this divine superstructure. I quite admit the existence of that which man builds; I quite admit that solemn evidence of failing responsibility, and nothing shows man's utter failure as a builder more than the present state of the house of God; *that* was indeed committed in responsibility to man as a builder, but any one who ever thought or imagined that anything, but, failure, could come out of his operations, must have but a poor scriptural knowledge of what man is; in very truth, man never touched anything, man never put his finger, upon anything yet, that he did not leave upon it the mark of the incompetency of the being that touched it. There never was anything that God ever set up, upon this earth, and committed to the responsibility of man, in any measure, or any way, that man did not utterly break down, and fail in respect of it; and whether you take the church now, or anything that formerly was committed to human responsibility, you will find the same thing. There is nothing new. What is said in this world, as to history, is time as to the history of man. You have, no doubt, often heard it said that "history repeats itself": man, I say, repeats himself; man also repeats his ways; nothing is more sure than this, beloved brethren, that man is ever the same. The history of the ages declares plainly the solemn fact, in relation to every part of the responsibility, with which man has been entrusted by God. You will always find it is the same sad issue -- failure, failure all the way.

Take, for instance, the creation. Before sin entered at all into this world, when God made everything, and delighted in what He had made, and rested in what He had made, and looked upon all that He had made, "and behold it was very good," God could rest in that creation then, the fruit of His own skill and handiwork -- and now, that very creation is groaning. Why? Man has been in it; creation groans because man has been at work in it. He was entrusted with headship there, it was placed under him in headship and responsibility, and all creation groans. Mark that passage -- a most instructive passage for our souls, that: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." And why? It was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who hath subjected it, that is, Adam; Adam subjected God's creation to vanity; Adam was the head of this creation, and was placed in responsibility in, and headship over it, and the whole scene partakes of the consequences of his failure. Hence we find it groaning, and it is groaning now. It is the same thing in regard to all else. If the church is committed, as a responsible testimony and witness, to man, and he is placed as a builder in it, it is the same thing -- incompetency, inability, failure, break-down -- just the same sad story. But then, what a rich comfort for the heart is this, that there is a sphere in which he is not allowed to enter at all; there is a sphere in which he builds nothing; there is a sphere in which he does not add one stone to the superstructure. That is what Christ builds, not only what Christ builds, but there is the foundation upon which Christ builds, and there is the center of that which Christ builds, which He Himself is -- and that is what we have here. Before ever He speaks of the building,

He reveals -- and from heaven too -- the foundation and the center. "Thou art the Christ." Peter was taught of God, a revelation from the Father; not a development of his own mind, not an evolution of his own mind, but a distinct revelation from the Father in heaven; a heavenly revelation from God to Peter. It is that which Peter confesses. How magnificent it is: "Thou art the Christ," thou art God's anointed One -- "the Son of the living God."

And now, mark, beloved friends, further, for a moment. Just look, in reference to this center, and this foundation, at v. 17: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "Flesh and blood." Some people think that flesh and blood can do anything, that flesh and blood is competent for anything, that flesh and blood is equal to anything. Flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee; as if He said, This communication is outside the range of flesh and blood. "Flesh and blood," of course, means man as he is constituted down here in his present state and form: he is not competent to take in God's revelation, he cannot unravel it, he cannot know it. (Cp. 1 Cor. 2:11-16.) And more than that though I do not dwell upon it now, not merely is there this revelation from God Himself, but, if you will carefully look at the scripture, you will find there is the Holy Ghost that dwells in us, to give us power to understand the revelation; not only is there the revelation, that God Himself has been pleased to make of His mind, in this precious book, but the Holy Ghost dwells in us, in order that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God. Scholarship will not do it, the most acute perception of the mind of man, the clearest head, cannot reach God's revelation. If it could, it would not be God's revelation. If God's revelation were within the range and scope of the natural faculties and power of the human mind, it would cease to be the revelation of God. Being the revelation of God, it must be understood by Him who is God. Just as He is the communicator of it, He is the One by whom alone we can understand it. I know this is not palatable to this reason-loving age; people do not like that which makes nothing of them. Man does not like that which puts him outside altogether, and makes him merely a recipient; but it is the truth of God, and the meek will say, with all their hearts, Thank God, it is so. The true heart, that is taught of Him, glories in it, delights in it; adores God for the perfection of His grace and wisdom in the whole matter.

Now further, mark this, in connection with our subject, not only was the center outside of the range of human ken and human thought, but observe these words: "I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church." Here we have the superstructure, the building, and Christ the builder, and the revelation of what He was about to do. Here is the church mentioned for the first time: "Upon this rock I will build my assembly, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How blessed to think of that! Such was the nature of the foundation, such the nature of the center, such the nature of the corner-stone, such the nature of the whole of this marvelous and wonderful building that He was about to rear, -- no power of man could attain to the knowledge of it, and no power of hell could prevail, in anywise, against it, so as to destroy the superstructure in the

smallest or the least degree. What a wonderful and blessed reality!

And though I do not like here to refer to a subject, now causing so much agitation, still, at the same time, it is almost impossible for one's ears not to hear the sounds that fill the air through which we pass at the present moment; why, men are agitated, to the very depths of their souls, about all the things that are coming on the earth, and all the things that are likely to happen, and the upheavings and projected over-turnings of everything that is constituted; and what may yet be, none can tell: the confiscation of property, the disestablishment of what is called the church. Oh, beloved brethren, what a reality to be able to look at what cannot be disestablished, and what cannot be disendowed, and to be connected practically with what neither devil nor man can touch! Think of that. Think of the immense comfort to the soul that is, to be connected with a divine thing of which a divine Person is the foundation, and a divine Person is the center, and which derives all the strength, and all the power, and all the durability that belong to it, from that upon which it rests. What a comfort that is! Could anything be more blessed for the soul, could anything be more comforting for the soul, than to know that? Mark it well; here is that which nothing can touch; the gates of hell, the power of man, the intrigues of Satan, all the effort, and all the contrivance that is peculiar to devils, or that is found even in men -- earth or hell, devils or men, cannot prevail against it.

Now mark, a moment further, as to this center. We have had the revelation of the center; and we have had the revelation of the future building, of which He was to be the center; and the foundation as well, in His own blessed Person; but now look at how this is brought about. Observe the twenty-first verse of Matt. 16, "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples. how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Now this sets forth His death, as the basis, on which the blessed Lord would build this wonderful assembly of His. The foundation was to be His own Person. He was to be both center and foundation of the building, but was to pass through death; it was not a living Christ, the church was not built upon a living Christ, the assembly was not to be founded upon a living Christ, but upon a Christ who should go through death, who should rise again, and ascend into the heavens; His sufferings and glory were to be the firm foundation of the church; it was to be a dead, risen, ascended, and glorified Christ. And, beloved friends, for ourselves individually, -- oh, let me speak affectionately to you for a moment as to this -- it is just the same for our souls individually, as for that which is corporate. What was a living Christ down here upon earth, in all His blessed, gracious ways among men? He was the perfect manifestation of God in all His wondrous kindness and goodness. Never was there such grace, never such kindness, never such tenderness, never such mercy, as was seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, as a man down here in this world. But all the worse for you and me *as sinners!* Why, there was not a single answer in man's heart to it. They condemned that blessed One, spotless, and precious, and holy as He was, in all His ways down here, and they nailed Him to a cross. "For my love they are my adversaries," He says (Psa. 109:4). Man hated Him for His goodness, and therefore a living Christ, a Christ on

earth blessed and perfect though He was, the very incarnation of goodness, was a *testing* Christ. Man was tested. All men stood out in their true character before Him, as He was here in this world. His very goodness exposed all the vileness, and all the hatred, and all the enmity that was in man's heart. But then, mark! a dead Christ, a Christ who has endured death, a Christ who bears the judgment, a Christ who meets all the holy, righteous requirements of a holy God upon the cross, who drank that dreadful cup, who goes through it all, and endures it all, and rises again from the dead, He is the One who has wrought atonement; atonement was there wrought by Him; propitiation and substitution also flow from this atonement which has been wrought. Here then, beloved friends, is the grand basis of our footing before God, the true and only foundation of our soul's hopes; we need no other, could have no other. The assembly, too, is built upon His Person, as the One who died and rose again. Let me ask you, if Christ had not died and risen again, what would become of you and me? what hope should we have? Harken to the words of the Spirit, through the apostle: "If Christ be not risen you are yet in your sins": "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable"; if He has not risen, from among the dead, there is no foundation for our souls. It would be impossible to overestimate the deep importance of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord brings in here, in a most distinct way, His death and His resurrection, in connection with the unfolding of this magnificent superstructure He was about to build, and of which He was to be the center and the foundation. The moment He speaks of it, He announces His death and rising again, and tells His disciples from that time, He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Suffering, killed, rising again; observe how everything here is in relation to the blessed, precious foundation, of the assembly He was about to build.

And now there is one other subject here, before we pass from this chapter, which connects itself with what has been before us; it is exceedingly solemn for us all, I mean for all who are Christians here. Look at that twenty-fourth verse "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." There we have discipleship brought in, but discipleship brought in, in connection with what? In connection with a living Christ? No, beloved friends. In connection with a testing Christ? No; but in connection with a hated, rejected, killed, crucified Christ. And observe, it is not exactly martyrdom here, it is the reality of being in Christ's path of rejection and shame; it is indeed the following a Christ, who was the rejected One, the hated, and scorned, and crucified One down here, by all in this world. How striking, and how remarkable, that this question of discipleship should connect itself, at once, with His precious death. He never says a word about discipleship until He unfolds His death. The moment He introduces His death, the treatment He was to receive at the hands of men, His rising again from the dead or being raised up by the glory of the Father, then it is He announces the disciples' path; then He says to His own, if any one will follow me, "if any man will come after me"; if it be in very truth a following of this Christ, of cleaving to Him, of regarding Him so as properly to form the hope and expectation

of the heart, that path is the only way. Beloved, are we really set on this? Are we up to it? Are we seeking to follow a scorned, rejected, hated, crucified Christ? Is that the constant aim and purpose of our hearts? Alas, how little the world or men can see it in us; how little does it seem to be before our hearts and minds as Christians, in the true and real sense of the word! Is it a joy to us to receive the same thing that He has received? Is it an honor to us to have the treatment that was given Him, given us? Oh, how different from all our natural thoughts, how widely different! How it crosses all the purely natural thoughts of our hearts; how we shrink from the contumely, shame, scorn, rejection, hatred, despising, at the hands of the world, just as Christ received it, in His own blessed, precious ways down here. And yet, this is His path. The Lord connects discipleship with His own rejection, His own death, His own refusal at the hands of man.

Now let me call your attention, for a few moments more, to another chapter in this same gospel, which will bring the subject more directly to ourselves. In Matt. 18 (19, 20), which, you will find, is connected distinctly with this, He says, in reference to prayer -- shall I say prayer in divine concert? -- "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven." For, observe the reason, "where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them." Now here we have the blessedness of this center, and that, too, contemplating the very lowest conceivable state of the church's history on earth. For I suppose, beloved friends, we cannot conceive anything smaller in the eyes of men than two people. "What is two!" "Why there are only two!" The Lord contemplates the very weakest, He provides for the very lowest, the most abject condition of the assembly's history, in the world. He comes down to two; if there be but two. And now, think of the blessedness of that for a moment. It would be hardly possible to conceive of anything less than two poor, wretched, feeble things of the earth. Two poor weak things, what could they do? Oh, beloved, it is that very weakness which brings out the divine preciousness of those words, "There am I." The power is in, "There am I." The vitality is in, "There am I." The competency for everything is in, "There am I." The sufficiency for every moment is in, "There am I." And, strange to say, precious as it is, that truth is just the very one we are in danger of letting slip; the very thing we are in danger of parting with; Lord, keep it in our hearts! Lord, enshrine in our affections, the blessed fact of the presence of the One, who is the center; in the midst of two or three gathered together to His name. And you will find frequently and constantly, how little even it is in the thoughts of the saints.

If there be a difficulty to be undertaken, if there be a question to be faced, or a danger to be undergone, the thought oftener is, who is a wise counselor amongst men that can help? Where is the prudent, longheaded man, that can bring to bear on the difficulty, his power of reason and his foresight? How little is the thought, "There am I," if there are but two or three gathered together to my name. And, beloved brethren, in that thought, at this moment, there is to my own soul unspeakable comfort. There is nothing that I know of so outrageous, no greater affront to His name, no greater disparagement to His glory, who is the same

yesterday, to-day, and to the ages of ages, than to think that, because these times are days of darkness, and difficulty, and upheaving upon all sides, Christ is not the same! Oh, may such a thought be forbidden entrance into our minds, may such a slight upon Christ be resented by us with all our earnestness. None but a traitor could entertain the idea of turning away from the truth to individuality, because the days are dark and difficult; none but a traitor, I repeat, would surrender the very foundation of the whole thing, and give up the preciousness and reality of the name of Christ even for the weakest and lowest condition of the church's history upon earth; -- I cannot conceive a heart loyal to Christ, adopting such a creed as that -- or pleading as an excuse, darkness and difficulty, for turning aside to wretched, selfish individuality, which, after all, is only contemptible, miserable pride, self-sufficient pride. Oh I thank God for the unspeakable resource of "There am I"; a divine resource, contemplating too days of ruin, contemplating the break-up of everything outward, of everything that was once committed to human responsibility and trust; deeply solemn, as it is, at the present moment; yet there remains the unalterable power and sufficiency -- for the darkest days and brightest days alike; for times of storm and tempest, as of calm -- of the divine promise, "There am I." I admit that faith is needed to profit by it; but, may I ask, what part of God's revealed will and truth, as set forth in His own word, is of any profit, save as there is faith, so as to get the good of it? Of course, there must be faith -- "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith" -- there is not a truth of God we either apprehend, or use, or enjoy, except by faith. But then, thank God, there is something to have faith in; thank God, there is an unchanging stability in that promise, as there is an unchanging stability in the Person who makes it. There is the resource of faith. Tell me when that was ever revoked; show me when He ever withdrew that; show me, in the living word of God, in the New Testament scriptures, any such revocation!

Search as we may, through it -- into the epistles, which describe the state of the church in the latter times and last days, where the history is brought down to the very moment we are in -- and point out, if you can, a single line of scripture that calls back that precious promise and leaves us now without it: There is none, beloved friends; it remains in all its force, and in all its fulness, and it remains through all time. And, therefore, because He Himself in giving the promise, contemplates the lowest and most abject state of the church, all the sufficiency is unfolded in His own words, words which set forth His sufficiency: "Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I." Yes, as the center, as the foundation, as the competency, as the wisdom, as the power: "there am I" for discernment; "there am I" for understanding; "there am I" for action; "there am I" for everything.

The Lord give us more faith, true faith, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, more faith in the One that says He is there amongst those gathered to His name.

And I desire earnestly to call your attention to another point; it is important that every word should get its full and clear place. He does not say, Where two or three

gather to my name -- that is a very different thing. He does not say, Where two or three are met in my name. He does not say, Where two or three come in my name. That would make the whole thing different: and I will tell you why; because that would connect practically the preciousness of this sufficiency, with man's will -- and it is man's will that is distinctly shut out. He does say, "Where two or three are gathered together unto my name." And just on this account, that as there is a center, and as there is a foundation, and as there is an object -- and He who is the center is both object and foundation -- so there is a *gatherer*; and the gatherer is as divine as the Person to whom He thus gathers. It is so blessed to see man's will shut out. Man is ever the intruder; there is no room left for his wretched will at all; man has ever sought to intrude into the most sacred things of God. Vain man, proud and foolish man would assert himself; he would like to have a door left open for him, I may come, or any one may come.

No, beloved friends, where two or three *are gathered*, that is, by the Holy Ghost, to that blessed, precious name, there Christ is. And faith sees Him and adores Him; faith, too, knows His sufficiency, and faith rejoices in His sufficiency, and faith refuses everything that does not emanate from Him, that does not proceed from Him.

Now nothing could be more blessed for our souls than all that; and instead of difficult moments interfering with it, they are just the moments to prove the reality of it. But there, alas! it too often happens that difficulties, and pressure and trial, and all that kind of testing, bring out how little faith we have in Christ's resources, how little confidence there is in Himself. Just so we find it individually in our difficulties. I suppose there is not a child of God in this company here to-night that would not own the truth of this -- that when you are exposed individually to difficulty, and danger, and trial, it just tests how much you have confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, and how much He really is before your soul, as the stay of your heart.

Yes, beloved friends, the danger of the church is the danger of the individual: they are precisely the same. I know many a one who has gone on smoothly, whilst as yet there has been no difficulty, or stormy trial, or pressures, nothing, in fact, to cause them uneasiness, and nothing to cause them anxiety or care in their path; but the storm arose, and the wind blew, and then comes the question, how far the soul is trusting in Christ, and having the word of Christ as the stay. Oh, be assured, it is just these very difficulties that bring out the faith and confidence of your heart in that blessed Person. And so it is collectively. I believe, and therefore I confidently speak to you this evening, that the darkest moment of the history of God's professing church upon this earth, is the fitting opportunity for proving, and also showing the sufficiency of Christ, to the two or three that are gathered to His name; that it is not the bright moments that show it, so much as the dark moments, the difficult moments. The difficulties, and the perplexities, and the exercises are just the very atmosphere to be assured of the reality, and the preciousness of that blessed presence in the midst.

One little word further with regard to this blessed Person here, this center, this

foundation. It is found in another scripture to which I will hardly more than refer, in the book of Revelation, in order to show you how the Lord unfolds Himself in that character to a very feeble company, a feeble few, those whom He speaks of, to the church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3). He speaks of them in the character of few, feeble, and little; but look at the way He addresses them. He sets Himself before them, and it is exceedingly interesting for our hearts to see the manner in which He sets Himself before that feeble company in Rev. 3 He says, "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

Now, think of the competency expressed in that communication and revelation of Himself. Look at the divine fulness set forth in that word. There is every kind of competency in that revelation of His own blessed Person, to that poor feeble company, whom He appreciated in their devotedness to Himself. But the point here is, who is the One that is before them, and in what character is this foundation and center set before them? "He that is holy"; it is a holy center, it is a holy foundation; it is a true center, it is a true foundation. I do not know anything of a more searching nature to the soul than that. It is not merely that He is a blessed, and sure, and unchanging center; but, He is a holy center, and therefore you must have the holiness that becomes the One around whom you are -- "He that is holy." You must have holiness and truth; you must have a moral fitness and suitability to Him, in keeping with that revelation of His name. Where, may I ask, is this suitability maintained? Where is that to be found which is in keeping with His name? He, the holy One, and He, the true One, and as such He is the competency, and sufficiency, and power for everything; "He opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens. He has got power; He can open doors as He pleases. You may say, "the doors will be all closed and shut." I reply, Christ can open them. He can open; and if He open, who can close? and if He shut, who can open? Some, vainly, forever try to open all kinds of doors, and all sorts of opportunities for themselves.

How different it is to travel in company with this foundation and center, and watch for the doors that Christ opens! "He opens and no man shuts, and shuts, and no man opens."

The Lord, in the riches of His grace, give every heart to walk, in faith, round this precious center, and this divine foundation, in all its fulness this evening, and see what there is, as to it, in the scriptures; see what there is in Christ, see what you can find, individually, in Him; see what is there for the church in its weakest moments, in the days of its greatest difficulty, in the moment of its greatest trial; see what Christ is, and can be; our resource on earth, our treasure up there in heaven. The Lord give every heart here to taste it. He can, beloved friends; if there is the least interest in any heart here for Him, if there is the smallest desire to be found in His ways, if there is the faintest, feeblest echo to His own heart's affection in any heart here, He can open your eyes to see the magnificence of that center, to see the fulness and sufficiency there is in Himself for every occasion, according to His precious words, "There am I."

The Lord command His blessing on His own word, and may it reach every heart and conscience here, for Jesus Christ's sake.

The State of Christians Now

They are carried away by man, and they are all so anxious to get man to applaud them, and to sacrifice and compromise everything in order to get the assent and consent of people that want {need} to be saved, that have no kind of judgment in things divine, for this never can be had unless we not only have Christ, but know what it is to be crucified to the world and the world unto us. That is, it must be a thorough-going work, and the children of God shrink from that; consequently, they will read anything that merely keeps up their spirits, just like a boy at night whistling through a church-yard. Anything that will keep up their spirits - every little dram, every little sentiment, every little phrase -- perhaps a very bad and poor phrase -- but still there it is, and that keeps up their spirits. Well now, friends, that is the way to get removed from Him that called us; because it is entirely by growing in grace, and by dependence upon that grace, that we are kept from all these snares that more particularly surround the people of God. At the time of the cross the people of God were the Jews, and that was the reason why they were the worst of all.

And now in Christendom, in the world as it is now, who are the most guilty? Who are ripening now for the severest judgment of God? The world-church. I do not mean by that the Established Church; it will take in the Dissenters just as well. The Dissenters are further away in some respects than even the Anglicans. They are howling politicians, howling for their own will, and calling themselves, in the most extraordinary manner, "passive resisters." Why, "passive resistance" is passive nonsense! You cannot be passive and resisting. If you are resisting you are not passive. . .

(Submitted) W. Kelly, *Eleven Lectures on the Book of Job*, 1903, p. 61-65.

Faith, Prayer and Forgiving

And Jesus answering says to them, Have faith in God. Verily I say to you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou taken away and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but believe that what he says takes place, whatever he shall say shall come to pass for him. For this reason I say to you, All things whatsoever ye pray for and ask, believe that ye receive it, and it shall come to pass for you. And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have anything against any one, that your Father also who is in the heavens may forgive you your offences. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in the heavens forgive your offences (Mark 11:22-26).

I have found Mark 11:22-26 of great benefit to myself and others. . . Here we have:

1. FAITH -- The "Faith of God." That is, faith that takes its character and strength from God as its object - faith that brings God into the difficulty. There is a mountain to be removed. God only can lift a mountain up and throw it into the sea. But He is greater than the mountain, and if you can bring Him into the matter, the mountain must go.

2. PRAYER is our proper attitude -- what expresses our dependence on God; but the prayer of faith only is effectual.

3. There is a condition: that is, this prayer of faith is conditional on a certain state in us, and that is the spirit of forgiveness. "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any." It is not here going to one who has wronged you, and telling him you forgive him. In such a case the word is: "If he repent, forgive him." But here it is the state of our hearts toward our brethren when we are in the presence of God. Suppose I am praying to God, who has forgiven me ten thousand talents in absolute grace, and am holding something against one who may have wronged me, God will not hear me. I am not in communion, my state is wrong, I am not in the current of God's thoughts, and will not be able to exercise faith.

A person says: "I cannot feel right towards Mr. A." That is, he has hard feelings toward Mr. A. But can I think of God in this way? Can I speak of Him as having "hard feelings" toward anyone? Never. When we were enemies, He gave His Son. Now my heart is to be formed by what flows down in communion through the Word from His heart into mine. And if this is my state when I pray, I will forgive if I have anything against anyone, and my heart will be free in God's presence; and, however my brother may have erred, I will be able to seek his blessing and restoration.

In case of personal difficulties among saints, if this state is reached in God's presence, it is wonderful how soon difficulties melt away, because it is God Himself coming in to act in grace.

(Submitted) A. H. Rule

Reality!

Judges 7:1-8

"Oh! The power and the joy of being nothing, having nothing, and knowing nothing but a glorified Christ up there in Heaven; and of being 'careful for nothing' but the honor of His sweet name down here on earth."

It is an immense comfort to meet with Reality in this world, where everything is so confused, and there are so many mixed motives at work. God looks for Reality.

Nothing less suits His mind, or meets His thoughts. In the Scripture which heads this page there are deeply solemn lessons on this subject, which we do well to ponder. May the Lord Himself, by His Spirit, teach us, making our hearts willing and subject to His word.

In the previous chapter we find the Lord getting His instrument ready for His work. This is a principle of the deepest value. God's instruments must not only be raised up by God Himself, they must be adapted and fitted by Himself for the work he has for them. Abundant instances and illustrations of this are to be found in the Word. We shall only refer to one. God it was who raised up the man Moses to be the deliverer of His people Israel out of their cruel bondage. Of this Moses we read, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22.) Nature would say, What a *fitted, prepared* weapon God has now at His hand. But this is the very thought which is short of the mind of God; for He will not, and does not, accredit the qualifications of Egypt, but sends Moses to school (as we would say) for forty years, in order that he may be fitted, and prepared, and qualified for the work that God has for Him to do. Oh, what *Reality* there is in all this. How real is the fact that God's instruments must *learn* in God's school. There is no such thing, Reader, as purchasing commissions in His army; *there* all must rise from the ranks.

Now in the history before us, the same principle is found. God raises up Gideon, the son of Joash the Abiezrite, that through him, God might deliver Israel out of the hand of the Midianites. His family is poor in Manasseh, and like David, he is the least in his father's house. Yet, what of all this? "Have not I sent thee?" and "Surely I will be with thee" withers up all such thoughts, and places a living *Reality* before the soul.

Reader, have we known this? It is an easy thing in these days to put on an appearance before one another, and even to keep it up, but do our own souls know the deep *Reality* of having to do with the living God? And here remark that what is so sweet in the exercises of soul, to which the words "Have not I sent thee?" and "Surely I will be with thee," were a reply, is, that what occupied the mind of Gideon, was the relation between God and His people -- "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" Now let us turn and look at the steps -- shall I say the forms? -- of the school of God, in which this mighty man of valor was trained and see how *Reality* marks it all.

First -- The relationship of peace must be set up between him and God. He is brought into the presence of God. and hears these words: "Peace unto thee," "fear not." Sweet, precious words! Oh what *Reality*!

Second -- As it was with himself, so must it be with his own family, viz, the relationship with God must be set up, and hence, Gideon is set to work *at home* before he is sent out abroad. "And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it; and build an altar unto the Lord thy God on the top of this rock, in the

ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down" (Judg. 6:25, 26). Reader, what a searching principle is found here. God's weapons are set to cut down the evil at home before they are used to cut it down abroad. It is the principle of 2 Tim. 2:21 -- "If a man therefore purge himself from these (see v. 21), he shall be a vessel unto honor, *sanctified*, and *meet* for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." There must not be in the Lord's vessel that which is unsuited to the Lord. It is true that in the gracious sovereignty of God He condescends to use a variety of means to bring about His own purposes. But this is not the thought of being *a vessel for God, sanctified*, and *meet* for His use. What God looks for in His servants and people is *Reality*. To use the expressive language of another, God does not want "a lifeless finger-board to point along a way He neither leads nor follows -- He does want and desires one who is "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," who can endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ -- who warreth, not entangling himself with the affairs of this life, and who laboreth as an husbandman having *first* been partaker of the fruits. This is all *Reality*, and this God looks for. He finds it in Gideon, the fruit too of His own gracious work with him. And now let us see how God looks for *Reality* in the people who follow Gideon. He cannot trust His honor to the 32,000, they are too many for Him. What a solemn rebuke to the very thought that rises earliest and is cultivated latest in the natural mind. God will test that crowd. It cannot be that all are true to Him, some will surely go back. And so it is. When the ordinance of Deut. 20. is gone through, which simply set each one to count the cost -- to do, as it were, a sum in Profit and Loss -- out of the 32,000 only 10,000 are found ready to stand in face of danger and loss.

But God is not yet finished. He says, The people are yet too many for me. Most deeply solemn words these, Reader. He must work in a way which will leave no room for doubt that it is His hand that has wrought. So that the heart that is true to Him can say, "The Lord has done great things for us already." And why? Because he well knew there was in Israel an haughty uplifted spirit that would credit themselves with victory. And now, mark, there is great force in the Lord's words a second time to Gideon,

The people are yet too many, bring them down unto the *water* and *I* will try them for thee THERE and it shall be that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water, and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

The significance of all this is striking. Out of the ten thousand which the previous testing had left, only 300 are found to stand before, and rise superior to, the new test. And mark it attentively, Reader, there are a greater number equal to the difficulty

and danger than there are equal to what we may call the *blessing*; or, many who are able to face the danger fall before the blessing. But some one may say, What do you mean by all this? Was it wrong for thirsty people to drink water? Surely not. And that is not the point in the history at all, for the three hundred upon whom God set His seal of approval drank as well as the nine thousand seven hundred who were sent away; but the point is, they used the water *in passing*, but were not engaged with it; the water which quenched the thirst and refreshed the body was not that which occupied their minds -- they had not time to halt, their hearts were in the work -- they were *Real*, and they exhibited *Reality*. And, Reader, has not all this a solemn application to us in this day? How many a soul is there who rises superior to difficulties that utterly breaks down in the presence of prosperity, or a position where they are well to do! Alas! how true it is that few of us can be trusted in sunshine (i.e., when all is smooth around us). When tested by the Lord, those who *bowed down* were not fit for His use any more than those who were sent back through fear or loss. And this is just the testing of the present hour, for God is bringing out the 300 who are occupied with that which occupies Him. It is *Reality* we need, dear Reader. There is no lack in our day of head knowledge -- this is readily acquired, easily got up. Not only so, but nature likes it all, and turns it round to selfish purposes. In my mind, nothing is more sad or solemn than to see the way in which not a few now-a-days can talk about truth, and argue about it, who are themselves its living contradictions. *Reality! Reality!* is the crying need of the day. Oh, Reader, to be one of Christ's 300 in this day of His rejection -- to have found in Himself the real secret of superiority not only to the difficulties and dangers, but as well to the prosperity, ease, and quiet of this day. Oh, to be in earnest -- to be *Real* for Christ. To have I do not say *low* thoughts of self, but *no* thoughts of self -- all thoughts fixed on Himself the alone source and spring and channel of every blessing. Reader, be assured of it, in the history of every Christian, there is a time when he or she is being brought down to the water. When it is so, the Lord give us *that* occupation with Himself, and His thoughts, which will bear us above and carry us over the trial, and exhibit in us that *Reality* which is alone worthy of Him.

W. T. Turpin, *Reality! Judges 7:1-8*, Glasgow: Bible and Tract Repository, n.d.

The Closet, The Battle Field of Faith

1 Samuel 17

David had been preparing for public service, in the secret school of God. God will always have to do in secret with that soul which he intends to serve Him in public. In the desert he had learnt the resources which faith has in God. He had slain the lion and the bear.

Are not our failures invariably here, that we have not been in secret with the living God? This is the essential and primary matter. Do we esteem communion with God our highest privilege? Our strength is in walking in fellowship with the living

God. David had already gone through trial, and had therefore proved the God in whom he trusted. There had been dealing between his soul and God in the wilderness. O beloved, where is it that the saints really learn to get the victory? I believe where no eye sees us save God's. The heartily denying of self, the taking up the cross in secret, the knowing the way in the retirement of our closets to cast down imaginations, and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; these are our highest achievements. The closet is the great battle-field of faith. Let the foe be met and conquered there. He who has much to do with God in secret, cannot use carnal weapons; and this should show us the importance of coming forth from the presence of the living God into all our service, that we may be thus prepared to detect and mortify all the pretensions of the flesh. It is sad indeed to see a saint trying to fight in the Lord's name, but clothed in the world's armor.

David said moreover, "God hath delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear; he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" He knew that one was as easy to God as the other. When we are in communion with God we do not put difficulty by the side of difficulty, for what is difficulty to Him? Faith measures every difficulty by the power of God, and then the mountain becomes as the plain. Too often, we think, that in little things, less than Omnipotence will do, and then it is that we fail. Have we not seen zealous and devoted saints fail in some trifling thing? The cause is, that they have not thought of bringing God by faith into all their ways. Abraham could leave his family and his father's house, and go out at the command of God, not knowing whither he went, but the moment he meets a difficulty in his own wisdom, and gets down into Egypt, what does he do? He constantly fails in comparatively small things.

Faith discerns our own weakness so clearly that it sees {that} nothing less than the power of God can enable us to overcome in anything. So that faith never makes light of the danger, for it knows what we are, just as on the other hand, faith never faints at the danger, because it knows what God is.

(Submitted) *Things New and Old* 22:243, 244.

Let love be unfeigned; abhorring evil; cleaving to good ((Rom. 12:8).

Let everyone who names the name of the Lord withdraw from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19).

Not avenging yourselves, beloved, but give place to wrath; for it is written, vengeance [belongs] to me, I will recompense, saith the Lord (Rom. 12:19)

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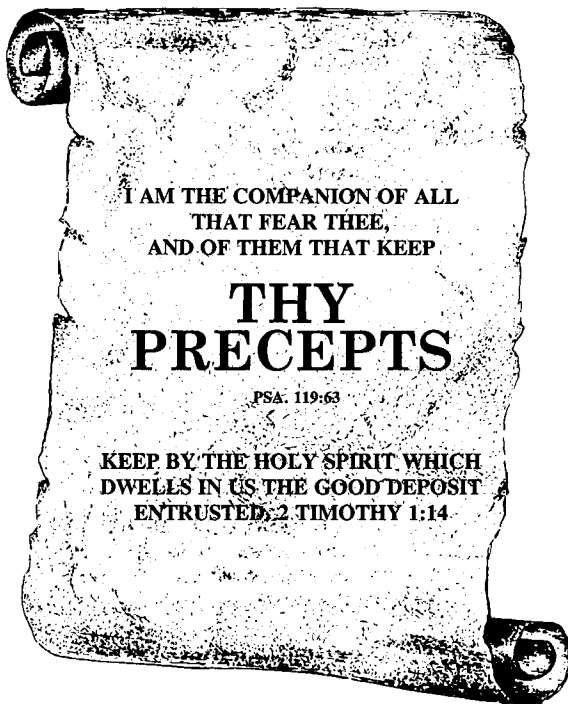
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Elements of Dispensational Truth

Chapter 7.8

{The paper being reviewed by J. A. Trench is signed G.F.T. (Trench?) appeared in *The Golden Lamp*, for 1873, a periodical edited by William Yapp, of Open Brethren, until 1874. This article is a reprint but all bold-faced headings have been added to this article.}

And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one [and] that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and [that] thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me (John 17:22, 23).

... when he shall have come to be glorified in his saints, and wondered at in all that have believed (for our testimony to you has been believed), in that day (2 Thess. 1:10).

***The New Jerusalem:
A Review of a Paper so Entitled
in the July and August Numbers
of the "Golden Lamp"***
by J. A. Trench

***The New Jerusalem
not a Literal City***

INTERPRETATION

The system of the writer has at least the merit of being clearly presented to us.

Nothing can be more flagrantly inconsistent than to assert that all the prophecies concerning Israel in the Old Testament are to be understood literally, and at the same time to teach that this chapter must be explained away and spiritualized (p. 190).

{The objection is that} We are to understand the contents of Rev. 21, 22 literally. To interpret them as spiritual things communicated to us in figure is

to explain away.

Is this, then, the principle on which the Book of the Revelation is to be understood? or is it possible to deny that the general scope of it is symbolic? When, then, are we to begin to take it literally? If it be supposed that what is addressed to or spoken of the church must be literal, the writer himself maintains the contrary. For, in speaking of Rev. 2, 3, he says,

Every figure in these epistles to the seven churches is of a Jewish and Old Testament cast and character (p. 216).

There are, then, figures in the book; and when the churches to whom as a whole it is addressed are specifically the matter in hand, every figure is of Jewish and Old Testament cast and character. There is nothing inconsistent, then, as to the form in which the truth is communicated, if the church be still the subject matter in Rev. 21, 22, although it be cast in Jewish figures. On the contrary, I think it will be found that nothing could be

more beautifully in harmony with what scripture would lead us to expect.

Nor need the most earnest advocate of the literal interpretation of Old Testament prophecy for the Jews fear that this will be touched, save to confirm it by the use of the realities of their coming earthly glory, as figures of a heavenly glory beyond and above theirs.

I will now ask any simple Christian to read again the description of the glorious city in Rev. 21, 22, and tell me if it conveys to his mind the idea of what is material, and, if he is still in doubt, to turn to page 219 of this paper, and see what materialism involves the writer in.

As to its shape and form, we cannot pretend to any degree of certainty, but, from the description, it would seem to be material, to be in the form of a lofty pyramid, of which the height to the top-stone, &c. The top-stone, the chief cornerstone, will crown the pyramidal city, and forming thus the center in which all its lines shall meet, will, with exquisite suitability, form the material representation and glorious monument of the exalted living stone.

THE CITY IS A CUBE

Verse 16 says:

The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

We may understand by this, not a pyramid, but the city is presented as a cube. This is in keeping with the sanctuary in the Tabernacle and in the Temple.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROPHECY

But, first, the structure of this part of the prophecy calls for attention, as evidently forming an important feature in the interpretation of it. What is the reason of the break at the end of Rev. 21:8? If there be none, and the course of the prophecy be simply continuous, why is it said at this point,

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues?

Has not such introduction of angel messengers been previously marked in the book, and generally connected with some change or first beginning made in the communication of it? (See Rev. 5:2; 7:12; 8:23; 10:1; 14; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1; 21:1). Is there nothing to arrest the careful reader *here*? no break or change indicated? Why, too, one of *these particular* angels, and the similarity of the circumstances under which John was shown the mystery of the woman and the beast that carried her, in Rev. 17? Are not these things significant at least, and likely to bear on the right understanding of the passage? All is passed over without notice by the writer. It is time we should inquire what may be their import.

Rev. 21:1-8 is the Eternal State

FEATURES OF THE ETERNAL STATE

The historic sequence of Rev. 21:1-8 with the events described in ch. 20, may be assumed as unquestioned. The

great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them,

introduces naturally

a new heaven and a new earth (ch. 21), for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.

It is the eternal state, the distinguishing characteristics of which are given us in these verses. Let us weigh them well. And first and most marked of all as to God Himself. We know something of the immensity involved in *the way* in which God is revealed and known. This forms, and contains in itself, the blessing of His people in every age. God speaks of it to Moses:

I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them (Ex. 6:3).

This was reserved as the order of Israel's blessing. Full and rich as were the resources of faith in these early days -- found in God revealed as Almighty, and Jehovah in unchanging faithfulness -- it was not enough for Him, in the full knowledge of and nearness to Himself into which He would bring His people. Even "I am that I am" was involved in inexplicable mystery that none could fathom, till He came who alone could tell it out -- the Word that was with God, that was God.

And 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.

It was now the only-begotten Son telling out all that was in the bosom of the

Father, to bring us into relationship with Him as His children. And when He had finished the work by which God was perfectly glorified in His own nature, and, as to sin, He could say

I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God, and send down the Holy Ghost to be the power in our hearts of a relationship so intimate and blessed. Again, the name involves the blessing, and "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" contains in it all the riches possible, as it is ours thus to know Him for ever.

But not so does the Revelation give Him to us; for Christianity, *as such*, is not the subject of it, nor the revelation of God that forms it. It is the Son of man as judge first, and the time was come that judgment should begin at the house of God. Thus we have, in Rev. 4, the glory of God in creatorship and providence, Rev. 5 bringing out the title of the Lamb to the inheritance on the ground of redemption; then the judgments that put Him in possession of it, till He comes Himself to take possession in ch. 19. This gives its character to the revelation of God in the millennium, and the blessing of that glorious era. It is the direct government of the throne, the Lamb reigning in manifested glory. See Rev. 5, where His title is celebrated in heavenly praise before the hour of actual triumph is looked at as come.

Blessing, and honor, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever.

So again, when in Rev. 7:9-17 we are carried on to the scenes of the millennial joy:

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall tabernacle over them, . . . the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, &c.

See also Rev. 14:1-4; 19:6-9. Everywhere it is God and the Lamb that marks the blessing of that day. And

he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Accordingly the destruction of death, when the resurrection of judgment has made the separation of body and spirit no longer the existing state of any one, is given us in Rev. 20:4. But now what follows in the passage I have referred to, for the expressed order in which these closing events of time take place?

Then cometh the end, when he delivers up the kingdom to God even the Father. When he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power . . . and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under Him, *that God may be all in all*.

The dispensation of the fulness of times {the millennium} had come, all things in heaven and earth had been headed up in the once despised Nazarene,

everything laid low at His feet. But what is it for? That He should give up the universal sovereignty as man. The Son also Himself became subject unto Him that put all things under Him, in order that God should be all in all. Exactly in accordance with this, in the description of the eternal state given us in the opening verses of our chapter, God is revealed as all in all.

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

This is the sum of eternal blessing. What for us could go beyond God thus known, and dwelling with His people? Is it not the very point to which we are already brought by faith in the Epistle to the Romans, as the climax of our joy? See Rom. 5:1-10; and then v. 11,

Not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.

So also in 2 Cor. 5:17, 18, it is similarly realized as the fruit of the new creation ground on which we are brought in Christ --

Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new; and *all things are of God*, who hath reconciled us *to Himself* by Jesus Christ.

This, then, is the brightest distinguishing feature of the new heavens and the new earth, when

the former things are passed away, and He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

God is all in all.

But hardly less marked as to man's state is the fact that all the distinctions that came in by sin in time and upon the earth are lost. Now we hear no more of nations. In the new creation and therefore already to faith

there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all (Col. 3:10, 11).

"The people are one," as at the first before man's pretension and pride of unity forced God to scatter and divide. One distinction alone remains,

the tabernacle of God is with men.

But this was not the fruit of sin in the flesh in time, but of the counsels of God before the world was. It is the church, not (as it is found only in Paul's epistles) the body of Christ, but in a twofold relationship: to Christ, as the bride adorned for her husband; and to God, as His tabernacle, the eternal dwelling-place of His glory. Both are found in Ephesians: the first in connection with Christ's love that is preparing for presentation to Himself in glory all that He can delight in, Eph. 5:25-27, and the second in Eph. 2:21, 22, when all the building fitly framed together is growing unto a holy temple in the Lord -- the result reached for both in Rev. 21. The Kingdom was prepared for the blessed heirs of it "from the foundation of the world," and when set up will

last as long as time lasts (see Psa. 89:4, 27-37); but the church belongs to eternity, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world. I shall have to refer again to the subject of the giving up of the kingdom, but now pass on to other characteristics of the eternal state.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ETERNAL STATE

“There was no more sea” (v. 1), no part of the new creation that is not brought into order and blessing.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

God rests at last, when there was fully come the declared and precious object of the manifestation of the Son.

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

It was clean gone now. No trail of the serpent defiled the new creation. God had gone to the source of all that brought in sorrow, and swept it away in the judgment of the cross. The former things were passed away. The God, who had had to drive out the man and woman in tears from the Eden He had made for unfallen creatures, is able to meet us on the threshold of a new heaven and a new earth as the wiper away of all tears from our eyes.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

What words could more solemnly close the eventful history of time, wherein God had used the proved ruin of men to bring out to His own infinite glory what He Himself is, to be the fountain of eternal flowings of refreshment for His people.

I will give unto him that is athirst of the water of life freely.

Already we are at the source. He could say who came to make Him known,

The water that I shall give shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Here is the full realization of it in eternity.

He that overcometh shall inherit *these* things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Such is the close of the conflict, and such the position and portion of the overcomer in God's own presence and blessing. Then one last word that fixes in terrible contrast the eternal and unalterable doom of the lost that have “their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” Here the veil of the future, lifted by Revelation, drops; as well it may. The historic sequence of events has been opened out prophetically to its term. The waves of succeeding ages break no longer on the shores of time. This is

eternity, and then beyond the utmost bound of the everlasting hills faith knows its portion.

Yet once again the veil is lifted, and a scene of great glory is opened to us -- some of the elements of it such as have been already before us in the description of the eternal state, yet not without sufficient to distinguish it, as we shall see -- with even points of contrast. If it be so, what is the glory that is portrayed from Rev. 21:8 to ch. 22:5?

The Bride, the Lamb's Wife, During the Millennium

We must look at it a little in detail, for we are told

there is an absence of all the church's distinctive characteristics (p. 218).

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain (Rev. 21:9).

Now, surely it is not unworthy of notice that at this point the position of John changes. It is not often that it is so ordered in the course of the communications made to him, yet never, we may safely say, without design and fitness; though whether we are able to discern it is another thing. But is an interpretation of the passage likely to be the true one that makes nothing of such a change? Nay, that has for its principle that there is none, but that in orderly connection of the parts, the scene is one in chs. 21-22:5, and John is carried away in spirit to a great and high mountain? At Rev. 21:10 too he shows what he had already seen and described from verse 1-8. This is the system of the paper (see p. 219, where the argument is founded on it).

Thus we see the millennial city and earth are at end *before* this city descends, which is confirmed by the word that there shall be no more death . . . So also there shall be no sun, and yet no night.

But I turn to the word, for true light we want, which is surely not lacking in it. The introduction seems to carry us back to Rev. 17. This is certainly a striking parallel in the way John was shown the very different scenes before him there.

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters . . . So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness (Rev. 17:1-3)

Then it was to see the unholy alliance of the apostate church with the world, in the last form the Gentile dominion assumes, that is, the revived Roman empire. How suited the wilderness, from which John looks out on the moral chaos

where no fruit of the life of Christ was found to be fruit for God.

Yet was there never to be a true connection of the church with the world? Absolutely none with the world *as it is*, out of which Christ is rejected.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

But what when the kingdom of this world becomes the Lord's, and He sits on the throne of His glory? We shall reign with Him. Scripture is perfectly clear as to this, in spite of our author, who asks,

What has the church to do with the new earth; is not heaven, with the many mansions now being prepared, her home?

It tells us,

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. (Again), To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne (Rev. 2:21).

If it said, This is in the millennial earth, and not the new earth, we have seen the church's connection with the latter in the tabernacle or dwelling-place of God.

The truth is, that much of the confusion of this paper is to be traced to the mistaken thought of limiting the truth of the church to that which is specially revealed of it through Paul, that is, its unity as the body of Christ. Yet even there, as we have seen, it is also the temple of God. But besides what the church is corporately, there is, first and highest of all, the relationships in which those who compose it stand individually with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, as Eph. 1 unfolds them to us. It is full association with Him in all that He has entered into as man with His Father and God. Hence His place always gives us ours. If hidden now, our life is hid with Him in God: if about to be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory. In fact, He comes "to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," in bright contrast to the day when He came alone, and men "saw no beauty in him that they should desire him." As the prism catches the ray that falls upon it, and, breaking it up into its several colors, reflects it thus in its varied beauty and perfection; so will the church be to Christ in the coming day of manifested glory.

This is what is given us in the description before us, not the home of the Father and the Son, the home of our hearts even now in a love that goes beyond the glory, because the glory can be displayed, but the love never, but the displayed glory of the kingdom, and the church's necessary and blessed association with Christ in it, the heavenly Eve of the last Adam heir sharer with Him of it all. It is especially the heavenly part of it, where the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43). But there is seen church and state in true connection with one another, when it is no longer Satan's skill in counterfeit, but the fulfilment of the purpose of God for the glory of His Christ. We see thus the reason of the link between chs. 21 and 22 if only to bring out the contrast of the things that are depicted. And do we not enter in some little measure into the wisdom and preciousness of the grace that does not give us the glorious espousal of the church,

as in Rev. 19, until the overthrow in judgment of that which had held the place and profession of the Bride in the awful Satanic counterfeit? nor finally close the Revelation without the true and recognized place of the church in the kingdom, when the time had come for it, according to God? What more in keeping too, than that one of the angels of the vials, by which judgment was executed, should be chosen to show John the full positive result in glory and blessing?

May I ask here what could be the meaning of one of the vial angels being thus introduced according to the scheme of interpretation (if so it can be called) that I am examining? ¹ According to the paper this is eternity; and therefore the thousand years of the kingdom have intervened between the pouring out of the vials of wrath and the glory here set out before John. Why such a link taken up with events of time so long past?

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

1. {Another wrote:

It is well to notice, that when the angel comes to show Babylon in Rev. 17:1, he describes her wide-spread influence, "sitting by the many waters;" but when here he comes to show the New Jerusalem, there is nothing to be said of her; it is enough to say that she is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." The harlot could ride the beast, and spread corruption far and wide; she had immense power, but affection she had none. While the harlot is saying, "I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow," the Bride feels that she is not her own, but that she belongs to another. While the love of influence, the "sitting beside many waters," is the spirit of Babylon, the character of dependence marks the Bride. Ah! beloved friends, if we are seeking power or worldly influence, the spirit of Babylon is in us. The only influence we should court, as to service or as to anything else, should be the result of attachment to Christ alone, and dependence upon Him. Affection for Him is the one thing. There will be plenty of trial and difficulty, where this exists: but there will be no thwarted expectations when He is the object. We shall never find in Him what does not satisfy. This is happiness. There may be plenty in us needing to be subdued, and this will give us trouble, and 'tis labor, alas, often, to keep the heart up to a sense of His love; but that single word, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife" is quite enough for us; for was there ever an affection wanting in Christ toward us? Never. Never shall we find defect in the object of our affections, though we shall find defect in the affection in ourselves, lack of ability to enjoy the fulness of our portion. A true sense of the abiding love of Jesus to us is that which gives perfect peace to the love that is looking to Jesus. One source of our failure in realizing the love of Jesus is, that our hearts, though enlarged by the Holy Ghost, are too little to answer to it. Herein lies the marked difference as has been remarked between the Book of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. In Ecclesiastes it is said, "What can the man do that cometh after the king, who hath gathered to himself peculiar treasure of all the sons of men?" But the larger his heart was in its intelligence and in its desires, the less there was to fill it, so that everything issued in "vanity and vexation of spirit." But what was wanting in the Song of Solomon -- primarily applicable no doubt to the Jewish remnant -- was a heart large enough to take in the all-satisfying object of its love. And oh, what a thought it is, that Jesus and all the glory He has received is ours! as He says, "the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them" (*The Present Testimony* 8:321, 322).}

The Divine Path

John 1:43; 12:23-26; 21:18, 19

Luke 9:57-62

Philippians 3:12-14

The subject here -- one of those precious subjects in this first chapter of John, in addition to what we have had before us -- is the great fact, that there is a divine path through the maze and intricacies of this world; a distinctly divine path, so that we are not left to ourselves in any way to make out the road. It is not our own understanding of how we could pick our steps through the tangled labyrinth, if I may so describe it, which this world really presents, in its present alienated state; but there is a path, a very defined path through it all, for faith. A wonderful cheer for our souls it is even to contemplate that, for a moment; the *existence* of such a path, even supposing we have not as yet found it; but the fact that it is there to be found, what a comfort to the soul. Not only is there an object divine, and a center divine -- for these are the subjects we have had before us -- but, blessed be God, there is also a divine path, a path that His own blessed feet have marked out for us, through the desert sands of this world, and which faith can penetrate, and discern, and reach, and rejoice in being permitted to walk in, even Christ's path.

Now the first thing with regard to this subject, is -- and I will ask you to look at a scripture which shows it -- how entirely and completely it is a path of faith, and that it is only faith that can tread it, as it is only faith that can discover it. It is only by faith that we can see what it is, and it is only by faith that we can estimate the good of it. Turn with me to Job. 28:7, 8: it is a remarkable scripture:

There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen; the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

You will observe, it is presented here, in figure, by the Holy Ghost as entirely outside the keenest perception of nature. That is the thought which the Spirit of God would leave on our hearts with regard to this path. It is divinely far above the keenest sight or discernment of the creature. The most powerful agent in nature, the most far-sighted and keen-visioned cannot make it out. "No fowl knoweth." There is no eye, no sight, like that of the vulture for keenness, for quickness of perception, for far-seeing. "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen"; untrodden by even the lion's whelps, or the fierce lion. No sight of nature, nor power of nature, can either discern or walk in this path. Well you will admit, beloved friends, that this puts it very simply for us, through God's grace. It cannot be discerned nor trodden by human power; further there is nothing to show. And that is where the difficulty oftentimes is. Those who, through grace and faith, have God-given eyes, can see

the path, and, thank God, walk in it too but it is not only difficult, it is impossible, to show this path to another; and even more difficult still, to give others the power to walk in it, even if you could show it to them. If you doubt this, try, and you will assuredly find out the truth of it for yourselves. Be assured, it is for yourself, when God gives you eyes to see it. I mean, of course, spiritual eyes; eyes by the teaching of his Spirit, through His word too; His Spirit and His word enlightening the eyes of the heart. It is thus, too, that the apostle prays, in Eph. 1, even that

the eyes of your heart, being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

He asks for opening and enlightening in the eyes of their hearts, in the seat of their affections; thus you will at once understand the intimate connection between the affections being in exercise, and thereby knowledge of the mind of God.

What a wonderful thing, to be illuminated in the heart's eyes; not the mind, not the reason, but the heart, the eyes of your heart being enlightened, the enlightening power of His Spirit in the affections of our souls. And, beloved friends, there is no other way to know, but this. You cannot see God's path, and you cannot tread God's path, in any other way than faith in God Himself, the living God. So that the value, the blessedness, of this word at the start, is that it puts the finding of this path, outside of everything that is merely connected with man, as man. No man of himself, or by any power that he has, can possibly discern this path; it is true he may be an exceedingly able man, a man of great parts, as we say; of great faculties, great discernment, great wisdom, great foresight, and all that, but this reckons not here; what we are speaking of lies entirely outside and beyond the greatest of men. And, beloved friends, we cannot insist upon that too much, we cannot press it upon our own hearts too earnestly, because you must perceive how the tendency with us is to think that we can, by sense or sight, discern the things of God. He has to teach us, in His wonderful grace, that we never really see anything according to Him, until we become fools.

If any man will be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

He has really to come down from all that fancied ability and power in himself, and the false idea that he is possessed of any sight, or any clearness, or any power; to see these things, or unravel them, or discern them, he must give all that up: and when a man comes down to be a little child, then, there is found before the Lord the proper, true, right condition of soul, in which to exercise living faith in that which is of God, and which is made known to faith. It is to faith it is made known; not to reason, nor to sense. Sense and reason hinder and deceive; all the whole power of nature is misleading.

Now this clears the ground immensely, and then comes the comfort, that

there is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen.

I would, further, ask you to look at another scripture, but not on that point, because that is settled, once and for all.

It is to be noted well, how everything of God is seen in the same way. There is no power of man that gives him an understanding of *anything* of God. As the apostle, by the Holy Ghost, writes in 1 Corinthians 2, and which is the very mind of God, in relation to understanding all given us of God: "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man." "No man" -- remarkable words. That is to say, no man, as *a man*, knows the things of the Spirit of God. You cannot tell what is passing in my mind, and I cannot tell what is passing in yours. Even so, you cannot discern the things of God, save as He, by His Spirit, makes them known to you; as surely as God is the author of the revelation, so surely it cannot be either known or received, but by the Spirit of God. This, then, beloved friends, is solemn and searching. But, observe, there is the positive side also -- I merely quote it -- "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." So that it is not only that there are things given to us of God, but there is power by the Holy Ghost to know them, and there is a capacity in the new man to receive them: further, it is written,

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ {1 Cor. 2}.

It is, then, by the Holy Ghost, we know the things that are freely given to us of God, but no man, as man, can know them: the simplest truth of God, no man, as man, can understand; for instance, take creation, though I do not desire to dwell long upon it, only to illustrate the point: how do we know as to creation? Why, "by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." How simple that is! "by faith." And so it is with regard to everything else -- it is the mind of God, that He has been pleased to reveal in His own word to faith, and faith must be in exercise. And, blessed be His name, faith is that which is found in us, as new creatures in Christ. Faith in the testimony of God, and the Holy Ghost to make that testimony known to us, in all its blessedness and power, are the alone way to the understanding and knowing anything about it.

We shall now turn to the scripture, another scripture, for a little, in order to show you, as the Lord may help, how this path was trodden by the Lord Himself; and this we shall find most blessed. Turn to Psa. 16:11, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." Now this is the language of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in His place of dependence and trust, as a man, before Jehovah. He comes down and takes the place of a man, in confidence and trust in God. This it is, that gives this

Psalms (16) such a precious interest for our hearts, because it is His own blessed path down here in this world. God everything to Him, in His perfection as man before God, perfect in His confidence, perfect in His trust, perfect in His dependence, "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust." And then, further,

Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage.

Again,

I have set Jehovah always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

It is all the path and place of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a man down here in this world, as before God; in the perfection of the confidence, trust, and dependence, that marked Him, in His perfection, in the place He had taken. And then, how precious to see Him, as going through that path, the path of life, and to hear Him saying these words,

Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

And that was the path in which He walked across this world, meeting death, because we never could walk along that path until Christ had gone before in it; we are not going along a way, that has never been trodden, and which we address ourselves to, for the first time. Christ has walked in that path, He has walked the whole path of faith; and this it is which gives such preciousness and value to that scripture in the epistle to the Hebrews, where He is spoken of as the beginner and finisher of faith; that is to say, He walks the whole road; that in which we find each of the worthies of old, filling up their part, namely, Abraham, Joseph, Enoch, and so on, each of them filled up their part in this path, but Christ goes the whole path; He was the beginner and He was the finisher, "the author and finisher of faith," the path or road of faith as a whole; and then meeting death, and taking out of death all that, that stood in our way, so as to hinder us walking in that path; meeting everything that was involved in that death, as the blessed One did, and looking beyond it to resurrection, as the perfect answer of God to His victory and triumph. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life." Walking in that path, having in grace identified Himself in it with those who were quickened by the Spirit, those who had confessed their sins, *not keepers of law*, but quickened souls who, having owned their sins, had turned to God; He could be there, blessed be His name, and He did, fulfilling all righteousness, identify Himself with them, the excellent in the earth, "in whom is all my delight." He has met everything, and defined what that path is.

Now, that is an immense comfort to the soul. Dwell upon it, beloved friends, Christ has gone the whole way. And therefore it is, that He can, and does, blessed

be His name, call us to follow Him. And further, mark this, it gives a very distinct character to it; Christ Himself is the way, the road. A person may say, But what is that road, what is that path? Christ Himself; that is the path; "I am the way." "We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" He replies, "I am the way." And, beloved, think how blessed it is; because it sets that blessed One before the eyes. It is none less than that precious, living, blessed Christ, before the eyes of the soul; that makes the path as distinct and simple as anything can be. Christ is the way. I am to follow Christ, I have to watch Christ, I have to keep my eyes on Christ; and it moreover clears up so many difficulties, it takes so many things out of the way at once; it is not considering how and where we could escape from dangers here, and how we could make the best of our way through difficulties; far from it. Have you reflected on this? There are, in that path which is the opposite to that of faith, quite as many difficulties, yet unbelief is ever ready to take that road; but there is not with those who walk that way, the power of God to sustain: this solemn fact I commend to your consideration.

Be assured of it, beloved friends, in reality the difficulties in the path of faith serve to draw out dependence in us, and to display that power of God, which is above everything; and this is an immense gain and blessing; further, you have not the company of Christ with you in the one, but you have in the other. You will have to meet constant and hard pressing difficulties, you will have to encounter severely trying hindrances and obstacles, but you cannot have Christ with you, and you will not enjoy that sweet and blessed assurance in your soul, that Christ went that road before you, so that you could discern, if you were with Him, as it were the very tracks of His blessed feet, in the desert sands. Whereas, if your eyes are on Him, not on difficulties, but on him, how comforting—the road is plain before you, the light is on your path at once. If your eyes are on Christ, if it is Christ, who is simply the road, as He says Himself, "I am the way," if it is Christ simply before you, the whole way is clear as light; it can be said truly,

"Light divine surrounds Thy going."

The path is simple and defined before you. Suffering, no doubt, but that is part of the blessedness of the path. Instead of being a part of the trials and difficulties of it, it is part of the blessedness of it. Ah, it is a very different thing from suffering, merely where it is connected with our own deserts. A person may suffer because of his own folly and his own waywardness, and there is a bitterness, and rightly, too, in that; but the suffering that belongs to that precious path, which His own feet have walked in, and the road which is marked out as This own, is sweet beyond all description. Alas, how little we have tasted it! How little we have partaken of that suffering which is connected with Himself, and with the path which He has trodden down here; yet we often sing,

There is but that one in the waste,

Which His footsteps have marked as His own;
And I follow in diligent haste,
To the seats where He's put on His crown."

There is a bitterness about the other suffering, and pain attached to it, as well; but in that which is connected with Christ, there is real sweetness, there is true joy. Just like the apostles, when they went out from the presence of the council, it is said, they "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." They were beaten, but it was the comfort of their hearts that they had suffered for Christ, had walked with Christ. And so it should be with us, if we were found, through grace, walking in His path, following Him.

This brings us to those other scriptures read at the beginning of this meeting, and we shall see how they tell one upon another. In the first of John, we start distinctly with the Lord's own blessed word, "Follow me." That is the divine path, and I have tried to show you how He Himself constituted it, and walked in it first, and thus made a way for us to follow Him.

Now for a moment turn to the twelfth chapter of John. This gives the true character of this path, and shows what it is. The Lord says here,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me {John 12:24-26}.

Now, there we have the distinct nature, the positive character of this path of faith through this world; it is a suffering path: it is nothing less than death; it is loss. Observe how here the Lord is on His road *to the cross*; and what makes it so much more solemn is this, that the whole glory of the kingdom passed before Him there in figure; the kingdom in figure is there before Him, Israel accepts Him for the time being, the Greeks come up and say, "We would see Jesus." The whole scene is one of deep and solemn interest. Just think what that moment was to Jesus, how at that moment, Isa. 49:6 was present to His mind; but then death was in the road for Christ. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." He could have taken the kingdom alone. There was no necessity for Him, as to Himself, blessed be His name, to suffer, but if He did take the kingdom, it must have been *alone*. He might have remained alone; He could have abode alone, for, except it "fall into the ground and die, it abides alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." But then observe the words connected with it, "If it die"; and oh, I often wonder if our hearts take in the depth, the intense solemnity that is connected with those little words, "*If it die*." Think of what His death involves, think of what is connected with it; it was not only the solemn reality of meeting the judgment of God with reference to sin; no doubt that was all involved in it, as well as the meeting the whole power of Satan, and destroying him that had the power of death, that is the devil -- who could or indeed would underrate the judgment of a holy God in relation to sin? But oh! beloved friends, see what it defined for the followers of that dying

Savior, see how distinctly it marked out the nature and character of the path, for every one that would serve Him, "If any man serve me, let him follow me." "Follow me" -- where? To death. Death it must be, because that was what was in the road; that was the immediate thing before His mind; it was that which the alabaster box of Mary had brought so distinctly before the mind, when she anointed His body for the burying.

The deep significance of that alabaster box was there to the soul of Jesus upon earth, at that moment, "If any man serve me, let him follow me." And more than that, you will remember how the Lord Himself had said, "If any man will come after me," which is following as well, "let him deny himself" -- think of that -- and further, "take up his cross"; which does not mean that each person has his particular trial and special difficulty; that is the way it is wont to be spoken of at times, even that each person has his own special trial and difficulty; as one would say, "That is my cross," and something else is another person's cross. That is not the meaning of this scripture at all. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." And mark, denying yourself is a greater thing by far than self-denial. There is oftentimes a great deal of self-denial, where there is no denying of self, at all. Denying yourself is a most deeply searching reality, the positive abnegation and refusal, even to death, of everything connected with yourself. "Let him deny himself." Self-denial is very frequently made an opportunity of ministering to self. Very often, acts of self-denial are positively a ministration to self. But think of what a reality it is to deny yourself, the abnegation to death of every principle connected with yourself. Oh, to refuse that! And further, not only what is bad, but what is good; what is naturally beautiful, naturally amiable, naturally attractive, naturally lovely, on this to bring and bear the cross. "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross": that is to say, he has to accept the death that lies in the path; not each person's particular trial and particular difficulty, but to take up his cross, even death that is in the road; the denial of yourself, the abnegation of yourself to death, and all else beside, that lies in that path; and for what? Even to "Follow me." Wonderful reality, beloved friends, but wonderfully searching and deeply solemn truth for our souls it is. And if you will just connect that with service, as the Lord does here, "If any man serve me, let him follow me," how different it is from our thoughts of service; how different from the ideas of service prevailing at the present moment. Serving the Lord is, very oftentimes, really ministration to oneself; very oftentimes toleration of self, anything and everything but the death which stands in the path and in the road. "If any man serve me, let him follow me."

Let us now further connect with this, that scripture in the ninth of Luke, and see how near to each other they are. A man comes to the Lord, who evidently has not at all measured the deep significance of this path, nor weighed at all what is involved in following Christ. This man addresses Him and says, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." What words the Lord addresses in reply! How touching are those words! How searching to the soul! What does He say?

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Are we up to that kind of following, beloved? "I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." How little did he take in who it was, and what His position was, whom he thus confidently proposed to follow. Think of those words. Think of following such an One as that! Think of such a path as His! We all need to have our conscience and our heart searched, as to this. It is true that there is every kind of blessedness in it, but let us have the due weight of it in our souls; let the full solemnity of it rest on our souls. Do not let it be a sentimental thing with us. One dreads the sentiment. The sentiment of the truth is not the truth. The sentiment of the truth very often saps out the real power of the truth in our souls. But the deep reality of it, the immense significance of that path, is most affecting: a destitute Christ, a Man here who had not a place where to lay His head; a solitary, isolated Man, who was poorer than the creatures of His own hand in His own creation; what could more appeal to our hearts than a rejected Savior, who had not a place "where to lay his head"?

It brings very forcibly to mind that touching scene in the close of the eighth, and beginning of the ninth chapters of John: there was a division among the people because of Him, one urging one thing and another somewhat else, but as to Himself, the testimony forced from unwilling witnesses, "never man spake like this man"; and in confusion and uncertainty all depart, "every man went unto his own house"; but as to Jesus, it is written, "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives." Mark it well, all had their own house, but He had none; "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Now look at the next verse or two, "And he said unto another, Follow me." I think these differences of dealing with souls, are most deeply instructive in scripture, the way in which the blessed Lord, the tender, and yet solemn way in which He corrects the mistaken thought of following Him, by pressing the path in all its full solemnity before one; and then on another His distinct and immediate claim. His word now is, "Follow me." Observe the reply, "Let me first go and bury my father." Then the Lord says to him, "Let the dead bury their dead." And then, another, apparently of himself, says to Christ, "Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house." Now here we have, in the first instance, one who had not weighed the significance of the path, one who looked, as it were, lightly on following Christ, regarded it as an easy thing to follow Him; upon this man's spirit, the Lord brings the full weight of the deep solemnity of the path. With the others, it was the case of those who put something else as having a prior claim to following Christ, and that is the meaning of the Lord's reply. The first great thing, the pre-eminent thing, the paramount thing is to follow Christ. There is great force in that little word "first." "Let me *first* go and bury my father." "Let me *first* go bid them farewell which are at home at my house." "First!" The Lord says, I must be first, and last too; Christ must be first, and Christ must be last. There can be

no first, and there can be no last, but Christ. Blessed be His name, He is first and He is last, but He must be first and last *with us*, as He is first and last in Himself. And more than that, He is the indispensable One as well. How often our hearts have used those words, "the indispensable" -- what is the indispensable? Jesus. I know no other indispensable; nothing else that cannot be done without, but Jesus. We cannot do without Christ. We can do without everything else but Him. Oh! you say, that is very extreme. Very extreme? I say, it is very blessed; you surely will not call blessed things extreme; may the Lord teach us how blessed it is!

Do not your hearts like to give Him that place, and say that He can be everything to you, yea all things, food, and meat, and drink, and shelter? Would you not like to exalt Him into such a position as that, to let Him be everything? Harken to the words which the Lord Himself addressed to his disciples, "*When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes.*" Oh, many a time have I thought of those words; these are what we call the indispensables of life, what would be called the absolute necessities; what would you think of a man going without. purse, or scrip, or shoes, now? Yet He says, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? What did they say? "Nothing." Why, beloved friends? Because they had Him.

And was not that the lesson that He taught them in the boat? There they were, in distress and perturbation, because they had not brought bread. He says, Am not I better than bread? Have you not all, in having me? Are you distressed because you have not taken bread, when you have me in the boat? Oh, the comfort for the heart in finding Christ everything, and everything in Christ: Christ the path, and Christ the sufficiency for the path; Christ the way, and Christ the competency for the way; Christ the road, and Christ the power to walk in that road. "Christ is all." And that is the reason why the Lord brings it out there, the paramount claims of Himself upon those who propose to follow Him it must be Himself absolutely, first and last.

Further, there is one other little word to which I will call your attention, before I speak of the last scripture, and that is in the twenty-first of John; and in this scripture, the subject is exceedingly beautiful; here it is the restored soul. In the first of John, it is what we might call the beginning of life, it is the first moments of acquaintance with Him. The Lord finds Peter and Andrew, and says, "Follow me." Now in John 21, it is Peter after he was brought back, after he was restored, and there is only one point I would call your attention specially to, in this part of our subject. Peter is broken down and restored in conscience in Luke 22. In the force of his nature and the strength of his will, do you remember what he said?

Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

And if you search the history a little further on, you find that when the Lord was taken and all the disciples forsook Him and fled, then it is said of Peter, remarkable words, "Peter *followed afar off*"; he followed at a distance. And there is great force, I am assured, in those words, "followed afar off": Because you must know, if you are distant from a person, every turn of the road will hide him from your view; every little obstacle that comes in the way screens him from your sight. "Peter followed afar off." I do not trace the history further, for I take it we are all familiar with it, and we know what the denial was, we know how he essayed to follow Christ, in the power of his flesh and will, and how terrible was the break-down, trusting his love instead of trusting Christ's.

And now I refer to the twenty-first of John, for the purpose of showing you, that after the Lord has probed him, and reached the *depths* of his failure and break-down, and suggested by His questions his denial, when He re-instates Peter in his position of shepherd and martyr, He says to him in that eighteenth verse,

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

Beautiful words are these; the contrast between Peter in the youthful unbroken energy of his will, in the force and strength of the trust that he had in his own affections, as expressed in the words of the blessed Lord, "When thou wast young," and Peter's matured and mellowed condition afterwards, when subjected and broken down, he could be described as one aged and experienced, in such words as, "but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not," is exceedingly blessed. Then observe how that twenty-first of John leaves Peter and John following; that is the happy place it leaves them in. It closes on them following; Peter says to Jesus, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" "If I will that he tarry till I come," says the Lord, with reference to John, "what is that to thee?" Here is the path, the main business, the wonderful precious occupation, "Follow thou me." The way the Lord brings that out before the restored soul, as He presents it to the soul in the first moments, so to speak of its life down here, is to me exceedingly beautiful and blessed, beyond all expression.

And now, there is only one other scripture to which I would invite your attention, it is Phil. 3. As has been so often said, Philippians is the normal life of a Christian, in the power of the Holy Ghost; the normal life of a heavenly man down here in this world, in the energy of the Spirit. So in the third chapter, behold the apostle, as the divine energy -- which his soul was filled with from the glorified man at God's right hand -- fixed his eye upon that precious Object there in heaven, and engaged all the affections of his heart with that Savior in glory; that very Savior whose brightness shone upon his path, as he was pursuing his

mission of death and destruction; hearken to him now, as he says:

I follow after; I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do
... I press toward the mark for the prize;

as if he had said, I have not yet laid hold upon that for which I have been laid hold of, but one controlling object engrosses me, one thing governs, one thing fills my soul in its incomings and outgoings, "I follow after," "I press toward the mark for the prize"; my eye is on that mark, and my heart is on that prize; and we may well say, what a mark, and what a prize; and Christ is the prize, and Christ is the gain; I press toward that mark -- "I follow after," and "I press." Beautiful words, wonderful words! The energy of the soul filled with a heavenly Christ, a glorified Christ. The streams of light, and life, and glory flowing down from the Man at God's right hand, fill the vessel here upon earth, so that it rises to reach the source whence the power that set it in motion came. The power came from heaven, and the vessel, as filled with that power, rises to reach the Christ, in the scene of His glory! My soul delights to linger in divine admiration of such a sight. It was not that he had attained to anything or reached anything, it was not that he was already perfect; that is, he had not as yet reached up to the standard of conformity to Christ in glory, that is what he means by being perfect; he had not reached up to that standard of perfection, the only divine standard; but "one thing I do," he says, "I follow." My feet are down here in His blessed footsteps, my poor trembling feet, but that Object up there in all His beauty, is filling the whole range and vision of my soul.

"O fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That with Thy beauty occupied,
We elsewhere none can see."

Well, beloved friends, there is nothing more comforting to the heart than that there is such a path. The Lord give us increasingly to have our poor feet in that path, which no power of nature can tread; no power of man can discern; which is above and beyond the keenest perception of the eye of the creature, or the wisdom of the wise. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." This is the language of the Holy Ghost, in describing how impossible it is for the keenest vision or power of nature to either find out or walk in the divine path; but there is such a path, and Christ has walked in it, and faith knows it and faith can walk in it, and the power comes from the One at God's right hand to carry us all the way through.

May every heart here realize this blessedness for Christ's sake.

W. T. Turpin, ch. 5 in *"All Things of God."*

The New Covenant and the Church

Chapter 4

The Eternal Covenant of Hebrews 13:20

Before looking at the alleged solution to the (non-existent) "leak in the dispensational dike," as given by M. J. Stanford, in accord with W. R. Newell's view, let us reflect upon the eternal covenant of Heb. 13:20.

WHAT IS A COVENANT IN SCRIPTURE?

W. Kelly wrote:

In divine things it means an order established by God and made known to the men concerned, according to which He forms relations with them, and they walk before Him. ¹

To this we add from J. N. Darby:

Covenant in no way implies two parties, but the contrary, i.e., in divine things; a mediator does {imply two parties}, but there is an object of the covenant, assurance of blessing, and the circumstances of this object may require the interposition of a mediator, righteously to obtain for, qualify, and sustain them. Christ is properly the object of the Abrahamic covenant, but then, for the Church to come in, being guilty, there must be a mediator with God for that; they are brought into the covenant through a mediator, but the covenant is not made with, or properly for them.

A covenant is a disposition of God, secured by His binding or obliging Himself; this -- man being a sinner -- must be by the meritorious death of the Covenanter. In the case of a man's covenant, it seems to me it was conventionally brought to the same point -- the authority of God being interposed, and the covenanter bound in this by the same sanction, *quad. nota*.

Diatheke is the divine interpretation of *b'rith* (covenant) as to these matters, so that in the divine enquiry of it I have no need to search with anxiety for the

1. F. E. R. Heterodox, p. 57. See also *Essential Writings of J. N. Darby* 34:402.

root or meaning of *b'rith* (covenant) as to its ordinary human force.²

THE ETERNAL COVENANT

The Translation of Hebrews 13:20.

But the God of peace, who brought again from among [the] dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep in [the power of the] blood of [the] eternal covenant. . . . (Hebrews 13:20; JND trans.).

But the God of peace, that brought again from among [the] dead our Lord Jesus the great shepherd of the sheep in virtue of the blood of an everlasting covenant . . . (W. Kelly trans.).

A few quotations regarding the translation are appropriate here. The first, from a footnote by JND:

Lit. 'The bringer again'; the article and participle give the character without relation to time.

The next is from W. Kelly regarding the words "in virtue of":

[The RV gives] "in the" instead of "through" for *ἐν*. It expresses the power or virtue in that blood in which God brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus (Bible Treasury 14:62).

. . . in virtue of . . . an everlasting: "an" eternal is very much to be doubted . . . Our tongue does not always admit of the characterizing power of the anarthrous Greek construction, as may be seen in almost every salutation of the Epistles and often elsewhere. Hence we are forced sometimes to use our definite article where Greek has none. More noteworthy than any of these three is the true bearing of *ἐν* in 20 . . . It is really and simply, in virtue, or in the power, of His blood (Bible Treasury 15:32).³

M. J. Stanford's Erroneous View of Hebrews. The discussion in the previous section about one-sidedness leading to error has a direct bearing on the subject of the eternal covenant. The writer stated that:

The purpose and burden of Hebrews is to draw believers away from anything of earthly Israel, and to establish them in their heavenly position in Christ, and that by the "Blood of the everlasting covenant."

Observe that he has linked his view of the eternal covenant -- being a *new* covenant for the church -- with his erroneous view of Hebrews, which he says is to establish them in their heavenly position in Christ. How does Hebrews establish them in the heavenly position? -- "by the 'Blood of the everlasting covenant.'" He has to view Hebrews as setting out the heavenly position so as to have the eternal covenant refer to that heavenly position. Thus he has a covenant for the church, and then that this covenant must be the new covenant.

The purpose of Hebrews is to establish believers in their heavenly *privileges*,

2. *Notes and Comments* 4:4, 5.

3. *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament*, p. 635 -- available from the publisher.
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not their heavenly position. (*We shall have more to observe about this in another chapter.*) The epistle views saints as in the wilderness, hence so much reference to the tabernacle.⁴ But it was a shadow of the heavenly, true tabernacle, which the Lord has pitched, and not man (Heb. 8:2). And the Christian is *not viewed* in Hebrews as seated in the heavenlies (though all Christians have that position), but as having entrance into the holies above by the blood of Jesus, etc. (Heb. 10:19).

No Scripture Calls the Eternal Covenant a New Covenant. The eternal covenant is not the same covenant as the new covenant:

The everlasting covenant has a different character from the new covenant. There are many covenants in Scripture, but the old and new are distinct, and with Israel only.⁵

Now Heb. 13:20 does not call the eternal covenant a *new* covenant. It is claimed to be a new covenant because other scriptures that use the expression “new covenant” (which actually refer to Israel’s new covenant) are alleged to refer to the eternal covenant. Therefore the eternal covenant must be a *new* covenant -- and then it must be explained why the *eternal* covenant is *new*. Here is M. J. Stanford’s explanation of why it is a *new* covenant:

The Everlasting Covenant was ratified in eternity past, and fulfilled at the resurrection. It is a new covenant in respect of time (Calvary), and it is new in respect to kind, i.e., between the Father and God the Son. It is the fulfillment of Galatians 3:20: “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.”⁶

Since the eternal covenant is eternal, when the eternal covenant was “ratified” it was not then *new*. Well, I suppose it is peculiar to speak of things old and new in eternity past. Yet, he says, “it is new in respect to kind,” i.e., “between the Father and the Son,” which does seem to be in eternity; and if so, must imply that there was an old covenant in eternity that was different in *kind* before this *new-in-kind* one was “ratified” in eternity. I suggest that the explanation of why the eternal covenant is “new in kind between the Father and the Son” *in eternity* should alert the reader to the falsity of the notion.

There are two NT words which bear on this matter of “new.”

4. For more on the way the saint is viewed in Hebrews, see *Collected Writings* 23:262.

5. *Collected Writings* 27:312.

6. *The Two New Covenants*, p. 1 (Feb. 1996). It is remarkable to read such words as “conditions,” “if,” and “ratified” (p. 1) in connection with the eternal covenant, and also such things as “In eternity past the Father conceived the Church, the Body, the Bride for His Beloved Son . . . (p. 6), and “the Father brought her in a secret descent to the cross” (p. 7); as well as “the eternal pact between the God of peace and Himself,” *Pauline Dispensationalism*, p. 26. The reader should have noticed how carefully JND avoided and excluded such talk from the subject of the eternal covenant.
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καινός is new in the sense of not having existed before, in contrast with old preceding it; νέος is new, fresh, young (which never means), in contrast with subsequent prolonged existence by which a person or thing becomes old. What is old, was once (unless eternal) νέον; if it disappears and another thing takes its place, this is καινόν.

Thus in Matt. 9:17 (twice); Mark 2:22 (thrice); Luke 5:37-39 (four times), wine is called νέος, i.e., fresh, not yet old. Again, in Luke 15:12,13; 22:26; Acts 5:6; 1 Tim. 5:1, 2, 11, 14; Titus 2:4, 6; 1 Peter 5:5. various forms of the word are used in the sense of "young" or "younger." In 1 Cor. 5 it is a fresh lump. In Heb. 12:24, it should be, not *the*, but a new covenant, διαθήκης νέας. It is a fresh covenant, and just beginning, it is one yet to come and become developed. It is not here in contrast with the old, which is exactly the point in Heb. 8:8,13, where the new covenant is designated καινή in every other such mention of the New Testament and the apostle reasons, "in that be saith, A new [covenant], he hath made the first old." That is, here it is new, as contrasted with the old. The attentive reader may remark that this determines the force also of Matt. 26:29, and Mark 14:25, "until that day when I drink it new." It is not here, wine not yet grown old, which would be νέου but wine after a new sort or of a new kind. . . .⁷

The Expression, The Blood of the Eternal Covenant, Appears in Hebrews. "The blood of the eternal covenant" should be viewed as related to what Ephesians speaks of, though it is not the same thing:

... according to [the] purpose of the ages {"Or, 'eternal purpose.'"} which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:11).

It is not suggested that the eternal purpose and the eternal covenant are the same thing. Rather, the working out of the eternal purpose rests upon the blood of the eternal covenant.

There is in Hebrews 13: 20, another expression to which allusion may be made: God has "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." "This shows us that Christ Himself is above, and has been raised according to the efficaciousness of the blood that He has shed to satisfy the glory of God. He, the only and beloved Son of the Father, charged Himself with our responsibility and our sins, and thus with the glory of God in this respect; and if this glory had not been completely satisfied, He could not evidently either rise again, or appear before Him whose majesty required that nothing should fail to the work. But He accomplished this work gloriously, and in that the Son of man has been glorified, and God glorified in Him; and He is ascended on high, not only as Son of God, but according to the efficaciousness of His work, in virtue of which He appears before the Father, the everlasting covenant being thus established in His blood. The question here is not of an old or a new covenant, which refers to particular circumstances, but of the intrinsic and

7. *Bible Treasury* 2:303.

essential worth of the blood of Christ.⁸

This work of the Lord Jesus is spoken of in Hebrews in keeping with *the character of the book*:

We have also, at the end of the epistle, the expression “the blood of the everlasting covenant.” “Covenant” he uses, I doubt not (as the word “law” also is used), because it was commonly employed as the condition of relationship with God {among the Jews}, and “eternal” is characteristic of the Hebrews. There have been, and will be, covenants in time and for the earth; but we have eternal conditions of relationship with God, of which the blood of Christ is the expression and security, founded in everlasting grace, and righteousness as well as grace, by that precious blood, in which all the character and all the purpose of God has been made good and glorified, as well as our sins been put away.⁹

“The blood of the eternal covenant” stands in contrast, in the book of Hebrews, to the blood of the sacrifices in the OT that looked forward to the cross. They could not take away sin.

It is a people looked at, at any rate externally,¹⁰ as in relationship with God, and the question is between the temporary and ineffectual means of the law and the abiding efficacy of Christ’s work as gone to heaven, for a people thus in relationship. This last was eternal as its efficacy as redemption, inheritance, perfecting the man and his conscience as far as entering into the holiest went, by an offering once for all; even the Spirit is called the eternal Spirit; the covenant, the everlasting covenant; hence, as you say, the work done once for all, He is thereafter a priest in heaven, appearing for us and interceding for us, as to the difficulties of the way.¹¹

Accordingly, in Ephesians we read of the eternal purpose, while in Hebrews of the eternal covenant, each expression suitable and perfect in its place in the Word of God -- in keeping with the several states of those addressed in the respective epistles and the lines of truth brought before them. And be it observed that the blood of the eternal covenant is of very wide application and not to be confined to the church.

The Shepherd of the Sheep. In this text concerning the blood of the eternal covenant, our Lord is called the Shepherd of the sheep. Let us bear in mind that the purpose of God is to glorify Himself, in Christ, in two spheres, the heavenly and the earthly (Eph. 1:10). Through the work signified by the blood of Christ, His

8. *Collected Writings* 24:65.

9. *Synopsis* 5:214n.

10. {Hebrews has much to say in warning about an empty profession; and the danger of apostasy is mentioned in Heb. 6 (from the presence and action of the Spirit) and Heb. 10 (from the blood). The wilful sin of Heb. 10:26 is that very sin of apostasy. The sanctification of Heb. 10:29 is an *external* thing -- and this is what JND referred to with the word *external* sanctification. The profession of Christ sets one apart (sanctifies) externally, and such will be held responsible.}

11. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:143 www.presenttruthpublishers.com

glory is displayed and His purpose brought to pass. And the sheep are blessed through the blood. All who are born again, OT and NT saints, are sheep. Christ laid down His life for the sheep (John 10:15). And, clearly, there were sheep in the Jewish fold, before the cross (John 10:16) as well as sheep now. The word "sheep" does not denote the heavenly standing of the Christian. To be a sheep is not a distinctive Christian blessing but a character common to all the blood-bought -- though, of course there are things that OT saints did not know, for life and incorruptibility has been brought to light in the gospel; but that is another matter.

This is not to say that all the sheep are blessed with all the same blessings, however. The death of Christ has provided for all that is in God's eternal purpose. As an example, it is because of the blood that Israel will have its portion. It is because of the blood that the church has its portion. It is not the same portion, but it is the same blood. Let us keep it before our souls that it was in the power of, or, in virtue of, the blood of the eternal covenant that the Lord Jesus, **the great Shepherd of the sheep**, was brought again from among the dead (Heb. 13:20). This emphasized phrase suggests the wide bearing of this Scripture, wider than only the Church. Indeed, all saints are beneficiaries of the blood of the eternal covenant.

The Blood of the Eternal Covenant is the Same Blood as that of the New Covenant, Though These Are not the Same Covenants. This should be evident, since the blood of the eternal covenant has in view the sheep -- all the blood-bought saints, from Adam onward -- which is not to say that *the blood* of the eternal covenant is limited to the security of all the sheep. I do not say that that is all it has in view. Far from it; that blood is the basis for *all* blessing of whatever order. However, we saw earlier, from John 10:16, that the Lord spoke of sheep that were in the Jewish fold. The point is that the blood of the eternal covenant does not have in view exclusively the church.

It may be objected that the blood is not limited to the church but the eternal covenant is limited to the church. Perhaps I misunderstand the author we are reviewing, but I think he does mean that this eternal covenant is a covenant for the church exclusively in the same sense that the New Covenant is for Israel exclusively. That would be an opinion, not what Scripture says; and it involves taking texts that speak of the New Covenant and claiming that they mean the eternal covenant. Let us look at Heb. 13:20 again, with that equation in view. What it means, in such a case, is this:

in the power of, or, in virtue of, the blood of the church's new covenant, God brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep.

Observe how restricting the first part of the verse to the church robs the Shepherd of a large number of His sheep in the latter part of this verse.

The blood of the new covenant is, of course, and obviously so, the same blood; but, there is a different line of truth. Looked at as the blood of the new covenant, it lays the basis in Christ's death for the distinctive millennial blessings that will be the portion of that nation. The death of Christ has in view various

spheres of blessing. John 11:51-52, for example, indicates two results of Christ's death, one of which is that He died *for the nation*. In the future the entire nation will be composed of saved ones -- God having purged out the evil ones (Ezek. 20; Zech.). This the Deliverer will accomplish (Rom. 11:26, etc.).

Moreover, the Christian has particular spiritual blessings and these also are based upon the *blood*; *what blood?* -- *the same blood* that is common to these covenants (eternal, and the new), though he is not under the new covenant. His distinctive *heavenly blessings* are based upon the same blood.

As an example of a particular blessing, consider the following.

. . . He is in His present place in the virtue and power of that blood. He is raised from the dead *en aimati* (in the power of the blood) of the everlasting covenant. Having taken our sins, He is entered in as Priest in the power of that blood, which He Himself shed for us. It is not only that we are sprinkled with it, blessedly true as that is, but He is entered into the exercise of priesthood in the power of it, for us indeed, but in the measure of His divine glory, for in that work God Himself was glorified -- all He is, displayed and made good in revelation in it.

Christ was consecrated to God in blood, not surely because He needed it, but that His obedience, by which we are saved, was unto death, and He is to God and loved of the Father according to the sacrifice of Himself -- His laying down His life, yet it was only for us, yet withal for God's glory.¹²

Summary.

The Spirit sets them also in the presence of a risen Christ, of a God who had founded and secured peace by the death of Christ, and had given a proof of it in His resurrection. He had brought Christ again from the dead according to the power of the blood of the everlasting¹³ covenant. On this blood the believing people might build a hope that nothing could shake. For it was not, as at Sinai, promises founded on the condition of the people's obedience, but on the ransom which had been paid, and the perfect expiation of their disobedience. The blessing was therefore unchangeable, the covenant (as the inheritance and the redemption) was everlasting. He prays that the God who had wrought it, would work in them to grant them full power and energy for the accomplishment of His will, working Himself in them that which was well-pleasing in His sight.¹⁴

12. *Notes and Comments* 2:31, 32.

13. The word "everlasting" is specific, in the epistle to the Hebrews, in contrast with a system which was passing away. Hebrews speaks of eternal redemption, eternal inheritance, the eternal Spirit even.

14. *Synopsis* 5:262.

Elements of Propitiation, Substitution, and The Righteousness of God

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Subject of Propitiation and Substitution

This article begins a new series on the subjects of propitiation, substitution, purchase, the righteousness of God, and some related matters.

God's Timing of the Work on the Cross is Connected with the End of the Testing of the First Man

THE TESTING OF THE FIRST MAN

God had not asked of Adam the performance of some meritorious deed whereby he would gain the right to some blessing. Rather, Adam had a prohibition, and this was a law for him. The prohibition was accompanied by a warning that if he transgressed the penalty was death. He was to stay in the creature's place of subjection and own the right of the Creator over himself. In this state he was *innocent*, and by that term we mean that he was *without knowledge of good and evil*. He had humanity in an innocent state. He disobeyed, but was not deceived (1 Tim. 2:14), which indicates that he was cognizant of what he did in following Eve. He, the appointed head here on earth, defied the Creator, and brought the stamp of death upon all over which he was the appointed head. Not only would there be physical death, but moral death fastened itself upon the soul. He now had *humanity in a fallen state*. He had the knowledge of good and evil now; but he also had in his being something else that was not there when he had come forth fresh from the hand of the Creator. He had a sinful nature. He had acquired what Rom. 8:3 calls "sin in the flesh." This sin in the flesh is something within us that desires to act contrary to the will of God, whether that will is expressed explicitly or not. It is a lawlessness within us¹⁵ -- i.e., an acting without reference to the will and pleasure of God. This sin in the flesh acts in a uniform, consistent way, contrary to God. This awful, uniform contrariness is referred to in Rom. 7:23 as "*the law of sin*

15. "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4).

which exists in my members." *A law* is a fixed, a uniform, principle of operation.

Fallen man was placed under testing by God. Note that well. The trial of man means the *trial of man as fallen*. Obviously, an innocent Adam was not the head of a race of innocent men. It is *fallen Adam* that became the head of a race of men, a race of *fallen men*. In 1 Cor. 15:45 we read:

The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit.

There are actually only two Adams. The Lord Jesus is "the last Adam" -- *last* indicating there will not be another one. And, really, there are only two men before God:

the first man out of [the] earth, made of dust; the second man out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:47).

It is as fallen Adam, and as the fallen first man, that the trial of man begins. I am aware that persons that continue the trial of man after the cross put Adam innocent in the epochs of trial, but it is a mistake just as is the idea of the continuation of the trial after the cross. It is part of a scheme that ignores the end of the trial of the first man at the cross, the evidence of which is given in a summary fashion below. The point here is that it is *fallen man* which is under trial -- *to see if he is recoverable*. It is fallen Adam as the head of a fallen race. It is the fallen first man as the head of a fallen race of men. Thus, we speak of the testing, or trial, or probation, of the first man.

FORMS OF THE TESTING

During the epochs of trial of the first man, he necessarily has a standing before God. We speak of this as his Adamic standing -- and mean a standing in Adam as fallen. We speak of this as a standing in the flesh before God. It is fallen man in his natural state, sin in the flesh characterizing his state -- and the law of sin working in him. All men are under the headship of Adam fallen. All have the stamp of the fallen first man on them.

So during the epochs of trial, the trial may be of various forms, but it is *the first man* who is under those forms of trial; the first man, in Adamic standing in the flesh. We know that the trial ended in the rejection of Christ.

The trial took several forms during the epochs of trial, as man left to conscience from the fall until the flood. Then government was introduced. When Christ was rejected and crucified, where was conscience? And what did government do to Christ? Another trial of the first man was made in the persons of Israel. To Israel was given the law and they sinned in the face of the law when they crucified Him to whom the law and the prophets pointed.

The first man was tried under law though the law was given to the Jews, not the Gentiles. The law made no distinction between who was the Lord's and who was not. It addressed man in the flesh, man in the (fallen) Adamic standing, in the persons of the Jews. It was the first man under trial by law. The law made no distinction between who was actually a child of God and who was not. It was not addressed to the children of God. It was addressed to the first man in the persons

of the favored Jews, and treated the first man as if he were alive. Moreover, it promised prolongation of life through obedience to it (Lev. 18:5). He was even provided sacrifices -- but of course they could not perfect the conscience. Once the sacrifice truly satisfies God, then there is no need of any other.¹⁶ The history of repeated failure is recorded in Scripture; failure under Moses, under priesthood, under judges, under kings, under prophetic ministry, and finally rejecting the revelation of the Father in the Son. The conclusion was:

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

We have a law, and by our law he ought to die (John 19:7).

THE TESTING ENDED AT THE CROSS

They rejected the revelation of the Father in the Son! That rejection ended the testing. The point to its being the trial of *the first man* is that the expression embraces all in Adamic standing. That includes the whole world. Consequently, the world was declared under judgment, and all men held to be lost. This is part of the declaration in the gospel. And therefore God calls upon all men everywhere to repent. The trial of the first man was ended, the case of his irremediable lostness was proved, and there is no more trial of the first man. He is removed, as to his standing in the flesh, from before God; and is displaced by the Second Man.

At the *beginning of the trial* of fallen man, God spoke, of the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman,

. . . he shall crush thy head, and thou shalt crush his heel (Gen. 3:15).

At the *end of the trial* this came to pass -- at the cross. His head was crushed. All his plans are thus symbolized as defeated, though he be allowed to work evil meanwhile, until cast into the abyss.

It is essential to an understanding of the ways of God that the reader grasp the important fact that the probation of man ended at the cross. Implicit in the trial of man is the opportunity to undo the offense of sin before God and to live sinless before Him; to prove to God that his state, which resulted from the fall, was remediable (of course, it was not), that he could climb up again from the Fall. The idea that man is still under trial is absurd. What? God has not yet proved the case of man's irremediable lostness? The first man still needs further trial even after rejecting the revelation of the Father in the Son (John 15:24)? -- even after rejecting the One full of grace and truth (John 1:14)?

16. It might be well to call attention to the fact that the millennial sacrifices will not have the significance that the OT sacrifices had. The OT sacrifices looked forward to the work of Christ and signified that the once-for-all work had not been done. These were offered under the Aaronic order of priesthood. In the millennium Christ will be priest after the order of Melchisedec, with an order of priesthood founded upon the once-for-all finished work of the cross. Thus, for an earthly people, the future sacrifices will look back in a memorial way to the once-for-all finished work, as carried out under the Melchisedec priesthood, though sons of Aaron officiate.

The time when the great work of atonement was wrought on the cross necessarily coincided with the sentence pronounced upon the first man, which first fell from the lips of the Son Himself (John 12:31; cp. Rom. 3:19; 1 John 5:19). In the ways of God, He utilized the final test of the first man to be the occasion of providing the work of atonement. Christ was the final test, and Christ wrought atonement in connection with the end of that final test. This is all plain where a pseudo-dispensational continuance of testing after the cross does not cloud the understanding.

The God-glorifying life that the Lord Jesus lived, and in which He was rejected by the first man in every aspect of that life; that life in which He revealed the Father; that very life it was in which He suffered under the judgment of God in the three hours of darkness. And that very life in which He lived to the glory of God, and suffered in atonement, He poured out in death. And then came the last act which God allowed the first man to do to His Son:

The very spear that pierced Thy side,
Drew forth the blood to save (J. G. Deck).

Then God rent the veil. The testing of the first man was concluded, and God no longer remained hidden, but comes out to man in the gospel, declaring that He has been glorified by the work of Christ with respect to sin and sins; declaring His righteousness in the preter-mission of the sins of the OT saints; and, that He is just in justifying the believer (Rom. 3:21-26). And He *now* commands all men everywhere, to repent (Acts 17:30).

The evidences of the end of the testing are most full and conclusive. Because there is no express statement in Scripture that says "the testing of man ended at the cross," that will not excuse you from not accepting that great and basic dispensational truth of Christianity. The fact is plain in Scripture for all to see. It is stunning to think of professed dispensationalists not seeing the cross and the consequent gospel proclamation as marking the end of the trial of the first man.¹⁷ It evidences the power of pseudo-dispensational schemes -- schemes that not only reject this truth, but necessarily must also be defective regarding other truths connected with that one. And since doctrine forms practice, consequently practice must also partake of the defect in doctrine. You say, what doctrines and practice? God's way is for us to acknowledge the truth from His Word when it is brought before us, and then we are in a better position to learn connected truths. The truth of the end of the probation of the first man is summarized in the following chart.

17. Why does the Scofieldian age-ism system say that the testing of man continues when God has declared that all are dead (2 Cor. 5:14)? That all are dead is a statement of the conclusion of the testing. God is not now testing dead men. Before the cross man was not treated by God as dead, but as alive in Adamic responsibility to see if he was recoverable from the fall.

End of the Testing of the First Man

... that which is spiritual was not first

The first man out of [the] earth, made of dust

FINAL TESTING

*Tested by the person of
the Son, the Second Man*

*And at last He sent to
them His Son (Matt. 21:37)*

The perfect King and the Kingdom (Matt.)

The perfect Servant and perfect service (Mark)

The perfect Man and perfect dependency (Luke)

The only-begotten, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

The revelation of the Father in the Son (John 15:24).

Note particularly that the first man, in the persons of the Jews, **was tested by the kingdom** in the offer of the King and kingdom; and **was tested by grace** in the person of the Son. Man is not now being tested by grace. God has concluded testing the first man, having shown all to be under sin (Rom. 3:9).

ADAM,
The First Man

UNDER:
Conscience
Government
Law
Priesthood
Judges
Kings
Prophets

"The fulness of the time" (Gal. 4:4)
"In due time" (Rom. 5:6)
(at the end of the time of testing)

"Yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8)
"Still without strength" (Rom. 5:6)
(conclusion at the end of the testing)

**"Consummation of the
ages" (Heb. 9:26)**
(ages of testing)

*then that which is spiritual (1 Cor. 14:46)
the second man, out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:47)*

NOW

*The Second Man has now
displaced the First Man*

**In view of the end of the testing
of the First Man, God declares:**

Wrath of God revealed from heaven (Rom. 1:18)

Every mouth stopped (Rom. 3:20)

All the world under judgment (Rom. 3:20)

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23)

All are dead (2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 2:1)

Now is the judgment of this world (John 12:31)

In due time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6)

Christ died for all (2 Cor. 5:14)

Christ gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6)

Christ is the propitiation for the world (1 John 2:2)

The trial of the First Man ended at the cross. The declaration that man is lost followed upon the conclusion of the trial of man in the flesh. The case is closed and now God sends forth the gospel based on what the Second Man has done.

NOW: Rom. 3:21; 2 Tim. 1:9-10; Eph. 3:10; Heb. 9:26

**God NOW enjoins men
everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30)**

**"Upon whom the ends of the
ages are come" (1 Cor. 10:11)
(ages of testing)**

R. A. Huebner -- Jan. 19, 1998

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THE STATE OF THE FIRST MAN REQUIRED THE CROSS

Blessed be God, the very cross awarded to Christ by the first man is that whereby God glorified Himself regarding sin, and through which he dealt with the standing and state (and its consequences) of the first man. The consequences require that man lie eternally under judgment, forsaken by God.

The life of the first man is forfeited and God now views man as dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).¹⁸ The law had regarded him as alive, as under trial to see if he was recoverable. Now, the sentence resulting from the conclusion of the trial of the first man is pronounced by God. It is a pity that there are psuedo-dispensational schemes that carry on a chain of testing that erroneously began with Adam-innocent and continues now. The blessed Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, was here, "full of grace and truth," and so man has been tested by grace and truth, in Him who perfectly displayed the Father.

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

Yet on that cross to which the first man assigned Him, He wrought atonement. And now I, as connected with the first man, am gone:

I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, *I*, but Christ lives in me; but [in] that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the [faith] of the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me (Gal. 2:20).

. . . Christ . . . who is our life (Col. 3:4).

It is clear that my life by which I live to God, is not the life of the first man improved in some way. It is not repaired, it is not mended, it is not a restoration to innocence. Christ is my life. And for me, the consequences, the judgment, and the penalty that resulted from the fall of man are forever gone. Those things cannot be attached to the life of Christ, which is my life. But they remain attached to unbelievers.

Aspects of the Work on the Cross

The subject of propitiation and substitution is broad and involves many considerations. For example, a most important distinction for the believer to apprehend is the difference between sin and sins, as spoken of in Scripture. A Christian generally first thinks about sins, i.e., acts, before the fact that within us is an evil nature from which those acts spring. The evil within is sometimes spoken of as "the flesh," and sometimes as "sin." 1 Pet 2:24 speaks of sins, borne by Christ on the cross. 2 Cor. 5:21, however speaks of what is within us -- sin. The cross dealt with both of these. How they were dealt with by God involves His glory and our place before Him.

18. It is true that from another perspective, i.e., in Romans, man is looked at as alive in sins, but away from God and incorrigible (Rom. 8:7).

There are, of course, numbers of other matters related, since all truth is related; but we might think of some quite immediately related as necessary for laying a foundation for apprehending the greatness of propitiation and substitution. For example, words like purchase (bought), ransom, and redemption, which will be considered in this series of articles, are to be understood in connection with this subject. The subject of "the righteousness of God" is closely involved, as are other doctrines. There is a difficulty in giving an exposition of the subject because of the interrelationship of various truths, as always. We need the Spirit of God to guide us into the truth, for He is the unction (1 John 2:27) given for this purpose. That verse does not mean that there is no such thing as teachers (1 Cor. 12:28), for among the various gifts they also have been given for edification. The point is that we are not dependent on *man*, as merely man, for divine teaching. The Spirit has given the Word of God in the divine way and He is the interpreter of it (1 Cor. 2:11-16).

On the subject before us, both the Arminian and the Calvinistic systems err -- and do so with regard to the other connected truths mentioned above. The truth of these matters was set forth in correctness, through J. N. Darby, in connection with the restoration and recovery of truth in the 1800s. Here, by way of introduction to this series, is an extract from Him:

As to the general idea of its efficacy, the high priest drew near personally, and filled the most holy place with incense; then he took some blood, which he put on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Sins were atoned for according to the requirement of the majesty of the throne of God Himself, so that the full satisfaction made to His majesty rendered the throne of *justice* favorable, grace had free course, and the worshiper found the blood there before him when he drew near, and even as a testimony before the throne. Then the high priest cleansed the tabernacle, the altar, and all that was found there. Thus, in virtue of the sprinkling of His blood, Christ will reconcile all things, having made peace through the blood of His cross. There could be no guiltiness in the tabernacle, but God would cleanse away the defilements, that they might not appear before Him. In the third place, the high priest confessed the sins of the people over the scapegoat, which, sent off unto a land not inhabited, bore all the sins away from God never to be found again. It is here that the idea of substitution is presented most clearly.

There are three things: the blood on the mercy-seat, the reconciliation of all things, and the sins confessed and borne by another. This order is found in Col. 1 -- peace made, reconciliation of all things by Christ, and of believers it is said -- "You hath he now reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death." It is evident that, though the scapegoat was sent away alive, it was identified as to the efficacy of the work with the death of the other. The idea of the eternal sending away of sins out of remembrance is only added to the thought of death. The glory of God was established and His rights vindicated, on one side, in the putting of the blood on the mercy-seat; and, on the other, there was the substitution of the scapegoat, of the Lord Jesus, in His precious grace, for the guilty persons whose cause He had undertaken; and, the sins of these having been borne, their deliverance was full, entire and final. The first goat was

Jehovah's lot -- it was a question of His character and His majesty. The other was the lot of the people, which definitely represented the people in their sins.

These two aspects of the death of Jesus must be carefully distinguished in the atoning sacrifice He has accomplished. He has glorified God, and God acts according to the value of that blood towards all. He has borne the sins of His people; and the salvation of His people is complete. And, in a certain sense, the first part is the most important. Sin having come in, the justice of God might, it is true, have got rid of the sinner; but where would then have been His love and His counsels of grace, pardon, and even the maintenance of His glory according to His true nature as love, while righteous and holy too? I am not speaking here of the persons who were to be saved, but of the glory of God Himself. But the perfect death of Jesus -- His blood put on the throne of God -- has established and brought into evidence all that God is -- all His glory, as no creation could have done it: His truth, for if He had passed sentence of death, it is made good in the highest way in Jesus; His majesty, for His Son submits to all for His glory; His justice against sin; His infinite love. God found means therein to accomplish His counsels of grace, in maintaining all the majesty of His justice and of His divine dignity; for what could have glorified them like the death of Jesus? ¹⁹

Hopefully what we have considered will help in understanding Chapter 2 of this series, which is an old article on the atonement. Chapter 3, which will require three installments in *Thy Precepts*, is an article by W. Kelly on the day of atonement (Lev. 16). It is hoped that it will greatly aid our understanding, since the matter of the two goats so graphically present the difference between propitiation and substitution. While these two goats form the one sin-offering, the one work of Christ, they show two aspects of the work of Christ on the cross: propitiation and substitution. And while it will be seen that Israel is particularly in view in Lev 16, these two aspects of the work of Christ brought out apply to the saints now. The bullock, however, in connection with the priestly household, has the church particularly in view, in a *typical* sense. Very importantly, besides the sprinkling of the blood on and before the mercy-seat, we have the cloud of the incense meeting the Shekinah upon the mercy-seat; and this mind-prostrating subject of *glory* will be more fully dwelt on when we consider the mercy-seat later in this series. Many quotations spread throughout this series refer to the bullock and the two goats of the day of atonement. It is well to have some understanding of Lev. 16 in order to better appreciate what is said in those quotations.

The remainder of this series will speak of various aspects of the subjects of propitiation, substitution, ransom, purchase, the righteousness of God, etc.

Ed.

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