

---

## BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

J. G. VOS, Editor and Manager

Copyright © 2016 The Board of Education and Publication  
of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America  
(Crown & Covenant Publications)  
7408 Penn Avenue • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15208

All rights are reserved by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America and its Board of Education & Publication (Crown & Covenant Publications). Except for personal use of one digital copy by the user, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher.

This project is made possible by the History Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America ([rparchives.org](http://rparchives.org)).

---





# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

JANUARY-MARCH, 1963

NUMBER 1

<b>Loyalty to Truth in the Face of Pressures .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>George Gillespie on Church Censures .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The Hebrew Sanctuary, A Study in Typology .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>A Believer's Life of Christ .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Instrumental Music in Public Worship .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>The Transmission of the Scriptures .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Studies in Old Testament History .....</b>	<b>24</b>

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

Subscription \$1.50 per year postpaid anywhere

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

3408 7th Avenue

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Editorial Committee: Ross Latimer, Joseph M. Caskey, G. Mackay Robb

Published by

The Board of Publication of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Agent for Britain and Ireland: The Rev. Adam Loughridge, B.A.,  
Glenmanus Manse, Portrush, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Agent for Australia and New Zealand: The Rev. Alexander Barkley, B.A.,  
20 Fenwick St., Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Publication Office, Linn, Kansas, U.S.A.

Published Quarterly, Second Class Postage Paid at Linn, Kansas

## *Our Martyrs' Answer*

By Owen F. Thompson

The stones of Scotland mark our rest;  
Not laid in rows nor tended well,  
But scattered over hill and dell.  
Like wind-blown flowers we fell. We fell  
Beneath His banner, gave our best.  
We stood the test!

Yes, we have died. Among the dead  
We lie. O Christ, we died for Thee!  
We died for men, to make them free!  
Oh, may our dying fruitful be  
To rear a race who'll hold instead  
Christ's kingly banner o'er our head.

All dead are we? Nay, spirits live;  
And of our spirit to you we give.  
Be true, ye coming race, be true!  
Ye soldiers of the Crown, be true! . . .

O Covenant dust, in Scotland's hills,  
We hear thy call. God grant our wills  
May falter not, nor pass the call.  
O Lord, our Christ, we offer ALL!  
And may our fathers' vow of old  
Be now OUR Covenant — let it hold!

Ye cloud of witnesses, be near!  
We need your presence with us here.  
And Christ, our King, for whom ye died,  
Leave not Thy place at our right side.  
And in thy strength we'll carry on,  
Till all the kings of earth are won;  
And kingdoms of the world shall be  
One mighty kingdom unto Thee.  
Then from all lands a wondrous throng  
Shall give eternal praise in song.

---

Lord, grant us eyes to see, and ears to hear  
And souls to love, and minds to understand,  
And confidence of hope, and filial fear. . . .  
Lord, grant us what Thou wilt, and what Thou wilt  
Deny, and fold us in Thy peaceful fold;  
Not as the world gives, give to us Thine own;  
Inbuild us where Jerusalem is built  
With walls of jasper, and with streets of gold,  
And Thou, Thyself, Lord, Christ, the corner-stone.

— Christina G. Rossetti

Safe where I cannot die yet  
Safe where I hope to lie too,  
Safe from the fume and the fret;  
You, and you,  
Whom I never forget.

Safe from the frost and the snow  
Safe from the storm and the sun,  
Safe where the seeds wait to grow  
One by one,  
And to come back in blow.\*

\*blow: bloom

— C. G. Rossetti

---

## *Till the Perfect Day*

We still believe, though oft seems baffled  
Faith's noble, age-long fight;  
For right we stand, though gloom the scaffold  
With shadows to affright;  
For truth we strive, though still be ruffled  
His seamless robe of light.  
Faith's goodly fight will we maintain,  
Assured that righteousness shall reign.

His truth is mighty, though its power  
To man's rash heart seem slow;  
His grace shall fruit, though oft its flower  
Seems frayed while tempests blow;  
And hope, though threatening clouds may lower,  
Their frowns spans with a bow.  
Undaunted, still we watch and pray  
Till Christ bring in the perfect day.

(Author unknown)

# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

JANUARY-MARCH, 1963

NUMBER 1

## *Loyalty to Truth in the Face of Pressures*

By J. G. Vos

**"And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" — 1 Kings 22:14.**

Following the division of the kingdom of Israel into kingdoms under Rehoboam and Jeroboam there was a period of about sixty years of bad relations between the two kingdoms. There was long war between the house of Rehoboam and the house of Jeroboam.

About 874 B.C. Ahab, son of the powerful Omri, became king of the Northern Kingdom. Some of the bitterness caused by the secession of the northern tribes had been softened by the passing of time. Hardly anyone who was living could remember the crisis of the Rehoboam-Jeroboam split. Ahab felt that it was time to forget ancient feuds and seek a friendly alliance between the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah.

It should be realized that such an alliance was bound to be displeasing to God. At this time the Kingdom of Judah under its good king Jehoshaphat was in the main faithful to God, whereas the Kingdom of Israel under Ahab, which had been born in apostasy under Jeroboam, was deeply sinful and involved in grievous rebellion against the Lord. As an index to Ahab's character we may recall his marriage to the notorious Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal king of Sidon. Years later a marriage was arranged between Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and Jehoram, the crown prince of the Kingdom of Judah. This seems to have been Ahab's initial act in his concerted effort to break the ice and bring about friendly relations between the two kingdoms.

In war with Syria Ahab had been victorious, though he had incurred God's displeasure by allowing Benhadad, whom God wanted destroyed, to escape alive. A prophet of God rebuked Ahab for this disobedience, which should have convinced him that God's blessing could not be expected on any future campaign of his against Syria.

Following the war, however, there was a lull and the Kingdom of Israel was at peace. At the same time the Kingdom of Judah was at peace and enjoyed prosperity. Ahab took advantage of these circumstances to invite Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, to come to the Northern Kingdom for a royal visit. There can be little doubt that

the initiative in this was taken by Ahab — it was Ahab who did the inviting and the persuading, and Jehoshaphat who accepted the invitation and yielded to the persuasions.

Thus the good Jehoshaphat got himself into a difficult and embarrassing position. He was royally entertained by Ahab and thus, perhaps, came to feel himself obligated to Ahab. We should remember that Ahab's kingdom was much the larger in good land, number of people and political, economic and military potential. In material strength and resources, Ahab was far in the lead. Jehoshaphat, on the other hand, had the advantage of loyalty and devotion to God. But now he was stepping on thin ice in becoming the honored guest of this clever and powerful Ahab.

At the height of this lavish entertainment of Jehoshaphat, Ahab proposed a campaign to recover Ramoth-Gilead from the Syrians. Benhadad king of Syria had defaulted on his promise to restore this city to Israel. Ahab first proposed the matter to his own ministers of state, then tactfully asked Jehoshaphat whether he would join in the proposed expedition. Jehoshaphat, of course, felt that he was hardly in a position to refuse, so he readily replied, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." But then his conscience began to feel uncomfortable, so he suggested to Ahab that it would be a good idea to "inquire at the word of the Lord" about the matter — this proposal coming, be it noted, *after* Jehoshaphat had already committed himself to join in the expedition.

Ahab called in four hundred prophets, with their leader, a man named Zedekiah. With one accord, they declared that God was in favor of the expedition: "Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." Zedekiah went further and dramatized his message — placing horns of iron on his head, he prophesied, "Thus saith the Lord, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them."

It seemed to be unanimous, but Jehoshaphat was not impressed with Ahab's prophets. He wanted a real prophet of the Lord to be consulted. Ahab admitted that there was indeed one such in Samaria, but added that he hated him, for this prophet never had anything good to say about Ahab. Still, at Jehoshaphat's insistence,

Micaiah the son of Imlah was sent for and brought — apparently from prison — by an officer.

Enroute across the city, this officer undertook to coach Micaiah on what to say when he would come before Ahab and Jehoshaphat. After all, visiting royalty was present; it would be a shame to have Ahab and his plans denounced publicly in the presence of a visiting king. Micaiah, do you always have to be against everything that other people are in favor of? Could you not be agreeable and positive in your attitude just for once? Be like the other prophets, and speak that which is good!

But Micaiah replied, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."

At first Micaiah assumed that Ahab was not really interested in knowing the Word of the Lord, so he sarcastically told Ahab to go up and prosper, for God would deliver Ramoth-Gilead into his hands. But when Ahab solemnly assured him that this time truth was really wanted, Micaiah told the truth — he had seen a vision, and in it all Israel were scattered on the hills as sheep without a shepherd, and the voice of the Lord said, "These have no master, let them return every man to his house in peace." That is, if Ahab went to battle at Ramoth-Gilead he would pay for it with his life — he would be killed in the battle.

Ahab leaned over to Jehoshaphat and said in effect, "I told you so!" At this point, surely, Jehoshaphat should have pocketed his pride and backed out of the proposed expedition. But, of course, he did nothing of the kind. He was already committed to disobey the will of God.

Micaiah explained further that a lying spirit had actuated Ahab's four hundred prophets, so that they were uttering lies. Zedekiah walked up to Micaiah and slapped him in the face, asking, "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?" To this Micaiah replied, You will find out on the day when you go into an inner chamber to hide. That is, when Ahab has been killed at Ramoth-Gilead, and Zedekiah's prophecy has been proved untrue, he will not dare to face the public and the returning soldiers — he will sneak away to hide from the searchlight of publicity.

At Ahab's command, Micaiah was ordered taken back to prison, to be given the poorest kind of food, until Ahab would return victorious from Ramoth-Gilead. But Micaiah had the last word, as he was being led away to prison: Ahab, if you ever return in peace from this campaign, the Lord has not spoken by me.

The rest of the story is no doubt familiar. Ahab, in spite of an attempt to defeat the prophecy by disguising himself, was killed in the battle, and Jehoshaphat had a narrow escape.

Now let us consider Micaiah as an example of loyalty to truth in the face of pressures.

### I. The Pressure of Secular Humanism

To Ahab, religion was something to be used for his own human purposes. This, of course, is just the opposite of real religion, which means that man's chief end is to glorify and enjoy God — to live a God-centered life.

That real religion meant little or nothing to Ahab is shown by his life as a whole — his marrying the unspeakable Jezebel, his trying to arrest and persecute the prophet Elijah, his disobedience in letting Benhadad go free, and many other things.

But Ahab thought that religion could be useful. He was not interested in truth, and he certainly had no idea of devoting his life to serving the Lord. Ahab was a hard-headed man of the world. But religion is a fact of human life, so Ahab thought he could use it in some way to promote his own interests. Thus he maintained four hundred prophets who gave the official sanction of religion to his campaign to recover Ramoth-Gilead from the Syrians.

When people try to use religion for human ends, it is no longer religion, it is only a counterfeit, a travesty of religion. Yet this very thing is becoming increasingly characteristic of the modern world. The Communist and Fascist countries, of course, have openly insisted that religion make its one great aim the furtherance of the power and prestige of the State. But this same evil is found in our Western democratic society. Democracy or the pattern set by the majority of the people is becoming the great American idol. And there can be no tyranny worse than that of an unchecked majority which sets itself in the place of God.

Ahab demanded that God's kingdom become subservient to Ahab's kingdom. So in America we are increasingly hearing voices which seem confidently to assume that a secular democratic society is our great ideal, and that religion must be made subservient to this ideal. Such people speak as if the first article of their creed were "Man's chief end it to promote the American way of life."

So we hear people say that the church exists for the purpose of serving the community. This implies, of course, that the community shall decide what the church is to stand for, what it is to believe, to say and to do. Religion is thus denied **centrality** and **determinative character** as a philosophy of life. It is not to set the pattern for society, but it is to prop up and support what the people decide is for the best.

Religion is thus patronized as a support for various human values. The Boy Scouts are to be promoted, clergymen are to "pronounce the invocation" at all kinds of social and civic func-

tions, people are to be received into the church's fellowship regardless of their beliefs and their conduct, and everyone is to get a Christian burial when he dies, whether he was a Christian during his life or not.

Religion is not allowed to set the pattern of our culture; it must plug and promote the pattern adopted by a secular democratic society. Religion is not to be allowed to determine the **aims** and **goals** of society; rather, it is to follow in the rear and do the chores.

Micaiah, of course, knew that Ahab was like this. It is reflected in his sarcastic opening statement that Ahab should go to Ramoth-Gilead, because God would deliver the city into Ahab's hands. The prophet knew, certainly, that Ahab had no real devotion and obedience to God, and he knew also that Ahab had the power to persecute him and even to kill him. Thus Micaiah was under the **pressure** of Ahab's secular humanism, but by the grace of God he successfully resisted the pressure.

Ministers of the Gospel often find themselves faced with this pressure of a secular humanism in the community around them. It is not so much an explicit demand as an assumption, a tacit major premise that the church is a function of the community and exists to do the will of the community. And the saddest part is that some members of the churches have absorbed this secular humanism and seem to think it a self-evident truth that the church is a community organization. Here and there a council of churches — the ecumenical movement at the local level — influences governmental authorities to prevent a new church from erecting a building, on the ground that **the community does not need another church**. Thus it is assumed that the needs and desires of the community are the decisive factor in shaping the church's policies and actions.

A bishop of the Methodist Church has declared in a published book that the cry of men today is for a **democratic God**. It is an evil cry, but the bishop is correct in saying that such is the cry of men today. And that cry for "a democratic God" is the measure of the ascendancy of secular humanism in our democratic culture.

This pressure of secular humanism if allowed to continue unchecked will eventually crowd out all that is really **Christian** from the church's message. The Church will then become a sub-Christian cultural force, with the offence of the cross eliminated. Its message will not be "Jesus Christ and Him crucified", but merely an advocacy of tolerance, community-mindedness and what are vaguely referred to as "spiritual values" together with "the American way of life."

This has already happened to a considerable extent in large sections of the Visible Church. Such are not really "the church of God which he purchased with his own blood," but only the church of man who believes in the gospel of

faith in his fellow-man — "Be community-minded and thou shalt be saved."

## II. The Pressure of Naive Compromisers

Jehoshaphat was a good man, but at the same time he was a naive compromiser. The term "naive" implies lack of intelligent discernment of the issues; the term "compromiser" implies lack of willingness to witness in the face of opposition for unpopular truth or difficult duty.

Jehoshaphat sacrificed his principles for the sake of good relations with Ahab. He paid a heavy price, to be sure; indeed, it almost cost him his life in that affray at Ramoth-Gilead.

But note what other evils came from Jehoshaphat's compromises. His son Jehoram was married to Ahab's daughter Athaliah. Athaliah, one of the wickedest women in all history, introduced Baalism to Jerusalem and tried to kill off all the heirs to the throne of David — actually, her own grandchildren. She almost succeeded in snuffing out the seed of David, the line from which Jesus Christ must be born. And all this came because this good man, Jehoshaphat, was too naive and weak to say "No" to the scheming Ahab.

There are members of church congregations today who do not want to pay the price of being different. They are like Jehoshaphat, who could not say "No" to Ahab. They are unwilling to witness for the truth by staying out of a council of churches which is dominated by modern unbelief. They want to join up with the large liberal and modernist-controlled denominations in union services on the World Day of Prayer for Missions. As the people of Israel said to Samuel, "Make us a king, that we may be like all the nations," so these people want friendship and unity where there is no proper basis for friendship and unity.

What does it matter to such people that in some of these large denominations the word "Missions" does not mean preaching to the heathen about the blood of Christ as the only way of salvation from the wrath of God, but merely sharing some "values" of Christianity with the adherents of the heathen religions? The church members we are speaking about, in their naive ignorance of the real state of affairs today, are not even aware of the existence of this issue.

Some people are impatient if their minister sounds a warning note against a theologically unsound book, magazine or organization. Any serious effort to draw a clear line between truth and error they will promptly brush off as "hair-splitting." A sermon that seeks to instruct them in the Biblical system of truth and to fortify them against the prevalent errors of the day, they will immediately pronounce "too deep", and thereupon will shut their minds tight against it.

Jehoshaphat shut his mind tight against the

prophecy of Micaiah. He went to Ramoth-Gilead in spite of the Word of God spoken by the prophet. Though his conscience told him that Micaiah was speaking the truth and Ahab's prophets were telling lies, still he disobeyed the Word of God and did what Ahab's popular prophets recommended. For Jehoshaphat was a naive compromiser.

There are also naive compromisers on moral issues. Jehoshaphat must have known that the marriage between his son and Ahab's daughter was sinful — a grievous covenant-breaking offence. Marriages were arranged by the parents in those days, of course.

This marriage was based on political expediency and the sacrifice of moral principles. Intended to cement peace with a kingdom that was at war with God, it could not be other than deeply sinful. So today are those who commit unrighteousness for the sake of expediency, for some private purpose or for some financial or other gain.

It is safe enough for a minister to berate the low morals of motion picture actresses, the communist totalitarianism of Soviet Russia and the inhuman cruelty of Red China, but to deal faithfully with the moral evils that the members of the church are really involved in will result in pressure to be silent. Christian ethics applied faithfully and **relevantly** to real life will result in the minister being accused of being "personal". This is likely to happen in a small church, though it can happen in any church. The naive compromisers are like the man described by Dr. Samuel Shoemaker in one of his books, who took a shower bath with a raincoat on — they want the benefits of religion, but they don't want it to touch their skin.

The naive compromisers have conventions, not convictions; they deal in adjustments, not in principles; they are concerned with what is easy and comfortable, not with what is true and right.

Someone has said that it is a minister's business to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. Neither of these is an easy task, but it is afflicting the comfortable that arouses opposition and pressure to desist. The comfortable have made their peace with the status quo — the **sinful** status quo — and the minister who challenges this will be subjected to pressure; he will be called a disturber of the peace, a troubler of Israel.

### III. The Pressure of Popularized Apostate Religion

Ahab's four hundred prophets were not prophets of Baal, but false prophets who claimed to speak for Jehovah. Actually, they were moved by a lying spirit and they uttered lies in the name of the Lord.

The most subtle religious danger of Ahab's day was not the worship of Baal and Asherah, nor

the golden calves set up by Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel, but the men who claimed to speak for the true God, yet had become so blinded that they could not discern truth from error.

So today the real evil and the great menace on the religious horizon is not atheism and communism, bad as these are, but the blind leaders of the blind — the men who speak for the Lord but He has not sent them, who claim to speak truth but really speak lies in the name of the Lord.

The massive, organized religion of our day is largely dominated by falsehood rather than truth. Some of its leaders actually deny that there is such a thing as absolute truth; they say that truth depends on the individual and changes with the individual and his needs or with society and its needs. Therefore they replace the concept of truth with that of "value" in the sphere of religion.

A Chinese inquirer asked a missionary: "That story in the Bible about Jesus rising from the dead — is that really true, or is it just a story?" To which the missionary replied: "If you believe it is true, it is true for you; if I believe it is true, it is true for me; but the really important question is, Are you following the ethical ideals of Jesus?"

The Bible says that "**No lie is of the truth**" (1 John 2:21); that is, there is an **absolute** difference between truth and error. But today we are being told, in effect, that many lies are of the truth — that is, that there is no clear-cut, absolute distinction between truth and error. It does not matter what you believe, according to the popular idea today, so long as you are sincere.

The leaders of many of the large Protestant denominations are blind to the theological apostasy of our day . . . the apostasy from the authority of the Bible and from the Gospel of salvation by the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Some of these leaders admit the existence of truth, but deny its importance. Theirs is a "Yes, but . . ." theology. "The Bible is the Word of God, but . . .;" "Christ died on the cross to save sinners, but . . .".

We are being told in high places today that the Bible is not infallible, that sin is not serious enough to condemn the sinner to hell, that atonement was not a substitution of the innocent Christ for the guilty sinner, and that faith does not depend on a proper object of faith for its saving efficacy.

The popular notion of today has been called "faith in faith." It regards faith as psychologically beneficial. It is the act of believing that is said to bring the benefit, not the Christ who is **believed in**.

There is only one way of salvation, and that

is to confess oneself a guilty, hell-deserving lost sinner and to cast oneself completely on the mercy of God who gave His Son to save sinners by bearing their punishment on the cross. This is the only way. Paul called it "the offence of the cross." But this message is precisely the missing note in the apostate Protestantism of our day with its vague concepts of faith in faith, of high ideals and of spiritual values. The sober fact is that many and large denominations are in the grip of this leadership which has turned its back on the cardinal truths of Biblical Christianity. This apostasy is not yet complete and universal but it is certainly real. It is around us and it puts a heavy pressure on ministers and denominations which have solid convictions of truth and are loyal to them.

A part of this religious apostasy is the popular rising tide of church unionism. This is union at the sacrifice of truth. The Methodists, Presbyterians and others can talk about uniting because, by and large, their members no longer know or care what the real theology of their denomination is. Since few people know the difference between denominations, it is easy to say that there are no important differences, and all should get together in one and the same mammoth organization. This, of course, is a clamor for union, but it is not based on nor will it lead to real unity.

The minister who dares to raise his voice in protest against the increasing church unionism of our day will be subjected to pressures. Some people will call him bigoted and narrow-minded. He will be given no credit for convictions and conscience; instead, the advocates of church union will call him "provincial", "parochially-minded", and the like.

And even in the smaller and purer denominations, the minister who dares to speak forth the real truth about the present-day ecclesiastical scene will find some in his own church who may seek to silence his testimony. For, it may be, some of their own families or relatives are members of these union-minded denominations, and to mention the situation candidly is to touch a sensitive spot.

It was around 100 years ago that Horatius Bonar wrote his poem "The Coming Creed." He predicted accurately the trend of the coming century. This poem, though old, describes well the increasingly dominant religious scene in the contemporary world.

#### The Coming Creed

The creeds have gone, so speaks the age,  
The era of the sects is past.  
Forward! In spite of saint or sage,  
True freedom has begun at last.

The Christ of God is now no more;  
The Christ of man now sits supreme;  
The Cross is part of mystic lore,  
The resurrection morn a dream.

The age's progress fears no God,  
No righteous law, no Judge's throne;  
Man bounds along his new-found road,  
And calls the universe his own.

Not faith in God, but faith in man  
Is pilot now, and sail, and oar;  
The creeds are shrivelled, cold and wan;  
The Christ that has been is no more.

Old truth, which once struck deep in hearts,  
Fights hard for life, but fights in vain;  
Old error into vigor starts  
And fable comes to life again.

Old mischief now becomes earth's creed;  
The falsehood lives, the truth has died;  
Man leans upon a broken reed,  
And falls in helplessness of pride.

He spurns the hands that would have led,  
The lips that would have spoken love;  
The Book that would his soul have fed,  
And taught the wisdom from above.

The ever-standing Cross, to him,  
Is but a Hebrew relic vain;  
The wondrous birth at Bethlehem  
A fiction of the wandering brain.

He wants no Saviour and no light;  
No teacher but himself he needs;  
He knows not of a human night,  
Save from the darkness of the creeds.

Eternal Light, hide not Thy face;  
Eternal Truth, direct our way;  
Eternal Love, shine forth in grace;  
Reveal our darkness and Thy day.

#### IV. Micaiah, Loyal to Truth in the Face of Pressures

Micaiah endured unpopularity and witnessed for truth. He resisted the pressure of Ahab's secular humanism. He resisted the pressure of Jehoshaphat's easy compromising. He resisted the pressure of Zedekiah and the four hundred false prophets to tone down unpleasant and embarrassing truth. He suffered persecution — not only reproach, but actual physical persecution, in prison on starvation rations. All this he could have avoided, simply by yielding to the pressure and trimming his message to suit the preferences and prejudices of his audience. Just a few words spoken and many left unspoken would easily have accomplished it.

Micaiah could have said, "If I am to be a prophet of the Lord, I must maintain contact with the people. To do this I must stay out of jail. Therefore, on this one occasion, I must compromise just a little, I must do evil that good may

come, by telling Ahab what he wants to hear. Thereby I can remain a free man, be an active prophet, and accomplish much good winning people to the Lord. Surely nothing is more important than winning souls!"

But Micaiah said nothing of the kind. Instead, he said, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."

Martin Luther once said, "If I witness for every portion of divine truth except that one little portion that the world and the devil are attacking at the moment, I am not confessing Christ, however loudly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be faithful on all the battlefield besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that one point."

Church member, are you supporting and encouraging your minister in faithful testimony to truth? Or are you one of those who would like to tone down and silence his testimony in the interests of peace and popularity?

Micaiah was ultimately vindicated. His prophecy came true. So the true servant of Christ today, who is loyal to truth in spite of the heavy pressures of our day, will be vindicated in the end. Let us never forget the words of the apostle Paul to Timothy: "Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. . . but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. 1:8). And let us remember the word of the Lord Jesus to the angel (or minister) of the church of Ephesus: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

---

## *George Gillespie on Church Censures*

By R. D. Eagleson, M.A., Dip. Ed.

(Continued from last issue)

**Note:** This article by a scholar in Australia expounds the classic Presbyterian view of Church Discipline as held by the 17th century Scottish divine George Gillespie. — Editor.

The final purpose of church discipline has many levels: "and for the preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders." In establishing the fact of censures, we drew attention to those texts in Revelation 2 in which the wrath of God was announced against the church for not exercising its disciplinary authority. If we would please God and retain His commendation, then we must obey His commandments and observe His appointments. He has promised us grace for every task. We are then without excuse and must expect His wrath if we wilfully disobey or shrink back.

The reasons for the wrath of God falling on the church is the profanation of the covenant and its seals. It is pertinent to notice that the Westminster Assembly placed the responsibility for the profanation on the church, "if they (the church) **should suffer** his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders." In other words, the Assembly recognized that the church had both a right and a duty to restrain men from unworthily appropriating the covenant and the sacraments to themselves.

Since it is a fearful thing to come under the wrath of God and since some are either negligent or hesitant about discipline, we might well examine the reason which God gives for His anger.

The Erastians frequently argued that it was the individual's responsibility if he profaned God's covenant and ordinance. The church should warn all men of the dangers of partaking unworthily, but if they persisted then they alone incurred guilt and deserved punishment. Once the church had issued its warning, it was absolved from further responsibility. There are some today who, while not Erastians, would adopt a similar position with regard to church discipline and the protection of the sacraments. Not so the Scriptures nor the Westminster Assembly. As far as it lies in its power to discern the hearts of men, the church is to refuse membership and the sacraments to those whom it regards as unfitted.

The reasons for such responsibility being placed on the church are consistent and natural. The fact that it is a government makes the employment of discipline at least hypothetical, even if never exercised. The fact that it is specifically commanded to discipline strikes at the very roots of its profession to own Christ as King and immediately tests its honesty of heart. The sacraments are a seal of our covenant bond with God, of our fellowship with Christ and of our membership in the Church. They declare — and this applies perhaps more visibly in the Lord's Supper than in Baptism — that we are one, that perfect unity of heart and intention exists between us. How then can we sit down at a table to give public testimony to this fact with a man who obviously by word or deed denies what we hold most dear? Even the unregenerate man at a function with no spiritual connotations shudders to do this, lest he be considered a companion and colleague of the evil-doer. How much more im-

portant for us to be careful when the honour and name of our Redeemer and God is at stake. Moreover, we have Scripture to accuse us if we do so, or to assure that we are not acting wrongly or harshly if we refuse. If saying "God speed" to a false teacher makes us partakers in his evil (2 John 10) how much more so will the admitting of scandalous sinners to the Lord's Table make all who consent to this admission to be partakers of their evil deeds. There can be no honesty in our profession of faith, no love of the truth if we are going to bow so weakly before the carnality of man. What good is there in our calling upon men to repent and believe in their hearts, if we are going to accept a mere lip confession along with unaltered lusts?

We do act foolishly twice over if we allow ourselves to be led astray on this matter. Not only is our admission of scandalous sinners to the sacrament tantamount to an acknowledgement of our condoning and approving their evil deeds, but it is also a robbery against ourselves. In 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 we read:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

These verses put the argument beyond doubt. God will receive us into fellowship only as we shun fellowship with evildoers. If we do not separate ourselves, then God will have no part in our ceremonies and we rob ourselves. The church of God exists only where there are no unclean admitted, as we read in Isaiah 52:1, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." From the rest of the chapter and its parallels with portions in the New Testament, it is clear that this verse is a prophecy concerning the condition of the Church in the New Testament; and so we do a great disservice to ourselves if we allow scandalous sinners into the Church or suffer them to partake of and profane the sacraments, for by so doing we not only do not bring them into contact with the influences of God's ordinances but exclude ourselves also. (It is idle to protest that the Church cannot discern every man's heart. As far as the visible Church is concerned it can only mean separation from scandalous sinners.)

This judgement that a notorious scandalous sinner pollutes the covenant seals by partaking them has the authority of God. It is a necessary consequence of His rebuke in Haggai 2:11-14, that unholy persons are not sanctified by their approaching to or joining in holy ordinances. They that are filthy will be filthy still. If God does not give them His Spirit to sanctify them, the ordinances cannot do it. Their presence at His sacraments then is unacceptable to God ("and that which they offer there is unclean" — Haggai 2:14). Knowing therefore that this is God's judgment on the situation, the Church also becomes guilty and unacceptable if it allows a man to pollute the sacraments contrary to the revealed will of God.

Moreover, speaking of the Lord's Supper, a seal of the covenant, Gillespie writes: "The ordinance which is eucharistical and consolatory supposes that such as partake of it have part and portion in that thing for which thanks are to be given, and are such as are fit to be comforted. Shall a man be called to give thanks for redemption, reconciliation and remission of sins and to take comfort in Jesus Christ even while he is such a one of whom God has said: "There is no peace for the wicked? (Ps. 33:1)? . . . . Is it not then a healing slightly of the malady of impenitent sinners, yea a betraying of their souls, to bring them to joy and comfort and thanksgiving and songs of praise, to eat of the marrow and fatness, and to drink of the rivers of pleasure which are in the house of God, when we ought rather to call them to weeping and to mourning, to make their peace with God and to flee from the wrath to come?" (p. 513). Therefore, if the Church admits a notorious sinner to the sacraments, it doubly deserves God's wrath, for it has allowed to be polluted what it should jealously protect, and it has misled a soul proclaiming peace to it when it should be declaring the truth of God and warning the sinner of his dangerous plight. We do harm not good when we promiscuously throw open the membership of the Church, and above all treat the holy things of God as though they were of little worth. The choice then is ours: either we obey God's instruction and censure where necessary or we incur His due wrath.

These then are the purposes or reasons for church censures. When we look at them in detail we understand how weighty they are and how replete with spiritual importance. Though we may be grieved to undertake discipline and though it is no pleasant task, nevertheless these purposes should be inducement enough. If we keep in mind the dominating spirit of love and the wonderful end results — the gaining of a brother, the protection of others, the preservation of Christ's honour — then we should have encouragement enough to hold steadfast to our course.

(To be continued)

# *The Hebrew Sanctuary, A Study in Typology*

By the Rev. Wallace B. Nicholson, M.A., B.D., M.Th.

## **XI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SACRIFICES**

### **I. Their Origin.**

The origin of sacrifices has been discussed by various writers. The question in its simplest form is whether sacrifice is of divine institution or human invention. Several objectives have been offered to rebut the former view; such as, that sacrifice was a practice and therefore instinctive to man; that if a positive command had been given sacrifice would lose its moral value; and that we are bound to ignore the existence of a divine decree which is not expressly announced. To these objections it may be briefly replied, first, that the universal practice of sacrifice does not necessarily imply that originally it was not commanded; and secondly, that the obligation to love God does not lose its moral value because it is commanded; and finally, to ignore the existence of a divine decree which is not expressly announced would involve us in great difficulties when dealing with the sacred text, and, to go back to the beginning, it seems reasonably certain that the institution of marriage and the Sabbath established the foundations of social and religious life though these interpretations can only be inferred.

The first incident which seems to relate to this subject is found in the third chapter of Genesis where it is stated that God clothed our first parents with coats of skins. Since animal food was not permitted before the flood, we can only assume that these slain animals were sacrificed to God. Whether Christ appeared in a Christophany as the first priest or whether Adam was instructed at that time to offer sacrifice, at least it seems clear, since this occurred shortly after the introduction of sin and the announcement of a Saviour, that sacrifices were commanded shortly after the apostacy of man. And further, one might expect that in his exigency Adam might think of this; but we discover in the same context that instead of inventing such a method to appease God, our first parents adopted the expedient of sewing fig leaves together, to make themselves aprons, and afterwards hiding themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden (Gen. 3:7, 8).

In the fourth chapter of Genesis we read that an innocent animal was offered to God as a sacrifice by Abel, and accepted, while another offering brought by Cain was rejected. A reasonable assumption therefore is that the institution of a specific command made the difference. Surely it is not too much to concede that they both were informed as to the character of the offering required, and that the action of Abel was done in obedience to God's command, while the offering of Cain was an act of will-worship. Besides

we are told in the New Testament that Abel's sacrifice proceeded from faith, and surely faith presupposes a revelation of God's will, which Abel acquiesced in.

Finally, all true believers will be disposed to acknowledge that the sacrifices of the Old Testament formed part of a plan designed by God to have an intimate bearing upon the great atoning Sacrifice of the Saviour, and that the sacrifices derived all their efficacy from their relation to the Atonement of Christ. Therefore it seems a great error to suppose that God adopted the suggestions of sinful man by formulating an elaborate ritual which pointed to the infinite Sacrifice of Christ, as man-made remedy purposed and fitted to meet the needs of fallen human nature.

### **2. The Ritual of the Sacrifices.**

An offering in a religious sense is what one offers as a gift by way of reverence and devotion to God. The Jewish sacrifice, and in general all religious sacrifices are properly oblations, but strictly speaking, offerings were bloodless gifts while proper sacrifices involved the death of an animal and the shedding of its blood. For our present purposes we may enumerate the following sacrifices as having a relation to the Hebrew Sanctuary, namely, Burnt Offerings, Sin Offerings, and Trespass Offerings; the Bloodless Offerings relating to the Tabernacle proper, as, Incense Offerings, Light Offerings and Food Offerings. There were also Votive Offerings, and Meat and Drink Offerings.

In the sacrifices proper the only animals offered were oxen, sheep, and goats, and turtle doves or pigeons. Both sexes were allowed but in the case of the higher sacrifices only the male was offered as being of the superior sex. The animals must be without blemish except in the case of inferior offerings, such as free will offerings (Lev. 22:23). Every animal was esteemed unclean under the age of eight days and it is presumed that they must be of youthful vigour and not older than three years. There is no regulation as to the age and sex of turtle doves and pigeons. Why the sacrifices prescribed were of the above classification has been well stated by Witsius, (*Miscellaneous Sacrifices*, Book 2, Dissertation 2, No. 14.) where he remarks in connection with the ordinance, that clean animals were to be used for food and also sacrifice, that "God wished these two to be joined together, partly that man might thereby exhibit the most clearly his gratitude to God, in offering what had been given for the support of his own life, and partly that the substitution of the sacrifice in

his stead might be rendered the more palpable, for man offering the support of his own life, appeared to offer that life itself." According to Fairbairn the main reason lies in the last sentence of this quotation: (**Typology**, Vol. 2, p. 307.)

"Since human victims were improper, none being free from guilt, and so to make the gap as small as possible between the offerer and the victim, the offerer was to select the tame domestic animals which were his own property and of his own rearing the most **human** in their natural disposition and mode of life."

In all this of course it must be understood that God had no pleasure in sacrifices "per se"; what He sought was the worshipper himself. And in this temporary arrangement — which prefigured a better Priest providing a better sacrifice, even Himself — there are abundant scriptural references which show that God had no delight in sacrifices and offerings, unless the heart and life of the offerer was in a state of harmony with God.

In the ritual itself there are several phases of the action of sacrifice, viz., the presentation of the victim, the laying on of hands, the sprinkling of the blood, and the disposal of the slain sacrifice. When the offerer, who must be sanctified or ceremonially clean so far as circumstances permitted (I Sam. 16:5), presented his sacrifice, he laid his hands on the head of the victim. In doing so he presented the animal as his substitute and the main emphasis of this action of laying on of hands was the transference of his own guilt to his representative. Other factors would enter in here according to the specific purpose of the sacrifice such as adoration, invocation or gratitude, but under all circumstances man was considered as a sinner and hence the laying on of hands was an emphatic gesture of the conveyance of his guilt to the appointed substitute.

In the case of private individuals it was originally the custom for the offerer to perform the killing; but later this was left to the priests and Levites who were more fitted for the task. Offerings presented on behalf of the congregation were slain by the priests or Levites. It is supposed that the action of slaying was so performed as to permit all the blood to flow immediately out of the body into a sacred vessel kept for that purpose.

### 3. The Significance of Blood.

The significance of blood in connection with the worship of the Old Testament is of primary importance. Blood is a symbol of life or the bearer of life; it also signifies death. Typically, blood represents the nature and effects of the sacrifice of Christ. The sole symbolical efficacy of the sacrifices arose from the presentation of the blood of slain animals on God's altar as the only means used to procure pardon and acceptance with God,

and this agrees with the declaration made in the Epistle to the Hebrews that "without shedding of blood is no remission." The fundamental passage in the Old Testament dealing with this subject reads thus in the Authorized Version (Lev. 17:11):

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement **for the soul.**"

The exact meaning of the last clause is obscure and exegetes have given various renderings of it. The sense given by Fairbairn, Delitzsch, Kurtz and others, avoids tautology and appears to give the true meaning when it is rendered:

"for the blood atones through the soul."

It is not the blood as such that expiates sin but the blood as the bearer of the soul. It is the life that atones for sin through the shedding of its blood. The life of the sinner is exposed to death through sin, but by God's merciful interposition the substituted life of the sacrifice, the blood of which is shed and brought before Him, is graciously accepted by Him, whereupon He pardons and accepts the sinner.

The sense in which the blood covers or expiates is better understood when we consider the fundamental aspects of the atonement of Christ. Through his obedience and suffering, sin was covered, or cancelled; and hence the sinner was covered or screened from the penalty of the law, its conditions having now been fulfilled, while sin itself is withdrawn from the presence of God as having no existence, being covered by the satisfaction of the substitute. The slaying of the victim and the sprinkling of the blood are two aspects of the same institution, the latter becoming prominent as the consummating act of a completed transaction, sin being cancelled by death, which involves the destruction of the substitute, the sinner is automatically released and the acceptance of the blood on God's altar is, for the sinner, a pledge of his restoration and renewed fellowship with God, which had been broken off through the entrance of sin. The Antitype fulfilled all the required conditions as the Substitute, for He "was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." Christ, by His death expiated our sins, and by His resurrection He appeared before the Father to secure the benefits purchased by His obedience. The execution of the high priestly functions on the day of Atonement sheds further light on the subject, since he must not only slay the sacrifice but also sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat in the holy of holies, thus virtually bringing in the whole congregation of Israel — who, delivered from the guilt of sin, were restored to union with God — and presenting them before the Lord as sancti-

fied worshippers and sons of God. And so our Great High Priest, "by his own blood entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us." And as it was necessary in line with the divine economy of the Mosaic dispensation that the patterns of the heavenly things be purified with blood, so, the heavenly things themselves were purified by the blood of the everlasting covenant, which thereby fulfilled the conditions, established the promises, and secured infallibly and eternally the benefits of the New Covenant.

#### 4. The Burnt Offering.

The ritual for the burnt offering is set down in the first chapter of Leviticus. This offering, as an institution, was in force in pre-Mosaic times and was evidently of a comprehensive character. The offering was to bring a bullock, a lamb or a kid, which must be of the male sex and unblemished. The offerer placed his hand on the head of the victim, which he then slew. The priest, having sprinkled the blood around the altar, the dismembered carcass was then burnt, the skin being reserved for the priest (Lev. 7:8).

In seeking to arrive at the significance of this offering in line with the various references made to it in scripture we are warranted in concluding that it embodied the general idea of sacrifice, and in a manner comprehended within itself the whole sacrificial ritual. Whether or not it can be maintained that the first sacrifices referred to in patriarchal history, and indeed in all other pre-Mosaic sacrifices, were burnt offerings (peace and votive offerings being excepted), we are on fairly safe ground when we assert that this type of sacrifice was of a comprehensive character. In the Mosaic ritual the burnt offering was presented morning and evening by the covenant people, and the altar in the fore-court was familiarly called the "Altar of Burnt Offering."

The primary element in this sacrifice was the consecration of the worshipper to the service of God. When presenting his offering he was considered as in good standing in the commonwealth of Israel and in unbroken fellowship with God. For example, if he were guilty of any particular sin, or the guilt of sin lay on his conscience then he was not permitted to offer a burnt offering, as other sacrifices, such as sin-offerings or trespass offerings, must first be rendered. Nonetheless, we are not to think that the offerer was free from sins, frailties and temptations; and so we read that the offerer was always required to lay his hand upon the head of the sacrifice, which was said "to be accepted for him to make atonement for him."

In Christ God made provision to meet with the guilt and sinfulness of His Heritage. By the sacrifice of Christ they have been delivered from the guilt of sin, and through the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts they are delivered from

the power of sin. When our first parents under the Covenant of Works were in fellowship with God, they had no need of any offerings for sin; but needless to say, the least sin destroyed their union and fellowship with God. But under the Covenant of Grace provision is made for the maintenance of believers in fellowship with God notwithstanding the sins, temptations, and moral frailties which are inseparable from their Christian life; and when by the commission of certain sins and practices fellowship with God is interrupted, provision is made in view of the prevailing virtue of the Sacrifice of Christ to restore them to fellowship through penitence and confession.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

Oehler (*Theology of the Old Testament*, Page 285.) states that this offering expressed in a general way the adoration and devotion due to Jehovah, while the presentation of the blood connected with it sets forth the idea of propitiation. He further says that the law knows nothing of a special destination of the burnt offering to atone for a special sort of sins. Edersheim (A. Edersheim, *The Temple, its Ministry and Services*, Revised Edition 1874, p. 99.) remarks that the burnt offering "symbolized the entire surrender unto God, whether of the individual or congregation, and His acceptance thereof. Hence, also, it could not be offered without the shedding of blood. When other sacrifices were brought it followed the sin but preceded the peace offering. In fact it meant general acceptance on the ground of previous special acceptance." Principal Fairbairn (*Typology*, Vol. 2, page 345.) maintains:

"The sin and trespass offerings were presented with the view simply of making atonement for sin, very commonly particular sins, and had for their object the restoring of the offerer to a state of peace and fellowship with God, which had been interrupted by the commission of iniquity. But the Burnt Offering was for those who were already standing within the bounds of the covenant, and without any such sense of guilt lying upon their conscience as exposed them to excision from the covenant. We are not, however, to suppose on this account, that there was to be no conscience of sin in the offerer when he presented this sacrifice; for he was required to lay his hand on the head of the victim (with which confession of sin was always accompanied) and it was expressly said 'to be accepted for him to make atonement for him' (Lev. 1:4, 16, 24). But the guilt for which atonement was required to be made, was not properly of special and formal acts of trans-

gression, but rather of those shortcomings and imperfections which perpetually cleave to the servant of God, and mingle even with his best services."

That this sacrifice points to Christ will be readily understood when we consider the fundamental elements involved in the complete consecration of Christ who not only gave all that He had but all that He was as a sacrifice well-pleasing to God, the virtue of which constitutes a

continual oblation and a guarantee of the safety and happiness of His people, and though His offering can neither be imitated or supplemented, yet His people in the measure in which they are animated by His Spirit offer to Him from their hearts the sacrifices of prayer and praise.

(Copyright, 1951, by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Used by permission.)

(To be continued)

---

## *A Believer's Life of Christ*

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

### RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

Contrary to the rule of all ordinary human existence the earthly life of Christ did not end with his death. In one respect his work was done; the work of his atonement was complete. In another sense his life and work had a wholly new beginning, "the third day he rose again from the dead." He lived again in a continuing life. For a period of forty days he, in his human nature, went on living here below. Then suddenly the theatre of his new and resurrection life expanded to include both earth and heaven. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18).

Others died and arose from the dead; however only to experience a second death. Two, at least, that we know of, were translated that they should not see death. But Jesus died and rose from the dead never more to die but rather only to ascend up "far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (Ephesians 1:15-23, 4:8-10).

Life was his native element and yet, as one has said "The Son of man came into the world to die. Dying was the service by way of eminence which he came to perform. Dying in the stead of others who themselves deserved to die that they need not die." (Dr B. B. Warfield "Biblical Doctrines", p. 314.) The supreme wonder of this sorry world of ours is that Jesus died. The great thing in his life, as in all Christian thought and life, is the death of Christ.

And yet how utterly in vain it would have been unless he were to rise again. That he in whom was life, who was life, whose word was life and by whose power the dead are raised; that he should die and not live again was quite unthinkable. The disciples prior to his death realized something of this; and that, we believe, was partly why they so persistently disbelieved in his death. But later on they learned that life from the dead was possible only through his death and yet not by his death but by his life.

It seems reasonable to suppose that the writers realized this as they recorded what took place following upon the death of Christ. They tell the story of his death unhurriedly and in detail. But as for the remaining days of his life, they seem disinclined to linger on it.

The inspired accounts at this point are penned mainly only to record the fact that Jesus lived. All of course report the resurrection. Only two of the writers speak of the ascension; Mark, very briefly in his final words; Luke, in the closing words of his gospel and in the opening words of his Acts of the Apostles. And yet for us, as students of the Word, there is a wealth of material here on which to meditate.

A survey of the material as a whole shows that both Testaments must be included. The teaching begins of course with prophecy. As we look to the Old Testament for light upon the death of Christ, so also for the other of the two great events of Christian history and Christian faith and life.

God is displeased with sinners whoever they may be. We bring our sorrows on ourselves. Our sin and the recompense of its reward brought death and shame upon the Lord. But for all who dwell securely in God's love, suffering and shame are never prolonged.

It is so with us and it was so with Christ. For all who belong to God the Psalmist's words apply. The Lord's "anger is but for a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalms 30:5). Of this faithful saying there was an abundant fulfillment for all concerned on that blessed "third day" following upon the day of Jesus' death.

The 22d. Psalm takes us deep into the inner sanctuary of Christ's inmost thoughts as he suffered on the cross. And Isaiah 53 expounds the death of Christ both as to the event itself and the meaning of it. Both passages, however, clearly intimate what was to follow. In the one it is

distinctly implied that he who suffered and died would live again and declare the ways of God. The same is also true of the account as given in Isaiah. Having suffered for our sins and having made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, he would see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He would see his seed, he would prolong his days and the pleasure of the Lord would prosper in his hands.

But the clearest prediction, and that which was taken up by Peter in his first public address, is found in Psalm 16: "My flesh also shall rest in hope. For 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: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

The occasion for the apostle's use of this quotation was in explanation of the great event of the effusion of the Holy Spirit and of the phenomena connected with it (Acts 2:1-21). In addition to these and other instances of prophetic foresight we call attention to the fact that it was present by implication at least, in every prophetic reference to the Christ.

Turning to the New Testament account it is of interest to observe that we are at first still in the realm of prophecy. The New Testament story really begins with Christ's own predictions concerning his own life's story following upon his death. For his own prophetic preview let us turn attention to his "three days" and "little while."

The three-day interval was first intimated by the Lord in his response to the rulers' challenge on the occasion of the first temple purge (John 2:18-22). Its first appearance in his teaching was at Caesarea Philippi when he said that he would "suffer many things and be killed and be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21). The statement was repeated while he was yet in Galilee; "the third day he shall be raised again" (Matthew 17:23). And it was included in his teaching along the way as he went up to the city; "the third day he shall rise again" (Matthew 20:17-19).

The statement about the destruction of the temple of his body and his reconstruction of it made a deep impression and was not forgotten. The false witnesses at his examination brought it up against him. They said that he had said that he was able to destroy the temple and build it in three days (Matthew 26:61). It was further thrown at him by those by whom he was reviled (Matthew 27:40). Those at the empty tomb who saw and heard the angels were reminded of the fact that he had said that he would "be crucified and the third day rise again" (Luke 24:5-9). And the risen Lord himself in his first appearance to the eleven as he opened their understanding and the Scriptures to them said "Thus it is written,

and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:44-49).

The conversational discourse of the upper room was pregnant with the thought of separation and reunion, departure and return. "A little while and ye shall not see me: and, again, a little while and ye shall see me," was the way he phrased it.

His original use of this expression was made to his adversaries; "Yet a little while I am with you" and again "Yet a little while is the light with you" (John 7:33 f and 12:35, 36).

Later, to his own, before they went out into the night he said "Yet a little while I am with you." "I go," "I depart," "I go away," "I leave the world," "I go my way to him that sent me."

The effect of this, as he observed, was that sorrow filled their hearts. But it was something which had to be said and strongly impressed upon them for the time of his departure was at hand and he could be glorified, and God in him, in no other way than by his death.

Happily, however, this was only one side of the story and there was another, brighter side. And without the one side there could be no other. Without departure there could be no return; without separation, no glad reunion. Without a break in the kind of fellowship they had known there could be no resumption of it on a higher plane. And without his death for sinners there could be no salvation unto life.

The teaching of the upper room had everything to do with that which lay immediately before him in the way — his death. With this in mind, however, his thought moves on to the end in view, the joy that lay before them in the path of life. And so he says, "I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." The Comforter will come; and, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live ye shall live also."

It is safe to say that as he neared the end of this discourse they were greatly comforted and reassured. And yet, there it was again, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." "What is this that he saith?" they wanted to know, and so do we.

Fortunately we are in a better position to understand what was intended for we see it in the light of all that followed. And yet again we say with those of that day "What is this that he saith?"

Obviously part of what it meant was that very soon he would be taken from them by his death; and then as quickly reunited with them in his resurrection life. This, however, was only

part of the meaning, for the thought moves on to other things and in particular to another second parting and departure — the ascension. And then again in compensation for this separation there would be other, further, reunion and return.

He would come to them again in the coming of the Spirit on them. And for each and all there would be continual never-ending coming and communion. To each of his own he would come again and again in his precious presence with each one in his own heart and life. He would come to each one in his death. But beyond all this he would come in grand reunion with them in his glorious, visible and personal return and their resurrection when man's life in this world, as we know it, would have an end and time would be no more.

All this was present in the Master's vision and prediction of the new age of his coming. But let us try to get the matter straight. The essential union of the Lord and his own is never broken. As one has said "Our union with Christ is one thing — it is inviolable: our communion is another — it is fragile and easily broken." (Rev. W. L. Land; *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, July-September 1958, p. 103.)

A definite feature of the relationship between the Lord and his own is a unique combination of departure and return, separation and association. It was something wholly new and unique in interpersonal relationship. For while there was departure and separation in one way, it was not so at all in another. There was parting here but very different in kind from every other. It was departure which was not departure, disunion which was not disunion. For it was only in part; in which there was never any real disruption of the essential union.

The disciples were desolated and afraid; conscience-stricken and heart broken. They were prostrate in their grief almost as though they too were dead. But their Lord had not been taken from them. The fellowship indeed was broken; but faith was not dead. Their union with Christ remained and he was with them. Bereaved as they were they still knew and loved and clung to their dear dead. The parting wrought by death was quickly remedied and the separation of the ascension was wonderfully overruled.

We glory in Jesus' foresight on this occasion. It covers the new age as a whole; the new dispensation of God's grace to sinner-men in Christ. And how compassionate he was in his expression of the situation! There was an infinite kindness in his "little while," and the prayer that followed only transfigured and glorified the theme of his discourse.

It is stated in the creed that subsequently to his death and burial "he descended into hell." The real descent into hell, however, came while he was yet alive. This took place during the

hours of darkness as he "bore our sins in his own body on the tree."

Death for him in one sense of the word meant the same for him as it does for us and for all men. As the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken there occurs a complete disruption of the union of the soul and body. As with us so also with Christ. The body of the Lord still hung upon the cross but the soul had gone to be with God who gave it.

This is all that can be meant by the statement that he descended into hell. All that can properly be understood is the Hebrew word for the state or abode of the dead. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," i.e. "sheol"; the abode of the departed (Psalms 16:10).

The meaning is that the body was now a lifeless corpse; the soul a disembodied spirit. But as an eternity of suffering was in his case shortened to three hours, so this soul and body separation could not be prolonged. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." It is not to be supposed for a moment that he who was and is "the resurrection and the life" could remain under the power of death. It were unthinkable that the precious bruised and broken body of the Lord should suffer such indignity. The duration of the final phase of the humiliation could only be "a little while."

"After three days" was the Jewish way of stating it. We would have said two days. But as a matter of fact, for actual duration, it was only about a day and a half.

The story moves on through death and burial to resurrection and reunion. Following the crucifixion the evangelists record what then took place immediately upon the Saviour's death.

There was an end to the darkness that had covered the earth. There was the rending of the veil of the temple and the centurion's testimony. Matthew tells how that "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matthew 27:51-54).

With the last word spoken from the cross of Christ, borne upon his last expiring breath, all suffering was over for him. The humiliation itself, however, was yet in force. For now he was dead. The thrust of the spear left no possible doubt about it. It is true that the soul of Christ was comforted in the bosom of the Father, but the body remained. As evening came Joseph gained permission from Pilate to take charge of the body; and with the help of Nicodemus, performed his good offices. The cross was taken down and relieved of its burden; the body borne away and reverently laid in Joseph's tomb, hard by the place of death.

Now we see the disciples as they "mourned and wept" and Mary weeping at the grave (Mark 16:9, 10 and John 20:11). As the Saviour had said, "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy" (John 16:20).

The evangelists further record what was still going on in the camp of the enemy. It is apparent that when the darkness came they quit the scene; and rejoicing in the success of their malice, returned to their headquarters. But the sabbath was at hand and to make sure of the sufferers' death and the removal of their bodies they sought out Pilate again and besought him that the legs of the crucified might be broken and the bodies taken away. However God himself had other plans about the disposition of the body of his Son.

Also later they feigned the need of great precaution to prevent the disciples despoilment of the grave. "So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." Later, apprised of the empty tomb, they pretended that their efforts had been wasted and all precaution had been in vain (Matthew 27:62-66 and 28:11-15).

Coming to the event itself we learn that upon the first day of the week, our Sunday, at some undetermined hour of early morn, the low estate in which the Saviour took our place came to an end and he arose.

It was a reunion of the soul and body; the reconstruction of the human nature of the Lord. The body of his death revived and at the same time was transformed. Now it was the new body of his new and resurrection life. Now the natural aspect of his being and person was filled with the Supernatural as normally it should be. His human nature was perfectly suffused with the

divine. With the resurrection, the God-man entered upon a life more becoming to him, more suitable to his being and nature.

With this event the life-long state of the humiliation ceased and the new state of his exaltation was begun. This is the explanation of all which now appeared and came to pass in his life. With his desertion of the grave he entered on an altogether new and different stage and state of being.

It is to be observed that the resurrection of the Lord and his ascension merge and blend in one great and blessed outcome and happy conclusion of his life. Together they comprise the divine activity in the production of the exaltation of Christ. They terminate in his exalted state upon the throne of God, at the right hand of the Father, in the highest heavenly glory.

A fact to be observed about the life of Christ is that there was ever growing progress in it. One thing was always in order to another; each stage preparatory to the next. The birth was in order to the growing life, which was in order to the public life, which was in order to his sacrificial death. A most important aspect of the death of Christ is that it was in order to his resurrection and his new and resurrection life of fellowship with his own and self-disclosure to them. Whereupon, the end in view was the ascension, which issued in the yet continuing heavenly life and ministry. This in turn shall yet eventuate in the events of the end and in the final state of Christ and of his glory. How important it is for our understanding of the ways of God to get the total view.

(Copyright, 1960, by W. A. Wilde Company. Used by permission.)

(To be continued)

---

## *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church*

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

### III.

#### ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

We have seen, by an examination of the Old Testament Scriptures, that throughout the Mosaic dispensation this great principle exerted a controlled influence: That whatsoever God commands is to be observed, and that whatsoever he does not command is forbidden, so far as the public worship of his house is concerned. Under the operation of that principle, instrumental music, as an

accompaniment of the singing of praise, was excluded from the tabernacle during almost the whole period of its existence, and from the synagogue, and was introduced into the temple in consequence of a divine warrant expressly furnished to that effect. We come now to the consideration of the New Testament, and the question is, Has Christ, the King of the church, prohibited the introduction of instrumental music into its public worship? That he has will be maintained on the following grounds:

1. What was peculiar and distinctive in the worship of the Jewish temple has been abolished.

This has been the general view of the Christian church, but it has been ridiculed by infidels and opposed, in part, by some prelatists: ridiculed by the former because it supposes a change of divine enactments and infers the admission of God's mutability; (The answer to this is found in the obvious distinction between moral and positive laws — the former being immutable, the latter not.) opposed by the latter, because they seek justification for introduction into the Christian church a class of officers and an order of worship which belonged alone to the Jewish temple. It is somewhat curious that this question is but rarely discussed in systems of theology and histories of the church. It will, therefore, not be gratuitous to state some of the reasons which justify the view, that what was peculiar to the temple-worship has been abrogated. This may be inferred from —

(1.) The nature of the case. It is conceded that some of the elements of the temple-service were typical. While the Jew denies that they have met their fulfilment in their corresponding antitypes, the Christian affirms. The latter, consequently, must hold that the types, not as objects of study, but as elements of religion to be observed, have passed away. The anti-types, as substantial realities approaching in the future, cast their shadows before them. They were dimly outlined in those shadows. When, in the process of time, the substances themselves were reached, what need was there for further following the guidance of the shadows? To take another view, indicated also by Scripture, the types were prophecies and promises presented concretely, and not merely in words, to the ancient worshipper. They were real manifestations, in the phenomenal sphere, of the purpose of redemption and of the sure Word of prophecy. But the things prophesied and promised have been actually accomplished, and are now in the possession of the Christian worshipper. History in part, and in part a continuous present experience, have taken the place of prophecy and promise. Once more, the peculiar elements of the temple-service were figurative representations of future realities, not known by experience. What need of the figures when the real objects figured are experimentally known? A surveyor's plat or a topographical map is of utmost value to one who expects to purchase, but cannot inspect, a tract of land. When he is in actual possession of it, he gazes upon it with his own eyes, and the map is no longer a necessity. A likeness of a person whom one has never seen, but desires to see, is precious until actual acquaintance ensues. Why study the picture when one looks into the face of the person himself? From the nature of the case, then, the distinctive elements of the temple-worship have passed away. They have expired by their own limitation.

(2.) The statements of Scripture. Let us follow the order of the New Testament writings, and select some of the testimonies which they furnish.

First, We encounter the song of Simeon, who, when he had taken the infant Jesus into his arms, "blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" and the words of the prophetess Anna, who "gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him (Jesus) to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

Secondly, The Baptist, pointing to Jesus as with the index-finger of the old economy, exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Look! there he is, God's provided and appointed Lamb, the great atoning sacrifice, who was typified by every lamb sacrificed at the tabernacle and the temple.

Thirdly, "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And when Nathanael, convinced of his Messiahship, uttered the confession, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel," Jesus received the confession and confirmed the testimony.

Fourthly, "After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee; preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled; and the kingdom of God is at hand." Again he said, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved;" by which he evidently taught that, as the new dispensation was about to begin, its spirit would transcend the forms of the old, and necessitate their abrogation. In his dying words, "It is finished," Jesus in actually fulfilling the types of the old economy, pronounced them abolished. His whole mediatorial work on earth was completed, and all the figures of it were superseded by the reality. After his resurrection, in rebuke of the unbelief of his disciples, he said, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

There are three aspects in which the necessity which Christ here affirms for his sufferings and glorification may be regarded. First, there was an absolute necessity, and the supposition of a free determination on God's part to save sinners, that a competent atonement for their guilt should ground their reconciliation to him, consistently with his infinite perfections — his justice, truth and holiness. Secondly, there was a necessity that the legal substitute who would die for the

expiation of guilt should be a priest, not only to evince with perfect clearness his own free and cheerful susception of the great undertaking, and to be qualified by actual experience to sympathize with his people in suffering, but also to provide, by the offices of an infinitely meritorious Minister of worship, for the access of sinners to God, and the acceptance of their prayers and their praises. But, thirdly, there was a necessity for a fulfilment of the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and there can be but little doubt that it was chiefly upon this point that the Lord Jesus insisted, in his talk with the disciples on their way to Emmaus. The legal and ceremonial institutions of Moses and the promissory writings of the prophets he expounded as having had reference to himself, and therefore virtually declared that they had all been fulfilled, so far as they related to his sufferings and atoning work, or were in process of fulfilment, so far as they pointed to his entrance into his glory — his ascension to heaven, his session on the throne, his intercession, his communication of the Holy Spirit, and his second coming to complete the redemption of his people and to judge the quick and the dead. But a promise fulfilled ceases to be a promise, and a type realized in its antitype is a type no more: its prospective office necessarily expires. It is evident, therefore, from the discourse ascribed by the exangelist to our Lord, that the peculiar and distinctive elements of the temple-worship, so far as they figured a future atonement by priestly sacrifice, had been abrogated, and so far as they represented a future effusion of the Holy Ghost soon would be abrogated.

Fifthly, On the day of Pentecost Peter declared that the wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit which was then experienced was in fulfilment of a prophecy of Joel. That fulfilment the apostolic preacher explained by saying: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye do now see and hear." Now, not only were the death and glorification of Christ conjoined with the effusion of the Spirit in the prophecies, but they were also associated with each other in the temple types. Both classes of prospective representations, the prophetic and the typical, in this their twofold significance, were fulfilled. We have seen, moreover, that the feast of Pentecost, which was a constituent element of the temple-services, was typical of the copious effusion of the Holy Spirit, and it was precisely on the day of Pentecost that it met a conspicuous fulfilment. What are we to conclude, but that as the types of Christ's death and exaltation had necessarily expired, the same was true of those which pre-figured the outpouring of the Holy Ghost? In answer to this it may be said that the prophecy cited by Peter had only a partial, however glorious, fulfilment on the day of

Pentecost, and continues to be a prediction of copious effusions of the Spirit, and so the temple-services which bear upon the same continuous impartation of his grace may be legitimately employed until the consummation shall be reached. What is true of the prophecies may be true of the types.

But, in the first place, the same would hold good with reference to the continued prosecution of Christ's intercessory work in heaven. Now, that was certainly typified by the high-priestly offering of incense in the Jewish holy of holies. The argument, if worth anything, would avail to show that the typical representations of Christ's intercession may still be retained in the church. What would be the consequence? This: that so much of the temple-service as typified the sacrificial death of Christ was abrogated and has vanished, and so much as pertained to his intercession, as not yet completed, may still be legitimately employed. That is to say, a service which God made one great whole, may now, at the discretion of the church, be divided in twain — a part discarded and a part retained. No sober Protestant mind could possibly entertain such a view. No more, for like reasons, could it tolerate a retention of those typical services which foreshadowed the continuous effusion of the Holy Ghost. Either the whole temple-service or none: these are the alternatives to which the Christian church was reduced. It elected the latter, and it has been reserved for Rome and the high-church Prelatists who agree with her to pursue a middle course, and not presuming to retain bloody sacrifices, to divorce what God had joined together, and to perpetrate the solemn mockery of a mutilated temple ritual.

In the second place, the temple itself was a type of Christ and his mediatorial work. But it has fulfilled its typical office, and has ceased to exist. To retain a part of its services is to suppose the continued existence of the temple, for God never authorized the employment of those services except in immediate connection with that particular structure, after the tabernacle had given way to it by his inspired direction. The force of this consideration is acknowledged by the Jews themselves, who do not pretend to offer bloody sacrifices elsewhere. If the cathedral takes the place of the temple, we would have many sacred edifices, in many different places, substituted for the only temple which existed by divine appointment, to which the tribes of Israel and proselytes from distant countries repaired to celebrate the great typical festivals. If we may have but one substitute for it, which one? Shall it be St. Peter's? And must all the world go to that mountain to worship, when Jesus Christ has said that neither at Mount Gerizim nor at Mount Moriah will men be obligated to worship? Jesus has thus declared that the positive enactment which required ceremonial worship at the Jewish temple is abrogated; and the New Testament is

utterly silent in regard to any transfer to the Christian church of the services peculiar to that edifice.

In the third place, although the prophecies contained in the Old Testament taught a continuous communication of the Spirit until the complete establishment of Christ's mediatorial kingdom on earth, yet they themselves were finished when they were uttered. So with the types foreshadowing the same thing. We might as warrantably add to those prophecies new predictions because they have not had a consummate fulfillment, as continue to employ the types because they have not had an exhaustive realization. Both sorts of prospective representations were limited by God's will, and the attempt to reinstate either, or to continue either, by the will of man, would be to invade God's prerogative and to disobey God's authority.

In the fourth place, the effusion of the Holy Spirit has already in the past been in part enjoyed by the church, and is in part now enjoyed by the church, and to perpetuate services which typify it, would be at one and the same time to confound a type which has reference to the fu-

ture with a symbol commemorating the past, and to observe the type at the very time that the anti-type is actually manifested. In either case contradiction and absurdity would result. The truth is, that the glorious, though partial, fulfilment of the prophecies and types alike of the old dispensation constitutes a pledge, definite and sufficient, of their exhaustive fulfilment in the future. If it be said that the New Testament contains prophecies of its own touching the future progress of Christ's kingdom, the reply is easy, that they were finished and sealed up with the completion of the sacred canon, and that unless the church has the right, furnished by fresh inspiration, to create substantive additions to the Scriptures which God pronounces perfect, she has no authority to utter prophecies, in the strict sense, any more; and it may be asked, where are the types peculiar to the New Testament? Are we pointed to baptism and the Lord's supper? Let it be proved that they are types at all; and if that could be proved, all that would be established is that the church is restricted to them alone, and the plea for a sacerdotal ritual of typical services would be cut up by the roots.

(To be continued)

---

## *The Transmission of the Scripture*

By Robert More, Jr.

The Scripture itself gives some clues as to its transmission. Such passages as Exodus 24:4, Deuteronomy 6, Job 19:23, 24 and Proverbs 25:1 speak to the subject. The best Old Testament passage, though, is Jeremiah 36. Verse 2 speaks of "a roll of a book," i.e., a scroll. It was copied from an oral presentation, for 36:18 says Baruch answered concerning authorship by saying, "He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book." That reference to "ink" is also the first. Then 36:23 says that "three or four leaves" were burnt. This may mean that scrolls were "leaves" sewn together.

The New Testament also says something. Acts 1:1, II Peter 3:1, 2 and Rev. 22:18, 19 are pertinent. II Timothy 4:13 is very good. Paul wants the cloak, the books (usually of secular nature) but especially the parchments or the Scriptures. Another good reference is II John 12 where "blackstuff" (ink) and "papyrus" (paper) are mentioned.

To list the different materials used in Scripture writing, we see rock (the Decalogue), perhaps leather, papyrus and vellum.

In the history of written documents, the first pliable material used extensively was leather. References to documents written on skins go back to 2750-2900 B. C. The earliest extant specimens date from 1788-2000 B. C. Ezra 6:1, 2 and Esther

6:1 could refer to leather manuscripts, and it is certain that Jeremiah 36:23 shows the use of leather, as the knife was the scribe's scraping knife.

The most common writing material was papyrus, referred to as "paper" in II John 12. It was made from the papyrus plant of Egypt. The plant was cut into thin and narrow strips. A series would be laid in one direction and then the second would be placed at right angles to the first, and finally, glue, heat and pressure were added until it became cohesive.

Each one of these sheets was called a "leaf", and when sewn together they made a scroll. Each leaf usually measured about 7 by 10 inches or a little larger. Any number of them could be added; one existent scroll is 133 feet long. This was too big for general use, so the average was about 35 feet, which was sufficiently long to write a Gospel of Luke or John on it.

The next material is vellum, parchment (Greek: *membranai*). It was made from the skins of cattle, sheep, goats or deer. Eumenes of Pergamum popularized it about 200 B.C. when one of Egypt's Pharaohs placed an embargo on the export of papyrus. For a time both vellum and papyrus were used, but in the fourth century A.D. vellum won out because of its greater durability.

These writing materials assumed several forms. The earliest is the scroll. The Scripture and the Rabbins refer to it, and the discoveries at Qumran (the Dead Sea Scrolls) have substantiated it. Because this fact was so patent, for a time it was thought that the book form (called a **codex**; plural, **codices**) was not invented until vellum became ascendant. One fact changed this opinion, namely, the flood of papyri discoveries. Some of these date back to the beginning of the Christian era, and they reigned supreme by the fourth century A.D. Photographic facsimiles of these can be purchased.

The writing on these materials also varied. The earliest Old Testament writing was likely a tilted print. Each letter was separate but probably had a certain tilt about it. The oldest of the Qumran manuscripts are written this way. The later ones show the second type. This is the Assyrian or block script. It attempted to standardize the letters by writing all with square corners. This first appeared about the third century B.C. and in the end (as evidenced by the Massoretic text) won out because of its accuracy in copying.

In the New Testament, the situation is perhaps reversed. It is debated whether John or Paul and others wrote in block or sloping hand. Because the average person (as demonstrated by the thousands of everyday papyri) wrote in a sloping hand, it is perhaps correct to say that the New Testament autographs were of a similar nature. One contrary voice speaks, namely Paul's reminder "Ye see how large letters I wrote to you by my hand" (Gal. 6:11). This is usually interpreted as proving Paul's bad eyesight, but it could be a cryptic reference to the fact that Paul wrote in the square, capital letter form.

Thus the papyri were written in what might be called an irregular, sloping uncial style. **Uncial** is synonymous with capital letters. Originally it denoted only letters one inch tall, but gradually became identified with capital letters. It is also practically equivalent to the square script of the Hebrew. This was the first major type of writing on New Testament manuscripts.

This form was slow to copy, so around the ninth century A.D. the **cursive** script became predominant. A cursive hand is identical with long-hand writing today.

Having finished the preliminaries, let us consider how the Bible text has come down to us. How do we secure the correct text?

With the Qumran discoveries, we must say that much textual study is going to be done on our Old Testament. The Hebrew text commonly used today was primarily settled at the Council of Jamnia in Palestine about 90 A.D. This did not, however, fix a universal text. The Egyptian Jews had a much larger canon, as evidenced by the Egyptian Church fathers. The Babylonian

Jews also had a somewhat larger canon, as evidenced by some Talmudic references, while the Samaritans had a much restricted canon, specifically, only the Pentateuch. Jamnia set the consonantal text in common use in their area. The Jews of Qumran, to a degree, also used this text.

The Jamnian text was, however, perhaps very slightly modified by the Massoretic text (abbreviation: MT) which we use. The biggest difference is the addition of uninspired vowel points. The Massorettes were devout Jews who meticulously copied and preserved what they considered to be the true text. However, this work was not finished until the tenth century A.D., which allows almost two and one-half millenniums of time between Moses' original and the final presentation.

Because of this time, mistakes crept into the copies, and these were faithfully reproduced. As an example, Jeremiah 21:2 says "Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us. . .". II Kings 24:10 reads, "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city. . .". The confusion of the Hebrew letters **resh** (R) and **nun** (N) in the king's name is explainable, but the fact remains that the different spelling is incorporated in the text. Incidentally, the Babylonian name in transliteration reads, **Na-bi-um ku-du-ur-ri u-su-ur**, so the form Nebuchadrezzar is correct. The mistake involved in spelling it Nebuchadnezzar is very minor; it does not change any meaning, nor does it prove that the autograph (as the original is called) was incorrect; it only shows that much comparative study must be done on the basis of the Qumran texts, and that when these may be demonstrated to be correct, their readings should be put into use.

For the New Testament, the manuscript evidence is plenteous. As a sweepingly general guess, there may be 10,000 pieces relating to the New Testament text. This is the reason why it is possible to be very dogmatic about the text of the New Testament.

One of these manuscripts (abbreviation: MS; plural, MSS), goes back to within thirty-five years of the original, namely the Rylands papyrus containing a fragment of John 18. From that date of 125 A.D. we next jump to 200 A.D. In recent years (with the papyri discoveries) more and more ancient New Testament texts are being discovered. The two most famous names are the Chester Beatty (pronounced Be-a-ti) library housed in part at the University of Michigan, and more important, the Martin Bodmar collection. It has seventeen volumes of texts printed now. All are written in the uncial script, with some evidence of connecting the letters. All these are available for purchase in their modern printed form.

Following this date, the next main one is 350 A.D. This is the era of the "Great Uncial"

texts. The foremost is the Vatican Manuscript called "B". It is written on vellum. It has been housed in the Vatican since A.D. 1481, although Napoleon carried it away for a time. The Vatican was very stingy about making it available, and its accessibility was only accomplished in 1890 when photographs were released. Beyond question it is the best single New Testament MS available, although it contains some errors.

The second great uncial is **Aleph** or **Sinaiticus**. Tischendorf discovered it in 1843. It has an unbelievably intriguing history behind it. When it agrees with B, these two form the most perfect text available today.

Other uncials deserve mention. Codex Alexandrinus was given to the British Government in 1627, and gives some support to the perfect text. It is dated about A.D. 450. Codex Beza (named for John Calvin's pupil, who owned it) is a very corrupt fifth century text. It resembles a commentary written into the text. Codex Washingtonianus of the fifth century is housed in Washington, D.C., and is sometimes pure, sometimes corrupt.

The next group of manuscripts is the cursives which came into vogue around the ninth century A.D. These were written in "longhand", and being so much later, they are generally regarded as inferior witnesses to the text, although one (number 33) is excellent.

From all these manuscripts, then, exactly how did we get the genuine text? All the MSS are compared, every word, and each word which makes the most sense in its context, which has the oldest support, has nothing contrary to the rest of the Scripture, and which has the best textual support is chosen as correct. Therefore, the mere fact that a majority of the MSS may have a certain word, or the fact that certain words are more explanatory, or that one word "has always been used," does not prove that it is correct. Other basic rules are these. The most difficult reading is preferable, since we are inclined to add explanations of the difficult; the shortest text is best, since it is easier to add words than to remove them; if there is a way to explain a word's presence, such as the line above having it, it may be a textual corruption. When all these tests are

passed, then we are warranted in saying that the resultant text is the best possible one.

All of this work has been done and is available in the Nestle Greek New Testament. If not actually identical with the text which the Apostles wrote, it is practically so. Therefore any translation of the New Testament should be based upon this text.

The King James Version, however, is quite different from this text. It was translated from a Greek text based upon approximately fifteen cursive MSS, which makes the text of late date. The compilers of this text may have been aware of one uncial codex, still the best ones had not yet been discovered. The translation is excellently done, but being made from a relatively poor text, it follows that the translation will not be as close as possible to the original and absolutely infallible Scripture.

Allow one illustration — that famous (or rather infamous) text in I John 5:7. This is absent from every ancient manuscript; actually it is found in only three Greek MSS, and none of these is older than the 12th century A.D. It was incorporated into the text from some Latin MSS written in Africa. The King James translation of this verse is absolutely correct, but the verse itself is absolutely uncanonical. Therefore it is not very close to what the Apostle John wrote. One observation is in order: the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church cites this text as a proof text for the doctrine of the Trinity.

Other passages that are questionable from the standpoint of manuscript evidence are: Matt. 6: 13b; Matt. 23: 14; Mark 16: 9-20; Luke 22: 43,44; John 3: 13b (the words "who is in heaven"); John 5: 4; John 7: 53 to 8: 11; Acts 8: 37; Acts 15: 34.

Lest this seem to deny the perfectly inerrant Scripture, let me summarize. The absolutely correct text, that which the Apostles and Prophets wrote, must be determined by comparing all the manuscripts available; then skilled Hebrew and Greek scholars must translate it faithfully into English; finally English grammarians must polish the whole. When this process is followed, then we may confidently preach and testify "Thus saith the Lord" concerning the resultant product.

## *Religious Terms Defined*

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of "Blue Banner Faith and Life". The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

**GOSPEL.** The good news of salvation provided for sinners by the grace of God through the

redemptive work of Jesus Christ the Mediator. (1 Cor. 15: 1-4).

**GRACE OF GOD.** The Favor of God bestowed on human beings who deserve His wrath and curse on account of sin.

**SPECIAL GRACE OF GOD.** That grace of God which is bestowed on His elect only, and which brings about their eternal salvation.

**COMMON GRACE OF GOD.** That grace of God which is bestowed on all mankind alike, both the elect and the reprobate, bringing certain benefits during this life, but not bringing about eternal salvation.

**HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.** A book which combines the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John into one continuous narrative, avoiding repetition, or which arranges the contents of the four Gospels in such a way that the reader can easily see what parts are peculiar to a particular Gospel and what parts are common to two, three or all four Gospels.

**HEAVEN.** (1) The sky (Gen. 1:1). (2) That place in the created universe where the presence and glory of God are specially revealed (Matt. 6:9). (3) The eternal home of the redeemed (2 Cor. 5:1; Heb. 10:34).

**HELL.** The place of eternal punishment, originally prepared for the devil and his angels, where all human beings who are out of Christ will for ever be isolated from the favorable presence of God and from all that is good (Matt. 25:41, 46).

**HERESY.** (1) In the New Testament, originally a party or sect (translated "sect" in Acts 5:17; 15:5); later, false doctrine stubbornly adhered to (2 Pet. 2:1). (2) In church government today, false doctrine which is definitely contrary to the accepted creed or doctrinal standards of a church. (Note: doctrine which is alleged to be contrary to the Bible, but not contrary to definite statements of the Church's creed, is called "error", whereas doctrine which is not only alleged to be contrary to the Bible, but is also contrary to definite statements of the Church's creed, is called "heresy").

**HERETIC.** A person who adheres to a heresy.

**HERODIANS.** A Jewish party of the time of Christ, who supported the political power of the Herod family and favored the Romans, thus being opposed to the Pharisees (Matt. 22:16; Mark 3:6).

**HETERODOX.** Unsound or erroneous; the opposite of orthodox (used of either a doctrine or a person).

**HOLINESS.** The state of freedom from sin, with the heart in conformity to God; a state of the heart which is manifested in the life.

**HOLINESS OF GOD.** (1) God's supreme majesty and exaltation far above and beyond the universe and all created beings. (2) God's infinite, absolute separation from all that is sinful.

**HOPE.** The Christian's sure expectation and eager anticipation of the supreme glory and blessing which shall be his in the life of eternity, following the second coming of Christ and the resurrection (Rom. 8:18-25; Heb. 6:18-20).

**HUGUENOTS.** A name, originally given in contempt, for the Reformed or Calvinistic Protestants of France.

**HUMANITY OF CHRIST.** The human nature of Christ, consisting of body and soul, which He took into union with His divine person and nature. "Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin" (S.C. 22).

**HUMILIATION OF CHRIST.** "Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time" (S.C. 27).

**HUSSITES.** A reforming party in the Church in Bohemia (Czecho-Slovakia) in the 15th Century and later. Named their leader John Huss who was burnt at the stake in 1415 for his faith.

**IDOLATRY.** (1) In the narrower sense, the religious worship of idols, that is, images or pictures. (2) In the wider sense, all religious worship other than that offered to the true God.

**ILLUMINATION.** The progressive work of the Holy Spirit in the mind of a Christian, whereby he is enabled to see and understand the truth revealed in the Scriptures (Eph. 1:18). (Illumination is the intellectual counterpart of sanctification. By sanctification a Christian is made to love and practice holiness; by illumination he is made to know and understand the truth).

**IMPLICIT FAITH.** That faith by which a person accepts on the authority of another some doctrine or system which he has not himself considered, or of which he is personally ignorant. (Cf. Westminster Confession of Faith, XX.2. When a person says that he accepts the doctrines of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, yet admits that he has never read those documents, he is guilty of the sin of accepting them with an "implicit faith," that is "sight-unseen", by a blind faith).

**INABILITY.** The condition of the unsaved sinner, by reason of which he is unable, not merely to save himself from sin, but even to desire salvation. (Note: Inability is not inconsistent with free agency. The unsaved sinner is free to turn to God, but not able to turn to God, just as a bird with a broken wing is free to fly, but not able to fly).

**INCARNATION.** The act by which God the

Son took to Himself a human nature (body and soul) and thus became man, to accomplish the work of redemption. (John 1:14).

**INDEPENDENCE OF GOD.** The truth that God is in no sense whatever dependent upon, limit-

ed by, or in need of anything or anyone in, the created universe, but is absolutely self-sufficient and self-existent. (It is wrong to use the verbs "cannot" and "needs" in connection with God. Mark 10:27; Acts 17:25).

---

## *Some Noteworthy Quotations*

No one is made strong by God but he who feels himself weak of his own self.

— Augustine of Hippo

The grace of God does not find men fit for salvation, but makes them so.

— Augustine of Hippo

Deal gently and tenderly with your unconverted friends. Remember you were once as blind as they.

— Robert Murray McCheyne

From God's election cometh faith; from a lively faith do good works spring, in which the elect continuing and going forward not only make their own election sure, as St. Peter doth teach (2 Peter 1:11) but also give a testimony of it to others, before whom their good works do shine."

— John Knox

Take as many to heaven with you as ye are able to draw. The more ye draw with you, ye shall be the welcomer yourself.

— Samuel Rutherford

Sure I am it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside and draw by the curtains, and say "Courage, I am thy salvation," than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

— Samuel Rutherford

A child of God may pray and not be heard, because at that time he may be a child of anger. If any sin lie unrepented of, we are not in a case fit to pray.

— Richard Sibbes

There are many among us who seem to live in utter ignorance of their lost condition, who plead the innocence of their lives even when Death is laying his cold hand upon them. There are some poor souls who seem to die willing to be judged by the law. I have lived a decent life, they will say; I have been a harmless quiet-living man; and I can see no reason why the wrath of the great God should ever come upon me. Oh! brethren, if this is your case, it is very plain you have never had a divine awakening. The power of God alone could awaken you to flee.

— Robert Murray McCheyne

Christians are called **spiritual** persons because they are born of the Spirit, and because of the in-

dwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them.

—Jonathan Edwards

God doth not need  
Either man's work or His own gifts; who best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state  
Is kingly. Thousands at His bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait.

—John Milton

It is no vain and empty thing, that the excellent dignity and authority of the Christian Faith hath overspread the whole world.

—Augustine of Hippo

I will take my stand where, as a child, my parents placed me, until the clear truth be found out.

—Augustine of Hippo

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;  
This cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:  
My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem,  
My heart remembers it.

—Christina G. Rossetti

If faith has not for its basis a testimony of God to which we must submit, as to an authority exterior to our personal judgment, and independent of it, then faith is no faith.

—Adolphe Monod

To Thy grace I ascribe it, and to Thy mercy, that Thou hast melted away my sins as it were ice. To Thy grace I ascribe also whatsoever I have not done of evil; for what might I not have done, who even loved a sin for its own sake?

—Augustine of Hippo

It is the radical principle of the Bible, and consequently of all true religion, that God is all and in all; that of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. It is the tendency of all truth to exalt God, and to humble the creature; and it is characteristic of true piety to feel that all good comes from God, and to desire that all glory should be given to God.

— Charles Hodge

It is the duty of Christians to receive kindly their brethren, and to aid them in every way within their power, and to do this from religious motives and in a religious manner, as becometh saints.

— Charles Hodge

# *Studies in Old Testament History*

## LESSON 49

### SUNRISE AT PENIEL — THE FACE OF GOD

(Genesis Chapter 32)

“And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there” (32:29). Jacob seems to be still not absolutely sure of the identity of the mysterious stranger who has been wrestling with him. He asks to be told his name, that is, his identity. The reply is a refusal to tell the name. We may wonder about the reason for this refusal. Luther held that the failure to disclose the name left an atmosphere of mystery about the whole transaction, which would lead Jacob to continued reflection upon it. “In spiritual experiences there is and must be the challenge of the mysterious. A spiritual experience so lucid that a man sees through and is able to analyze every part of it must be rather shallow” (Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, II, p. 880). Furthermore, Jacob can really know the identity of the stranger from the statement that he (Jacob) has power with God, and has prevailed. Also, the blessing which is conferred in verse 29 could really come only from God. As a matter of fact, Jacob realized that it was God he had been wrestling with, for in verse 30 he states, “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”

“And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (32:30). Peniel means “face of God.” (Peniel is usually spelled Penuel in the Old Testament; the meaning is the same).

“And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh” (32:31). The injured thigh reminded him of the experience of the previous night — of his hours of struggle with God, ending in spiritual victory. The rising sun, we may suggest, symbolized the new day dawning in Jacob’s life — his real and true life, for which his previous life was only a preparation. We are warranted in suggesting this symbolic significance by the mention of the sunrise in the narrative. It seems to be mentioned as significant. The sun rises every day and we take the daily sunrise for granted without special comment. The mention of it here is exceptional and suggests symbolic meaning. Jacob has crossed the Jabbok, but he has crossed more than the Jabbok. He has entered a new life, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; all things have become new. The matter of meeting Esau can now be viewed in its proper perspective. No longer need it loom high as the supreme problem of his life.

“Therefore the children of Israel eat not of

the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day; because he touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh in the sinew that shrank” (32:32). “Unto this day” means, of course, unto the time when Moses wrote the Book of Genesis. How much longer this custom was observed the Bible does not state.

This abstinence from eating a specific part of the flesh of animals was not commanded by God. It was rather a mere custom which the Israelites observed spontaneously. In their observance of this custom we see a recognition, on their part, of the importance and significance of Jacob’s strange experience that night by the Jabbok.

Obviously Jacob must have told the story himself. He had been alone with God by the Jabbok. The next morning as the sun rose he limped across the stream and rejoined his family on the southern side of the river. His wives, children and servants would of course instantly note that Jacob was limping. Naturally they would inquire as to what had happened. We can only imagine the wonder with which they would hear the story of that strange night as it was told by the patriarch. But from his telling of the story there arose the custom as to eating which is mentioned in verse 32.

#### Questions:

1. Why did Jacob ask the mysterious stranger for his name?
2. What may have been the reasons for the stranger’s refusal to disclose the name?
3. What statement in the record indicates that Jacob realized that his opponent was God?
4. What name did Jacob give to the place where he had this strange experience?
5. How is Peniel usually spelled in the Old Testament?
6. What is the meaning of the name Peniel?
7. What purpose would the injured thigh serve in Jacob’s later life?
8. What may be the symbolic significance of the statement that the sun rose as Jacob crossed over Peniel?

9. How could Jacob now regard the problem of meeting Esau?

10. What custom concerning food among the

Israelites had its origin in Jacob's experience at Jabbok?

11. How would the Israelites know the story of what had happened to Jacob by the Jabbok?

## LESSON 50

### PEACE AT LAST BETWEEN JACOB AND ESAU

We have reached the beginning of chapter 33 in the Book of Genesis. This chapter relates, first, the meeting of Jacob with Esau, and his reconciliation with him; and after that, the settlement of Jacob and his family in the land of Canaan.

Jacob has spent the night wrestling with God on the bank of the Jabbok River. As the sun rose, he has crossed the Jabbok and joined his family, enjoying a new consciousness of the favor and blessing of God as he limps on his injured thigh.

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men" (33:1). As we have previously observed, a man does not ordinarily go on a peaceful errand accompanied by a bodyguard of four hundred men. So the sight of this large company would naturally cause Jacob to be on guard against danger. Jacob takes the only precautionary measure that is possible under the circumstances. He divides the company of his people up into separate groups, taking care to place his beloved Rachel and Joseph last so that if Esau actually attacks, possibly Rachel and Joseph can escape. We do not know the exact age of Joseph at this time but it may have been about six years.

In verse 3, the statement that Jacob "passed over before them" does not refer to crossing the river, for that had already been done. Rather, the meaning is that Jacob went forward to the head of the procession, passing the various groups of his establishment as he did so. Coming at last into the presence of his brother Esau, Jacob ceremoniously bows deeply seven times. This is a typically Oriental manifestation of formal courtesy. It does not imply that Jacob recognized Esau as his superior or his master, but only that he wishes to display the greatest respect toward Esau. After the way Jacob had treated Esau twenty years previously, an informal brotherly greeting would have been out of place. Leupold calls attention to the fact that such multiple bowing is mentioned repeatedly in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets.

Esau's reaction is very different from what Jacob had feared. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7). Jacob's earnest prayers are now answered. Esau, whom he has feared so greatly, turns out to be friendly rather than hostile. "And Esau ran to meet him, and

embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept" (33:4). That this is to be regarded as a special answer to prayer appears from the fact that Esau is accompanied by four hundred men. The guard of 400 men indicates that Esau's intentions on leaving home were not necessarily peaceful or friendly to Jacob. It might be argued, of course, that Esau was actually afraid of Jacob and is accompanied by 400 men for self-defence. But in that case, why should Esau have left home at all? The narrative seems to indicate that Esau started out with hostile, or at least mixed, intentions, but on actually meeting Jacob, he has become friendly toward him. This, we repeat, can be regarded as nothing but a special answer to prayer. In it we see, too, the grace of God toward the unworthy. Jacob did not **deserve** good treatment at the hands of Esau, but God graciously brings it about that Esau is friendly to him.

When Jacob had left home twenty years before he was unmarried. Now he is accompanied by four women, eleven children and a company of servants. Naturally Esau inquires as to the identity of these women and children: what is their relation to Jacob? Jacob replies that they are the children which God has graciously given him. Following this, the handmaidens approach, with their children, and bow respectfully to Esau; then Leah and her children, and finally Rachel and Joseph. It is a strange fact that in verse 7 Joseph is mentioned before his mother Rachel; the reason for this is unknown.

The formal introductions and greetings having been attended to, Esau next inquires as to the droves of livestock which he has received from Jacob's servants. The servants, it will be recalled, were to present these animals saying "It is a present sent unto my lord Esau" from Jacob. Esau inquires as to the meaning or reason for the present. To this Jacob replies: "These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." "A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom, strong wrath" (Prov. 21:14). Jacob realizes that if he can get Esau to accept a valuable gift, it will prove the reality and permanence of Esau's reconciliation to him. If Esau accepts the present, he will be bound by the obligation of honor to drop any antagonism against Jacob which he may have been cherishing. A gentleman cannot accept a handsome gift and then turn and attack the giver. To do so would be to violate his code of honor — especially in an Oriental society.

Oriental politeness and "face" require, moreover, that such a gift be accepted only after a great show of reluctance and protest. Accordingly, Esau protests: "I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself" (33:9). No doubt Esau is by this time a rich man. The fact that he can command a guard of 400 men proves this. So Esau protests that he has enough and Jacob should keep the animals.

Jacob, however, earnestly begs Esau to accept the gift. He pleads that acceptance on Esau's part will be the token or evidence that he, Jacob, has found grace in Esau's sight. It will demonstrate that Esau is really favorable toward him and not at enmity with him. "For therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me" (33:10). Thus Jacob confesses that Esau's favor is a manifestation of the favor of God to himself. It was God's gracious working which changed Esau's hostile attitude to a friendly and favorable one.

Jacob further confesses that all that he has, he owes to the blessing of God: "God hath dealt graciously with me, and I have enough." Here the word "enough" is really "everything." And it is true that Jacob, possessing God as his portion, does indeed possess everything. "Nearly the same words are on the tongues of all; but there are few who truly ascribe to God what they possess: the greater part sacrifice to their own industry. Scarcely one in a hundred is convinced, that whatever is good flows from the gratuitous favor of God; and yet by nature this sense is engraved upon our minds, but we obliterate it by our ingratitude. It has appeared already, how laborious was the life of Jacob: nevertheless, though he had suffered the greatest annoyances, he celebrates only the mercy of God" (Calvin).

Following this earnest plea on Jacob's part, Esau finally consents to accept the present.

#### Questions:

1. Where and how did Jacob spend the night before his meeting with Esau?
2. What fact indicates that Esau had started out from home with an unfriendly attitude toward Jacob?
3. What precautionary measure did Jacob adopt just before meeting his brother?
4. What is meant by the statement that Jacob "passed over before them"?
5. How did Jacob honor his brother upon meeting him?
6. What was Esau's attitude when he actually met Jacob?
7. How can the change in Esau's attitude be accounted for?
8. What question did Esau address to Jacob?
9. What was Esau's second question to Jacob?
10. Why was Esau reluctant to accept Jacob's gift?
11. Why was Jacob insistent that the gift be accepted?
12. What fact in the record proves that Esau was a rich man?
13. To what does Jacob attribute Esau's favorable attitude?
14. To what does Jacob attribute all the good that he possesses?

### LESSON 51

#### SCANDAL IN THE FAMILY OF JACOB

(Genesis Chapter 34)

Chapter 34, to which we have now come, records the scandalous events which followed upon the act of Dinah, daughter of Jacob and Leah, in venturing away from home "to see the daughters of the land." The birth of Dinah is recorded in 30:21. It is probable that at the time of the events recorded in chapter 34 she was 14 or 15 years old.

Many writers have undertaken to place the blame upon Dinah for occasioning the scandals of this chapter. However, the record does not necessarily imply that she was at fault. As to what her motive may have been, and to what extent she was at fault, we are not informed and can only guess.

The inhabitants of Shechem are called

Hivites, but in 48:22 they are referred to as Amorites. This is to be explained by the fact that the term "Amorites," like the term "Canaanites," was sometimes used as a blanket designation of the non-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan.

We shall not dwell on the sordid details of this story, but only note and comment on the main facts. Dinah is seduced and violated by Shechem, a Hivite prince. Following this, Shechem seeks to marry her. From his point of view, under the circumstances, this would be the honorable thing to do.

Negotiations follow between the father of Shechem and the family of Dinah. The sons of Jacob agree to the proposed marriage, but only on one condition, namely, that all the males of the Shechemites be circumcised. This proposal,

as it turns out later, is not made in good faith by the sons of Jacob, but with an intention of treachery.

The Shechemites agree to the proposal of the sons of Jacob, reasoning that by complying they will ultimately be able to absorb the family of Jacob and to possess all their property. They are one and all circumcised. Thereupon Simeon and Levi, two of Jacob's sons, take advantage of the incapacitated condition of the Shechemites and attack them suddenly, massacring all the males of the city. Taking all the wealth of the city as spoil, and the women and children as captives, they return home. Jacob their father, be it said to his credit, does not approve of this lawless massacre. He accuses his sons: "Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land" (34:30). They in turn reply, "Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?"

The question naturally arises, how did it happen that Jacob allowed his sons to carry on the negotiations with the Shechemites? Why did not Jacob handle the matter himself? Possibly Jacob placed too much confidence in his sons; probably, too, they concealed from their father what their real intentions were.

We shall give Calvin's comments on the inexcusable conduct of Jacob's sons recorded in this chapter:

"Moses shows that, not content with simple revenge, they fly together to the spoil . . . Be it, that they were blinded with anger in shedding blood; yet by what right do they sack the city? This certainly cannot be ascribed to anger. But these are the ordinary fruits of human intemperance, that he who gives himself the rein in perpetrating one wickedness, soon breaks into another. Thus the sons of Jacob, from being murderers, also became robbers, and the guilt of avarice is added to that of cruelty. The more anxious then should be our endeavors to bridle our desires; lest they should mutually fan each other, so that at length, by their combined action, a dreadful conflagration should arise; but especially, we must beware of using force of arms, which brings with it many perverse and brutal assaults. Moses says that the sons of Jacob did this, because the Shechemites had defiled their sister; but the whole city was not guilty. Moses, however, only states in what way the authors of the slaughter are affected: for although they wish to appear just avengers of the injury, yet they pay no respect to what was lawful for them to do, and make no attempt to control their depraved affections, and consequently set no bounds to their wickedness."

Whatever may have been the guilt of the Shechemites, in this chapter the sons of Jacob — the covenant people of God — appear upon an

even lower ethical level than the men of Shechem. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can be said to excuse the conduct of Simeon and Levi and that of all the sons of Jacob in this chapter. Moses records the facts objectively, leaving it to the reader to form an ethical judgment upon them.

This scandalous history may serve to bring out two things that are sometimes forgotten in studies of the Old Testament.

In the first place, the very existence of such a narrative is evidence on the face of it that it is historical, not legendary as some critics have claimed. No people would form legends, and preserve them in their sacred writings, which place their own ancestors in such an extremely bad light. Here are the sons of Jacob, the honored ancestors of the tribes of Israel, represented as lawless murderers and robbers. What nation would make up such a story about their founders and national heroes? The only explanation of the existence of such a story in the Hebrew writings is that it is historically true.

In the second place, those who are horrified at the presence of such stories in the Bible should realize that they are in the Bible just because the Bible is a book of truth. It portrays people as they really were, without idealizing them and without eliminating their bad deeds. A scoffer once said to the present writer that he would not leave a Bible where children or young people could see it, as the immoral stories in the Bible are (he claimed) worse than anything in the writings of the Italian author Boccaccio. This skeptic completely mistook the real point and purport of these so-called "immoral stories" in the Bible. They are not in the Bible as an example for us, or as a pattern for us to copy, but rather to show the real nature of sin and of sinners — to show what man is really like without the grace of God, and to show the judgment of God upon such wickedness.

Just because the Bible is a book of truth, it must tell the real truth about sin and sinners. If the Bible were merely the word of man, it would tone down sin and wickedness or cover it up. But because it is the Word of God, it tells the plain, terrible truth about sin and sinners. So far from such chapters as Genesis 34 being an argument against the divine character of the Bible, they are in fact a strong argument in favor of the truth that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God.

#### Questions:

1. Why did Dinah venture away from home?
2. By what two tribal names are the inhabitants of Shechem called in Genesis?
3. Which of the sons of Jacob took the lead in attacking the people of Shechem?

4. What should be our judgment as to the conduct of Jacob's sons?

5. What can be said about the bearing of this chapter on the question of whether the history of the patriarchs is legendary or historical?

6. What mistake is made by people who use stories like that of Genesis 34 as an argument against the Bible?

7. What does the presence of such incidents as those of Gen. 34 in the Bible really show as to the origin and character of the Bible?

## LESSON 52

### JACOB'S FAMILY PURGED OF IDOLATRY

(Genesis Chapter 35)

Chapter 35 opens with the command of God to Jacob to go to Bethel; "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make thee there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (35:1). The time has come for Jacob to fulfil his vow of 28:22, "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house . . ." . The command of God for Jacob to build an altar at Bethel makes clear to us the meaning Jacob had in mind in making the vow some twenty years before; by "God's house" he clearly meant a religious shrine or sanctuary, of which, of course, the principal feature would be an altar.

The command of God to Jacob to "dwell" at Bethel does not imply a requirement of permanent residence there. The Hebrew verb may be translated "tarry," implying no more than living there long enough to carry out God's instructions concerning the altar.

Jacob at once realizes that for real obedience to the command of God a rededication of himself and all his household to God is needed. Accordingly he says to his household, "and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments. And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went" (35:2,3). The result of this was that the members of the establishment turned their idols and idolatrous paraphernalia over to Jacob, who buried them under the terebinth tree at Shechem. (The word "oak" in the King James version is an incorrect translation). No doubt the idols now buried included the images which Rachel had stolen from her father Laban at the time of departure from Mesopotamia.

If we are surprised that there should be idols in Jacob's company, we should realize that apart from the special grace of God the tendency of religion is always to deteriorate. From Joshua 24:2 we know that the ancestors of Abraham served false gods in Ur of the Chaldees. Besides Rachel having her father's images, it is highly probable that some of the servants may have been idolaters, at least secretly. Also the women added to the clan at the time of the massacre of the men of

Shechem probably brought idolatry with them. With what we know of the moral standards of Jacob's family, we have little reason to suppose that their religious standards — except in the case of Jacob himself — were very high. Therefore we must conclude that Jacob's call for a cleaning out of idols and idolatry was very necessary at the time. (The term "strange gods" is literally "gods of the foreigner"). We note that the clearing out of idolatry was complete — "they gave unto Jacob ALL the strange gods which were in their hand. . ." (35:4).

Idolatry having been cleaned out, the household moves toward Bethel. "And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob" (35:5). This is God's favorable response to Jacob's act of purifying his clan of idolatry. God's restraining hand prevents the Canaanites from harming the family of Jacob. The text implies a miracle or supernatural act of God in restraining the Canaanites, and this in turn implies that there had been some kind of plan or intention to interfere with or harm the family of Jacob. By His almighty power God terrified the local cities and tribes so that they did not dare to carry out their plan of harming Jacob's clan. Here again we see exemplified the truth that "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Note, too, that this is grace on God's part, for surely Jacob and his family did not really deserve such wonderful divine protection, especially after the scandalous sins recorded in chapter 34.

"So Jacob came to Luz which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him" (35:6). As we have already seen at 28:19, the original (Canaanite) name of this city was Luz, but Jacob named it Bethel, which means "house of God." Jacob, of course, would always remember his wonderful experience at Bethel when God had appeared to him and confirmed to him the great covenant promises originally given to Abraham (28:13-15). Probably Jacob, even after more than twenty years, was able to locate the exact spot where he had slept and received the vision.

At Bethel the altar is built, and the spot is named El-bethel ("God of Bethel"), in commem-

oration of the revelation of God given to Jacob when he was fleeing from his brother Esau. The town or city was named Bethel, but the spot where the altar was built was named El-bethel. So Jacob's vow of twenty years before is carried out in action.

At this point we are informed that Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and was buried near Bethel under an oak, which came to be called Allonbachuth ("Oak of Weeping"). This is the first time that we are told that Rebekah's nurse was named Deborah. She has appeared previously at 24:59, where, however, her name is not given. But how does it happen that Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, is a member of the household of Jacob? Certainly she did not accompany him when he fled from Esau, for we are explicitly told that he went alone (32:10). Nor is there any record of her joining Jacob's household at any time after his departure from Laban. In view of the silence of the record we can only guess at the facts. Probably Rebekah died during Jacob's long absence from home. This may explain the fact that he finally left Laban without being sent for by his mother as she had promised (27:45). The record is also silent as to the time and circumstances of the death of Rebekah, though we are told in 49:31 that she was buried in the cave of Machpelah near Hebron. It would seem probable that following the death of Rebekah, when Deborah learned that Jacob had returned to Canaan, she left the establishment of Isaac and joined that of Jacob. We should note that the sacred record regards the death and burial of this humble woman servant as important enough to warrant a

place in the narrative. The weeping which is mentioned indicates that Deborah was highly respected and greatly loved.

#### Questions:

1. What command of God to Jacob is found at the beginning of Chapter 35?
2. What vow of Jacob must now be fulfilled?
3. What does this new command of God show us concerning the original meaning of Jacob's vow?
4. What is meant by the command of God to Jacob to "dwell" at Bethel?
5. How did Jacob prepare his household for worshipping God at Bethel?
6. How can we explain the fact that members of Jacob's household were idolatrous?
7. What was God's response to Jacob's act of cleansing his household of idolatry?
8. What had the local Canaanite cities evidently intended to do to the clan of Jacob?
9. What was the original name of the city of Bethel?
10. What is the meaning of the name Bethel?
11. What is the meaning of the phrase El-bethel?
12. How may the presence of Rebekah's nurse Deborah in Jacob's household perhaps be explained?

### LESSON 53

#### THE COVENANT PROMISES CONFIRMED TO JACOB

At this point a new theophany (appearance of God) is granted to Jacob. This is stated to have been "when he came out of Padan-Aram" because Jacob is still regarded as enroute home. It is not until 35:27 that he actually returns to his father's residence at Mamre) cf. 28:21, "So that I come again to my father's house in peace. . ."). The change of his name from Jacob to Israel, which had already been revealed at Peniel (32:28) is now repeated and confirmed (35:10).

This is followed by a repetition of some of the great covenant promises originally given to Abraham, especially as concerns numerous posterity and inheritance of the land. "And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him" (35:13). The language here used indicates that this theophany or manifestation of God's presence was not merely in Jacob's mind but was objectively real and visible. As Leupold states it, "His visible ascent occurred in a plainly visible fashion." It is popular in our day to regard all divine revelation as subjective, or in some

sense a product of the consciousness of the human subject. Thus present-day writers tell us that the Old Testament prophets "felt" this, and "discerned" that, they "realized" that something was true and they "recognized the value" of something else — all of which they sold to the public under the label "Thus saith the Lord." Very different is the Bible's own view of divine revelation. God REALLY appeared to men and REALLY spoke to men — not only through men, but to men. The source of revelation was outside of and distinct from the human consciousness. It is folly to try to psychologize the supernatural works of God. What leads men to attempt it is, we believe, a deep antipathy to the supernaturalism of the Bible.

Jacob is deeply impressed by his experience. He repeats his actions of more than twenty years before, setting up a stone for a pillar and pouring oil on it to consecrate it to God. This transaction is not to be identified or confused with that recorded in chapter 28. It is a repetition and yet a

distinct act in which a new pillar is consecrated to God.

Needless to say, there is not the slightest hint of anything idolatrous or superstitious in Jacob's setting up such a pillar and consecrating it to God, as some critics have claimed. These stone pillars were not images nor were they worshipped. Nor was the libation of oil an offering to the dead as some have asserted.

"And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, "Bethel" (35:15). Though this is a repetition of an act of twenty years before, there is an important difference, for the first time only Jacob alone, a single person, was there; now it is a large family or clan, with many people, who are involved.

Next we are told of the birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel (35:16-20). Rachel dies in giving birth to her second son, and "as her soul was departing" she calls his name Ben-oni ("son of my sorrow", but Jacob later called him Benjamin ("son of the right hand"). "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." Rachel was, therefore, not buried in the cave of Machpelah, where the mortal bodies of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah were laid to rest to await the resurrection day (49:30-32; 50:13).

"And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day" (35:20). "Unto this day" means, of course, unto the time of Moses' writing the book of Genesis. Rachel's tomb was long known. It is mentioned in the time of King Saul, 1 Sam. 10:2. Davis' Dictionary of the Bible states that in the fourth century of the Christian era it was claimed that the location was known. Davis also gives a drawing of the present-day structure on the reputed site of the tomb; this structure, however, is of Mohammedan origin and not ancient. It is two miles north of Bethlehem.

"And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar" (35:21). Edar is usually spelled Eder in the Old Testament. The exact location of this tower is unknown. The phrase "tower of Edar" means literally "tower of the flock" and it is possible that a lookout tower of shepherds on the southwest hill of Jerusalem may be meant (cf. Micah 4:8).

If this is the correct location of the tower of Edar, it was only a few miles from the place where Rachel died and was buried.

In 35:22 we read of an additional scandal involving one of Jacob's sons — Reuben, his first-born, who committed adultery with Bilhah, who was originally Rachel's maidservant and who became Jacob's concubine. It is recorded "and Israel heard it." This must have been an additional grief to Jacob.

Next the twelve sons of Jacob are listed (35:22-26) — first the sons of Leah, then those of Rachel; then those of Bilhah, and last those of Zilpah. Although the text gives the general statement that these twelve sons were born to Jacob in Padan-aram, the fact is that the youngest, Benjamin, was born in the land of Canaan.

"And Jacob came unto his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arba, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned" (35:27). We may wonder that Jacob had not hastened to see his aged father as soon as possible after his return to the land of Canaan. We must remember that the scene of this history is not modern America but the ancient Near East; people took life more slowly and deliberately in those days. Leupold calculates that Isaac was 168 years old at the time of Jacob's return to Mamre. Since Isaac died at the age of 180, Jacob was still able to be with his father twelve years before the latter's death (cf. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, II. 929).

"Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him" (35:29). The expression "was gathered unto his people" is not a reference to his burial, which is mentioned separately immediately afterwards. Rather, it is an intimation of faith in a personal immortality beyond the death of the body. The same expression is used of Abraham, who was buried hundreds of miles from the graves of his ancestors. This expression, "was gathered unto his people", while it is not yet the clear daylight of the New Testament revelation concerning the future life, nevertheless expresses a real faith in a personal immortality beyond the grave.

"And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." Possibly this was the first meeting of Esau and Jacob after their separation by the banks of the Jabbok; possibly not. The record does not say. We may consider it probable, on general grounds, that the two men may have met several times during the interval, but we cannot be sure.

#### Questions:

1. What is meant by the term "theophany"?
2. Why is this theophany, which occurred in Canaan, declared to have been "when he came out of Padan-Aram"?
3. What promises were confirmed to Jacob at this time?
4. What statement in the record shows that God was really and visibly present to Jacob?
5. What action of twenty years before was repeated by Jacob on this occasion?
6. What is the meaning of the name Ben-oni? Of the name Benjamin?

7. Where was Rachel buried?
8. How long was the location of Rachel's tomb certainly known?
9. What may have been the location of the tower of Edar?
10. Which of Jacob's sons was involved in a new scandal at this point?
11. How many years did Jacob probably live with his father Isaac before the latter's death?
12. What is meant by the expression "was gathered unto his people"?

#### LESSON 54

#### ABOUT THE DESCENDANTS OF ESAU

(Genesis Chapter 36)

"Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom" (36:1). As we have already noted, this formula — "these are the generations of . . ." — is the standard way, in the Book of Genesis, of introducing a new subject or a new division of a subject. The new subject taken up in chapter 36 is the descendants of Esau. The history of Isaac having been completed by the recording of his death, the book follows its usual pattern in first disposing of the less important history of the descendants of Esau, before proceeding to the more important history of the descendants of Jacob. The data given in this chapter, while not of primary importance for the history of God's plan of redemption, are nevertheless of importance for the history and descent of the Edomites, one of Israel's near neighbors and a kindred nation.

The chapter may be divided into several sections. The first section includes 1-8 and deals with Esau's wives and children, and their settlement in the land of Edom or Seir.

A difficulty appears in the fact that the names of Esau's wives as given in chapter 36 differ from those given in 26:34 and 28:9. 26:34 speaks of two wives, Judith and Bashemath, both of them being Hittites; 28:9 adds Mahalath, who is an Ishmaelite. In 36:1-3 the Ishmaelite wife is called Bashemath, and the two Hittite wives are called Adah and Aholibamah. Moreover 36:2 speaks of the father of one of these women as a Hivite, not a Hittite. While we are not able fully to resolve this complex of problems, we should not regard the facts as proving that the Bible contradicts itself. The New Bible Commentary (Davidson, Stibbs & Kevan) states concerning these problems: "The discrepancies are not real, but arise out of the fluid use of names in oriental custom." Leupold says: "Such changes of names need surprise no one, for Orientals commonly go under several names, especially the women, who frequently receive a new name at marriage" (Exposition of Genesis, II. 934). With regard to the problem of the father of one of Esau's wives being called both a Hittite and a Hivite, this is probably to be explained by the well known fact that "Hittites," like "Canaanites" and "Amorites," was sometimes used as an inclusive general term for the non-Israelite inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and

at other times in the stricter sense designating the Hittites specifically in distinction from other tribes. Thus the man in question could be a Hivite in the strict sense, and still could be called a Hittite in the more general sense.

"And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom" (36:6-8). The question which confronts us here is whether this separation of Esau from the land of Canaan took place before Jacob's return from Padan-aram or after that return. Prior to Jacob's return, the flocks and herds of Isaac consisted partly of those which would eventually belong to Jacob and partly of those which would eventually belong to Esau. As the possessor of the birthright Jacob would be heir to the larger portion. It is possible that Esau, with his household and possessions remained at home with his father Isaac until Jacob's return from Mesopotamia added such a large amount of livestock that a prompt separation became inevitable. On this view, Esau's removal to Edom took place after Jacob's arrival home. On the other hand, the narrative (32:3; 33:14, 16) seems to imply that Esau was already living in Mount Seir, or Edom, prior to Jacob's return. This, however, need not be regarded as an insoluble problem. Prior to Jacob's homecoming, Esau may have been living south of the Dead Sea (Edom) from time to time, and he may have pastured part of his flocks and herds there while the rest were kept in southern Canaan where Isaac lived. The statement of 36:8, "Thus Esau dwelt in Mount Seir" may mean no more than that from that point of time he made Edom his sole and permanent dwelling place.

As to how the clan of Esau occupied the country of Edom, we cannot say definitely. It may be that the land was taken from the former inhabitants by military conquest; on the other hand it is possible that the occupation was more peaceful and merely involved moving in among

the previous inhabitants, followed by intermarriage with them. Statements in chapter 36 suggest that there was considerable intermarriage between the descendants of Esau and the previous inhabitants of the land of Edom.

Verses 9-14 concern the sons of Esau and his grandsons. Among these we note the name of Amalek, a son of Esau and a concubine named Timna. Amalek is the ancestor of the Amalekites, a nomadic people of importance in the later history of the Israelites.

Verses 15-19 list the chiefs of the Edomites. These are called "dukes" in the King James Version. This is obviously an improper translation, for the word "duke" has associations with the feudal system of medieval Europe which are quite foreign to these ancient nomadic Semitic tribes. The Hebrew word may mean "ruler of a thousand", though of course "thousand" may be taken as a round number and need not be understood literally. On these verses Leupold comments that they show "how at a comparatively early date Esau's descendants advance to positions of prominence and honor" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 940-1).

Verses 20-30 present the Horite chiefs. These Horites formed the other main component of the Edomite stock. The historical Edomites were a combination of Horites and descendants of Esau. Archaeological evidence seems to indicate that the Biblical Horites were identical with an ancient people known as the Hurrians. The discoveries of Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in Syria and Nuzi (east of the Tigris River) and elsewhere have revealed the existence of the Hurrians and many facts about them. They were important in the fifteenth century B. C. — about the time of Moses. The word "Horites" means "cave-dwellers." It is possible that the Horites were identical with, or closely related to, the Hivites.

We note that in 36:28 a man named Uz is mentioned. This calls to mind the opening verse of the Book of Job, where we are told that Job lived in the land of Uz. Whether there was a real connection between the two, and if so just where "the land of Uz" was located, we do not know.

The chiefs of the Horites enumerated in verses 20-30 may have ruled successively, but it seems more probable that part of them, at least, were simultaneous. The passage affords no information on this point.

Verses 31-39 present "the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (36:31). Some critics have held that Moses could not have written verse 31 because (they say) it must have been written after there was a king in Israel, i.e., in the time of Saul or later. We do not agree with this claim of the critics. Moses definitely looked

forward to the time when Israel would have a king (Deut. 17:14-20), so it would be quite natural for him to speak of the Edomites having kings before there was any king in Israel. Of course the same critics also reject the genuineness of Deuteronomy, holding that it is a forgery produced in the time of Josiah about 800 years after the time of Moses. We believe there are very good reasons for siding with Moses against the modern critics.

Eight Edomite kings are listed, and of three of them it is said that they had cities, which are named. The others are not stated to have had cities. It is evident that the kingship in Edom was not hereditary, for none of these Edomite kings is said to be the son of any other of them.

In verses 40-43 we have another list of Edomite chiefs. Some of these have already been mentioned in verses 15-19. The important thing to note in verses 40-43 is the phrase "after their places" in verse 40. This is a listing by geographical location. The word "duke" is of course improper and misleading here as in 15-19. The word "chief" is a preferable translation. Some of the names in verses 40-43 may be geographical rather than personal names. Thus Leupold translates: ". . . the chief of Timna, the chief of Alvah", etc. If these are names of places, some of them can be identified today, others not.

#### Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the formula "these are the generations of . . . "?
2. What difficulty exists concerning the names of Esau's wives?
3. What may be the solution of this problem?
4. How can we explain the fact that the father of one of Esau's wives is called both a Hivite and a Hittite?
5. Whither did Esau move from Canaan?
6. What can be said on the question of when Esau made this move?
7. What may have been the method of Esau's clan occupying Edom?
8. What son of Esau gave his name to a nomadic people which were important in later Old Testament history?
9. What may be the literal meaning of the Hebrew word translated "dukes" in the King James Version?
10. Why are the Horite chiefs listed in this chapter?
11. What does modern archaeological evidence indicate concerning the Horites?

12. What is the literal meaning of the name "Horites"?

13. Why do some critics claim that Moses could not have written 36:31?

14. How can this claim of the critics be answered?

15. How can it be shown that kingship among the Edomites was not hereditary?

## LESSON 55

### JOSEPH LOVED BY HIS FATHER BUT HATED BY HIS BROTHERS

(Genesis Chapter 37)

The descendants of Isaac through Esau having been discussed, the narrative now turns to the main subject, the descendants of Isaac through Jacob. The history of Joseph is told in great detail and occupies the greater part of thirteen chapters. In other words the history of this one man's life is given more space in the book of Genesis than the entire history of the world prior to the time of Abraham ((11 chapters). As the Book of Genesis approaches closer to the time of Moses, its human author, it naturally deals with its subject matter in greater detail.

Verse 1 calls us back from Edom to the land of Canaan. In contrast with Esau and his descendants, Jacob dwelt in Canaan. We should realize that although Isaac's death is given in the record at the end of chapter 35, the evidence indicates that he lived twelve years after Jacob's return to Mamre, and therefore that Isaac was still living when Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brothers.

The chapter opens with Joseph at the age of 17, helping to pasture his father's flocks, along with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah. "And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report" (37:2). From what we know of Jacob's sons from chapter 34, there was probably plenty of bad conduct on the part of his brothers for Joseph to report to his father. Some have held that Joseph was a "tattle-tale" with a self-righteous attitude in reporting the bad deeds of his brothers to his father. It is not necessary to regard the matter thus. If their actions were to any degree similar to what is recorded in chapter 34, then it was Joseph's duty to report the matters to his father.

However, Joseph's acting the part of an informer naturally would not increase his popularity with his brothers. Regardless of the right or wrong involved, they would naturally tend to hate the one who reported their evil deeds. This is the first root of the brothers' opposition to Joseph.

The second root of the brothers' hatred of Joseph lay in Jacob's partiality toward him. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children, "because he was the son of his old age" (37:3). It is easy to discern other reasons for Jacob's partiality. Joseph was the son of Rachel, the wife whom he loved best. Also Joseph seems to have been the only one of the brothers — during this period, at

least — who had any real spiritual sensitivity and religious kinship with his father.

We cannot blame Jacob for his feeling of partiality toward Joseph, but we should blame him for a most unwise way of manifesting his affection — by bestowing upon Joseph a special "coat of many colors." Leupold points out that the Hebrew means "he used to make," implying that when one such coat was worn out Jacob provided another to replace it. He also suggests that the coat was a symbolic token of a position of leadership. Naturally, Joseph's being distinguished in this way fills the brothers with jealousy. They cannot help noticing their father's attitude to Joseph. The result is that "they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him" (37:4).

We have noted two sources of the brothers' antipathy to Joseph. A third arose from Joseph's dreams. Though the dreams certainly came from God, as shown by the remarkable manner in which they were fulfilled in later years, this did not warrant Joseph's telling them to his brothers as he did. The brothers hated him "for his dreams, and for his words" (37:8). The dream of the sheaves was so obvious in meaning that the brothers could not miss the point. Naturally enough, they are indignant and express their indignation forcefully.

Joseph's second dream was that of the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing down to him. This one he tells not only to his brothers, but also to his father. Jacob, the father, of course instantly recognizes the import of the dream. He rebukes Joseph, evidently for his pride in telling the dream. In the dream, the moon, of course, refers to Joseph's mother. Rachel, however, was already dead; therefore the reference may be to Leah who no doubt took the place of Rachel as Joseph's mother after his real mother's death.

"And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying" (37:11). The attitude of the brothers was a jealous hatred, that of the father, thoughtful wonder concerning the future.

The brothers have gone to pasture their father's flock in Shechem. We may wonder that they would venture back there after their outrageous conduct there in chapter 34. The explanation may be that the brothers were bold men with no fear of danger. At any rate, Jacob sends Joseph to Shechem to find out how his brothers are getting

along, and bring word back to his father again. Joseph accordingly sets out from "the vale of Hebron" and reaches Shechem. This would be a journey of about 45 miles "as the crow flies," but of course somewhat longer than that by any road or path. We note that there is no indication in the record that either Jacob or Joseph suspected that the brothers might harm Joseph. As Joseph was only 17 years old we can readily see how he could fail to realize the full wickedness of his brothers; but we can hardly fail to be a little surprised that Jacob seems so trustful and unsuspecting, especially in view of the known past conduct of his sons.

Joseph has reached Shechem, but is unable to find his brothers. A stranger who sees him wandering in a field provides the information that the brothers have gone to Dothan. On going there, Joseph locates them. Dothan was about 12 miles north of Shechem.

Seeing and recognizing Joseph while he is yet at a distance — no doubt by his coat of many colors — the brothers conspire together to murder him. They propose to dispose of his body by dropping it into a pit, and to report to their father that some wild animal has killed him. But Reuben, the oldest of the brothers, who apparently had no part in the plan to kill Joseph succeeds in rescuing the lad from their hands, proposing to drop him into a pit and leave him there to die. The idea was that this would avoid the guilt of bloodshed, although of course a murder is a murder regardless of the precise method employed. But Reuben's secret intention is to get Joseph back home safely to Jacob again. As the oldest brother, Reuben seems to have some feeling of moral responsibility which the others lack. Yet we know that Reuben was not truly a godly man, as is shown by his committing adultery as recorded in 35:22. Of course it is possible that in the interval Reuben has repented but there is nothing in the record to indicate this.

#### Questions:

1. How many chapters of Genesis are devoted mainly to the life of Joseph? How does this compare with the number of chapters devoted to the entire period of world history prior to Abraham?
2. How should we regard Joseph's bringing his father the evil report of his brothers?
3. What were the three main roots of the brothers' antagonism to Joseph?
4. What reasons can be assigned for Jacob's partiality toward Joseph? What reason does the Scripture give for it?
5. What may have been the symbolic meaning of Joseph's coat of many colors?
6. What fact shows that Joseph's dreams were of God?
7. Why was it unwise for Joseph to tell his dreams to his brothers and his father?
8. What was the reaction of the brothers on hearing the dreams?
9. What was Jacob's attitude to Joseph's dreams?
10. Where did Jacob send Joseph to find out about his brothers? How far away was this place?
11. How old was Joseph at this time?
12. Where did Joseph finally locate his brothers?
13. What plot to murder Joseph did the brothers form?
14. Which of the brothers prevented the murder?
15. Why would this brother feel a greater responsibility than the others?
16. What secret intention did this brother have?

### LESSON 56

#### FROM FREEDOM IN CANAAN TO SLAVERY IN EGYPT

##### (Genesis Chapter 37)

"And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it" (37:23, 24). Calvin comments on the hypocrisy of the brothers in supposing that they would be less guilty of their brother's death if they dropped him into a pit and left him to starve than if they killed him with a knife or sword: "As if, indeed, it made any difference, whether they ran their brother through with a sword, or put him to death by suffocation. . . . It was a barbarous thought, that they should not touch his life, if

they did not embroil their hands in his blood; since it was a kind of death, not less violent, which they wished to inflict by hunger."

The brothers, having cast Joseph into the pit, sit down to eat their meal. How hardhearted these men were is shown by the fact that they were able to eat food immediately after such a wicked deed as they had done. It has been observed by some writers that very likely Simeon was the one who actually manhandled Joseph. What suggests this is not only Simeon's wickedness shown in chapter 34 but especially Joseph's treatment of Simeon years later in Egypt (42:34).

Next a caravan of merchants is seen on the horizon. These are called Ishmaelites in verse 25 but in verse 28 they are called Midianites. This involves the problem of how the same group of people could be called both Ishmaelites and Midianites. One possible explanation is that there were members of both tribes in the caravan. We know from other places in the Bible that the Midianites and the Ishmaelites were closely connected. Both Ishmael and Midian were sons of Abraham, the former being born of Hagar and the latter of Keturah (16:15; 25:2). In Judges 8:24 the Midianites which were defeated by Gideon are called Ishmaelites. In view of the close connection between the two tribes we need not wonder that the caravan in Gen. 37 is called by both names.

This caravan of traders is coming from Gilead, that is the country east of the Jordan and opposite the northern part of Canaan. With their camels they are carrying spices, balm and myrrh to Egypt for sale. These products were various kinds of aromatic gums for which the region of Gilead was famous, and which were greatly in demand in Egypt, where they were used both for medicine and for embalming the dead.

At this point Judah makes a proposal. (It is evident from verse 29 that Reuben, the oldest brother, was not present at this time). Judah proposes that instead of leaving Joseph to die in the pit, they sell him to the passing merchants. "What profit is it that we slay our brother, and conceal his blood" (37:26). We should note that this question asked by Judah involves an admission that leaving Joseph to die in the pit is morally equivalent to shedding his blood.

Though some have praised Judah's proposal as a noble effort to save Joseph's life, it seems that he does not deserve such praise. He appeals to their desire for profit — "What profit is it?" — rather than to their conscience. And certainly a proposal to sell one's own brother to a foreign country to be a slave is a brutal and hardhearted proposal. If Judah really wanted to do what was right he should have come out boldly and insisted that Joseph be set free.

The brothers agree to Judah's proposal. Joseph is drawn out of the pit and sold to the merchants for twenty pieces of silver. Note that the word "pieces" is in italics in the King James Version, indicating that it is not found in the Hebrew but was supplied by the translators. Coined money was not used at this period; the money was weighed. In Leviticus 27:5 we find 20 pieces of silver as the valuation of a boy from 15 to 20 years of age. The Law of Moses fixed compensation for the death of a full-grown slave at 30 pieces of silver (Ex. 21:32).

From a later chapter in Genesis we know that Joseph did not submit to this treatment without protest, but on the contrary implored his brothers

not to do it. This is seen in 42:21 where the brothers are in the presence of Joseph in Egypt, but are not aware that it is Joseph nor that he can understand the language they are speaking. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

Later Reuben returns to the pit, expecting to find Joseph in it, and on finding the pit empty, he rends his clothes, the sign of extreme emotional stress. Reuben returns to the other brothers and says: "The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?" (37:30). Perhaps the others did not even answer Reuben; at any rate, no answer is recorded. But inevitably Reuben must soon have learned the truth about that which had happened to Joseph.

The wicked hardheartedness of the brothers is further seen in their plan to lie to their father. After making Joseph's coat bloody with goat's blood, they present it to Jacob with the lie: "This have we found" followed by the suggestion: "Know now whether it be thy son's coat or no" (37:32). Not one of the brothers is willing to tell Jacob the truth. Jacob of course recognizes the garment as Joseph's and at once concludes that a wild beast has killed and devoured Joseph.

Perhaps the brothers did not realize that Jacob would take the loss of Joseph so hard. For he proves inconsolable. Rending his clothes, he puts on sackcloth and mourns for his son many days. The brothers and their sisters become alarmed. This is worse than they had expected. So a concerted effort is made to comfort him, "but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him." They rose up to comfort him — but what hypocritical comfort, based as it was on a conspiracy of lies! Not one has enough love and pity to tell Jacob the truth. If they had only told him the truth, it might have been possible to send someone to Egypt to buy Joseph back. If a slave can be sold, he can also be bought. But the brothers are more concerned about concealing their own guilt than about consoling their grief-stricken father or getting their brother back home safely.

"And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard" (37:36). This preliminary information about Joseph's situation in Egypt prepares the way for the more detailed story which follows in chapter 39.

#### Questions:

1. What hypocrisy was involved in the brothers' decision to drop Joseph into the pit?
2. What action after they dropped Joseph into the pit shows the callousness of the brothers?

3. On what ground has it been supposed that Simeon was the one who actually dropped Joseph into the pit?

4. How can we explain the fact that the merchants are called both Ishmaelites and also Midianites?

5. Where was Gilead? For what kind of products was it renowned?

6. What proposal was made by Judah?

7. Is Judah's proposal praiseworthy or not? Why?

8. At what price was Joseph sold?

9. How do we know that Joseph did not submit to being sold without protest?

10. What was Reuben's reaction upon finding the pit empty?

11. What did Jacob conclude upon seeing the bloody coat?

12. What was the effect of this shock upon Jacob?

13. Why was the effort of his sons and daughters to comfort him hypocritical?

## LESSON 57

### GRACE TRANSFORMS AFFLICTION TO OPPORTUNITY

(Genesis Chapters 38 and 39)

**The scandalous sinfulness of the family of Judah. 38:1-30**

This chapter records the lamentable decline of part of the family or clan of Jacob to the low moral standards of the Canaanites. Some of the deeds recorded in this chapter are so morally offensive and so shocking to modesty and good taste that the present writer would hesitate to use the chapter as material for class discussion. At the same time it must be realized that this chapter belongs in the Bible and is there for a good purpose. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The devout Bible student can gain very worth-while lessons from this chapter. Without taking up the details of the chapter we may suggest the following implications of its contents:

1. Apart from the special grace of God even the covenant children of godly parents may fall very deeply into heinous sin.

2. There is need for constant watchfulness lest the moral standards of God's people be lowered to the level of the world.

3. God is a God of grace who forgives even great sin. He does not save people because they are good, but in order that they may become good.

4. All the actions and relationships of men are subject to the moral judgment of God.

5. Practices which are not considered sin at all by the world may be grievous sins when viewed in the light of the will of God.

**The history of Joseph continued. 39:1 to 50:26**

Joseph has been taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard. The record specifically states that Potiphar was "an Egyptian" (39:1). It is possible

that this was during the period of Hyksos domination of Egypt. The Hyksos were Semitic invaders who gained control of Egypt and held it for some hundreds of years. Being Semites from southwestern Asia, the Hyksos were distantly related to the Hebrews and distinct from the genuine Egyptians, who were descended from Ham rather than from Shem. The fact of the Hyksos reign in Egypt at this period may be the reason for the specific mention of the fact that Potiphar was "an Egyptian."

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian" (39:2). What a contrast Joseph forms to his brothers, especially Reuben and Judah! They fell deeply into sin even while at home under the favorable influence of their father; Joseph maintains his unrightness even when away from home, unjustly treated and in a wholly unfavorable environment. All through the history of Joseph we see the blessing of God resting upon a man who chooses to suffer wrong rather than to commit wrong. All that Joseph knew of the true God and His way of salvation he learned before he reached the age of 17 when he was sold into Egypt. His religion and his moral code stood him in good stead and proved sufficient for building a life upon — one of the greatest lives of all history. Joseph was not like a hot-house plant but like a sturdy oak, by the grace of God. Certainly he was not like some church members of the present day who have to be constantly encouraged and exhorted and catered to in order to get them to maintain even a passable outward show of a Christian profession.

We are told that Joseph was in the house of his master the Egyptian. This implies that he was not living in the (doubtless much poorer) servants' quarters but actually in the building occupied by Potiphar and his family. This must have been in marked contrast to the rather humble tent dwellings he had been accustomed to in

Canaan, even though we must remember that his father was a rich man.

Even Potiphar, though not himself a worshipper of the true God, saw that Joseph's success and prosperity in all he undertook must be attributed to the Lord being with him (39:3). As time passes Potiphar is more impressed by Joseph's character and attainments; Joseph "found grace in his sight" and is promoted to be business manager or steward of the entire household establishment. The record indicates that Potiphar became increasingly aware by degrees or stages, of the fact that the blessing of the Lord was upon Joseph and upon all that he did, both "in the house and in the field." "The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake" (39:5). This exemplifies a truth taught by the Bible and often observed in history, namely that blessings come to the world and worldly people because of their connection with the people of God, or the presence of the people of God among them. God would have spared Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons among the inhabitants. In this sense Christians are the salt of the earth.

So complete is Potiphar's confidence in Joseph that he fully entrusts all his possessions to him. Joseph takes full charge of everything. Apart from eating his meals, Potiphar does not need to pay any attention to anything that belongs to him. As Potiphar was a high officer of the Egyptian government, very likely he was more than busy with his official duties and was glad to be relieved of all responsibilities for the management of his household.

Verse 6 adds the information that "Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored." This is stated at this point, perhaps, to prepare the way for what comes next, the infatuation of Potiphar's wife with Joseph. Incidentally, it has been observed that Scripture speaks of very few men as handsome or good looking. We may call to mind Saul, David and Absalom.

"And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me" (39:7). No doubt Joseph was not only good looking, but also handsomely dressed, as befitted his rank in Potiphar's household. She makes a shameless and lawless proposal to Joseph, which he, however, instantly and completely refuses, on the two grounds that to comply with her wishes would be (1) a breach of the trust his master has placed in him, and (2) a wicked sin against God (39:8, 9). Presumably Potiphar's wife was a believer in the common idolatrous religion of Egypt; yet even so, Joseph's mention of a sin against God could not be misunderstood. For adultery is recognized and condemned as sin even by corrupt and pagan faiths.

Joseph's refusal however did not end the evil desires of Potiphar's wife. We are given to under-

stand that the temptation was continued over a considerable period of time ("day by day", verse 10). Joseph consistently refuses to pay attention to her advances.

Finally Potiphar's wife wickedly attempts to trap Joseph in such a way that even if not guilty he is sure to appear guilty to others. Taking advantage of a time when none of the servants are present, and when Joseph is in the house attending to his necessary business, she takes hold of his garment and repeats her lawless solicitation. Joseph, realizing that the situation is serious, leaves the coat in her hands and flees. The Hebrew indicates that he fled not merely into another part of the house, but actually out of doors or into the street.

Now Potiphar's wife is angry with Joseph because he has spurned her advances. To remove suspicion from herself and pin it on Joseph she immediately makes a great outcry, summoning the men of the house and accusing Joseph of attempting to attack her. We may doubt that all the servants believed Potiphar's wife. Surely some of them, at least, must have realized something of her true character and also must have sensed Joseph's moral integrity.

Possibly Potiphar's wife indulges in an appeal to racial prejudice when she says, "See, he hath brought in a Hebrew unto us to mock us" and again refers to Joseph, not by name, but as "the Hebrew servant." At any rate, with a great show of injured innocence Potiphar's wife displays Joseph's coat. On the face of it, this would seem to be evidence of Joseph's guilt, however different the real facts might be. It is not recorded that the men of the house made any reply. As Leupold comments, "They may not have been unduly impressed by her protestations of innocence" (Exposition of Genesis, II. 1000).

#### Questions:

1. Why are matters such as those found in chapter 38 included in the Bible?
2. What is the universal tendency of all moral standards apart from the grace of God?
3. What is the probable reason why the record specifically states that Potiphar was an Egyptian?
4. Who were the rulers of Egypt at this time?
5. How is Joseph's life in contrast to that of Reuben and Judah?
6. How old was Joseph when he was sold into Egypt?
7. What is implied by the statement that Joseph was in the house of his master the Egyptian?
8. What was Potiphar's attitude to Joseph?

9. What benefits came to Potiphar because of Joseph's presence?

10. What is meant by the statement that the people of God are the salt of the earth?

11. To what extent did Potiphar entrust his household and property to Joseph?

12. What information does the Bible give about the personal appearance of Joseph?

13. On what two grounds did Joseph refuse the proposal of Potiphar's wife?

14. By what evidence did Potiphar's wife attempt to prove Joseph guilty?

### LESSON 58

#### IN PRISON BUT NOT FORSAKEN BY THE LORD

(Genesis Chapters 39 and 40)

Evidently Potiphar was away from home at the time of the alleged assault upon Potiphar's wife, for "She laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home" (39:16). Perhaps Potiphar's official duties required him to be away from home a good deal of the time, and his wife may have felt lonely and neglected. However the Scripture record pictures her as a brazen and shameless woman. At any rate, when Potiphar returns home his wife triumphantly displays Joseph's coat and repeats her false accusation of Joseph.

Naturally, Potiphar's wrath was kindled (39:19). It should be noted that the record does not say that Potiphar was angry with Joseph, though of course he may have been. As Leupold suggests, it is possible, at least, that Potiphar was angry principally because the whole incident was a vexation to him. He may well have doubted his wife's word, but naturally he had to take his wife's word against that of a servant, when it was a choice between the two. However, if Potiphar knew anything of his wife's real character he may well have doubted the truth of her accusation. At any rate, he adopts the easy and obvious remedy and removes Joseph from his household, putting him in prison. In view of the fact that the usual penalty for adultery in ancient times was death, it would appear that Joseph was treated rather leniently. This may reflect doubt in Potiphar's mind as to his real guilt, or provocation that he had been deprived of the services of a highly competent steward.

The prison in which Joseph is confined is described as "a place where the king's prisoners were bound" (39:20). Whether "the king's prisoners" means political offenders or merely persons imprisoned — for whatever reason—on the king's orders, we do not know. At any rate, "the king's prisoners" must have been people of some importance, as is shown by the fact that the chief butler and chief baker of the royal palace were later placed in the same prison. This was, therefore, not a common jail for petty thieves and the like. Prominent people were committed to it.

"And he was there in the prison" (39:20). This seems to imply the passing of a considerable period of time. From 41:1 we know that Joseph was in prison over two years.

Yet even in prison God has not forsaken

Joseph, nor has Joseph's faith in God weakened. "But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison" (39:21). Just as Potiphar had noted Joseph's remarkable combination of ability and reliability, so the warden of the prison notes that this man is different from other prisoners. Soon tasks and duties are assigned to Joseph by the warden, and he is entrusted with more and more responsibilities until he is business manager of the prison as he had been business manager of Potiphar's household. "And whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper" (39:22, 23). In all but name, Joseph has become the real warden of the prison. The official warden has an easy, carefree life because everything is being properly attended to by Joseph. If the warden had placed such complete confidence in anyone except Joseph, the results might have been disastrous; but in Joseph's hands everything is done honestly, efficiently and safely.

During all this time the aged Jacob is grieving and mourning the loss of his son Joseph, and the brothers are brazenly facing it out, none of them being willing to tell their father the truth about Joseph because that would involve an admission of their own guilt. Years pass, and Jacob is still left to believe that Joseph was killed and eaten by a wild beast somewhere between Mamre and Shechem. Yet God has not forgotten either Jacob or Joseph. The providence of God seems to us to work slowly, but it is working all the time.

"And it came to pass after these things" — how long after we do not know — "that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt" (40:1). What the offence of these men was we do not know. As chief butler and chief baker (cf. verse 2) they held very responsible positions. Having control over the king's food and drink, his health and even his life depended on their integrity and watchfulness. There is a Jewish account to the effect that the chief butler and the chief baker had been involved in a plot to poison the king. This is very improbable, as the penalty for such an offense would have been immediate death

rather than imprisonment. Much more likely is the supposition that these two men, being prominent persons at the king's court, had been involved in some political plot or intrigue which had been discovered, on account of which they were put in prison.

"And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound" (40:3). From 39:1 we know that "the captain of the guard" was none other than Potiphar himself. It would seem, therefore, that Joseph is still in Potiphar's service, even though it is in his prison rather than in his household.

"And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they continued a season in ward" (40:4). It is evident from this verse that the king's butler and baker were considered important people, and even in prison they are "served" or waited on in accordance with their rank and position. The expression "a season" is quite indefinite, but may even mean a period of years.

#### Questions:

1. What fact indicates that Potiphar was away from home at the time of Joseph's alleged assault upon Potiphar's wife?

2. What may have been the cause of Potiphar's wrath?

3. Why would Potiphar believe his wife rather than Joseph?

4. In view of the laws and customs of those times, how severe was Potiphar's punishment of Joseph?

5. What may have been the reason or reasons for Potiphar's comparatively lenient treatment of Joseph?

6. To what prison was Joseph committed?

7. How long was Joseph in prison?

8. What was the attitude of the warden to Joseph?

9. What change came in Joseph's life in the prison?

10. Why would the king's chief butler and chief baker be regarded as important persons?

11. What may have been the offence of the chief butler and chief baker?

12. Who, apparently, was the "captain of the guard" mentioned on 40:3, 4?

13. What new responsibility was committed to Joseph after the chief butler and chief baker were committed to prison?

### LESSON 59

#### JOSEPH ENABLED TO INTERPRET TWO DREAMS

(Genesis Chapter 40)

From chapter 40 verse 5 we have the account of the dreams of the chief butler and chief baker, and Joseph's interpretation of the dreams. In times before the completion of the Bible, one of God's ways of revealing Himself and His will was by dreams. As a general rule — though there may be some exceptions — revelation in dream form came to persons in a relatively low spiritual state. When persons were in a higher spiritual state, and living in close fellowship with God, more direct modes of revelation were ordinarily employed.

The two prisoners — the chief butler and the chief baker — both have dreams in the same night. Moreover these were not common dreams, but dreams with a meaning, for it is said that they dreamed "each man according to the interpretation of his dream" (40:5). Ordinarily dreams may be the product of something in the subconscious mind of the person and may be explained by psychology, but these dreams were different. They were a vehicle of divine revelation.

In the morning Joseph notes that both men look sad, and inquires as to the reason for their sadness. They in turn reply that they have

dreamed, but lack an interpreter. Joseph then says, "Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you" (40:8). Joseph does not promise to interpret the dreams, but quite evidently he feels that it is possible that God may enable him to interpret them, therefore he does not hesitate to ask that the dreams be told him. In speaking of "God," Joseph of course meant the Lord, the true God, even though inevitably the two Egyptians would have a distorted idea of his meaning.

The chief butler tells his dream first (40:9-11). In his dream he stood by a grape vine with three branches; as he stood there the vine budded, blossomed, and produced ripe grapes; he pressed the juice into Pharaoh's cup and handed the cup to Pharaoh to drink. All these things could not happen so rapidly in real life, of course, but in dreams the sense of time is often distorted and what in real life would take weeks or months seems to happen in a few moments.

"And Joseph said unto him . . ." (40:12). The record does not state that Joseph gave the interpretation of the dream immediately. Certainly it is possible and even probable that Luther is

correct in his supposition that at this point Joseph retired to seek the Lord in prayer. In any case, Joseph is infallibly guided by God in interpreting the dream. He brings out clearly the meaning of its main features. The three branches stand for three days. The handing the cup to Pharaoh signifies a restoration to the butler's former functions and duties. Therefore the dream means that within three days the chief butler will be released from prison and restored to his former position.

Joseph adds a personal plea to the chief butler: "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon" (40:15). Joseph is telling the truth to the chief butler, who will be even more convinced of Joseph's truthfulness after three days when the interpretation of the dream will be fulfilled. The simplicity and lack of elaboration of Joseph's statement has the ring of truth.

Next the chief baker tells his dream, hoping for as favorable an interpretation as the chief butler received. It is not surprising that the chief baker expected a good interpretation, for his dream was in some respects quite similar to the chief butler's. In his dream he stood with three baskets of baked goods stacked on his head, containing many kinds of bread and cakes for Pharaoh to eat. Then the birds swooped down and ate the food out of the baskets that were on his head. As Leupold points out, the chief baker himself failed to note the most important thing in this dream, namely the fact that in the dream, when the birds swooped down to eat the baked foods, the chief baker was helpless to drive them off; they ate without interference.

No doubt Joseph would have liked to give the chief baker as favorable an interpretation as he had given the chief butler. But as he had himself said, interpretations belong to God. Joseph is only a servant of God; it is not in his power to decide what the interpretation shall be; his function is only to declare it. So it occurs that honesty and faithfulness require Joseph to impart bad news to the chief baker. He informs him that the three baskets stand for three days, after which Pharaoh will punish the chief baker by having him beheaded; following that, his body will be hanged on a tree, and the birds will eat the flesh from his bones. Though this was an unpleasant interpretation, it was the truth, and Joseph did not shrink from disclosing it.

Calvin comments on this passage by stating that the majority of religious teachers and preachers, "in desiring to yield to the corrupt wishes of the world, adulterate the word of God. Wherefore, no one is a sincere minister of God's word, but he, who despising reproach, and being ready, as often as it may be necessary, to attack various

offences, will frame his method of teaching according to the command of God. Joseph would, indeed, have preferred to augur well concerning both; but since it is not in his power to give a prosperous fortune to any one, nothing remains for him but frankly to pronounce whatever he has received from the Lord. So, formerly, although the people chose for themselves prophets who would promise them abundance of wine and oil and corn, while they exclaimed loudly against the holy prophets, because they let fall nothing but threatenings . . . yet it was the duty of the servants of the Lord, who had been sent to denounce vengeance, to proceed with severity, although they brought upon themselves hatred and danger." (Calvin). We can readily realize the application of this truth to our own day, when many people want only preachers who will proclaim a "popular" type of message — a message that makes people feel comfortable and peaceful while they are still in their sins and unreconciled to God.

"And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler to his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: but he hanged the chief baker; as Joseph had interpreted to them" (40:20-22). Thus Joseph's interpretations are verified by coming to pass. It is well known that in ancient times kings frequently celebrated their birthdays not only by banquets (Mark 6:21) but also by pardoning selected offenders. The history recorded here is therefore very true to life.

"Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him" (40:23). No doubt Joseph hoped to be released from prison soon. Very likely he thought that the chief butler would be so happy about being released from prison and restored to his position that he would be only too glad to intercede with Pharaoh for Joseph. But it did not happen. The chief butler ungratefully forgets Joseph, who is left to languish in prison. As a matter of fact, two full years pass, and Joseph remains in prison. "Therefore, we are all taught, in his person, that nothing is more improper than to prescribe the time in which God shall help us; since He purposely, for a long season, keeps His own people in anxious suspense, that, by this very experiment, they may truly know what it is to trust in Him" (Calvin). We believe that there was a special purpose of God involved in the chief butler's forgetting Joseph. It was for the further development of Joseph's faith and patience. On the other hand, this does not at all excuse the chief butler, who was guilty of ingratitude in forgetting Joseph. Moreover it is hard to believe that the chief butler could have forgotten Joseph accidentally or unintentionally. From time to time, at least he must have remembered Joseph and recalled the interpretation of the dream which had been so wonderfully ful-

filled. But either because he thought the time was not opportune, or for some other reason, he neglected to carry out Joseph's request. Possibly he just preferred to "let well enough alone" rather than become involved in the case of another prisoner which might have had results for himself.

#### Questions:

1. To what class of people did God usually reveal Himself by dreams in Bible times?
2. How do we know that the dreams of the chief butler and baker were not caused by their own subconscious mind?
3. Why did Joseph ask the chief butler and baker to tell their dreams to him?
4. What was the meaning of the chief butler's dream?
5. What personal request did Joseph make of the chief butler?
6. What argument did Joseph use in making his request of the chief butler?
7. What important point in the chief baker's dream was unnoticed by the dreamer?
8. Why did Joseph interpret the chief baker's dream as bad news for the chief baker?
9. What is the bearing of Joseph's interpretation of the chief baker's dream on the duty of ministers of God's Word today?
10. How did kings in ancient times often celebrate their birthdays?
11. What purpose of God was involved in the chief butler's forgetting Joseph?
12. Could the chief butler have forgotten Joseph accidentally?
13. What may have been the chief butler's reasons for failing to carry out Joseph's request?

### LESSON 60

#### GOD FOREWARNS PHARAOH OF COMING FAMINE

(Genesis Chapter 41)

As chapter 41 opens, two full years have passed, and Joseph is still in prison. Again dreams enter into the history of Joseph. This time it is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who dreams. As in the previous instances, the dreams are not ordinary dreams but are revelations of the purpose of God. As in Joseph's own boyhood experience, there are two dreams with the same meaning. The first is the dream of the seven fat and seven lean cows; the second is the dream of the seven full and seven thin ears of grain. Following each dream, it is recorded, Pharaoh awoke. The fact that divine revelation came to Pharaoh in the form of dreams, rather than by a more direct method, confirms the observation made in a previous lesson that dreams were the mode of revelation to those not living in close contact with God. Pharaoh, as an Egyptian, was of course a pagan and idolater. His idea of God would inevitably be distorted by the false religion of Egypt.

Pharaoh's dreams are a strange combination of features that are entirely natural and appropriate in Egypt, with things that could never happen at all in real life, whether in Egypt or anywhere else. The river, the meadow by the riverside, the cattle grazing in the meadow — all this fits the Egyptian scene perfectly. Doubtless Pharaoh and every Egyptian had gazed on just such a scene many a time. Moreover there would be nothing out of the ordinary in both fat and lean cattle being seen, for Egypt might have either kind, according to the season and the abundance of pasture. But the thin cattle eating up the fat cattle is something that could only happen in a dream. No doubt it was

this very strange feature that caused Pharaoh to awake and ponder the dream.

Again, the seven well-filled ears of grain on a single stalk would be no uncommon sight in Egypt, which was renowned as the granary of the Mediterranean world. With the Nile River continually restoring fertility to the fields in its flood plain and supplying water, it is no wonder that Egypt produced immense crops of wheat and other grain. Nor would the seven thin ears, blasted by the hot east wind, be a strange sight in Egypt. The hot, dry east wind blowing from the desert is said to wilt and blast vegetation at the present day in Egypt. But contrary to what could happen in real life, the seven thin ears eat up the seven fat ones. Again Pharaoh awakes and realizes that he has been dreaming.

In the morning Pharaoh, being convinced that these strange dreams must have a special meaning, summons his experts, including, perhaps, professional dream analysts, and relates the dreams to them. But they are unable to interpret the dreams. It is remarkable that Pharaoh's wise men and magicians did not attempt to make up an interpretation of the dreams, for it would not have been difficult to arrive at a plausible meaning by guesswork. As everyone knew, the Nile River was (and is) Egypt's source of fertility, and the cow was worshipped as a symbol of the productive power of nature. The dreams, then, were framed in terms of ideas familiar to every Egyptian, and we are almost surprised that the wise men of Egypt were unable to discern the meaning. "Apparently, the hand of God was upon the interpreters, making

their own devices of no effect, in order that the revelation might come by His own chosen instrument" (Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, II. 1023). Something can be said, too, for the honesty of the Egyptian wise men. Though devotees of a false religion and no doubt largely involved in the study of pseudo-science, they do not consciously and deliberately attempt to satisfy the king by the use of falsehood.

The wise men and magicians having failed to interpret the king's dream, the chief butler speaks up: "I do remember my faults this day" (41:9). Well he may remember his faults — he has basely "forgotten" Joseph for two full years, while Joseph remains unjustly imprisoned. The chief butler relates his experience and that of the chief baker, and tells how the interpretations given by Joseph in each case came true. The result of this is that Pharaoh summons Joseph to the royal palace.

The record states that Joseph was brought "hastily" out of the prison. But first he must be shaved and properly attired. This does not imply that in the prison Joseph has been living in a dirty or unkempt condition, but merely that there were special requirements for a person to be presented before the ruler of Egypt. After these matters have been attended to, Joseph is brought into the presence of Pharaoh in order to interpret the king's dreams. Joseph humbly replies, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of

peace." Here Joseph displays the mark of every true servant of God, in that he gives all the credit to God and takes none to himself.

#### Questions:

1. How much time passed while Joseph remained in prison?
2. What were the two dreams of Pharaoh?
3. What is implied by the fact that God's revelation came to Pharaoh in the form of dreams rather than some other form?
4. What features of Pharaoh's dreams were things natural and common in the land of Egypt?
5. What features of the king's dreams were things that could not happen in real life?
6. What was Pharaoh's first attempt to learn the meaning of his dreams?
7. Why is it surprising that the Egyptian wise men were not able to interpret the dreams?
8. How can we explain the wise men's failure to interpret the king's dreams?
9. What confession did the chief butler make?
10. What preparation was necessary before Joseph could be presented at the court of Pharaoh?
11. What statement of Joseph indicates that he was a humble and true servant of God?

### LESSON 61

#### GOD'S PROVIDENCE MAKES JOSEPH RULER OF EGYPT

Pharaoh repeats his dreams to Joseph (41:17-24), adding the statement "I told this unto the magicians, but there was none that could declare it to me." Joseph at once proceeds to give the interpretation of the dreams. In Joseph's speech, we note the emphasis placed on God as the revealer of truth and the controller of events. Whatever may be Pharaoh's original idea of God or gods, he cannot fail to note in what Joseph says the idea of one God who holds absolute control over all things, including the forces of nature and the events of the future.

First of all Joseph lays down the proposition that "the dream is one," that is, Pharaoh's two dreams have but a single meaning. Later he adds (verse 32) that the reason for Pharaoh having two dreams rather than just one, is for emphasis on the absolute certainty of the thing coming to pass, and that soon.

The interpretation is that there shall be a succession of seven specially good years in Egypt, in which there shall be plentiful harvests, followed by a succession of seven years of famine. The years of famine will be so severe that the plenty of the seven good years will be forgotten.

So much for the meaning of the dreams. We

may note in the fact of these dreams a double purpose of God. First, Pharaoh's dreams are God's way of getting His servant Joseph out of prison. Secondly, Pharaoh's dreams proceed from the compassion of God on the people of Egypt and neighboring countries. There are to be seven years of famine, but in the mercy of God these will be preceded by seven good years; and in the mercy of God this is revealed to the king of Egypt in advance so that wise preparations can be made and the suffering of the seven bad years somewhat mitigated.

Thus in the affairs of Egypt and the dreams of Pharaoh, as these proceed from the providence of God, we see both God's general compassion on His creatures, and His special favor to His elect. Both God's compassion on human suffering and His special redemptive purpose connected with the seed of Abraham are seen at work in this history. The immediate purpose is to prevent or mitigate suffering in Egypt; the long-range (redemptive) purpose is to preserve alive that portion of the human race from which the Messiah, the Seed of the woman, must finally come.

Having declared the meaning of the dreams to Pharaoh, Joseph adds some wise counsel (41:33-

36). He proposes that a "discreet and wise" man be found and appointed as food administrator of the land of Egypt, to have supervision over officers who shall collect and store one-fifth of the crops of grain during the seven good years, so that this surplus can be rationed out to the people during the seven years of famine which are sure to follow, "that the land perish not through the famine."

"And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh" (41:37). Apparently neither Pharaoh nor his advisors thought of questioning the truth of Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, nor the divine source of the dreams themselves. In connection with this, no doubt the testimony of the chief butler to the reliability of Joseph's interpretation of dreams carried much weight. Yet beyond this, we may see a special operation of God. Did no Egyptian official become jealous of the honor and prominence about to be bestowed upon a foreigner just removed from prison? Did none of the Egyptian magicians and wise men become irritated by their own lowered prestige in comparison with that of this newcomer? Apparently not. We can see in this the special working of God, who brings His purposes to pass without fail. It is truly astonishing that a foreign slave, just out of prison where he had been put for alleged crime, should suddenly be entrusted with the highest and most responsible position in the kingdom, subordinate only to Pharaoh himself. And that this should occur, as it seems to have, without delay or opposition, is an even stronger proof of the wondrous working of God. We would naturally expect the Egyptian magicians, wise men and politicians to be intensely jealous. Yet there is no indication of the slightest opposition to Joseph. We can only wonder what Potiphar's wife may have thought of the turn of events!

The proposal is not only good in the eyes of Pharaoh, but also "in the eyes of all his servants" (41:37). Pharaoh decides that no person can be found better qualified than Joseph himself to be the food administrator of Egypt, clothed with almost unlimited powers to carry out his program of conserving grain during the good years and rationing it out during the years of famine.

"Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. . . See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt" (41:40, 41). This grant of authority is symbolized by the transfer of Pharaoh's ring from his own hand to Joseph's hand. This would be a signet ring used for authenticating documents — a sort of "power of attorney" granted to Joseph, so that his acts and decrees will be of the same authority as those of Pharaoh himself. To the ring are added clothing of fine linen, and a gold chain about his neck. Moreover Joseph is made to ride in the second chariot of Egypt, while runners ahead of him cry "Bow the knee!" Pharaoh adds that without Joseph shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all

the land of Egypt, implying that absolute powers have been conferred upon him. What a change in the circumstances of Joseph from the day when his brothers stripped him of his coat of many colors and dropped him into a pit to starve to death, and later sold him to a caravan of merchants for twenty pieces of silver!

For Egyptian social standing it was also necessary that Joseph be a married man. Accordingly, Pharaoh provides for this too. Joseph is given an Egyptian name, Zaphnath-Paaneah. The meaning of this name is uncertain. It may mean "abundance of life" or some related idea. For his wife Joseph is given a lady of high rank, Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. On was the city where the worship of the sun-god was centered. Both the names, Asenath and Potiphera, seem to have idolatrous connotations. But we may certainly suppose that following her marriage to Joseph Asenath was converted from the errors and superstitions of Egyptian paganism to faith in the one true God, the Lord, whom Joseph worshipped. Leupold suggests that Joseph's marriage to the daughter of such an important and prominent Egyptian was calculated to neutralize whatever prejudice may have existed against him as a foreigner.

#### Questions:

1. What special emphasis is found in Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams?
2. Why did God reveal the future to Pharaoh by two dreams rather than by just one?
3. What was the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams?
4. What two purposes of God can be discerned in Pharaoh's dreams?
5. What counsel did Joseph give to Pharaoh after interpreting the dreams?
6. How can we explain the fact that there seemed to be no prejudice against Joseph or opposition to his appointment?
7. What powers did Pharaoh confer upon Joseph?
8. What symbols of authority were given to Joseph?
9. What Egyptian name was given to Joseph? What may its meaning be?
10. Why was it necessary, from the Egyptian point of view, for Joseph to be a married man?
11. Who became Joseph's wife?
12. What may we suppose as to her religion before and after her marriage to Joseph?

(To be continued)

## Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of *Blue Banner Faith and Life* each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers. Do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

### CHRISTIAN FICTION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The following eleven books are all published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. They are recommended as suitable for church and Sabbath School libraries and also as appropriate prize or gift items for children and young people.

**BEYOND THE TANGLED MOUNTAIN**, by Douglas C. Percy. 1962, pp. 158. \$2.50. A missionary novel featuring courage, faith, adventure and dedication.

**THE NURSE'S VICTORY**, by Marie A. Yoder. 1962, pp. 158. \$2.50. The experiences of a Christian girl who served as a missionary nurse in Puerto Rico.

**THE RETURN OF SPOTTED EAGLE**, by Pearl Roam. 1962, pp. 87. \$1.95. An adventure story of life on the old Western frontier of America.

**THE CLOUDED SKY**, by Florence E. Beausay. 1962, pp. 148. \$2.50. The story of the providence of God in the life of jet fighter pilot David Cameron and his high school sweetheart Tamara Blair.

**HIDDEN FIRE**, by Adel Pryor. 1962, pp. 156. \$2.50. A young Christian girl who is emotionally torn between two loves finds by experience that all things work together for good to them that love God.

**BROWN SHADOW**, by Craig Massey. 1962, pp. 118. \$1.95. This is a sequel to the author's earlier story, **Indian Drums and Broken Arrows**. High adventure in the days following the American Revolutionary War.

**THE PHANTOM SHIP**, by Allan Stewart. 1962, pp. 119. \$1.95. Mystery and adventure on the ocean off the coast of Florida.

**NEXT DOOR TO HAPPINESS**, by LaVaughn Storsve. 1962, pp. 184. \$2.50. The obstacle-strewn romance of a lonely young man of Christian character and a young woman burdened by the guilt of unforgiven sin, with a happy ending manifesting the grace of God in the Gospel of His Son.

**THIS SIDE OF TOMORROW**, by Ruth Livingston Hill. 1962, pp. 186. \$2.50. The exper-

iences of a Pennsylvania farm girl who almost loses her grip on the Christian Faith in a secular, non-Christian college. Both romance and renewed Christian certainty come to Verna Mae as she finds strong Christian students among the many indifferent and unbelieving ones.

**THE HEART OF A STRANGER**, by Lon Woodrum. 1962, pp. 136. \$2.50. Suspense and romance. A young man who had been unjustly imprisoned for a crime of which he was innocent bitterly plans to "get even" with society by robbing a bank. But his conscience troubles him, and the robbery is never committed. Instead, he falls in love with the daughter of the president of the bank he had intended to rob. The power of Christ in the life of this girl and others around her deeply impresses the young man, who finally turns to the Lord.

**THE GREEN OLIVE TREE**, by Irene Murray. 1962, pp. 223. \$2.95. Three young women — Melinda, Meg and Linda — what each sought in marriage, and what each found. Tragedy and sorrow come to two, but the third finds true fulfillment and happiness in a truly Christian marriage which honors the Lord.

(End of list of books published by Zondervan Publishing House)

**ORPHAN BY CHOICE**, by Clara Verner. Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Mo. 1960, pp. 200. \$2.50. Phyllis Marlowe becomes an orphan by choice. When divorce is tearing her parental home apart, this junior college student leaves home for a large city. After much heartbreak, peace and happiness is found in Christ.

— J. G. Vos

**DAILY MANNA CALENDAR**, edited by Martin Monsma, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1963. \$1.95.

Meditations for daily devotions in leaflet form written by men of the Reformed Faith. There is a thought provoking meditation on each leaflet on the verse quoted for the day. A different author for each week of the year gives variety. Some write their meditations in the form of a series but most of the writers do not. The meditations are not as shallow in thought as some devotional helps tend to be. It is recommended to those who want more than just an

illustration of the application of a Bible verse in day by day living.

— Robert A. Henning

**SUPPLEMENTA CALVINIA**, by T. H. L. Parker. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1962, pp. 23, paper cover. 2 shillings (30 cents).

The World Reformed Alliance has undertaken, through an international committee under the chairmanship of Dr. J. I. McCord of Princeton Seminary, the publication of 14 manuscript volumes of Calvin's sermons. An interesting account of preparation of the manuscripts, their history, the problems involved in the publication of a critical text, and brief suggestion of their value is given by a member of the committee.

This monograph is of importance to all students of Calvin and will be useful in church libraries to create interest in the Reformer. Included are two full page facsimile plates of the manuscripts.

— E. C. Copeland

**THE UNCHANGING COMMISSION**, by David H. Adeney. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1961, pp. 92. Paper. Four shillings (60c)

The sub-title well describes the contents: "A re-appraisal of foreign missions and the Christian's responsibility." The author is well qualified to speak on this subject by many years of service in the Orient. After the door was closed to him in China, he spent several years as field representative of Inter-Varsity Fellowship in the U.S.A. where this book was first written and published in 1955.

Mr. Adeney presents an accurate picture of the present international situation and how it has affected missionary activity. For him the problem is not one of competing idealisms. The driving power behind the missionary programme of the church must be the desire to see Christ exalted, not the fear of communism (p. 23).

Nor are the hindrances to missionary activity primarily external. "The church of Jesus Christ can never blame the world for her failure to evangelize" (p. 25). "Obedience, not opportunity, is the keyword to missionary endeavour" (p. 26).

A very enlightening Biblical discussion of the motive, personality, qualifications and goal of the missionary follows. There is a valuable chapter discussing "Vocational Witness Overseas" in the light of increasing restrictions on "professional" missionaries. He presents also the problems which arise in that which is individual rather than church directed.

Rev. Adeney seeks to bring home the call of the Great Commission to the reader, and fitting-

ly ends, "A decision to be satisfied with nothing less than a life fully controlled by the Holy Spirit will open the way for you to go forth with the Saviour into the mission fields of the world." (p. 92).

This is an excellent book for Missionary Societies and youth groups to study, and a fine gift to that young person who should be considering the claims of Christ upon his or her life.

— E. C. Copeland

**A GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN READING**, revised and edited by A. F. Walls. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1961, pp. 157. six shillings six pence (90c).

This is a complete revision of the Guide by the same publishers in 1952, an indication of the usefulness of the former and what can be expected of this.

The editor reminds us that it is only a guide and not a basis for judgment of works. It is recognized that there are omissions and probable errors. It does not pretend to be complete, being limited in three ways: 1. It is designed for people living in the Sterling area and so includes a limited number of American works. 2. It is designed for "the general reader, whose time for theological study is limited, but who is anxious to equip himself in the understanding and expression of his faith" (p. 9). 3. "A work professing to be a guide to anything Christian must be rooted in whole-hearted obedience to the authority of the Lord conveyed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments" (p. 10). Some liberal works are included that the Christian may be informed of the theological trends of the day; these are usually indicated.

Over 1500 titles are listed under eight main sections and numerous sub-sections. The main sections are The Bible, O. T., N. T., Christian Doctrine, Apologetics, The Practice of Christianity, Church History and Biography; and The Church Overseas. There is an addenda of information on works published after the manuscript was prepared, and an index of authors and of American publishers with addresses.

Information is necessarily brief, usually a sentence or phrase to indicate the nature of the contents or theological bias. In many cases no comment is made.

Though limited, as indicated above, this is a very useful guide to conservative Christian literature, particularly for the lay leadership of the church.

— E. C. Copeland

**SERMONS OF ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE**, The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1961, pp. 187. 3 shillings.

There is a certain timelessness to the sermons of Robert Murray M'Cheyne which places them high on the list of great sermons of all time. Nineteenth Century Scotland knew no more dedicated a pastor than young M'Cheyne whose ministry at St. Giles, Edinburgh came to a close when he died at only twenty-nine years of age.

This recent paperback contains twenty-six of some 300 sermons for which M'Cheyne left notes. All of these selections are timely and are especially valuable as examples of Calvinism practically applied to the area of evangelism. No compromise is made of the Sovereignty of God, nor yet is man's responsibility left unchallenged.

Other more complete collections of M'Cheyne are available; but as a "sampler" this edition is highly recommended. Its moderate cost also makes it especially suitable for general congregational sale and distribution as excellent Sabbath reading.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

KIERKEGAARD, by S. U. Zuidema, International Library of Philosophy and Theology, (MODERN THINKERS SERIES: David H. Freeman, Editor), Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1960, pp. 50, paper cover. \$1.25.

No one will deny that the psychological complexes of the melancholy Dane, Soren Kierkegaard, are directly related to his theological complexities. His works are subjective, intensely personal, and not easily resolved into data of systematic theology. Yet he is recognized as one of the founding fathers of current theology. His "existentialism", his philosophic irrationalism are the tools of present-day neo-orthodox theologians.

Dr. Zuidema rightly states in his brief monograph that "Kierkegaard in many points had to pervert the Biblical revelation concerning Christ in order to make it compatible with his idea of the Absolute Paradox. Kierkegaard distorted Biblical revelation to fit his own preconceived theory of human existence, a theory developed independently of revelation. (p. 10).

A cursory knowledge of Kierkegaard's works could well lead to his thought being caricatured. With great fairness, Zuidema avoids this tendency as he analyzes the philosophic framework of Kierkegaardianism. He shows rather how, once the presuppositions of existentialism are granted, there does exist a coherent and "logical" view.

The nature of faith in K. and the problem of revelation and time are well presented. K. is distinguished from later existentialist thinkers both in terms of his adherence to a form of Christianity and his extreme philosophic individualism.

These 50 pages do **not** represent a brief and oversimplified outline of K.'s thought. Rather, the essential thrusts of K. are discussed and evaluated in terms of Reformed Theology.

It is regrettable that Dr. Zuidema does not deal at length with Kierkegaard's view of Scripture, but instead he assumes this to be obvious to the reader and proceeds to give more attention to the problem of Revelation in terms of the Divine-human encounter.

This book is highly recommended for pastors and conscientious laymen who would endeavor to understand some of the underlying currents in contemporary theology.

It is almost essential to read a work of this nature before actually endeavoring to read K. himself.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

BROWNLOW NORTH, HIS LIFE AND WORK, by K. Moody-Stuart, M. A., The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1961, pp. 221. 3 shillings sixpence.

The poorest biography of a great person cannot help but reflect some of the greatness of the one concerning whom it is written. While Moody-Stuart's biography of Brownlow North cannot be classified as any literary masterpiece, its subject matter, the life and work of a great 19th Century Scottish evangelist, is certainly stimulating material. It is regrettable that the author's style is annoyingly pedantic and that he fails to present Brownlow North as a living personality. The early life of North is only sketchily presented and all too little of his actual discourses are contained in this book. If the reader is able to see behind the analytical and impersonal scenes of the book and find inspiration in the life and work of North, this book is well worth his while. However, it is not suitable written for the young Christian; nor should it be placed in anyone's hands as a stimulating devotional work. The pastor and trained layman will find this work valuable from an historical viewpoint and also from a theological viewpoint as it relates the effective nature of North's evangelism in terms of his grasp of Reformed doctrine.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES FOR 1963, by Wilbur M. Smith. W. A. Wilde Company, 10 Huron Street, Natick, Mass. 1963, pp. 447. \$2.95.

This volume presents the well-known Peloubet's Notes on the International Sabbath School Lessons, ably prepared by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith. Those who have used these notes in the past will realize their high quality and value. The theological viewpoint is soundly evangelical and, in the main, acceptable from the standpoint of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Not only are these notes Biblically sound — they are also eminently usable, with an abundance of expository and illustrative material. For such a large volume of valuable material the price is remarkably moderate. An additional feature of this year's volume is a page at the end to be cut out and used as a coupon. This page when filled

out and mailed to the publishers entitles the owner of the volume to receive a special set of Bible maps in color. This book is heartily recommended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

**TOWARD THE UNDERSTANDING OF ST. PAUL**, by Donald J. Selby. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J. 1962, pp. 348. \$4.95.

This book is attractive, well-written, scholarly and manifests thorough familiarity with the relevant literature, including orthodox works.

The author seems to feel, however, that scholarship requires that the New Testament writings be treated as if they were mere human documents, i. e., that their divine inspiration and inerrancy must, for scholarly study (though not necessarily for religious faith) be disregarded. This, of course, is a wrong tendency. Truly scholarly study of the Bible should proceed on the assumption that the Bible and its component parts are what they purport to be, namely, infallible God-breathed Scripture. Although the author is not at all extreme, he shows some tendency to emphasize apparent discrepancies or contradictions in Scripture. He seems to regard these, in some cases, as real contradictions which have been introduced into Scripture through human limitation or error, where historical orthodoxy would regard them as **difficulties** to be solved if possible while the basic truth of the inerrancy of Scripture is retained as the major premise.

The author's doubt as to the genuineness (i. e., full Pauline authorship) of the Pastoral Epistles seems to base too much on human reason.

In dealing with Paul's theology, the author follows the modern tendency to stress the vital element (union with Christ) while virtually neglecting the forensic element (justification by imputed righteousness) (See pages 319, 320). The author stresses "the new life of righteousness" but not **the imputed righteousness of Christ**, which is so prominent in the Epistle to the Romans. This is a serious defect in the book. Along the same line, there is apparently nowhere in the book a clear statement of the doctrine of the atonement, although there is something about it (in rather ambiguous language) on page 318.

Similarly, the author apparently (though without full clarity) seems to hold a **realistic** rather than a **federal** (Covenant of Works) view of the relation of Adam's sin to the human race. The language lacks consistency. First he says "Adam here is the representative man," then he adds that "all men participate in the disobedience of Adam." The first of these statements fits the federal or covenant theology (Hodge, Westminster Confession, etc.) while the second fits the **realistic** theology (the idea that human nature was concentrated in Adam and so all Adam's posterity actually sinned in Adam when Adam sinned; Shedd, A.

H. Strong, etc.). This is a minor flaw in a book of this type, but it indicates theological confusion in the author's mind. Or does he possibly think that the federal theology — the Covenant of Works and Covenant of Grace concept — is dead and need no longer be reckoned with?

— J. G. Vos

**THE OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE: REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE HOLY BIBLE**, edited by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. Oxford University Press, 417 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. 1962. pp. 1576. \$5.95.

This beautifully printed and bound volume contains the text of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, with extensive explanatory notes at the foot of the pages. There are many cross references, an index of the notes, and an excellent set of colored Bible maps at the end of the volume. Each book of the Bible has prefixed to it a brief introduction. Included are also articles on How to Read the Bible, Geography, History, Archaeology, Weights and Measures, Chronology, English Versions of the Bible, etc.

The editor of the Old Testament part is Dr. Herbert G. May of the Oberlin College Graduate School of Theology; of the New Testament part, Dr. Bruce M. Metzger, of Princeton Theological Seminary.

For such a large book, and one so well printed and bound, the price is most moderate.

In spite of its wealth of scholarship and its many commendable features, we are unable to recommend this book because its theological viewpoint is incompatible with faith in the Bible as the infallible Word of God. A glance through the list of names of the scholars who have prepared the introductions and notes shows that they are practically to a man either theological liberals or adherents of the Neo-orthodox school of thought. What they have written is just what might be expected from such authors. The Books of Moses are treated according to present-day "critical" theories, as put together from various sources long after the time of Moses; Deuteronomy is said to be fundamentally "a rediscovery and reinterpretation of Mosaic teaching in the light of later historical understanding" (p. 214). Chapters 40-55 of the Book of Isaiah are stated to be "anonymous" and to have originated "immediately before the fall of Babylon" in 539 B.C. This implies, of course, that all the places in the New Testament which quote this part of the book of Isaiah as the writing of Isaiah the prophet are erroneous. Isaiah 56-66 is said "to suggest a date between 530 and 510 B.C." while "chapters 60-62 may be later" (p. 822). The Book of Daniel is attributed to "a pious Jew living under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, 167-164 B.C." (p. 1067). This, of course, denies that Daniel contains true **predictive prophecy**, and holds, rather, that the "prophecies" of the book

were written after the things "prophesied" were actually beginning to happen. Of course, it is the anti-supernaturalism of the liberal critics which motivates their zeal to explain away predictive prophecy in Scripture.

In the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew is said to have been written by an "unknown Christian teacher" (p. 1171). Concerning the Pastoral Epistles (I, II Timothy and Titus) we are told that "It is difficult to ascribe them in their present form to the apostle Paul" and that "it is easier to assume that a loyal disciple of Paul used several previously unpublished messages of the apostle and expanded them to deal with conditions confronting the church a generation after Paul's death" (p. 1438). Similarly, the Second Epistle of Peter is held to be almost certainly not by Peter himself, but by some unknown Christian writing in Peter's name early in the second century.

This reviewer found the notes on Isaiah chapter 53 especially offensive. The Servant of the Lord in this chapter is simply stated to be "Israel"; Christians have always understood this Servant to be Jesus Christ, the perfect Israelite, and the prophecy is certainly referred to Christ in the New Testament. Concerning the statements of Isa. 53:2 ("like a young plant"; "a root out of dry ground") we are told that "these are sometimes considered Messianic allusions" (p. 889). The note on Isaiah 53 concludes thus: "Israel, Abraham's 'child', brings blessings to many. The poem describes the purpose of God's people, the covenant community" (p. 890). Concerning this last statement the reviewer would comment by quoting the words of Acts 8:27ff., where the evangelist Philip joins the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch who was "sitting in his chariot" reading "Isaiah the prophet" (Acts 8:28). The place where the eunuch was reading was Isa. 53:7, 8, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." "And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:34, 35). Must we now believe that Philip, who undertook this interview under revelation of the Holy Spirit through "the angel of the Lord" (Acts 8:26), was **mistaken** as to the basic meaning of Isaiah chapter 53 — that Philip wrongly thought it a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, but we must now accept the view of modern scholarship that the subject of the chapter is **Israel**?

There is much more of this sort of thing in the volume we have been considering. The pity is that many unsuspecting Christian people are likely to be impressed by its many attractive fea-

tures so as to accept its statements uncritically to the serious undermining of their faith in the integrity of God's Holy Word.

— J. G. Vos

**BASIC SOURCES OF THE JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION**, edited by Fred Berthold, Allen Carlsten, Klaus Penzel and James F. Ross. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1962, pp. 444. \$7.95.

This beautifully printed and bound book is made up chiefly of readings from the sources of Judaism and Christianity. With two columns to the page and appropriate sub-captions the material is very readable and usable. Some introductory and interpretive (non-source) material is printed across the page instead of in columns.

In view of the excellent mechanical presentation of the material, it is greatly to be regretted that a "liberal" theological viewpoint is very much in evidence. Thus the material from the Pentateuch is presented in terms of the critical documentary theory. The (entirely hypothetical) "Second Isaiah" is introduced after the real Isaiah (p. 44), and is "identified" as "the name given by biblical critics to the anonymous prophet who lived during the Exile just prior to the capture of Babylon by the Persians in 539 B.C." On page 12 a "Third Isaiah" is mentioned, with the statement that Isaiah chapters 56-66 "is commonly regarded as the work of Second Isaiah's disciples." The New Testament, of course, quotes from all parts of the Book of Isaiah as the genuine writing of the great Eighth Century prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. The editors of this volume give their vote for the liberal critics rather than for the Lord Jesus Christ and His inspired apostles. Also they quite ignore the highly competent scholarship of such conservative writers as Robert Dick Wilson, Oswald T. Allis and Edward J. Young. The literature cited appears to be monotonously liberal, mediating or Neo-orthodox. On the Old Testament S. R. Driver, H. H. Rowley, John Bright, and Bernhard W. Anderson (among others) are listed in the Bibliography; on the New Testament, among others Rudolph Bultmann, Oscar Cullmann, C. H. Dodd, Edgar G. Goodspeed, and many others — but this reviewer did not recognize the name of a real believer in the Bible as the infallible Word of God in the entire list.

We are informed that the Book of Daniel was written about 165 B.C. (that is, of course, 400 years after Daniel really lived and wrote). Thus the viewpoint here too is that of naturalistic criticism.

The selected material from the Bible is followed by selections from the Dead Sea Scrolls (The "Manuel of Discipline") and from the Talmud. This material is of value and informative. Next comes the history of Christian-

ity in the early and medieval periods. Material is presented from Irenaeus, Cyprian, Augustine, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, Benedict of Nursia, Thomas a-Kempis, Thomas Aquinas, and the Canons and Decrees of the council of Trent. The material from Augustine is his **Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love** (25 large pages) and gives a good sampling of the theology of Augustine.

Roughly half of the book concerns the Reformation and Modern periods. It is correctly stated that the Protestant Reformation was both a doctrinal reformation and a practical and ecclesiastical revolution. No support is given to the modern, popular but superficial notion that the Reformation was essentially a revolt against authority in favor of intellectual liberty. The central principle of Calvinism is rightly affirmed to be the sovereignty of God, and Calvin's **Institutes of the Christian Religion** is described as a "masterpiece." Moreover, due credit is given to Calvinism for intense activity in promoting the cause of Christ. "Calvin's theology, instead of paralyzing human exertions, seemed to give to Calvinists an enthusiasm for becoming the human instruments of God's sovereign will. It was this that filled Calvin's followers with an untiring zeal to shape the world in all its spheres to the will of God" (p. 244). It is not quite correct, however, to state (as this book does on p. 244) that Calvin "felt justified in having Servetus burned at the stake. . .". The fact is that Calvin justified the death sentence but disapproved the infliction of it by burning; Calvin called death by burning an "atrocious" and tried in vain to get the civil court which had condemned Servetus to change the mode of execution to beheading. The book is correct, however, in adding that the death of Servetus "was approved by all the major Protestant reformers" (p. 244).

The presentation is marked by a wide selection of readings from Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish sources. There are even four pages from John Dewey. In the modern period, two truly sound, orthodox figures appear: William Jennings Bryan (3 pages); Benjamin B. Warfield, on Christian supernaturalism and on the inspiration of Scripture (6 pages). These are followed, however, by material from Karl Barth (5½ pages), Rudolph Bultmann (5 pages), Paul Tillich (5 pages), Reinhold Niebuhr (7 pages), and W. A. Visser 'T Hooft (4 pages). The absence of a single **contemporary** advocate of orthodox Christianity is conspicuous. William Jennings Bryan, though a very public figure, was certainly not a theologian. Dr. J. Gresham Machen would have been a much more suitable choice to place alongside of Benjamin B. Warfield. And certainly there should have been at least **one** present-day voice to give the orthodox position over against those 25 pages from Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, Niebuhr and 'T Hooft. These five theologians differ among themselves, to be sure, but they all agree in one thing — that his-

torical orthodox Christianity is an outworn creed and cannot be held by intelligent scholars today. The way the material is presented, the unsuspecting college student is likely to get the impression that no responsible scholarship of the present day accepts the Bible as the infallible Word of God and adheres honestly and faithfully to the great historic confessions such as the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The reviewer found the portions of this book dealing with the early, medieval and Reformation periods of Christianity good and of great value. The part on the Biblical period is absolutely unacceptable because of the pronounced negative critical bias of the editors, and the part on the contemporary scene is highly unsatisfactory because it is heavily weighted with material selected from liberal and neo-orthodox sources. This volume came to the Bible Department of Geneva College as a sample book. The reviewer feels that it would be quite unsuitable for use in undergraduate courses in a Christian college unless very carefully handled by an instructor able to point out its bias toward unorthodoxy, while making a special effort to balance this with satisfactory material giving the orthodox position.

— J. G. Vos

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: CHRISTIAN OR UNCHRISTIAN**, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1757, Waco, Texas. 1962, pp. 41, paper cover. Free on request.

Contemporary discussions of capital punishment are mostly irrelevant for the Bible-believing Christian, because they proceed on the pragmatic assumption that the question is to be decided in accordance with the answer given to the question "Does the death penalty deter people from committing murder?" The Bible-believer cannot, of course, determine the matter on this basis. He holds that capital punishment is required for first degree murder because God in His Word has commanded this, and that the basic reason is rooted in justice and the honor of God, not in the pragmatic welfare of society. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, **for in the image of God made he man**. He who unjustly destroys a human life destroys that which bears the image of God, therefore he affronts God, and by God's decree deserves to die. The damage done to human society, though real, is incidental.

Pastor Daniel argues for capital punishment on Biblical grounds. He shows that this requirement is taught in both the Old and New Testament, and that it is based upon the very nature of God Himself. He shows that the common objections to it are partly based on misinterpretation of Scripture, and partly on sentimentality. This booklet is heartily recommended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

**OXFORD BIBLE ATLAS**, edited by Herbert G. May with the assistance of R. W. Hamilton and G. N. S. Hunt. Oxford University Press, Amen House, London, E. C. 4, England; 417 Fifth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. 1962, pp. 144. Paper binding, \$2.50. Cloth binding, \$4.95.

This is a handy volume measuring 7½ by 10 inches. Printed in Great Britain, it is proof that a really fine modern Bible atlas does not need to cost ten or fifteen dollars. The paper cover on the paperbound edition could be a bit stronger — a plastic coating on the paper would have added much to the durability of the cover. The entire book is beautifully printed and is a pleasure to hold and use. Besides a profusion of most excellent Biblical maps, there are many fine photographs of actual places and archaeological finds. These materials are accompanied by explanatory text. For the most part the text material is quite factual and objective. At a few points the reviewer noted objectionable statements — for example, these on page 108:

“. . . the cult of Yahweh was not intrusive in the Canaanite world, but grew out of it; . . .”

“The religion of Israel, no less than its laws, was a natural product of its time.”

“Remote as these fabulous mythologies may appear from the restrained theophanies of the Old Testament, they reveal a background of imagination, obsessed with the presence and power of nature personified, from which in later years the

genius of Israel derived its more refined but still anthropomorphic concept of Yahweh, the Lord of Hosts.” (The “fabulous mythologies” referred to are those of the Canaanites, as revealed by discoveries at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in Syria).

Needless to say, the above quotations reflect a naturalistic philosophy of religion which is repugnant to the Christian who adheres to historic orthodoxy and regards the Bible, not as the product of “genius” with a background of “imagination”, but as **the objective, special revelation of God Himself.**

This objectionable material, however, is not at all predominant or conspicuous in the volume. On the whole the text is characterized by factual information, not theological or philosophical bias.

Bible chronology from the time of King Saul is given in parallel columns, to the end of the Old Testament period, one column giving the dating preferred by Albright, and the other that worked out by Professor E. R. Thiele. Of course, the last word has not yet been written on the extremely complicated chronology of the kingdom period of the Old Testament.

The maps alone are worth the modest price of the volume. They are beautifully drawn and printed, and unlike some Bible maps, they are clear and easy to read. They are also up-to-date in giving the latest discoveries and information on locations in Bible lands.

— J. G. Vos

## Acknowledgments and Announcements

### Contributions Received

The manager of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine received since our last issue went to press:

**September, 1962 (from September 16):** No. 1101, \$4.00. No. 1102, \$5.00.

**November, 1962:** No. 1103, \$10.00. No. 1104, .50. No. 1105, .50. No. 1106, \$2.00. No. 1107, \$50.00. No. 1108, \$3.50. No. 1109, \$1.50. No. 1110, \$2.50. No. 1111, .50. No. 1112, \$1.50. No. 1113, \$33.50. No. 1114, \$1.50. No. 1115, \$3.50. No. 1116, \$3.50. No. 1117, \$8.50. No. 1118, \$8.50. No. 1119, \$1.00. No. 1120, .50. No. 1121, \$2.00. No. 1122, \$1.00. No. 1123, \$1.50. No. 1124, \$2.00. No. 1125, .50. No. 1126, \$1.00. No. 1127, \$2.00. No. 1128, \$2.00. No. 1129, \$2.00. No. 1130, \$3.50. No. 1131, \$1.50. No. 1132, \$5.00. No. 1133, \$1.00. No. 1134, \$3.50. No. 1135, \$3.50. No. 1136, \$2.00. No. 1137, \$2.50. No. 1138, \$5.00. No. 1139, \$8.50. No. 1140, \$20.00. No. 1141, \$3.50. No. 1142, \$1.50. No. 1143, \$1.00. No. 1144, \$2.50. No. 1145, .50. No. 1146, \$1.50. No. 1147, \$25.00. No. 1148, \$3.50. No. 1149, \$25.00. No. 1150, \$3.50. No. 1151, \$5.00. No.

1152, \$3.00. No. 1153, \$25.00. No. 1154, .50. No. 1155, .50. No. 1156, .50. No. 1157, \$3.50. No. 1158, \$8.50. No. 1159, \$22.00. No. 1160, \$10.50. No. 1161, \$1.50. No. 1162, \$1.00. No. 1163, \$2.00. No. 1164, .50.

**December, 1962 (to December 28):** No. 1165, \$5.00. No. 1166, \$5.00. No. 1167, \$2.00. No. 1168, \$2.50. No. 1169, .50. No. 1170, .50. No. 1171, .50. No. 1172, \$18.00. No. 1173, \$3.00. No. 1174, \$3.00. No. 1175, \$1.50. No. 1176, \$1.50. No. 1177, \$2.00. No. 1178, \$50.00. No. 1179, \$2.00. No. 1180, \$5.50. No. 1181, \$1.00. No. 1182, \$3.00. No. 1183, \$4.00. No. 1184, \$10.00.

These generous contributions from friends and readers who have in this practical manner shown their concern for the continued publication of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is obtained from subscriptions; for the rest we are dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing to the cost of publication as the Lord enables you.

### Circulation of this Issue

As many renewals for 1963, especially club subscriptions for congregations, have not yet been received at the time of writing this (December 28, 1962) it is not possible to give accurate information as yet on the circulation of this issue. By the time of printing the April-June 1963 issue our subscription list for 1963 should be stabilized. Detailed information will be given in that issue. Meantime it will interest many of our readers to

know that the circulation of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** has been showing a slow but steady increase. During 1962 the number of copies of each issue printed was 1200. Toward the end of 1962 the subscription list had almost reached 1200 and it became evident that this number of copies would in all probability not be sufficient for 1963. Accordingly, 1300 copies of the present issue are being printed.

### Change of Address

Our mailing list is kept strictly corrected to date, but we are helpless when subscribers move without notifying us. Each case involves expense to us and delay in a reader receiving his magazine. The return and re-mailing of an undelivered copy in the U. S. domestic mails costs us

about 25 cents. If we have to write one or more letters to find out the new address, it costs even more, not to mention the work involved. Please help by prompt notification of any change in your address.

### Gift Subscriptions

You may wish to send **Blue Banner Faith and Life** for 1963 to a friend, a son or daughter away at college, or someone else. The rate for individual subscriptions is \$1.50 per year postpaid to any address in the free world. In the case of gift

subscriptions, we send a printed gift card to the recipient informing him or her that the magazine will come during 1963 as a gift, and giving the name and address of the donor.

### Club Subscriptions

For the United States and Canada only, subscriptions are \$1.00 per year in clubs of 5 or more. Some one person must act as the congregational agent or the representative of the group, collect the money and send it in, and distribute the magazines to the subscribers four times a year. The magazines are mailed quarterly in a single package to a single address. Many churches are using the Bible lessons in this magazine as mater-

ial for an adults or young adults' study group on Sabbath evenings or at some other time. For just \$1.00 a year 52 Bible lessons are provided, plus all the other articles and features in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**. It costs the club subscriber less than half a cent a page.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager  
3408 Seventh Avenue  
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

---

## *Blue Banner Question Box*

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

### Question:

What should be thought of the advertisement which appeared recently (November, 1962) in a nationally circulated religious magazine offering a medallion containing "a bit of the Holy Land"?

### Answer:

This advertisement occurred in a Protestant magazine of popular type and wide circulation.

It was of the Holy Land Medallion Society, and in a large display layout said:

With the "Gift-of-Peace" Medallion . . . Hold a bit of The Holy Land in **YOUR** hand. Each emblem has 5 radiant colors — pressure sealed for permanence. Actual Soil from Bethlehem Where He was born. Actual Soil from Gethsemane Where He Suffered. Actual Soil from Mt. Calvary Where He died. Actual Water from the River Jordan. Reverse side shows Sallman's

beautiful head of Christ. "I AM A CHRISTIAN!" This is the message of the Gift of Peace. The enfolded hands were designed by clergymen of MANY faiths, working together for conversions. The bits of land where HE was born are priceless aids to spiritual meditation. May they bring you calm courage and "The Peace That Passes Understanding." Give the gift that says "I AM A CHRISTIAN." Certified authentic at the U. S. Consulate at Amman, Jordan, November, 1961. (End of material quoted from advertisement.)

We wrote to the Editor and the Advertising Manager of the magazine which published this advertisement objecting to the advertisement as superstitious and repugnant to real Christianity. The Editor asked the Advertising Manager to reply for both of them. He replied with the following statements:

"I agree with you that the use of sympathetic magic and personal totems seems a little out of date in this day and age and not in line with Protestant Christian beliefs as they should exist today. But nothing happens overnight and I am afraid there are a great many people who can still benefit from gimmicks like that offered by the Holy Land Medallion Society. . . .

"We have been allowing advertisers to offer various forms of Sallman's paintings for a number of years and this presentation seemed to me to be only an unfortunate extension. We could hardly call it unacceptable for our pages."

The Department of State of the United States Government, upon being queried as to the statement in the advertisement, "Certified authentic at the U. S. Consulate at Amman, Jordan, November, 1961" replied to the effect that the Government in no way endorses what the advertisement offers. The statement about "certified authentic", etc., merely means that someone appeared at the Amman Consulate (actually an Embassy) and swore an affidavit as to the genuineness of the contents of the medallion.

It seems to the present writer that the magazine which published this advertisement was helping a superstitious practice which is entirely foreign to real Christianity. Even the Roman Catholic figurines of the Virgin Mary and St. Christopher (which the writer deplores), are at least representations of persons. But the recent advertisement offers bits of lifeless soil and water as aids to devotion and possible sources of courage and spiritual peace. This borders on idolatry and blasphemy. How is it any better than the superstitious medieval devotion to relics, saints' bones, splinters of the "true cross", and the like? Surely it is not from the dead earth of Palestine, but from the risen, living Christ in heaven that the Christian gains courage and peace.

— J. G. Vos

#### Question:

Are you sure you have been fair to the great missionary Albert Schweitzer, in your statements about him in the July-September 1962 issue of the magazine? Perhaps you may be prejudiced against him.

#### Answer:

The editor of this magazine is certainly prejudiced. He frankly admits being prejudiced in favor of the Bible as the infallible Word of God, and in favor of the Christ of the Scriptures. There can be no neutrality between truth and error, between Biblical Christianity and modern naturalistic unbelief.

As we pointed out, the popular magazines which have praised Dr. Schweitzer are not interested in his theological views. They are impressed by his humanitarian service in Africa. We freely admit Dr. Schweitzer's sincerity and his greatness in social service. What we deny is that his theological views expressed in his published works are compatible with Biblical Christianity.

Schweitzer's most famous book is **The Quest of the Historical Jesus** (1906; English translation 1910). This famous book is large (403 pages in current English paperback edition). Some scholars regarded **The Quest of the Historical Jesus** as giving support to their view that Jesus was mentally ill (paranoia and perhaps hysteria). Schweitzer did not and does not believe that Jesus was mentally deranged, though he certainly believes that Jesus was mistaken in His predictions about the coming of the Kingdom and the end of the age. Schweitzer wrote a smaller book, **The Psychiatric Study of Jesus** to prove that Jesus, though mistaken, still was sane, and that his (Schweitzer's) views expressed in **The Quest of the Historical Jesus** are in harmony with this. **The Psychiatric Study of Jesus** was published in Germany in 1913. This little book (74 pages) is now published in English translation by Beacon Press, Inc., the publishing agency of the Unitarian Church.

While arguing that Jesus was sane, Schweitzer time and again writes off some portion of the Bible as "unhistorical" or "legendary". We shall give a few brief quotations from **The Psychiatric Study of Jesus** to show his attitude toward the Bible:

"It should be particularly noted that the story of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple, which he (Luke) alone presents to us (Luke 2:41-52), cannot be considered historical for a variety of reasons" (p. 46).

"Discarding the Fourth Gospel is of the greatest importance" (p. 54).

"But the three temptations of which Matthew (4:1-11) informs us are also unhistorical; they belong to the prehistoric legend as David Friedrich Strauss has already rightly remarked. The whole wilderness episode is to be evaluated on the whole as a literary product that grew out of reasoning based on the Old Testament" (p. 66).

"It is also doubtful if the hallucinations at the baptism are historical. We must again and again make it clear to ourselves that the Nazarene comes into the light of history for the first time on the day when he appears as a preacher in Galilee and that everything that comes before that belongs to dark and uncertain tradition" (p. 67).

Much more could be quoted from *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus* to show that Albert Schweitzer regards Jesus as a very great man, but still a mere man and mistaken in his principal expectations, and that he regards the Bible as a book containing considerable elements of unhistorical (that is, untrue) legends and traditions. If anyone still questions what has been published in this magazine about Schweitzer, let him obtain the books and see for himself. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* is published by the Macmillan Company at \$1.95. *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus* is published by Beacon Press, Inc., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass., at 95 cents.

— J. G. Vos

**Question:**

Please publish something about the doctrines and practices of what is commonly called Pentecostalism.

**Answer:**

Several denominations of Protestant Christianity are commonly classified as "Pentecostal". This term is not the name of a single denomination, but rather it is the designation of a certain general category of belief and practice. The Pentecostal denominations differ considerably among themselves, and certainly some of them are involved in error much less than others. We have no wish to injure the good name of any group of sincere Christian believers, and what will be said in this answer is not said about any particular denomination. It applies, in a general way, to a greater or less degree, to several.

The Pentecostal denominations are, in general, Fundamentalists in their theology; they hold to Arminian views about the way of salvation; and they tend to hold premillennial views about prophecy and the Last Things. All of these characteristics they share with many Christians and churches which could not be called Pentecostal. What distinguishes Pentecostalism is its special tenets concerning the Holy Spirit's work in the Christian. It should be realized that what we are about to say does not apply to all who are called Pentecostal, nor does it apply in equal de-

gree to all those to whom it does apply. The reader should bear this warning in mind in considering what follows.

The first feature of Pentecostalism, which we consider to be an error, is a tendency to classify Christians into those who have and those who have not received the Holy Spirit. The idea of a "second work of grace" is unscriptural if it is limited to a second work and if it implies that previously the Holy Spirit was not in the person's life. Romans 8:9b proves that there cannot be a Christian who lacks the Holy Spirit: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (compare verse 8).

The second feature of Pentecostalism, which we consider to be an error, is a tendency to confuse the grace of the Holy Spirit with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The grace is the same for all Christians. Note Galatians 5:22ff., "The fruit (singular, not plural) of the Spirit is love. . . .". The grace is one, the gifts are many, and different for different Christians, as described in I Cor. 12. Note 1 Cor. 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." This verse proves that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a special gift to be received later, but something that every Christian has already received.

The third feature of Pentecostalism, which we consider to be an error, is the idea that the charismatic is more important than the ethical as evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the person's life. Many Pentecostals will heartily agree with us in deploring this tendency which is manifested by some who are called Pentecostals. By the charismatic we mean the special gifts of the Holy Spirit such as those mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 12. Those who emphasize speaking with tongues or gifts of miraculous healing as our evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit, rather than emphasizing the fruit of the Spirit (love, etc., as described in Gal. 5:22ff. and elsewhere) have departed from the highway of truth.

We do not deny that there are special gifts of the Holy Spirit to particular Christians and that these are important and should be cultivated and used to the glory of God and the good of man. We do question whether the present-day phenomenon of "speaking with tongues" is the same as that which existed in the apostolic church. We also question the Scriptural character of the claims of some present-day persons who are at the center of "divine healing" movements. And we certainly question and deplore the tendency of some to stress special charismatic gifts while placing little or no emphasis on the ethical and spiritual fruit which every Christian must be concerned to bear in his life.

— J. G. Vos

## PSALM 118

HUDSON. C.M.D.

R. E. Hudson

1. O praise the Lord, for He is good; His grace is ev-er sure. Now let the tribes of

Is-r'el say, His mer-cy doth en-dure. 2. Now let the house of Aar-on say, His

grace is ev-er sure. Let those that fear the Lord now say, His mer-cy doth en-dure.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>3. In my distress I sought the Lord;<br/>Jehovah answered me;<br/>He set me in a spacious place,<br/>A place of liberty.</p> <p>4. The mighty Lord is on my side;<br/>I will not be afraid;<br/>For anything that man can do<br/>I shall not be dismayed.</p> <p>5. The Lord doth take my part with them<br/>That render help to me,<br/>And therefore my desire on those<br/>Who hate me I shall see.</p> <p>6. 'Tis better far to trust the Lord<br/>Than on man's aid rely;<br/>Yea, better far to trust the Lord<br/>Than trust in princes high.</p> <p>7. The nations compassed me about,<br/>The nations great and small;<br/>But in Jehovah's holy name<br/>I will destroy them all.</p> | <p>8. Yea, they have compassed me about,<br/>They compassed to annoy;<br/>But in the Lord's most holy name<br/>I shall them all destroy.</p> <p>9. Like bees they compassed me about;<br/>Like crackling thorns they fall;<br/>But in Jehovah's holy name<br/>I will destroy them all.</p> <p>10. Thou sore hast thrust that I might fall;<br/>The Lord gave help to me;<br/>Jehovah is my strength and song,<br/>And my salvation free.</p> <p>11. Salvation's joyful song is heard<br/>Where'er the righteous dwell;<br/>The right hand of the mighty Lord<br/>In valor doth excel.</p> <p>12. The right hand of the mighty Lord<br/>Exalted is on high;<br/>The right hand of the mighty Lord<br/>Doth ever valiantly.</p> |
|--|---|

(Reprinted by permission from **The Book of Psalms with Music**. Copyright 1950 by The Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Price of book (359 pages) is \$1.50 postpaid. Copies can be ordered from Chester R. Fox, Treasurer, Empire Building, Pittsburgh 22, Pennsylvania.)

Printed in the United States of America by the Record Publishing Company, Linn, Kansas



# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

APRIL-JUNE, 1963

NUMBER 2

Dispensationalism Explained and Appraised .....	57
George Gillespie on Church Censures .....	63
The Hebrew Sanctuary: A Study in Typology .....	65
Instrumental Music in Public Worship .....	67
A Believer's Life of Christ .....	69
Observations on the Theory of Evolution .....	73
The English Bible .....	75

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

Subscription \$1.50 per year postpaid anywhere

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

3408 7th Avenue

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Editorial Committee: Ross Latimer, Joseph M. Caskey, G. Mackay Robb

Published by

The Board of Publication of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Agent for Britain and Ireland: The Rev. Adam Loughridge, B.A.,  
Glenmanus Manse, Portrush, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Agent for Australia and New Zealand: The Rev. Alexander Barkley, B.A.,  
20 Fenwick St., Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Publication Office, Linn, Kansas, U.S.A.

Published Quarterly, Second Class Postage Paid at Linn, Kansas

# ***From Covenant Times***

**By Hugh C. Wilson**

Awake, my harp! Ring out thy notes, ring out thy richest strain,  
O'er those who boldly dared for love of God's cause to be slain;  
Tell thou each Christian of today, who by the wayside faints,  
Of times when Scotland's plaid was dyed with life-blood of the saints;  
When everywhere, by hill and glen, within the stricken land,  
Who held the Bible, also held their life within their hand;  
When righteous men were hunted down like wild beasts of the field —  
Brave men, who in the cause of truth would rather die than yield.

Lo! deep from wild sequestered glen, amidst the Sabbath calm,  
Arises through the early mists to Heav'n the morning Psalm;  
Then on the sward, when knees are pressed and every heart aware,  
Their hearts rise with the speaker's voice, up to the throne in prayer.  
The aged pastor reads the word from God's own sacred page —  
Perhaps, where David sought the Lord to quell the heathen's rage;  
Again a Psalm they sweetly chant, then kneeling down to pray:  
"Oh! help us, Lord, to do thy will — protect us through this day."

With Bible placed upon a rock, he then expounds the word:  
But, hark! like wind among the trees, a murmuring is heard,  
As when far out the sailor hears across his trackless path  
The tempest breathe o'er ocean vast a telegram of wrath.  
An awful stillness intervenes, then borne along they hear,  
Much louder now, like troubled winds, the murmur coming near.  
Each heart stands still, the cheeks are blanched, the speaker's voice is dumb;  
Their sentry calls from off the height, "The king's dragoons — they come!"

"Be calm, be calm, my children dear, and on the Lord rely;  
He ever ready is to save the needy when they cry;  
Mysterious unto us His ways, but, blessed be His name,  
We yet may wear a robe of light — our foes a crown of shame.  
Adown the glen now while ye may, seek safety all in flight,  
But draw your blades, ye trusty few, who yet may have to fight;  
The aged and the feeble first; haste! for they hurry near;  
The women and the children next; ye strong men, guard the rear."

The holy man, when left alone, sank down behind a rock.  
"Heed, heed not me, O Lord," he cried, "but spare, oh spare Thy flock!  
Thy hand lies heavy on the land, oh lift Thy chastening rod,  
If 'tis Thy holy will to hear my humble prayer, O God.  
And bless wherever met this day, in cave or lonely glen,  
Thy chosen few, and teach them, Lord, to bear themselves like men;  
And help Thy humble servant now, and hear his earnest cry;  
If in his en'my's hand he fall, oh give him strength to die!"

The captain came. "Now, hoary scamp, to flames thy Bible fling,  
And on your knees go down and swear allegiance to the King."  
"To heaven's high King alone; but not to false King James, or thou,  
While life-blood warms this aged frame, these knees will ever bow."  
"Form round and ready then, my lads, his blood be on his head.  
King James or death?" "Heaven's King alone! I have already said."  
Flash! went the guns, down sank the saint, thrust by the tyrant's rod,  
With horrid oath into his ears, before Thy throne, O God!

# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

APRIL-JUNE, 1963

NUMBER 2

## *An Explanation and Appraisal of Dispensationalism*

By J. G. Vos

The term **Dispensation** is a translation of the Greek noun **oikonomia**, which may be translated either **dispensation** or **stewardship**. When it is used with regard to someone in authority, it means **dispensation** in the sense of **plan** or **scheme**. When it is used with regard to someone under authority, it means **stewardship** or assigned responsibility.

The Scofield Reference Bible defines **Dispensation** as "a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." This is manifestly incorrect, for in the Bible **oikonomia** never means a period of time. The idea of time in connection with it is wholly incidental, and arises from the fact that the Old Testament and the New Testament are consecutive. Thus, while it is true that a dispensation may in fact coincide with a period of time, still the term **Dispensation** never means a period of time.

Using the term Dispensation in the Biblical sense of a plan or scheme on God's part, it may be said that all Christians are Dispensationalists. The error of Modern Dispensationalism does not consist in believing in the existence of Dispensations, but in regard to **their number** and **their nature**. All Christians believe in at least two dispensations, commonly called "the old" and "the new", or those of Moses and of Christ. Or we might state more precisely that Scripture presents three dispensations, one of the Covenant of Works and two of the Covenant of Grace. These coincide with (a) the period from the creation of man to the Fall; (b) the period from the Fall to Christ; (c) the period from Christ to the end of the world. In this sense Dispensationalism is Biblical and is also a doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith and other Reformed standards. This, however, is something very different from what is commonly called "Dispensationalism" today. The Biblical view regards these dispensations as mutually **complementary**, as harmoniously fitting parts of an organic whole; the Dispensationalist view regards the Dispensations as mutually **antithetical** in their basic ideas.

### **The Popularity of Modern Dispensationalism**

Dispensationalism has been widely promoted and popularized in the modern Protestant world

by the **Scofield Reference Bible** and the **Pilgrim Edition of the Holy Bible**. These are both published by the Oxford University Press (American Branch). The Pilgrim Bible is a later work than the Scofield Bible, and is intended as a Bible with special helps for young people. The basic teachings of these two works are identical. Each consists of the text of the King James Version, accompanied by a copious system of explanatory notes and cross-references.

It was a master stroke of psychology for Scofield to place his comments on the same pages with the inspired text of Scripture. The Scofield notes thereby acquired, in many people's minds, what might be called "authority by association." Also the strongly dogmatic, oracular tone of the Scofield notes makes the book popular. Scofield never argues and never states his reasons. He simply asserts that something is the truth. Another reason for the popularity of the Scofield Bible is that it rings true on the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity such as the inspiration of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ and the substitutionary atonement. Yet another reason may be discerned, perhaps, in the manner in which the Scofield and Pilgrim Bibles are advertised by their publisher, the Oxford University Press. They are represented as simply Bibles with references and helps. The fact that these two Bibles are based throughout on a highly debatable system known as Darby-Scofield Dispensationalism is never mentioned in the advertising. The public is thus led to believe that these are simply Bibles with helps, comparable, say, to the Thompson Chain-Reference Bible. Thus the naive purchaser pays his money and receives, without realizing it, a package of very opinionated and debatable propaganda, in which the most debatable matters, on which sincere Christians deeply disagree, are presented with oracular certainty, and without a shadow of suggestion that any other interpretation is held by anyone or indeed is compatible with faith in the Bible as the Word of God.

### **The History of Dispensationalism**

Dispensationalists have claimed Augustine as one of their persuasion, citing in support of this a statement of Augustine to the effect that if we

will distinguish the dispensations, the Scriptures will become harmonious. Needless to insist, this remark of Augustine has nothing in common with Dispensationalism as it is promoted today. Augustine did not believe, surely, in the seven dispensations of Modern Dispensationalism, nor did he believe that the Dispensation of Moses is antithetical to that of Christ. He simply meant that in Biblical interpretation proper distinctions must be borne in mind, with respect to the Old Testament and the New, if error is to be avoided. Thus, for example, circumcision was commanded in God's covenant with Abraham, but declared to be unnecessary by the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15. This involves no contradiction nor even any real problem if we will keep Augustine's dictum in mind.

It has also been claimed that Paul was a Dispensationalist because he wrote to Timothy urging on him the importance of "rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15). According to some Dispensationalists, "rightly dividing the word of truth" means dividing it correctly into a number of antithetical dispensations. This is manifestly absurd; all that Paul's word to Timothy means is that Timothy is to strive to interpret Scripture in accordance with the principles of sound exegesis.

The real history of Dispensationalism begins, apparently, with the Dutch theologian John Cocceius (1603-1669). At any rate Cocceius was the forerunner of Dispensationalism. However it has not been proven that the Dispensationalist pioneers of the 19th century (Darby, Scofield) derived their ideas from the writings of Cocceius. Cocceius held that the ceremonial law was imposed on Israel as a penalty for the sin of worshipping the golden calf at Sinai. He also held that the Old Testament administration differed from the New not only in form or incidental features, but **in essence** or basic substance. It was this feature of Cocceius' thought which marks him as the forerunner of Modern Dispensationalism.

The next stage in the history of Dispensationalism concerns John Nelson Darby, who was born in 1800 in London, of Irish parents. In 1825 he was ordained in the Anglican Church of Ireland, and soon was the center of an amazing work among Irish Roman Catholics. It is reported that under his influence Irish Catholics were becoming Protestants at the rate of 600 to 800 per week. In the midst of this success, Darby became aware of the evil of Erastianism (government control of the church) which was deeply imbedded in the national establishments of the Anglican Church in Ireland. He retired to take stock of the situation and to study his Bible. In 1827-8 he met regularly with a few Christian friends. This group ultimately became the movement known as the Brethren.

Beyond question Darby was a very devoted and spiritual Christian. He was also a real schol-

ar and a voluminous writer, starting at the age of 28 and continuing until his death at 82. He published over 40 volumes of 600 or more pages each on all manner of religious subjects. Included in this was the production of an original translation of the entire Bible which displayed immense learning. This was accompanied by copious notes showing amazing scholarship. The style, however, was complicated and difficult to follow.

Darby started with the doctrine of the Church. He found the organized church as he saw it to be apostate, and held that true believers should withdraw from it and fellowship among themselves. He made a sharp distinction between the true church, which is the "bride of Christ", and apostate organized Christianity, which he called "Christendom."

Later Darby took up the study of Biblical prophecy. This led on to a dispensational scheme of interpretation of the Bible. He set forth seven dispensations, though these were not exactly the same as those held by Dispensationalists today. In substance, he held that in each dispensation God has placed some special responsibility on man, in which man has totally failed, yet God by grace carried the dispensation on to its end in spite of man's failure at its beginning. Darby also held that certain portions of Scripture are to be considered Jewish and certain other portions are to be considered Christian. This was the germ of Modern Dispensationalism as it exists today in the Scofield and Pilgrim Bibles and the **Systematic Theology** of Lewis Sperry Chafer.

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield was born in 1843. He served in the Confederate army during the Civil War. After the war he studied law in St. Louis. Later he practiced law in Washington, D.C., and was active in politics. During this part of his life Scofield did not know the Lord. He became a heavy drinker. In 1879 he was converted, the human instrumentality being the influence of a Christian lawyer who visited him repeatedly. He continued as a lawyer for three more years. Then, without ever having had any formal theological education, he was ordained pastor of a small Congregational Church in Dallas, Texas. In 1895 he became pastor of the Congregational Church in East Northfield, Mass., where D. L. Moody worshipped when he was at home. In 1902 he returned to Dallas to minister to his old church and also work on the preparation of the **Scofield Reference Bible**. At this time he was reading the writings of J. N. Darby. He associated eight other men with himself in the editorship of the **Scofield Reference Bible**, among whom were some men of distinction in the field of theological study.

The **Scofield Reference Bible** was first published in 1909. A second edition appeared in 1917. Since it first appeared, about three million copies have been printed and sold in the United States alone. Since Scofield's time, Dispensationalism has been increasingly popularized by many Bible

conferences and Bible institutes. The theological headquarters of this system today is at Dallas Theological Seminary, Texas. The standard work on Dispensational theology is Lewis Sperry Chafer's **Systematic Theology** (8 volumes, 1948).

In recent years Dispensationalism has come under serious theological investigation and criticism. For many years it had gone practically unnoticed by the orthodox theological world. Then articles and books on it began to appear. This criticism was bitterly resented by Dispensationalist teachers, but it continued. There is today a considerable literature which is critical of Dispensationalism from the standpoint of orthodox evangelical and Reformed theology.

The following may be specially mentioned in the field of literature critical of Dispensationalism:

Albertus Pieters, **A Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible** (booklet; 25c), Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Union County, Penna.

Oswald T. Allis, **Prophecy and the Church**. 339 pages. \$3.75. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, New Jersey.

Clarence B. Bass, **Backgrounds to Dispensationalism**. 183 pages. \$3.50. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan.

C. Norman Kraus, **Dispensationalism in America**. \$3.00. John Knox Press, Box 1176, 8 North Sixth St., Richmond 9, Virginia.

### Distinctive Features of Dispensationalism

**1. Not merely a form of Premillennialism.** All Dispensationalists are Premillennialists, but not all Premillennialists are Dispensationalists. The characteristic errors of Dispensationalism do not find their origin in eschatological views, but rather in a wrong method of Biblical interpretation and a misunderstanding of Bible history.

**2. Misconstruction of Biblical Dispensations.** Dispensationalism differs from orthodox theology as to the **number** of dispensations and as to their **nature**. As to the number, it holds to seven, of which orthodox theology recognizes only three. These seven are:

1. Innocency, before the Fall of man
2. Conscience, from Adam's fall to Noah
3. Human Government, from Noah to Abraham
4. Promise, from Abraham to Moses
5. Law, from Moses to Christ
6. Grace, from Christ to the Rapture
7. The Kingdom, from Christ's Return to the end of the world

As has been pointed out, Dispensationalism errs by defining a Dispensation as "a period of time", a meaning the term never has in Scripture. Then it errs concerning the **nature** of the Dispensations. They are said to be periods of time in each of which mankind is tested with respect to obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God. There is no evidence in Scripture for this notion of repeated testing. Rather, the Bible teaches that mankind went through one probation only — that in which Adam was under the test of the Covenant of Works. Dispensationalism also errs in regarding the various Dispensations as **mutually antithetical** rather than **mutually complementary**. This, in fact, may be regarded as the very essence of Dispensationalism in a nutshell — the setting up of Dispensations as periods of time in Bible history which are regarded as mutually antithetical rather than mutually complementary. Orthodox theology regards all dispensations as **basically identical** in purpose, all coming under the master theme of divine grace in bringing the elect of God to glory. Orthodox theology holds that various periods of sacred history differ in circumstances, modes of administration, and the like, but that beneath these superficial differences there is an underlying unity and continuity **which is more basic than the differences**. Dispensationalism, on the other hand, denies the unity and emphasizes the differences.

This false structure of Dispensations is the root from which the mistaken eschatology and other errors of the Dispensational system have arisen. If we are to attack the system effectively, we must deal with its most radical and basic error.

**3. Sharp antithesis between law and grace.** Orthodox theology regards law and grace in the Bible as mutually complementary concepts. The very law was itself a gift of grace. The Ten Commandments were enclosed in the ark of the covenant over which was **the mercy seat**. The law was not the enemy of grace, nor a substitute for grace, but an ingredient of the system of grace. God gave the law to enhance His grace, not to contradict it.

Of course, law and grace are not the same thing, and no one ever claimed that they were. But the real question is, What is the correct view of the relation between the two? Are they complementary or are they antithetical? Orthodox theology says they are complementary, Dispensationalism says they are antithetical. Scofield even says that at Sinai Israel **rashly** accepted the law. A standard Dispensational text is John 1:17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This is interpreted by Dispensationalists in such a way as to make law and grace antithetical and even mutually exclusive — two things that cannot be mixed, like oil and water. The correct interpretation, however, surely is that this text presents a comparison which for the sake of emphasis is stated as

if it were an absolute contrast. Law is more prominent in the system associated with Moses, and grace is more prominent in the system associated with Christ. Note, that in this verse "truth" is associated with grace; if we put grace in antithesis to law, we will also have to put truth in antithesis to law. The Bible often states a relative matter in absolute terms for the sake of emphasis. For example, we are told that if a person is to be a follower of Christ, he must hate his father and mother, brethren and sisters, wife, children and even his own life. Manifestly this does not mean that Christians are really to **hate** their nearest relatives. What is meant is that love for the Lord must have priority over love to human kindred. It is stated as "hatred" for kindred, when the meaning is a deeper love for the Lord. Similarly, the statement that the law was given by Moses, whereas grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, does not mean that the law was devoid of grace and truth, nor does it mean that grace and truth are without law. It only means that there is a much fuller revelation of grace and truth in Christ than there was through Moses.

This sharp antithesis between law and grace raises one of the most serious and difficult questions in connection with Dispensationalism, namely, does Dispensationalism teach that there are different ways of salvation in different dispensations? All the logic of the basic principles of Dispensationalism requires that this question be answered affirmatively, yet every Dispensationalist teacher, in despite of logic, answers it negatively.

Manifestly, if grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and the period from Moses to Christ was characterized by law, people from Moses to Christ, if saved, must have been saved by works of the law. Yet Scofield and all Dispensationalist writers assert that no one was ever saved except by grace. How can this be reconciled with the rigid antithesis between law and grace?

There is a crude popular error which holds that the Jews were saved by works but Christians are saved by grace. Recognized Dispensationalist writers, however, are not so crude, nor do they make this assertion. On the contrary, they repel such a charge indignantly. Yet their basic structure by the most relentless logic requires this conclusion — that salvation by grace is limited to the Dispensation of Grace, and people in the era from Moses to Christ either were not saved at all, or else they were saved by works.

Serious students of Dispensationalism have wrestled with this paradox and have not come up with a satisfying solution. The best that can be said is that Scofield and other Dispensationalist writers are inconsistent, do not follow their own basic principles through to logical conclusions, and actually hold principles which are incompatible with their basic system. They are thus better than

their creed, but by the same token they are very poor systematic theologians. We may even call this a happy inconsistency on the part of Dispensationalists.

A sample or two of comment on this Dispensationalist paradox may be of interest. The fact is that the teaching of the Scofield Bible is unclear and ambiguous at this crucial point, so that it is difficult or impossible to say exactly what it teaches about the way of salvation in the period from Moses to Christ.

Kraus in his book **Dispensationalism in America** discusses at length the question whether Dispensationalism teaches that there are different ways of salvation in different dispensations (*op. cit.*, pp. 117 ff.). After citing a Dispensationalist disclaimer of belief in different ways of salvation, Kraus says that one cannot escape the conclusion that Scofield's explanatory notes merit the criticism that he is ambiguous at this point. The ambiguity grows out of his lack of clarity concerning the relation of faith to salvation" (p. 118). Kraus concludes, "His (Scofield's) entire treatment lacks system and does not follow his statements to their logical conclusion. As it stands, it is difficult to see how Scofield's defenders can expect their denial of the charge that he teaches more than one way of salvation to be taken seriously" (p. 120).

Bass in his book **Backgrounds to Dispensationalism** similarly wrestles with the paradox between the Dispensationalist antithesis between law and grace and the denial that there ever was more than one way of salvation (pp. 33 ff.). After stating that the Dispensationalist distinction between law and grace "implies that there are two principles under which man has been saved — law and grace", Bass adds that all Dispensationalists vigorously deny this idea. He then comments: "However, these assertions of a single principle of salvation simply contradict the basic ideas of the system. Its protestations to the contrary, dispensationalism has constructed a system in which law and grace work against each other, not conjointly" (p. 35). He also says that Dispensationalism implies and contains "not only an inherent multiple basis of salvation in the past, but in the future as well." This is involved in the Dispensationalist distinction between the Gospel of Grace, which is being preached now, and the so-called Gospel of the Kingdom, which will be preached after the rapture of the saints from the earth. Bass then continues: "Thorough understanding must be achieved at this point. Dispensationalists do insist that there is no multiple basis of salvation in their system. It is legitimate to ask, however, whether their own system of interpretation does not protest strongly against them. If one were to take seriously the dichotomies involved here — Israel-church, church-kingdom, gospel of the kingdom-gospel of grace, etc., — would one not conclude, in spite of protest to the contrary, that

multiple basis is inevitable for one who orients his theology in this system"? (p. 36).

**4. Sharp antithesis between Israel and the Church.** It is considered axiomatic by Dispensationalists that "Israel is Israel; the Church is the Church." This is formulated as a very sharp antithesis. The Reformed covenant theology holds the spiritual unity and continuity of the Church with the Old Testament Israel; Dispensationalism sets them sharply over against each other in an antithetical relationship.

It might be asked, What is the harm in an antithesis between Israel and the Church? The answer is: very great harm. The answer given to this problem affects our whole interpretation of the Bible. What is the over-all theme or subject of Holy Scripture? The covenant theology answers: The over-all theme or subject of Scripture is the revelation and implementation of God's gracious purpose to redeem the elect unto eternal glory. The dominant theme of Scripture, then, is God's grace toward the elect. Subordinate to this is the history of Israel, which is related to the salvation of the elect as a means to an end. In the covenant theology, Israel is important, and the Old Testament is important, because it prepares the way for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In other words, Israel is important as essential to the origin of Christianity. But in Dispensationalism, Israel is important *per se* (for its own sake).

Dispensationalism holds that the over-all theme of Scripture is God's dealings with Israel. Subordinate to this is the Christian Church, which is sandwiched in as a parenthesis in God's dealings with Israel. It is held that the Church is a parenthetical "mystery" — that it was not predicted by the Old Testament prophets, but was established when Israel rejected the earthly kingdom which was offered by Jesus Christ. It is stated that when Israel rejected its Messiah, the clock of prophecy stopped ticking and has not ticked since. But when the Church is raptured out of the world, then the clock of prophetic fulfillment will start ticking again, and God will resume his interrupted program of dealing with Israel. The Church will be gone, there will not be a single born-again Christian left in the whole world, and the power of the Holy Spirit will also be removed. But the nominal Christians left behind will accept Christ and will begin to preach the "Gospel of the Kingdom" and this will result in the greatest revival of all history — people will be converted in large numbers by the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom. These people will be called "tribulation saints" and they will not be members of the church at all.

Thus Dispensationalism makes Christianity and the Christian Church an interlude or a parenthesis in the vast, sweeping program of God's dealings with Israel. The church did not exist in

Old Testament times, and it will not exist on earth after the rapture, at least until the Millennium begins. This is known as the **postponement view of the Kingdom**. The Kingdom was offered to the Jews, rejected by them, then the Church was put in for a period of time (the Dispensation of Grace), to call out for the Lord a people from the Gentiles. After the church is removed from the scene, the Kingdom will really be established on earth.

**5. Eschatology.** On the subject of eschatology Dispensationalism holds a highly specialized minority view. Christian eschatology (ruling out naturalistic and "liberal" views) may be divided into Postmillennial, Amillennial and Premillennial views. Of these, Dispensationalism chooses the third. Premillennialism in turn is divided into Historicist and Futurist views of the interpretation of prophecy, especially the Book of Revelation. Dispensationalism chooses the Futurist view. The futurist view is again divided into a Post-Tribulationist view and a Pre-Tribulationist view, that is, it is divided into those who hold that the Church will exist on earth through the Great Tribulation just prior to the Millennium, and those who hold that the Church will be raptured (caught up) out of the world **before** the Great Tribulation. Dispensationalism chooses the Pre-Tribulationist view. But Pre-Tribulationism itself exists in two alternative forms — those who believe in the ordinary or traditional view of the future kingdom, and those who hold the Postponement View of the Millennium or future Kingdom. Dispensationalism chooses the latter. Thus it holds a view which many Premillennialists do not hold — not to mention Postmillennialists and Amillennialists.

It is held that the Rapture may occur at any moment and it will be secret so far as the world is concerned. The Christians will be removed from the world. This will be followed by a 7 year period which is said to be the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. During the first part of this period, many will be converted by the preaching of the "Gospel of the Kingdom." Antichrist or the Man of Sin is in power and makes an agreement with the Jews, who have rebuilt the Jerusalem temple but have not accepted Christ. After 3½ years Antichrist breaks this covenant and demands divine honors for himself. Persecution fills the second 3½ years and becomes increasingly bitter. At the end of the second 3½ years, just as Antichrist seems to have achieved his goal of exterminating the saints, Christ appears again visibly with mighty power. He defeats and destroys the Antichrist, then sets up the Millennial Kingdom. There are two resurrections, one of the saved, at the beginning of the Millennium, and a second, of the reprobate or wicked, at the end of the Millennium. The Millennium will either be a literal 1000 years, or else a long period of time in which Christ will reign physically and visibly on

earth. During this period there will be three kinds of people on earth: (1) the resurrected saints; (2) the saints or godly people of the Millennium who have not yet died; and (3) the wicked people who have not yet died, but are kept under control by Christ's power.

This Millennium, or 1000 year Kingdom, according to Dispensationalism, has a strongly Jewish character. It is the Kingdom, restored to Israel. The Jews, either in natural or resurrection bodies, will have the places of influence and renown in this Kingdom.

The Millennium is the Dispensation of the Kingdom. Accordingly, it is the last of the seven dispensations in which God is said to test mankind in respect of some specific revelation of the divine will. In the Millennium man will be tested as to whether he will obey God under ideal or near-ideal conditions. The outcome, as usual, is man's failure. For during the Millennium sin and evil will not be removed from the world, but only suppressed by force. At the end of the Millennium the greatest of all rebellions against God will break out—the attack of Gog and Magog, who are able to raise military forces as numerous “as the sands of the sea” and attack “the camp of the saints, and the beloved city.” Just as they seem about to gain their victory, fire comes from God and destroys them utterly. This followed by the Judgment of the Great White Throne, after which comes the eternal state.

It will be seen that this scheme is quite complicated. This need not be an objection to the scheme if it can be demonstrated to be true. But it is evident that the structure has many weak spots. In a way, this is a dispute among Premillennialists, but it is interesting for us to note what is going on. The Postponement idea of the Kingdom, the Secret Rapture and Pretribulationism are strongly opposed by many Premillennialists. In fact there are Premillennial Christians who hold almost nothing of this whole structure except the idea that Christ's second coming will be followed by a long Kingdom of near-ideal conditions before the end of the world. The older Premillennialism, of scholars like Bengel and Alford, did not hold these Dispensationalist ideas. It is the Jewish character of the Kingdom Dispensation as held by the Dispensationalists that makes it so harmfully erroneous from the traditional Christian point of view.

#### Summary of Harmful Tendencies in Modern Dispensationalism

1. Dispensationalism misconstrues the true import of the history of Israel and hence of the Bible as a whole. It gives a wrong answer to the question: What is the over-all theme or subject of Holy Scripture?
2. Dispensationalism compartmentalizes the Bible by holding that certain portions are “Jewish” and certain other portions are “for the Church.” The truth is, of course, that the whole Bible forms an organic unity and all of it is for all God's people, though not all commands or institutions are directly applicable to all persons nor at all periods.
3. Dispensationalism minimizes the importance of the Christian Church by limiting it to the Dispensation of Grace, from Christ to the Rapture.
4. By its sharp antithesis between law and grace Dispensationalism incurs the danger of a lapse into Antinomianism, and some Christians have thus lapsed under its influence, excusing serious moral faults by the plea that they are not under law but under grace. (Recognized Dispensational writers would not condone such moral lapses, of course).
5. By its ambiguous and baffling teaching about the way of salvation in other Dispensations than that of grace, Dispensationalism casts discredit upon the cross of Christ, by limiting its efficacy to the Dispensation of Grace. (This is a charge that will be indignantly denied by all Dispensationalists, yet the baffling, uncertain and ambiguous character of their teaching about the way of salvation in the Old Testament period remains unclarified in their acknowledged works and documents).
6. By the misleading and unethical advertising and promotion of the Scofield and Pilgrim Bibles, Dispensationalism brings the reproach of dishonesty upon Christianity.
7. By its highly specialized and debatable scheme of eschatology, with the strongly Jewish character which is attached to this, Dispensationalism leads many uninformed Christians into false and spiritually harmful views of Biblical prophecy.
8. Its Postponement Theory of the Kingdom implies that Christ is not King today, which in fact dishonors Christ and disregards the fact that He was enthroned as the King of Glory at His ascension forty days after He was crucified.

---

## Mock On, Mock On

By William Blake

Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau;  
Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!  
You throw the sand against the wind,  
And the wind blows it back again.  
And every sand becomes a gem  
Reflected in the beams divine;  
Blown back they blind the mocking eye,  
But still in Israel's path they shine.  
The Atoms of Democritus  
And Newton's Particles of Light  
Are sands upon the Red Sea shore,  
Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

## George Gillespie on Church Censures

By R. D. Eagleson, M.A., Dip. Ed.

(Continued from last issue)

Note: This article by a scholar in Australia expounds the classic Presbyterian view of Church Discipline as held by the 17th century Scottish divine George Gillespie. — Editor.

### The Method of Church Censures.

These purposes, and especially the principle of love, should illumine and determine the methods we adopt in executing church censures. Chapter 30, section iv of the Confession sets out the procedure as:

“For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the church are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord’s supper for a season, and by excommunication from the church, according to the nature of the crime, and demerit of the person.”

The Confession is here dealing with the procedure to be followed when the matter has reached the courts of the church: it is not dealing with the whole process of discipline. The outward expression of discipline, the actual punishment for wrongdoing in the church, can be imposed only by the church-officers meeting as a judicial body and in the name of Christ. It cannot be imposed by an individual member of the church, as Matthew 18 clearly indicates, nor by the civil magistrate as we have discussed above. Our Master, however, has stipulated certain steps which we must faithfully take as individuals before we reveal the matter to the church as a whole. These steps, precursory to action in church courts, He has enumerated in Matthew 18, and we might consider them first before proceeding to examine the procedure to be followed by the church as a whole.

In verse 15 we read,

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone.”

We have already commented on the depth of love and tenderness which this requirement displays and calls forth from us as individual Christians. We are not to be eager to publish abroad the faults of another but are to cherish our brothers in Christ and be endowed with an understanding sympathy for them. But there is another purpose behind Christ’s words as well as this one of pointing out the attitude we should bear to each other. Every Christian has a brotherly responsibility: in a sense he is his brother’s keeper. If a brother commits a sin against him or in his sight, he himself has a personal responsibility to

advise his brother and to assist him overcome his fault. He has no right to pass this burden on to the church officers. Indeed, we might well question the quality of our friendship and love for our brother if we are not prepared to remonstrate with him.

There is further wisdom in Christ’s regulation. The Church is the place for the preaching of the Gospel and for the edification of the saints. While discipline is an unavoidable part of its government and duty, it is not Christ’s intention that the church be continually disturbed by re-primations. This surely is also the point and lesson of I Corinthians 6 in which the Holy Spirit rebukes the Corinthians for rushing into the civil law courts. Many of the discords which occur in the weakness of the flesh between Christians should be capable of settlement privately without recourse to a public tribunal. Were we endowed with the meekness of spirit which we should possess, it would be so. We should do our erring brother the credit of possessing a portion of this meekness or at least strive to develop it in him. Consequently, to approach him first privately with a desire to preserve his public respect and maintain the harmony of the church should be our automatic response to a wrong committed against us. And if we keep in mind the possible result, “thou hast gained thy brother,” we should be prompt to obey. Moreover, many trespasses are committed thoughtlessly or from immaturity. A private and kind admonition is often all that is necessary to correct a fault and to elicit an apology and repentance. If so, the harm is confined to narrow limits and the peace of the church is unruffled. Far better that this should result, than that the attention of the church-officers be unnecessarily distracted from the precious task of advancing the Gospel. Let us be men — men of true Christian love — and accept our individual responsibility for the spiritual welfare of our brethren as they have contacts with us. Let us remember also that in doing this we are playing our part in the work of the church.

Before leaving this verse of Scripture and this commandment of Christ to speak to our brother privately, we might consider the reverse side of the picture. What if we are in the position of the sinner? if we had committed the trespass against a brother? Christ has commanded him to come to us. We should therefore listen to him in all meekness and consider prayerfully what he has to say. We should also be grateful to him that he has thought highly enough of us to seek our good. As our correcting brother has been gener-

ous to us, let us be generous and not churlish to him, accepting with due humility his words and enlisting his aid.

Our Lord Jesus interposed one further action between the committing of the sin and its trial by the church:

“But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” (Matt. 18:16).

We can see immediately that the intervention of witnesses serves the same purpose as the action of the individual: they might be able to localise the unfortunate occurrence and prevent it from distressing the whole church. A careless sinner is more likely to give heed to the voices of two or three, when he had been inclined to disregard the voice of one, and that of the man against whom he had trespassed. The approach of numbers can often have a beneficial effect on groundless pride.

There is more to this interpolation of witnesses, however, than the value of weight of numbers in convincing a man of his wrong. The church is empowered to act against public sins. Its governing bodies are not meant to be perpetually prying into the private lives of members, and life in the church should be lived in an atmosphere, not of repression, but of liberty. The Session, for example, may take direct action against an open idolator, heretic or fornicator, without a private member first reproving him, but it should not interfere in the private relations between individuals and the delicate contacts one with another. As Christians, each member should be able to live responsibly and to act with circumspection towards his brother, remonstrating with him where necessary. Church discipline by church courts is restricted to those excessive outbursts where justified shame and reproach can be leveled against the church.

Moreover, as we have already indicated, discipline falls on a man more for his contumacy than for the original deed: he openly and wilfully persists in his sin and refuses to acknowledge its fault and desist from its performance. It is at this point that the witnesses become important. In verse 15 our Lord was referring to a private sin, which was known only to the offending and the offended brothers. The sinner has rejected the warnings of his brother, who, in concern, enlists the aid of others. But the sinner persists and now the sin begins to take the shape of a public sin. In his obduracy, the sinner is virtually advocating sin. The courts of the church now can and must take action for the transgressor is wilfully and openly disobeying the commandments of God and such a situation cannot be allowed to continue. It is no longer the original sin that is alone under consideration, but a far worse one has been

added to it, a challenge to the sovereignty of God; and it is now a public offence, because committed in front of witnesses. It is not that the witnesses have incited the erring one to greater extremes and thus enabled the church courts to impose their stern authority. Rather their participation has served to reveal a more serious state: the wayward member is settled in his sinful ways and has no desire for holiness. Now we all sin and are in need of the forgiveness of our brethren, but not all refuse to listen to a gracious rebuke. This willingness for a few to act as witnesses saves the church courts having to conduct greater surveillance of the lives of members; their rebuff uncovers a malignant blindness deserving the concerted attention of the ruling elders.

That we are not misinterpreting the function of the witnesses may be seen from the concluding words of verse 16, “that . . . every word may be established.” The sinner is being given every opportunity to repent and the presence and advice of witnesses must impress him with the seriousness of the position, so that he cannot say when he comes before the church-officers that he was in ignorance. He must declare himself. Should he say that he is unable to see wherein his fault lies, then the action which the Church court takes will be vastly different from the situation in which he refuses to repent. The witnesses are there to ensure that the position has been made thoroughly clear and that no misunderstanding exists between the two parties.

It is only after those two processes have been completed without success that our Lord would have us bring the case to the Church courts. By this time the offence has been added to and the transgressor is guilty of scandal. The words of Christ are:

“And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church. (Matt. 18:17).

In such a situation the ruling elders must then act, otherwise their authority as the divinely appointed government in Christ's kingdom on earth would be undermined and they would be guilty of neglect of duty. They would be allowing a deliberate sinner to wrongly enjoy the privileges of membership, and would be doing nothing to prevent or warn faithful members against his baleful influence.

(To be continued)

---

The more I study the Scriptures, the example of Christ, and the history of my own heart, the more I am convinced, that a testimony of God, placed without us and above us, exempt from all intermixture of sin and error which belong to a fallen race, and received with submission on the sole authority of God, is the true basis of faith.

— Adolphe Monod

# *The Hebrew Sanctuary, a Study in Typology*

By the Rev. Wallace B. Nicholson, M.A., B.D., M.Th.

## 5. The Sin Offerings.

The ritual for the sin offering was as follows: The victim must be an animal not older than a year and not younger than eight days and unblemished. A bullock was offered for a priest, a male kid for a ruler, and a female kid or lamb for a private person. (In the case of the poor, two pigeons might be offered: one as the sin-offering and the other as a burnt-offering; and when even this could not be procured the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour might be substituted (Lev. 5:7, 11).) The offerer laid his hand on the head of the victim and having slain the offering, the blood was sprinkled by the priest on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and the remainder was poured out at its base; but if the sacrifice was offered on behalf of a priest the blood was sprinkled on the horns of the altar of incense, then seven times within the holy place towards the mercy seat, and what remained was poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering. The fat, the choicest part of the victim, having been consumed on the altar, the remainder was eaten by the priests within the court, their families being excluded from participation. In the case of a sinning priest, or the whole congregation, after the fat was consumed by fire, the flesh was carried outside the camp and burned to ashes in a clean place. The sin offerings prescribed for the annual day of atonement were a bullock for the high priest and a goat for the people. In this case the blood was first sprinkled in the holy of holies, then in the holy place, and finally upon the horns of the altar in the court.

The sin offering was in the nature of a restoring ordinance. The offerer, in this case had been excluded from fellowship with Jehovah because of some particular sin or defilement; and as an introduction to a new or restored relationship a sin offering was required. The ritual dealing with this subject is to be found in Leviticus, chapters four and five. In seeking to discover what precisely is meant by sins of ignorance we are led to consider that presumptuous sins committed against knowledge and in open defiance to God's law were punishable by death. We may conceive, however, that even under the Mosaic dispensation there was forgiveness for any sin provided always it was truly repented of and confessed: this could still be true, even if the sentence of death was carried out under the Theocracy. However that may be, it has been generally held that there is a severity here, incompatible with the New Testament economy; but notwithstanding the greater manifestation of mercy, in the latter there are also cases mentioned of hardened and

flagrant opposition to the Spirit of God for which there was no forgiveness.

The sins of ignorance referred to therefore appear to lie anywhere below the level of presumptuous sins, and must include within their scope various sins not committed in absolute ignorance but arising from temptation, infirmity, or passion. Such sins would include acts committed against specific prohibitions of the law which were not sufficiently attended to or were unconsciously committed and afterwards realized as acts of sin; there would also be rash acts of sin and violations of a ceremonial nature or misdemeanours committed, which showed a culpable defect in knowledge or a low spiritual state of mind which was particularly offensive to God. To limit the sin offerings to mere violations of ceremonial etiquette, as some writers have done, is due to a misconception of the varying conditions and experiences of God's people in a state of imperfection here below, or a misapprehension of the various statements referred to in the descriptions given in the text, of the nature of the sin offering. It is also a mistake to conclude that the sin offering availed only for special individual sins, since on the annual day of atonement account was taken of all the sins of the covenant people.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that the purpose of the sin offering was to restore the union between God and man which had been broken off by transgression; and once this union was restored provision was made to maintain it by means of the burnt offering, and it is hardly necessary to explain that this also has its parallel in the gospel dispensation. Through the atonement of Christ who offered Himself without spot unto God, and whose offering was expiatory, vindicating the law and suffering its penalty as the Substitute, He so provided through the blood of the everlasting covenant, restoration and happiness for the children of God:

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (II Cor. 5:21).

## 6. The Trespass Offering.

The regulations governing the trespass offering are set down in Leviticus and Numbers (Lev. 5:14 to 6:7; Lev. 7:1-7; Num. 5:8).

The animal brought for a trespass offering was always a ram, whatever the rank or standing of the offerer. In the first and second sections dealing with this matter (Lev. 5:14-16 and Lev. 5:17-19), the trespass was wholly concerned with "the holy things of the Lord" though the second tres-

pass was perhaps in point of subjective knowledge, less blameworthy and consequently of an inferior rank. In these two cases, if the transgressor had defrauded, or unrighteously withheld his dues in the sacred things of God he was to offer a ram for his trespass: and besides this, he was to restore whatever had been withheld along with an additional fifth.

In the second class of trespass offerings the offence, though still against God, involved the constitutional rights of his neighbour; and in this case also he was to offer a ram, and besides restore to his neighbour the amount of the loss.

If this were found to be impossible, the principal and the additional fifth were to be restored to the Lord. The offering of the leper and of the Nazarite present some slight differences, the circumstances not being precisely the same.

The distinction between the sin offering proper and the trespass offering has been obscured partly because of their similarity, and partly because the sections dealing with these two different classes of offerings have not been properly distinguished. Perhaps the word "trespass" occurring in Leviticus 5:6 has contributed to this confusion. Two different words are used for "sin offering" and "trespass offering" or what might be properly called "guilt offering"; and it must be remembered in considering the distinctions here that the sin offering was also a guilt or debt offering, though the latter lays emphasis on the debt incurred which required restoration or recompense. In the matter of the sin offering the question of sacrilege or social injustice was held out of view, but in the case of the proper trespass offering this aspect of sin was brought into prominence. The offering in this ritual was always the same, as distinct from the sin offering, while the blood was only poured around the altar. The trespass offering was inferior to the sin offering, since it had regard mainly to the correction of social injustices among the covenant people, injustices which in themselves were a consequence of, and reflected a measure of unspirituality inconsistent with the respect due to the holy things of God. Hence in the trespass offering reparation had also to be made. We may note that in the burnt offering the basic element was **consecration**, in the sin offering **expiation**, and in the trespass offering **reparation**.

While the New Testament lays emphasis on the sacrifice of Christ under the view of a sin offering, we must not forget that the aspect of trespass or reparation is also made prominent in the Gospel. Christ restored that which he took not away (Psa. 69:4). If we consider sin as a debt, we shall find that God was defrauded of that which rightfully belonged to Him, while man himself was despoiled of what originally belonged to him. The oblation of the redeemer met all the exigencies of the case. All the offences against the holy

things of God and all the injustices of humanity were cancelled by a satisfaction of infinite efficacy and everlasting merit. And in the sphere of Christian life, worship, and service, it is impossible in the nature of the case to have peace and fellowship with God unless efforts are made in the Spirit of the Gospel to make reparation for the injuries done to others (Matt. 5:23-24).

According to Delitzsch: (**Commentary on Isaiah**, Chapter 53, Verse 10.)

"Every species of offering has its peculiar fundamental idea. That of the burnt offering the gift of devotion; that of the peace offering the information of fellowship; that of the food offering the hallowing dedication; that of the sin offering the atonement; that of the guilt offering the compensatory payment. The self sacrifice of the servant of Jehovah may be viewed in all these lights. It is the antitype **in toto**, the truth, the goal, and the end of offerings."

## XII. THE SYMBOLISM OF COLOUR AND NUMBERS

Various colours were used in the furnishings of the tabernacle and the garments of the high priest, such as red, blue, purple and white. These colours according to some typologists are typical of some truths of Christianity; and Bahr, Neumann and others have elaborated this idea. Other writers have contented themselves with suggesting that these colours were not significant but were used as the precious metals and stones were used to enhance the glory of the dwelling place of Jehovah. At the same time there is scriptural evidence that colour has been used to symbolize certain verities. "White" for example is an emblem of righteousness or purity while "Red" is representative of death or life.

Typologists have also maintained that numbers have been used to express certain ideas. The most familiar numbers used were, twelve, ten, seven, and three, which respectively are supposed to represent — the twelve tribes of Israel, the idea of perfection, the signature of the covenant, and the Trinity. With reference to these as well as the colours and the precious metals and jewels mentioned, caution should be exercised since excessive elaboration tends to lead to puerile interpretations of materials used for convenience, or facts of history referred to which possess no typological significance.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atwater, E. E., **The Sacred Tabernacle**. New York. 1877.
- Augustine, Aurelius, **Reply to Faustus the Manichean**. A. D. 354-430.
- Bahr, **Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus**. 1837-39-74.

- Barnabas, **Epistle of Barnabas**. A. D. 100.
- Calvin, John, **Harmony of the Pentateuch**. 3 vols.
- Chrysostom, John, **Homilies on Hebrews**. A. D. 347-409.
- Clement of Alexandria, **The Stromata**. A. D. 153-217.
- Cocceius, Johannes, **Summa doctrinae de foedere et testamento Dei**. 1648.
- Fairbairn, Patrick, **Typology of Scripture**. 1864.
- Glassius, Salomon, **Philologia Sacra**. 1623-36.
- Hengstenberg, Ernst W., **Beitrag zur Einleitung ins Alte Testament**. 1831.
- Hutchinson, John, **Collected Writings**. 1784.
- Irenaeus, **Fragments**. A. D. 120-202.
- Josephus, Flavius, **Antiquities of the Jews**. A. D. 37-A. D. 100.
- Justin Martyr, **Dialogue with Trypho**. A. D. 110-165.
- Keach, Benjamin, **Tropologia: A Key to Open Scripture Metaphors and Types**. London 1861.
- Klausen, H. N., **Hermeneutics**. 1841.
- Luther, Martin, **Commentary on Galatians**. Edinburgh. 1822.
- MacEwen, W., **Types, Figures and Allegories of the Old Testament**.
- Marsh, Herbert, **Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible**. 1828-1838.
- Origen of Alexandria, **Principia**. A. D. 185-254.
- Philo Judaeus, **Life of Moses; on Sacrifices**. B. C. 20-A. D. 40.
- Terry, Milton S., **Biblical Hermeneutics**. 1890.
- Tertullian. **Contra Marcion**. A. D. 145-220.
- Vitringa, Campegius, **Observationes Sacrae**. 3 vols. 1689-1708.
- Witsius, Herman, **De oeconomia foederum Dei cum hominibus**. 1712. Eng. trans. 2 vols. London. 1840.

The End

---

## *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church*

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

### III.

#### ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, CONTINUED

To all this it may be answered, that what is contended for is that the Christian church is warranted by the observance of services analogous to those of the Jewish temple to **commemorate** the past illustrious events of her history. Where is the warrant? We have a divine warrant for the observance of the Lord's day. We have a divine warrant for the observance of the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. What other days are we enjoined to keep holy? What other symbolical ordinances are we commanded to observe? To take the ground that the church has a discretionary power to appoint other holy days and other symbolical rites is to concede to Rome the legitimacy of her five superfluous sacraments and all her self-devised paraphernalia of sacred festivals. There is no middle ground. Either we are bound by the Lord's appointments in his Word, or human discretion is logically entitled to the full-blown license of Rome.

Sixthly, The speech of Stephen before the Jewish Council. This speech of the illustrious proto-martyr of the Christian church must ever be

regarded as one of the strongest scriptural proofs of the abolition of the temple-worship; but as it will come to be considered as one of the elements in the direct argument against the use of instrumental music in public worship, its examination will for the present be deferred.

Seventhly, The decree of the Synod of Jerusalem. Certain Judaizing teachers who went from Judea to Antioch "taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." This raised the whole question about conformity to the institutions of the ceremonial law by the Christian church. That question was referred to the decision of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas were the commissioners. They laid the case before an assembled synod. The decree of that body, which was sent to the Gentile churches, was: "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." The significant absence of any allusion, explicitly made, to the question about the ceremonial law was manifestly equivalent to a decision that it was not necessary that the churches should conform to the requirements of that law. It was tanta-

mount to a judgment that the Mosaic institutions, so far as they were ceremonial and typical, were no longer binding. Of course, it follows that the venerable synod regarded the observance of the temple-worship as no longer obligatory, and discharged the Gentile churches from the duty of adhering to any of its elements which were distinctive of the old dispensation. (This was afterwards expressly asserted to Paul by the apostles at Jerusalem as the sense of the synod's decision. "As touching the Gentiles," said they, "which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing." Acts xxi. 25.) To suppose that those churches, after such a discharge, had discretionary power to retain the services of the ceremonial code is to suppose that they might, at discretion, forsake the liberty they had in Christ and resume the yoke of Moses. The supposition is absurd. As the great body of the Christian church has been gathered from the Gentiles, the inference is obvious.

Eighthly, The speeches of Paul at his last visit to Jerusalem. The charge which was brought against him was this: "This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place." If the charge had been even partly false that he taught against the law and the temple, Paul's first step in his defence would evidently have consisted in denying it. This denial he did not make. How can the fact be accounted for, except upon the ground that Paul was well aware that both the temple and its peculiar services were doomed? He knew the prediction of Jesus that the building would be destroyed, and he had special reason for remembering the defence of Stephen before the Council, in which that servant of Christ contended that the whole typical ritual would give way to the sublime simplicity of worship which would characterize the new dispensation. That Paul himself occasionally worshipped **at the temple** was a mere matter of expediency. That he took part in its ceremonial and typical observances there is no proof to show. Indeed, without any assertion upon the subject, may not the question be raised, whether, after the day of Pentecost, when the Christian dispensation was inaugurated, the apostles did not, **as men**, commit a mistake in worshipping at all at the temple. It is difficult to believe that Stephen worshipped there.

Ninthly, The argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews is decisive. In the first place, it shows that the Aaronic priests and Levitical ministers have vanished, having been superseded by a priest after the order of Melchizedek, who has offered a perfect sacrifice, and lives forever to intercede for his people and consummate the work of redemption. If there be no priests and Levites to officiate, how is it possible to continue the services of the temple? To say that they are succeeded by Christian ministers is flatly to contradict the argument of the inspired writer. In the second place,

the argument expressly proves that the temple-worship has been abolished. After stating the fact that the first covenant (that is, the Jewish dispensation.) (The allusion here cannot be to the covenant of works as historically preceding the covenant of grace. It is to that special form in which God administered the covenant of grace in the Jewish dispensation which gave way to another form of administration under the Christian economy.) had "ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary," and specifying the things contained and the offices performed in the latter, it declares that "the first tabernacle" — and by this term the temple, as well as the tabernacle proper, was designated — "was a figure for the time then present;" but that Christ had come, "a high priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle." The figure had been realized in that which was figured, and consequently there was no longer any necessity for its teaching; indeed, its teaching would be utterly false and misleading. In the third place, the argument shows that the ceremonial law, as a mere shadow of good things to come, was inefficacious to provide for the removal of guilt from the conscience and the sanctification of the soul. But these ends are now secured by Christ through the sacrifice of himself. Now there is no need to approach God by the old way of the temple-worship. We are at liberty to approach him by a new and living way, which Christ hath consecrated for us through the veil; that is to say, his flesh. His atoning death has cancelled the necessity for the temple and all its ceremonial and typical observances.

(3.) The providence of God settled this question. It effectually abolished the temple and its services. The Lord Jesus, before his death, predicted the destruction of the temple itself. Forty years after his death the Romans destroyed it. This, it may be urged, proved nothing as to the legitimacy of continuing its services: it may, for aught we know, be restored. It is true that the temple was rebuilt after the Babylonish captivity. This was accomplished upon the expiration of seventy years only, and then by God's direction. The Messiah had not come, and the typical office of the temple might still be fitly discharged. But he did come, and the rending of the veil, when he expired, was the patent signal of the temple's doom. More than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since its destruction, and it is not yet rebuilt. God has never directed its reconstruction, but on the contrary has by his providence prevented it when it has been attempted. The Emperor Julian, commonly called the Apostate, made the effort, and was baffled in a most extraordinary way. In speaking of what he terms "the miraculous interposition of heaven, which defeated Julian's attempt to rebuild the Jewish temple of Jerusalem," Bishop Warburton says: "Sacrifices constituting the essentials of their (the Jews') worship, their

religion could not be said to exist longer than that celebration continued. But sacrifices were to be performed in no place out of the walls of their temple. So that when this holy place was finally destroyed, according to the prophetic predictions, the institution itself became abolished. Nor was anything more consonant to the genius of this religion, than the assigning such a celebration of its principal rites. The temple would exist while they remained a people, and continued sovereign. And when their sovereignty was lost, the temple-worship became precarious, and subject to the arbitrary pleasure of their masters. They destroyed this temple: but it was not till it had lost its use. For the rites, directed to be there celebrated, were relative to them only as a free-policed people.

"So that this was, in reality, a total **extinction** of the Jewish worship. How wonderful are the ways of God! This came to pass at that very period when a new revelation from heaven concurred with the blind transactions of civil policy, to supersede the law by the introduction of the gospel: the last great work which completed the scheme of human redemption.

"To confound this admirable order of providence was what induced the Emperor Julian to attempt the rebuilding of the Jewish temple of Jerusalem. The vanity of the attempt could only be equalled by its impiety; for it was designed to give the lie to God, who, by the mouth of his prophets, had foretold that it should never be rebuilt. Here, then, was the most important occasion for a miraculous interposition, as it was to defeat this mad attempt. And thus in fact it was defeated, to the admiration of all mankind.

"But as a large and full account of the whole affair hath been already given to the public, in a work entitled — Julian, or a Discourse concerning the Earthquake and Fiery Eruption which defeated that Emperor's attempt to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem; thither will I refer the learned reader, who will there meet with all the various evi-

dence of the fact, abundantly sufficient to support and establish it; together with a full confutation of all the cavils opposed to its certainty and necessity."

It may be pleaded, that although the temple may be irrevocably destroyed, its priestly services may, in some sense, be transferred in a modified form and under new conditions to the Christian church: that the New Testament itself authorizes the offices of a priesthood. Yes, it declares all believers to be made priests in Christ to God, but priests, as offering eucharistic sacrifices — sacrifices of themselves, of their prayers, and of their substance. Nothing more need be said in rebuttal of this wretched perversion of Scripture than that the word **priest** (*hiereus*) is never, in the singular, applied in the New Testament to any merely human officer of the church. He who assumes to be officially a priest usurps the prerogative of Jesus Christ, and audaciously invokes his judgment. This is sufficient in reply to sacerdotalists who, if not already within the pale of Rome, need only to push out their views to a legitimate conclusion in order to reach the popish outrage of the Mass.

We must concur with Warburton in holding that the destruction of the temple, after the death of Christ, involved the "extinction" of all that was peculiar and characteristic in the temple-worship.

The abolition of the temple-worship, so far as it was peculiar to the Jewish dispensation, has now been proved by an appeal to the nature of the case, to the statements of the New Testament Scriptures, and to the awful providence of God; and as it was before incontestably shown that instrumental music was employed alone in that worship, so far as the public religious services of God's people were concerned, it follows that that kind of music is, with those limitations, abolished, and that its use in the Christian church is contrary to the Word and will of God.

(To be continued)

---

## ***A Believer's Life of Christ***

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

### **HUMILIATION AND EXALTATION**

The story of the resurrection day is the story of the empty tomb and its discovery, the appearance of the angels with their message, and the appearance of the risen Lord.

As for the resurrection itself, it is evident that it was withheld from human observation. In all likelihood it took place before the day appeared and in a manner invisible to any eye save that of God.

For the individuals concerned the events of the day began with the dawn. In these events the devoted women followers had a part which was all their own. It was given to them to be the first at the sepulchre. They and they alone saw and heard the angel messengers. And to them it was that the risen Saviour first appeared.

They had been witnesses at the crucifixion of Christ and at his burial and were early at the grave. One of them especially gained a name of deathless fame; Mary, out of whom seven

devils had been cast, Mary of Magdala, or as she is called, Mary Magdalene. Others are mentioned by name, but Mary's name appears four times in connection with the death and burial and no less than seven in the resurrection story.

Of the women it is said that, as they went to report their experiences and findings, Jesus met them and said, "All hail," and they "worshipped him" (Matthew 28:9). But of Mary Magdalene it is distinctly stated that the honour of receiving the first appearance of the Lord was given to her (Mark 16:9 and John 20:11-18). These all loved the Lord and had, as they believed, a duty to perform and made no delay about it. Thus they were the first to see and hear and to believe. (Our authority for the belief that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene is found in Mark 16:9. We hold that the "Authorized" or "King James" version is correct at this point and accept it as genuine. See the able defense of the matter in question in the works of Edward F. Hills and John W. Burgon.)

As for the disciples, they too were at the crucifixion and the burial and when the report of the women came they should have believed. But they did not, and were later upbraided for their "unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them that had seen the Lord after he was risen" (Mark 16:14).

With regard to the forty day appearances themselves, they may be classified as the earlier, the later and the final appearance. The earlier appearances occurred in and near Jerusalem. They were to Mary and the other women, to the two on the way to Emmaus, to Peter, to James and to the ten; all these on the resurrection day itself. Another in this group was that which occurred one week later, in the same place and about the same time of day, to the eleven (Thomas being present).

The later appearances were in Galilee to the eleven on the mountain, and to more than five hundred at one time. It may be that these two were one and the same appearance. Another of this group was to seven of the disciples by the sea of Galilee. And there may have been others.

The final appearance was to the eleven at the end of the forty day period. Now they were in Jerusalem again and we learn that again on this occasion the Lord met and had a meal with them somewhere in the city. He gave and they received his final teaching and instructions. Whereupon "he led them out as far as to Bethany, and lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, that while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." And "they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God." So, Luke, in the last words of his gospel.

His second account as given in his Acts of the Apostles (chapter one) adds that "while they beheld, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight."

Previously it had been to the women only that the angels had appeared. But now an angelic appearance was vouchsafed to the men. "While they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Thus it was that the final appearance took place and issued in the Lord's ascension.

So we know that Christ arose for he appeared and was seen by the women and by the men and not merely by a few but by many. And that he arose in the same body as that in which he suffered we also know, for he took particular pains to impress this fact upon them. (For references on Jesus' resurrection in the same body as that in which he suffered see Luke 24:36-43; John 20:20 and 24-28; Acts 10:41.)

And as "to him gave all the prophets witness" so also all of the apostles.

The New Testament as a whole witnesses throughout to the two great events of the life of Christ, his death and resurrection; to the two great epochs of his life, the humiliation and the exaltation. For the death of Christ the New Testament provides a fourfold narrative, but for the resurrection and ascension there are five. If the story of the appearances are what we have in mind, Paul's summary in I Corinthians 15:1-8 would have to be included together with the story of his conversion as recorded in Acts chapter eight.

A fact not always clearly understood about the death of Christ is that in it his victory over the tempter and all his power was final and complete. It was the inevitable outcome of his participation in our nature and his life-work as the sinner's friend. Part of his purpose in becoming man was "that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15).

This victory was gained in principle in his death and was implemented in his resurrection and resurrection power and life. The death of Christ was a death blow to the devil; a hurt irreparable. Thereby he suffered a reverse from which he never has and never shall recover.

This set-back to the forces of evil was at once apparent in its effect upon the human agents of the adversary. Now they were really troubled; utterly confounded by the new turn of events.

They were "grieved" that the apostles "taught the people." They were amazed "when they saw the boldness of Peter and John." They could neither deny the evidence nor resist the testimony. Later, when Herod, to please the Jews, joined forces with them, his bold attempt on Peter's life was divinely circumvented (Acts 12:1-11).

Jesus' entrance upon his exalted state in glory signifies another and a wholly new state and stage in his life. For the forty day period he was not yet glorified, for he was not yet ascended.

But with the ascension and all that follows from it he did not leave the cross and its place and significance behind. We are "reconciled to God by the death of his Son" and we are "saved by his life." The Christ they knew and loved in Galilee is our Christ today. He is yet with us here and now, and as not before. He is the same Lord Jesus Christ and his life and ministry is still the same as it was while here on earth among us in the flesh.

The message of the apostles and of the church of their day was Christ and him crucified; Christ risen and ascended. It was a message of permanent and supreme significance both for the individual and for the world.

It is interesting to observe how the two great events of Jesus' life were combined in Peter's message. In his first address on the day of Pentecost he says of the Lord that having been "delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23, 24f). "This Jesus hath God raised up," he said, "whereof we are all witnesses." Brought before the Jewish council he spoke again of "Jesus whom they had crucified, whom God raised from the dead" (Acts 4:10).

Again on a similar occasion he said "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things, etc." (Acts 5:30, 31).

And, again, addressing Cornelius and his friends, commenting on the life of Christ he said, "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in all the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:34-43).

The two events represent two sides of God's work of Salvation. As they appear in close prox-

imity in the story so also always in the testimony.

The same association of these two events appears in the witness and preaching of Paul. Speaking in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, following his allusion to the human origin and public life of Christ, he tells how "they that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers," "though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead; and he was seen many days of them that came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people" (Acts 13:27-31). It is the same story as that of Peter; of Jesus' life and death and resurrection and of the forgiveness of sins through him, with the same special attention to his resurrection as the fulfillment of David's prophecy of Psalm 16.

Of Paul at Thessalonica we read that "as his manner was he went in unto them (that is, to the Jews in their synagogue) and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:1-3).

The same close connection of the two events is maintained in the epistles. A few instances will serve to illustrate.

In Romans 4:25 Paul says that Jesus our Lord was "delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification." In Romans six he speaks of our death in Christ and of our burial and resurrection and resurrection life with him. Romans 8:34 — "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Again and again he speaks of the believer's identification with Christ in his death and resurrection and of the meaning of these events for us in our lives. Christ's amazing self-humiliation unto death, even the death of the cross; and the glory and greatness of his exaltation, are the burden of Philipians 2:5-11. In I Thessalonians 5:10 he says that Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."

The same emphasis upon these two supreme events is, of course, characteristic of all of the New Testament writers. We cannot close our consideration of them without giving some attention to their meaning for the Lord himself and for all that are in him.

It is evident from Paul's famous dissertation in Romans six and elsewhere that the death and resurrection have very distinct and definite meaning for the believer in this present world and life. The writer says that "so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his

death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." And again, "Now if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:3, 4, 8-11).

He says that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3). And "that if one died for all, then were all dead" (that is, all for whom he died in his substitutionary death; these all died in him). And the implication is that his death for them was to the end that they should both die and live again (II Corinthians 5:14, 15).

Repeatedly Paul connects these two things, death and life for the believer, with specific reference to the death and life of Christ. "I am crucified with Christ," he says, "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: 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" (Galatians 2:20).

A secondary meaning of Christ's death for sins was his death to sin in behalf of all those for whom he died. So, if and when his redemption is applied to us, we also both die and live again. We die to sin with him in his death and rise again with him into new and resurrection life.

So Christ's death was and is our death in more ways than one; and his resurrection and new life was and is our resurrection and "newness of life." As prior to our regeneration and conversion we were "dead in trespasses and sins," we are subsequently dead to sin and alive unto God. We are "quicken together with Christ," "raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 2:1-10). Above what has just been quoted, the apostle speaks of "the exceeding greatness of God's power to usward who believe." It is the assertion of a resurrection wrought in us by the exercise of the same power as that "which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:19-23).

And in Colossians 3:1-4 he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your

life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

A further teaching concerning Jesus' resurrection comes in I Corinthians 15. Here Paul expounds its meaning for the believers in its relation to the general resurrection. As their souls are raised from their death in sin into a new life in Christ, so shall it be eventually also with their bodies. "We shall not all sleep," he says, "but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we shall be changed (I Corinthians 15:51, 52). Other passages to this effect could be cited both from the teachings of the Lord himself and in all of the New Testament writings.

In Colossians 1:12-20 Christ is set forth both in his pre-incarnate and also in his post-ascension state. In II Timothy 1:8-11 the inspired writer speaks of his "appearing" and in Titus 2:11-15 of "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." And in other places, such as I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and II Thessalonians 1:7-10, diverse aspects of the coming of the Lord are portrayed.

The essential contrast of the believers and the unbelievers will be abundantly clear in the general resurrection and the judgment, when Jesus comes. The believers will have their place and part in things to come and the unbelievers theirs. The unbelievers may and do enjoy many great and good things in this life; all of which, whether they know it or not, flow from God's grace and goodness in and through his Son.

All proceed from the death and life of Christ and are received by one in one way and by another in another. "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Titus 1:15). While yet alive they enjoy God's good gifts in their way; but for the rest, they are excluded.

For they are "of the world"; the world that despised and rejected Christ; that condemned him and put him to death. Even as in his earthly life they cast him out of the synagogue, went back and walked no more with him and fell away; so also in every day and age and so today.

Christ died that we might live. He suffered for our sins that we might not have to suffer for them. For our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might be rich. His deliverance to his foes was his deliverance of his people from them. He "suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

We can only say with one of old "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift" (II Corinthians 9:15). "Who shall deliver me from the body of his death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24, 25). "Thanks be to God

which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57). (Copyright, 1960, by W. A. Wilde Company. Used by permission.) (To be continued)

## *Some Observations on the Theory of Evolution*

By J. G. Vos

### I

#### The Theory of Evolution from the Philosophical Viewpoint

##### 1. Science is properly limited to repeatable phenomena.

Much conflict of beliefs has arisen from the common popular notion, which unfortunately seems to be uncritically held by some scientists, that the field in which science can function and discover truth is unlimited. It is a common notion today that science can furnish all the answers — if we can only collect enough data and analyze them thoroughly enough, our questions can all be answered and our problems will all be solved. Not all scientists hold this idea but it is clear that **some** do. This notion, however, is unwarranted and unsound. There are vast areas of truth in which science cannot speak at all. For example, the whole field of moral values is outside the scope of science; it is neither scientific nor unscientific to steal or commit murder.

Properly, the legitimate field of scientific research is the field of **phenomena**, that is, the field of facts which can be observed, measured, repeated and tested by experiment. Within this field science certainly has a right to seek and find truth by the scientific method of progressively revised hypotheses. Even truth thus discovered, however, may not be absolute or final; for example, much has been learned about the nature of light, but every physics student knows that there are two theories about the nature of light and neither of them can be discarded in favor of the other.

Facts which are supposed to have happened millions or billions of years ago are not phenomena which can be observed, repeated or tested by experiment. A bone or fossil is a fact which can be observed, but its relationship to another bone or fossil found somewhere else is not subject to observation or experiment. How long ago it was alive and what is its relationship to organisms living today can only be **conjectured** in terms of a framework held by faith; it cannot be proved by observation or experiment.

##### 2. The Origin of Life and of Man are not Repeatable.

Man as he exists today is a proper object of

scientific research. But the origin of man, and the origin of life, lie outside the bounds of proper scientific research. This is because in the nature of the case it is not an observable fact, it cannot be repeated and it cannot be tested by experiment. In spite of some scientists' hopes, science has never produced life from inorganic matter — not even a single-celled amoeba, let alone man. When man first appeared on this earth — whether by creation or by evolution — there were no scientists present to observe and record what happened. **The origin of man and the origin of life are known only by faith, not by proof.** This is true both of the evolutionist and of the Christian believer. The one pronounces a judgment by evolutionary faith concerning something that has not been observed and cannot be tested by experiment; the other pronounces by Biblical or religious faith concerning that which cannot be proved. The dispute about evolution in connection with origins concerns these unprovable matters which after all are held by faith.

##### 3. To assume that Development Explains Origin is Improper.

Evolutionary theory studies the development, or the supposed development, of organisms and from this study of development undertakes to make pronouncements about their ultimate **origin**. This is manifestly improper and based on faulty reasoning. Evolution is a theory of how living organisms **changed**. But a theory of how things changed cannot explain how things got there in the first place. A study of how nature functions today cannot explain what started nature to functioning in the first place. Biological study of mutations, adaptation to environment, and other kinds of genetic change cannot explain the **starting point or starting points** of the process. It is well known that in many cases the hypothetical intermediate forms — the so-called missing links — between the major divisions of plant and animal life are **missing** — that is, they do not actually exist as fossils, but are purely hypothetical. It is held that they must have existed but the fossils have been lost or destroyed. But it should be noted that this is not proved; it is held by a scientific faith or dogmatism, because the alternative would be to believe in supernatural creation by God.

The evolutionist should realize that he is

assuming that development can explain origin. He should not hold this uncritically as an axiom that needs no proof. The non-evolutionist should realize that this is a serious weakness of the whole evolutionary scheme.

#### 4. Rejection of the Supernatural as Unscientific is Improper.

According to the scientific method, any hypothesis whatever can be proposed and tested as an explanation of the facts. If the hypothesis fails to explain the facts, it must then be discarded and a new one sought or set up. But many books on science after thus stating the scientific method add a statement that of course no hypothesis involving the supernatural can be considered worthy of being tested. The supernatural is ruled out at the start as unscientific. What this really amounts to is that the evolutionary scientist at the very start **assumes** the thing that requires proof — namely that the functioning of nature can explain the origin of nature. This is just the point at issue. If it is unscientific to say that God by supernatural power created nature, the reason this is unscientific is that the question is one outside the proper field of scientific study. But if it is outside the field of scientific study, Christian theism should not be ruled out and a **non-theistic, naturalistic dogmatism** substituted for it. If origins are outside the proper field of science, then proper scientists should avoid making scientific pronouncements on origins.

## II

### The Theory of Evolution from the Theological Viewpoint

Christianity requires and Evolutionary Theory denies that:

1. At his origin man existed in the image of God. (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10). The image of God is what makes man human. It marks him as distinct from the animals but in some true sense similar to God. Scripture explains the image of God, which characterized mankind at the very beginning, as involving a mind, personality, character, moral uprightness. The first people, according to Scripture were truly human, in mind and soul as well as in body; they were civilized and in moral uprightness, though completely untechnological. This is completely denied by the common form of evolution which holds that through ages of time early man was little better than a savage brute. Evolutionary theory has little or no place for the idea that man **at his origin** was a being existing in the image of God.

2. From his original moral uprightness man **fell** into sin and selfishness. (Rom. 5:12) Scripture represents this as a definite historical fact which happened once for all at a particular time. Some hold that the story is told in Genesis in symbolic terms. This is possible, but at the same time it must be remembered that Scripture repre-

sents the fall as a definite event which really happened. It is perhaps permissible to say that the fall was a real event which is described in symbolic language; it is another thing to say, as many do today, that the fall was not a real event. But this idea of morally upright man at a definite time **falling** into sin and evil is just the opposite of the evolutionary scheme. Evolution is the idea of constant progress toward higher and better things. It has no room for the idea of progress in reverse gear so that man, from being perfect, became morally evil and anti-social.

3. Mankind has a single genetic origin. Acts 17:26. According to Scripture humanity is a single **species** and all the races of man which exist are merely varieties or sub-species. This is not only substantiated by many scientific data about the blood and germ-plasm of humanity, but it is taught in Scripture. Mankind is a biological unity because humanity has descended from a single genetic source. But unless I am mistaken current evolutionary theory generally discounts this and holds that the first borderline humans must have been, not a single pair such as Adam and Eve, but a large community of organisms. The organic unity of humanity is essential to the Christian faith. Eve is described as created from part of the body of Adam because it is essential that humanity have a **single**, not a multiple source. Christ was to assume human nature to redeem man and this involved the simple unity of genetic origin of humanity.

4. A historical Adam parallels the Historical Christ. Romans 5:12-21. The Bible treats both Adam and Jesus Christ as real historical, individual persons. Paul the apostle in Romans 5:12-21 sets up an elaborate parallel between Adam and Christ. From the one came sin, from the other redemption. It is partly a parallel and partly a series of contrasts. This argument of Paul in Romans 5 depends absolutely for its validity on the fact that as Jesus was a historical person so Adam was a historical individual. There cannot be a proper comparison between a mythical Adam and a historical Christ. Adam is as essential to the Christian system of theology as Christ is. Christ is called "the second Adam." Any theory which tends, as evolution does, to eliminate Adam as a real historical person is destructive of Christianity. Yet this very thing is done by the common form of evolutionary theory. It has no more room for a real Adam than it has for a real fall of mankind into sin. And if Christ as the second Adam came to undo the harm done by the first Adam, we must needs continue to believe in the reality of the first Adam.

The beginning of true nobility comes when a man ceases to be interested in the judgment of men, and becomes interested in the judgment of God.

— J. Gresham Machen

# The English Bible

By Robert More, Jr.

The American Christian of English background has been conditioned by the English Bible, whether he realizes it or not. If this be the case, then it is true that he generally only has an inadequate understanding of that tradition. Therefore, a brief history of the English Bible is proper.

A problem immediately arises. Does the history begin with the first English Bible, or the first Bible in England? Also, what constitutes the first "English" Bible, as opposed to the Saxon, or Kentish Bibles?

Instead of answering the questions, the history will be presented, and the reader may draw the conclusion. This is the order which will be followed. I. The History of English Translations; II. The History of the Supporting Greek Text; III. The Best Translation Today.

In the year 597 A.D., the missionary Augustine (not the church father) landed at Kent, proclaimed Christ, and used a Latin Bible. He was followed by Aidan who came down from the colony of Iowa. An English paraphrase of the creation was composed as the result of this visit.

The first English Bible was produced by Aldhelm. It was a translation of the book of Psalms from a Latin text around 700 A.D. This manuscript has not been preserved. The same is true of the efforts of Bede the Venerable (673-735) and King Alfred. Both did some translating, especially the book of Psalms.

The first extant "English" Bible is a Latin Book of Psalms with a word-for-word translation in the Kentish dialect written about the end of the ninth century. A similar Bible is the Lindisfarne Gospels. This is a Latin Bible (700 A.D.) with a 950 A.D. Anglo-Saxon paraphrase between the lines by Aldred the priest. The Rushworth MS is a Latin text of the Gospels with an interlineary gloss. Matthew is in the Old Mercian dialect (i.e., middle English) while the rest are the Northumbrian dialect. An example from this Bible has the Latin say in Matt. 1:23 **nomen eius emanet** while in tiny script and above the line we read **noma hy**.

The first solely English version is dated in the twelfth century. This is a book of the Gospels. After the Latin superscription, the translation begins, "Her ys Godspelles angin, halendes cristes godes sune. Swa awriten ys on thaswitegan bec isaia. Nu ic asende mine aengel beforan thinre ansyne. Se gegarewath thinne weg beforan the. Clepigende stefen on tham westene gearwiath drihtness weg. Doth rihte his sythas. Iohannes waes on westene fulgende & bodiende. Daed-

bote fulwyht on synna forgyfenysse." Did your forebears speak **that**?

In the thirteenth century, according to one writer, only the book of Psalms was translated into English. There were three versions of it. One is the William of Shoreham Psalter and another was the Rolle Psalter. William, in Ps. 56 says, "Have mercy on me, God, for man hath defouled me. The fende trubled me, feghtand alday oghayns me." Rolle reads, "Have mercy of me, God, for man trad me, al day the fyghtyng troublede me."

Active times were in store for England. The land grew in population; literature advanced; the Black Death was active. Besides these, the imaginary peace of the Church was disturbed by John Wycliffe. He was the genius behind the first complete English Bible. He was born about 1330 and died in 1384. A group of scholars helped him produce his monument to English literature. After his death, the translations were revised. His original of Heb. 1:1, 2 reads "manyfold and many maners sum tyme God spekinge to fadris in prophetis, at the laste in thes daies spak to us in the sone:". A later edition says, "God, that spak sum tyme bi prophetis in many maneres to oure fadris, at the laste in these daies he hath spoke to us bi the sone;".

After Wycliffe, there is a lull in the history. The English Bible emerges again with William Tyndale. He was born in 1490 and died at the stake in 1536. He was a wanderer in many lands, mostly because he was expounding an unwanted doctrine, viz., a Bible in even the plough-man's hands. This Bible is basically the source behind all English Bibles, at least until recent times. He set the tone of many words, as is seen in Heb. 1:1, 2 again. "God in tyme past diversly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by prophets: but in these last days he hath spoken vnto vs by hys sonne;".

This Bible was followed by Coverdale's Bible of 1535. It was the first complete Bible. Since he helped Tyndale while abroad, the translation is indebted to him. It was also the first Bible to be granted free commerce in the nation. The apocrypha is also distinctly segregated.

A flood of Bibles now appeared. Matthew's Bible of 1537 was actually the completion of Tyndale's work. The Great Bible of 1539-41 appeared and was approved by the government. The Taverner's Bible of 1539 is inconsequential.

The Geneva Bible (or the "Breeches Bible") of 1557-60 is next. The force behind this one was the tyranny of "Bloody Mary." The translators

were forced into exile with many gathering at the school of Calvin and Beza. After gathering Hebrew, Greek, and Latin manuscripts, comparing other translations, inserting verse numbers into the English, and putting noticeable, but not unduly biased, Calvinistic explanations on the margin, they published it. This was the Bible of the average person in England as late as 1650. Heb. 1:1, 2 reads, "At sondrie times and in diuers maners God spake in ye olde time to our fathers by the Prophetes: in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto us by his Sonne,".

Since the Geneva Bible was never approved for the church, the Bishops' Bible of 1568 was published. It too had marginal explanations, and it was approved by the government.

About this time the Roman Church rather belatedly produced the Rheims and Douai Bible of 1582-1600. The New Testament was started while the seminary was at Douai but was not published until it moved to Rheims. Then when the Old Testament was delayed, the seminary moved back to Douai where it was published. It was translated from Latin.

Now the King James Bible looms on the horizon. It is a masterpiece. As is well known, King James I was a politician primarily, and then a theologian. He approved the plan, but it wasn't so much to make a Bible available as it was to strengthen his position over the church. The impetus for it arose as the result of a "news conference" held in 1604. Dr. Reynolds raised the subject of the imperfections of the different Bibles and when Bancroft, the bishop of London supported him, the seed had been planted. James laid the ground work by charging the universities with the translating and by approving the approximately fifty translators. The task was formally undertaken in 1607. The translators agreed to use the form and language of the Bishops' Bible as far as possible. Although none of the men individually was an outstanding literary figure, the combined effort created more excellence than any one of them had. In fact, instead of being literary figures, some were just the opposite. One man, "Dutch" Thomson, it is recounted, after his day's work would drown his fatigue with a quantity of potent, liquid, relaxation. Still, those men produced a gem.

This Bible went through many editions (the most famous is the Wicked Bible edition of 1631; it omitted the negative in the seventh commandment). Although the original edition had the words "Appointed to be read in the Churches," and "Authorized," still there is no record of a decree ordaining its use. The concept of an "Authorized Version" is a carry over from the Bishops' Bible of 1568 which truly was authorized.

Today's King James Bible is not the original masterpiece but is rather a modernized King James Bible. This is seen by quoting the title

page and Heb. 1:1, 2 of the original. "The HOLY BIBLE, conteynyn the Old Testament, and the New. Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former Translations diligently compared and reuised by his Majesties special comandement." "God who at sundry times, and in diuers manners, spake in time past vnto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last dayes spoken vnto vs by his Sonne,".

The King James Version held the throne (after its ultimate victory over the Geneva Bible) for two centuries. The Revised Version of 1885 was the first to crack that barrier. By using the best possible Greek text of the day (Westcott-Hort), they produced a worthy successor to the King James. It is quite accurate (except II Tim. 3:16) and was given an "American" imprint in 1901.

This century produced many Bibles. Only the most notable will be listed here.

The Revised Moffatt Bible was published in 1933. It is quite stylistic but at times leans to modernism and is somewhat free in translating the originals.

The Phillips New Testament is hardly a translation. It is a "story book" Bible. For reading, it is unique; for study, without value. He is modernistic.

The Revised Standard Version became available in 1952. It used a good Greek text, employed scholars, but has several quite distressing liberal translations. The rest of the translation is fairly good.

The Williams' New Testament (1952) is quite literal, especially with verb tenses. At times, though, he carries them too far. It is very good.

The Berkeley Bible of 1959 is somewhat flowery in speech, has some passages subject to opposition, but is basically well done.

The Amplified Bible, which will soon be complete is definitely not a translation. While the New Testament is theologically sound in its explanations, the Old Testament has its objections. It makes a good commentary.

The New English Bible of 1961 is simply fascinating reading. However it is very loose with the basic meanings of the words, used a poorer Greek text, and is almost a "New English Interpretation of the Bible."

Having completed this survey, let us notice the history of the Greek text behind these Bibles.

Until Tyndale's time, all the Bibles were based upon Latin texts. He broke with the "custom" and completely abandoned the Latin in favor of the 1522 Greek text of Erasmus. This text was based upon seven young Greek manuscripts, none of which is too valuable today. It

also was the first text to insert I John 5:7 (and that almost on a dare.) Since none of his manuscripts had the last six verses of Revelation, Erasmus translated them from Latin into his Greek text.

This text was taken up by Robert Estienne (or Stephanus) and it was his third edition of 1557 that formed the text for the King James. He used about fifteen manuscripts for the text. Where these differed among themselves, he chose the reading which seemed to be correct and relegated the rest to the footnotes. However, the great Greek manuscript (Codex B) was not yet available. In fact, it was not available for almost 300 years after the King James was translated. The second best (Codex Aleph) was not discovered until 200 years later. The third best (Codex A) wasn't available until fifteen years after the translation. The only old manuscripts to Estienne were codices "L" and "D", the latter being possibly the worst text available even today. Even though this text suffered from the lack of manuscripts, it was still amazingly good, considering everything.

Another occasional designation for the King James Bible is **Textus Receptus**. When this is done, it is historically inaccurate. The words only refer to a Greek text, not a translation. The two words first appear in the 1633 Greek text of the Elzevir brothers. "TEXTUM ergo habes, nunc ab omnibus RECEPTUM, in quo nihil immutatum aut corruptum damus." "You have therefore a TEXT, now RECEIVED by everyone, in which we give nothing mutilated or corrupt" (Capitals mine). Because the King James was translated in 1611 from a Greek text which preceded that 1633 edition, and since "textus receptus" was coined in 1633, therefore it is evident that "textus receptus" cannot be applied to either the King James or its Greek text. Besides this, not everyone did receive the text, for the Germans still used the first edition of Erasmus' text (following Luther.) The words therefore are somewhat misleading.

Although the King James was unmoved for two centuries, still the underlying text was being improved. Since almost every century uncovered another "great" Greek manuscript (plus turning up many lesser ones), naturally men started collating them and in the end, printing them. There was Bentley, Tischendorf, Warfield, Souter, but pre-eminently, Bishop Westcott and Dr. Hort. These men (and others) set up the laws of the scientific field called "textual criticism" (or more explanatorily) "textual judgment — analysis." A good many of the experts in this field were conservative, orthodox Christians whose foundation we dare not despise.

Of the Greek texts produced, the Westcott-Hort was probably the best. It was the source behind the American Revised Version of 1901.

Two other accurate texts were by Tischendorf and Weiss. So about the close of the last century, D. Eberhard Nestle took those three best texts and by collating their readings secured what is likely the best text available today. Where all three agree, or where two of the three are identical, he places that in his text without any suspicion. Where only one text has a reading, it is put in a footnote and so rejected. Where one text has a word, where a second text suspects it, and where the third rejects it, then Nestle includes it in the text but marks it as somewhat suspicious. Although this system has some weaknesses and is capable of many variations on this plan, still it has given us a very accurate text.

This brings up the final section, viz., what is the best English Bible today? This must be broken down into two parts: (1) for reading or study; (2) Old or New Testament.

For an entire Bible for reading, perhaps the Berkeley is best. The best Old Testament could be either the Berkeley or the American Revised Version. For the New Testament, the Williams is adequate. In the final analysis, the reader must choose his own.

For study, two little known volumes are recommended. The very literal Jewish translation of the Old Testament by Isaac Lesser is good enough. Although it has a few anti-Christian translations (viz., Is. 7:14; Ps. 110:1), it is usually fair to the Hebrew and is quite literal. Another "disadvantage" to the average reader is that it has the Hebrew text as well. This shouldn't militate against its study use; consider it as something extra for the money.

**The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament** is quite valuable. It has the King James in the margin, the Nestle Greek text, and a quite commendable literal translation in English. Except for a misleading translation of II Tim. 3:16, and the inclusion of two problematical textual passages (Mark 16:9-20; John 7:51-8:11), it is well done. Besides this, the reader who is familiar with Greek letters (from seeing them on fraternity-sorority signs) can also immediately tell that the "word" in Heb. 1:3 and Eph. 6:17 is not identical with the one in John 1:1 and Heb. 4:12. It too has the "something extra" for the money.

With this, the sketch of the English Bible is completed. The Lord be praised if the reader fits the description of II Tim. 3:15-17. "You have known the Sacred Letters from infancy, which (letters) are able to make you wise to salvation, through faith, in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and (so is) profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, in order that the man of God may

be effective, having been equipped for every good work."

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kenyon, Frederic. *Our Bible and Ancient*

*Manuscripts*. Revised edition. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1958.

Paine, Gustavus S. *The Learned Men*. New York: Thomas Crowell Co., 1959.

---

## *Religious Terms Defined*

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of "Blue Banner Faith and Life". The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

**INFINITY OF GOD.** That quality of God by which He is absolutely perfect and boundless, without any limits, both in His being and in all His attributes.

**INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE.** An activity of God the Holy Spirit by which the writers of the books of the Bible were so influenced that the product of their writing is truly the Word of God.

**INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.** The heavenly ministry of Christ as the High Priest and Advocate of His people, whereby He pleads the merits of His own shed blood and perfect righteousness for each and every one of the elect, for whom He died and to whom He has given His Holy Spirit.

**JUDAIZERS.** A party of Jewish Christians in the Early Church, who regarded Christianity as a branch of Judaism, and taught that salvation is partly based on the work of Jesus Christ and partly on man's obedience to the requirements of God's law. (Paul's Epistle to the Galatians was written to refute the errors of Judaizing teachers who had confused and misled the Galatian Christians).

**JUSTIFICATION.** "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone." (S. Cat. Q. 33).

**KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.** The authority of church government and discipline committed by Christ, the Head of the Church, to the lawful officers of His Church. (Matt. 16:19; 18:17, 18. Westminster Confession of Faith, XXX. 1, 2).

**LEGALISM.** The false notion that salvation, or a righteous standing before God, is attainable, in whole or in part, by human works of obedience to the law of God. (All legalists lack a proper conviction of sin; consequently they vainly imagine that their external and mechanical compliance with the commandments of God is the righteousness which God requires of man. Legalism was the blight of the Pharisees, as it is the terrible error of modern Judaism).

**LENT.** The period of 40 days ending with

Easter, observed by Roman Catholics and some Protestants as a special period of self-denial and humiliation. (The observance of Lent is a mere human custom based on ecclesiastical tradition; there is no warrant for it in Scripture).

**LEVITY.** Excessive lightness of spirit, or frivolity, which is inconsistent with Christian soberness, seriousness and earnestness, and which is a base counterfeit of true Christian happiness and cheerfulness. (Those who try to drown the voice of conscience by constant levity and jesting may be laughing themselves to hell).

**LIBERTY, CHRISTIAN.** The freedom of a Christian from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law, and the bondage of sin and Satan, as well as his future deliverance from all evil of every kind. (Westminster Confession of Faith, XX. 1).

**LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.** The freedom of the human conscience from all doctrines and commandments of men which are in any respect contrary to the Word of God, and the freedom of the conscience from all requirements in matters of faith or worship which are in addition to the Word of God. (Westminster Confession of Faith, XX. 2).

**LOT.** "A mutual agreement to determine an uncertain event, no other way determinable, by an appeal to the providence of God, on casting or throwing something" (Buck's Theological Dictionary).

**MARTYR.** (1) A witness. (2) A person who suffers death rather than renounce or compromise his religious faith.

**MATERIALISM.** The false doctrine that nothing exists except material substance and energy. (Materialism denies the existence of God and of the human soul, and the reality of life after death).

**MEANS OF GRACE.** "The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, Sacraments and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation." (S. C. 89)

## *Some Noteworthy Quotations*

TO NEGLECT CHURCH DISCIPLINE, as has been proved by all history, is only to forfeit purity and spiritual influence. Of this the Greek Church is a striking monument. Her downfall to the lowest degradation is traced by Sozomen — one on her own historians — to the dilapidation of her discipline.

— George Smeaton

HOW WONDERFUL is the providence of God in over-ruling things most disorderly, and in turning to our good things which in themselves are most pernicious!

— Arthur W. Pink

THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS is a difficult pass between two mountains of error, and the great secret of the Christian's life is to wind his way along the narrow valley.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

COST WHAT IT MAY, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God, is not alone our liberty, but our duty.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

THE JEWEL OF ASSURANCE is best kept in the cabinet of a humble heart.

— Thomas Watson

THAT WE MAY NOT COMPLAIN of what is, let us see God's hand in all events; that we may not be afraid of what shall be, let us see all events in God's hand.

— Matthew Henry

THE MODERNIST PROFESSOR clutches at any explanation of Divine acts exclusive of Divine agency.

— E. K. Simpson

## *Studies in Old Testament History*

### LESSON 62

#### JOSEPH ADMINISTERS EGYPT'S FOOD SUPPLY

(Genesis Chapter 41)

In our study of the Book of Genesis we have reached chapter 41 verse 46. The last incident considered was the marriage of Joseph to Asenath. In verse 46 we are informed that Joseph was 30 years of age when he was released from prison and stood before Pharaoh the king of Egypt. Thirteen years have passed since Joseph, at the age of seventeen, took care of his father's sheep (37:2). As Joseph lived to the age of 110 years (50:26), more than two-thirds of his life was still before him.

In 41:45 we read "And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt," and then in the next verse we read "And Joseph went . . . throughout all the land of Egypt." It might seem at first sight that the second statement is a mere repetition of the first, and therefore superfluous. However, there is a difference. Note that in verse 45 in the English Bible the word "all" is printed in italics, indicating that it is not in the Hebrew, but was added by the translators, whereas in verse 46 the word "all" is not printed in italics, therefore it is in the Hebrew text. Both this fact and the word "throughout" in verse 46 indicate that the second statement covers a larger field than the first.

Joseph is not an armchair official who merely sits at a desk and issues directives. He travels throughout all the land of Egypt and personally inspects the operation of the food conservation

program. The statement of verse 46 that Joseph went throughout all the land of Egypt doubtless implies much more than a single trip of inspection. No doubt Joseph repeatedly travelled through Egypt supervising the program. As we know from earlier incidents in the life of Joseph, he was a careful and thorough person, possessing that "almost infinite capacity for taking pains" that is necessary for true success in a complex and difficult undertaking.

During the seven years of plenty which ensued, the soil of Egypt produced abundant crops of grain. The surplus was stored in cities in all parts of Egypt, each city serving as a storage center for the grain produced in its area. The supply stored eventually reached such an enormous quantity that the officials gave up keeping a record of the amount in storage. Leupold suggests that in Joseph's day the knowledge of arithmetic was not sufficiently advanced to handle such large quantities. This suggestion seems far-fetched, for the people that built the great pyramid of Khufu at Gizeh more than a thousand years before Joseph's time must have known a good deal of mathematics beyond simple addition.

The next fact reported is the birth of Joseph's two sons (41:50) who of course were half Hebrew and half Egyptian. It is recorded that these two sons of Joseph were born "before the years of famine came." The record also specifically states

that these sons were born to Joseph of Asenath, thus reminding us that Joseph adhered to God's ordinance of monogamous marriage.

The naming of Joseph's sons is significant. Joseph named the first son Manasseh, "For God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house" (41:51). The name Manasseh means "making to forget." The basic idea is that of forgetting.

Ephraim, Joseph's second son, was named Ephraim, "For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction" (verse 52). The name Ephraim means literally "double fruit." Egypt was the land of Joseph's affliction, not only because it was a land of exile from his true country and from his father and brethren, but also because of the bitter experiences of slavery and imprisonment which had come to him in Egypt.

Next we learn of the coming of the seven years of famine (41:53, 54). This famine affected not only Egypt but the surrounding countries also. The cause of the famine is not stated, but presumably it was caused by drought. Canaan, a land with marginal rainfall, often suffered drought and resulting famine. Egypt, with even less rainfall than Canaan — so little, indeed, as to be practically negligible — ordinarily did not suffer famine because the Nile river afforded an abundant water supply. But sometimes the water in the Nile is too low to be used effectively for the irrigation of Egypt's fields. The cause of this occasional occurrence of low water in the Nile is said to be a stoppage of the White Nile (one of the rivers which form the sources of the Nile) in central Africa by the thick growth of vegetation which impounds the waters in vast stretches of marshland until the river finally clears a new channel for itself. Leupold mentions a similar case about 900 years ago (A.D. 1064-1071) when famine was so severe in Egypt that "the people ate corpses and animals that died of themselves" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1039).

When the record states that the famine was "in all lands" this does not necessarily imply that it was world-wide. Rather, the plain meaning would seem to be that there was famine in all the lands surrounding Egypt. It is not necessary to suppose that at this time there was famine in Scandinavia, North America, New Zealand or other remote parts of the world. When the record states (41:57) that "all countries came into Egypt" to purchase grain (41:57) this again must be regarded as limited by the context to countries in that part of the world where Egypt is located; it would be quite absurd to suppose that grain was imported from Egypt to Britain, China or other distant countries at this time.

The story as it is narrated in Genesis obviously reports only the essential facts, and these in a very simple manner. Certainly there must have

been many details about this grain program and its administration which are not reported.

The record states that the people of Egypt were "famished", whereupon they cried to Pharaoh for help, and in reply were told to apply to Joseph and follow his instructions. Joseph opened all the storehouses and issued grain to the Egyptians, for which they paid money.

Not only Egyptians, but people from other lands, applied to Joseph for grain (41:57). It seems noteworthy that Joseph did not attempt to limit the grain to Egyptians, but was willing for others also to share in the benefit.

We should note, too, that Joseph did not begin to ration out the grain until after the people had become "famished." Vast as the stored-up supply was, it was not unlimited; it must be issued carefully, for it had to last through seven years of famine. Joseph's great ability as a wise administrator appears in this matter. Nor was the grain issued in unlimited quantities, for we are told that even after the issuing of grain had been commenced, still "the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt" (41:56b).

#### Questions:

1. How old was Joseph when he was released from prison and stood before Pharaoh?
2. How old was Joseph at the time of his death? How much of his life was still before him when he stood before Pharaoh?
3. How can it be shown that the statement about Joseph's travels through Egypt in verse 46 is not a mere repetition of the somewhat similar statement in verse 45?
4. What does Joseph's travelling through Egypt show concerning his competence as an administrator?
5. Why was the attempt to keep a record of the amount of grain in storage abandoned?
6. When were Joseph's two sons born?
7. What were the names of Joseph's two sons? What is the meaning of each name?
8. What is the significance of the statement that Joseph's sons were born of Asenath?
9. Why did Egypt very seldom suffer famine?
10. What possible explanation has been suggested as to the cause of the seven years of famine in Egypt?
11. When did a similar famine of several years' duration take place in Egypt?
12. What is meant by the statement that the famine was "in all lands"?
13. What statements of the record indicate that the grain was not issued too soon nor in unlimited quantities?

## LESSON 63

## JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS MEET AGAIN

(Genesis Chapter 42)

Chapter 42 opens with Jacob sending his sons to Egypt to purchase grain. We may wonder why Joseph has done nothing to get in contact with his father during the time that has passed. For about nine years have passed since Joseph became the ruler of Egypt — seven years of plenty and two years of famine (45:6). We can only speculate as to the reason why Joseph (as far as we know) made no effort even to inform his father that he was still alive. Perhaps he felt it would be better to wait for developments in the providence of God rather than to take such a matter into his own hands.

Jacob asks his sons why they are looking one upon another. Evidently they all realize that the food problem has become acute, yet each expects some one of the others to be the first to propose a remedy. At length the initiative is taken by Jacob himself: "Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence, that we may live, and not die" (42:2).

In accordance with Jacob's instructions, Joseph's ten older brother go to Egypt to get food. Benjamin, the youngest, who like Joseph was a son of Rachel, is kept at home with his father, "lest peradventure mischief befall him."

Verse 6 tells us that it was Joseph that sold to all the people of the land. This can hardly mean that all applicants for grain from all parts of Egypt were required to interview Joseph personally. Presumably in ordinary cases Egyptian applicants obtained the grain from local administrators near where they lived, the entire nationwide program being under Joseph's control and supervision. Apparently, however, special cases required a clearance from the head administrator himself, and it evidently was the practice to require applicants from foreign lands to appear at headquarters for approval by Joseph himself.

Thus Joseph's ten brothers arrive and appear before Joseph, prostrating themselves respectfully before him. "And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him" (42:8). As they were all considerably older than Joseph, their appearance would have changed but little in the intervening years. Joseph, on the other hand, has grown up from a lad of seventeen to a man of thirty. Moreover, Joseph was naturally wearing the dress of an Egyptian and speaking the Egyptian language. It would hardly even occur to the brothers that this powerful Egyptian official could be their own brother. While Joseph has not forgotten his native Hebrew, by this time he has doubtless learned to speak the Egyptian language fluently. If he had a trace of foreign accent in speaking

Egyptian, this would not be noticed by his brothers who knew no Egyptian at all.

The record states that Joseph "made himself strange unto them," that is, he deliberately sought to prevent their immediate recognition of him as their brother. He "spake roughly unto them", not because of anger, but rather because he proposes to test his brothers' attitude toward himself in preparation for a full reconciliation with them. Leupold states that any anger toward his brothers which Joseph may have had at the time when he was sold into Egypt, would have vanished by this time through his tribulations in prison in Egypt. And there is no indication anywhere in the narrative that Joseph was acting in anger; rather, we get the impression that he maintained a most remarkable self-control and even-tempered calm through everything until he finally broke down and revealed his identity to his brothers.

It is reported by ancient writers that the Egyptians were regularly suspicious of foreigners entering their country from the northeast, the direction from which hostile invaders usually came. In harmony with this quite natural pattern Joseph asks the men whence they are and they reply that they are from Canaan, and wish to buy food. Verse 9 says that "Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them" — the dreams of their bowing down before him. Now they are prostrated before him with their faces to the ground. Part of the dreams, at least, has already come true! This would lead Joseph to conclude that their coming into Egypt was part of a special providence of God.

Harshly Joseph accuses his brothers of being spies: "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come" (42:9). No country looks with favor on espionage carried out by a possible invader; at this particular time Egypt, weakened by the famine, could not tolerate anything that might lead to foreign invasion. So Joseph's charge that the men are spies would sound natural enough not only to the Egyptians but even to the brothers themselves.

Very likely, too, Joseph wonders why there are only ten brothers before him. Where is the eleventh? Have they done something to Benjamin too as they did to Joseph? Have they possibly murdered Benjamin, or sold him also as a slave?

In reply to Joseph's charge, the brothers insist on their innocence. They have come only to buy food; they are not spies; they are all the sons of one father. Perhaps their appearance would confirm the truth of this claim. If they could get Joseph to believe that they were all sons of one

father, this would help to clear them of the charge of being spies. A father might easily send ten sons to purchase grain; the king of an enemy country would not be likely to pick ten brothers to send out as spies.

As the interview proceeds the brothers volunteer the information that originally there were twelve brothers, of which the youngest is still with their father in Canaan, while "one is not." This last statement seems rather vague, though of course the brothers have heard nothing about Joseph during all the years that have passed since he was sold to the Ishmaelites. Their vagueness in speaking about the one brother who "is not" may have led Joseph to doubt the truth of their statement that the youngest was at home with his father.

At any rate, Joseph resolves to test them as to their truthfulness. Repeating the accusation "Ye are spies" (42:14), he swears an Egyptian oath, "By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither." Was it right for Joseph to swear by the life of Pharaoh? Calvin says not; Leupold, following Luther, feels that the oath by the life of Pharaoh was legitimate. He holds that while using the name of Pharaoh, Joseph was really thinking of the God who punishes perjurers. There is no doubt that the use of a common Egyptian oath would give a very realistic Egyptian touch to Joseph's words in the minds of his brothers. As to the morality of his using this form of oath, the present writer agrees with Calvin in holding that it cannot be justified. This is one of the compromises of good men which the Bible faithfully records. Similarly, it records Abraham's untruthfulness, Noah's drunkenness and David's adultery. These things are recorded as matters of fact, without any implication of divine approval. Incidentally, it is one of the evidences of the truth of the Old Testament that it faithfully records the compromises and lapses of good men. If these stories were largely the product of the imaginations of later Jewish writers, all discreditable features would have been left out. People do not invent stories which show their national heroes in a bad light.

#### LESSON 64

#### JOSEPH'S BROTHERS RETURN TO CANAAN

(Genesis Chapter 42)

Next Joseph announces that one of the brothers is to be sent back to Canaan to bring the youngest brother as proof that the men are not spies. Upon announcing this, he puts all ten of his brothers in prison for three days. This would certainly have a strong psychological effect on the brothers. They would not be told, of course, that the imprisonment was to be limited to three days.

The fact that Joseph is portrayed as a pious and godly man does not imply that he was perfect. Nor is this Egyptian oath the only point at which Joseph seems to have compromised with moral evil. Later in the story he falsely represents himself as having powers of divination by the use of a silver cup (44:4, 5). It is futile to attempt to justify this use of deceit. It is always wrong to do evil that good may come.

#### Questions:

1. What may have been the reason why Joseph did not make any effort, during the years of plenty in Egypt, to get in touch with his father?
2. Who took the initiative, in Jacob's household as to the purchase of grain from Egypt?
3. Why was Benjamin kept at home by his father?
4. What is meant by the statement of verse 6 that it was Joseph that sold to all the people of the land?
5. Why would Joseph recognize his brothers, and why would they not recognize him?
6. What caused Joseph to remember his dreams when his brothers appeared before him?
7. What was Joseph's reason for treating his brothers roughly?
8. Why were the Egyptians usually suspicious of foreigners entering their country from the northeast?
9. Why did the brothers tell Joseph that they were all sons of one father?
10. In what way did the brothers mention Joseph?
11. What should we think of Joseph's use of an Egyptian oath?
12. What is implied by the fact that the Bible faithfully records the wrongdoing of good men?
13. On what later occasion did Joseph compromise with evil?

Naturally they would tend to think that it might continue much longer, or indefinitely. No doubt they would suffer some pangs of conscience, remembering what they had done to Joseph years before.

We may wonder why this imprisonment was precisely three days. It is possible, but not certain, that Joseph had spent three days in the pit;

the record in chapter 37 does not necessarily imply that the dropping of Joseph into the pit and the selling of him to the Ishmaelites all happened on the same day, though it is possible that it did.

After three days the brothers are brought before Joseph again. Explaining that he is a man that fears God, Joseph now modifies his original decree. Only one of the brothers is to be kept in prison in Egypt; the rest may purchase grain and return to Canaan. When they bring back their youngest brother, they will be cleared of the charge of espionage and the brother left in prison will be released.

At this point the brothers engage in a conversation among themselves, not realizing that Joseph can understand them (42:21-23). We learn here that they feel guilty concerning their treatment of Joseph. It has been observed that this is the only acknowledgement of sin in the entire book of Genesis. "Therefore is this distress come upon us." Reuben, the eldest of the brothers, adds that he had been opposed to the mistreatment of Joseph, "and ye would not hear". "Behold, also, his blood is required" — that is, Reuben asserts that what is happening to the brothers is divine retribution for their crime against Joseph. The mention of "blood" may indicate that Reuben, at least, supposed Joseph to be already dead.

At this point Joseph's emotions get beyond his control. He turns away from them, presumably into another room, and weeps, then returns to them. Selecting Simeon from among the ten, Joseph has him bound before their eyes (42:24). We may ask why Simeon was selected. It is possible that Simeon was the one who actually manhandled Joseph when he was dropped into the pit and later sold to the Ishmaelites. We know that Simeon had a reputation for cruelty (34:25; 49:5-7). If it was indeed Simeon that manhandled Joseph, this singling out of Simeon to be bound and imprisoned would make a deep impression on the brothers. However, this is only a possibility, as the record does not state why Simeon was selected to be kept in prison.

The nine brothers are now sold grain and sent back to Canaan. At Joseph's command they are given provisions for use on the trip home. In addition to this Joseph secretly orders that their money be placed in their sacks. Thereupon they depart to return to Canaan.

Stopping in an inn on the way home, one of the sacks is opened and the money is found lying on top of the grain in the mouth of the sack. As they were given special provisions for the trip home, this probably was late in the journey after the special provisions had been used up, and they found it necessary to use some of the grain they had purchased to feed their animals. There is no basis in the narrative for the notion that this discovery occurred the first night after their de-

parture from the presence of Joseph. Nor does the record imply what some have inferred from it, that each brother had only a single sack of grain. As Leupold comments, for the trip to Egypt to be worth while, each brother would have to bring back several sacks of grain. Each man's money was placed in one of his sacks, but none was discovered till the incident in the inn mentioned in verse 27.

This strange discovery fills the brothers with wonder. They cannot understand the strange things that have been happening to them on this remarkable trip to Egypt and back. The very obscurity and uncertainty of the matter would cause them to be filled with apprehensions. The record states that "their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, "What is this that God hath done unto us" (42:28). From this we note that the brothers not only believe in God, but they believe that He is the moral Ruler of men and administers retribution to men according to their desert. Though there is no evidence that they had personal devotion to God at this time of their life, it is clear that they hold to the theology of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, recognizing that what happens comes to pass by the hand of God. To this extent Joseph's ten brothers have a better and truer faith than many modern people who attribute what happens to chance.

Arriving home in Canaan, the brothers tell their story to their aged father, Jacob. They do not, of course, tell of their own guilty feelings and consciousness of suffering the just retribution of God, for that would involve disclosing the truth about their crime against Joseph years before. Nor do they immediately inform their father about Simeon being left in prison in Egypt, though Jacob would of course soon notice the absence of Simeon from the group. Also they do not tell their father about their humiliating experience of being put in prison for three days. They do, however, tell of the charge that they were spies and of the demand that Benjamin be sent to Egypt to appear before the great food administrator there. Jacob's own feelings at this stage of the affair are not reported. We can only imagine the indignation and grief that he must have felt on hearing the report of his sons.

Next we are told that on emptying the sacks, each man's money was found in one of his sacks, and the "bundles of money" were seen both by them and by Jacob, with the result that "they were afraid" (42:35). Jacob, seeing money in the sacks, would naturally conclude that his sons had stolen the grain in Egypt, instead of honestly purchasing and paying for it; how else could they come home with both the grain and the money? Moreover, the brothers could offer no explanation of the presence of the money in the sacks. Anything they might say would only tend to incriminate themselves.

Jacob is filled with fears and grief: "Ye have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me" (42:36). Does Jacob suspect that his sons had something to do with the mysterious disappearance of Joseph? He accuses them of bereaving him of his children. Perhaps he had a strong suspicion that Joseph had met with foul play at their hands.

At this point Reuben, the eldest son, steps forward saying: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again" (42:37). This proposal is a personal pledge or guarantee. Reuben offers to bear full responsibility for the safe return of Benjamin. Of course Jacob would not think of killing Reuben's two sons in the event that Benjamin does not return. Grief over the loss of a son is not remedied by the murder of grandsons. But Reuben perhaps hopes by the very extravagance of his offer to move his father to give consent for Benjamin to go to Egypt.

Jacob, however, remains adamant in his refusal. "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (42:38). Jacob has already suffered much; he feels that another deep sorrow would be too much for him to bear.

#### Questions:

1. What did Joseph do to start the consciences of his brothers to working?

2. What may possibly be the reason why the imprisonment of the ten brothers was for three days?

3. What statement of the brothers after their release from prison indicates their feeling of guilt?

4. Which brother was finally selected to be kept in prison until the arrival of Benjamin?

5. What may possibly be the reason why Simeon was selected?

6. In addition to the grain which they purchased, what was given to the brothers before their departure from Egypt to return to Canaan?

7. What happened when the brothers stopped at an inn enroute home?

8. At what stage of their homeward journey did this probably take place?

9. What was the effect on the brothers of the discovery of the money?

10. What does this incident show concerning the religious faith of the brothers at this stage of their life?

11. What did the brothers tell their father, and what did they not tell him, on their arrival at home?

12. What further discovery caused added dismay?

13. What would Jacob naturally conclude from the presence of the money in the sacks?

14. Of what does Jacob accuse his sons in verse 36?

15. What suspicion may have been in Jacob's mind?

16. What proposition is made by Reuben?

17. On what ground does Jacob flatly refuse to allow Benjamin to go to Egypt?

## LESSON 65

### 'THE BROTHERS' SECOND TRIP TO EGYPT

(Genesis Chapter 43)

At the beginning of chapter 43 the famine still exists in Canaan and the food brought from Egypt has been eaten up. Jacob therefore urges his sons to make a second trip to Egypt to buy food. They reply that this can be done on one condition only, namely, that Benjamin accompany them to Egypt (43:1-5). Jacob asks them why they ever told the man in Egypt that they had a brother, and they reply that they could not avoid answering his pointed questions. This reply does not seem to fit what is recorded in chapter 42 exactly, for it appears there (42:13) that the brothers volunteered the information that they had a younger brother. However, the statement in 43:7 that the man in Egypt had asked them whether they had another brother is not necessarily a lie. It is quite possible that much more

was said between Joseph and the brothers than is recorded in chapter 42, and that what we have in chapter 42 is merely a very condensed summary of the main items of the conversation.

At this point Judah offers to assume entire responsibility for the safe return of Benjamin. He enforces his plea by the consideration that it is a life and death matter for the entire family: "that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones" (43:8). Even Benjamin would suffer if food is not speedily obtained from some source. Judah offers to bear the blame for ever if he does not bring Benjamin safely back to his father. He adds that they could already have completed the second trip if they had not been delayed (by Jacob's unwillingness to allow Benjamin to accompany them).

Finally Jacob's extreme reluctance is broken down by the force of sheer necessity. A suitable gift of the choice products of Canaan is to be taken along to placate this great Egyptian official who has Simeon in prison in Egypt. Considering the fact that Canaan was in the grip of a dire famine, the gift could not have been very lavish. The money is also to be taken back, along with new money for the purchase of more grain; Jacob suggests that it might have been an oversight that the money was returned in the sacks the first time (43:12). Leupold comments that the language used indicates that the money found in the sacks on the return from the first trip had been kept intact "in its original bundles, a kind of unlucky coin which no one dared to use" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1066).

"Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved" (43:14). Thus the aged Jacob makes the decision and sends his sons off on the second journey to Egypt.

Note the faith of Jacob as shown at this point in his life. He has done what he could; now it is beyond human power and the issue is committed to the hands of God Almighty, the God of Abraham and Isaac. Those who think that the Hebrew patriarchs believed in a local or tribal God are mistaken. Jacob believes in a God of unlimited power who controls what happens everywhere. The acts of a great Egyptian official are not regarded as beyond the control of the God Jacob believes in. He is also a God of mercy to those who deserve no mercy. Modern liberal scholars tend to rate the religious conceptions of the early Hebrews much too low. They do this largely because of their artificial theory of the evolution or development of Israel's religion from early belief in a local or tribal God to the ethical monotheism of the great prophets such as Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah. It is true, of course, that there was development in Israel's religion, just because there was progress in God's revelation of Himself and His will. But there is no reason to hold that Abraham, Isaac or Jacob ever believed in a limited, local or tribal God.

Jacob's plaintive statement, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved" is not to be regarded as a grumbling complaint nor as an expression of doubt, but rather as an act of humble submission to the will of God in true faith. The thought expressed is: "If it is God's will for me to lose my children, then let God's will be done."

Accordingly, the nine brothers and Benjamin return to Egypt and appear before Joseph (43:15). On seeing that they have their younger brother with them, Joseph issues an order for these men to dine with him the same day at noon. So they are conducted to Joseph's private residence, which

no doubt was grand and spacious in a manner befitting his high office in the land of Egypt.

Joseph, of course, is greatly relieved to see Benjamin among the brothers. This proves, not only that they had done nothing evil to Benjamin, but also that their statements on other matters are true. This is a great day of rejoicing for Joseph after his long years of waiting in Egypt. He will have a feast suited to such a day of rejoicing. He orders the steward of his household to "slay," that is, to butcher an animal for the dinner.

As they enter Joseph's house, the brothers feel very apprehensive. After all, it was a very strange thing that ten men from Canaan who had come on a purely commercial transaction should be invited to be dinner guests of the highest officer in Egypt next to the king. Their experiences in Egypt all seemed to have something strange and mysterious about them. What could this unexpected social invitation mean? Is this Egyptian official going to make an issue about the money in the sacks and use that as an excuse for imprisoning them all, making them slaves or possibly even condemning them to death? Verse 18 describes the thoughts of the brothers as they consider the possibilities together. They decide that there is possible danger and they consider it wise to forestall the peril if possible. Accordingly they address the steward of Joseph's household explaining that they have brought back the money which was mysteriously found in the sacks (43:20-22). The steward sets them at ease by replying that he had their money all the time; the money found in the sacks must have been placed there by the power of God. Though this statement of the steward may appear to be an untruth, it need not be regarded as such. The statement "I had your money" means "Your money came into my hands" (Leupold), which was strictly true. With regard to the statement that God had given them treasure in their sacks, this was true also, if it be rightly understood. Whatever benefits men enjoy, really come to them from God, who alone is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. If they found money in their sacks, this good fortune is to be attributed to the blessing of God. "The sum of his answer, however, amounts to this, that there was no reason for fear, because their affairs were in a prosperous state. And since, after the manner of men, it was not possible that they should have paid the money for the corn which was found in their sacks, he ascribes this to the favor of God" (Calvin).

But how does it come that this steward, an Egyptian, speaks of the true God? A possible explanation is that he is speaking as Joseph was accustomed to speak. More probable is the explanation suggested by Calvin, who says: "I, therefore, do not doubt that Joseph, though not permitted openly to correct anything in the received superstitions, endeavored, at least in his

own house, to establish the true worship of the one God, and always held fast the covenant, concerning which, as a boy, he had heard his father speak" (Commentary on Genesis, II, 359).

Calvin is also of the opinion that Joseph had probably taken this steward into his confidence, so that the steward knew that the men were Joseph's brothers. While this cannot be proved, it seems quite likely.

Water is provided to wash the guests' feet; the asses are given fodder. The gift from Canaan is prepared for presentation to Joseph at noon.

#### Questions:

1. Which brother assumed responsibility for the safety of Benjamin on the second trip to Egypt?
2. By what act did Jacob hope to placate the great Egyptian food administrator?
3. What was finally done about the money found in the sacks?
4. How does Jacob's religious faith appear in his sending his sons to Egypt the second time?
5. How does it appear that Jacob believed that God's power is universal?

6. What is the modern liberal theory about the religion of Israel?

7. Why is the modern liberal theory of the development of Israel's religion false and misleading?

8. How should we interpret Jacob's statement, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved"?

9. What order was issued by Joseph when he saw Benjamin with the other brothers?

10. What preparations were to be made for rejoicing?

11. What fear troubled the brothers as they entered Joseph's house?

12. What attempt did they make to avoid possible danger?

13. What was the reply of Joseph's steward to them?

14. How can we explain the fact that Joseph's Egyptian steward spoke about the true God?

15. What last minute preparation did the brothers make before Joseph's arrival at noon?

## LESSON 66

### JOSEPH TESTS HIS BROTHERS' REPENTANCE

(Genesis Chapters 43 and 44)

On Joseph's arrival at his residence at noon, the brothers first of all present their gift. The record does not state what Joseph's response to this gift was. No doubt Joseph felt that he must keep strict control over his emotions at such a time. In presenting the gift the brothers bow deeply, showing the highest honor and respect. Joseph, on his part, courteously inquires as to whether the lad whom he sees with them is their youngest brother, and addresses Benjamin with a blessing: "God be gracious unto thee, my son" (43:29) His calling Benjamin "son" implies merely the marked difference in age between himself and Benjamin.

At this point Joseph's long-restrained emotions get the better of him and he feels that he must weep. Hastening into his private room he weeps there, washes his face, returns to the company and orders the dinner to be served

Here we note a striking reference to Egyptian customs. Three tables are set: one for Joseph alone; one for his brothers; one for the Egyptian guests who were present. It is known that Egyptians were extremely strict about such matters, a taboo which is reflected by the statement of verse 32 that to eat a meal along with Hebrews would be "an abomination unto the Egyptians."

The brothers, to their own amazement, are

seated according to their relative ages. This would be easy for Joseph to arrange, knowing as he did the ages of all his brothers, but it must have mystified the brothers, who "marvelled one at another" as they wondered how this Egyptian official could possibly know their ages from oldest to youngest.

Joseph now carries out an additional test of his brothers. He bestows favoritism deliberately on Benjamin. If they have concealed resentment against Benjamin similar to what they once had against Joseph, it may show in their faces or actions when Benjamin is served five times as much food as the other ten brothers. Of course Benjamin could not possibly have eaten five complete dinners at one sitting, or at any rate we may be sure that he would not attempt to do so! Nor was it Joseph's intention that he eat all this food. Rather, the oversized portions were intended as a mark of distinction and honor. The portions must have been very large, so as to be outstandingly conspicuous, to achieve the intended effect. The brothers could not help noticing what was happening. It could not be attributed to accident but must be the result of design. But Joseph's brothers meet this test satisfactorily; no resentment is betrayed by their words or looks. Thus far, Joseph has reason to feel confident that his brothers have a right attitude.

Chapter 44 opens with the dinner over. Joseph and his brothers separate and go their ways. Joseph secretly commands his steward, in filling the men's sacks with grain, to restore their money in the mouths of the sacks, and also to place Joseph's special silver drinking cup in the sack of the youngest, with his money. The brothers remain overnight, and depart on their homeward trip at daybreak the next morning.

Joseph had commanded the steward to fill the men's sacks to their full capacity. This involved generosity beyond a mere business transaction. The men would of course notice this generous treatment and be pleased by it. The money placed in the sacks was intended, as on the former occasion, to arouse a sense of mystery in the brothers' minds and so to lead them to think of the hand of God behind what was going on. This, in turn, should lead them to some qualms of conscience concerning their own past life. The special silver cup is "planted" in Benjamin's sack, of course, in order to make it appear that Benjamin is guilty of theft. This will afford a good opportunity to test the brothers as to how they will treat Benjamin in a crisis.

The brothers have not gone very far when they are overtaken by Joseph's steward on Joseph's orders. The steward is to charge them with ungrateful wrongdoing in stealing his master's silver cup and to inform them that this cup is used by Joseph in the practice of divination. It is known that cups or bowls were used in ancient times for divination, in various ways.

At this point we must face a real difficulty. How can Joseph, a believer in the true God, allow himself to practice divination? To do so is certainly heathenish and sinful. On the other hand, if Joseph did not really practice divination, but only claims to have that power, then how can he be cleared of the guilt of untruthfulness? Leupold suggests a third possibility, namely that God actually used some such means as this silver cup for granting special revelations to Joseph. This however is merely speculative and there is no evidence in its support. Calvin holds that Joseph only pretended to be a practitioner of divination, for the sake of making an impression on his brothers. He states that two sins were involved in Joseph's conduct on this occasion: the sin of professing divination, and the sin of untruthfulness. His judgment is that Joseph's conduct in this matter cannot be defended: "By boasting that he is a magician rather than proclaiming himself a prophet of God, he impiously profanes the gift of the Holy Spirit. Doubtless, in this dissimulation, it is not to be denied, that he sinned grievously" (Commentary on Genesis, II, 369). Calvin adds, however, the fact that Joseph was acting the part of an Egyptian official to his brothers and the time had not yet come to disclose his real identity to them. Had he declared himself a prophet of the true God, the secret

would have been let out prematurely. The brothers would expect an Egyptian official to hold the beliefs and superstitions of Egypt. Thus, comments Calvin, when Joseph once started out on a course of pretending not to recognize his brothers, thus allowing them to continue to think of him as an Egyptian official, he was acting a lie and really committing himself to a whole series of untruths. "Whence, we gather, that when any one swerves from the right line, he is prone to fall into various sins. Wherefore, being warned by this example, let us learn to allow ourselves in nothing except what we know is approved of God. But especially we must avoid all dissimulation, which either produces or confirms mischievous impostures. Besides, we are warned, that it is not sufficient for any one to oppose a prevailing vice for a time; unless he add constancy of resistance, even though the evil may become excessive. For he discharges his duty very defectively, who, having once testified that he is displeased with what is evil, afterwards, by his silence or connivance, gives it a kind of assent" (Commentary on Genesis, II, 369).

#### Questions:

1. How did the brothers show their respect for Joseph in presenting their gift to him?
2. What words did Joseph use in greeting Benjamin?
3. What did Joseph do when he could no longer restrain his tears?
4. How did the seating at the dinner illustrate Egyptian customs or prejudices?
5. What fact about the seating arrangement caused the brothers to marvel?
6. In what way did Joseph show favoritism toward Benjamin at the dinner?
7. What may have been Joseph's intention in showing this favoritism?
8. How long did the brothers remain as Joseph's guests?
9. What commands did Joseph give to his steward before the departure of the brothers?
10. What was the purpose of "planting" the silver cup in Benjamin's sack?
11. What did the steward say to the brothers on overtaking them?
12. What is meant by the term "divination" or "divining"?
13. What possibilities exist as to the explanation of Joseph's claim to be a diviner?
14. What is Calvin's opinion as to the legitimacy of Joseph's claim to practice divination?
15. What ethical lesson may we learn from Joseph's conduct?

## LESSON 67

## THE BROTHERS REFUSE TO ABANDON BENJAMIN

(Genesis Chapter 44)

The brothers, of course, are utterly baffled by the steward's speech on his overtaking them. Note that everything is very mysterious. The steward has not actually mentioned the cup by name; he calls it only "this" and adds that his lord drinks in it and divines by it. The brothers repel the mysterious charge of wrongdoing, adding in support of their claim to innocence the fact that they had brought again the money found in their sacks on their return from their first trip to Egypt. They add that there is no motive why they should steal silver or gold out of the great official's house. Finally, they rather rashly state that if the cup is found in any of their sacks, the one in whose sack it is found, being guilty of theft, shall die, and the rest will be "my lord's bondmen." So confident are the brothers that the cup will not be found in any of their sacks.

The search is conducted, from the oldest brother to the youngest. The steward, of course, knows perfectly well that the cup will not be found until he reaches Benjamin's sack; but he builds up the suspense in the minds of the brothers by methodically conducting the search from sack to sack just as if he had no idea in whose sack it might be found — as if, in other words, he was acting on mere suspicion rather than on actual knowledge.

The cup is found, of course, in Benjamin's sack. What can the brothers say? They are speechless, only rending their clothes in their frustration and grief. There is no way out. They must return to the city and face a most serious charge.

What, if anything, did Benjamin say to the brothers as they made their way back to the city? Did he protest his innocence? Did the brothers really believe him guilty of having stolen the cup? Or did they perhaps suspect that this was one more mysterious fact in this wholly mysterious affair? Did they suspect that the cup had actually been "planted" in the sack with deliberate intent? And did they think of what the reaction of their aged father back in Canaan would be on learning that Benjamin had been put to death in Egypt as a thief? Certainly terrible thoughts must have raced through their minds. Yet all this the narrative passes over in silence, reporting to us only the facts in a very objective manner.

They arrive at Joseph's residence. He is still there. They prostrate themselves to the ground humbly before him. He flatly charges them with wrongdoing, adding the question, "Didn't you know that such a man as I can certainly divine?"

Judah acts as spokesman for the group.

"What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found" (44:16).

Does the statement "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants" refer to the theft of the cup, or is it a reference to the old guilt of the brothers in selling Joseph as a slave? Leupold's opinion is that the reference is to their guilt in selling Joseph. Calvin, however, is inclined rather to the view that they are referring to the guilt of stealing the cup, as if to say "It is no use to deny a thing which is manifest in itself," adding that even though they probably suspected fraud, yet they "choose rather to trace the cause of their punishment to the secret judgment of God" (Commentary on Genesis, II, 370).

They cannot, however, tolerate the idea of Benjamin alone remaining a slave or prisoner in the land of Egypt; rather than that, they will all remain as "my lord's servants." Leupold comments that this indicates a good sense of solidarity among the brothers; if one must suffer, they will all suffer with him. Perhaps it would be too painful to face Jacob with such bad news; they would prefer to remain in Egypt and leave Jacob to wonder what had happened to them.

Joseph, however, dismisses such an idea as that all the brothers should be punished. Only the one guilty of the theft must suffer the penalty. As for the rest, "get you up in peace unto your father." Joseph of course realized that there would be no "peace" connected with a return to Canaan without Benjamin. But he is here deeply testing the brothers' attitude toward Jacob and toward Benjamin.

At this point Judah speaks again. Using the most respectful and conciliatory language, he attempts to explain the situation. The great age of their father, his deep attachment to Benjamin, the fact that Benjamin's only full brother was "dead", are presented in a most moving plea. Judah explains that the aged father will die if Benjamin does not return to him in safety. The whole history of the matter is presented in accurate and orderly fashion. Judah also explains that he has personally assumed full responsibility for the safe return of Benjamin. Finally, he pleads that he be allowed to remain as a slave in Egypt in place of Benjamin, and that the lad be allowed to return home with his brothers to his aged father. "For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father" (44:34).

Leupold says: "This is one of the manliest, most straightforward speeches ever delivered by any man. For depth of feeling and sincerity of purpose it stands unexcelled. What makes it most remarkable, however, is the fact that it comes from the lips of one who once upon a time was so calloused that he cared nothing about the grief he had caused his father" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1086). Leupold's estimate of Judah's speech seems fully justified. It would be hard to find a more transparently sincere and moving plea anywhere in the field of literature. No wonder this speech of Judah broke Joseph down completely, as we learn at the beginning of the next chapter, so that he could not refrain himself, but burst out and "wept aloud."

#### Questions:

1. How did the steward address the brothers on overtaking them?
2. How did they attempt to reply to the steward's charge?
3. What proposal did the brothers make in their confidence of their innocence?

4. Why did the steward start searching at the oldest brother's sacks?

5. What action did the brothers perform when the cup was discovered?

6. What may have been the thoughts of the brothers on their way back to the city?

7. Which brother acted as spokesman for the group as they appeared before Joseph?

8. What are the possibilities as to the meaning of the statement "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants"?

9. Why could the brothers not tolerate the idea of leaving Benjamin alone in Egypt?

10. What was Joseph's response to the proposal that all the brothers remain in Egypt as slaves?

11. Give an outline of Judah's plea for Benjamin's release.

12. How does Leupold rate Judah's speech?

13. What was the effect of Judah's speech on Joseph?

### LESSON 68

#### JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BROTHERS

(Genesis Chapter 45)

Judah's earnest and eloquent pleas that Benjamin be spared and that Judah be allowed to become a slave in his stead brought us to the end of chapter 44. Chapter 45 opens with Joseph overcome with intense emotion. No longer able to refrain himself, Joseph orders all except his brethren to leave the room. This means, of course, all the Egyptian guests and servants who may have been present during the dinner which preceded this scene. What is to follow is a private matter between Joseph and his brothers; the Egyptians had no right to know about it, and could not have understood it. Accordingly, the Egyptians one and all withdraw.

"And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard" (45:2). Leupold translates this: "Joseph raised his voice so loudly in weeping, that the Egyptians heard it, and even the house of Pharaoh heard it" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1090). This does not mean that Joseph wept so loud that the sound of his voice carried all the way to Pharaoh's palace — however near or distant that may have been — but rather the Egyptians who had just left Joseph's presence heard the loud weeping, and carried the report of this to Pharaoh's palace.

"I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" (45:3). This marks the first time Joseph addresses his brothers in Egypt in the Hebrew language, without the aid of an interpreter. The

inquiry as to whether his father is still alive may seem superfluous, inasmuch as the brothers have been speaking of their father all along and he was prominently mentioned in Judah's earnest speech. But all that time the brothers thought they were dealing with an Egyptian, and now he discloses himself as their own brother. The solicitous inquiry about his father would serve to moderate somewhat the sudden shock of the announcement "I am Joseph."

The brothers, however, are paralyzed by the sudden shock and the wave of fear that overwhelmed them an instant later. "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." It is not surprising that they feel thus. In addition to their own guilty conscience concerning the crime perpetuated against Joseph years before, this man who now says he is Joseph has been treating them with rigorous justice. They could even consider him cruel and unfeeling.

Joseph, however, harbors no resentment. "Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near." Then Joseph tells them not to be grieved, nor angry with themselves that they had sold him into Egypt, "for God did send me before you to preserve life" (45:5; compare 50:19, 20). This is one of the classic passages of Scripture to illustrate the truth that even the sinful acts of men are foreordained by God and in God's wise

plan work out in the end for the true benefit of His people. The purpose of the brothers in selling Joseph into Egypt was to give vent to their spite and hatred against him, which of course was deeply sinful. But a deeper purpose of God was at work in the same series of events, a purpose of grace toward His elect. We can even say that the brothers' wicked deed of selling Joseph into Egypt formed a necessary link in the historical development of God's plan of salvation. It had been promised by God that through the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all the families of the earth would be blessed. This was a Messianic promise ultimately fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. The fulfilment of this promise depended absolutely on the covenant seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob surviving the dire famine in the seven years of scarcity. If they had perished in the famine, the Messianic promise would have been frustrated. They were saved from perishing in the famine, however, by going to Egypt where there was food. There was food in Egypt because Joseph had been enabled by God to predict the seven years of famine and to store up grain for use in those years. Joseph's being food administrator of Egypt, in turn, depended on his being in Egypt, which in turn depended on his brothers having sold him into that country. Thus the wicked deed of the brothers formed an essential link in the chain of God's redemptive purpose. Those who irreverently speak of God's mysterious foreordination as if it were a mere abstract doctrine held by a few queer people called "Calvinists" should ponder the history of Joseph. Divine foreordination of all that comes to pass is no merely incidental feature in the Bible; it is deeply imbedded in the Scriptures, Old Testament and New, and cannot be removed from them without violently tearing many a historical narrative apart. God makes the wrath of man to praise Him, as the Psalmist said (Psalm 76:10). The present writer has often been impressed by the fact that those who vehemently object to the doctrine of divine foreordination almost never attempt to deny that it is taught in Scripture. Instead of trying to prove that the Bible does not teach it, they almost invariably bring up rationalistic objections to it. The usual attitude is something like this: "If I cannot reconcile God's foreordination with my own freedom in a way that satisfies my reason, then I refuse to believe that God has foreordained what comes to pass." We have even heard of a church officer who was quoted as saying that it made no difference to him whether the Bible teaches foreordination or not; even if taught in Scripture he would not believe it. Needless to say, such an attitude proceeds not from a humble, reverent faith in God but from a proud, man-pleasing rationalistic bias. Those who speak so should realize that their real quarrel is not with John Calvin but with the God of the Bible. They are not willing for God to be really God.

Joseph continues, telling his brothers that the famine is to continue for five more years, during which no crops will be harvested. "And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (45:7, 8).

Joseph is not boasting here; he is simply telling the facts to his brothers; facts moreover which they had to know to understand what had really happened. He gives all the credit to God, taking none at all for himself. He is trying to lead his brothers to see what has happened in its true light, that is, in relation to the sovereign purpose of God. The fact that God's purpose was involved in all that had happened of course did not in any way cancel or lessen the brothers' guilt in selling Joseph. Joseph is not telling them that it was an act of God (verse 8) in order to minimize the evil of their deed, but rather to get them to see the entire series of events in its true perspective. For nothing is truly understood until it is understood in relation to God. It is only in God's light that man can really see light (Psalm 36:9).

#### Questions:

1. What effect was produced on Joseph by the speech of Judah in the last part of chapter 44?
2. Why did Joseph order the Egyptians to leave the room?
3. What may have been the reason why Joseph asked "Doth my father yet live?"
4. What attitude was displayed by the brothers on learning that they were in Joseph's presence?
5. What reasons can be assigned for the attitude of the brothers?
6. How did Joseph show that he harbored no resentment?
7. On what ground did Joseph tell his brothers not to be grieved or angry with themselves?
8. How does the history of Joseph illustrate the truth of God's foreordination?
9. What was the relation between the brothers' crime and God's plan of redemption?
10. What is the real reason why many people oppose the doctrine of divine foreordination?
11. How can it be shown that Joseph was not boasting in what he said to his brothers in 45:4-8?
12. What was Joseph trying to get his brothers to see in 45:4-8?

## LESSON 69

## JOSEPH IS YET ALIVE!

(Genesis Chapter 45)

Having reassured his brothers and sought to lead them to think of the situation and its background in the light of God's foreordination and providence, Joseph next instructs them to return to Canaan to bring their father Jacob and their households down to Egypt. They are to explain to their father the high position which Joseph occupies in the land of Egypt. He and his kindred are invited to dwell in the land of Goshen. Goshen was in the region of the Nile delta in the northeastern part of Egypt. The entire group is to move to Egypt, with their families and possessions. Joseph adds that there remain five years of famine. Joseph undertakes to provide whatever is necessary for the entire establishment for the five years of remaining famine. Finally, they are to "haste" and bring Joseph's father to him in Egypt (45:9-13).

In this section we see Joseph's wisdom and his ability as a planner and administrator. Everything is considered and provided for. The plan is a wise one and had everything in its favor. Of course Joseph's great authority in the land of Egypt placed him in a position to make such lavish promises and also to carry them out.

Following this commission, Joseph falls upon Benjamin's neck and weeps, and Benjamin weeps on Joseph's neck. Formalities are dispensed with and brotherly affection is freely expressed. Only in the case of Benjamin is mutual weeping on necks mentioned. With regard to the other brothers, the record merely states that Joseph "kissed" them and "wept upon" them. Still, as Leupold points out, this was "all a truly oriental display of emotion" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1097). Finally the brothers really feel at ease and talk with Joseph freely and naturally (45:15).

Such news as the arrival of Joseph's brothers and his identification of himself to them naturally could not be kept secret very long. Even though not officially published in any manner, the information would travel rapidly by the "grapevine" method. So we are informed in verse 16 that the news reached Pharaoh's palace, and that this "pleased Pharaoh well." Leupold remarks that the arrival of the brothers removed a kind of social stigma from the figure of Joseph, inasmuch as Joseph had been regarded as an ex-slave. "Now proof is offered that Joseph comes of an honorable family of free nomads, who are generally held in high regard in those days" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1098).

Pharaoh himself proposes a plan which is identical with that previously formulated by Joseph, although Pharaoh does not mention Goshen. Rather, he states "I will give you the good of the land of Egypt . . . the good of all

the land of Egypt is yours" (45:18, 20). Pharaoh also orders that Egyptian wagons be provided for moving Jacob's household to Egypt. These were not chariots, which were used only in war; rather they were carts, with either two or four wheels, used for any persons too old or weak to walk or mount a donkey. Such carts, it seems certain, were used only in Egypt.

We should note that Joseph is not merely offered the privilege of accommodating his father, his brothers and their families in Egypt, but is actually ordered by Pharaoh to do so. "Thou art commanded" is the language used. Possibly Pharaoh felt that Joseph might hesitate to use his office and authority so freely for the benefit of his own relatives, therefore he commands him to do these things, thus removing any objection or scruple on Joseph's part.

"Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours" (45:20). Jacob's family need not bother to pack and bring every last item of household goods. It was urgent that they get to Egypt without needless delay. Their needs would be amply provided for after their arrival there.

In accordance with Pharaoh's orders, Joseph issues wagons and travel provisions to his brothers. Each brother also receives "changes of raiment" — at least two extra garments. Benjamin, however, is given 300 pieces of silver and five "changes of raiment." Besides all this, a special gift is sent to his father Jacob: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten donkeys loaded with food for his father on the trip to Egypt. Considering the fact that Egypt was in the grip of a dire famine, this was extremely liberal provision for Joseph's kindred. Yet who shall say, in view of the tremendous debt that Egypt as a nation owed to Joseph, that the liberality was unwarranted?

We get a further intimation of Joseph's real wisdom in his parting counsel to the brothers: "See that ye fall not out by the way" (45:24). Knowing his brothers and being a shrewd judge of human nature, Joseph realizes that once they are out of his presence and on their way home, they may begin to argue and quarrel — possibly as to who was most to blame for the crime committed against Joseph years before, possibly as to whether it was fair for Benjamin to have 300 pieces of silver and five changes of raiment when they themselves received less raiment and no silver. Joseph therefore cautions them against disputing and disunity while they are enroute home. And apparently Joseph's wise counsel was duly heeded, for verse 25 informs us that they arrived

at the home of Jacob in Canaan. It is implied that they arrived there without untoward incidents.

"Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt!" Thus the brothers announce the glad news to their aged father who probably has long suspected that his ten older sons had something to do with the mysterious disappearance of Joseph years before. The news is almost too much for Jacob. "And Jacob's heart fainted" — Leupold translates, "his heart grew numb". Knowing well the character of his sons, Jacob not unnaturally suspects them of lying. The sons, however, continue to tell their story, repeating "all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them." We may wonder whether this "all" means strictly **all** that Joseph had said to his brothers. Did the brothers now actually tell their father what Joseph had said about their crime against him being part of a divine plan to preserve people alive? If so, this would involve disclosure of their own guilt in the matter. Obviously, Jacob must have learned the truth sooner or later. Possibly he already knew it; possibly he learned it definitely at this time.

What finally convinced Jacob that his sons were telling the truth was a sight of the wagons which Joseph had sent from Egypt. He well knew that his sons had not had money to purchase any such extensive equipment; therefore the presence of the wagons was real evidence that the son's story was true. On realizing this, Jacob's spirit revived. The sudden shock has passed, though he must still be very excited.

"It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die" (45:28). We note that Jacob offers no comment on Joseph's exalted rank in Egypt. What really matters to him is the fact that Joseph is alive.

#### Questions:

1. What did Joseph instruct his brothers to tell his father?
2. In what part of Egypt were they to settle?
3. How many more years of famine remained?
4. What can be said about the wisdom of Joseph's plan?
5. How did Joseph express his affection for Benjamin?
6. How did Joseph express his affection for the other brothers?
7. What may have been the reason why the news of the arrival of Joseph's brothers pleased Pharaoh well?
8. What plan did Pharaoh propose?
9. What difference, if any, existed between the plan announced by Pharaoh and that already formulated by Joseph?
10. What was the nature of the wagons sent for Jacob's use?
11. What may have been the reason why Pharaoh issued a command instead of an invitation?
12. What gifts did Joseph give his brothers prior to their return to Canaan? How was favoritism shown to Benjamin?
13. What wise counsel did Joseph give his brothers just before their departure?
14. Why was this wise counsel advisable?
15. What was the effect on Jacob of his sons' announcement upon their arrival at home?
16. What finally convinced Jacob that his sons were telling the truth?

## LESSON 70

### JACOB JOURNEYS TO EGYPT

(Genesis Chapter 46)

Chapter 46 relates the move of Jacob and his clan from Canaan to Egypt. The first stage of the journey is to Beersheba. We are not told what the point of departure was, but the residence of Jacob at the time of Joseph being sold was at Hebron (37:14). From Hebron to Beersheba is about 25 miles in a direct line, and Beersheba was on the direct route between Hebron and Egypt.

At Beersheba the company pauses and Jacob offers sacrifices "unto the God of his father Isaac". The God of Isaac is of course identical with the God of Jacob. The mention of Isaac at this point serves to remind the reader of Isaac's earlier offering of sacrifices at the same place. In this hallowed spot Jacob would think of the

great divine promises to which he was heir. Another reason for offering sacrifices at Beersheba may have been that this was the traditional southern limit of the Promised Land, and Jacob is about to take the serious step of going outside the Promised Land. He earnestly desires the clear guidance and approval of God before taking so serious a step.

God's answer to Jacob comes in the form of a vision seen during the night. The Lord addresses the patriarch at this time as "Jacob," not as "Israel," which may surprise us somewhat. The reason may be to recall to the patriarch's mind the kind of person he once was, or "to indicate that as long as he doubts and hesitates he

is the old Jacob rather than the new Israel" (Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, II, 1107).

God reassures Jacob: "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes" (46:3, 4). Here we may raise the question, why should Jacob fear to go to Egypt? This could hardly be a fear of danger to his personal safety or that of his family, in view of the position of Joseph as supreme ruler of Egypt next to Pharaoh. It must have been a fear of acting contrary to the will of God. It will be recalled that Abraham's trip to Egypt (chapter 12) had some bad consequences, and that God specifically forbade Isaac to enter Egypt, commanding him on the contrary to abide in the land of Canaan (26:2). Moreover, God's warning to Isaac against entering Egypt came precisely in a time of famine, Jacob would naturally recall these facts and wonder whether perhaps a trip to Egypt might be contrary to God's will. Hence the divine revelation reassuring and instructing him was necessary at this time.

God also promises Jacob at Beersheba that he will make of him a great nation, and that this will be done precisely in Egypt (46:3). Jacob is also promised that God will bring him up from Egypt again — a promise fulfilled unto Jacob not in his own person but in his posterity centuries later in the time of Moses. For Jacob will die in Egypt (49:33) and only his mortal body will be brought up from Egypt for burial in the cave of Machpelah (50:13).

Thus reassured and encouraged, Jacob and his clan depart from Beersheba to go to Egypt. Jacob the aged father, rides in one of the Egyptian carts; so do the women and young children. The rest presumably walked or possibly rode by turns upon donkeys. We should not fail to note that the act of removal from Canaan to Egypt is represented in the narrative as an act of Jacob — "And Jacob rose up from Beersheba . . ." — the decision and the responsibility are Jacob's as the patriarchal head of the clan.

The narrative informs us that the entire connection ("all his seed") left Canaan to enter Egypt. Specific mention is made of sons, grandsons, daughters and granddaughters. Though we know of only one daughter of Jacob by name — Dinah, 34:1 — we do know that he had "daughters," for we find mention of "all his daughters" in 37:35.

The record next presents a list of the members of Jacob's party entering Egypt. The sons of Leah, with their offspring, are mentioned first (verses 8-15). These total 33 persons not counting Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah. Next are listed the sons and descendants of Zilpah; these are 16 in number not counting Asher's daughter Serah. Next come Rachel's sons and

descendants, 14 in number. Of these, of course, Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim were not in the party entering Egypt, for they were already in Egypt.

There is a difficulty in connection with the listing of the sons of Benjamin. Ten sons of Benjamin are listed in 46:21. As the data presented in the narrative indicate that Benjamin at this time was a young man in his early twenties, it seems almost impossible that he could already have ten sons. The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) lists only three of them as sons of Benjamin, the other seven being listed as his grandsons. This removes part of the difficulty, assuming that the Septuagint is correct over against the Hebrew text. But still a difficulty remains. If Benjamin is a young man of about 23 years of age on entering Egypt, how can he have grandsons at that comparatively young age? The conclusion seems inevitable that part, at least, of the descendants of Benjamin were born after the settlement in Egypt, just as we know that Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were born in Egypt, even though they are included in the list of "the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt" (46:8).

Last of all the sons and descendants of Bilhah are listed (verses 23-25), being seven in number.

This gives a total of 70, of whom 33 are descended from Leah, 16 from Zilpah, 14 from Rachel, and 7 from Bilhah. This reckoning of 70 however does not include Jacob himself, nor Dinah, nor the wives, nor (with the exception of Serah) the daughters.

The total given in verse 26, with the definite statement that the wives are not counted, is 66. But in verse 27, the total is given as 70. An added complication consists in the fact that in the New Testament (Stephen's speech, Acts 7:14) the number is given as 75. It is not certain that we can fully reconcile these apparently conflicting statements. With regard to Stephen's speech, it seems clear that he was following the Greek version of the Old Testament (Septuagint) which at this point varies from the Hebrew text. Ordinarily the Hebrew text is regarded as much more reliable than the Greek version. Leupold suggests that perhaps Er and Onan (who died in the land of Canaan) are not to be counted in the list of Leah's descendants, but Jacob and Dinah counted instead. This would give the total of 70 including Jacob and Dinah. Thus one difficulty seems to be solved. As for the total of 66 given in verse 26, he suggests that Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh are not counted in this figure, for the figure is for "all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt" (Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, II, 1115).

A further matter that needs to be considered is what may have been the total counting all the wives and daughters. Clearly this must have

been considerably more than 70, though not necessarily double that number. Also, should we not suppose that a considerable number of servants or slaves accompanied the household into Egypt? In Abraham's day, that patriarch was able to organize a private army of 318 men, at a moment's notice, from his own establishment (14:14), clearly implying a total establishment of several hundred or possibly even a thousand. Isaac also was very rich, with flocks and herds, and "great store of servants" (26:14). It would seem natural to suppose that Jacob's establishment, also, had numerous servants or slaves. What became of these if they did not enter Egypt with the patriarch? It has been suggested that he had liberated them on account of the famine, or had lost them in some way. However this is mere speculation, and it seems at least as reasonable to suppose that a considerable number of such persons entered Egypt along with Jacob. Since even the wives of Jacob's son are not listed or counted, it need not surprise us that no mention is made of the servants or slaves. Allowing for the latter class, it is quite possible that the total number of persons accompanying Jacob into Egypt was in the hundreds.

**Questions:**

1. What was the first stage of Jacob's journey to Egypt?
2. What is the distance from Hebron to Beersheba?
3. What religious act was performed by Jacob at Beersheba?
4. What religious associations did Beersheba have for Jacob?
5. Why would Jacob hesitate to go beyond Beersheba?
6. How did God reassure the patriarch at this point?
7. What promises did God give to Jacob at Beersheba?
8. Which of the company rode in the Egyptian carts?
9. What is known as to the number of Jacob's daughters?
10. How many descendants of Leah are listed as entering Egypt? How many of Zilpah? Of Rachel? Of Bilhah?
11. What difficulty exists concerning the sons of Benjamin listed in 46:21? What possible solutions have been suggested for this problem?
12. What problems exist as to the total number of people entering Egypt? What solutions can be suggested?
13. How many may have been in the company if we count the wives?
14. Why may it be regarded as probable that a considerable number of servants, not counted in the total, also accompanied Jacob into Egypt?

**LESSON 71**

**JACOB AND HIS SONS MEET PHARAOH**

(Genesis Chapters 46 and 47)

There is one matter in the listing of Jacob's party which still calls for some attention. In 46:10 among the sons of Simeon we find listed "Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman." This specific mention of a marriage between one of Jacob's sons and a Canaanite woman seems to indicate that such was exceptional. We are not told where Jacob's sons got their wives but it may be assumed that they obtained them from Mesopotamia as Isaac and Jacob had, or possibly from other tribes which were not involved in the extreme religious and moral corruptions of the Canaanites.

As the party enters Egypt, Jacob sends Judah on ahead to inform Joseph of their imminent arrival, "to direct his face unto Goshen" (46:28). The party soon after arrives in Goshen, where they are met by Joseph in person, who has traveled there by chariot (46:29). On seeing his aged father again, Joseph "fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." Jacob (here called Israel) on his part says to Joseph: "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art

yet alive" (46:30). Jacob's long pent-up and now at last released emotion is understandable. Actually, however, the patriarch lived seventeen more years (47:9 compared with 47:28).

Joseph next announces his intention to inform Pharaoh and his court of the arrival of his father and his kindred. He proposes to inform Pharaoh that his brethren are shepherds by occupation, and have brought their flocks and herds with them. He coaches his brothers as to how they are to answer when Pharaoh inquires as to their occupation. They are to reply that they are and always have been "about cattle." This will make it suitable that they dwell in the land of Goshen. Joseph adds an explanation: "For every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians" (46:34).

The Egyptians antipathy to shepherds is confirmed by archaeological discoveries in Egypt. It included not only foreign shepherds but also Egyptian ones. They were regarded as an inferior and contemptible class of people. Exodus

8:26 indicates that not only shepherds but also sheep were an abomination unto the Egyptians.

Pharaoh, as the ruler of Egypt, would of course have to reckon with this Egyptian prejudice against the sheep industry. It will be recalled that it was Joseph, not Pharaoh, who had specified the land of Goshen as the place where his brethren should settle (45:10). Pharaoh had been much more general in his language, saying "I will give you the good of the land of Egypt" (45:18). Since Goshen was well suited to sheep and cattle, Joseph desires that Pharaoh confirm his plan that his brethren settle there. Hence his careful coaching of his brothers as to how to reply to Pharaoh's inquiries. Goshen would not only be suitable for live-stock raising, but it would also serve to isolate the Israelites from the Egyptians, and thereby would help to shield them from Egyptian race-prejudice. Also, as Leupold remarks, it was near the border of Canaan, which would facilitate their exit when the time came for that.

Joseph informs Pharaoh that his father and his brethren have arrived in Egypt, with their flocks, herds and possessions, and are at the moment located in the land of Goshen. It was certainly a wise move for Joseph to locate his brethren in Goshen first, and inform Pharaoh of it afterwards. The easiest course for Pharaoh to adopt would then be simply to give his formal approval or ratification to what Joseph had arranged.

Joseph has selected five of his brethren for presentation at the court of Pharaoh. We do not know which five these were, but presumably he selected the five that he felt would make the best impression at the court of the king. On their being presented, Pharaoh asks the question which Joseph had anticipated, and Joseph's brothers reply frankly and honestly, even though their honest reply might perhaps be expected to arouse prejudice. They state plainly that they are shepherds as were their fathers before them.

Joseph's brothers add an explanation as to their reason for coming to Egypt. It is "to sojourn" — that is, to live there temporarily only. They explain that they were forced out of Canaan by the famine conditions and lack of pasture for their stock. For these reasons, they request that they be allowed to dwell in the land of Goshen.

We take the brothers' request for permission to "sojourn" — to dwell only temporarily — as

honest and made in good faith. Even though as a matter of fact the Israelites remained in Egypt for centuries, that was not contemplated by Jacob or his sons at the time of their entering Egypt. It was regarded as a temporary expedient rendered necessary by the famine, with the presumption, of course, that when the famine was over they would return to the Promised Land of Canaan again.

In his reply Pharaoh says to Joseph: "The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell . . ." (47:6). So the land of Egypt is at the disposal of these newcomers, and since Joseph has already located them in the land of Goshen, Pharaoh confirms this, making it an official decree not only of Joseph but also of Pharaoh himself.

Pharaoh adds: "If thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle" (47:6b). "Men of activity" means "men of ability" or "competent men."

#### Questions:

1. What special fact is recorded concerning Simeon's son Shaul?
2. What seems to be implied by the mention of the nationality of Shaul's mother?
3. How did Jacob notify Joseph of his imminent arrival in Egypt?
4. Where did Joseph meet his father, and how did he get there?
5. What did Joseph do on meeting his father?
6. What did Jacob say on meeting his son Joseph?
7. How did Joseph coach his brothers concerning their appearance before Pharaoh?
8. What was the Egyptian attitude toward shepherds and sheep?
9. What reasons can be suggested as to why Goshen was a specially desirable place for Joseph's brethren to settle?
10. How many of his brothers did Joseph introduce to Pharaoh?
11. How did the brothers answer Pharaoh's inquiry?
12. What request did they make of Pharaoh?
13. How long did they intend to remain in Egypt?
14. What position did Pharaoh offer to any men of special ability among Joseph's brothers?

## LESSON 72

### JACOB INVOKES GOD'S BLESSING ON PHARAOH

(Genesis Chapter 47)

Having introduced five of his brothers to Pharaoh, Joseph next presents his father Jacob to the king. With true and typical oriental cour-

tesy Pharaoh asks Jacob the proper question under the circumstances: "How old art thou?" (47:8). Americans and Europeans who are getting along

in years sometimes do not like to be asked their age, but it is evident that in ancient Egypt as in modern China it was considered the courteous thing to ask an older person's age, and considered a distinct honor to be of outstanding age.

Jacob's reply is both dignified and truly beautiful: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage" (47:9). People took time to speak deliberately and gracefully in those days; what a contrast it forms to the constant rush and pressure of modern American life! Perhaps people who lived deliberately as Jacob did avoided nervous breakdowns of modern life with its stress and strain.

"And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh" (47:10). Since it is a recognized principle in Scripture that "without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better" (Hebrews 7:7), Jacob here appears as Pharaoh's superior in spiritual and human values. But what was involved in Jacob's blessing Pharaoh? Luther suggests that Pharaoh became a convert to the true God whom Jacob served. This, however, is an unwarranted inference. Nor should we suppose that Jacob's blessing bestowed on Pharaoh included any promises or predictions of his eternal salvation or participation in God's work of redemption. Rather it would seem that this was a blessing such as a truly godly person could invoke upon a ruler even though the ruler might be of another faith. For instance, Americans are accustomed to pray for God's protection and blessing up on the President of the United States, quite regardless of whether he is of the same faith with themselves or not. It is the exalted office that they have in mind, rather than the personal qualities of the man holding the office. Such prayer or blessing does not imply a bond of religious communion between the person blessing and the person blessed, but merely the recognition that it is the will of God that Christian people invoke the goodness of God on behalf of those who, in God's providence, are in positions of high authority in the state.

The presentation at court being finished, Joseph definitely settles his father and his brethren "in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded" (47:11). The land was given to them for "a possession" which seems to be more than they had asked for, and more than they had enjoyed in Canaan before entering Egypt.

The expression "land of Rameses" instead of "land of Goshen" is interesting. It seems clear that the region was not called "land of Rameses" in Jacob's and Joseph's day, but only later. Note the name of the store city Raamses in Ex. 1:11. Raamses is held to be the same as Rameses, only the spelling being slightly different. The explanation seems to be that Moses, the writer of Genesis, knew this region by the name of "land of Rameses", and here uses the name which was in common use in his own day, instead of "Goshen" which was the common name in Joseph's day.

As to the exact location of Rameses, it is said to have been located halfway between the Nile river and Lake Timsah.

"And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families" (47:12). Here "bread" of course means food in general, not merely what we call "bread" today. The implication is that the precious food was rationed in proportion to the number of persons in a household, so that even though the supply was strictly limited owing to the famine, still all had enough and none suffered lack. This continued, of course, through the five years which remained of the famine.

#### Questions:

1. What did Joseph do after introducing five of his brothers to Pharaoh?
2. What question did Pharaoh address to Jacob?
3. What are the characteristics of Jacob's reply to Pharaoh?
4. What principle is recognized in Scripture concerning the relative standing of the person who blesses and the person who is blessed?
5. What does Jacob's act of blessing Pharaoh indicate concerning the human and spiritual stature of Jacob in comparison with Pharaoh?
6. What must we regard as not included in Jacob's blessing of Pharaoh?
7. What may we suppose to be included in Jacob's blessing of Pharaoh?
8. What name is given to the part of Egypt where Joseph settled his father and his brethren? Why is it not called Goshen?
9. Where is Rameses said to have been located?
10. What provision did Joseph make for his father and his brethren in the matter of food supplies? How long would this provision continue?

### LESSON 73

#### HOW JOSEPH ADMINISTERED FAMINE RELIEF

(Genesis Chapter 47)

From 47:13 to verse 26 the subject is Joseph's administration of the famine relief program in the

land of Egypt. It is noted that the famine was very sore not only in the land of Egypt but also

in the land of Canaan (verse 13). This indicates that Canaan was at this time regarded as a dependency of Egypt.

As the famine increases in severity, the people spend their available cash for food which is rationed to them by Joseph. The next stage of the rationing program is that in which Joseph issues food to the people in exchange for their cattle. Some have harshly criticized Joseph for making people give up their cattle instead of simply giving them the food free. We should realize, however, that the matter was not as simple as it might seem on the surface. Very likely even with the large reserve of grain accumulated during the seven years of plenty, there was not enough to tide all the people of Egypt and all their livestock over the entire seven years of famine. Not only would the reserve have to be carefully controlled, but a part — perhaps a large part — of the animals would have to be sacrificed in order to keep the people alive. At the same time, part of the livestock must be kept alive for breeding purposes to restock the land after the famine period was over. Such a program required the planning and administration of a government authority rather than every individual making his own plans and carrying them out. While the present writer has no sympathy with the idea of a government-controlled “planned economy” as a matter of general economic policy, it would seem that in times of dire emergency and national crisis such as the years of famine in Egypt, central planning and control by a firm hand may be absolutely necessary. It was the good fortune of Egypt, in the providence of God, to have a truly wise and competent man at the head of this emergency program, instead of a stupid, blundering bureaucrat who would occasion greater evils that he sought to remedy.

The third stage of the relief program came when the people had given up both their cash and their cattle. Now they sell their land in return for rations of food. It should be noted that the proposal to sell the land originated with the people of Egypt, not with Joseph (47:19). Leupold comments that in this whole program of expecting the people to pay in some way for what they got, Joseph was being very wise rather than harsh. The fact of payment enabled the Egyptians to keep up their self-respect and to avoid the breakdown of morale which would result from their accepting free relief over a period of years. Joseph wisely avoided the appearance of a dole. Though it may be said that the people of Egypt were not in a very free bargaining position, owing to the pressure of the famine, yet all the way through the terms on which food is issued are agreed upon by both government and people.

“And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the

people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof” (47:20, 21). In return for food, the people turn in the title to their land. Then Joseph removes the people from the temporarily useless, drought-parched farm land to cities located throughout Egypt. On the famine-stricken farm land they could do nothing as long as the years of famine continued. Having the people dispersed through the country would only make the relief program more complicated and difficult to administer. So Joseph adopts the wise and very practical course of removing the people to cities. In this way the issuing of rations would be much simpler and easier. No doubt the people were concentrated in locations where the grain reserves had been stored.

It is recorded that the only class of people in Egypt not selling their land were the priests. These did not find it necessary to sell because they had a “portion which Pharaoh gave them.” This indicates the high standing of the Egyptian priesthood. They were provided for without having to renounce title to their lands.

“Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land” (47:23). This must be understood as spoken near the end of the famine period, for Joseph provides seed for planting.

Joseph accordingly announces what the policy as to taxation is to be when the expected harvest is realized. One-fifth of the crop is to be for Pharaoh, and the remaining four-fifths are to be for seed and for food for the people (47:24). Leupold comments: Twenty per cent is a high tax rate but quite moderate for the Orient where one third and one half have been demanded. . . . Our tax-ridden age ought not to find reason for objection here” (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1138). It has been reported that farmers in the Yangtze valley of central China have sometimes been required to pay as much as 75% of their crop as taxes to the Communist government of China. Americans are getting accustomed to a 20% tax on their taxable income, and much more than that in higher brackets. So perhaps we should think twice before pronouncing an adverse judgment on Joseph's taxation program for Egypt.

As a matter of fact, the Egyptians seem to have accepted the new policy readily: “And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants” (47:25). This does not necessarily imply that there were no complaints or protests — very likely there were some. It only implies that the general reaction was one of willing submission to the conditions, in view of the fact that the program administered by Joseph had saved the people's lives. And this was indeed a great thing. How many famines have there been since Joseph's

time, in various parts of the world, in which people have died by millions of starvation, although perhaps many if not all these lives might have been saved by a wise and firm program such as Joseph's, over a period of years.

Before leaving this subject of the Egyptian famine, we should consider whether Joseph acted rightly in what he did. Some have made bold to criticize Joseph in very harsh terms. We can imagine that present-day Communists would label Joseph as "an enemy of the people," yet Joseph saved the people from death by starvation, which Communist governments in Russia and China have sometimes notoriously failed to do. Even some without any sympathy for Communism have held that Joseph took an intolerable advantage of the plight of the people of Egypt. The writer of these notes does not agree with this criticism of Joseph.

In the first place, it would seem that Joseph's program of requiring something in exchange for the food issued enabled the Egyptians to preserve their morale and self-respect better than if the food had been issued as an absolutely free grant with no strings attached. Secondly, the whole matter must be viewed in its context and setting of the second millennium before Christ. It is very unhistorical and unrealistic to try to apply twentieth century concepts of democracy and what some people call "social justice" to a situation which existed between three and four thousand years ago. Democracy simply did not exist at that period of the world's history. Government by a powerful monarchy was universally accepted as the normal state of affairs. The kind of objections that an American or European, more or less influenced by the socialistic trend of the present day, may feel inclined to raise against Joseph's program and methods, probably never entered the mind of the average Egyptian farmer who accepted the terms and received the benefits of Joseph's program.

#### LESSON 74

#### ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN

(Genesis Chapter 47)

The last section of chapter 47 concerns preparations for the death of Jacob. "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly" (47:27). This general statement carries us beyond the end of the years of famine, and seems to cover the years described from this point to the end of the book of Genesis. Although the famine is over, the people do not return to the land of Canaan, but remain in Egypt. As to the reason for this, we are not informed, but very likely it may have been because of great prosperity of the Israelites in Egypt. Of course God had a deeper reason

#### Questions:

1. What subject is related in verses 13 to 26 of chapter 47?
2. Where was the famine sore besides in Egypt?
3. What was the first stage of Joseph's famine relief program?
4. Why may it have been a practical necessity that the people surrender their livestock to the Egyptian government?
5. What was the second stage of the relief program?
6. What was the third stage of the program?
7. What psychological benefit may have come to the people of Egypt from Joseph's requirement of payment for food?
8. Why did Joseph remove the people to cities throughout Egypt?
9. What class of people did not sell their land, and why?
10. Why must 47:23 be regarded as having been spoken toward the end of the famine period?
11. What was Joseph's taxation policy with regard to the new crop?
12. What can be said on the question of whether the tax-rate established by Joseph was excessive or not?
13. What was the reaction of the people of Egypt to Joseph's announcement about the new tax policy?
14. How would present-day Communists label Joseph?
15. Why is it improper to criticize Joseph and his program from the standpoint of modern democracy?

in His plans and purposes, but we are inquiring as to the reason in the minds of the Israelites themselves.

As a matter of fact the Israelites were not totally out of contact with the land of Canaan during his period. Not only did they make a trip back to the Promised Land at the time of the burial of Jacob (50:7-13), but there is evidence of at least one other trip of some of them to Canaan during the period. It is not mentioned in Genesis but comes up rather mysteriously in I Chronicles 7:20-22, where we read: "And the sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, and Bered his son,

Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, and Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him." Comparison of the persons named with the listing in Numbers 26:35-37 indicates that part of the men mentioned were actual sons of Ephraim while part may have been descendants or grandsons. Ezer and Elead, therefore, may have been either sons or grandsons of Ephraim. Ephraim could be called their "father" in either relationship, according to common Old Testament usage. In any case, the cattle-stealing raid mentioned in I Chron. 7:21 must have been made from Egypt, for it is quite impossible to regard it as having happened before Jacob's entrance to Egypt, and of course it must have been long before the Exodus. It forms an interesting, if mysterious, sidelight on the dwelling of the Israelites in Egypt during the period of flourishing, before the onset of the Egyptian oppression of them. It would seem to indicate, also, that some of Jacob's descendants did not have very high ethical standards at this time, inasmuch as they were killed while engaged in what is today called "cattle rustling." Gath, the place of the incident, is in the Philistine area in southwestern Canaan.

"And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seven years: so the whole age of Jacob was a hundred forty and seven years. And the time drew night that Israel must die . . . (47:28, 29a). Realizing that his death cannot be far away, Jacob, here called by his new name "Israel", sends for his son Joseph. He requests Joseph to swear a solemn oath, promising that he will not bury his father in the land of Egypt, but will bury him with his forefathers in their burying-place. This means, of course, the cave of Machpelah near Hebron in southern Canaan.

Joseph readily swears the oath, promising to comply with his dying father's wishes. "And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head." We may raise the question why Jacob regarded it as important that he be buried with his forefathers in the cave of Machpelah in Canaan instead of in the land of Egypt. Leupold states that this cannot be regarded, in Jacob's case, as a mere matter of sentiment. "With men of strong faith, such as the patriarchs had, such petitions would have a deep and worthy motivation" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1140). "Jacob believed God's promises in reference to Israel, the land of Canaan, and the blessing of all the nations of the world through the Saviour to come. His deepest hopes were tied up with these promises of the Word of God. Jacob wanted even his burial to give testimony to this faith. But the only suitable land the patriarchs owned was the cave at Machpelah where Abraham and Isaac lay buried.

Therefore he requests that he be laid to rest there" (Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, II, 1140).

"And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head" (47:31b). "By this expression, Moses again affirms that Jacob esteemed it a singular kindness, that his son should have promised to do what he had required respecting his burial. For he exerts his weak body as much as he is able, in order to give thanks unto God, as if he had obtained something most desirable. He is said to have worshipped towards the head of his bed: because, seeing he was quite unable to rise from the bed on which he lay, he yet composed himself with a solemn air in the attitude of one who was praying" (Calvin, Commentary on Genesis, II, 417-8).

#### Questions:

1. What is the subject related in the last section of chapter 47?
2. What general facts concerning the Israelites are stated in verse 27?
3. How can it be shown that the Israelites were not totally out of contact with the land of Canaan during the early part of their sojourn in Egypt?
4. What does I Chronicles 7:20-22 show about the Israelites during the early part of their Egyptian sojourn?
5. What did Jacob do when he realized he was soon to die?
6. What promise did Jacob request Joseph to make upon his oath?
7. Why should burial in the cave of Machpelah be important to Jacob?
8. How did Jacob show his appreciation of Joseph's oath and promise?
9. What act of Jacob indicated his reverence toward God?

(To be continued)

## Somebody

Somebody did a golden deed;  
 Somebody proved a friend in need;  
 Somebody sang a beautiful song;  
 Somebody smiled the whole day long;  
 Somebody thought "'Tis sweet to live";  
 Somebody said "I'm glad to give";  
 Somebody fought a valiant fight;  
 Somebody lived to shield the right;  
 Was that "somebody" you?

(Author unknown)

## Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of *Blue Banner Faith and Life* each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers. Do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

**INTELLECTUAL SCHIZOPHRENIA**, by Rousas J. Rushdoony. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 133. \$2.75.

In this book we have an excellent critique of the current educational philosophy. Mr. Rushdoony seeks to prove that it is the presuppositions and axioms of our culture that causes the problem in our education system and in fact in every area of life. This book will not find favor with those who are public educationists for the book challenges the whole philosophical structure of our educational system. Here we have a penetrating closely-reasoned study which begins with Christian presuppositions and deals harshly with the vagaries of current educational theory. Mr. Rushdoony is a thorough Calvinist, both in his theology and philosophy. It is helpful to have an interpreter of the Dooyeweerdian and Vantilian Presuppositional Philosophy implement this philosophy, and at the same time speak in an intelligible manner.

However, this reviewer would raise the following questions. In his zeal to make the point that most people teach the Bible moralistically, the author deals with some comments in Catherine Vos' *Childs Story Bible* out of context. (Page 78). In his interpretation of the story of Rahab, the author would seem to say that any person who interprets Scripture as a redemptive record rather than a set of moralisms must admit that Rahab lied. This reviewer feels that there is a logical argument for the truthfulness of Rahab. For the author to say that any one who holds this position is involved in a "radical falsification of the faith," (p. 80) and to equate this view with a total moralistic concept of the Scripture is a gross overstatement. Also on pages 119-121, Rushdoony, in a chapter entitled "The Menace of the Sunday School" says, "It (The Sunday School) teaches precisely that faith which the pulpit is called upon to wage war against. It inculcates either outright Pelagianism or works-salvation . . . Its effects are almost invariably moralistic." The "Sunday School" is called a menace without any conditional statements. Is this true in the small Reformed bodies and in some isolated cases in the large denominations? Would the author imply that the GREAT COMMISSION Sunday School Material is to be classed with all others? Again it seems that the author has over-stated his case.

With these exceptions this book is highly rec-

ommended as a thorough and competent analysis of contemporary thought from the perspective of the Reformed Faith.

— John H. White

**FREE PRESBYTERIAN PULPIT**, Issued by Publication Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Carruthers and Sons, Inverness. 1961, pp. 86. 6s. 6d.

This book contains seven sermons by deceased ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At the beginning of each of the sermons there is a brief biographical sketch of the author. The preface says that these men "accepted the Bible as their infallible supreme standard, and the whole doctrine of the 'Westminster Confession of Faith' as founded upon the Scripture." These sermons combine a consistent and profound development of Biblical and Systematic Theology, and a warm presentation of the claims of Christ over the personal life. The sermons are each primarily concerned with the truth of the text rather than the homiletical structure.

This reviewer felt that the sermon by Rev. Malcolm Gillies on pages 75-86 contained some fanciful typology. Othniel is called a type of Christ. A consistent hermeneutical principle is that every Old Testament type must have an explicit N. T. antitype. The whole sermon then is developed upon the premise of this unsupported typology. With this exception, these sermons are refreshing and stimulating in this age of watered-down, non-doctrinal homiletics.

— John H. White

**THE BEATITUDES OF JESUS**, by William Fitch. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1961. pp. 132, \$3.00.

Dr. Fitch has written a series of ten popular sermons on the Beatitudes. They grasp the central significance of the Sermon on the Mount and are clear forceful expositions. The author displays an awareness of contemporary dispensational and liberal interpretations of the Beatitudes and a rejection of both. Dr. Fitch says: "The Beatitudes present a composite picture of the true life of the child of God in its beginnings, course, and consummation, and with every detail and feature we must honestly and carefully compare ourselves."

The book is popular in nature and yet one wonders if it is not the expositor's duty to bring out the double meanings which are involved in the original words for poor, meek, and pure. The Beatitudes are by their nature strongly doctrinal; Total depravity, justification, adoption, sanctification, and the Second Coming, yet Dr. Fitch never refers to these doctrines. The final sermon emphasizes the decision of man concerning his blessedness whereas there has been no emphasis in other presentations on the sovereign pronouncement by God of an individual to this blessedness. Also the constituency of this periodical with any Puritan convictions will be offended by the two full-page pictures of Jesus.

This book should not be used without some other competent study of the beatitudes.

— John H. White

**MUKLE KATE (A TROPHY OF GRACE).** Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Palmerton Villa, 4 Millburn Road, Iverness, Scotland. Paper pamphlet, 4d.

This is a small pamphlet containing the story of the conversion of an old woman who had been "guilty of every forbidden crime in the law of God except murder." One will find here a delightful God-honoring testimony.

— John H. White

**DARIUS THE MEDE**, by John C. Whitcomb, Jr. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 84. \$2.75.

To any who enjoy history, the author of this book presents a very interesting and challenging work on the heretofore controversial character mentioned in Daniel, that of Darius the Mede. The great lack of historical evidences of this period have made many doubt the authenticity of the Biblical record. But recent findings, and a new translation of the Nabonidus Chronicle has given Mr. Whitcomb the material for his convincing argument that there is one person in history, and only one, who fits all the Biblical data concerning Darius the Mede, and this is one by the name of Gubaru.

Mr. Whitcomb delves into his subject very minutely, and carefully establishes the Biblical record concerning Darius the Mede. He then systematically presents the cuneiform source material, documenting all in detail. This he follows with his evaluation and interpretation. He seems to have gathered every scrap of evidence and seriously considered it before coming to his conclusions. He also considers at length Professor H. H. Rowley's book on the subject, pointing out the confusion of characters which occurred there — the confusion of "Gobryas" for "Gubaru", and also an "Ugbaru" is involved. But Mr. Whitcomb very ably leads us through this maze and on through the contentions of the modern critics to a satisfying conclusion that the Gubaru of Baby-

lon of the sixth century B. C. was truly Darius the Mede.

In this rather small volume of 84 pages, Mr. Whitcomb has presented a great deal of historical data of Medo-Persian chronicles. He gives an historical sketch of the Medes and Persians down to 520 B.C., dates of the Babylonian Fall, a listing of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian kings, and even a passage from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* that bears on this period. The book is well indexed and is very rewarding reading to those interested in this period of history.

— Melville W. Martin

**THE TEACHING OF CALVIN FOR TODAY**, by Harold J. Whitney. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959, pp. 205. \$2.95.

In his foreword, Mr. Whitney, an Assembly Evangelist from Australia, has stated the purpose of his work: "It is meant to be no more than a profile of the great Reformer and his teachings. This of set purpose, for a profile is often a better clue to character than a portrait. It highlights the dominant features. A mere glance at a profile sometimes suffices to read the man. Moreover, a profile is an intriguing thing. It lures one on to visualize the face and anticipate the details of the portrait. It stimulates the imagination also." This the author has successfully done in his timely book.

This book is divided into five sections. The first deals with the main character, John Calvin. The remaining four sections are a very condensed summary of his "Institutes". To begin with, Mr. Whitney presents a brief biography of John Calvin the Man, then an evaluation of him as the Champion of the Reformation. This is followed by an interpretation of the regime of Calvin in Geneva, then shorter chapters entitled, "John Calvin and Capitalism," "John Calvin's Influence", "The Approach to Calvinism", and "John Calvin the Theologian". All is to the point and brings to us a very interesting and "up-to-date" Calvin. This portion is typical: "Now, because life is more than logical consistency, and the Scriptures as God's revelation, greater than man, Calvin found many things in Scripture beyond man's power to pack into the compass of the syllogism. This did not dismay Calvin, who was neither half-hearted nor one-sided in his method. He frankly acknowledged the place that mystery held in the Christian scheme of things, and what he could not logically reconcile, he referred to the goodwill and pleasure of an omniscient God. He did not favor unprofitable speculation, and bent himself to the task of simply discovering and laying bare for all to see, the spiritual truths of Scripture." (pg. 58)

As to the presentation of the "Substance of the Institutes", Mr. Whitney has systematically and ably presented the material section by section, carefully indicating in the margin the section,

chapter and paragraph being dealt with. It is a marvellous work of digesting, setting forth in about 130 pages that which is contained in two volumes, or some 1200 pages of the Institutes. It does, however, accomplish the purpose of the author in that one is given a "profile" and is then intrigued into delving more thoroughly into those sections of the Institutes which are of special interest at the time.

This book is one that all those who are interested in John Calvin and his impact on the world would benefit by having in their library.

— Melville W. Martin

**THE APOCALYPSE TODAY**, by Thomas F. Torrance. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1959, pp. 155. \$3.00.

This book is a series of expositions on the book of Revelation written by the professor of Christian Dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, and originally delivered as a series of sermons. The author states in the preface that these expositions are intended for the ordinary member of the Church who increasingly turns to the book of Revelation for comfort and strength, but often finds little to guide his understanding outside the fantastic interpretations of the sects.

In these expositions the author tries to emphasize the relationship between the book of Revelation and current history and problems faced by Christ's followers every day of their lives. He does not attempt to manufacture fanciful prognostications, but draws heavily from events in the life of Christ in his interpretations of the apocalyptic visions. This provides a refreshing approach to the book of Revelation which may not be entirely new, but which helps dispel some of the aura of mystery that has long kept Christians from common-sense and down-to-earth study of the book.

Dr. Torrance writes from a soundly orthodox point of view, and although the reader may not agree with some of his interpretations, the book will prove helpful in the study of Revelation.

— J. M. Caskey

**THE MIRACLES AND PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**, by a London Minister. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959, pp. 427 \$3.95.

This is a reprint of a book originally published in 1890 by an author who chose to remain anonymous. The book is a collection of homiletic outlines on 62 miracles and 42 parables of the Old Testament.

The author makes no attempt to examine the miracles and parables critically, but accepts the King James translation at face value and proceeds from there to suggest outlines and illustrative quotations from the writings of such men as Bishop Hall, Matthew Henry, Lange, Erskine, Fairbairn, John Owen, and others.

This book is a source of seed-thoughts for the preacher or Bible teacher, and makes no claim to be anything deeper. It should serve a useful purpose by suggesting subjects, outlines, and some illustrations for sermon material.

— J. M. Caskey

**THE TRUTH ABOUT SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISM**, by Walter R. Martin. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1960, pp. 248. \$3.50.

Rev. W. R. Martin is an ordained minister in the Conservative Baptist Church. He has studied many of the sects or cults which flourish in the United States. He is a contributing editor to "Eternity" magazine and was heard on Barnhouse's "Bible Study Hour" on the radio.

Rev. Martin's doctrinal position is that of an evangelical. He states in his preface that love is not to be a substitute for "sound doctrine" or adherence to the "great foundational truths of the Gospel". He goes on to say that "love is the proof of conversion, and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ is the proof of love. . ." and this love which we express is to be exactly like His love to us. Martin believes that for the SDA movement and for the non-SDA Christians, that this love commandment has been lost through "ignorance, prejudice, and an unforgiving spirit. . ." Further, to determine if the SDA is part of the mystical Body of Christ one need only study to discover their position on "all the foundational Christian doctrines regarding the salvation of the soul and growth in Christian life." This then is Martin's task. His conclusion is that the SDA movement is and should be considered a member of the mystical Body of Christ. His reason is that on all foundational truths of the Gospel, those that apply to salvation, the SDA movement is in agreement with non-SDA Christians.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part deals with contemporary SDAism and shows how SDA developed out of the "Great Disappointment of 1844" of the Millerites. Martin then deals with the heart of SDA theology. This section is based on a 1957 publication of the SDA movement, which was an attempt to answer specific questions put to SDAism by the evangelical community. The publication is entitled, "Questions on Doctrine". Martin does not consider as official, public comments or published comments in magazines, made prior to 1957 which are explained or contradicted in the Questions on Doctrine of 1957.

Part two is an examination of SDA theology by Martin. There is much to commend Martin for in this section. The reviewer must offer a demurrer concerning Martin's dispensational position on the Christian Sabbath.

His conclusion is found in part three. Martin's basic conviction is that "the only requirements for

Biblical fellowship are adherence to fundamental doctrinal truths, abstinence from overtly divisive practices, and love for one another as Christ commanded us." Martin feels that the SDA and non-SDA Christians do have a common Christian faith, but because of an Adventists lack of love and presentation of their beliefs that the problem of fellowship has become difficult to solve. Agreement on cardinal doctrines of Christianity exists (according to Martin) and that in the Questions on Doctrine 1957, the SDA movement has repudiated "the concept of the sinful nature of Christ, the 'mark of the Beast' for Sunday keepers, the infallibility of Ellen G. White, the vicarious nature of the scapegoat transaction, positions held by some members of the adventist denomination and which had appeared prominently in their literature for some years."

To the reviewer, there is the problem of how or what Martin considers to be "cardinal doctrines" and what "secondary doctrines". To be specific, we can look at the SDA position on Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White. The official documents of the SDA movement state the acceptance of the Bible "as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will", and "the only foundation of all true Christian doctrine" and other similar acceptable statements. They however believe that communication from Heaven did not end with the closing of Scripture, but continues through the restoration of the "gift of prophecy" which occurred in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings are to be "accepted by Adventists as "testimonies" from the Spirit of God to guide their denominational activities." Martin goes on to explain that SDA movement has "adopted a qualified view of inspiration as related to her writings. . . which emphasizes subjective interpretation as the criterion for determining specifically where in Mrs. White's writings the 'spirit of prophecy' has decisively spoken." He then points up the contradiction which the SDA movement is forced to defend. He then concludes on this that their belief on this point is a matter of religious liberty so long as they do not make it a test of fellowship with another denomination.

Without accepting Martin's conclusions we can appreciate his spirit of research and the light he has brought to this area of SDAism. The book provides a new and penetrating study of a contemporary cult and therefore is a help to the Bible student in defending the faith to the Glory of God.

— T. R. Smyth

**THE PASTORAL GENIUS OF PREACHING**, by Samuel Volbeda. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1960, pp. 85. \$2.00.

This brief, but very pointed, book was prepared from the classnotes left by the author from his twenty six years in teaching Practical Theology

at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. As would be expected from one who taught so faithfully in a distinctively Calvinistic Seminary for so many years, the author's approach to the subject at hand is thoroughly Calvinistic.

The author attempts to show that preaching is essentially a pastoral activity, or in the words of the book's title: that the "Genius", or distinguishing character, of "Preaching" is "Pastoral". Dr. Volbeda defines his terms very clearly and concisely so that the reader is not left in doubt as to the author's precise meaning. For example, in his explanation of the nature of pastoral work as related to preaching, he says: "The pastoral task, then, entrusted to the preacher is to feed the flock assigned to him by leading the sheep in the green pastures of the written Word of God. . . . In other words, preaching does not reduce God's people to inactivity, any more than sheep will be fed when led into the pasture, if they do not themselves browse. Preaching is letting the people of God graze in the green pastures of His Word" (p. 32). Again in the closing chapter of the book, the author comments along the same line: "The minister as the chief pastoral agent does not inject food intravenously as it were, but he provides well-prepared food for the flock. He sets it before the flock and persuades them to feed themselves as they partake of it" (p. 80).

As the title would suggest, this book is written primarily for pastors, although any layman could find some stimulating thoughts regarding his pastor as a preacher. Although it is very brief and concise, this book is not easy reading. It requires concentrated study and reflection in addition to readily available copies of a good standard dictionary and a theological dictionary.

— James C. Pennington

**THE PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE**, compiled by Philip Watters. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1959, pp. 334. \$3.95.

This book is a reprint "without alternation from the original edition first issued in 1883 by Phillips and Hunt, New York."

This book contains all the prayers of the Bible; also included are all other verses that refer to prayer. It catalogues the verses under different headings. The book is well indexed which makes it very convenient to use.

The study of this book is very profitable. During 1963 Covenanters will find such a book helpful with their prayer meeting topics which are all on prayer and prayers of the Bible.

— Paul E. Faris

**BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS**, by Reginald E. O. White. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 159. \$3.00.

This book contains 33 "Meditations on the Passion of Our Lord". The author is a Baptist minister who has served in Wales, England and

Scotland. As he discusses the last days of Christ, His death and the Cross, he brings out in each 4 page message many interesting thoughts. In the main I would commend his work.

I have some reservation about some statements; for instance in meditation 17, pp. 82-85 — "The Atonement of Innocence": "Certainly we should have difficulty with some of the ways in which the truth has been expressed. An angry God, demanding to be pacified with offerings, is not a Christian conception, either of God the Father, or of Calvary. It was because God loved, He gave His Son; it is God who "commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The notion of a cross-grained Deity needing to be placated is utterly wrong."

Then to show that atonement, expiation, sacrifice are not false ideas, he quotes Albert Schweitzer on the injuries inflicted by the white man on the black; "Anything we give them is not benevolence but atonement. When we have done all that is in our power, we shall not have atoned for the thousandth part of our guilt." Next comes a quote from Eleanor Rathbone after Britain had endured the bombings, "Now we are no longer ashamed. We feel that if there is anything in the doctrine of expiation, Britain has expiated her sin." Other quotations are given to bring out this idea.

He goes on to speak of "the difficulty of saving a world from sin." "We thought once that enlightenment would do it; science, education, psychology between them would redeem the world. Some of us even thought that preaching would do it. Now we know better. We have found that it is not ideas — self-interest, fear, the social good — that save a man; but deeds."

"Ideas inspire, but deeds redeem. Loving deeds, costly deeds, identifying the innocent with the guilty in redemptive service — these are the forces of salvation."

I question the author's interpretation of the Atonement as set forth in the Scriptures.

— Paul E. Faris

**LEADING LITTLE ONES TO JESUS**, by Dr. Jan Waterink. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 119. \$2.50.

An excellent book. Written especially to mothers in a warm informal style as though the author was sitting and discussing with the mothers the Christian nurture of their young children. Dr. Jan Waterink is an internationally known educator and psychologist and author of many books. He has occupied the chair as Professor of Education and Psychology at the Free University of Amsterdam for 35 years so writes from a rich background. A book which could well be read and re-read by all mothers of Covenant children. I heartily recommend this book.

— Mrs. Kenneth Smith

**MY FAVORITE PICTURE STORIES FROM THE BIBLE**, by Dena Korfker. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 150. \$1.95.

An excellent selection of Bible stories from Genesis thru Revelation told in an easy-to-listen-to and easy-to-read style. The Old Testament illustrations are very good but there are several in the New which depict Jesus. Each story is prefaced with Scripture reference and has questions at the end which make the book particularly suited for family worship or daily reading for the child.

— Mrs. Kenneth Smith

**BIRDS OF THE BIBLE**, by Paul Hubartt. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 22. 50c.

This is a rather interesting book of wild life in Biblical times with special emphasis on birds. Interesting facts are given about the birds and there are pictures to be colored. Good Sabbath day activity book for children especially interested in birds.

— Mrs. Kenneth Smith

**A CHILD PRAYS**, by Joan Ballard and Elizabeth Elling. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 45. \$1.95.

A picture book of through-the-day photographs of a pre-schooler from early morning until bedtime prayer. The photographs illustrate the various things and people for whom Julie prays. An attractive book but not important.

— Mrs. Kenneth Smith

**BILL AND BETTY LEARN ABOUT GOD**, by Margaret J. Anderson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 48. \$1.95.

A very attractively illustrated book arranged in short chapters using an easy-to-read style. As the fictional mother teaches her children Biblical truths about God, the child hearing or reading the story will learn too. Very well done and should make God real to the child. Suitable for pre-schooler through the Junior years. I recommend it.

— Mrs. Kenneth Smith

**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COUNSELING**, by Clyde M. Narramore, Ed. D., Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1960, pp. 303. \$3.95.

For the second time we are using this book as a textbook for part of a course in the Psychology of Religion and find it very suggestive for students who are interested in basic principles of Christian counseling. Though Dr. Narramore follows the non-directive type of counseling procedure to a large extent he clearly indicates that a counselor has a moral and spiritual

obligation to assist the counselee to solve his problem in the light of God's revealed will. The book is easy to use since it divides the material into fairly short chapters with good titles and outline. It is very attractively printed and bound.

The first section of the book deals with basic concepts and techniques of counseling from the viewpoint of psychological research. It discusses such things as arranging the counseling interview, acceptance of the counselee, waiting for the real problem, tracing the origins of the trouble, and knowing when to refer a problem to specialists. The second half of the book is divided into longer chapters on a few special areas of counseling such as the counseling of teen-agers, the mentally ill, or people having problems in marriage relationship. A third part of the book, an appendix, has a fine chapter on the use of Scripture in counseling; one listing psychological terms with an explanation of each, and another listing books and recordings of value in counseling. The book does not answer all questions, to be sure, and one may not agree with every solution of problems illustrated by numerous cases, but the book is full of practical help.

— D. Ray Wilcox

**PLANTING AND DEVELOPMENT OF MISSIONARY CHURCHES**, by John L. Nevius. Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1958, reprint of 1895, pp. 92, paper cover. \$1.50.

This is a reprint of a famous book on the indigenous method of establishing Christian missions. It was written by a Presbyterian Missionary to China and was largely responsible for the growth of self-supported churches in China and Korea and other countries. The old system of making paid agents of new converts to Christ was found to work many evils which hindered the growth of the church. Dr. Nevius laid emphasis on Scripture warnings, "Not a novice. . ." and "Lay hands hastily on no man. . ." to lay the ground work for a more adequate training of workers, and showed by experience that true Christians would willingly serve the Lord while maintaining their previous occupation for support. He organized what he called a "kind of Normal School" for more advanced Christians with the understanding that they were to communicate what they learned to others. They were in no sense employees of the mission but willingly gave of their own time to prepare themselves to serve as lay leaders in the church.

This book, by a pioneer in the field, contains many helpful suggestions for missionaries and Christians at home who want to understand something of the basic problems of mission work.

— D. Ray Wilcox

**THE SECRET OF RADIANT CHRISTIAN LIVING**, by Simon Blocker. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1957, 111 pages, \$2.00.

This book puzzled your reviewer somewhat. The title, "The Secret of Radiant Christian Living," would lead most of us to expect a treatise on how to get radiance in the Christian life, with the use of Bible references to teach us happy Christian living. The references, however, seemed to express feelings already attained more than to show us how to attain them. It was this use of Bible references that was puzzling at first. This is a legitimate use of Scripture, and one that we might employ more often. After all, if a Bible verse fits a feeling we experience, it is proof we are on the right track.

Each chapter is preceded by a poem, presumably by the author since there was no acknowledgment of authorship given, and by an apt quotation from some famous person. The chapter on "The Old-fashioned Mother" is really a gem. After the poem, entitled "Mother," there is Luther's quotation about how Adam did not style Eve wife, but simply mother, — mother of all living creatures, the glory and most precious ornament of woman. Then the author paints a beautiful and true to life picture of the Christian mother: first up in the morning; pulling for father, the head of the house; managing somehow to have her quiet hour; loving her church; valuing character more than money; taking seriously the vows made at baptism; and teaching the real meaning of love. Another chapter, "Facing Crisis With Christ," is very helpful. Crete is made to stand for crisis, and the author concludes, "Face Crete with Christ. . . Use the dynamite of God in Crete. . . 'My God, my God, why hast thou left me in Crete?' 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting.'"

A thought provoking chapter, "The Church Under Fire," takes up the fact that the High Priest at the trial of Christ asked about His disciples because he could not find anything wrong in Him, but might in His followers. So Christ is still on trial, and men look at His followers in order to find charges against Him.

Each of the thirteen chapters is a unit, from which a minister might find seed thoughts for sermons and talks, and any Christian might find help. As the author states in the introduction, he knows the prepared table, the anointing, and the overflowing cup (Psalm 23), and he has written in the prayerful hope that others may see God's table and bounty, and receive the anointing and the cup of His salvation.

— C. E. Caskey

**PHILIPPIANS THROUGH THE REVELATION: AN EXPANDED TRANSLATION**, by Kenneth S. Wuest. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 284. \$3.50.

The author was Professor Emeritus of New Testament Greek at Moody Bible Institute. This is Volume 3 of a series on the New Testament.

The preceding volumes were — 1. The Gospels, 2. Acts Through Ephesians.

“The purpose of this work is to clarify the text of the Authorized Version by expanding the translation of its condensed phraseology. The author resorts to a free translation method, and to paraphrase and brief commentary at times in order to give the meaning as accurately as possible.” — From introduction of the work by Dr. Wilbur C. Lamm.

We quote several passages as samples of this translation. II Timothy 3:16. “Every scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for teaching, for conviction, for improvement, for training with respect to righteousness. . .”

II Timothy 4:2 A.V. — Preach the word. In Dr. Wuest’s preface to II Timothy, we read: “The noun form of the word translated ‘preach’ . . . was used of the imperial herald, spokesman of Caesar Augustus, who when entering a town as a representative of the Emperor would make a public proclamation of the Emperor’s message with such formality, gravity, and authority as must be heeded and obeyed.” The expanded translation of this command is: “Make a public proclamation of the Word with such formality, gravity, and authority as must be heeded.”

Again in II Timothy 4:5 A.V. there is the statement: Do the work of an evangelist. In the expanded translation it reads: “Let your work (as a pastor) be evangelistic in character.” Dr. Wuest thinks the expression in A.V. could be taken to mean “that Timothy should leave the care of his church and spend much time in evangelistic work. That was far from Paul’s thought. The words ‘work’ and ‘evangelist’ are without the definite article in the Greek text, which means that quality, character, nature (of the work) are stressed.”

This book I appreciate as a reference. In some passages it brings out meanings which are not readily seen in the King James.

— Waldo Mitchel

**BACKGROUNDS TO DISPENSATIONALISM**, by Clarence B. Bass. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1960, pp. 155. \$3.50.

In the writer’s opinion, this book is excellent in every regard. The purpose of the book is to describe the historical setting out of which dispensationalism has grown, to establish what it is, and to enumerate its implications for the church today. The author accomplishes his objectives admirably well.

The author is well qualified from personal experience to deal with this subject due to the fact that he, “was reared in the dispensational system” (p. 9).

He further illustrates his qualifications to deal

with the subject at hand by his thorough documentation, relying on quotations of well-known leaders and spokesmen for dispensationalism, rather than his own interpretations. Perhaps, the most unique feature of this book is the fair, unbiased, and objective approach of the author, although he makes his own personal convictions emphatically clear.

The distinguishing features of dispensationalism are clearly and objectively outlined and explained, as opposed to the position of the historic Christian faith. A much needed distinction between dispensationalism and historic premillennialism is also made by the author. The author proves that dispensationalism is a theological system, which practically means that one cannot consistently accept some of its features without accepting the entire system and its implications.

A good portion of the book deals with the origins of dispensationalism in the thought and practice of John Nelson Darby, and especially his doctrine of the church. The author clearly demonstrates that Darby introduced an entirely new concept of the church which is basic to the dispensational system, as well as a new principle of interpretation. A fair and objective estimate of Darby as a man is presented, but the author admits in conclusion that “Darby the man is difficult to estimate fairly.”

The author concludes his work with a most helpful chapter evaluating the historical background of dispensationalism presented in the body of the book, and enumerating some of the practical implications for the church today. In his estimation the most profound implication of dispensationalism is that “the sum total of all its doctrines tends to make it a separatist, withdrawn, inclusive theology. . . . Any theological system which causes a part of the church to withdraw from the larger fellowship in Christ and, by isolationism and separatism, to default its role, is wrong” (pp. 153, 154). He makes clear one of several reasons why he emphatically opposes the dispensational system in which he was early indoctrinated, and affirms his belief in the evangelical faith, including the cardinal doctrines of Scripture. Beyond this, it is difficult to evaluate the author’s theological viewpoint because of his objective approach to the subject. He also leaves much by way of Judgment and application to the reader. In his own words, “I will have to leave to the judgment of the reader whether I have proved my points.” In the judgment of this reader, Dr. Bass has well proven his points. I would highly recommend this book to all who desire a clear and unbiased understanding of the historical background and distinguishing features of dispensationalism.

— James C. Pennington

**THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF JUDGMENT**, by Leon Morris. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1960, pp. 72. \$1.90.

The author is a conservative believer. His scholarship in this book, which is basically a word study, is well documented. The work is divided into the Old and the New Testament doctrine. His introduction is a good summary of his findings: "The basic Old Testament idea about judgment is summed up . . . in the words of Deuteronomy i. 17, 'the judgment is God's.'" To this an Amen is appropriate.

— Robert More, Jr.

**THESE, TOO, WERE UNSHACKLED!** by Faith Coxe Bailey. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 127. \$1.95.

Fifteen dramatic stories adapted from the "Unshackled" radio scripts of the Pacific Garden Mission. Men and women from various walks of life are brought to Christ and freed from the power of alcohol through their contact with the Mission. A needed reminder to the Christian of today that Christ can free men and women from the shackles of alcohol.

— Robert A. Henning

**MISSIONARY METHODS: ST. PAUL'S OR OURS?** by Roland Allen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1962 (reprint of 1922), pp. 179, paper cover. \$1.65.

This is the sixth edition of a book published 40 years ago. It stirred the missionary world when it was first published, and caused many missionaries and mission boards to take a new look at their mission work. The message of this book is needed today to continue to evaluate our mission program. It is particularly good in the matters of finance and the training of native workers. Chapter 13 gives a good summary applying the principles laid down in the previous chapters.

I urge the use of this book by mission boards, missionary societies, missionaries, and others who want to study a Biblical program for mission work.

— Robert A. Henning

**THE EARTH BOUND VISION: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF PRE-MILLENNIALISM**, by Murdoch Campbell. Westminster Standard Book-centre Publications, 183 Rutene Road, Gisborne, New Zealand. 1960, pp. 30, paper cover. Price not stated.

This booklet is the result of two lectures given in 1960 by the author. He points out gross inconsistencies in the premillennial interpretation of prophecy, which, he shows, is founded upon an unjustified and extreme literalism. He also mildly criticizes amillennialism and gives a brief apologetic for postmillennialism.

He treats subjects under the following headings: Our Lord's visible and personal return to reign on earth; the Rapture; the Great Tribulation; and Anti-Christ; the resurrection; the Church

(he points to this last division as the system's most serious aberration from Scriptural teaching).

In this reviewer's opinion, his apologetic for postmillennialism is weak. Nevertheless, the booklet is very helpful in pointing out the weaknesses of the premillennial position.

— Raymond P. Joseph

**MOTIVES AND METHODS IN EVANGELISM**, by J. R. W. Stott. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1962, pp. 19, paper cover. 15 cents.

This presidential address to the Inter-Varsity Conference in April, 1962, is a searching examination of the responsibility of Christians in the "furtherance of the gospel". Motives discussed are Obedience to Christ's Command, Love for Christ's people, Jealousy for Christ's Name.

Fundamentally there is one method, says Rev. Stott, proclamation, either public or private. "This is not really a method in evangelism; it is the essence of evangelism itself." (p. 13). Evangelism involves a living contact with men which costs us "both our selfishness and our sin", and a living contact with God which alone gives reality and power to man's word. "The greatest single hindrance to the spread of the Gospel today is the low level of our Christian lives" (p. 18).

For those desiring information and challenge in the matter of Christian outreach, this is a useful source.

— E. C. Copeland

**THE MEANING OF JUSTIFICATION**, by Frank Colquhoun. Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1962, pp. 32, paper cover. 15 cents.

Here we have another of the FOUNDATIONS FOR FAITH series of the Tyndale Press. It is a simple, brief, straightforward statement of the great Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone. The author has a pleasing, elucidating use of figures of speech and illustration. The argument is supported throughout by appropriate appeal to Scripture and to the Thirty-Nine Articles (of the Church of England) and the Westminster Confession of Faith. There is a very good discussion of the "Response of Faith" in which a careful distinction is drawn between righteousness **imputed** and righteousness **imparted**, both of which are essential elements of the Christian life. It is carefully pointed out that if the Christian is to "avoid the heresy of antinomianism", the idea that the believer, being saved by grace is no more subject to the law of God, the above distinction must be understood and applied in life.

We are happy to recommend this booklet to our readers.

— E. C. Copeland

**FAITH'S UNCLAIMED INHERITANCE**, by Bishop Frank Houghton. Inter-Varsity Fellow-

ship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1961, pp. 107, paper cover. 45 cents.

This is the second edition of a book that went through five printings in eight years, and now appears under a new title, intended by the publishers to suggest more directly the purpose of the book. The preface states that the book is written particularly for that class of people rightly called Christians because they sincerely believe in Christ, but whose lives are astonishingly similar to those of non-Christians.

The author was a man of wide Christian experience as Bishop of Eastern Szechwan and General Director of China Inland Mission; hence he writes from his own rich experience and observation of varied types of Christians, and a real burden for the subject of this book.

There are nineteen chapters in which the author leads his reader to look deep into his own heart and life through the Scriptures. The way of salvation, the purpose of God, the way of faith and sanctification, the indwelling of the Spirit for the obedience of faith and life of service are clearly set forth not in theological apologetics, but from the viewpoint of experience, biblically oriented.

This is a very fine book to put in the hands of the type of Christian described; and we are all aware that we are in this class far more of the time than we are above it; the pastor and the session will do well to be the first readers.

— E. C. Copeland

**THE NEW BIBLE DICTIONARY**, by J. D. Douglas, organizing editor. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England, and W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1962, pp. 1375 and xlviii. \$12.95.

The responsibility rightly to divide the Word of Truth involves, aside from reading the text of Scripture, the understanding of the many references to historical, geographical, cultural, biological and other data to which reference is made. Obviously this requires the use of information outside the Scriptures themselves, the compilation of which has been made by those who are reverent in their attitude toward the Scriptures and objective in their examination of sources. New Bible Dictionary offers us just this advantage.

Under the leadership of the organized editor and four consultants, 139 conservative scholars coming from all parts of the world, many of whom are recognized authorities in their fields, have prepared 2300 articles for the aid of the conscientious, Bible believing Christian. The work is scholarly done, is richly illustrated by line drawings, charts and maps throughout, and by xvi plates of archeological illustrations and 17 relief maps.

This material has been compiled by men who believe in the unique inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. As was expected liberal reviewers have advised that it be used "with care" on such matters as the authorship of the Pentateuch, Isaiah, and the dating of Daniel. This is all the more reason for our hearty commendation of the work, and for citing the opinion of a man like Wilbur Smith that it will take the place of Davis Bible Dictionary for conservative students, simply because it is up to date in its information.

We are not suggesting that the whole of the material can be accepted uncritically. It compares very favourably with the now well known **NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY** by the same publishers in its variety of theological and historical interpretations. In both works both the early and late dating of the Exodus are defended by different authors. In this work, the article on Judges follows the early chronology, 1440 B.C. for the Exodus; the article on Chronology follows the later chronology and makes archeological interpretations decisive over Biblical statements. The article on Creation proposes that we have in Genesis 1 a schematic arrangement rather than a chronological one, the first three days having parallels in the last three days. It is possibly beyond probability to expect absolute agreement among so wide a group of scholars, devoted though they be to an inspired Scripture. However, the vast majority of the material given here will appeal as within the scope of the historical interpretation of Reformed Theology. We are aware of no other work of this nature which is so faithful to the inspired Word.

Nor can we say that the contributors are obscurantists. They have diligently considered the claims of liberal scholarship and have capably defended the conservative positions against destructive criticism.

We are most happy to recommend this work to our readers and hope that many of you will avail yourselves of the opportunity to benefit by the fruits of conservative scholarship that are afforded in this volume.

— E. C. Copeland

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS.** Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia 26, Pennsylvania. Complete sample kit for 1963, \$3.95. Kit is returnable if in good condition and if returned within 3 weeks.

The Board of Christian Education of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America has cooperated with Great Commission Publications in the production of a Reformed Presbyterian edition of these Vacation Bible School materials. All parts of the three-year course of materials are now available in the Reformed Presbyterian edition, which has Psalms instead of hymns, and certain other changes preferred by the Board

of Christian Education to adjust the materials to the faith and practice of the Covenant Church. Those wishing materials for use in Covenant schools should be sure to specify "Reformed Presbyterian Edition" in ordering; otherwise the regular edition will be supplied. (See Minutes of Synod of the R. P. Church, 1962, page 54).

The Sample Kit provides teachers' and pupils' materials for four age-levels: beginners, primary, junior and intermediate. The themes of this year's materials are: Beginner: "God's Helpers." Primary: "Missionaries." Junior: "Our Bible." Intermediate: "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ." The teachers' manuals are very well prepared and contain a wealth of usable material; each is from 75 to 90 pages in length. The pupils' workbooks are shorter, but adequate, and very well suited to the various age groups for which they are intended. There are also some hand-work materials, an Old Testament Game Kit, and various announcement forms, posters, and the like. Accompanying the kit is a catalog with price list and order blanks.

Anyone who has used Great Commission Vacation Bible School helps in former years knows how attractive and truly usable these materials are. One is immediately impressed with their high quality and fine appearance. The prices are moderate, too. Most important is the fact that the emphasis is on Biblical teaching throughout all levels of the school — this is in sharp contrast to some VBS materials available from other sources. A school competently using these materials will be something more than an expedient for getting children off the streets or out from under their mothers' feet for ten summer mornings. Some real and immeasurably valuable Scriptural knowledge will be imparted to the children who attend this type of school.

Two notable features call for special comment. First, these materials are practically unique among VBS materials in that they are completely free of so-called "pictures of Jesus." Thus something which is offensive to many serious Christians is eliminated entirely. In the second place, these materials are really orthodox. They are not merely evangelical, "fundamental" or "Bible believing" — they are truly **Reformed** in their theological viewpoint and assumptions. This does not mean that materials for a children's Vacation Bible School are theological in a technical sense, for of course they are not and could not be expected to be. But Christian truth, even on the level of presentation to children, has to be viewed from some point of view. There is no such thing as stating truth without stating it from some point of view, or within some framework of presuppositions. A person's basic philosophy of religion, or theological standpoint, may not **obviously** affect his presentation of truth in Christian education materials, but it will certainly affect it and will determine, ultimately, the character of the product. The people who prepared these materials are Calvinists. They accept the **Reformed Faith heartily** — not just as an intellectual concession, but heartily as the truest and most Biblical interpretation of Christianity. Thus the basic viewpoint of these materials is in harmony with the Reformed Faith as expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith and other historic Reformed creeds.

It is a pleasure to accord the Great Commission Vacation Bible School materials an enthusiastic endorsement and to commend them heartily to all our readers. If not familiar with them already, send for a sample kit and be convinced.

— J. G. Vos

---

## Acknowledgments and Announcements

### Contributions Received

The manager of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine received since our last issue went to press.

**December, 1962 (from December 29):** No. 1185, \$2.50. No. 1186, \$3.50. No. 1187, \$5.00. No. 1188, \$2.00. No. 1189, \$10.00.

**January, 1963:** No. 1190, \$2.00. No. 1191, \$3.50. No. 1192, \$3.00. No. 1193, \$8.50. No. 1194, \$9.25. No. 1195, \$5.00. No. 1196, \$17.00.

**February, 1963:** No. 1197, \$3.00. No. 1198, \$2.00. No. 1199, \$5.00. No. 1200, \$1.00. No. 1201, \$5.00. No. 1202, \$3.00. No. 1203, \$1.00. No. 1204, \$10.00. No. 1205, \$5.00. No. 1206, \$20.00.

**March, 1963 (to March 23):** No. 1207, \$75.00. No. 1208, \$100.00

These generous contributions from friends and readers who have in this practical manner

shown their concern for the continued publication of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is obtained from subscriptions; for the rest we are dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing to the cost of publication as the Lord enables you.

### Circulation of this Issue

U.S.A., 802. Australia, 55. England, 51. Canada, 46. Scotland, 40. Northern Ireland, 38. Japan, 30. Cyprus, 16. New Zealand, 10. Ceylon, 9. South Africa, 9. Free China (Taiwan), 7. Syria, 5. India, 5. Lebanon, 5. Eire, 4. Korea, 4. Peru, 3. Netherlands, 3. Indonesia, 2. Ethiopia, 2. Greece, 2. Hong Kong, 2. One copy each to Egypt (U.A.R.), Argentina, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Sweden, Thailand. Total circulation, 1157. Total outside U.S.A., 355. Number of countries reached, 31.

MYRA. C.M.D.

## PSALM 51

Paul D. McCracken

7. All mine in - i - qui - ties blot out; My sins hide from Thy view;

Cre - ate in me a spir - it right; O God, my heart re - new.

8. O from Thy pres - ence cast me not, Thy face no more to see;

Thy Ho - ly Spir - it ut - ter - ly Take not a - way from me.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>9. The joy which Thy salvation brings<br/>Again to me restore;<br/>And with a willing spirit then<br/>Uphold me evermore.</p> <p>10. Then in Thy ways will I instruct<br/>Those that transgressors be,<br/>And those that sinners are shall then<br/>Return again to Thee.</p> <p>11. O God, of my salvation God,<br/>Free me from guilt of blood;<br/>Then of Thy perfect righteousness<br/>My tongue shall sing aloud.</p> <p>12. My lips which have so long been closed<br/>Now open Thou, O Lord;<br/>And when Thou hast restored my speech<br/>I will Thee praise accord.</p> | <p>13. No sacrifice dost Thou desire,<br/>Else would I give it Thee;<br/>Nor wilt Thou with burnt-offering<br/>At all delighted be.</p> <p>14. A broken spirit is to God<br/>A pleasing sacrifice;<br/>A broken and a contrite heart<br/>Thou, God, wilt not despise.</p> <p>15. In Thy good pleasure favor show<br/>To Zion, Thine own hill;<br/>The walls of Thy Jerusalem<br/>Build up of Thy good will.</p> <p>16. Then righteous off'rings shall Thee please,<br/>And off'rings burnt, which they,<br/>With whole burnt-off'rings and with calves,<br/>Shall on Thine altar lay.</p> |
|---|---|

(Reprinted by permission from **The Book of Psalms with Music**. Copyright 1960 by The Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Price of book (359 pages) is \$1.50 postpaid. Order from Chester R. Fox, Treasurer, Empire Bldg., Pittsburgh 22, Pa.)

Printed in the United States of America by the Record Publishing Company, Linn, Kansas



# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1963

NUMBER 3

<b>The Gospel Minister's Appeal to Conscience .....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>George Gillespie on Church Censures .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Instrumental Music in Public Worship .....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>A Believer's Life of Christ .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Some Noteworthy Quotations .....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>Religious Terms Defined .....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Studies in Old Testament History .....</b>	<b>124</b>

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

Subscription \$1.50 per year postpaid anywhere

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

3408 7th Avenue

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Editorial Committee: Ross Latimer, Joseph M. Caskey, G. Mackay Robb

Published by

The Board of Publication of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Agent for Britain and Ireland: The Rev. Adam Loughridge, B.A.,  
Glenmanus Manse, Portrush, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Agent for Australia and New Zealand: The Rev. Alexander Barkley, B.A.,  
20 Fenwick St., Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Publication Office, Linn, Kansas, U.S.A.

Published Quarterly, Second Class Postage Paid at Linn, Kansas

# *Passing Away*

By Christina G. Rossetti

Passing away, saith the World, passing away:  
Chances, beauty and youth sapp'd day by day:  
Thy life never continueth in one stay.  
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to gray  
That hath won neither laurel nor bay?  
I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May;  
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild thy decay  
On my bosom for aye.  
Then I answer'd: Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing away:  
With its burden of fear and hope, of labor and play,  
Hearken what the past doth witness and say:  
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,  
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.  
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain day,  
Lo, the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay:  
Watch thou and pray.  
Then I answer'd: Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away:  
Winter passeth after the long delay:  
New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,  
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.  
Though I tarry, wait for me, trust me, watch and pray.  
Arise, come away; night is past, and lo, it is day;  
My love, my sister, my spouse, thou shalt hear me say —  
Then I answer'd: Yea.

---

# *The New Jerusalem*

(Author Unknown)

Jerusalem, my happy home,  
When shall I come to thee?  
When shall my sorrows have an end,  
Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbour of the saints!  
O sweet and pleasant soil!  
In thee no sorrow may be found,  
No grief, no care, no toil.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell,  
There envy bears no sway;  
There is no hunger, heat nor cold,  
But pleasure every way.

Thy walls are made of precious stones,  
Thy bulwarks diamonds square;  
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,  
Exceeding rich and rare.

Quite through the streets, with silver sound,  
The flood of Life doth flow;  
Upon whose banks on every side  
The wood of Life doth grow.

Jerusalem, my happy home,  
Would God I were in thee!  
Would God my woes were at an end,  
Thy joys that I might see!

# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1963

NUMBER 3

## *The Gospel Minister's Appeal to Conscience*

By J. G. Vos

**"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 4:1, 2).**

Religious liberty hangs in the balances today. In many parts of the world it has been entirely lost. Let no one say that it is not somewhat in peril in our own free country. There are straws that show how the wind blows, and clouds on the horizon that may well cause the lover of religious freedom to think seriously concerning this matter.

### LOSS OF LIBERTY

I shall venture the generalisation that religious liberty is usually lost first in the sphere of the Church, and only later in the sphere of the State. A people usually loses the real spirit of religious liberty, the deep desire for it and the sense of its preciousness, before losing the outward exercise of it at the hands of a tyrannical government. Assuredly, the totalitarian States of today are a threat to religious liberty throughout the world; but no less assuredly, there is an inward, invisible, intangible threat which involves an even greater danger — the danger that those who possess religious liberty may lose their attachment to its true principles, and part with it easily, perhaps even unconsciously, in their own souls, before ever the hand of a tyrant is laid upon it in the sphere of external facts.

Beyond question the trend of the times is away from individualism toward collectivism. This is manifest in the sphere of the religious life as well as in the spheres of politics and economics. The tendency seen on every hand is to deny or surrender private judgment of some collective body or tribunal. This takes the form of a prevalent tendency to substitute some kind of human authority for the authority of the Word of God. Men are so constituted that they must have some authority to live by. If their authority is not the Bible it will be the Church or the State or something else. At the present day, the tide and trend is toward emphasis on the decisions of men and away from emphasis on the Word of God.

### THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT

This tendency is contrary to the real character of our faith. As Protestants, as Calvinists and as Presbyterians we maintain the principle that the Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and life, and that every man must decide for himself what that Word of God means. This right and duty of private judgment lies at the very basis of the whole system of our faith. It stands as a great bulwark against the tyranny of both Church and State in the sphere of religion. Anything which tends toward minimising or obscuring the principle of private judgment, at the same time leads toward breaking down this bulwark and opening the gates to tyranny and oppression. The real alternatives may be stated in bold simplicity: either the Reformed principle of private judgment, or, ultimately, a bondage and slavery worse than that of iron chains and prison bars.

### THE FUNCTION OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

Our text speaks of the Gospel ministry, and tells us that there are certain things the true minister will not dare to do, and then sets forth, over against these, the true function and objective of the minister of the Gospel.

The Gospel ministry is an office, not just an occupation or a profession. It is an office to which men are called, not just by the Church or by some body of men, but by God Himself. For this reason the office of the ministry is sacred and the Gospel minister is responsible for his use of it. The Church alone cannot call any man to the ministry; there must be a call of God, and it is to God, in the end, that the minister must give an account of his ministry.

The Gospel ministry has a definite function. We might say that this office has several functions, but that central among them is this great function — "the manifestation of the truth" — the proclamation of a message, the setting forth of a body of truth. Today the chief emphasis is not on the message, but on methods, methods of evangelism, programmes, campaigns, standards of efficiency, and the like, while the really important matter of the content of the message is almost forgotten. This is a great pity, even a cal-

amity. The Bible always stresses the content of the message, not the methods by which it is proclaimed.

#### WHAT STANDARD?

As soon as we speak of a message of truth, we face the need for a standard of truth. What is truth? How is it to be defined and distinguished from error? Is it always changing, or always the same? Is it the same for all persons, in all places, at all times, or is something true for one and false for another, true at one time and false at another? Or is truth just what seems to work out for the greatest good of the greatest number, or what is judged by the majority to be advantageous for society or the State? Humanity is indeed at sea today for want of an objective, definite, universal standard of truth. The Apostle Paul had such a standard and he mentions it in our text: the Word of God. This is a clear, definite, unchanging standard of truth, an infallible revelation of God to man.

This standard of truth, the Word of God, means something in and of itself, as shown by Paul's renunciation of all "handling the Word of God deceitfully," of all tampering with its message by human craft and ingenuity. It is sometimes said that anything can be proved by Scripture, as if any interpretation were as valid as any other. To affirm this is to hold that Scripture does not mean anything of itself, apart from the meanings that interpreters read into it. But this is contrary to the real facts about the Word of God. If Scripture be honestly and accurately interpreted, it is emphatically not true that anything can be proved by Scripture. There is only one way by which men can make Scripture prove anything they please, and that is by that kind of walking in craftiness, and handling the Word of God deceitfully, which the Apostle Paul repudiates.

We live in a day of doctrinal and religious vagueness and uncertainty, and a day of tinkering and tampering with the message of the Word of God. All such tampering the Apostle Paul classified as "the hidden things of dishonesty," and said he had renounced. He was a thoroughly honest man and he was honest in his handling of the Word of God; he was not trying to explain away part of its teachings, nor to make it seem to teach things which it did not really teach; he only wanted to let its true message be known, without admixture of the opinions and traditions of fallible men.

#### THE GOSPEL MINISTER'S OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Gospel minister is to convince the conscience of his hearers, as Paul said, "by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." The minister's appeal is not primarily to people's intelligence, nor to the faculty of

human reason, nor to common sense, but to the human conscience, the sense of responsibility to God. The true minister does not say to his people, "You should believe and act in a certain way because it is reasonable or sensible to do so," but rather, "You should believe and act in a certain way because this is what God requires of you." The keynote of his preaching must never be "This is reasonable," but always "Thus saith the Lord." And where he cannot confidently say "Thus saith the Lord," he will keep silence and say nothing at all, never venturing to speak for God where Scripture remains silent.

Moreover, the true minister of the Gospel will not only proclaim "Thus saith the Lord," but he will also take great pains to show just exactly where and how the Lord has said it. He will not say in effect, "Thus saith the Lord . . . take my word for it; I am an expert in religion"; on the contrary, he will say, "Thus saith the Lord," and then go on to show just what statements of Scripture, or what logical inferences from statements of Scripture, set forth the doctrine he is proclaiming. The message will not be just a minister's opinion of what a text or passage of Scripture means; rather it will be such a manifestation, such an opening out, such an unfolding of the Scripture that it will be clear to the hearers that such is indeed the true meaning of the Scripture itself. The hearers will then believe a particular doctrine, not because the Rev. Mr. So-and-so holds that the Bible teaches it, but because he has been careful to show them, and able to convince them, that the Bible itself teaches it. They will then believe it wholly on the authority of the Word of God, and not at all on the authority of the minister who preached that Word.

It is only by such a manifestation of the truth that the minister can really commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. For God, and God alone, is the Lord of the conscience. That only can be binding on the conscience, which God requires. And what God requires of men, both in the sphere of belief and that of life, can be known only from the Holy Scriptures. The minister who is careful to appeal to the consciences of his hearers will always be mindful that only that which can be shown to be taught in the Scriptures can really bind the conscience. His real concern will always be, first, to preach nothing but what the Word of God really teaches, and second, to make it abundantly plain to his hearers that the Word of God really teaches it. And having such an objective, the Gospel minister will seek to attain it, not by the hidden things of dishonesty, nor by walking in craftiness, nor by handling the Word of God deceitfully — not by devious manipulations of Scripture texts, or doubtful inference from them, or subtle adding of extraneous ideas to them — but, as the Apostle Paul said, by "great plainness of speech" (2 Cor. 3:12).

Thus the true minister will always remember and respect that right and duty of private judgment which is the very pillar of our Protestant faith. He will not ask his hearers to accept doctrines or follow practices which he cannot by honest, straightforward interpretation and valid logical inference show to be really required of them by the Word of God. He will always invite his hearers to search the Scriptures, to see for themselves whether the things he preaches are so. And by thus commending himself to his hearers' conscience, he will honour and support the true principle of religious liberty which is in such peril today.

The faithful Gospel minister will also not hesitate to face honestly all the arguments and objections of those who differ from him in interpretations of Scripture. He will not try to evade the difficulties of his own position, nor to avoid considering arguments against that position that may be advanced by others. He will not attempt to answer an argument by skillfully evading the real issue, nor will he try to silence the difficulties or conscientious scruples of a brother by a show of expert knowledge nor by a steam roller of ecclesiastical authority which leaves arguments unanswered and conscience unsatisfied. His concern will not be to evade a difficulty, nor to silence an opponent, but so to manifest the truth of the Scriptures that no difficulty needs to be evaded, and so that the opponent, instead of being just silenced, is really satisfied, really convinced that the true teaching of the Word of God has been set forth.

#### THE MINISTER'S MOTIVE

Our text also speaks of the minister's motive.

His work is to be done "in the sight of God." It is to God, in the end, that he must give an account of his ministry. And God is the God of truth. He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. He sees through the shams and pretences and deceits of men. He is not mocked. No one can deceive Him. So the Gospel minister's motive is his desire to do the will of God, to please God, not to please himself or other men. What courage, what honesty, what zeal for the truth of Scripture, ought this motive to produce! The minister who does his work in the sight of God will not be a compromiser; he will not be willing to tamper with the Word of God; he will not be a Church politician or an ecclesiastical "yes man" when there are issues between the Word of God and the traditions of men.

The right and duty of private judgment, which we usually call "freedom of conscience" or "religious liberty," is recognised by the Word of God, and should be recognised and respected by the Gospel minister in his work of manifestation of the truth. It is our duty to imitate the Apostle Paul in seeking to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. In doing so, we shall be doing our part to maintain and preserve the real foundation and basic principle of religious liberty in the word. For real religious liberty has its roots in the realisation that it is every man's right and duty to test every doctrine and every moral precept by the Word of God and to regard as binding only that which proves to be really the teaching of the Word of God. When this principle is undermined or surrendered, even though it be unconsciously or for reasons which appear pious, the real framework of our Protestant and Reformed faith will have been destroyed.

---

## George Gillespie on Church Censures

By R. D. Eagleson, M.A., Dip. Ed.

(Continued from last issue)

Note: This article by a scholar in Australia expounds the classic Presbyterian view of Church Discipline as held by the 17th century Scottish divine George Gillespie. — Editor.

Just as we are to be cautious as individuals and not rush into official disciplinary action against an offending brother but are first to plead with him privately and then to take two or three, so the Church also should move slowly when a case for censure comes before it. It has to keep uppermost the prospect of gaining a brother, of leading a soul back to God, and therefore must use every means possible to strive with the soul before proceeding to the most extreme

action. Indeed, the path it should follow has been clearly set out in the Epistle to Titus. The Church officers, meeting as a duly constituted court, should first rebuke: "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." (Titus 1:13). If this fails to incite submission, then the church should castigate more firmly, "rebuke with authority" (Titus 2:15). But if there is still no sorrow for sin, then the Church must proceed to excommunication: "after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10). The Church has been eminently fair and patient. Every opportunity has been given to the man, every avenue has been pursued. If after all this he refuses to heed the Scripture, upon which

all the Church's rebukes have been based, then he cannot be a true member and should be excluded.

In practice the church officers (ruling elders), having satisfied themselves that the preliminary rules laid down by Christ in Matthew 18:15-16 have been followed, first call the guilty member before them and admonish him. (They may do this privately at first, sending one or two of their members to confer with the offender.) Should he refuse to attend to their instruction, they proceed to suspend him from the Sacrament. This means that he may still attend the usual church services and hear the preaching of the Word, but he may not partake of the Lord's Supper. It is hoped that the power of the Word and the shame of his exclusion may both be used to lead him to consider his dangerous condition and cry to God for mercy. If, however, repentance is not forthcoming after the appointed period of suspension, the church officers must proceed to excommunicate the offender.

In all these proceedings the elders act together as a judicial body, in Session, Presbytery, Synod or Assembly, and to conduct the case with scrupulous fairness. Indeed, the church courts may be even more solicitous for the accused party than the civil courts. He is presented with a statement of the charge and evidence against him and is given a specified period (usually 10 days) in which to prepare his reply. No evidence which is not substantiated and attested by a member of the Church will be received (Anonymous evidence is excluded automatically, though the Court may prefer not to release the names of witnesses if it is satisfied about the genuineness of their evidence, and particularly if it is not denied). When the case is heard before the court each party is allowed to discuss the evidence and to examine the witnesses. When the court is satisfied that all relevant evidence has been examined and each party has been able to present its case, the court meets in private to determine its verdict. The parties are then recalled and the sentence passed.

If the court finds the accused guilty and he repents immediately, the court may decide to admonish him and take no further action, unless the offence is repeated. This admonition may be announced only before the court, but it may also be announced in front of the congregation by the minister should the court decide that the seriousness of the offence warrants a more public rebuke. If the guilty member does not repent on being admonished, he may be allowed an interval to reconsider his attitude, and should he still be obdurate, the court proceeds to suspend him. If this further punishment fails to induce repentance, excommunication must follow.

It is important to notice that if a person is found to have made the charge against a brother maliciously or frivolously, he himself becomes

guilty of a serious offence and is liable to censure. Appeals against sentences may be made to higher ecclesiastical courts, but may not be made to the civil courts. The only justifiable appeal to the civil court is one against wrong procedure, as we considered when dealing with Chapter 30, Section 1.

There may be occasions when individual members may not consider the offence committed against them serious enough to follow all these steps of discipline. For example, they may consider the offence due to immaturity or thoughtlessness. They will reprove their brother, draw his attention to Scripture and request his serious study of the matter, leaving it to God's time for him to be enlightened and his conscience quickened. If he is a true Christian, while he may not repent at the time, he will at least accede to the request to consider his actions, treating it as serious and will desist as far as possible from giving further offence. Indeed most of the sins of Christians should be of this nature and should require no further censure.

It is interesting to observe the continuity from the Old Testament to the New Testament Church in the practice of discipline. In the Jewish Church there were also three degrees of discipline. The first was known as Niddui. It was a separation for a certain time, in the first instance for 30 days, then for 60 days or 90 days. If a member did not repent after being smitten with Niddui, then the church smote him with Chorem: a casting out with imprecations and curses. This could be followed by the severest of all punishments, Schammata: a final excommunication without hope of returning to the Church. These three degrees approximate to our suspension, excommunication and anathema. The last form, as far as I know, has been imposed only once by the Christian Church, namely on Julian the Apostle, when Christians were instructed to pray against him rather than for him.

We might pause here to consider the nature of the final punishment. We have observed that the Confession calls it **excommunication**, which the dictionary describes as "an exclusion of the offender from all communication with the Church or its members" (S. O. E. D.). We understand more of its nature from our Lord's words when He said:

"but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. 18:17).

For Christ's listeners, the words "as a heathen man" implied five things. The heathen was not allowed to come into the inner Temple. Should any dare to ignore this restriction, his entry was challenged both by God (Ezekiel 44:7, 9): "Thus saith the Lord God: No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, or any stranger that is among the children of Israel.") and by the Jews (Acts

21:28: "men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.") A heathen, though sojourning among the Jews, was not allowed to eat the Passover (Exodus 12:43, 45). He might be given civil fellowship and civil rights, but his partaking of the Passover was forbidden. Nor was he

allowed to eat of an offering of the holy things (Leviticus 22:10-13). A sacrifice was not accepted at his hand (Leviticus 22:25) and he had no part or portion with God's people (Nehemiah 2:12). In short the heathen in our Lord's use was without the church, not within it, one who had no part in its worship or fellowship.

(To be continued)

---

## *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church*

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

### III.

#### ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, CONTINUED

2. The second argument will be derived from the reproduction by the Christian church, under New Testament conditions, of the essential principles of polity and worship which obtained in the Jewish synagogue.

Let us pause to indicate briefly the elements of difference and of similarity between the church of the new dispensation and that of the old.

The prominent elements by which the Christian church was obviously distinguished from the Jewish were:

(1.) The actual advent, death, resurrection, exaltation, intercession, and mediatorial reign, of Christ; with all the consequences which flowed from those stupendous events. The old church looked forward to them all; the new looks backward to some of them, contemplates others as continuing to exist, and looks ever forward to the **second** coming of the Saviour to complete the redemption of his people and judge the quick and the dead. Jesus is more distinctly, than was possible to the Old Testament saints, recognized and worshipped as the King and Head of the church, and as the Mediatorial Sovereign to whose hands God the Father has committed dominion over all things in heaven, earth and hell.

(2.) The influence proceeding from the copious effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the results attending it, upon the disciples and their fellow-believers in wonderfully increasing their gifts and graces, and upon the mass of unbelievers in the conviction of their minds and the conversion of their souls.

(3.) The elimination of all that was ceremonial and typical in the old dispensation. Only

two symbolical ordinances are commanded by Christ to be observed: the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Simplicity is the reigning genius of worship, only such external instrumentalities being allowed as are necessary to constitute the media of its expression. All else, save baptism and the Lord's supper, is swept away.

(4.) The exaltation, accentuation and extension of the preaching function: evangelism is made dominant in contradistinction to the dominant conservatism of the Old Testament church, — dominant, let it be observed, for the Jewish church was not merely and absolutely conservative, as provision was made for the admission of proselytes from the Gentile nations; and the Christian church is very far from being simply evangelistic, since it is an important part of her duty to preserve, maintain and defend the truth, and to train the sons of God for service on earth and glory in heaven.

(5.) The emphasizing of the singing of praise in public worship. There is reason to believe that the apostles made singing, as a distinct and articulate part of worship, more prominent in the Christian church than it had been in the services of the Jewish synagogue. The reason would seem to be plain. It is the most fitting vehicle for the utterance of gratitude and joy; and the Christian is peculiarly called upon to express these sentiments in worship, in consequence of the finished atonement of Christ and the out-poured influence of the Holy Ghost.

The question next being, what elements of similarity there are between the church under the new dispensation and that under the old, it is obvious from what has been said in regard to the typical and temporary character of the Jewish temple, that it could not have constituted the pattern or model in conformity with which the Christian church was organized. We must look elsewhere, if anywhere, for such an ideal.

We find that in the Jewish synagogue, as an organized institute, there existed those essential elements of polity and worship which possess the character of permanence, elements which were destined to form the abiding attributes of the visible church through all dispensational changes. We might, therefore, conclude, from the very nature of the case, that such elements would pass over by an easy transition, without the jar of dislocation and a wholly new construction, to the church of the new dispensation. This antecedent presumption we discover to be confirmed by facts.

The synagogue, according to those authors, both Jewish and Christian, who are best entitled to speak on the subject, had, as to its polity, elders, deacons, and — I am disposed to believe — preachers. At least, there was the germ of the preaching function which only needed expansion to make it complete. Here were the essential elements, which only required to be modified by New Testament conditions to become the constituents of the polity and order of Christian congregations. When, accordingly, the majority of a Jewish synagogue were converted to the Christian faith, it became at once, simply by a profession of Christianity, without any marked outward change, a Christian church, with its officers already in existence, and consequently not needing to be elected and ordained. In a word, there was no necessity to create new offices. The old might need to be modified and extended in consequence of the new relations and conditions involved, but not to be vacated so that new offices, another kind of offices, should be substituted for them. Hence, in the accounts given in the Acts of the Apostles of the first gathering of Christian churches, we have no notice of the institution of the office of elder *ab initio*. The Jewish elders of the synagogue became the Christian elders of the church. The same, with exception of the apostles and other extraordinary officers, would seem to have been true of all the offices of the Christian church — of preachers, and in all probability of deacons. There is no positive proof that the appointment of the Seven was a creation of the diaconal office. The evidence tends to an opposite conclusion. The narrative leads naturally to the conclusion that there were, under the superintendence of the apostles, Hebrew deacons who attended to the distribution of the common fund contributed by the church; and that the Seven (whose names are Hellenistic), were added to the already existing corps of deacons, in order to still the murmurs of the Hellenist converts and adequately meet their wants. As this is a point only subsidiary to the argument in hand, it will not be elaborately discussed. A considerable mass of testimonies might be collected from learned writers who, although characterized by different types of theological and ecclesiastical thought, have contended that the Christian church was organized after

the analogy of the synagogue. It may be sufficient to cite the frequently quoted remarks of one who, in view of his church relations and official position, must be regarded as having spoken with distinguished candor upon this subject. "It is probable," says Archbishop Whately, (*Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 83-85. Am. Ed., pp. 84-86.) "that one cause, humanly speaking, why we find in the Sacred Books less information concerning the Christian ministry and the constitution of church-governments than we otherwise might have found, is that these institutions had less of novelty than some would at first sight suppose, and that many portions of them did not wholly originate with the apostles. It appears highly probable — I might say, morally certain — that, wherever a Jewish synagogue existed, that was brought, the whole, or the chief part of it, to embrace the gospel, the apostles did not there so much form a Christian church (or congregation, *ecclesia*), as make an existing congregation Christian, by introducing the Christian sacraments and worship, and establishing whatever regulations were requisite for the newly-adopted faith; leaving the machinery (if I may so speak) of government unchanged; the rulers of synagogues, elders and other officers (whether spiritual or ecclesiastical, or both) being already provided in the existing institutions. And it is likely that several of the earliest Christian churches did originate in this way; that is, that they were converted synagogues, which became Christian churches as soon as the members, or the main part of the members, acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah.

"The attempt to effect this conversion of a Jewish synagogue into a Christian church seems always to have been made, in the first instance, in every place where there was an opening for it. Even after the call of the idolatrous Gentiles, it appears plainly to have been the practice of the apostles Paul and Barnabas, when they came to any city where there was a synagogue, to go thither first and deliver their sacred message to the Jews and 'devout Gentiles'; according to their own expression (Acts xiii. 17), 'to the men of Israel and those that feared God;' adding that it was necessary that the Word of God should first be preached to them.' And when they founded a church in any of those cities in which (and such were, probably, a very large majority) there was no Jewish synagogue that received the gospel, it is likely they would still conform, in a great measure, to the same model." In these views such men as Grotius, Vitranga, Selden and Lightfoot concur.

If this be so, if the Christian church adopted its polity and its ordinary officers from the Jewish synagogue, it is almost unnecessary to argue that it appropriated its mode of worship from the same source. It was that to which in the past the people of God had been accustomed

in their stated meetings on the Sabbath. Why should it not have been continued for all the future? This would have been the almost inevitable result, unless the Head of the Church had authoritatively directed a change to be made, and had prescribed another and a different method of worship which he willed to be observed. There is not the slightest proof to show that he did, except in the instances of baptism and the Lord's supper; and this silence of Christ, and the absence of inspired direction to that effect by the Holy Ghost, are entitled to be construed as an approval of the continuance by the church of the long-standing and venerable mode of worship of the Jewish synagogue. This probable argument amounts to certainly, in view of the significant fact, that the elements of public worship actually enumerated in the New Testament are precisely those which existed in the synagogue. As, then, the use of instrumental music was unknown in the worship of the synagogue it was not introduced into the Christian church.

To this two considerations may be added: first, that the analogy between the synagogue and the Christian church is sustained by the fact that the LXX. frequently use the term *ecclesia* as

convertible with synagogue; and secondly, that as the temple stood and its worship continued for many years after the first Christian churches were constituted, the introduction into them of a kind of music which every Jew knew to be peculiar to the temple would have furnished in itself a reason for intense hostility to Christianity, and have called forth a special opposition which would have left its impress upon the records of the times, both sacred and profane. But we here nothing of such a conflict, and the inference is well-nigh irresistible that the ground for it did not exist; instrumental music had no place in the early Christian churches. This particular consideration is, moreover, enhanced when we reflect that the Jewish synagogues themselves passed by an easy transition into Christian congregations. But that the converted Jew should, without difficulty, have admitted into the synagogue, even though christianized, an element which belonged to the temple as peculiar and typical, or that the Christian should have adopted part of a worship the abolition of which he knew to be certain, is either of them a supposition too violent to be entertained.

(To be continued)

---

## *A Believer's Life of Christ*

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

### CHRIST ON THE THRONE

The resurrection, we believe, was instantaneous in its occurrence. It was not only supernatural but also miraculous in the strict sense of the word. And there were no human witnesses.

In the ascension, on the other hand, a time element seems to have been involved. It was a movement, which, from the standpoint of the observers, they could see and follow. At one moment he was standing with them on the mount in the act of blessing them. The next they saw him as he was parted from them and began to rise in a visible ascent. Not that heaven was located somewhere overhead or even anywhere in any literal sense in time and space. But "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." (By the statement that heaven is nowhere to be found in time and space we do not mean that it is not a place, but only that it is not located in space as we know it. As one has said, "It may be located in some other kind of space, on a higher plane of existence, hence not to be located in terms of astronomy" (J. G. Vos in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, Oct.-Dec. 1959, p. 184).)

This however was only the first stage of the ascent; for, as we learn elsewhere, he not only

passed from the "lower" to a "higher" sphere, but his ascent continued in that sphere.

The first stage of the ascension occurred here on earth and was seen of men. A second stage ensued, invisible indeed to men here below, but not to the adoring hosts of the angels and the saints above. For the ascent continued on through heaven and all things that are therein.

He "entered heaven itself," as we are told; "passed through the heavens," and was "made higher than the heavens." He "ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10). And the goal of his ascent was none other than the throne of the Highest, on the right hand of the Father, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:21).

We have had occasion in these chapters to remark about the elements of change and movement in the story of the life of Christ. But behold, what changes now appear! Where now is Jesus? Where now the lowly Nazarene who suffered and bled and died at the hands of men?

The shepherds went and found him wrapped in swaddling clothes and "lying in a manger." The magi came and inquired and found "the young child with Mary his mother and fell down and worshipped him." The Son of man while he tabernacled here among us had not house or home to call his own. But now where is he? Where now the King? Kingship, as we have seen, was always his. King he was though in the manger, in the garden, on the cross, and in the grave. Now, however; risen, ascended and seated on the throne, he is inducted into full possession of all his prerogatives and powers. Now as a king he has his throne of course; and, in the nature of the case, no less a throne than that of heaven's King.

Yet even so there is still no essential change in his personality and in his personal demeanor in relation to his people. No small part of the disciples' joy in the renewal of the fellowship which came with the appearances, was the discovery of the fact that their Lord in attitude and spirit was no different than before. From the first moment of his first appearance to them they were back together on familiar terms. Lord and Master that he was, he was still the meek and lowly, humble, gentle Jesus that he had always been. They were still at ease in his presence.

As the relationship had been, so it continued and through all changes ever would remain. Now, though parted from them and taken up into heaven, they understood that he had gone to prepare a place for them. And they remembered his word how he had said that if I go "I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). And so we read, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 7:17). Now though exalted and glorified and fully manifested as King of Kings he was still the brother-friend, the Saviour-Servant of them all.

What did the ascension glory mean as regards his life of ministry and service to them? What did it mean for him? Only a higher place and vantage point from which to serve; for the further, fuller development of his life and work of saving ministry. For this was his teaching and all teaching that was ever given was first of all exemplified in himself, applied to himself in his own life. It ever was and is as he has said — "he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." He who is the greatest of all must be servant of all." I am among you as he that serveth."

The ascension teaching was that, with his removal in his human nature from earth to heaven, he would not be lost to them. Especially in and with the descent of his Spirit upon them he would

come and ever be with them. Indeed, the promise was that the loss incurred would be replaced by a better, closer, richer, dearer, because an inner and indwelling presence and fellowship. This would be spiritual. It would be in the Spirit. It would be as the poet has said,

"Speak to him thou for he hears,  
And spirit with spirit can meet;  
Closer is he than breathing,  
And nearer than hands and feet."

Jesus, therefore, as the God-man, is omnipresent and omnipotent. "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth." There is no limit to his presentness. And, for those who know him, there can be no doubt about his in-nerness.

As he said to Mary Magdalene, speaking to her of his ascension, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended." What was the implication for what the relationship would be following his ascent? Was it not that, subsequently to that event, she could and would have her beloved Saviour-Friend to have and to hold as could not be otherwise? Once taken from her in the outward form she would be free to have and to hold him to her in her heart to the fullest extent of her heart's love and desire.

"Thou of life the fountain art,  
Freely let me take of Thee;  
Spring Thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity."

Christ on the throne is another of the great themes of the Bible as a whole. As the Old Testament itself is rich in its prophetic teaching in other ways, so also in this. The Saviour's heavenly felicity and transcendent glory is celebrated in the Psalms; notably the second, forty-fifth and one hundred and tenth. And the kingdom magnified in Psalm 145 is surely none other than that of Christ. "thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."

All the prophets anticipate and proclaim the power and glory of the King. He came in the incarnation and his kingdom with him. He was the Lord of the kingdom and the kingdom-builder. It was not to remain as it had been but was to be remade, reconstituted. With the gift of himself he gave a new and reconstructed kingdom remodeled according to the specifications of the new age of the Son of God and of the Spirit of the Father and the Son. In the prophetic depiction of things to come there can be no doubt of yet another era, a new and final age of the kingdom and the King.

In the study of the prophets and their vision of things to come it may not always be too easy to distinguish exactly what period or stage

of the future and of the kingdom is intended. However they say that "a King shall reign in righteousness," and describe the blessed fruits of his dominion in glowing terms. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 32:1; 35:1 f). See also Isaiah 2:1-5 and 11:1-10; Micah 4:1-4 and many other passages. The messages from God by the prophets were given for their own day but also for other days, in fact for all time to come and for the end of time.

The Bible believer cannot doubt that, with the ascension of Christ and the inauguration of his session on the throne, there came a new day for the Lord and his kingdom. Our consideration of what the final triumph is to be remains for the subject of his coming again.

As for the New Testament representations we have had some of the references from the pen of the great apostle and Bible writer, Paul. To these add Ephesians 4:8-10 f; "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive" (not captives only but captivity itself), "and gave gifts unto men." Also Philippians 2:9-11, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him etc."; and again, Peter, in I Peter 3:18-22, where, referring to Christ's death and resurrection for us, he says, "Who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

In the epistle to the Hebrews there is even more abundant assertion of the supremacy and glory of Christ's exaltation. This representation arises especially in connection with the teaching concerning the continuing priesthood of the Lord. He is the appointed "heir of all things"; by whom also God "made the worlds"; who is the brightness of the Father's glory, "and the express image of his person"; upholding all things by the word of his power," who, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Hebrews 1:1-5 f).

And so on throughout the epistle. He is our "great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." He is of a unique order of the priesthood; that is that of Melchisedec, not the Aaronic. He is "made higher than the heavens," and "is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." He has his seat "on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." For us he has entered the heavenly holy place and holy-of-holies. He "sat down on the right hand of God." And he is "the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set

down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 4:14; chapters 5-7; 7:26, 27; 8:1; 9:12 and 24; 10:12; and 12:1, 2 and 22-24).

A teaching which pervades the New Testament as a whole, it comes into special prominence toward the close. The dazzling visions of the Apocalypse, vouchsafed to John in exile on the isle of Patmos, crowns the story of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love. Here in ecstatic vision we see the heavens opened and the Almighty on his throne. We see that great multitude before the throne, the four and twenty elders, the innumerable company of the angels and of the redeemed and hear the song of praise. And we behold "the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne" who alone has the power to open the seven seals. We hear him as he speaks in final communication to his own church and people and to the world. We learn what his exaltation is and means for us and the world of this and every age, and for all mankind and the world at the end of the age.

Let us not fail to read, mark and inwardly digest this precious teaching of God's Word. Let us let it "sink down into our ears," and be deeply graven on our minds and hearts. For Jesus our Lord now reigns on high and Christ the Saviour of men is on the throne of God. The son of Mary lives and dwells in that pure light "which no man can approach unto; which no man hath seen nor can see." He occupies the seat of honour and holds the spotlight of the universe. And once again, as it were, we hear the words; "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

From our standpoint in our day we must believe that the "Son of man" of Daniel's vision has long since received his rightful "dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him" (Daniel 7:13, 14). The Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; our "fairest Lord Jesus," is indeed the "ruler of all nature." And not only so, for he is also Governor over all mankind; over all nations of men.

As of old and always so also today, in the exalted place of his abode, he discharges a two-fold function of faithful ministry unto and dealing with his own for their salvation; and, the visitation of his dread judgments on his enemies and ours. He is God's great World-Administrator both in his justice and his love. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." As world Ruler, Lawgiver and Judge he raises up and he casts down, he builds and he destroys.

What then is his message to the nations? "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Psalms 14:34). "He ruleth by his power forever; his eyes behold the

nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves" (Psalms 66:7). "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Psalms 2:10-12).

In consideration of these things we look out with equanimity upon the troubled world of our day. As we survey the current scene of confusion many times confounded we are wonderfully reassured. For Jesus reigns; and God, we may be sure, thinks too much of his own world-government, as vested in his Son, ever to allow it to slip from his grasp and fall into the hands of evil men. He holds the universe of his creation and all of the inhabitants thereof in the hollow of his hand. And he has his own eternal plan and purpose in it which he holds in high esteem; too high ever to permit the world's destruction at the hands of puny man.

One side of the high and holy life and work of God the Son is the execution of his wrath and the awful severity of his judgments upon all who sin against him, always and everywhere. The other is his heavenly ministry unto and in behalf of all his own. The latter is the continuation and progressive consummation of his three-fold office.

He continues the exercise of his office as a prophet "in revealing to us, by his Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation." He "executes his office as a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies." And he "executes his office as a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God,

and in making continual intercession for us." (The Shorter Catechism; questions 24, 26 and 25)

The great Atonement accomplished on the cross of Calvary; ever present to his view; he ever pleads as the ground of his effectual intercession for and blessed ministry to all for whom he bled and died. In the high place of his abode in glory he presides over his church of which he is the Head and King and which is both his body and his bride. The promise given in connection with the great commission still obtains; "lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." By all his agents and by all those agencies that are his, he still calls to sinner-men to repent and turn to God; to believe, leave all and follow him.

All who are Christ's, in every experience of their daily lives, find abundant proof of his faithfulness in caring for them. God "supplies all our need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He watches over all that pertains to our spiritual and material interests, and both our temporal and eternal welfare.

The Bible writers ever associate his high place of power and glory with the various services which it is his joy to render and ours to receive. He is no stranger to our weakness and knows all our need. "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18). "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

(Copyright, 1960, by W. A. Wilde Company.  
Used by permission).

(To be continued)

## Some Noteworthy Quotations

WE SHOULD STAND FAST in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and not allow our consciences to be brought under the yoke of bondage to human opinions. There is a strong tendency in men to treat, as matters of conscience, things which God has never enjoined. Wherever this disposition has been indulged or submitted to, it has resulted in bringing one class of men under the most degrading bondage to another; and in the still more serious evil of leading them to disregard the authority of God. Multitudes who would be shocked at the thought of eating meat on Friday, commit the greatest moral offences without the slightest compunction. It is, therefore, of great importance to keep the conscience free; under no subjection but to truth and God. This is necessary, not only on account of its influence on our own moral feel-

ings, but also because nothing but truth can really do good. To advocate even a good cause with bad arguments does great harm, by exciting unnecessary opposition; by making good men, who oppose the arguments, appear to oppose the truth; by introducing a false standard of duty; by failing to enlist the support of an enlightened conscience, and by the necessary forfeiture of the confidence of the intelligent and well informed. The cause of benevolence, therefore, instead of being promoted, is injured by all exaggerations, erroneous statements, and false principles, on the part of its advocates.

— Charles Hodge (on Romans 14:22)

A MAJOR OBSTACLE to voluntary support to church-related colleges lies in the fact that many such institutions do not differ sufficiently

from non-Christian colleges and universities either in emphasis or in quality to merit special distinction and preference. Colleges with a virile evangelical dedication often stir the loyalties of countless sacrificial donors; on the other hand those with a blunted spiritual orientation must rely more and more upon heavy denominational subsidies. This fact ought to indicate the administrative fallacy of telling constituents: "Support us so we can witness." The campus that maintains its witness inspires support.

If Protestant churches wish to identify themselves with higher education, they must work to keep their institutions within the orbit of the historic Christian faith and its implications for learning; otherwise they will become increasingly dependent upon secular sources for support.

— Christianity Today

THE APOSTLES UNIFORMLY TESTIFY that the cross was their confidence and boast, and lead us to regard the atonement as belonging to the main scope of revelation. Thus, when Paul describes the purport of his apostolic labours, he says, "We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor. i. 23); and, besides, he calls the gospel the preaching of

the cross, or more strictly rendered, "the word of the cross" (1 Cor. i. 18). We cannot allow that this means no more than the preaching of the pure moral code which Jesus taught, with only the accessory notion that it was confirmed by His death. Nor can the language with any greater reason referred to Christ's example, as sealed by martyrdom. Such comments as these, which aim at evading the vicarious sacrifice, are a violence to language, and wholly inconsistent with the import of the terms. The substance of Christianity, and the preaching of it, could not be described in such a way, unless the cross of Christ considered as a vicarious satisfaction, constituted its essential element, nay, its principal design. We have a further evidence of the same thing when the apostle adds, that the cross was a stumbling-block to one, and foolishness to another, of the nationalities among whom he laboured. Had the cross, however, been simply propounded as a confirmation of Christ's doctrine, it could not have been an offence. It would rather have tended, as in the case of Socrates, to win respect for the teacher and for His doctrine, that He had closed His career in attestation to His teaching by the endurance of a violent death.

— George Smeaton

## *Religious Terms Defined*

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of "Blue Banner Faith and Life". The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

**MEDIATOR.** One who intervenes between two parties who are at enmity against each other, and brings about reconciliation between them. "It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man" (Westminster Confession of Faith, VIII. 1)

**MERCY, CHRISTIAN.** The Christian virtue and duty of endeavoring to relieve, in the name of Christ, the sufferings and distress of those who are miserable, whether from sin or from its consequences.

**MERCY OF GOD.** That attribute of God by which He is inclined to pardon the guilty, and to relieve the distress of the miserable. God's mercy is free, being bestowed according to His sovereign choice; and it is gracious, being bestowed upon those who not only have no merit of their own, but have offended against Him.

**MERIT.** That which is earned or deserved. This is contrasted with grace or mercy, which is not earned or deserved. It is not by his own merit, but by the merit of Jesus Christ, that the Christian receives eternal life.

**MESSIAH.** A Hebrew term meaning "Anointed", equivalent to the Greek "Christos" or "Christ". In the Old Testament, kings and high priests were anointed with oil to set them apart to their office; the oil symbolized the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ as the perfect, final prophet, priest and king, is pre-eminently the Messiah.

**MILLENNIUM.** The thousand year period of restraint of Satan and of the reign of Christ, which is spoken of in Revelation 20:1-10. (There are various views as to the meaning and the fulfilment of this prophecy).

**MONOPHYSITES.** The adherents of a heresy in the early Church which denied that Jesus Christ has two *distinct* natures, divine and human, and held that these two are united so as to form only one nature.

**MIRACLE.** An event in the external world, for the purpose of bearing witness to the truth of God, which has no other cause than the will of God. (In God's ordinary providence He works through the sequence of cause and effect in the realm of nature; in the case of miracle, God works directly, by His supernatural power, to produce

an effect which lacks an efficient cause in the natural order. A miracle has natural effects, but no natural cause).

**MISSIONS.** The task of the Church, in obedience to Christ's Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) to undertake the establishments of the Christian Faith throughout the world, which involves three elements: (1) Evangelism, or preaching the Gospel; (2) the establishment of the Visible Church and its ordinances; (3) the teaching of the entire system of truth revealed in the Bible.

**MONOTHELITES.** The adherents of an ancient heresy which denied that Jesus Christ has two wills, a divine and a human, and held that He

has only one will. (This was condemned as heretical by the sixth general council, A. D. 680, on the ground that it was contrary to the full and true humanity of Jesus Christ).

**MONTANISTS.** A sect of Christians which sprang up in the second century after Christ as a reaction against worldliness and deadness in the orthodox or catholic Church. The Montanists were named after their founder, Montanus, a Phrygian by birth, who claimed divine inspiration and the gift of prophecy. They were much more strict than the catholic Church in their insistence upon holiness and separation from the world. The most famous Montanist was the great Tertullian, who insisted upon a clean, clear separation of Christians from everything pagan.

---

## *Studies in Old Testament History*

### LESSON 75

#### JACOB BLESSES JOSEPH'S TWO SONS

(Genesis Chapter 48)

We have now reached the beginning of chapter 48 in our study of the book of Genesis. Jacob is near the time of his death. At the end of chapter 47 we noted that he asked Joseph to swear a solemn oath that his mortal body would not be buried in Egypt but would be laid to rest with the remains of his forefathers in the land of Canaan. Evidently there is a lapse of time between the end of chapter 47 and the beginning of chapter 48. Jacob has taken a turn for the worse, physically, and it is reported to Joseph: "Behold, thy father is sick." This implies that the end of Joseph's earthly journey is near.

Joseph therefore takes his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and goes to see his dying father. When Jacob is informed that Joseph is coming, he "strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed" (48:2). There is no indication that Jacob sent for Joseph's sons in order to pronounce a blessing upon them. Perhaps it had been planned long before that Jacob should bless Ephraim and Manasseh before his death. If we may suppose this to have been the case, it would explain the fact that Joseph takes the two sons with him on this occasion.

On the arrival of Joseph with his two sons, Jacob first recounts God's dealing with him in the land of Canaan. The thoughts of the aged patriarch go back many, many years to that lonely night when he slept under the stars at Bethel, and saw the vision of the ladder reaching to heaven, and received assurance of the covenant blessings of the Lord. He recalls that God promised to make him fruitful, and make of him a multitude of people, and to give him the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. All of

this, of course, Joseph already knows well, but Jacob tells it over again because it leads up to what he is about to say next.

Jacob announces that Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, are to be counted as Jacob's sons just as Reuben and Simeon. This does not mean, of course, that Ephraim and Manasseh are to supplant Reuben and Simeon among Jacob's sons, but only that they are to be put on a par with them—that is, to be reckoned as Jacob's sons, not as his grandsons (which is what they really were). Jacob evidently has a special preference and favor for Joseph's sons because they are descended from Rachel, his first and true love. This act on the part of Jacob accounts for the fact that no tribe of Joseph is listed among the twelve tribes of Israel. Though the number twelve is conventionally used in speaking of the Israelite tribes, it is not strictly exact. For since Ephraim and Manasseh each constituted a tribe, the total is thirteen. Indeed, since the tribe of Manasseh in the settlement of Canaan actually received two extensive but not contiguous tracts of territory, one tract on each side of the Jordan River, there is a sense in which we can speak of fourteen tribes. The tribe of Dan also came to hold territory on both sides of the Jordan River.

As Jacob's eyesight is failing, he asks his son Joseph "Who are these?" On being reassured that they are indeed Joseph's two sons, he proceeds to bestow the blessing upon them. After embracing and kissing them, the aged patriarch lays his hands on their heads. Joseph is careful to place the boys so that Jacob's right hand will rest on the head of Manasseh, the firstborn, and

his left hand on the head of Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph. But strangely, Jacob crosses his arms so that his right hand rests on the head of Ephraim, the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, the firstborn. The record states that Jacob did this "wittingly," that is, intentionally.

Joseph naturally thinks that his father has made a mistake, which he attempts to correct, informing his father that Manasseh, not Ephraim, is the firstborn. But Jacob insists upon keeping his arms crossed so that the right hand will rest upon the younger son. In this we see, as we have already seen in the Book of Genesis, the priority of grace over nature. In the sovereignty of God what may seem fitting or right according to nature may have to give way to special requirements of the kingdom of God. God chose Isaac, not Ishmael; He chose Jacob, not Esau; and now the best blessing rests upon Ephraim, not Manasseh. The bestowal of the blessings of divine grace is sovereign and cannot be regimented according to human notions or custom or propriety.

The blessing itself is a beautiful and wonderful one. We should realize that this is something much deeper than merely the pious wishes of a dying man for his grandchildren. It partakes of the nature of true prophecy. We rightly regard Jacob as acting under a divine impulse in bestowing this blessing upon his grandsons.

"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth . . . In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (48:15, 16, 20).

This blessing, we should note, does not give Ephraim and Manasseh the place in God's redemptive program which belonged to the tribe of Judah (49:10). It would be from the tribe of Judah, not from the descendants of Joseph, that the Christ would finally come. Yet the naming of the name of Abraham and Isaac upon the lads seems to indicate that something more than merely earthly prosperity and numerical increase must be meant. This is a covenant blessing, not merely a promise of material and natural blessings. As for the numerical increase and inheritance of territory, we may note that this was abundantly fulfilled in the later history.

Finally, Jacob says to Joseph, "I die, but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers." This is the true patriarchal faith in the promise of God. Jacob dies in a firm faith that the divine promise concerning inheritance of the land of Canaan cannot fail to be fulfilled.

"Moreover I have given thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (48:22). This reference seems mysterious to us because the matter is not mentioned elsewhere in the Genesis record. However it seems to be referred to in the New Testament (John 4:5) where we read of "the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph," located near Sychar (not far from Shechem near Mount Gerizim). Apparently on some occasion Jacob had been in armed conflict with the Amorites. Possibly they had attacked him, and he defended himself and defeated them, thus gaining control of the piece of land mentioned. With the Israelites all in Egypt, no doubt the Amorites again took control of this "parcel of ground." Jacob, however, counts it as his by special right, apart from the general prospect that his seed shall inherit the whole land of Canaan. As something specially his to bestow, he grants it to his son Joseph.

#### Questions:

1. What news did Joseph hear about his father at the beginning of chapter 48?
2. Why did Joseph take Ephraim and Manasseh with him when he went to see his dying father?
3. What incident of past years did Jacob recall when Joseph arrived?
4. What special provision did Jacob make concerning the two sons of Joseph?
5. How many tribes of the Israelites actually existed?
6. What intentional act of Jacob was at first opposed by Joseph?
7. What theological principle seems to be implied in Jacob's disregarding of Joseph's objection?
8. In what respect did the blessing pronounced on Ephraim and Manasseh fall short of that pronounced later on Judah?
9. What firm conviction concerning the future was in Jacob's mind as he faced death?
10. What light does the New Testament shed on the meaning of 48:22?

### LESSON 76

#### JACOB BLESSES HIS TWELVE SONS

(Genesis Chapter 49)

Chapter 49 records the dying Jacob's blessing upon his twelve sons, starting with Reuben his

firstborn and ending with Benjamin the youngest. Like the blessing presented in the previous chap-

ter, this series of blessings in chapter 49 is to be regarded as more than a summary of human thoughts and wishes. It is prophecy uttered by divine impulse. Moreover, it is remarkably fulfilled in the later history of Israel. In a way, we have here a condensed preview of the future destinies of the twelve tribes. Jacob, guided by the Spirit of God we may be sure, shows a keen insight into the real character and capacities of his various sons. At the same time he is really giving some of his sons a much needed warning concerning their ways.

There is a great difference in the blessings of the twelve sons. Some receive detailed predictions, some a very brief general statement, and some solemn warnings or censures only. That the whole is to be regarded as prophecy is evident from the statement of Jacob in verse 1: "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." The expression "the last days" means "in the distant future." It may be translated "at the end of days" (Leupold). The Hebrew (*b'acherith hayyamim*) is an expression often used in Old Testament prophecy to mean the distant future when the Messiah would appear and Messianic prophecies would be fulfilled. Thus we are warranted in saying that here Jacob by inspiration of the Holy Spirit is able to look across centuries. He sees not only the occupation of Canaan by his descendants, but he sees the time of the Christ (verse 10). Yet the multitudinous details of the historical periods between — the periods of the Judges, the united kingdom, the divided kingdom, the Babylonian Captivity, the Persian dominion, the Maccabeans, the coming of the Romans — all these are left almost unmentioned. This is characteristic of the perspective of Old Testament prophecy. It views the high peaks of the distant future, while taking little or no notice of the centuries of historical time that may lie between one peak and another.

Concerning Reuben, though Jacob recognizes that he is the firstborn, little good is said. He is declared to be "unstable as water." Furthermore, Reuben "shall not excel," that is, shall not have any position of pre-eminence among the tribes. The reference concerning Reuben's immoral conduct is to what is recorded in 35:22.

Next, Simeon and Levi are the objects of their father's disapprobation. The statement that Simeon and Levi are "brethren" implies more than the literal sense of their being brothers — that is so obvious that it would not need to be stated. The meaning probably is that Simeon and Levi are similar, they think and act alike. The reference of Jacob to their wicked conduct is to what is recorded in 34:25-31, namely, the ruthless massacre of the men of Shechem. At the time Jacob told them how strongly he objected to their conduct. Now, after many years, he again recalls to mind their criminal behaviour. The consequence is: "I will divide them in Jacob, and scat-

ter them in Israel" (49:7). This prediction was indeed fulfilled, though somewhat differently in the case of Simeon and that of Levi. As for Simeon, the tribe rapidly decreased in numbers. In Numbers chapter 1 the tribe of Simeon is listed as having 59,300 men, but forty years later (Numbers 26) the number is only 22,000 — less than half the earlier figure. Being so small, the tribe of Simeon received its land "in the midst of the inheritance of the children of Judah" (Joshua 19:1). In Deuteronomy 33 Moses omits Simeon completely from his blessing on the tribes. Still later (1 Chron. 4:42, 43) we find members of the tribe of Simeon seeking a dwelling beyond the limits of the land of Canaan. To summarize the history, we may say that Simeon virtually ceased to exist as a tribe of Israel, though no doubt there were some individuals descended from Simeon living among the other tribes.

With regard to Levi, his descendants indeed occupied an honorable position among the people of Israel, for it was from this tribe that the priesthood was taken. Yet the posterity of Levi was literally divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel, for the tribe of Levi received no allotment of land when the land was portioned out in the days of Joshua. The Levites received certain cities, but these were scattered about in the territory of the other tribes. Even though Levi himself was evil and immoral, during part of his life at least, the tribe of Levi turned toward righteousness as we are informed in Exodus 32:26-29.

Next comes the blessing pronounced upon Judah, and this is the most remarkable of all, for it contains a distinct, though mysterious, prophecy of the coming of the Christ. In verses 8 and 9 the emphasis is on Judah's future as a victorious conqueror. His hand shall be on the neck of his enemies, and his father's children shall bow down before him. This was fulfilled, of course, in the history of King David (See 2 Samuel 5:1-3). David of the tribe of Judah, not only gained kingly power over all twelve tribes, but subdued all their enemies and founded a dynasty which lasted through twenty-one kings and more than four centuries of time (although during the greater part of this time the dynasty did not rule over the entire twelve tribes). But the conquering, victorious character of the tribe of Judah surely is a type (or small scale advance sample) of Him who as King of kings and Lord of lords goes forth conquering and to conquer (Revelation 6:2). For the kingship of the tribe of Judah did not stop when the last king of David's line (Zedekiah) was blinded and miserably confined in a Babylonian prison. The kingship was only interrupted — it was in abeyance until He should come to whom it really belongs, the One of whom it is said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

We now come to the most mysterious part of this mysterious prophecy. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be . . ." (49:10). The word "sceptre" is clear; it signifies a rod which symbolizes kingly rule or power. The word "lawgiver" is however not so clear. It can be correctly translated "lawgiver" as in the King James Version, or it may be translated "ruler's staff", and Leupold in his commentary prefers this latter rendering. At any rate, the meaning is that kingly power shall continue in the tribe of Judah "until Shiloh come."

But what is the meaning of "Shiloh"? Literally, the name means "tranquillity" or "rest." It was the name of a well-known town in Palestine, long the location of the Tabernacle, and also the residence of the prophet Ahijah. Jacob, in uttering his prophecy about the future of the tribe of Judah, uses the name Shiloh as symbolizing the possession of Canaan in peace and rest. The ultimate meaning, however, must be a reference to Him who is the Prince of Peace. This verse has always been regarded as a Messianic prophecy, though interpretations have differed in detail. Leupold states that Shiloh may be interpreted as "Restgiver," and adds that when the peoples "become aware of these superior achievements of his, they shall willingly tender "to him obedience," (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1179).

We are warranted, then, in taking Shiloh as a prophetic designation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Restgiver who said "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Christ is "the lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5).

"And unto him shall the gathering of the people be". In this sentence the pronoun "him" refers unquestionably to "Shiloh." Leupold paraphrases, "He shall be so great that men will readily yield him obedience" (Expositions of Genesis, II, 1180). The Hebrew verb used implies willing obedience, not that which is grudgingly yielded because of force. It is therefore a prophecy of the victories of the Gospel of Christ among the nations of the world.

We take verses 11 and 12 as non-Messianic prophecy, referring to the material and earthly blessings to be given to the tribe of Judah. The emphasis is on the fertility of the soil and the abundance of its fruits. Grape vines are so abundant that an ass's colt can be tethered to the choice vine — there are so many vines that it does not matter if one vine is damaged by the beast tied to it.

Zebulun is described as dwelling near the sea, and the border of Sidon. A glance at a map of the distribution of the twelve tribes under Joshua will show that this was fulfilled in the later history. The territory of Zebulun, however, did

not fully reach to the border of Sidon, for the territory of the tribe of Asher came between.

Next the tribe of Issachar is mentioned. "Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens" (49:14). This quality of physical strength is no doubt something that Jacob has noted concerning his son Issachar, which now becomes a prophecy concerning the characteristics of the tribe descended from Issachar. "And he saw that rest was good, and the land was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute" (49:15). Leupold interprets this as follows: "Seeing the prospect of 'rest' and a good 'land' and 'pleasant,' this tribe would rather surrender other advantages and become a group who would 'stoop over with the shoulder to take on a burden', working for others in work that required only the contented exertion of brute strength" (Exposition of Genesis, II, 1187). That is, this tribe will prefer security and the enjoyment of common comforts to the benefits that might be obtained by greater enterprise and greater risks.

"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward" (49:16, 17). The name Dan means "Judge." So the name suggests the first thought expressed here by the patriarch: "Dan shall judge his people." Nothing is known concerning the later history of the tribe of Dan which throws any special light on the fulfilment of this prediction.

The rest of the prediction about Dan concerns his ability in self-defense if attacked. As fast and effectively as a serpent he will be able to strike back at the enemy who attacks him. Leupold remarks that the hero Samson was of the tribe of Dan.

"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord" (49:18). This statement of Jacob, while it interrupts his blessing of the tribes, is connected in thought with what precedes it. Jacob has been speaking of the powers of the tribes to help or defend themselves. Judah has been compared to a lion, Issachar to a strong beast of burden, and Dan to a lurking serpent. Yet the true source of help is not in human powers or efforts, but in the Lord God and His gracious promises. After all, even what man can do for himself is really only a gift from God. Therefore at this point Jacob injects his confession of faith: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord," lest anyone suppose that his real faith is faith in man.

Next Gad, Asher and Naphtali are briefly mentioned. A troop shall overcome Gad, but he shall overcome at the last (49:19). In the distribution of the tribes Gad was located on the east side of the Jordan River, a location exposed to attack by many enemies such as the roving Midianites and Ammonites.

Asher is mentioned as rich in food products. This tribe was located along the seacoast north of Mt. Carmel, which was a very productive region.

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words" (49:21). This metaphor calls attention to Naphtali's strength and speed, especially in warfare. We recall that Barak delivered Israel with an army of ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun (Judges 4:6). The "goodly words" are illustrated by the song of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5).

**Questions:**

1. What statement of Jacob proves that his blessing of his sons is to be regarded as a prophecy?
2. What is the meaning of the expression "the last days" or "the latter days" in Old Testament prophecies?
3. How far was Jacob able to look into the future?
4. How was Jacob's prophecy concerning Simeon fulfilled?
5. What did Jacob say concerning Levi, and how did it come to pass in later history?

6. What does Jacob first emphasize concerning the future of the tribe of Judah?

7. How was this prophecy concerning Judah fulfilled?

8. What may be the meaning of the word translated "lawgiver" in 49:10?

9. What is the literal meaning of the word Shiloh?

10. What must be the ultimate reference of the term Shiloh?

11. Why is it fitting that the Messiah be called Shiloh?

12. What is implied concerning the Gospel of Christ by Jacob's prediction about Shiloh?

13. How should the prophecy about Issachar be interpreted?

14. What is the connection between 49:18 and what precedes it?

15. What mighty Israelite warrior was of the tribe of Dan?

16. What episode in the Book of Judges is recalled by Jacob's blessing on the tribe of Naphtali?

**LESSON 77**

**JACOB IS GATHERED UNTO HIS PEOPLE**

(Genesis Chapter 49)

We have now reached Jacob's blessing on Joseph (49:22-26). This is the longest of all the blessings and clearly reflects Jacob's special love for Joseph, the firstborn son of Rachel. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall" (49:22). The figure is that of a grape vine supported by a wall of masonry. The vine is prolific for the branches have climbed over the wall. Fruitfulness is increased by the fact that this vine is planted by the side of a well of water. We should realize that in ancient times wells were always fairly shallow — drilled wells hundreds of feet deep as we know them today were unknown. The roots of a tree or vine would easily reach the water of a nearby well. This prediction of fruitfulness well fits the historical development of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, which were descended from Joseph.

"The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob . . ." (49:23, 24). The picture is one of attack by enemies, but also of God-given strength for resistance and defence. Jacob well knows the true source of strength, whether physical or spiritual — the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

He adds: "from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel". This changes the metaphor from that of God strengthening the hands of a man drawing a bow to shoot an arrow to that of God as the Shepherd and Rock of His people. The idea of the Shepherd is that of protection and provision; that of the Rock is that of rugged strength available for His people.

In verses 25 and 26 Jacob continues his blessing on Joseph. Calling God "the Almighty" (how can liberal critics say that the patriarchs believed in a "tribal God"?) Jacob mentions rich blessings of nature—earth, deep, and sky— blessings to abound "above the blessings of thy progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." Fruitfulness of man and beast is emphasized in beautiful poetic language. These blessings "shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (49:26). In the subsequent history all this was abundantly fulfilled. It should be noted that natural rather than spiritual blessings are foretold for the descendants of Joseph. As a matter of fact the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were never outstanding for spiritual attainments. When the division of the kingdom took place, these tribes were found in the Northern Kingdom under the rule of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and sank into the depths of apostasy which finally resulted in the utter

destruction of the Northern Kingdom in 721 B.C. by the armed forces of Assyria.

We may look a little longer at the blessing pronounced on Joseph, however. What is the precise meaning of the phrase "the blessings of thy father" in verse 26? The problem is whether this phrase means "the blessings which thy father bestows" or "the blessings which thy father has received." While the language itself might be interpreted in either way, it is best for theological reasons to understand the phrase in the latter sense. After all, man is not a bestower of blessings but only a receiver of them. God alone is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Jacob's meaning, then, must be that the blessings granted to him have exceeded those granted to his forefathers Abraham and Isaac.

Finally, there is a brief blessing pronounced upon Benjamin. "Benjamin shall raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (49:27). The comparison of Benjamin to a wolf is not meant to be derogatory but rather the reverse. The meaning is that Benjamin will be successful in what he undertakes to do. We may call to mind two men of the tribe of Benjamin: Saul, Israel's first king, and Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles.

In the closing verses of chapter 49 we have Jacob's final charge to his sons. "I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite. . . ." As we have already seen in a previous lesson, the expression "to be gathered unto my people" cannot mean merely "to be buried," for we read in 25:17 that when Abraham died he was "gathered unto his people." But Abraham was buried in the cave of Machpelah in the land of Canaan, while his forefathers were buried far away at Ur of the Chaldees in Babylonia. Rather, "gathered unto his people" is a reference to the life that is beyond the death of the body. While the doctrine of immortality is not revealed so clearly and fully in the Old Testament as in the New, still it is there. These patriarchs who held the long view of life (Hebrews 11:13-16) well knew that there is a better country, that is, a

heavenly one, and a city whose builder and maker is God. They well knew that the death of the body cannot be the end of a human life, but only a transition to the mysterious life beyond.

Jacob's concern that his mortal body be buried in the cave of Machpelah is not to be regarded as mere sentiment. Rather, this is an expression of a strong, unwavering faith in the divine promise of inheritance of the land of Canaan by his descendants. They are not to remain in Egypt forever; Canaan, not Egypt, is to be their home and their inheritance; Jacob, just because he believes this firmly, wants to be buried with Abraham and Isaac in the land of promise.

Thus Jacob, at the end of his long earthly life of 147 years (47:28), finally "yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

#### Questions:

1. Why did Jacob have a special love for Joseph?
2. What is specially stressed in Jacob's blessing on Joseph?
3. What is shown by 49:23, 24 as to the true source of human strength?
4. How did the later history of the descendants of Joseph compare with the blessing pronounced on Joseph by Jacob?
5. What is the meaning of the phrase "the blessings of thy father" in verse 26?
6. What is predicted concerning Benjamin?
7. What two famous Bible characters were descended from Benjamin?
8. How can it be shown that the expression "to be gathered unto his people" does not mean simply "to be buried"?
9. What was the reason for Jacob's concern that his body be buried in the cave of Machpelah?
10. How old was Jacob at the time of his death?

### LESSON 78

#### JACOB BURIED AT MACHPELAH. DEATH OF JOSEPH

(Genesis Chapter 50)

Chapter 50, which we have now reached, describes the mourning of the people of Israel for Jacob, the burial of Jacob in Canaan, the plea of Joseph's brothers that he seek no revenge for their bad treatment of him, and finally, the death and burial of Joseph.

The typically Semitic and Israelitish concern for honorable treatment and burial of the dead is illustrated by this chapter. At the command of Joseph, the body of Jacob is embalmed

by the "physicians" of Egypt. This process, which is well known from a detailed description of it in the works of the Greek historian Herodotus, took forty days. A brief summary of this is found in Leupold's Exposition of Genesis, II, 1205-6. This process of embalming in the Egyptian manner was necessary if the body was to be taken to Canaan for burial. Ordinarily the Israelites buried the body of a person who had died as soon as possible after death — usually

the same day — so that no elaborate embalming was necessary. But that involved burying near the place where the person had died. The burial of Jacob, on the other hand, would involve a long journey.

We are informed that the Egyptians mourned for Jacob seventy days. This fact indicates the very high regard in which Jacob, as well as Joseph, was held in the land of Egypt. Nothing is said about how long the Israelites mourned for Jacob, but perhaps it was the same period of seventy days.

Following this period of mourning, Joseph presents himself before the house of Pharaoh with a request that he be allowed to leave Egypt temporarily in order to keep his solemn oath to bury his father in the land of Canaan. There may have been some taboo concerning death which made it impossible for him to appear directly before Pharaoh in person. At any rate, the request was made in an indirect way, through "the house of Pharaoh." Leupold suggests that Joseph purposely acted through Pharaoh's courtiers so that they, having officially sponsored his request to Pharaoh, would not be in a position to make any insinuations later concerning his loyalty or the purpose of the journey to Canaan. We know that Joseph was rich in practical wisdom, and we cannot doubt that he had a good reason for acting as he did.

In presenting the request to Pharaoh, the fact that Joseph is under oath to go to the land of Canaan is stressed. This would serve to convince Pharaoh that Joseph was not acting from personal or selfish motives but from a sense of moral obligation. Such a request could not well be denied. Pharaoh accordingly graciously grants the requested permission: "Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear" (50:6). The expression "go up" is used, since Canaan is mostly higher in altitude than Egypt, the latter country lying largely near sea level.

Verses 7 to 13 describe the funeral procession from Egypt to Canaan. "It was a very great company" (50:9), including not only the men of the Israelites, but also many prominent Egyptians. The latter are described as "all the elders of the land of Egypt," together with the elders of Pharaoh's house, and "all the servants of Pharaoh." While we cannot say how many people were included in this funeral procession, the number must have been in the hundreds. Also we are told that there were chariots and horsemen; that is, an armed guard. The word translated "chariots" may mean "wagons" and does not necessarily mean war chariots. The "horsemen," however, were undoubtedly a guard of armed men. The wagons or "chariots" may have been used for transporting provisions needed for so many people on such a long trip.

At the threshing floor of Atad the procession

comes to a halt. This is described as located "beyond Jordan," that is, presumably, on the east of the Jordan River. Note verse 13 which says that Jacob's sons carried the body INTO the land of Canaan for burial. Apparently, then, the great procession including the Egyptians, the chariots and horsemen, stopped at a point in Transjordan, while the sons of Jacob proceeded with the body to the cave of Machpelah near Hebron in southern Canaan. This implies that the route followed by the funeral procession was not the most direct one possible (which would have been along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea) but a more round-about one which may, however, have been easier and safer for various reasons.

At the threshing floor of Atad, seven days of mourning were passed, "and they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation" (50:10). This mourning was observed by the local Canaanites with the comment that it was a grievous mourning to the Egyptians. On account of this the place came to be called Abel-mizraim, that is, "Meadow of the Egyptians." To understand this, we should realize that in Hebrew the word for "mourning" differs only slightly in pronunciation from the word for "meadow". The Hebrew consonants in the two words are identical; it is only the vowels which differ. As originally written, the Old Testament in Hebrew consisted only of consonants, without vowels except where one was occasionally indicated by a letter used for the purpose. The vowel signs or "points" which appear in a printed Hebrew Bible today were added many centuries later by Jewish scholars who sought to guard against the original pronunciation being forgotten owing to the lapse of time.

The actual burial of the body of Jacob is undertaken by the patriarch's sons. It is not clear from the narrative whether the Egyptians remained at Abel-Mizraim or whether they followed the body to Hebron where the burial was to take place. It was the sons of Jacob who were under obligation to carry out the burial at the cave of Machpelah, located near the city of Hebron. Following this, the entire party returns to Egypt.

Following the return to Egypt, Joseph is approached by his brothers, who fear that now, since their father is dead, Joseph may seek revenge for the evil which they did to him in his youth. They send a representative to plead their cause. Their plea is that Jacob, before his death, has given a command to them to beg Joseph to forgive their wrongdoing (50:17). Some have supposed that this story was a lie invented by the brothers, but there seems no reason to regard it as such. Although Joseph's brothers had not always been honest and truthful men, still at this stage we may assume that they have learned their lesson and are honorable and truthful. Their address to Joseph involves a frank confession of wrongdoing, without any attempt at extenuation or in any way excusing themselves. And evidently Joseph

regards them as sincere, for "Joseph wept when they spake unto him" (50:17b).

It is not clear whether the "messenger" first approached Joseph alone, and was later followed by the brothers, or whether the "messenger" was really a spokesman accompanied by those whom he represented. By verse 18, at any rate, the brothers are all present, and fall down before Joseph, thus once more fulfilling his boyhood dream.

Joseph's response to the plea of the brothers shows real magnanimity and great-heartedness. There is no mean spirit of revenge or spite or resentment in Joseph. All is forgiven from the depths of his heart. Joseph replies: "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? After all, their sin was against God. We can sin against God, and we can injure our fellow men. But we cannot injure God, nor can we really sin against man. God, not man, is the judge of man's moral life. David recognized this in Psalm 51:4 when he said, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned;" he had grievously injured two human beings, but in doing so he had heinously sinned against God. It is with God that the sinner really has to do.

Joseph adds a wonderful statement: "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (50:20). Here we are face to face with the mystery of God's foreordination. Strange as it may sometimes seem to us, the Bible clearly teaches that even the sinful acts of men are foreordained by God and fitted by God into a larger framework so that they work out for good in the end (compare Romans 8:28). This of course by no means takes away or lessens the guilt of man's sin, nor does it in the least make it right to do evil that good may come. The man who does evil is guilty in God's sight, even though the act is part of God's plan in a larger framework. God judges man according to the motives and moral quality of his acts, not according to the ultimate purposes that God may use acts for in the end. Thus Joseph's brothers, in selling Joseph as a slave, were guilty of great sin. Yet that same act was part of God's plan for saving not only the people of Egypt, but the covenant seed of Abraham, alive through the years of famine. Indeed, we may say that as Christ was to come of the seed of Abraham, which could not be if the covenant people perished from starvation during the famine years, the crime of Joseph's brothers was essential to God's plan to redeem the world from sin. The same truth is illustrated by the act of Judas Iscariot in betraying Jesus. This was a sin, as Judas himself admitted when he said "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4). Yet this very sinful act of Judas was a necessary part of the larger pattern of God's plan to redeem the world from sin by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Let those who lightly brush aside the Biblical doc-

trine of divine foreordination ponder these clear facts of Scripture. Their quarrel is not with John Calvin but with the Holy Spirit who has deeply imbedded this truth of foreordination in the fabric of Scripture.

Joseph harbors no resentment. He reassures and comforts his fearful brothers with promises of good treatment and with kind words.

Next, the last days and death of Joseph are related. Continuing to dwell in Egypt, Joseph reaches the age of 110 years, and sees his own grandchildren. The wording in the King James Version might seem to imply that Joseph saw his great-grandchildren, but scholars rightly hold that grandchildren are meant; this seems proved by the usage of the same Hebrew word in Ex. 20:5 and Deut. 5:9. The statement that the children of Machir were brought up on Joseph's knees probably means that he lived long enough after their birth to take them upon his knees.

Finally Joseph realizes that he is soon to die, Solemnly he reminds his brethren of the promise of God to bring them back to the land of Canaan, as He had sworn to give that land to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. As Jacob had done in his time, so now Joseph requires the swearing of an oath that his mortal body shall be buried in the land of Canaan. He does not anticipate a special trip to Canaan for this purpose, but requires them to swear that when God brings them out of Egypt, they will take his bones along.

Incidentally, this requirement on Joseph's part illustrates the descending character of an oath or covenant entered into by the lawful representatives of a people. The men who actually swear this oath will all be dead before the time to leave Egypt arrives. Yet the oath will be binding on their descendants, just as if those descendants had actually sworn it themselves. A lawful oath or covenant, taken by the lawful representatives of a people, is binding on the people and their descendants, until the matter in question has been accomplished.

Then Joseph dies, at the age of 110 years, and his body is embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt. From Exodus 13:19 we learn that the people of Israel remembered and kept the oath which Joseph had required them to swear.

#### Questions:

1. How long did the Egyptians mourn for Jacob?
2. Why was it necessary that Jacob's body be embalmed?
3. Why did Joseph ask Pharaoh's courtiers instead of Pharaoh himself for permission to journey to Canaan for the burial of his father?
4. Why did Jacob stress the oath he had taken about his father's burial?

5. Why are people said to "go up" from Egypt to Canaan?

6. How large was the funeral procession? What important people were included?

7. Where was the threshing floor of Atad probably located?

8. What is the meaning of the phrase **Abel-Mizraim**? What additional idea is suggested by the sound of the words in Hebrew?

9. Where was the cave of Machpelah located?

10. What plea did Joseph's brothers make after the return to Egypt?

11. How did Joseph respond to the plea of his brothers?

12. Why is it correct to say that we cannot sin against our fellow men?

13. What theological explanation did Joseph give of his brothers' act of selling him into Egypt?

14. If God has foreordained even the sinful acts of men, and uses them to work out His purpose in history, then why are men considered guilty when they commit sin?

15. When people rebel against the Biblical doctrine of foreordination, why is it correct to say that their real quarrel is not against John Calvin?

16. When people refuse to accept the Biblical doctrine of foreordination, with whom are they really quarreling? What does this show about their real spiritual state?

17. How old was Joseph at the time of his death?

18. What oath did Joseph require his brothers to swear as he faced death?

19. What promise of God is called to mind by this oath?

20. What is shown here about the descending character of an oath?

## LESSON 79

### OPPRESSION IN THE LAND OF EGYPT

(Exodus Chapters 1-6)

According to the latest conservative Biblical scholarship, the death of Joseph occurred in 1806 B. C. This is the last event mentioned in Genesis. The first event mentioned in Exodus is the rise of "a new king" who "knew not Joseph." This statement of 1:8 presumably means a new dynasty of kings, not merely a new individual ruler.

About 1730 B. C. Egypt was invaded by "shepherd kings" of Semitic race, called the Hyksos, who defeated the ruling Egyptian dynasty, set themselves up as the rulers of Egypt and continued to rule until they were expelled by the Egyptians about 1570 B. C. These dates are taken from the chart of **Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges**, by John C. Whitcomb, copyright 1961. (This chart, which is extremely valuable for Bible study, can be obtained for 50 cents from Bible Charts, P.O. Box 677, Winona Lake, Indiana, U.S.A.).

This was a period of political disintegration in Egypt, and a period from which historical information is scanty and difficult to interpret. Bible scholars disagree on whether the "new king" rising over Egypt means the rise of the Hyksos dynasty, or whether it means the rise of the famous and splendid 18th Egyptian dynasty. Dr. Whitcomb's chart holds the former view, whereas Dr. Merrill F. Unger in his **Archeology and the Old Testament** adheres to the latter view. Which of these two views is held has a bearing on how long the people of Israel suffered oppression in Egypt. Did the period of oppression

begin in 1730 B. C. with the arrival of the Hyksos, or did it begin in 1570 B. C. with their expulsion? This question, in the present state of historical knowledge, cannot be answered with certainty.

It should be noted that there is a long time-gap between the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus. If we take Exodus 1:8 as referring to the arrival of the Hyksos rulers, the time gap is 1806-1730, or 76 years. If we hold the (perhaps more probable) view that Ex. 1:8 means the beginning of the 18th dynasty, following the **expulsion** of the Hyksos, then the time gap is 1806-1570, or about 236 years.

At all events, as we leave Genesis and enter Exodus we are immediately aware that things are different. In Genesis, the Israelites in Egypt were extremely well treated and, indeed, had the best of everything. We recall that many prominent Egyptians accompanied the body of Jacob to Canaan. In Exodus, Israel is regarded by the Egyptian rulers as a problem, and Israel suffers increasingly bad treatment.

1:7 stresses the great numerical increase of the Israelites. From being a single patriarchal family they are becoming a large population. Settled in the land of Goshen, that is, the eastern delta region of the Nile River, they are at the very entrance to Egypt. Any attacking enemy, such as the Hittites, would enter Egypt from the northeast, and Goshen would be the first Egyptian area invaded. Naturally, then, the Egyptians feared this rapidly increasing alien

population in the vestibule of their country. This does not justify their treatment of Israel, but it helps to explain it.

The statement of the king of Egypt (1:9) that Israel had already become more numerous and powerful than the Egyptians, must be taken as exaggeration or hyperbole. It is not known what the population of Egypt was at this period, but it must have been much greater than the Israelite population of Goshen. The hyperbole shows, however, how alarmed the Egyptians were becoming.

The Egyptian rulers adopted progressively harsh measures in dealing with Israel. The first of these measures was forced labor in the construction of store cities. "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew" (1:12). Israel was a people having high vitality, and moreover the blessing of God was upon them. Next, the Egyptian ruler commanded the Hebrew midwives to destroy male infants at birth (1:16). It was possibly Amenhotep I (1548-1528 B. C.) who issued this wicked command. When this cruel edict proved unenforceable, the Pharaoh "charged all his people" that every male infant of the Israelites is to be cast into the river. We should note that this was not a law or directive, but rather a propaganda appeal to the general population of Egypt to step in and act against the increase of Israel. This wicked counsel cannot have been very thoroughly carried out, for if it had been, there would have been no Israelite nation after one generation. As a matter of fact, it cannot have been thoroughly carried out, as proved by the unceasing increase of the Israelite population. Incidentally, Moses' older brother Aaron had not been thrown into the Nile.

The story of the birth of Moses is well-known. He was of the tribe of Levi, the tribe from which the priesthood later arose. Note that it was by faith that Moses' parents disobeyed the king of Egypt and saved Moses alive (Hebrews 11:23). It is not always our duty to obey rulers and magistrates — sometimes we must make a choice, and obey God rather than men.

The age of Moses at his death was 120 years (Deut. 34:7). Moses was 40 years old when he killed the Egyptian and had to flee to the land of Midian (Acts 7:23). He was 80 years old when God called him at the burning bush (Acts 7:30). Thus the 120 years of Moses' life are conveniently divided into three periods of 40 years each. This could not be known from the Old Testament alone; we are dependent on Stephen's speech in Acts 7 for the essential data.

The call of God came to Moses towards the end of his 40 year period in the desert of Midian. His attempt to help his own people at the age of 40 had failed and only resulted in his having to flee for his life. During the 40 years in Midian

Moses had plenty of time to think. He may very likely have felt that his own life was a failure. Many people believe that it was at this time that Moses wrote Psalm 90 (compare Psalm 90:9, 10) — his life had passed and nothing worth-while had been accomplished — it was like "a tale that is told". However, for Moses, life began at 80, not 40, with the theophany at the burning bush. (**Theophany** means a visible manifestation or appearing of God). The attempts to explain this naturalistically are pitiable. It has even been suggested by some that Moses saw some yellow flowers and mistakenly supposed they were a burning bush! Either one believes in the supernatural, or he doesn't. If one doesn't, then the Bible is a book of lies, and the consistent thing would be to become an atheist or agnostic. If one does believe in the supernatural, then events such as this theophany will cause him no difficulty. But to claim to be a Christian and a Bible-believer, and at the same time to discount or explain away the Bible's supernatural features, is intellectually dishonest and contemptible.

Moses was called to deliver Israel from the bondage of Egypt. Moses was most reluctant to accept this assignment, and offered a series of excuses for not doing so. However, it was the command of God and there was no evading it. For this Moses had been born, for this he had been saved from drowning in the Nile, for this he had been educated in Egypt, for this he had been prepared by God for 80 years. So finally Moses yields and accepts the assignment.

Moses is joined by his brother Aaron, and they first approach the elders of Israel, and are able to convince them that God had sent them (4:30, 31). Next they approach Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. The demand at this time is not that Israel be let go permanently, but merely that the people have three days off to go into the wilderness to worship their God. What could be more reasonable than that? Even a slave people have religion and their God has to be taken seriously. But Pharaoh will not yield an inch. "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (5:2). Here is the seed of the serpent versus the seed of the woman, the world against the church. This is haughty contempt for the Lord. The meaning is, "I do not recognize the Lord, and even if I did, I would not let Israel go".

The result of Moses' and Aaron's efforts, so far, was only to increase the troubles and burdens of Israel. The oppression tightens. Now it is bricks without straw. We should not expect an oppressive government to be reasonable. There is neither consistency nor logic in sin. Egypt will try to crush the very life out of Israel. The people groan under their bitter burdens. Where is the saving power of God?

**Questions:**

1. What difference is there in the attitude of the Egyptians toward the Israelites, between the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus?

2. What is the probable meaning of the statement that there arose a new king over Egypt (1:8)?

3. What problem exists as to the historical reference of Exodus 1:8?

4. Who were the Hyksos and what did they do?

5. Why would the rulers of Egypt consider Israel a special problem?

6. How can it be shown that Pharaoh's appeal to the Egyptians to destroy the Israelite male infants by throwing them into the Nile was not effectively carried out?

7. How long was Moses' life? Into what periods is it divided? From what statements of the Bible are these facts known?

8. What is the meaning of the term **theophany**?

9. What was the theophany which Moses witnessed?

10. Why is it wrong and foolish to try to explain this naturalistically?

11. What was the first demand made on Pharaoh?

12. What was Pharaoh's response? What attitude does it betray?

13. Why should we not expect oppressive governments to be reasonable?

**LESSON 80****THE PRESSURE OF THE LORD DESCENDS ON EGYPT**

(Exodus Chapters 7-10)

"Against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment: I am the Lord" (Ex. 12:12). The conflict now shaping up between Israel and Egypt was more than a contest between two races or populations. Nor was it merely a duel between Moses and Pharaoh. Essentially, this was a religious and spiritual conflict. The real battle was behind the scenes, between the Lord God and the demonic forces represented by Egypt and the gods of Egypt. That pagan religion involves a demonic element is proved by 1 Corinthians 10:20, "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." This does not mean that pagan worshippers consciously and deliberately worship evil spirits, for it is clear that ordinarily, at least, they have no such idea or intention. But it certainly means that demons have a part in making paganism what it is, and that the worship which the heathen ignorantly offer to their "gods" and "goddesses", the demons appropriate to themselves. The modern rationalism which would reduce all demons to figments of the imagination and hold that the rites of paganism are all mere harmless human deviations from truth and right, is not countenanced by the Bible.

So judgment is to be executed against "all the gods of Egypt." We should not condescendingly say, "That was a pre-scientific age." Instead, we should realize that any view of this conflict which regards it as merely social and human is superficial and fails to realize what was really going on.

Through the instrumentality of Moses and Aaron, the Lord sends ten plagues on the land of Egypt. It would take up too much space for us to consider the ten plagues in detail, but we

shall make certain observations about this history as a whole.

1. All of the first nine plagues perfectly fit the Egyptian scene. Nothing foreign to Egypt is introduced. Thus, there was a plague of frogs. A country that is a narrow strip of land on both sides of a great river will always have frogs. This time the frogs increased to such an extent that they became a national problem. Moreover, they came and went away again at the bidding of Moses. Thus the miraculous or supernatural features here seem to be in (a) the intensity of the affliction, and (b) the timing of the affliction. The intensity and the timing showed clearly the hand of God at work.

2. Each of the plagues hit at some feature of Egypt's religion. Thus, there was a plague of flies; the fly was worshipped in Egypt. There was a plague of darkness; they were sun-worshippers. There was a plague on their cattle; they worshipped cattle. Thus the Lord struck at the very things Egypt relied on for protection and help, and made these their trouble and ruin.

3. A sharp distinction was made between the people of Egypt and the people of Israel, as to the plagues. Note 8:22, 23, "And I will put a division between my people and thy people. . .". Thus the Lord acknowledged Israel to be His covenant people, the recipients of His special care and protection.

4. Some, at least, of the plagues involved both natural and supernatural elements. As already pointed out, in some cases the supernatural elements may have been in the intensity and timing of the plagues.

5. The plague of darkness affected all the land of Egypt except Goshen where the people of Israel lived. In the judgment of the present writer, this must be regarded as wholly supernatural; it is difficult to conceive of any physical causes of darkness which would operate so selectively. The same must be said about the tenth and last plague, the death of the firstborn. Some may attempt to explain this as caused by some sudden infection or virus. But this is futile. The plague affected **both man and beasts** — it struck the firstborn of man and beast, and the firstborn only. Even if there were a naturally caused disease which would attack both people and animals, it would not selectively smite the firstborn only. This tenth plague, therefore, was a sheer miracle, caused solely by the almighty power of God.

6. The first nine plagues produced a deep impression on the land and people of Egypt, and even on Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. They did not, however, produce any real repentance or change of heart. Pharaoh repeatedly relented, then changed his mind again. Thus we see that the judgments of God do not of themselves bring men to repentance. For that, something more is necessary, namely, **divine grace**. Judgments may convince people that they are in the wrong, they may lead to merely psychological intentions of amendment, but they do not change the heart, which, apart from the gracious supernatural regeneration, still is at enmity with God.

The pressure of the Lord fell on the land of Egypt. It became increasingly clear that a Person was at work against whom the gods of Egypt were powerless. The pressure became increasingly heavy until it was all but unendurable. No one in Egypt could ignore the God of Israel now. Even Pharaoh who had so proudly said "Who is the Lord? . . . I know not the Lord," now has to take the Lord seriously. Israel increasingly realizes that the covenant which the Lord had

made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is a reality and will be implemented by the almighty power of the Lord God on the field of human history. Thus the situation stands briefly as the Lord is about to strike the final blow against Egypt.

#### Questions:

1. How can it be shown that the conflict between Israel and Egypt was basically a religious and spiritual one?

2. What verse in Paul's epistles proves that paganism involves a demonic element?

3. What is the sophisticated modern attitude toward the gods and goddesses of the pagan world?

4. What is meant by the statement that all of the first nine plagues perfectly fit the Egyptian scene?

5. What is the relation between the ten plagues and the national religion of Egypt?

6. How did the plagues bring out the special relationship of Israel to the Lord?

7. If some of the plagues involved natural as well as supernatural elements, in what did the supernatural elements consist?

8. Why must the last two plagues have been entirely supernatural?

9. What impression did the nine plagues produce on Pharaoh and the Egyptians?

10. Why do the judgments of God not lead people to repentance?

11. To what extent did the first nine plagues change Pharaoh's attitude to the Lord?

12. What truth would be deeply impressed on the minds of the Israelites by the plagues?

## LESSON 81

### ESCAPE FROM EGYPT AT LAST

(Exodus Chapters 11-19)

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart has perplexed many people. If God hardened Pharaoh's heart, why is Pharaoh then blamed for having a hard heart and acting accordingly? The objection sounds plausible, but it is very superficial and unrealistic. According to the record, Pharaoh first hardened his own heart by haughtily rejecting the demand for an opportunity for the Israelites to worship God (Ex. 5:1-9). This was a grievous sin against God. God has various ways of punishing people for their sins. One way is to withhold all influences of divine grace from the person, that is, just to leave him alone in his stubbornness and sin. Thus left to himself, he can only become more and more deeply sinful

and rebellious against God. This can properly be called God hardening Pharaoh's heart. The only thing that could possibly have prevented Pharaoh's heart from becoming harder and harder was **grace**, the gracious working of the Holy Spirit leading to repentance and faith. But this was withheld — justly withheld — from Pharaoh as a punishment for his original wrong attitude.

That the whole process was planned and foreordained by God does not diminish Pharaoh's guilt in the least. The relation between God's foreordination and human guilt is mysterious to us, but it is folly to deny either (1) that God has foreordained all that comes to pass; or (2) that the sinner is guilty of the sin which he com-

mits. The apostle Paul in Romans chapter 9 discusses this problem, and affirms the sovereignty of God in spite of our difficulty in grasping it: "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Rom. 9:17, 18, quoting Ex. 9:16). Pharaoh, of course, acted from his own sinful motives, not from zeal for displaying the sovereignty of God. He is judged and condemned according to the moral state of his own heart and life, even though it remains true that the entire process, including the fact that this particular man has been "raised up" to be king of Egypt, was planned and fore-ordained by God according to His own wise and sovereign counsel.

The first nine plagues had hit the Egyptians in their property and their personal comfort, as well as striking dire blows against prominent features of their religion. The tenth plague strikes harder and deeper — it takes life, the finest life, the most precious life, the life of the firstborn of every family of Egypt, including even the royal family itself. God had said to Pharaoh, "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn" (Ex. 4:22, 23). Thus Pharaoh was informed that Israel had a special relationship to the Lord, a relationship which he could disregard only at his peril. He did disregard it, and finally the peril became an experienced reality.

To escape the tenth plague, Israel was to observe the **Passover**, with the shedding of the blood of the lamb and placing the blood on the door. Many books on the Old Testament suggest that the Passover was originally a spring festival celebrating the birth of young lambs. It is possible, of course, that there may have been such a festival and that the Passover as described in Exodus coincided with it in point of time. However, the Passover as it has been known in history is a religious ordinance commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and anticipating the crucifixion of Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The great lesson taught by the Passover is that salvation comes only by the shedding of blood — "It is by no breath, turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death" (Browning). The key verse is Ex. 12:13, "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Blood shed means life given up in substitu-

tionary death. Many people today react violently against the idea of atonement by blood, considered this a relic of savage barbarism. A prominent New York clergyman called it "the theology of the butcher shop." The Jewish faith today observes the Feast of the Passover without the blood of the lamb. This is not surprising, since modern Judaism is as far from the religion of the Old Testament as east is from west. The religion of the Old Testament is essentially **salvation by grace through atoning blood**; the religion of modern Judaism is salvation by good works, law observance and character-building. Instead of divine grace, it is a system of self-salvation — a do-it-yourself type of religion.

Blood atonement or blood sacrifice in some form is found in nearly all the religions of the ancient world. Far from being a relic of primitive barbarism, blood sacrifice is the result of man's very deep feeling of guilt. The first example of blood sacrifice in the Bible is that offered by Abel (Genesis 4:4). There is no record that God commanded this, but Scripture tells us that Abel did it by faith (Hebrews 11:4) and that God accepted it (Gen. 4:4b). Modern people who object to the idea of blood atonement and call it "barbarous", "crude", and the like do not really have a better theology than that of Abel and other ancient people who believed in blood sacrifice — they are just less sensitive to sin and so less conscious of their own desperate need before God. Blood sacrifice meets man's deepest need, the need for forgiveness, the need for reconciliation with God on the basis of the death of a Substitute acceptable to God. The Passover was one of many blood sacrifices commanded by God in the time of Moses.

The Lord went through the land of Egypt at midnight and smote all the firstborn of Egypt. "And there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead" (Ex. 12:30). This was the judgment which the Lord had threatened when he said to Pharaoh "Israel is my son, even my firstborn. . . Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn" (Ex. 4:22, 23).

"If Amenhotep II was the reigning Pharaoh of the Exodus, his eldest son was slain in the tenth plague. . . It is plain from the monuments that Thutmose IV (1425-1412 B. C.), who excavated the sphinx, was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II" (F. F. Unger, **Archeology and the Old Testament**, p. 142).

Those who adhere to the "early" chronology of Old Testament history believe that the Pharaoh of the Oppression was Thutmose III, while the Pharaoh of the Exodus was Amenhotep II. The dates of these Pharaohs are given as follows in Dr. Whitcomb's chart of **Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges**:

Thutmose III -----	1483-1450 B. C.
Amenhotep II -----	1450-1423 B. C.
Thutmose IV -----	1423-1410 B. C.
Exodus of Israel from Egypt --	1447 B. C.
Fall of Jericho -----	1407 B. C.

Obviously there must have been some preparations for the Exodus which are not recorded in Scripture. The organization must have been very well worked out. Soon afterwards we find this great mass of people living in tents in the Sinai peninsula, but there is not a word as to when, where and how this equipment was acquired. Some of these questions have puzzled Bible students. We should realize, however, that many ordinary details and routine matters may be omitted simply because they were not essential to the central theme of the story, which is the redemptive work of God for Israel. Attention is almost wholly centered on this, and many matters that we may be curious about are not discussed at all.

Some modern Bible versions have translated "Red Sea" as "Reed Sea" or "Sea of Reeds." Recently this has been publicized as a great modern discovery, although as a matter of fact there is nothing new or particularly startling about it. The Hebrew name is **Yam Suph** which means literally "Sea of Reeds". According to ancient usage this name could be used for any part of any body of water that was in water contact with the **Yam Suph**. What is called the Red Sea today runs for 1400 miles between Arabia and Africa. At the northern end this forks into the Gulf of Suez and the gulf of Aqaba. North of the Gulf of Suez there runs today the Suez Canal connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean. In Old Testament times there was a chain of shallow lakes in this area, some of which still exist. It is believed that Israel's crossing of the **Yam Suph** was at a point north of the present northern limit of the Gulf of Suez, where there was anciently an impassable body of water. The crossing was of course miraculous. God intervened by His almighty power and saved Israel from the pursuing Egyptians. (For further discussion of the location of Israel's crossing, see Unger, **Archaeology and the Old Testament**, pages 136-139).

In the morning Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore (Ex. 14:30, 31). They were free people at last. However they still had a slave psychology and would need much education and discipline before they would be ready to enter the Promised Land. They were constantly murmuring and complaining about temporary hardships or disappointments. The most direct route to Canaan would have been along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. This, however, would have involved fighting almost immediately — something for which they were far from ready. So Moses as directed by God leads the people southward in the Sinai peninsula. At Marah they found the water bitter, and complained until it

was made sweet by a miracle. At Elim they found twelve wells of water and 70 palm trees. This place might be called the Palm Beach of the Sinai peninsula! Here they paused and rested before resuming their journey to Mount Sinai.

Something must be said about the manna which God supernaturally provided for Israel during the 40 years of wandering in the Sinai peninsula. Nothing is commoner in liberal books on the Old Testament than to find naturalistic "explanations" of the manna. A common one is that it was a fuzz which appeared on the stems of plants like milkweed, and that by running one's thumb nail up the stem manna could be collected in the palm of one's hand. The present writer finds this sort of thing impossible to believe. It is easier to believe the account of the miracle as it stands than to accept such a childish "explanation" of it. The manna was of course miraculous, and no other "explanation" fits the facts at all. For example, there was none provided on the Sabbath. What kind of milkweed or other plant produces fuzz only six days a week? Incidentally, the manna must have been a perfect and complete food, containing all the nutrients, vitamins, minerals and trace minerals needed to keep the human body in life and health, for it formed almost the exclusive diet of the whole nation of Israel for some forty years.

#### Questions:

1. What is the problem about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and how can it be solved?
2. What was the central truth taught by the Passover?
3. What modern theory has been held by some scholars as to the origin of the Passover?
4. How do modern "liberals" regard the idea of blood atonement?
5. How does the religion of modern Judaism differ from that of the Old Testament?
6. Who offered the first blood sacrifice in the Bible?
7. How is the prevalence of blood sacrifice in ancient religions to be explained?
8. What known fact concerning the succession to the throne of Amenhotep II confirms the Biblical record of the tenth plague?
9. According to the "early" chronology, who was the Pharaoh of the Oppression, and who the Pharaoh of the Exodus?
10. What was the date of the Exodus, according to recent evangelical scholarship?
11. Why does the Biblical record not tell us more about the organization and preparation of equipment for Israel's departure from Egypt?

12. What is the literal meaning of the name translated "Red Sea" in our Bibles?

13. Where, in all probability, did Israel's crossing of the "Red Sea" take place?

14. Why would it have been unwise for Moses to lead Israel to Canaan by the shortest possible route?

15. How is the manna to be regarded?

## LESSON 82

### DIVINE REVELATION AT MOUNT SINAI

(Exodus, Chapters 20-27)

At Mount Sinai, probably the range in the southern part of the Sinai peninsula that is called "Mount Sinai" today, after a period of preparation, God revealed His laws to Israel and entered into a formal covenant relationship with them.

The Ten Commandments were written by God on tablets of stone — a material indicating permanence. They are given in full in Exodus 20:1-17, and are repeated with slight verbal differences in a speech of Moses in Deuteronomy chapter 5. The Ten Commandments are a summary of God's moral law for mankind.

Various churches divide the Ten Commandments differently. The Bible itself speaks of "ten commandments" but does not divide or number them. The verse numbers in Exodus are a modern convenience, not a part of the inspired text.

It is common to divide the Ten Commandments into two "tables." Often it is stated that the first table (Ex. 20:3-11) is our duty to God, while the second table (verses 12-17) is our duty to man. In a sense this is true, but it is an oversimplification. Actually, being God's law, the entire Ten Commandments are our duty to God. The first table (verses 3-11) is our duty to God **directly**, while the second table (verses 12-17) is our duty to God **indirectly**, that is, our duty to God in matters within the sphere of human society. Even in these social obligations, it is because of moral obligation to God that we should obey the Commandments. We are not to steal, commit adultery, bear false witness, etc., because GOD forbids these things; to do them would be to sin against God.

Note that the Introduction to the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1, 2) is essential to the Ten Commandments. This Introduction states the authority behind this code of laws, and the reasons why they should be obeyed. Note, too, that an experience of redemption comes before obedience to God's laws. The people were to keep these laws because God by His power had redeemed them from the slavery of Egypt. Similarly, the Christian is redeemed from the slavery of sin that he may live a good life and keep God's laws.

It is often objected to the Ten Commandments that they are not suited to our modern world because they are too negative — their

emphasis is on "thou shalt not." In answer to this it must be said that it is only **in form** that part of the Commandments are negative. In meaning, each negative implies the corresponding positive. For instance, "Thou shalt not kill" implies the duty of trying to save your neighbor's life if he is in danger and you can help him.

Also each commandment implies other moral duties of the same kind which are mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" singles out and forbids one very flagrant kind of untruthfulness. It implies that all kinds of untruthfulness are forbidden and that it is our duty to be honest and to speak the truth.

There are three kinds of laws found in the Books of Moses, namely:

**1. Moral laws**, of which the Ten Commandments are an example. These are permanent and unchangeable, because they are based on the essential difference between right and wrong; that is, they are based on the nature of God Himself.

**2. Ritual or Ceremonial laws.** These concerned religious worship, offerings, priesthood, clean and unclean foods, and other related matters. These laws were temporary, for the Old Testament period only. In some way they all pointed forward to Christ and His work of redemption.

**3. Civil or Judicial laws.** These were the national or government laws of the people of Israel, dealing with many matters such as borrowing of money, payment of debts, damages for injuries done, treatment of servants and slaves, marriage and divorce, ownership of land, military service, etc. These laws were valid for Israel as long as Israel was a nation. They are only of historical interest today, though the general principles of equity on which they are based are of permanent significance.

These various kinds of laws are not already separated and classified in the writings of Moses. They are however easily distinguishable according to their subject matter.

The **purpose** of the legislation given by God to Israel through Moses was a fourfold one, as follows:

**1. Civil and national.** A nation needs a body

of civil laws by which disputes can be settled, crime punished and justice maintained.

**2. Typical**, pointing forward to the coming Christ. For instance, the tabernacle and its ritual set forth much truth concerning Christ and the way of salvation.

**3. Ethical**, showing how a redeemed people ought to live to show their thankfulness to God for His gracious redemption.

**4. Religious**, to convict people of sin by showing them their failure to live up to God's standard of righteousness, thus making them conscious of their need of a God-given Substitute as their Saviour from sin.

The Tabernacle was a portable sanctuary. It was different from churches of today in that there was no place inside it for the lay worshipper. Only the priests could enter it; only the high priest could enter the "Holy of Holies" or innermost sanctuary.

The Tabernacle was constructed of the best materials available, during the stay at Sinai. The religious message brought by the Tabernacle is that **a mediated approach to God is necessary for sinful man**. Sinful men cannot come to God directly, but only through the divinely-appointed mediation, which involved the shedding of the blood of a substitute. Ultimately the Tabernacle was typical of Jesus Christ as the Mediator between the holy God and sinful man.

#### Questions:

1. Where is Mount Sinai located?
2. What idea is suggested by the fact that the Ten Commandments were written on stone?

3. Why is there disagreement between some churches as to how to divide the Ten Commandments into ten parts?

4. What is the meaning of the traditional division of the Ten Commandments into two "tables"?

5. Why is it inadequate to say that the first "table" is our duty to God, and the second our duty to man?

6. Give two reasons why the Introduction is essential to the Ten Commandments.

7. How can we answer the objection to the Ten Commandments on the ground that they are "too negative" for modern conditions?

8. What three basic kinds of laws are found in the Books of Moses?

9. What is meant by "moral laws", and why are they unchangeable?

10. What matters were included in the Ritual or Ceremonial laws, and what was their religious significance?

11. What matters did the Civil or Judicial laws deal with?

12. Why are the Civil or Judicial laws in the Books of Moses not binding as laws today?

13. Name four distinct **purposes** of the legislation which God gave Israel through Moses.

14. What is the difference between the **ethical** and the **religious** purpose of the legislation?

15. What was the religious message of the Tabernacle?

## LESSON 83

### ATONEMENT BY SHED BLOOD IN LEVITICUS

(Leviticus Chapters 16 and 17)

We have already noted the concept of blood atonement in our study of the origin of the Passover. The Passover was, however, only one of the forms of blood sacrifice in the books of Moses. The fullest account of these sacrifices is found in the Book of Leviticus.

The key verse of Leviticus is perhaps 17:11, which sets forth the idea of atonement by shed blood of a substitute: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

The statement that "the life of the flesh is in the blood" in this verse is of course not intended as a scientific pronouncement in the field of biology. All the same, the statement certainly comes close to being a scientific truth. Blood

makes the difference between life and death, and many a person is alive and well today because he received a transfusion of whole blood or plasma when he needed it desperately. Flesh with blood circulating through it is alive; flesh without blood cannot live, and is either dead or dying.

Since it is true that the life of the flesh is in the blood, it follows that **blood shed** means **life given up**. In the case of the animals offered in sacrifice, all of their blood was shed, and their whole life was given up in death. Atonement by shed blood therefore means **atonement by the death of a substitute**.

The word **atonement** means **at-one-ment**, that is, reconciliation between two parties who were at enmity with each other. In the case we are considering, these two parties are God and man, or more precisely, the holy God and sinful man.

Man's fall into sin has put a barrier between him and God. God cannot look with complacency on any being who is sinful. God's holiness is part of His nature, which even God cannot change or overlook. Therefore, "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold (down) the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). Here "wrath" does not mean petulant anger or peevish loss of temper, but an absolute reaction of God's nature against whatever is contrary to His nature. God could not avoid revealing His wrath against human sin any more than he could stop being God. To be God, to be holy and to be absolutely intolerant of sin, are one and the same thing to Him.

Humanity is therefore in the position of being under the wrath of God. This is taught throughout Scripture, not only in Paul's Epistles as some say. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). There are many people today who tell us that God does not need to be reconciled to the sinner; it is only the sinner that needs to be reconciled to God. Such people say that a blood atonement is unnecessary; God is always perfectly ready to forgive any and all sinners if they will only turn to him in repentance and faith; the obstacle is only in the mind of the sinner, who is cheating himself of the best in life by living without God, and who should be reconciled to God by returning to Him. For this no blood atonement would be needed, it is said, for it is only the sinner himself who needs to have his attitude changed.

Those who have this notion say that preaching the Gospel consists in telling everyone at home and abroad of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. All people are already the children of God, only some do not realize this and consequently are not living exactly as children of God should live. Missionaries are to tell the people of the non-Christian world that they are already children of the Heavenly Father and that people of all religions (and none) are really brothers. This kind of error is compounded by the trite saying that "God loves the sinner but he hates the sin." (This is mere playing with words, dealing in unreal abstractions.) The sin has no existence in itself. It exists only as an act or a state of some **person** who is a sinner. Sin in the abstract cannot be the object of hatred; only **persons** can be objects of love or hatred. The truth is that God loves the sinner in spite of the sin — He loves the sinner in spite of the sin enough to give His Son to suffer and die to save sinners. It remains true, however, that God also **hates** the sinner, He is **angry** with the sinner (Psalm 7:11, "God is angry with the wicked every day." See also 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chron. 6:36; Deut. 1:37; 4:21; 1 Kings 11:9; 2 Kings 17:18; Eph. 2:3; Col. 3:6; Rev. 6:16, 17; 19:15). God loves and hates the sinner at the same time; in the

case of the elect, the hatred will be temporary and the love will be eternal; in the case of the reprobate, the love will be temporary and the hatred (wrath) will be eternal. In heaven there is no wrath, but only love; in hell there is no love, but only wrath.

The truth is, therefore, that the anger or wrath of God against the sinner needs to be removed. It is not just that the sinner needs to return to God; there is an obstacle in God Himself that must be dealt with, otherwise he could never forgive and receive the sinner. This obstacle is God's righteousness or justice, which has been contradicted by human sin. God cannot forgive sin the way He created light, just by saying "let there be light, and there was light." God cannot just say "Let there be forgiveness" and then forgive people for their sins. Creating light was something in the sphere of **power**; God could do that without denying His own nature. But forgiveness is something in the **moral** sphere; God could not forgive without denying Himself, that is, His attribute of absolute righteousness.

Theological liberals are fond of quoting the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15) because in this parable the prodigal son simply arose and returned to his father, and the father received him. So, they say, you see there was no need for any atonement or for any substitute to bear the penalty of the sin. They forget that this parable was told to drive home a single point; it does not purport to contain a complete system of theology. If we are to make something of the fact that there is no atonement in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, we might also note that there is no Christ and no Holy Spirit in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. So if this parable proves that we do not need an atonement, it also proves that we do not need a Saviour and we do not need the Holy Spirit! Of course, it really proves none of these things.

The righteousness of God, then, requires that the sinner suffer the penalty of his sin. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as the forgiveness of sins. One of the articles of the so-called Apostles' Creed is "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." This is a truth if understood aright; strictly speaking, however, there is no such thing, and can be no such thing as the forgiveness of sins. What the Word of God teaches is **the forgiveness of sinners** — the forgiveness of sinners whose penalty has been borne for them by a Substitute.

God's righteousness demands that the penalty be paid; His love impels Him to provide a perfect and acceptable Substitute, Jesus Christ, His Son and our Lord. At Calvary God's justice and His love meet. The penalty is fully paid; justice is not mocked; yet the sinner can be forgiven. This is the heart of the Bible, it is the heart of Christianity, it is what Paul called "the offense

of the cross," it is the pride-humbling doctrine which keeps multitudes from becoming Christians.

Against this concept human pride has raised numerous objections. First, it is objected that we human beings forgive others without requiring any atonement, so why cannot God do so? Surely, it is said, we do not mean to represent God as less loving than man is! In answer to this it may be said that the cases are not parallel. We have nothing to do with the judicial forgiveness of sin. What we forgive in others are **injuries**. We cannot injure God, and we cannot (strictly speaking) sin against man. An injury can be forgiven without sacrificing the absolute justice of the moral Ruler of the universe. But sin is another matter. For God to forgive sin (without a substitutionary atonement) would cause the entire universe to vanish into nothingness in a split second. It would be the same as God Himself ceasing to exist — an impossibility, we may be thankful to realize.

Secondly, it is objected that God must be a harsh and vindictive judge if He will not forgive the sinner unless His own Son suffers and dies on the cross to pay the penalty. This objection overlooks the fact that the God who demands that the penalty be paid is also the one who provides the Sacrifice. Suppose I am arrested by a police officer who takes me into court and testifies that I was driving my car above the legal speed limit. The judge asks me if I have any excuse, and I reply, "No, your honor, I did it; I must plead guilty." The magistrate then says, "Fifty dollars fine." As I do not happen to have \$50.00, I will have to go to jail. Thereupon the judge steps off the bench, extracts his wallet from his pocket, takes out fifty dollars and hands them to the clerk of the court, saying, "Give this man a receipt." I am now free to go home and attend to my business. But suppose a newspaper reporter was present who wrote up the incident in a news item, adding the comment: "That harsh, vindictive judge would not allow a poor motorist to go free unless someone paid every penny of the fifty dollar fine." No one would call a judge who himself paid a man's fine "harsh" or "vindictive", yet there are people who speak thus about the Bible doctrine of substitutionary atonement. They fail to realize that while God's justice demanded the payment of the penalty, His love provided the Substitute.

Another objection is that it was not fair for God to take the sins of guilty men and lay them on the innocent Jesus. This is easy to answer. If Jesus Christ were compelled against His will

to bear the sins of others, that would indeed be unfair. But such is not the case. Christ **willingly** undertook to suffer and die for sinners. (John 10:17, 18). There is therefore no unfairness involved.

#### Questions:

1. Which of the books of Moses contains the fullest account of the various kinds of sacrifices?
2. What verse may well be regarded as the key verse of Leviticus?
3. How does Levit. 17:11 approach being a statement of scientific truth?
4. What is the theological meaning of atonement by shed blood?
5. How can the meaning of the word "atonement" be brought out by dividing the word into three parts?
6. What two parties need to be reconciled to each other?
7. Give a text which proves that God regards the sinner with wrath.
8. Why is it wrong to say that God does not need to be reconciled to the sinner, only the sinner needs to be reconciled to God?
9. Why is it wrong to say that missionaries are to preach the Gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man?
10. Why is "God loves the sinner but hates the sin" an inadequate and misleading form of statement?
11. Where will there be no wrath? Where will there be no love?
12. Why could not God forgive sinners without requiring an atonement?
13. How is the Parable of the Prodigal Son misused by some people?
14. How must the statement of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins", be understood if we are to be strictly accurate in our theological thinking?
15. How can we answer the objection that we forgive others without an atonement, therefore God should not need an atonement either?
16. How can we answer the objection which says that the doctrine of the atonement represents God as "harsh" or "vindictive"?
17. How can we answer those who say that it was not fair for God to lay the sins of guilty men upon the innocent Jesus?

#### LESSON 84

#### ATONEMENT BY SHED BLOOD IN LEVITICUS, CONTINUED

(Leviticus Chapters 16 and 17)

In the Hebrew of Levit. 17:11 the same word is used both for "life" and for "soul". This fact should help us to understand the teaching of this

verse. It brings out clearly the concept of **substitution**. The life is in the blood; the blood is poured out on the altar (in death); the blood

makes an atonement for the life (soul). Thus life is substituted for life. One life goes down in death, another life is spared to live in fellowship with God.

The fact that only **life given up** (blood shed in death) can cancel sin shows what a terrible thing sin is in the Biblical view. Fools make a mock of sin, and modern man represents it as a rather trivial evil. The Bible, on the other hand, regards sin as so bad that the sinner must suffer death. His right to live has been forfeited by his committing sin. He has contradicted the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and for this he deserves to die (eternally). This is the Biblical concept of **guilt**.

After having been cast out on the theological scrap heap for a generation or two by liberals, the word **guilt** is now becoming respectable again through the development of modern psychiatry. It is again recognized that there is such a thing as guilt and that it is indeed something to be reckoned with, something that can have the most terrible consequences. More and more psychiatric books are appearing dealing with the theme of guilt. As Christians we perhaps tend, at first thought, to welcome this development as a return to the teachings of God's Word, the Bible. But, alas! the concept of guilt in Scripture and Christian theology is one thing, and that in modern psychology is something else.

By guilt, the Bible means what might be called **objective guilt**, that is, that the person has really offended God and that because of this, God is against him and will surely punish him, even to the extent of eternal punishment in hell. It is not just that the person **feels** guilty or considers himself guilty, but that he **is** guilty and that God regards and treats him as guilty. Thus, for example, a person who has committed murder or theft is **guilty in God's sight**, regardless of whether he feels guilty or not.

Modern psychology, on the other hand, deals in the concept of **subjective guilt**, that is, the **feeling** of guilt. A person may be obsessed with a feeling of guilt, quite regardless of whether he is really guilty or not. Guilt feelings will have all sorts of bad effects in the personality. Psychiatry therefore attempts, by one means or another, to get people free from guilt feelings. This may be done in various ways, but it is never (except in the case of a few Christian psychiatrists) done by leading the person to faith in the crucified Christ as his substitutionary penalty-bearer. Thus the new emphasis on guilt which is becoming so common tends to keep people away from Christ rather than to lead them to become believers in Christ. People will not come to Christ for cleansing by His blood if they can get rid of their guilt feelings in some way that is easier on their human pride, such as facing and talking out their troubles on a psychiatrist's couch. (It should not be supposed that the

writer is opposed to psychiatry. It has a legitimate field and attains good results, especially in freeing people from subjective guilt feelings where they are not really objectively guilty. But there is much confusion today because many people uncritically assume that the word "guilt" means the same thing to a psychiatrist that it means in the Bible).

Back of the ritual of blood sacrifice in Leviticus is the concept of **objective guilt**. The sinner is really guilty before the holy God, and because guilty, he is subject to the wrath and curse of God in this life and in the life to come. Forgiveness is therefore, in the strictest sense, a life and death matter. God's love seeks that sinners shall live; His justice demands that sinners shall suffer death (physical and eternal) unless an acceptable Substitute suffers this in their place. This the ritual of sacrifice in Leviticus depicts in type or pageant form. The blood of an animal of course could never really cancel the guilt of a human person, but the animal sacrifice illustrates the principle and reminds the worshipper that salvation comes not otherwise than by the sufferings and death — the shed blood — of a Substitute provided by God.

Modern man is offended by the ritual of animal sacrifice as we find it in Leviticus, because modern man takes sin lightly and does not accept the Biblical concept of objective guilt. Modern man thinks little of Jesus Christ because modern man has a false and superficial notion of what the real human problem is. Man's deepest and most urgent need is not political, economic, educational or sociological; his deepest and most urgent need is **to get right with God** and this means accepting the God-given way by which God's justice is satisfied and His wrath against sinners canceled.

It is precisely the doctrines at the heart of Christianity that keep people from becoming Christians. Make no mistake, it is not the partly archaic language of the King James Version that keeps people from becoming Christians (though the present writer believes that the King James Version can be improved), but it is precisely the teachings of the Bible that are clear and plain that keep people from becoming Christians. And it is especially, above all, the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement, with what it implies concerning human sin and divine wrath, that offends people and keeps them from becoming Christians. If we want to make Christianity popular and pleasing to the world, the first thing to do is to eliminate the doctrines of sin, objective guilt, divine wrath and substitutionary atonement from it.

The ritual of the Day of Atonement is set forth in Leviticus chapter 16. Only on this one day in the year (16:34) was the high priest permitted to enter the Holy of Holies or Most Holy

Place, behind the veil. In this inner sanctuary the ark of the covenant was kept, the gold-covered chest containing the original tablets of the Ten Commandments. The ark rested upon the figures of cherubim, whose outspread wings above the ark formed the "mercy seat" or throne of God. Thus in the Holy of Holies God's throne was founded upon His moral law. This room would have been totally dark, except that at certain times it was illuminated by a supernatural glow indicating the presence of God. Here the high priest was to enter on the Day of Atonement and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice upon the mercy seat. The symbolism here is that God could dwell peaceably among His people, seated on a throne resting on moral law, with a satisfactory substitutionary atonement to cancel the people's guilt for having broken that law. Thus the Day of Atonement and the Holy of Holies set forth the truth of an absolutely holy, righteous God, reconciled to sinful men and living among them on the basis of shed blood, that is, of accomplished substitutionary atonement.

The high priest was to enter the Holy of Holies twice on the Day of Atonement, first to make atonement for his own sins and those of his family, and then again to make atonement for the sins of the whole congregation of Israel. He was to be **alone** when he performed these acts (16:17), perhaps suggesting the truth that Jesus **alone** bore the wrath of God and made atonement for the sins of His people.

On the Day of Atonement there was also the ritual of the two goats. Lots were to cast to select one goat for the Lord and the other to be the scapegoat. The goat chosen "for the Lord" was offered as a sin offering. It was the blood of this goat that the high priest was to sprinkle on the mercy seat on his second trip into the Holy of Holies, as shown by 16:15. The other goat, called the scapegoat, was to be led by someone appointed to do it to the wilderness beyond the limits of the camp, and there released. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited" (16:22). Some have supposed that while the first goat (which was offered in sacrifice) represented Christ, the second goat (or scapegoat) represented Satan. This has been held by many Seventh Day Adventists. Their idea is that since it was Satan who introduced sin into the world, he deserves to have the sins of the world laid on him and to go into oblivion with them on him (cf. Levit. 16:21). It is possible that the word here translated "scapegoat" (**Azazel**) may sometimes mean Satan, but it is not clear that it means this in Levit. 16. Moreover, Levit. 16 does not say that the second goat is Azazel, or represents Azazel, but that it is **FOR** Azazel. Verse 10 is translated in the Revised Standard Version: "But the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Aza-

zel." Verse 26 in the RSV says "And he who lets the goat go to Azazel shall wash his clothes. . .". Thus it appears that even if Azazel means Satan in this passage, the goat itself is not Azazel, for the goat is "for" Azazel and is released to go "to" Azazel. Because of such considerations as these, the traditional orthodox interpretation of the ritual of the scapegoat is that this second goat, like the first goat, represents Christ. The first goat (which was slain) represents Christ crucified for the sins of His people; the second goat (which was released in a desert area) represents Christ's burial following His death on the cross. The idea may be that He took our sins into the dark isolation of the tomb, and left them there. Obviously a single goat could hardly portray both Christ's crucifixion and also His burial, if the slain goat was to be burnt as such sacrifices were.

A little boy in a Sabbath School class was asked by his teacher, "Is there anything that God cannot do?" She expected him to say "No," but to her surprise he said, "Yes." When she asked "What?" he replied, "God cannot see my sins after they have been washed away by the blood of Jesus." This is good theology — better than is taught in many a theological seminary and church-related college Bible classroom these days. When the Church loses its grip on the doctrine of salvation by the shed blood of a Substitute, it has lost the main thing in Christianity.

"None other Lamb, none other Name,  
None other hope in heav'n or earth or sea;  
None other hiding place from guilt and  
shame —  
None beside Thee!"

(Christina Rossetti)

#### Questions:

1. What idea is brought out by the fact that in the Hebrew of Levit. 17:11 the same word is used for both "life" and "soul"?
2. What is the typically "modern" view of sin?
3. What does the Bible teach concerning the seriousness of sin?
4. What does the word "guilt" mean as used by present-day psychologists?
5. What is the meaning of guilt in the Bible?
6. What is the difference between **subjective guilt** and **objective guilt**?
7. How does the ritual of blood sacrifice in Leviticus imply the idea of objective guilt?
8. Why does modern man generally have a low idea of Jesus Christ?
9. According to Christianity, what is really man's deepest problem?
10. What is the real obstacle which inhibits people from becoming Christians?

11. What change in Christianity would make it popular and pleasing to the world?

12. What objects were kept in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle?

13. How was it shown that God's throne rests on moral law?

14. Why did the high priest have to enter the Holy of Holies twice on the Day of Atonement?

15. Describe the ritual of the two goats.

16. What is represented by the killing of the first goat?

17. What is the probable meaning of the ritual connected with the second goat?

18. How can it be shown from Levit. 16 that the second goat did not represent Satan?

## LESSON 85

### ISRAEL'S REBELLIOUS UNBELIEF

(Numbers Chapters 11-14)

The Book of Numbers is a combination of history and laws. In this lesson we shall limit ourselves to a study of some of the history. Chapter 33 gives a point by point log of the journeying of Israel from Egypt to Canaan. Forty-two places are named, of which only twelve can be identified with certainty today. Chapter 1 gives a census of Israel by tribes, with a total number of males over 20 years old of more than 600,000, not counting the Levites. This would imply a total population of men, women and children of a million and a half to two million. Modern rationalistic scholars have rejected these figures as utterly incredible and fantastic. It cannot be denied that some problems are involved in the figures given, but there is no doubt that a people as vital and prolific as Israel could have increased to such a number during the centuries they were in Egypt. In the Bible record two things are strongly stressed: the very great number of the people, and the supernatural provision made by God for their needs. It is therefore not a question of how many hundreds or perhaps thousands of people and animals the rather sparse vegetation of the Sinai peninsula could have supported; it is a question of what the power of God could do. Either one believes in miracles, or he doesn't. If one does, then it must be admitted that a big and long-continued miracle is not any more difficult for God than a small and transitory one. These critics of the Bible need to look a bit higher — to get their eyes off the milkweed stems and sparse pasture of Sinai, to the God who created the universe and sustains it by His constant providence.

The Israelites had been out of Egypt almost a year and a half. About a year had been spent near Mount Sinai where they were given God's laws, brought into a formal covenant relationship with Him, and organized as a nation. At the end of all this they reached Kadesh-barnea (Deut. 1:19; Num. 12:16). Here they were poised a mere 50 miles or so southwest of Beersheba (the traditional southern limit of Palestine). At the command of the Lord, Moses appointed twelve men to spy out the Promised Land (Num. 13:1, 2). They were to note the characteristics and value of the land, what the cities were like, how well

they were defended, etc., and to bring back some samples of the fruit of the land.

These twelve "spies" accepted their commission and carried out the task. We may wonder how they were able to accomplish this without being captured and put to death by the Canaanite rulers. It seems probable that they did not march in a group of twelve, but divided into smaller units. Another consideration is that there was no political unity at this time in the land of Canaan. Canaan was a dependency of Egypt, and Egypt wanted it kept weak, and therefore disunited, in case of a war with the Hittites or some other powerful enemy. A weak, divided Canaan would be a good buffer state for Egypt and could not defect to the side of Egypt's enemies as a unit. Consequently, whenever anyone showed signs of organizing anything like a "United States of Canaan," the military forces of Egypt would promptly break it up. The result of this was that loyalty was local, and no one bothered or cared too much about what went on over the next range of hills.

So the twelve "spies" accomplished their mission and returned to Kadesh. But when they came to present their report, it turned out to be a divided report, with ten men adhering to the majority report, and only two (Caleb and Joshua) adhering to the minority report.

There was some gross exaggeration in the majority report, such as their statement about the great stature of "all the people that we saw" (13:32) and the statement about the great size and fortifications of the cities (13:28). In general, however, the twelve men agreed concerning the facts, but they disagreed concerning the interpretation of the facts. There was general agreement that Canaan was a good country, producing desirable products, that it was a land of walled cities defended by their inhabitants. The "giants" which they mentioned (Anakim) may have been remnants of a pre-historic race of very tall men (like Goliath), but there is no reason to suppose that these were really very important in the total picture.

The spies differed as to the feasibility of

Israel occupying Canaan. And what led to this difference was the difference of viewpoint from which they looked at the facts. The majority, or the ten spies, viewed the matter as simply a problem in military science, on a human basis. They were pessimistic and held that Israel could not conquer Canaan. The two spies, Joshua and Caleb, while not disregarding the military aspects of the situation, viewed the whole matter from the standpoint of faith in the covenant promises of God. God had promised this land to Abraham and his seed for an inheritance. Therefore, with the help and blessing of God, they could expect to take the land.

The majority group, too, showed a most abysmal lack of grasp of the lessons of their history. After all, God had repeatedly done the humanly impossible for them. They had escaped Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, been fed with manna, been provided with water by miracle, had heard the living voice of the Lord of Sinai — all this, and they still did not believe that God would give them the land of Canaan. Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand urged faith in the Lord and a resolution to go forward in faith. These two men remembered the lessons of history. But the great majority of the people sided with the ten. A great wave of self-pity swept with hypnotic force over the camp. "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night" (14:1). Here was mass psychology at work, and no doubt many who in their individual thinking might have had more faith and courage, were swept off their feet by the overwhelming sentiment of those around them.

The next thing, in the morning, is a proposal to depose Moses, choose a new leader, and return to Egypt (14:4). Think of it: they are actually proposing to return to the cruel bondage of Egypt, and tell the Pharaoh Amenhotep II, We are sorry to have caused you so much trouble. Now please take us back, let the past be forgotten, and we will be good slaves from now on! In view of the fact that they had been brought out of Egypt by God Himself this was nothing more nor less than the most abysmal apostasy from faith in the Lord.

Moses and Aaron go to prayer. Caleb and Joshua make a last desperate attempt to persuade the people to obey God, "but all the congregation bade stone them with stones" (14:10). At this crucial moment the glory of God appears visibly in the Tabernacle in the sight of the people of Israel. The Lord said He would destroy the people, and make a new and better nation from the family of Moses. But Moses prayed for the people and God forgave them. However, because of their unbelief, they were condemned to wander about for forty years, until those of adult age at the time of this fiasco would all have died, after which their children and grandchildren could enter the land of Canaan as God had

promised. This "forty years" must mean to complete the forty year period from their Exodus from Egypt; a year and a half of it had already been spent.

The next morning the wave of defeatism and self-pity had spent itself, and many of the people had returned to a saner judgment. They approached Moses (14:40) proposing to go forward into Canaan after all, as urged by Joshua and Caleb. Moses replies that they cannot do so now, not after what has happened; to attempt it now would be rebellion against the Lord, and they would not have His blessing and help. However some of the Israelites attempted to go forward in spite of this warning, and soon were soundly beaten by a tribe of Amalekites and Canaanites. So the people realized at last that they must submit to the will of God. They settle down to forty years of wandering — motion without true progress. Probably the thing that occupied much of their attention was attending funerals. Except for the Babylonian Captivity, this must surely have been the most depressing period of all the long history of Israel.

The tragedy of all this was that it need not have been. It was not that the Canaanites were powerful, nor that God was weak, but that Israel lacked faith. It need not have been. How often this has been true in later history, both in the Bible and in the Christian Church. Because of the unbelief of those who are called God's people, great opportunities are missed, people are depressed and unhappy, and Satan laughs. There is an old couplet which reads:

Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees.

This is certainly true, yet it may also be true that the devil laughs when he sees the Visible Church stalled in unbelief. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Without faith nothing right can be done, and without faith nothing can be done right.

#### Questions:

1. How many Israelites left Egypt?
2. How could such a great number have survived in the Sinai peninsula?
3. What was done at Kadesh-barnea?
4. What were the twelve men appointed to do?
5. How can we explain the fact that the twelve spies were not arrested by the Canaanite authorities?
6. In what respects was the majority report apparently exaggerated?
7. On what did the twelve men, in general, agree? In what did they differ?

8. What lessons of history should have prevented the defeatist report of the majority?

9. What was the attitude of Joshua and Caleb?

10. What was the reaction of the whole congregation of Israel to the report of the spies?

11. What new plan did the people propose in the morning?

12. What almost happened to Joshua and Caleb when they urged the people to have faith in God?

13. From what did the intercession of Moses save Israel at this juncture?

14. What must be the meaning, presumably, of the forty-year period of wandering to which Israel was sentenced?

15. What was the attitude of the people on the second morning after the report of the spies?

16. What did the people now propose to do, and what did Moses say to them?

17. What was the result when part of the people attempted to go forward toward Canaan?

18. What was the most tragic element in this series of events?

## LESSON 86

### BALAAM TRIES BUT FAILS TO CURSE ISRAEL

(Numbers Chapters 22-24)

At last the forty year period of wandering was at an end, and Israel was to take possession of the Promised Land. Starting from Kadesh-barnea they sought permission to cross the territory of the Edmonites (descendants of Esau) directly south of the Dead Sea. This was refused, whereupon the people of Israel turned south to the Gulf of Aqaba, and then northward once more, passed along the eastern border of Edom, entered Moab by crossing the river Zered, continued north along the western border of Moab, and crossed the Arnon river into Amorite territory. Because they were kin to the Edmonites (descendants of Esau), Moabites and Ammonites (descendants of Lot), Israel was forbidden by the Lord to attack them. But when they had crossed the Arnon, Israel was attacked by Sihon, king of the Amorites. Fighting back, they defeated him decisively. Pressing further northward, on the east side of the Jordan, they fought and defeated Og king of Bashan at Edrei, not far from the Sea of Galilee. The territory east of the Jordan was now in the hands of Israel, except that of the Ammonites, which lay to the east of the kingdom of Sihon. (The Ammonites must be carefully distinguished from the Amorites. The former were kin to Israel, being descended from Lot, Abraham's nephew; the latter were kin to the Canaanites, being thus partly of Hamitic race, though having a Semitic language. God forbade Israel to conquer the territory of the Ammonites (Deut. 2:19), but He commanded them to fight and conquer the Amorites).

Turning southward again, still on the east side of the Jordan, they paused near the northern end of the Dead Sea, opposite Jericho. This area was part of what Israel had conquered from Sihon, king of the Amorites, but it was still called "the Plains of Moab" because in former times it had once been a part of the kingdom of Moab. At this point Balak, king of Moab, became alarmed against Israel. It is not clear just why he

should have become alarmed at this point, since Israel had already passed his kingdom without damage and had gone on north to fight Sihon and Og. Through all this Balak's kingdom had not been attacked by Israel, but with Transjordan north of the Arnon in Israel's possession, Balak apparently feared that an attack on his kingdom (Moab) was imminent. Feeling powerless to resist this vast multitude of Israelites by military force, Balak decided to seek the aid of supernatural powers. He therefore sought the help of Balaam, a famous soothsayer whose residence was at Pethor on the Euphrates River (a long way off from Balak and his kingdom — about 400 miles). The record describes Balaam as a *kosem*, that is, a soothsayer, diviner or fortune-teller. This man evidently had an international reputation as a manipulator of supernatural powers (Numbers 22:6b). Although there is no reason to believe that Balaam was a good man or really knew the Lord, it is evident that the Lord did use him to deliver some true prophecies. Balaam is called a prophet in 2 Peter 2:16. In both Testaments Balaam is represented as a sordid lover of money, a man willing, even eager, to do iniquity for financial gain.

Balak sent ambassadors to Balaam imploring him to come and curse Israel. They reach Balaam, bringing "the rewards of divination in their hand" (22:7), that is, money to be paid to Balaam to retain his services for Balak. Balaam puts them up overnight as his guests, and during the night the word of the Lord comes to him. He cannot curse Israel, for God has blessed them (22:12). In the morning, Balaam announces this outcome to Balak's messengers, who then return to Moab with the report that Balaam has refused to come. Balak interprets this refusal as a bid for more money, evidently believing that every man has his price, that is, that he had not offered Balaam a high enough fee for his service. So a second embassy is sent, of higher

rank than the first, with authority to make a higher offer of payment. Balaam again replies that the thing is out of the question, because the Lord is against it. Even if Balak were to give Balaam his house full of silver and gold, it would be out of the question. However, Balaam covets the money, so he again puts the messengers up overnight, saying that he will learn "what the Lord will say unto me more" (22:19). This was very wicked on Balaam's part for he already knew perfectly well what the Lord thought about the matter. His looking for a "loophole" in the Lord's prohibition is nothing less than a wicked, deliberate tempting of God.

This time the Lord grants Balaam a reluctant consent to go to Balak, with the understanding that when he gets there, he is not free to say a single word except what the Lord commands him to say. Balaam tells this good (?) news to Balak's ambassadors, who start back to Moab immediately, while Balaam follows a bit later, riding his donkey. This is remarkable, for donkeys were not usually used for long journeys; but then, Balaam was no ordinary person. During the trip one thing after another happens to impress upon Balaam that the idea of cursing Israel is highly displeasing to God and that the cursing must on no account be done. The climax of this series of events is the speaking of Balaam's donkey. This episode has, quite needlessly, occasioned considerable scoffing. Note the reference to it in the New Testament, 2 Peter 2:16, which definitely proves that the event is historical and not merely legendary.

J. Stafford Wright in his book **Man in the Process of Time** suggests that the donkey brayed loudly according to its nature, but that God by miracle enabled Balaam to hear the sounds as intelligible human speech. It is perhaps not very important whether the miracle took place in the vocal apparatus of the donkey or in the auditory apparatus of Balaam — either way it would be a miracle wrought by the direct power of God. 2 Peter 2:16, however, seems to teach that the miracle was in the vocal apparatus of the donkey, although this consideration may not be quite conclusive, for in the Bible phenomenal language is used and events are described as they were perceived by the human subject, not necessarily as they happened in objective fact. We follow the same kind of usage today when we say that the sun rises or sets, when the objective fact is that the earth turns on its axis so that the sun appears to the human eye to rise and set.

Except for the serpent speaking in Eden this speaking of Balaam's ass is the only instance in Scripture of an animal speaking in human words. Partial parallels may be found in John 12:27-30 and Acts 9:3-7; 22:6-9. Apparently bystanders heard only a sound, while Jesus in the one case, and Paul in the other, heard intelligible speech. It is remarkable that in the one case some of

those present thought it had thundered. In the case of Balaam and his donkey, it may be that something objective (in the donkey's act) is implied as well as something subjective (in Balaam's perception of the donkey's act). In any case, the story is to be regarded as true and the event was a miracle.

Balaam finally arrived at Moab and Balak was greatly relieved to have him on the ground. Balaam assures Balak that no matter what happens, he cannot deviate from the word of the Lord. This statement apparently makes no impression whatever on Balak. Perhaps Balak thought this merely a piece of the usual ritual or hokus-pokus of a magician such as Balaam. After a night's rest, the two men go out together. Balak takes Balaam to a mountain top from which he can view the vast camp of Israel, poised across the border of Moab. Balaam requires seven altars and seven rams for sacrifice, and these are promptly provided. Balak remains by the altars, while Balaam moves a short distance away. Perhaps he fell prostrate on the ground in a psychic trance and his eye became glassy as consciousness of his surroundings faded away. At any rate, Balaam returned to Balak and pronounced a wonderful blessing on Israel. Some have questioned that Balaam really received revelations from God, in view of the fact that he was obviously a wicked man and certainly unregenerate. This consideration, however, is not conclusive. The record repeatedly affirms that God revealed truth to Balaam: "And God met Balaam. . . and the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth. . ." (23:4, 5; compare 23:16). In the Old Testament period being an organ or recipient of divine revelation did not necessarily imply being in a regenerate state. Note the prophetic activity of Saul, the wicked first king of Israel, as recorded in 1 Samuel 10:9-13. It says that "God gave him another heart" but his later history abundantly proves that this was not a case of old things passing away and all things becoming new. Remember that Saul ended his life in rebellion, apostasy from the Lord, and suicide.

Balak is naturally indignant. He had engaged Balaam to curse his enemies, and now Balaam has actually blessed them. Balak was evidently a very superstitious man, and he felt that the geographical orientation or angle of view might have something to do with the possibility of an effective cursing of Israel. So he takes Balaam to a different mountain top, from which only part of Israel's camp will be visible (23:13) and asks that the attempt be made from there. Again Balaam blesses Israel. And this is repeated yet again.

Some of the prophecies of Balaam are beautiful as language and literature, as well as precious for their content of divine truth. The beauty and the spiritual sublimity of the prophecies are to be attributed to the Holy Spirit of God, their

true source, not to Balaam, who was an unworthy human channel. When Balaam said "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (23:10) perhaps he saw a tent apart from the rest of the camp of Israel, which he surmised must shelter the mortal remains of Joseph, the one-time great prime minister of Egypt. Balaam is the typical man who wants to die the death of the righteous, but is not willing to live the life of the righteous. He wants to serve himself and the devil in this life, and then enjoy the peace and bliss of the righteous in the next life. How many like Balaam are living today!

One of Balaam's prophecies has commonly been regarded as a prediction of Jesus Christ. "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: for there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth" (24:17). The next verse goes on to declare that the land of Edom will be conquered and become Israel's possession. This mention of military conquests is a difficulty in the way of regarding the "Star" as Jesus Christ, unless we translate the military conquest of Moab, Edom, etc., into spiritual terms. It is probably more correct to regard the predicted Star as King David, who actually did conquer these places. As David was a type of Christ, the conquering King of kings, the meaning of Balaam's prophecy would still ultimately be about Christ.

Balaam went his way, and Balak, refusing of course to pay for such dubious services, went home. Later, however, Balaam taught Balak a more effective way to gain an advantage over Israel. If Israel could be seduced into participation in the idolatrous and immoral rites of the worship of Baal-Peor, then the curse of God would come upon Israel (Num. 31:16). Balak evidently thought this a good idea and tried it (Micah 6:5), with devastating results to Israel (Numbers 25). In the retributive war commanded by God Balaam was captured and slain by the Israelites (Num. 31:8). It is possible that they let him tell his story before putting him to death, and so events and prophecies of Numbers 22-24 came a part of the Hebrew Scriptures.

#### Questions:

1. What three kingdoms of people was Israel forbidden to attack and conquer, and for what reason?

2. Why was it found necessary to go around Edom by a long detour?

3. What Amorite territories on the east side of the Jordan were conquered by Israel during the life-time of Moses?

4. What was the difference between the Ammonites and the Amorites?

5. What region was called "the Plains of Moab"? Why was this area called "the Plains of Moab", since it was not part of the kingdom of Moab?

6. What was the professional reputation of Balaam?

7. How is the character of Balaam described in the Bible?

8. What action or saying of Balaam proves his extreme wickedness?

9. What was the meaning of the strange things that happened to Balaam on his way to Moab?

10. What suggestion has been made as to the nature of the miracle of Balaam's ass speaking?

11. What equipment did Balaam require before he could prophesy?

12. How can it be shown that the fact that Balaam was a wicked man does not imply that he could not receive revelations from God?

13. What statement or action of Balak shows him to have been a superstitious man?

14. How can we account for the literary beauty and spiritual sublimity of the prophecies uttered by Balaam?

15. Why could Balaam not expect to die the death of the righteous?

16. What prediction uttered by Balaam has commonly been regarded as a prophecy of Jesus Christ? What difficulty exists in the way of regarding it as **directly** prophetic of Christ? If not directly prophetic, in what sense is it truly prophetic of Christ?

17. What method did Balaam suggest to Balak as a way of gaining an advantage over Israel?

18. Instead of dying the death of the righteous, how did Balaam actually end his earthly life?

### LESSON 87

#### SALVATION UNTO GOOD WORKS

(Deuteronomy)

The Book of Deuteronomy has been called "the football of the higher critics." There is perhaps no other Old Testament book which has

been so vigorously and persistently attacked by critics as Deuteronomy. Although the book purports to be by Moses, and universal Jewish and

Christian tradition holds that Moses was its author, and the New Testament repeatedly cites parts of it as the genuine writing of Moses, still negative critics feel absolutely certain that Moses did not write it. The common "critical" view is that Deuteronomy was the "Book of the Law" found in the Temple in the time of Josiah (7th century before Christ) and that it had only recently been written. It is held that Deuteronomy was "ghost-written" as if by Moses, but actually by one or more pious priests of the 7th century B.C. who wanted to reform religion among the Jews. In plain language, the critics hold that Deuteronomy is a literary fraud or forgery (though it is not considered genteel in liberal seminary classrooms to use such words as "fraud" and "forgery"). There are many good reasons for believing in the genuineness of Deuteronomy as a writing of Moses. The student is referred to E. J. Young, **Introduction to the Old Testament; The Book of the Law: Studies in the Date of Deuteronomy**, by G. T. Manley (both published in U.S.A. by Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich.) We may note in passing that when our Saviour was tempted by the devil, shortly after His baptism, he replied to each temptation by quoting a verse from Deuteronomy. Obviously, Jesus believed Deuteronomy to be a genuine book, not a fraud. The present writer takes his stand with Jesus Christ against Wellhausen, Driver and all the negative critics.

Recently an article in a popular magazine ridiculed the idea that Moses wrote Deuteronomy, in view of the fact that the last chapter of the book describes his own death and burial. Of course those who believe that Moses wrote Deuteronomy do not believe that he wrote the account of his own death and burial. It is believed that this final chapter (34) was added by someone else, possibly Joshua, after the death of Moses. This is not contrary to believing that Moses is the author of the book, any more than would be the case if a man writes a book today and dies before it is quite finished, and a friend undertakes to complete the book by a brief supplementary note relating the time and circumstances of the author's death. We wish that liberals and modernists would direct their attacks at the real beliefs of evangelical Christians, instead of setting up absurd distortions and caricatures and attacking these with so much zeal and gusto. But as we have remarked before, there is no consistency or logic in sin, so really we should not expect to find liberals and modernists fair and reasonable in their methods of controversy. These men are blind leaders of the blind, and while we deplore this fact, we should be realistic enough to know that blind men cannot see the light.

Does Deuteronomy teach salvation by works? Superficial reading might suggest that it does. Note, for example, the strong emphasis on obedience as the condition of blessing (11:26-28 and many other places).

But a real understanding indicates that the opposite is the case. The laws in Deuteronomy are not presented as a way by which sinners can be saved, but rather they show how saved people ought to live (in terms of the then existing historical situation, of course).

Salvation is by divine grace. That is, we do not earn it; it is a free gift of God to sinful man. This is typified both by the deliverance from Egypt at the Exodus and by the nature of the fall of Jericho at the entrance to Canaan (in the Book of Joshua). Deuteronomy, written just before the end of Moses' career, contemplates Israel as already in Canaan, the Promised Land, and therefore as already the recipients of God's salvation.

Canaan is the inheritance of a people who are saved by grace and who live by faith, as shown by Jericho.

Although salvation itself is by grace, the **enjoyment of blessings** is dependent on consistency in obedience and righteous living. It was fitting and necessary, as a matter of gratitude to God, that Israel obey God's laws. Enjoyment of blessings and obedience to God's will go together. The good that we call **blessedness** (or happiness) is linked to the good that we call **righteousness**, just as the evil that we call **suffering** is linked to the evil that is called **sin**.

When Israel finally became unfaithful to God, she could not remain in possession and enjoyment of the land that she had received by grace in Joshua's day. Then the Babylonian Captivity took place and the people were transported hundreds of miles from home to Babylonia.

It is a very common but superficial misreading of the Old Testament to suppose that the strong emphasis on obedience and righteous living which is so pervasive in the Law and the Prophets implies that man can save himself by obedience to the law. This error is akin to the crude but common notion that while Christians are saved by grace, the Jews of the Old Testament were saved by good works of the law.

Salvation by works is an idea flattering to human pride and self-esteem. We do not have to go to church or a theological seminary to learn this idea; we are born with it, and everyone tends to cling to this notion tenaciously until he is redeemed from it by the grace of God. There is a Jew in every one of us by nature. Among some people who have been strongly influenced by the rationalism of modern thought, that Jew inside is of the sect of the Sadducees, denying miracles, the supernatural, life after death, etc. But in most ordinary people, including multitudes of church members, the Jew who lives inside is a Pharisee, and his unquestioned creed is that salvation is a human attainment and can be earned

by good works or "character building." We tend naturally to believe this, and it must be very pleasing to the devil that we do. But by the grace of God we can be redeemed from this structure of lies, and come to grasp the truth that we are saved by grace alone, and that good works are in no sense the source, ground or foundation of salvation, but rather its proper product and fruits.

Deuteronomy should be read with this principle in mind: the good works and good life that are insisted on are not presented as a way of earning salvation, but as a fitting response of gratitude to God on the part of those who have experienced salvation by the grace and power of God.

#### Questions:

1. Why has Deuteronomy been called "the football of the higher critics"?
2. What is the common "liberal" belief about the Book of Deuteronomy?
3. How does our Saviour's use of Deuteronomy show that the book must be genuine?
4. If Moses is the author of Deuteronomy, how can we explain the fact that the last chapter

of the book relates Moses' own death and burial?

5. Why it is asking too much to expect liberals and modernists to be fair in their methods of controversy?

6. If Deuteronomy does not teach salvation by good works, then why is there such a strong emphasis on righteous living in the book?

7. How was it shown by historical events that Canaan is the inheritance of a people who are saved by grace and who live by faith?

8. Why can we not expect to enjoy blessings regardless of the moral quality of our life?

9. What happened to the nation of Israel when it finally became unfaithful to God?

10. Why is salvation by works a very popular and common notion?

11. What is meant by saying that there is a Jew in every one of us by nature, and in most people this Jew is a Pharisee?

12. What principle must be borne in mind as we read Deuteronomy?

(To be continued)

---

## *Reviews of Religious Books*

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of *Blue Banner Faith and Life* each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers. Do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

**PACO AND PACQUITA OF MEXICO**, by Emmy L. Murphy. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 44. 8½ x 11 inches, plastic-coated hard cover, illustrated. \$1.95.

This is a story book for small children, with attractive pictures on every page. Paco is a Mexican boy of ten, Pacquita a girl eight years old. Their life and adventures are described in well printed, easy-to-read text. A missionary reaches them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The family become believers and have many experiences as Christians. The last pages of the story feature the observance of Christmas. While much Biblical truth is presented therein, the reviewer knows of no Bible warrant for observing Christmas as a special religious day. Near the end of the book the missionary is heard presenting the Gospel to an adult non-Christian in typically Arminian language — stress on faith without mention of repentance; the statement made that "God gives you eternal life when you believe in

your heart that Jesus Christ died on the cross for you." This of course, is a non-Biblical mode of presenting the Good News, and it confuses saving faith with assurance of salvation, as is so commonly done in non-Reformed circles. However, it is a book for small children, and on the whole a good one.

— J. G. Vos

**OBADIAH AND HABAKKUK**, by Edward Marbury. Sovereign Grace Publishers, Box 641, Benson East, Jenkintown, Penna. 1960 (reprint), pp. 763. \$6.95.

This is another of the Sovereign Grace Publishers' reprints of Puritan Commentaries. It is a worthwhile endeavor to make these scholarly and complete commentaries available to the twentieth century.

However, this reviewer is convinced that the real need of the hour is not the republishing of commentaries which are over 100 years old, but new commentaries which build on these careful

studies and add new insights in the areas of textual, theological and linguistic studies. There are other questions that should be raised in reference to this book: When was this commentary written? The publication date listed is 1960 which obviously is not the first time the book was printed. There is also no introduction and no table of contents. Who is Edward Marbury anyway? One finds throughout the commentaries a frequent use of Latin and Greek, but the books of Obadiah and Habakkuk were written in Hebrew. Apparently Marbury did not know Hebrew. In some places the print is very poor.

With the realization of these weaknesses, we have here a commentary that grasps in a significant way the Biblical theological approach to Scriptural interpretation and is consistent in its hermeneutics. The pastor and teacher will find this commentary a helpful complement to other commentaries on Obadiah and Habakkuk, but we are still in need of one that is adequate in itself.

— John H. White

**HAPPY MARRIED LIFE**, by William S. Deal. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 117. \$1.95.

This is a very readable discussion of romance, love and marriage, written from a definitely Biblical point of view. It is filled with very practical information and counsel, and deals in a very relevant manner with the problems and disappointments which may threaten and even wreck a marriage. The author seeks commitment to the ideal of Christian marriage, not merely to happy marriage.

— J. G. Vos

**THE SOUL WINNER**, by Charles H. Spurgeon. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1963 (reprint, date of original publication not stated;) pp. 319, paper cover. \$1.75.

Anything that Spurgeon wrote is always worth reading. The great Calvinistic Baptist preacher of 19th century London speaks today in his published works. Mankind's deepest and most urgent problem never changes, though the outward circumstances of life change and so do the patterns of culture, thought and opposition to the Gospel. Hence we expect to find, and do find, Spurgeon relevant to the problem of soul-winning at its deepest level, even though many external features of the situation are different today from what they were in Spurgeon's day a century ago. At that time all professing Christians, and nearly everybody else as well, believed the Bible to be the infallible Word of God. One could approach the unsaved, ordinarily, taking such belief for granted. This is not the case today. The A-B-C's that Spurgeon and his contemporaries could take for granted have to be taught to people today from the bottom up, bit by bit. The average church member of today has been given the idea that the Bible is replete

with legends, folklore, errors, contradictions, pre-scientific nonsense, and the like. The man in the street who does not even profess to be a Christian has somehow gotten the idea that great scientific discoveries have proved the Bible untrue. All this makes soul-winning more difficult and complex than it once was, though basically it is still man's sin and unbelief that keep him from God, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is precisely the remedy he needs.

Spurgeon provides a great deal of practical material on personal evangelism. The book is calculated to encourage people to engage in this effort and to persist in it patiently and in faith.

— J. G. Vos

**HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE**, by Neil R. Lightfoot. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 128. \$2.50.

This is yet another of the numerous books on the making of the Bible. The author starts out with a description of the making of ancient books, then takes up the origin of the Bible. He holds the Bible to be the special revelation of God. Moses is unequivocally affirmed to be the author of the first five books of the Old Testament. What the author says about the formation of the canon of Scripture is of course not new, but it is sound, clear and well said.

Next follows a description and discussion of the manuscripts of the New Testament. This is very interesting and informative. The text of the New Testament is treated and the student is given a brief but informative introduction to the concept of textual criticism. This material is excellent and brings out effectively what some Christians cannot seem to grasp, namely that textual criticism is not an irreverent attack on the integrity of God's Word, but an absolutely necessary study if we are to have God's Word in its purity and integrity. There are many manuscripts and no two are exactly alike. It is necessary, therefore, to make decisions between variant readings in the various manuscripts. This is not to be done at random, hit or miss — far less is it to be done by taking the King James Version as our absolute standard and then evaluating ancient manuscripts by comparing them with the King James. The reviewer has noted with amazement recently that there are Christians who insist on doing this very thing, and even call it "blasphemy" to reject a verse of the King James Version which is lacking in practically all the Greek manuscripts. Rather, the decision between manuscripts is to be made according to tried and true rules of evidence. The book we are reviewing explains these processes briefly, in a non-technical manner.

Material on the text of the Old Testament follows, with descriptions and evaluations of the Massoretic Text, the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient materials. Next comes a discussion of the

Canon of Scripture. This is sound and clear, and brings out the fact that it was not the authority of the Church that determined what the Canon should be. The Apocryphal books are discussed next and the reasons why Protestants do not accept them as Scripture are given.

Finally there is a history of the English Bible. The weaknesses as well as the great merits of the King James Version are faithfully presented. The English Revised Version (1881), the American Standard Version (1901) and the Revised Standard Version (1952) are described and appraised. The RSV is commended for its readability and clarity, but criticized for a series of faulty or doubtful translations. In the judgment of the reviewer much more could have been said in criticism of the RSV. The renderings of the RSV which are most objectionable (Isaiah 7:14, Psalm 2:12, Romans 3:30) are not mentioned. (Rom. 3:30 was most objectionable in the RSV of the New Testament as published in 1946. This has been partly but not fully corrected in the RSV as it is being published today). Dr. Lightfoot seems not to realize the depth and extent of the liberal theological bias of the RSV translators, nor to appreciate how deeply this has affected their work. Dr. Lightfoot also criticizes J. B. Phillips' translation of the New Testament inadequately, in the reviewer's opinion. Phillips takes unwarranted liberties with the text of Scripture; for example, he translates the same Greek word, now as **presbyter**, again as **elder**, and then as **priest**.

The criticisms registered in this review should not be regarded as canceling the value of the book. In the reviewer's judgment this is an excellent book. It is recommended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

**THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**, by Bernard Ramm. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1963, pp. 125. \$3.00.

Dr. Ramm is an evangelical Baptist scholar. In this little volume he seeks to clear the idea of a Christian college or university, and to outline its proper characteristics and functions. Various viewpoints that have been held historically are examined in considerable detail, a chapter each being devoted to Augustine, Melancthon, Newman, Abraham Kuyper and Sir Walter Moberly. In the last few pages of the book Dr. Ramm presents a "Summary Statement" which presents in concise form his own conclusions from the preceding material. These conclusions are as follows:

1. A university is Christian only as it is Christian throughout.

2. A Christian university has the liberal arts at the center of its curriculum.

3. A Christian university, within the common grace of God, shares in the transmission of culture.

4. A Christian university relates itself vitally to the Christian Church.

The author rightly deplores present condition of many American church-related colleges which can be called "Christian" only in the most diluted and limited sense. A lapse into this condition is a constant danger facing every Christian college which can still be truly called Christian. Author Ramm says:

"In the structure of the American Christian university. . . board, administration and faculty must be composed of vitally Christian men. This is a hard and narrow road, but it is the only one. Any other policy leads to dilution and with dilution defeat of the Christian aims of the university. Furthermore, this requires a very clear, intelligent and biblical definition of **Christian**. We can make the term so broad that it becomes meaningless and so narrow that we cut off as possible choices for board, administration, and faculty many men who are dedicated Christians.

"We repeat, the way here proposed is a narrow and hard road. The foe that is always around the corner is dilution. Some of our largest private universities were once warmly evangelical; now they are virtually secular. Somewhere in their history they began a series of small but fateful compromises which eventually led to the complete dilution of their Christian character. The only vestige of their original charter is an effete department of religion. Other schools have attempted a synthesis of religious liberalism and liberal arts education. But this has hardly produced Christian institutions. The product has been some form of dilute Christian humanism.

"The board of trustees must be composed of Christian men because the master policies for the school are determined by it, and because it hires the administrative personnel of the university. Furthermore, when strategic policy decisions are to be umpired, it is the board which calls the play.

"The administration must be composed of Christian men because the day-by-day life of the school is managed by the administration and it has a large hand in the hiring of faculty personnel. At many points the administration is confronted with the making of decisions, and these decisions must be distinctively Christian. If the administration fails in its Christian witness and Christian interpretation of education the Christian character of the university is doomed.

"One of the most important functions of the administration is to hire new faculty members. Exactly at this point the dilution may well begin because appointments are frequently made under

great pressures. There is the pressure of the empty post which must be filled in order for classes to have instruction; and there is the pressure from the academic side. A dean or a department head may feel a real need to strengthen the academic stature of a department. Under such pressures fateful decisions may be made. There is no ready-made solution to this problem but there must be a well-formulated plan of hiring which keeps Christian concerns central. Sometimes it is better to face the embarrassment of lack of staff than to hire at the expense of Christian considerations.

"The faculty must be composed of Christian men because it has direct and daily touch with the student body and therefore has the greatest possible influence upon it for the Christian faith. The first requirement of a faculty member is that he first requirement of a faculty member is that he maintain a quiet Christian stance in his classroom, in his academic community, and in his local community. The second requirement is that he know how to correlate his specialty with the Christian faith. This is a very delicate matter. He must not dilute the substance of his courses by forever making it so much grist for his apologetic mill. And when he engages in apologetics he must beware of sentimentalizing his faith" (pp. 115-117).

This book is warmly commended to all our readers. The reviewer wishes that a copy could be placed in the hands of every trustee, administrative officer and faculty member of Geneva College and every other Christian college in the land. It deals with the real situation, faces real dangers, and points the way to real solutions.

— J. G. Vos

**PLUS LIVING: MEDITATIONS ON DISCIPLESHIP AND GRACE**, by Myron A. Augsburger. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 59, paper cover. \$1.00.

This is a devotional booklet on the Christian life. The forward is by Dr. Walter L. Wilson of Kansas City. The book is warmly evangelical and very practical. Some statements of the author betray theological confusion or are apt to mislead the reader who is not theologically oriented. Thus, "Christ did not come to offer a lengthy system of dogma, but rather to open a way of love and fellowship with God" (p. 19). Here is the old familiar antithesis between **doctrine** and **life**, as if they were mutually exclusive alternatives and we had to choose one or the other. "Dogma" is simply a name for truth that the Church has come to agreement on. That Christ came to open a way of love and fellowship with God is itself a statement of dogma. Every truth of Scripture about the way of salvation that the Church has learned and confessed is dogma. We need more dogma, not less, these days. Christ is **the life**, true, but first he is **the way** and **the**

**truth** (John 14:6). Every true statement about Christ and salvation in the book under review is a statement of Christian dogma. Moreover, the reviewer makes bold to affirm, Jesus Christ has, in the Holy Scriptures, not indeed "offered", but authoritatively imposed upon mankind precisely **a lengthy system of dogma**, and without it we would be forever crippled in trying to reach that state of "love and fellowship with God."

Again, the author sets up a false antithesis between Christ and the apostle Paul, when he says: "For centuries Protestantism has been interpreting Christ through Paul, tending to begin with man and his predicament in sin (an anthropological hermeneutic); but the full import of this commandment ('Thou shalt love the Lord thy God') calls us to find the heart of revelation in Christ (a Christological hermeneutic)" (p. 26). This is confused thinking, apparently influenced by neo-orthodox tendencies ("Christological hermeneutic"), and quite improper in its objection to the traditional orientation of classic Protestant theology ("interpreting Christ through Paul"). Why did the Holy Spirit inspire Paul to write thirteen Epistles of the New Testament interpreting Christ to the believer and the Church, if "interpreting Christ through Paul" is a wrong approach? We question whether the author realized the implications of the sentence quoted above.

— J. G. Vos

**THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD**, by W. H. Griffith Thomas. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1963, reprint of 1913, pp. 303, paper cover. \$1.95.

The content of this book was originally the L. P. Stone Foundation Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, 1913. While briefer than Abraham Kuyper's work on the Holy Spirit, it is quite comprehensive. The Holy Spirit is studied, first, in the various parts of the Bible, and then in the various periods of the history of the Christian Church. This material is readable and very informative. Part IV of the book, consisting of pages 192-273 deals with "The Modern Application" of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In this part are discussed The Holy Spirit and Divine Immanence, the Holy Spirit and Development (of doctrine), the Holy Spirit and Modernism, the Holy Spirit and Mysticism, the Holy Spirit and Intellectualism, the Holy Spirit and Personal Problems, and the Holy Spirit and Church Problems." The material on Mysticism and its perils impressed the reviewer as especially valuable.

This book is heartily commended to our readers. No one can read and ponder it without spiritual benefit.

— J. G. Vos

**FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF: YOUNG PEOPLE CAN DISCOVER THEIR OWN ANSWERS,**

by Eugenia Price. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 190. \$2.95.

In this reviewer's opinion, Miss Price's literary style today shows marked improvement over that found in her earliest books, which seemed to give the impression of oral discourses taken down by tape recorder and transcribed for publication. At any rate, the present book is pleasant and easy to read. It has sixteen chapters, each chapter title beginning with the words "Finding out . . .". The subjects treated are Finding out for yourself, about yourself, your talents, your tastes, your prejudices, God, what you really believe, how to be with God, God's idea for your life, real popularity, your parents, people, Christian conduct, guilt, fear, and your real potential. All these, obviously, are worthy themes, and Miss Price has presented good material for young people in discussing them.

An occasional statement seems unwarranted or betrays some theological confusion. For example, "God's severest punishment is the punishment of increased love in the ugly face of our disobedience" (p. 71). The fact is, that God's severest punishment is hell, the "lake of fire", where there can never be any love at all. Again, "God is not angry with you because Adam did what he did" (p. 163) is a statement that can hardly be reconciled with recognized Biblical truth as set forth, for example, in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, which says "The sinfulness of that estate wherinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin. . ." (Q. 18), or the **Reformed Presbyterian Testimony**, which rejects as an **error** the proposition "That none of Adam's posterity is esteemed guilty, or condemned on account of his first transgression" (Chap. V, Error 2).

Again, Miss Price says: "If we could get it straight, once and for all, that **everything** about God is redemptive — geared to lift us, to recreate, **never** to smash down or destroy, what a different people would inhabit the earth He gave us" (p. 163). This accords ill with our Lord's statement: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Luke 12:5). The New England theology of the 19th century attempted to reduce God's justice to a mere phase or implementation of His love. It is true that God is love, but it is not true that

God is nothing but love, or nothing but redemption. The New England theology ran its course into liberalism and universalism. Miss Price has a much sounder faith than that, but she seems unaware of the unbiblical character and theological tendency of such a statement as "**everything** about God is redemptive" (emphasis hers).

The reviewer found the chapter on Finding out about Your Prejudices especially good (pages 55-64). We shall quote a few sentences here:

"What about you? Are you prejudiced? Is there some area in which you just can't be budged away from your opinion? If so, this may be good. But it also may be the sign of a whole flock of deep-seated prejudices. Think it through. Does it have to do with your background? Your talents? Your tastes? . . . A good way to check ourselves for prejudices and/or beliefs is this: What happens to your blood pressure? What happens to your disposition? When your dearest theories are challenged or knocked down, do you flare up? Do you grow angry and want to hit back? Do you want to defend yourself? Do you want to knock down the other fellow's opinions? If you have come to a definite conclusion **before** you have weighed the evidence on both sides, before you have stepped over into the other fellow's shoes for even a moment, then you can be fairly sure that you are **pre-judging**. You have ended up with a prejudice. You are not acting on what you have thought through, because you have not used your mind at all. You have formed your conclusion on your **emotions**. Therefore, it is quite natural that when your conclusion is challenged, your emotions flare. If you have thought it through carefully, and are sure of your conviction, your emotions are beside the point. Furthermore, you are then so certain, that your security is in no way challenged" (pp. 57-62). The reviewer has noted people who cannot discuss temperance, or baptism, or Roman Catholicism, or some other controversial subject, without losing control of their emotions — their anger flares up as shown by a rise in the pitch of their voice and flashing eyes. When emotions climb into the driver's seat, intelligence and fairness are thrown into the rear seat of the car, and prejudice wins over justice and wisdom. What Miss Price says to young people about this and about many other matters, is well worthy of the attention of young and old alike.

— J. G. Vos

---

## Acknowledgments and Announcements

### Contributions Received

The manager of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine received since our last issue went to press.

**March, 1963 (From March 24):** No. 1209, \$10.00. No. 1210, \$30.00.

**April, 1963:** No. 1211, \$4.00. No. 1212, \$5.00. No. 1213, \$5.00.

**May, 1963:** No. 1214, \$5.00. No. 1215, \$200.00.

No. 1216, \$5.00. No. 1217, \$25.00. No. 1218, \$25.00.

These generous contributions from friends and readers who have in this practical manner shown their concern for the continued publication of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is received from subscriptions. For the rest we are dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing to the cost of publication as the Lord enables you. We especially need such help during the summer season when contributions are usually few, while our publication expenses continue the same as the rest of the year.

#### Circulation of this Issue

U.S.A., 819. Australia, 55. England, 51. Canada, 48. Scotland, 41. Northern Ireland, 37. Japan, 30. Cyprus, 11. New Zealand, 10. Ceylon, 9. South Africa, 9. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 7. Syria, 5. India, 5. Lebanon, 5. Korea, 5. Eire, 4. Peru, 3. Netherlands, 3. Indonesia, 2. Ethiopia, 2. Greece, 2. Hong Kong, 2. One copy each to Egypt, Argentina, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Sweden, Thailand, Ghana, Costa Rica. Total circulation, 1175. Total outside U.S.A., 356. Number of countries reached, 33.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager  
3408 Seventh Ave.,  
Beaver Falls, Penna., U.S.A.

---

## Blue Banner Question Box

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

### Question:

What should be the Christian attitude towards insurance of any kind, such as life insurance, automobile liability and collision insurance, and fire insurance on house or personal property? Do we, who believe in the providence of the Almighty, not show a certain lack of faith in taking out such insurance?

### Answer:

There is some difference of view among sincere Christians as to the propriety of insurance. The editor of this magazine does not believe that insurance is contrary to faith in divine Providence. Insurance would seem to come under the general consideration that the Lord expects us to use appropriate means to attain proper ends. Thus, if I am stricken with appendicitis, I will certainly pray and trust God to make me well, if such is His will, but I will also feel that I should get to a hospital as soon as possible and have a surgeon attend to my appendix. Cromwell is quoted as saying to his soldiers, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." That is, trust in God is always necessary and always our duty, but there are some means which God has placed within our reach and which He expects us to use.

Ordinary insurance such as automobile accident insurance is a social device for spreading the cost of losses. Society is God's creation and we are to have a care for others as well as ourselves. What I pay in premiums (if I have no accident) is not really wasted; it goes to help many other people (including some of my fellow-Christians) who would otherwise be faced with staggering burdens. Similarly, what others pay (if they have

no accident and I have one) goes to help me in my hour of need. Human society should be regarded as an ordinance of God in the sphere of common grace (that is, it is not limited to Christians, but is common to people as creatures of God). Thus the parable of the Good Samaritan faces the question, Who is my neighbor? In this parable, our Lord answers the question by showing that my neighbor is a fellow human being who is in need and whom it is in my power to help. It was a Samaritan who came to the help of the Jew who was the victim of robbers; yet the Samaritans and the Jews hated each other. According to our Lord's teaching, however, the Jew in need was a neighbor of the Samaritan, and the Samaritan proved himself neighbor to the Jew. Note that the parable speaks of "my neighbor". If it said **my brother**, the meaning would be limited to my fellow-Christians; but "my neighbor" means a fellow human being whom I could help. Now the ordinary forms of insurance are simply a mutual contract or arrangement suited to the complexities of modern life whereby I can "prove neighbor" to someone in need, and he can "prove neighbor" to me if I am in need. We are not likely to travel the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, nor meet a robbed and wounded man lying in the road (though it is possible, of course), but the hazards which insurance covers are statistically predictable. Statistics cannot tell whether my house will catch fire and burn to the ground during 1963, but it can tell very closely how many houses out of every hundred thousand houses will be damaged or destroyed by fire in a particular country in a specified period of time. Of course this cannot be predicted with absolute accuracy, but it can be predicted so closely that

the insurance company or fund can operate safely, paying for losses without becoming bankrupt. When I pay a small sum annually for fire insurance on my house, I still remember that in the end I am dependent on the Providence of God for safety, and also that I am required to be careful about all fire hazards. But at the same time it remains true that there will be a certain number of fires during the year among the many thousands of homes insured by the same company or fund. My few dollars go to help these fellow men in their hour of need.

The writer has known of cases of church buildings being accidentally destroyed by fire, which had not been insured or which had been very inadequately insured in comparison with the cost of rebuilding them at present-day rates. Such tragedies caused very severe financial strain to the churches involved, and required money which could have been used for other purposes. A comparatively small expense would have provided really adequate insurance protection. The present writer feels that church officers are neglecting their duty if they do not see that the church property under their care is adequately protected by insurance.

The foregoing should not be taken to mean that the editor of this magazine is in favor of all forms of insurance. Especially he is not in favor of compulsory national medical insurance, for which many are agitating in the United States and Canada. This sort of thing should be voluntary and none should be forced against his will or (even worse) against his conscience.

— J. G. Vos

#### Question:

In 1 Cor. 7:14, where a "mixed marriage" between a Christian and an unbeliever, contracted of course before the Christian was converted to the Lord, is under discussion, we are told that the unbelieving party is "sanctified" by the believing party, thus making the children of the union "holy," whereas otherwise they would be rated as "unclean." We understand that this "sanctification" is not the personal sanctification of a holy character wrought in the person by the Holy Spirit, but a "sanctification" of status or position, a legal or technical setting apart involving certain privileges but not implying spiritual regeneration. Now, if the children of such a union are entitled to receive baptism because of their "holy" status, why should not the unbelieving adult partner to the marriage also receive the covenant sign of baptism?

#### Answer:

We shall quote a portion of Professor John Murray's careful treatment of this rather difficult passage in First Corinthians:

"Though the due recognition and apprecia-

tion of this grace do not in the least provide encouragement to believers to marry unbelievers (marriage is not to be adopted as a means of evangelisation), and though believers should marry only in the Lord, nevertheless the believer who actually finds himself in a mixed marital relationship is given the assurance that grace is more potent than nature, that greater is He who is in the believer than he that is in the world.

"Additional corroboration is given to this principle by Paul's appeal to the sanctification of the offspring — 'else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.' The children of one believing parent receive sanctification from the believing spouse rather than defilement from the unbelieving. Believing spouses, in the situation envisaged, might hesitate to cooperate with unbelieving partners in the procreation of children on the suspicion that the children would contract defilement from the unbeliever. Paul says, in effect, 'Let there be no hesitancy in discharging the conjugal debt in such cases and in obeying the divine command to be fruitful and multiply; the children are sanctified in one believing parent.' Again we see the triumph of grace over the corruption of nature. As far as the privilege here spoken of is concerned, the children of one believing parent are in the same position as the children of parents who are both believers. The representative principle follows the line of the covenant of grace, exemplified in the believer, rather than the line of the covenant of works, exemplified in the unbeliever; the solidarity is unto life rather than unto death." (*Divorce*, by John Murray, Philadelphia, 1953, page 66).

From Professor Murray's discussion of the passage, it may be inferred that the child of one believing parent is entitled to baptism **because the believing parent is the God-appointed representative of the child in the structure of the covenant of grace**, and this relationship is not interfered with or canceled by the fact that the child's other parent is an unbeliever, for the unbeliever is (externally and positionally) sanctified by being married to a Christian. The Christian partner in such a marriage, however, is not the God-appointed covenant representative of the unbelieving partner. It is possible that the unbeliever may become a Christian believer, and the believing partner must hope and pray that this will indeed take place. But the relationship between husband and wife, or wife and husband, is not like that between parent and child, for both marriage partners are adults and each is **personally** responsible before God for his or her own spiritual state. The parent-child relationship is different — the parent is a responsible adult, the child is incapable of personal action as yet and is dependent entirely on the parent. It appears, therefore, that baptism of an unbelieving wife or husband on the ground of the faith of a believing spouse would be highly improper, and con-

trary to the nature of both infant and adult baptism.

— J. G. Vos

**Question:**

How can we answer the question as to whether people should be re-baptized if their parents, on their own testimony, were not Christians when the original rite was performed? Does not the validity of the covenant standing of the child relate directly to the existing covenant standing of the parents at the time of the baptism, and thus the rite also? Would such baptism not be invalid on the ground of false pretences at the time of administration?

**Answer:**

All Reformed standards teach that baptism is not to be repeated. The Form of Church Government of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, II, 5, states: "The church accepts as valid the baptism which has been properly administered by a recognized minister of any evangelical church." This of course leaves some questions dangling in the air, such as, What is meant by **properly** administered? What is an **evangelical** church — does it mean evangelical in creed only, or also in practical life and work? Of course, no statement or rule can be formulated so as perfectly to cover all possible cases.

The writer would suggest that an **evangelical** church must at least mean one that is evangelical in its official creed, i.e., teaching the supreme and sole authority of Scripture and the Gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith. By "properly" it would seem that the intention must have been to administer the Christian sacrament of Baptism (in the case of infant baptism) to the infant children of parents who professed to believe on Christ and obey Him. For a minister to baptize (as some indeed do) dying infants, neither of whose parents is a professing Christian, is certainly not "properly" administered baptism. On the other hand, ministers are not expected to psychoanalyze people and search their inner thoughts and motives out to find out if they are indeed true and sincere believers. Baptism and church membership rest on presumption, not on proof of regeneration. The Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, Chapter XXII, rejects as an **error** the proposition "That saintship is the criterion of church-membership, so that the visible Church may not, without guilt, receive any who is not really a saint, or exclude any who is regenerated" (XXII, Error 3). The attempt to gain positive and absolute certainty as to who is regenerate is not only improper, but it is also impossible to succeed in such an attempt. The early New England churches held this error, that "real saintship" (we would call it regeneration) is the criterion of church membership. They tried to have a perfectly pure church by limiting membership to those who could prove that they were regenerated. The evils which resulted from this at-

tempt were worse than the disease it was intended to cure.

The validity of baptism does not depend on the spiritual state of the minister, or the parents, but on the gracious promise and purpose of God. Where parents had children baptized, and it later turns out that the parents were unsaved at the time, the proper reaction is not to repeat the outward rite of the baptism, but to thank God that saving faith has come to the family at last. This would then be a kind of anachronism with a happy ending (Cf. The Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII. 6, "The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered. . ."). In a somewhat analogous way, the prayers of a parent for the conversion of his or her children may sometimes be answered years after the parent's death. God is the Lord of time and He is able to rectify and heal the blunders of His people.

— J. G. Vos

**Question:**

Deuteronomy 23:3 prohibited the Moabite from entering into the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation. Would this not have excluded Ruth, in spite of her true faith, and so also Jesse, David, Solomon, etc.?

**Answer:**

A negative "higher critic" would answer this one by saying that Deuteronomy was written hundreds of years after the time of Ruth and the other persons mentioned! Believing as we do that Deuteronomy is not only a genuine writing of Moses but also part of the infallible Word of God, we cannot adopt this easy answer.

G. T. Manley in *The New Bible Commentary* comments (page 215) that "although Egypt and Edom fought against the men of Israel, Moab and Ammon sought the ruin of their souls (Numbers 13)." The law about a Moabite or an Ammonite not entering the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation was evidently not strictly enforced after the Babylonian Captivity — compare Nehemiah 13:1-3. Israel and Moab seem to have been on friendly terms in the time of the Judges and early monarchy, as shown by 1 Samuel 22:3, 4. Rightly or wrongly, the law seems to have been inoperative during Israel's early history. For Mahlon and Chilion to marry Moabite women was not in accord with the laws and ideals God had given Israel for marriage. The book of Ruth, however, was not written to discuss the ethics of mixed marriages, but for other purposes, especially to give a link in the genealogy of King David and of Jesus Christ. In any case, God is sovereign and not subject to laws He has imposed on men, and since David was anointed by Samuel at the express command of the Lord, we may be sure that in this case, at any rate, God did not regard the law of Deut. 23:3 as excommunicating David and Solomon.

— J. G. Vos

## PSALM 140

CAMPBELL, C. M. D.

Unknown

1. Lord, save me from the e - vil man; From cru - el men keep free,  
 Who mis-chief in their heart de-vise And war would ev - er see.  
 For e - ven like a ser-pent's fangs Their tongues they sharp do make;  
 And un-der-neath their lips there lies The poi - son of a snake.

2. Preserve me, Lord, from wicked hands;  
 From cruel men keep free,  
 Who plan to thrust my steps aside;  
 They hid a snare for me.  
 The proud have laid their cords for me,  
 And they a secret net  
 Have by the wayside for me spread;  
 They gins for me have set.
3. Then to Jehovah thus I said:  
 My God alone art Thou;  
 Jehovah, hear my voice when I  
 In supplication bow.  
 O God, of my salvation Lord,  
 Thy saving strength impart;  
 In day of battle for my head  
 A covering Thou art.
4. What wicked men desire, O Lord, —  
 Their wishes be denied;  
 Nor further Thou their ill device,  
 Lest they exult in pride.

- As for the head and chief of those  
 That compass me around,  
 Make Thou the mischief of their lips  
 A cov'ring to confound.
5. Let burning coals upon them fall;  
 To flames be cast those men,  
 And into deepest pits whence they  
 May never rise again.  
 An evil speaker on the earth  
 In power shall not remain;  
 By wickedness the violent  
 Shall be sought out and slain.
6. I know Jehovah will maintain  
 The cause of those oppressed;  
 He will defend the right of those  
 By poverty distressed.  
 And then the righteous to Thy name  
 Their thanks will surely give;  
 And they that upright are in heart  
 Shall in Thy presence live.

(Reprinted by permission from *The Book of Psalms with Music*. Copyright 1950 by the Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Price of book (359 pages) is \$1.50 postpaid. Order from Chester R. Fox, Treasurer, Empire Bldg., Pittsburgh 22, Pa., U.S.A.)

Printed in the United States of America by The Record Publishing Company, Linn, Kansas



# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

OCTOBER-DECEMBER, 1963

NUMBER 4

Life Through Death .....	161
Seeing the Unseen .....	163
A Believer's Life of Christ .....	165
Instrumental Music in Public Worship .....	169
George Gillespie on Church Censures .....	173
Some Noteworthy Quotations .....	175
Religious Terms Defined .....	176
Studies in Old Testament History .....	177

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

Subscription \$1.50 per year postpaid anywhere

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

3408 7th Avenue

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Editorial Committee: Ross Latimer, Joseph M. Caskey, G. Mackay Robb

Published by

The Board of Publication of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Agent for Britain and Ireland: The Rev. Adam Loughridge, B.A.,  
Glenmanus Manse, Portrush, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Agent for Australia and New Zealand: The Rev. Alexander Barkley, B.A.,  
20 Fenwick St., Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Publication Office, Linn, Kansas, U.S.A.

Published Quarterly, Second Class Postage Paid at Linn, Kansas

# *Faith*

By Esther Belle Heins

Great God of Heaven, who doth give  
A peace, a mind serene,  
Through faith we know the worlds were framed  
By Thee, adored — unseen!

We know that Thou dost smile on faith,  
It is a gift from Thee  
And never shines more brightly than  
In midst of tragedy.

It is a beacon high on shore  
To those who roam the sea,  
It does not flicker, flare nor die  
But highlights Calvary.

# *The Stranger*

By John Clare

His presence was a peace to all,  
He bade the sorrowful rejoice.  
Pain turned to pleasure at His call,  
Health lived and issued from His voice.  
He healed the sick and sent abroad  
The dumb rejoicing in the Lord.

The blind met daylight in His eye,  
The joys of everlasting day;  
The sick found health in His reply;  
The cripple threw his crutch away.  
Yet He with troubles did remain  
And suffered poverty and pain.

Yet none could say of wrong He did,  
And scorn was ever standing by;  
Accusers by their conscience chid,  
When proof was sought, made no reply.  
Yet without sin He suffered more  
Than ever sinners did before.

# *No Scar? No Wound?*

(Author unknown)

Hast thou no scar?  
No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand?  
I hear thee sung as mighty in the land,  
I hear them hail thy bright ascendant star:  
Hast thou no scar?

Hast thou no wound?  
Yet I was wounded by the archers, spent  
Leaned me against a tree to die; and rent  
By ravening beasts that compassed Me, I  
swooned:  
Hast thou no wound?

No wound? No scar?  
Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,  
And pierced are the feet that follow Me;  
But thine are whole; can he have followed far  
Who has nor wound nor scar?

# BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 18

OCTOBER-DECEMBER, 1963

NUMBER 4

## *Life Through Death*

By Joseph P. Duggan

“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” — John 12:24, 25.

Scripture is clear and open in its meaning. It is designed not to hide the truth in mystery and dark sayings, but rather it is a revelation, an opening of the truth. At the same time it cannot be denied that it is full of surprises to men. Along this line, those who read and study the Word of God, cannot but be impressed by the considerable role that paradoxes or at least partially paradoxical situations play in it.

Thus, for example, Jerusalem was for a millennium the stronghold of truth and the bastion of the Kingdom of God upon earth — yet it was out of lowly Bethlehem that the everlasting and supreme King was brought forth; And it was in Nazareth that He made His appearance — Nazareth, so corrupted by gentile influence that even Nathaniel was prompted to say: “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46).

Think also of Palestine — which was the Promised Land — flowing with milk and honey — the land which the Lord gave to His people to be their dwelling place. Yet this same Lord in the days of Jeremiah vowed that if His people stayed in the land they would perish by sword, famine, and pestilence, and that they would be preserved only in wicked Babylon.

We might think also of the “chief of sinners” and the great persecutor of Christ’s people — yet this same man ultimately became an apostle of Jesus and a great and powerful witness to His gospel.

Our Lord Himself, in His teachings upon earth, made abundant use of paradoxical statements. For example: “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first” (Matthew 19:30) and “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (Matthew 20:27).

Think also of repentance, in which the penitent’s tears, humiliation, and heart-rending sorrow yield the fruit of glorious joy and exaltation. Remember also that chastening — though it may hardly seem so at the time — is the surest sign of God’s love.

The most impressive and supreme paradox is that the Lord of Glory should be delivered over into the hands of sinners to be crucified and slain.

A similar paradox is presented by our Lord’s words in John 12:24, 25: “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 life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”

Jesus Christ, when He entered upon His public ministry, new full well its nature: that it would culminate in the agony of the cross and, of course, following this, the glorification of the resurrection. And when He speaks here, He knew full well that He had been called to set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem that He might be delivered into the hands of men (Luke 9:44, 51). Thus, when He says: “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 truly speaks of Himself and of the work for which he came into the world.

He had already made abundant allusion to the death which awaited Him: “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19) and “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:17, 18).

This very discourse is opened with the words: “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified” (verse 23) and He continues in verses 24 and 25 to explain how this glorification is to be achieved. Shortly thereafter in the same discourse, verses 30-33, He further relates this dying to His own person. Here then Jesus looks forward to that time in which He would be called upon to drink the cup which the Father would give unto Him; here He sees Himself as a kernel of wheat ready to fall into the ground to die — ready to surrender His own earthly existence — ready to say “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” Luke 22:42).

Here, of course, is the paradox: **Death** — terrible, agonizing, unjust death, a death achieved by the machinations of Satan’s servants; **but issuing from this: Life** — glorious life — life for

God's people with peace and mercy and the destruction of Satan's power.

Here is the paradox: death is the opposite of and the contradiction of life. **Yet here and repeatedly He teaches that life is brought forth and born out of and through the means of death.** In the 24th verse the Lord points out that His death gives life to His people and in the next verse that their death is at least a part of their receiving the gift of life.

This is paradoxical; but paradoxes are not self-contradictions. They only violate the laws of logic when superficially applied. Paradoxes, true paradoxes, have explanations. Thus we may understand how Babylon had to replace the Promised Land, and how the penitent's tears inevitably bring a song to his lips, and how it was that the Lord of Glory was delivered into the hands of sinners.

And in this case the explanation to the paradox of life from death is quite obvious, for it has been incorporated into the paradox itself by Jesus. The explanation He gives is in the form of an analogy to nature. A seed or a kernel of wheat will be of no value if it abides alone. If it does not fall into the ground it accomplishes nothing, though it does preserve its own existence. But if it does fall into the ground and die, that is, surrender its own existence, it becomes the source of a great harvest.

Similarly, our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world not to preserve and protect His own person. For this He would have remained in the mansions of heaven. But rather He came to die; to surrender Himself in order that from His death a great harvest of souls might be reaped by God the Father. The Seed submits to the will of the Sower.

In giving to His disciples this lesson He does so to instruct them in the meaning of the crucifixion to which He determinately proceeded. In giving to His disciples this lesson He looks forward to the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy: "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him in grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isaiah 53:10, 11).

So much for the resemblance between Jesus Christ and the kernel of wheat. As the Apostle Peter tells us, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21). Christ is certainly the example for His people to follow. However, we cannot, of course, pattern our lives wholly after the life of the Son of Man. Not only did He live at a different time and under a different set of social circumstances than do we, but further, a vast seg-

ment of His activities were by nature and by necessity unique to Him as a unique man. In this regard we might think of His miraculous deeds and His crucifixion for His people.

On the other hand, however, the vast multitude of the principles which motivated our Lord are applicable to His people also, although such principles were by necessity applied in a specific manner in His life which specific application would be absurd in ours. The principle of dying to purely personal interest in order to bring life out of death is, of course, supremely applied in the life of our Lord in His laying down of His life upon the cross. In this Christ cannot serve as our example, for His offering for sin was eternally effectual, while our sacrifice could have no proper value in that our persons have not the merit of Christ's person. But, the **principle** of life being born out of death is applicable to the disciples of Christ, though certainly not in the same manner.

Our Lord asserts this principle as applicable to His people in the words which immediately follow in the 25th verse: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." He here asserts that He does indeed bring life to His own, but that they must (if they will truly appropriate this life) die — die in order that from their deaths they may live in newness of life, that is, the life which is from God, the life which the Son of God gives His people, the life which is true life. Such a life is born only in death.

This truth, that life is born in death, and that the living child of God must die to himself if he is to live to God, is of the utmost importance to the Christian profession. It is that which our baptism signifies, as is so plainly enunciated in Romans 6:3-11.

The life of fallen mankind is not here viewed as existing apart from sin (obviously for the very good reason that in actuality such does not exist), so that very properly those called to life on high from their former fallen estate are called to die in baptism — to die to the self which has become so inextricably entangled with sin. This dying to sin is, of course, vital to Christian life, for sin is the direct and absolute contradiction of that for which the Christian stands. Thus Paul says to the Colossians: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Colossians 3:5). Here again is death (mortification). Why death? Because death is the gateway to life. The life of sin must die in order that true life may arise. Thus Paul tells us further: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13).

All of this is, of course, involved in what our Lord says in John 12:25. It could not but be in-

volved, for although sin did not touch Him as it touched His people and thus the destruction of personal sins is a concept which cannot apply to His own dying as described in verse 24, yet nevertheless our Lord in this address applies the principle of life through death not only to His own sinless self, but also to His people woefully corrupted by and entangled in sin.

Certainly then, when our Lord speaks the words of John 12:25, He does speak of dying to sin, for He speaks concerning and to those who are sinners, and the hating of one's life by the sinner obviously entails hating the sin which is inseparable from the sinner's life. **But, there is something far more thorough-going than this in our Lord's words.**

When our Lord says: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit", He is not primarily speaking of death that is necessary because of personal involvement in sin; and similarly, when he continues: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal", He is not merely speaking of hating or despising our lives merely in so far as they are sinful. Even as He laid down His sinless life, so also we are called upon to lay down our lives, not merely because, or to the extent that, they are sinful, but our lives as such.

Here, and in the similar discourse recorded in the other three gospels, He closely relates the Christian's dying to self with His own enduring of the cross. In Mark 8:34, 35 we read: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Here, even as in John 12:25, the emphasis is on the Christian's self-denial and his losing of his life not merely because this life is corrupted by sin, but the laying down of our lives as such, as a sacrifice to God.

The people of God are thus not only called upon to die to sin, injustice, fraud, lust, and so forth, but also to die to things which are not wrong in themselves: our own ambitions, plans, goals, hopes, and purposes. The things of this world are

not evil in themselves, but nevertheless, as the Apostle Paul admonishes: "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2).

By analogy: there are many things that we can do with our material wealth; there are a multitude of good, legal, and proper things to do with it, but as Christians we recognize that we have not the final say over the disposition of any of it. We see, or should see, that we are only God's stewards, or caretakers, of the bounty which He has given to us.

Similarly, there are many good, proper, and legal things that we can do with our minutes, hours, yea, our whole lifetimes, but Christ calls us to die to our own lives — that is, to die to our own ambitions, and to live only unto God and never unto self, even though this may be in lawful manner.

Now this certainly does not mean that we must strive to harm our own self-interest. But rather, that we must utterly die to self and self-interest and be governed only by interest in Christ and His kingdom. For example, it may be to our own self-interest to eat and to drink (obviously so), but no longer will we eat and drink **because** it is to our self-interest, but because it is the will of God. As Paul says: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31).

In order to live as God's people we will die to ourselves, presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service (Romans 12:1).

It may be paradoxical to say that we must die to live, but this is the case. This is the consistent teaching of our Lord and His apostles. It is possible for us to live good, moral lives, but if in so doing, we live **our** lives, if we love our lives, if we love our own plans and goals, we will lose our lives.

How can we live? By dying to our own lives, and by living the life and only the life which God gives to His people. By hating our own lives in this world, by despising our own wills, we may enjoy God's life now and into all eternity.

---

## *Seeing the Unseen*

By the Rev. A. Barkley, M.A.

"Seeing the unseen" is an expression that may appear to some minds as contradictory or perhaps meaningless. Yet in sober truth it describes the deepest and richest condition that governs life. Describing the aspirations that should emanate from hearts aglow with spiritual warmth

Paul says: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." Again we are told that Moses was enabled to defy the wrath of the Egyptian monarch because he endured "as seeing Him Who is invisible." To speak of seeing the unseen often means being branded

as a visionary and perhaps lacking in ability to appreciate the beauty of art. People are so prone to mind earthly things that to speak of the unseen may sound to them as sheer foolishness. As Dr. Stuart Holden says, "they don't see and don't care that they don't see the unseen." But those who have truly experienced the work of grace in the heart can say, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

#### **MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE**

These words remind us that there is more in life and in the world than the physical eye can see. One man may look at a flower and see nothing very wonderful. Yet our Lord, drawing attention to the lily of the field, declares that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. With scientific aids many wonders of the hitherto unseen have been revealed to the eye — the wonders of the heavens and in the realm of nature. But there are unseen realities that can never be revealed with the aid of scientific instruments, and yet regarding the reality of such one can be deeply conscious. The year that King Uzziah died might have been one of forebodings and disaster for those whose vision comprehended only the political. But for Isaiah there could be no such fear, for he declares: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." Again he writes: "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." The Lord of Glory, invisible as far as physical sight is concerned, is to be seen and known in the spiritual sense.

God is seen in the glory of His works of creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." When God had spoken to Job about the wonders of creation and the mysteries pertaining to the realm of nature Job answered and said, "I know that Thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee . . . I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee."

#### **THE GLORY OF REDEMPTION**

But God is seen more intimately in the glory of redemption. It is in the revelation given us in His Word that we come to see God in this fashion. In the Bible we see God in the mystery of His existence, as one God and yet three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We cannot explain it all but by faith accept what God reveals. As Athanasius wrote many centuries ago: "Man can perceive only the hem of the garment of God, the cherubim cover the rest with their wings." Failure to see this fundamental fact regarding the doctrine of the Trinity will lead to misunderstanding of the whole plan of salvation as revealed by God in His Word. In the unfolding of the gracious purposes of God in redemption we see how the Father sent the Son to be the propitia-

tion for sin, and the Son, when He returned to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, sent the Spirit to apply His redemption to men. When God issues the call: "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else," it means that there must be a ready acceptance of the way of salvation that God has revealed and in which there is the activity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is looking to the unseen realities — unseen to the physical eye but clearly seen by the eye of faith.

#### **VIEW LIFE IN LIGHT OF UNSEEN**

When Paul speaks of seeing the unseen we are reminded that we must regard our experiences in life in the light of the unseen. That will determine the way in which we shall look upon such things as pain, sorrow and affliction. One writer, commenting upon Paul's words from 11 Cor. 4:18, states: "the things seen are to all intents and purposes that tempest-tossed life of which Paul has been speaking, that daily dying, that pressure, perplexity, persecution, and down-casting, which are for the present his lot. To these he does not look: in comparison with that to which he does look, these are a light and momentary affliction which is not worth a thought. Similarly, the things unseen are not everything, indefinitely, which is invisible; to all intents and purposes they are the glory of Christ. It is on this the Apostle's eye is fixed, this which is his goal. The stormy life, even when most is made of its storms, passes; but Christ's glory can never pass. It is infinite, inconceivable, eternal."

#### **SECRET OF VICTORY**

Is this not the true secret of the life of victory? We think of Moses with that band of redeemed slaves in the wilderness. They were difficult to handle. Their hankering after Egypt and their continuous grumbling about their lot were sufficient to break the heart of any leader. But Moses held on his way and he won through. What was his secret? "He endured as seeing Him Who is invisible." His deepest conviction was that these folk, in spite of their undeniable faults and failures, were "the people of God," and that God would never suffer final defeat. Had Moses looked to the material resources, or the military strength of those whom he led he could never have endured. If Paul had looked to the things that were seen around him he would have been of all men most miserable. There were quarrels in the Church, there were Christians who showed no evidence of growth in grace, some believers had fallen into most grievous sin. All these things tended to dishearten, but Paul could look away to the unseen, and what a blessed source of encouragement it was. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" he asks. "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?" — "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through

Him that loved us," he replies triumphantly.

The picture has not changed with the passing of the centuries. All the inventions in the world do not alter the essential nature of the heart of man. Out of it still proceed those thoughts that defile, and only by the blood of atonement can it be cleansed. To look at the things that are seen will never bring peace to the soul nor will it lead to a life of victory. Perhaps there is someone listening to this broadcast who has been finding it difficult to reconcile the actual experiences with the standard we have revealed in the Bible. You may feel that life has been one of defeats rather than victory. You have seen things happening in the case of others where there has been backsliding and grievous sin. In such circumstances it is well to remember that our hopes and encouragements do not arise from what we see in others. We are to look

to the unseen, to the glory of the exalted Lord and Saviour. That is something the world knows nothing about. It fails to understand the radiant peace that prevails when we can see Him Who is invisible. For it is only those who are Christ's and who have found in Him the secret of victory over sin, and therefore over pain, over sorrow, and over death, who can speak as Paul does about affliction being "light" and only "for a moment." They look at their trouble in the light of the glory of the perfected Kingdom of Christ, for which they know their present affliction is training them. They know that in that kingdom "the former troubles shall be forgotten"; "the Lord shall be their everlasting light and the days of their mourning shall be ended."

**Note:** The foregoing article is reproduced from *Evangelical Action* (Australia). — Editor.

---

## *A Believer's Life of Christ*

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

### THE COMING OF THE LORD

The subject of the coming of the Lord is one which has been much to the fore for a century or more. Much progress no doubt has been made but as yet no generally acceptable solution of the problem has appeared. The whole Bible-believing, fundamental-minded world has been sharply divided in the interpretation of the subject.

In our study and consideration of it, our first concern is for a firm foundation in all the fundamental facts and principles of Bible teaching and the Christian faith. Among these, for special mention and attention, we submit the following:

(1) God, in his exalted place and moral character as King and Judge.

(2) God, in the gift of His Son for the salvation of men.

(3) God, in his sovereign plan and purpose for the world.

Under this last head, the emphasis must be upon the great new day of God; the new dispensation of His Son and Holy Spirit. This new day of the Lord, especially in its initiation or inauguration, and establishment, is of decisive importance for the true understanding of the Coming.

Briefly stated, our position is that the coming of the Lord should be interpreted as having occurred in A.D. 70. History has it that at this time the Romans came against the Jews in an all-out campaign of death and destruction. But the Bible teaching is that it was the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as God's mediatorial King and Judge.

This, alone, we believe, accords with all that Jesus taught concerning his coming. This, from his viewpoint at the time, is what it was primarily. It was what he characterized by such expressions as his "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," his coming in and the coming of his kingdom.

It occupied a large place in his thought and teaching at the time just because it was near and consequently was of immediate concern to him and to God; to the early church and to the world.

This view of the matter should not be taken as in any way prejudicial to the teaching concerning his final, great, personal, visible and glorious coming at the end of the age. But what he had especially in mind in his closing days among us in the flesh was his coming in the life of the church and of the world. This, from his point of view at the time was his Coming.

Our concern in the present chapter is with the first of the two events of coming indicated; namely, his near-coming. It was indeed an event, an advent of the long ago from our standpoint. It had particular reference, we believe, to the Lord Jesus as a human being; in his life in his humanity; in his incarnate nature as man.

Often throughout his days among us in the flesh he gave voice to the thought that he came, as of the day and time in which he lived, not to judge but to deliver. He came "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." On one occasion he definitely repudiated the idea that he came to serve as a judge. "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" he said (Luke 12:14).

And yet at the same time he often spoke of himself as engaging in judgment. "As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just." "I judge no man and yet if I judge my judgment is true" (John 5:30; 8:15, 16). Also he spoke of himself as the one appointed to be the Judge (John 5:22; 26, 27). And not only at the end of his days but throughout his public life he certainly passed judgment not only on individuals as such but also on the people and nation as a whole.

In his coming of the incarnation he came first of all to forward and fulfill his gracious ministry and service in the redemption of the world. With the closing events of his life, this work of his earthly life was finished. There was, however, yet another office and function to discharge. It was a new and special office into which he was introduced in his ascension.

After the ascension there was yet another special event in his redemptive ministry, which came in the fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit. In the descent of the Spirit, Christ also himself, in fulfillment of his promise, came. He came to be with, indwell and to abide in and with his own. "I will not leave you comfortless"; he said, "I will come to you." This was one aspect of his post-ascension coming.

This followed immediately upon the event of his ascension. However, there was soon to be another coming of an altogether different kind. The first of these two post-ascension comings was the fulfillment of his power and presence in and with his people. The other of the two, which yet remained, was his full induction into the active exercise of his power and kingdom as World-Ruler, Lawgiver, Judge and Avenger.

The gist of the matter may be expressed as follows. From the viewpoint of God the incarnation of his Son was the introduction of a great new day of the Lord, the day of his Christ. The old dispensation of types and shadows; of tabernacle, temple, priest and sacrifice was at an end. According to the new regime in the plan of God the old was abrogated and was declared to be dead (Matthew 24:28; Luke 17:37).

Now the new day of God was introduced, supplanting the old. In order to its full establishment a transition had to be made. Step by step it came as God continued to unfold his master-plan.

The eternal Son of God became man. That was the fountain and foundation of it all. Conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary, he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. The third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. God, the Holy Spirit descended on the assemblage of his followers and in him The Lord Jesus came again in a great new coming to his own.

And then, not many years later, he came again into the world; not now as Lord and Saviour (for in that respect he was already fully present) but as God's own great mediatorial King and Judge.

God, we may never forget, is indeed **just** as well as merciful. He is a God of justice as well as a God of love. One side of his moral nature is his righteous indignation and holy abhorrence in relation to all sinners and all sin. "Vengeance belongeth unto God." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

We recall his visitation of his wrath and judgment on his people when the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar came. They sacked and burned the city, plundered and destroyed the temple and those left alive were carried away into the seventy year captivity. History records what became of Babylonia some years later. Read the prophetic account of this as given in Isaiah 13. This was the outstanding example, of old time, concerning what was sure to come when God's people fell away, as also when the cup of the world's iniquity was full.

With this general statement of the case in mind let us now turn to the sayings of the Lord himself and his teaching in the matter.

As regards the general coverage as given in the synoptic gospels we note

(1) a preliminary approach to the subject evident in Luke 11:14-54; 12:35-48 and 7:22-29.

(2) the principal material contained in two discourses; one given in the temple, the other on the Mt. of Olives. (Our explanation of the kind of language used in Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; and Luke 21:25-28 is as follows: At this point in his discourse Jesus, we believe, took occasion to revert to the language of apocalyptic, a rhetorical form of speech often used by the prophets. See Isaiah 13:9-13; Ezekiel 32:7-10; Daniel 8:9-14 and Joel 2:30, 31. It is an extreme form of hyperbole (exaggeration), and is or was employed for the expression of the terrifying severity of certain of God's judgments upon the nations.)

(3) The Lord's own official public notice given in connection with his "great confession" before the Jewish council (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62 and Luke 22:69). To be added to the above are passages in Luke 19:41-44 and 23:27-31.

In the address of Matthew 23 the Lord began by warning the disciples against the teaching and example of the leaders. Then turning to the leaders themselves he first gave utterance to the indictment, after which he prescribed the penalty and declared the judgment due. "The blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world shall be required of this generation." "Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." The discourse closes with what

amounts to an announcement of his final exit from the scene plus a prediction of their further encounter with him at some future date.

As the Master left the temple and was about to go his way out of the city his progress was interrupted by the disciples. They seem to have been moved by some urgent desire to call his attention to the massive strength and solidity of the construction of the temple.

Agreeably to their desire he turned to gaze once more upon the splendour of the walls and towers, the great stones and many architectural adornments. (Josephus says that the stones were white and of the best material and gives their measurements as 50x20x16 ft.)

No doubt they recalled how zealous he had ever been for the sanctity of "his Father's house"; how vehement, even, in his reproof of its desecration and pollution. But now they sensed a change of attitude. With the words of his final pronouncements yet ringing in their ears, they were very much concerned. It was beyond all comprehension that these sacred courts should ever be forsaken and destroyed.

To these remarks the Master responded with his word "Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." So now they knew and we can imagine something of what was in their hearts as they followed in the way.

Their deep concern was evidenced by what took place later in the evening. It was on the Mount of Olives where apparently they made their encampment for the night. To Jesus, sitting there alone and somewhat apart from the others, certain of the disciples came with the questions which weighed so heavily upon their hearts. "Tell us," they said, "when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). There followed the great prophetic discourse on record in all three of the synoptics (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21).

Spoken to the disciples themselves it was addressed primarily to the subject of their deliverance from the impending destruction. Step by step he opened up the future for them so that they would be able to see the day approaching. One event would follow another (false prophets, wars, and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes and the like) until the day appointed for the sign to appear which would be the signal for flight.

Strangely enough the sign was to be the investiture of the city by the Romans, which would seem to indicate its downfall. But before the actual assault could be made, the siege would be lifted, thereby opening the way of escape. Deliverance having been affected in this way the avenging legions would close in again and the destruction follow.

This in brief is the meaning, and, as we believe, the whole meaning and true import of this discourse. The time period covered was the ensuing forty years and the history of the time as told by the historians confirms each and every detail of the prophecy.

In addition to the preliminary teaching and the two discourses mentioned is the Lord's official public declaration made before the high priest and the council on the night of his trial. To his own self-confession he appended the statement "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62 and compare Luke 22:69).

To be noted is the fact that the statement was addressed to the sanhedrin which forty years later was still in existence. What it meant was that the council as such would see him in his power and coming, as of course they did (Matthew 24:30; 26:64).

A further observation is that while this declaration was indeed prophetic, it was yet not so much a prediction as it was an announcement of what he himself would do. For the moment they were permitted to sit in judgment on him. But the time would come when he, the Son of man, would come in all of his transcendent power and glory in judgment upon them.

(1) First among the various points to be considered is the time-factor everywhere apparent. A programme of events was revealed, a timetable placed in the disciples hands, by means of which they would be able to discern the actual nearness of the coming. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree," he said, "When his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matthew 24:32, 33; Mark 13:28, 29; Luke 21:29-31).

On the other hand no precise information bearing on the very day and hour was given. The sign of the coming, however, was revealed. And the teaching was that, following the fulfillment of the series of events included in the timetable, the sign would appear and would signify the hour for flight. According to the instructions given, the believers were to flee not only Jerusalem itself but all Judea; and so make their escape and contribute to their own deliverance.

Some of the time references are as follows: "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come" (Matthew 10:23). "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matthew 16:28). Finally there is this reference given in the discourse itself; "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34).

In addition we shall not fail to observe the use of the term "the end," as being on the way and soon to come, coupled with such sayings as "then know that the desolation thereof draweth nigh" and "these be the days of vengeance." We would also call attention to the oft-repeated "when — "then" form of statement.

And yet again there are the repeated exhortations to faithfulness and watchfulness, which would have been quite beside the point for the disciples in those days apart from some specific reference to them in their own lives. Note the intimation of the nearness of the event in the exhortation to prayer that their flight should not be in the winter, nor on the Sabbath; also that they might be accounted worthy to escape and so to "stand before the Son of man"; (i.e. approved in his sight.)

(2) A second observation has to do with the principal aspect of the main event, which was its character as a coming in judgment. In addition to the Bible teaching concerning God as the Judge, there is his elevation of his Son to that position. Considered from this standpoint it is clear that it was given of God to the Lord Jesus Christ both to pronounce and to execute the verdict.

The prophets of old were ever faithful in sounding the note of warning. The same was not wanting in the last and greatest of them. "Now also the axe is laid at the root of the trees." Of the Coming One he said "Whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:10, 12).

As for the apostasy of his own day, there can be no doubt about what the Saviour thought about it. In all his representations of the wickedness of the men of his day there is clear implication of his full conviction of their thoroughgoing ill desert.

The prophets of the past had spoken of God's great judgment visited upon his people of old as something less than "a full end." Not so Jesus, however. For him it was "the end," and signified God's final full rejection of the Jewish race, as such, as the people of God in any special sense.

Instructive in this connection is his early omission but later use and application of an expression found in Isaiah's prophecy; "the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2a; Luke 4:18, 19). On the occasion of the Lord's first public appearance in Nazareth, it was significant that this phrase was not included in his reading. But not so in his later discourse. "These be the days of vengeance" he said (Luke 21:22).

So it was that the theme of the impending judgment which had appeared in the address in the temple was carried over in the private conversation and discourse with the disciples. This,

however, was primarily concerned with the details of the mechanism of escape. In the former he had placed the leaders squarely in the succession of the enemies of God and of his messengers. He condemned in effect not only the leaders themselves but also the nation as a whole as represented by them. It was God's own last word in his age-long controversy with his people; the official summation of the case against them and declaration of the judgment due. Other references bearing on the subject are Luke 13:35; 19:41-44; and 23:27-31; 21:22-24.

Our aim in this discussion does not require us to dwell upon the harrowing details. The Lord himself said that "there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19).

Josephus' record states that there were 1,100,000 slain and 97,000 enslaved. The land was sold to the Gentiles so that all those not killed or carried away were left homeless and destitute. The Romans evidently had had enough of Jewish insurrection, and their original intention was not only destruction but extermination. Part of their objective was to publicize the action as an object lesson to all the provinces.

Their original design was overruled as God intervened in behalf of his elect to "shorten the days" (Matthew 24:22; Mark 13:20). We should not overlook the distinct prophetic references to the Romans; which, though often obscure, are unmistakable (Matthew 24:15, 28; Mark 13:14; Luke 17:37 and 21:20-24 and Daniel 9:26, 27). (The expression, "abomination of desolation"; (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20) we believe, is an evident reference to the desecration of the holy ground of the city and its environs by the Romans (See Daniel 8:9-14; 9:20-27; 11:31).

We can imagine something of the sensation produced throughout the empire as word of the destruction spread. To this applies the sayings of Matthew 24:27 and Luke 17:24. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so also shall the coming of the Son of man be." The Master distinctly declared that his coming would be seen of both friend and foe and would take place in full view of all the world.

(3) A third point would be that of the event as a coming in deliverance which however has already been considered.

It is natural to raise the question as to whether the idea of a continual coming of the Lord is warranted. It is true that throughout the history of the world God has exercised a continual coming or kind of coming. This was true before the incarnation and has been ever since. All coming subsequent to that event has been a coming of God in Christ. The Bible abundantly supports

the doctrine of continual successive comings of God in blessing on his church and in judgment on the world. This age-long coming of the Lord is now, as it has ever been, in justice and love. The Bible teaches, and the believer may discern, this general coming. Nevertheless we still maintain that for the Lord Jesus in his day his coming was first of all, as we have seen, in A.D. 70.

As we near the end of our present study the one thing above all else which must be emphasized is the general inclusion of all that is said and taught under the head of coming. This characteristic of the teaching is inescapable. The event of A.D. 70 was the coming of the Son of man, the coming of the Lord, his coming in his kingdom. It was his Parousia; the advent in all its fulness of the Presence of the King and of the new age of his kingdom.

Everything considered, can any doubt remain that this was the coming of Christ in the power of his supreme exaltation, in the active exercise of the administration given to him in all of the life and affairs of the world? This, in all the thought and teaching of the Lord himself, as also of the early church, was his coming. It was the punishment of what had been the chosen people of God. It was the overthrow and downfall of their whole regime.

From the human point of view we call it the destruction of Jerusalem. But for Christ and the church it was his Parousia. Throughout the gospel record there is constant, striking reference to it as the descent and presence and action of the Lord.

No evidence of any visible appearance in con-

action with it has been preserved. Even so there is no reason at all to doubt that at the appointed time and place Christ came as he had said "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Through all the source material provided two facts emerge with perfect clearness (1) the unmistakable reference to A.D. 70 (2) the absence of any and all reference to anything else.

By way of conclusion — what was the end in view from God's standpoint? What was meant to be accomplished by this coming of the Lord? In the first place it was God's complete vindication of his Son in all of his claims and predictions. This of course was also part of his reward. He came in judgment on his foes, deliverance for his friends and so in full demonstration of both the severity and the mercy of God. In and through it all, however, was his full induction into the active administration of his new office; His establishment in his position as sovereign World-Ruler, Judge and Avenger under God in all of the life of the world.

A practical lesson from it concerns the ways of God in the execution of his eternal purpose in the world. God, for his own glory, having fore-ordained all that comes to pass, exercises his dominion over the world in every day and age. As for his judgments on men and nations in this life, although they tarry and final judgment is deferred and though his tender mercies everywhere abound, the day of reckoning is sure; the day of the wrath and the vengeance of God will come.

(To be concluded)

(Copyright, 1960, by W. A. Wilde Company. Used by permission).

---

## *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church*

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

### ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, CONTINUED

3. The third argument against the employment of instrumental music in the Christian church will be drawn from the great speech of Stephen before the Jewish Council.

He was altogether an extraordinary man. Endowed with great intellectual abilities, full of faith and power and of the Holy Ghost, he disputed with such vigor against the Libertines, Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and them of Cilicia and Asia, that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." The reference to Cilicia makes it highly probable that in these public discussions he had Saul, the scholar of Tarsus and the disciple of Gamaliel, as one of his an-

tagonists; and it may be that the defeat in argument to which the gifted and aspiring zealot was subjected may have armed him with the acrimony which found so conspicuous expression at the execution of the martyr. Not being able to cope with him on the field of honorable debate, his adversaries resorted to the expedient which discomfited malice is wont to suggest — they prosecuted him before the supreme judiciary. The charge against him was: "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God; this man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall

destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered us." As is apt to be the case, this charge is partly true and partly false. It was false, so far as it alleged blasphemy against Moses and against God. So far as it affirmed Stephen's declaration, that the temple would be destroyed, and the customs or rites, as ceremonial and typical, of the Mosaic code, would be changed, it must, for two reasons, be considered true — in the first place, because the defendant never denied that allegation; and in the second place, because his defence itself proved its relevancy. This construction of the charge has strong support. "This charge," says Prof. Joseph Addison Alexander, (*Comm. on Acts*, Chap. vi.) "was no doubt true, so far as it related to the doctrine that the new religion, or rather the new form of the church, was to supersede the old." "Down to this time," observes Dr. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, (*Art. Stephen*, *Smith's Dict. of Bible*.) "the apostles and the early Christian community had clung in their worship, not merely to the holy land and the holy city, but to the holy place of the temple. This local worship, with the Jewish customs belonging to it, he (Stephen) now denounced. So we must infer from the accusations brought against him, confirmed as they are by the tenor of his defence. The actual words of the charge may have been false, as the sinister and malignant intention which they ascribed to him was undoubtedly false. 'Blasphemous,' that is, 'calumnious' words, 'against Moses and against God' he is not likely to have used. But the overthrow of the temple, the cessation of the Mosaic ritual, is no more than St. Paul preached openly, or than is implied in Stephen's own speech: 'against this holy place and the law — that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs that Moses delivered us.'"

The speech, in conformity with a tendency of the oriental mind, is cast in the framework of an historical statement, and to the cursory reader does not present the features of an argument. It is nevertheless a powerful argument. There are two great principles the assertion of which it involved, and upon which it proceeded: first, the spirituality of God; secondly, his infinite immensity. From the first the great speaker argued that it would be folly to hold God could be adequately worshipped by material emblems and ceremonial rites. From the second he derived the consequence that as God could not be confined to one place, neither could his worship. These positions he sustained by an appeal, in the first place, to the history of Israel, and, in the second place, to the doctrine of the prophets. He shows that the church-state of the Hebrews had undergone great changes — changes which rendered it impossible that they could have worshipped always in one particular mode, in one particular locality, and at one particular sanctuary. The church, as organized in the family of their great ancestor, Abraham, worshipped without the temple. The

church, while in bondage in Egypt, worshipped without the temple. The church, in its migrations for forty years in the wilderness, worshipped without the temple. The church, after it had found rest in the land of promise, through the whole period of the Judges, and through the reigns of Saul and David, worshipped without the temple. It was not until Solomon that the temple was built, and its peculiar services were inaugurated as supplementary to, and perfective of, those which had belonged to the tabernacle. Here Stephen reaches the conclusion of the first branch of his argument — namely, that the history of the Hebrew church proved that the temple in which his judges gloried had not been, in the past, a necessity to the spiritual worship of God, and therefore it involved neither absurdity nor impiety to hold that the church would again worship without it.

He then proceeds to confirm this lesson from the Israelitish history by the doctrine of the prophets, which teaches the greatness, majesty, infinity of God: "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Evidently the argument went to show the unreasonableness of so localizing the worship of the infinite Being as to tie him to a single house of worship. It implicitly affirmed the temporary character of the temple, and would, in all probability, have made the assertion explicit had not some manifestation of anger and pride on the part of the Council interrupted the speaker. This led the fearless and impassioned witness for the gospel directly to indict his judges: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." It is clearly implied that as their fathers had resisted the Holy Ghost in respect to the matter of worshipping according to God's appointments, so they resisted him in the same manner. When, for example, the Spirit directed their fathers to worship at the temple, they worshipped on high places and in groves. Now that a new dispensation had been introduced, and the Holy Ghost directed them to abandon the temple-worship as having discharged its typical and temporary office, they disobeyed him and insisted upon continuing that worship. This outburst of holy eloquence cut them to the heart and drew from them expressions of rage. And when he declared that he saw Jesus, whom he had charged them with having murdered, standing on the right hand of God, it became intolerable, and resolving themselves into a furious mob, they rushed upon him, dragged him outside the gate of the city, and pitilessly stoned him to death.

In this speech it is clear that Stephen erected a testimony which cost him his life in favor of the abrogation of the temple-worship; and as instrumental music was peculiar to that worship, we

have an independent line of proof from the New Testament that it was not introduced, and was not designed to be introduced, into the Christian church.

There is, besides, another aspect of this immortal speech which must not be overlooked. Stephen, endowed with extraordinary penetration of mind, and with a wonderful inspiration of the Holy Ghost, seemed to be in advance of the apostolic college itself in his estimate of the genius of gospel-worship. He contended, as the Lord Jesus had before declared, that the spirituality of God demanded spiritual worship, and delivered a testimony sealed with blood in behalf of the absolute simplicity of gospel institutions. Stripped of all the burdensome though splendid ritual of the temple, they would reproduce the simple and unostentatious services of the synagogue, and interject nothing which was not expressly prescribed by divine authority, or required by necessity, between the living worshipper and the living God. **The spirituality and simplicity of gospel-worship**, — this was what the illustrious deacon insisted upon in burning words and with dauntless spirit before that bigoted and furious bench of zealots; this was the principle which he saturated with martyr blood at the very beginning of the Christian dispensation. Would that every officer of the church would imitate the glorious example, and in the face of popular clamor and the demands of this world's princes, bear an unwavering testimony against the introduction into the public worship of the church of every abrogated element of the ancient temple-services!

4. The next proof is based upon the teaching of Christ and his apostles — a teaching enforced by their practice.

(1.) The teaching of the Lord Jesus excluded instrumental music from the public worship of the New Testament church. He declared that God is vainly worshipped when the doctrines and commandments of men are substituted for his own. We have seen that, by divine direction, by the doctrine and commandment of God, instrumental music in the Old Testament church was excluded from the ordinary, stated worship of his people on the Sabbath day in the synagogue, and was confined to the services of the temple. We have also seen that the Christian church in its polity and worship was, under the conditions and with the modifications necessitated by the new dispensation, modelled after the Jewish synagogue. No entirely new element of worship was incorporated into the services of that church. Jesus did not authorize the effectuation of such a change. Consequently the introduction of instrumental music, which God had not sanctioned, or rather had prohibited, in the worship of the synagogue would have been the substitution of a doctrine and commandment of men for those which proceeded from God.

In his conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, our Saviour enounced the great

principle of the spirituality of worship: "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." While he acknowledged that the Jews, in contradistinction to the Samaritans, paid intelligent worship to God, for the reason that it involved the knowledge of salvation — a salvation to be accomplished by One who, according to the flesh, would spring from the Jewish stock, and while he virtually admitted that they had complied with divine direction in conducting a ceremonial and typical worship with its seat at Jerusalem, he added the significant words: "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." In these words, which adumbrated the genius of gospel-worship, our blessed Lord clearly taught two things: first, that the ceremonial, typical, ritualistic worship of the Jewish temple was designed to be temporary, and that the hour was swiftly approaching when it would be entirely abolished; secondly, that even that stated worship which had been devoid of a ceremonial, typical and ritualistic character, would, under the influences to be exerted upon the people of God in the dispensation about to be inaugurated, become more spiritual than ever. These lessons the Lord Jesus manifestly inculcated, and they justify the inferences: that as instrumental music was a peculiar appendage of the temple it would pass away with it; and that, as it was absent from the synagogue, the Christian church, which was destined to be more spiritual in its worship than was even that unceremonial and untypical institute, could not consistently with its advanced nature and office introduce it into its services. It would suppose in the church of the New Testament a lower degree of spirituality in worship than was possessed by that of the Old.

Furthermore, our Lord, in issuing to his apostles, just before his ascension to glory, the great commission which contemplated the evangelization of the world, imposed upon them this solemn obligation: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This injunction of the Prophet and King of the church involved three things: first, that the apostles, in their oral communications and in their inspired writings, were to teach all those things which Christ commanded; secondly, that they were to teach nothing but what Christ commanded; and thirdly, that the church to be organized by them was to obey their teaching, originated and enforced by the authority of Christ, and to introduce nothing into her doctrine, polity and worship which was not either expressly or impliedly warranted by the command of Christ as reflected by apostolic inculcation and example. This left the church no discretion in regard to these elements of doctrine, government and worship. She is absolutely bound by Christ's commands, enounced

originally by the lips of the apostles, and now permanently recorded in his inspired Word. She is obliged to do all that he has commanded; she is forbidden to do anything which he has not commanded. She can construct no new doctrine, institute no new element of government, and decree no new rites and ceremonies — introduce no new mode of worship. The inquiry, what discretionary power the church possesses in the sphere of worship, will be reserved to another part of this discussion. It is sufficient now to say, that it is a discretionary power which she is never entitled to use **as the church**, but simply as an organization acting under secular and temporal conditions belonging to all human societies. It is only where there is no need, perhaps no room, for a command of Christ — in the sphere in which human wisdom, the natural judgment of men, is competent to act, in which indeed it must act, it is only here that the church is, from the very necessity of the case, invested with discretionary power.

The question now being, Did Christ command the use of instrumental music in his church? the answer must be, He did not. There is certainly no such command on record. Nor can it be presumed. The Lord Jesus knew the divine decree by which the temporary services of the temple were destined to be abolished. He himself predicted the utter destruction of the temple. He knew perfectly that instrumental music was an attachment to the peculiar and distinctive services of the temple, and therefore he knew that it must share the wreck to which the temple with all those services was doomed. Did he authorize his church to save instrumental music from the ruins, and employ it in her worship? He did not. Is she then warranted to do it? Assuredly not.

Our Lord, as a man, was perfectly familiar with the worship of the synagogue. It is said that there were in his day at least four hundred and fifty synagogues in the great city of Jerusalem itself, churches in which the population worshipped from Sabbath to Sabbath, just as a Christian people now worship in theirs. His custom was to attend the synagogue wherever in his blessed itinerancy he chanced to be. He full well knew the absence of instrumental music from its services, and he knew that his church, when established as such, would follow the precedents of stated Sabbath worship, which reached immemorably back through the history of his ancient people. Did he leave a command to his church to depart from that order, and introduce instrumental music into its stated Sabbath worship? He did not; and the defect of such a command is sufficient to settle the question.

These considerations, did they need confirmation, would find it in the actual practice of our Lord. We are informed that he sung psalms with his disciples. On the fatal night in which he was betrayed, he closed the affecting solemnity of instituting the sacrament of the supper with singing.

"And when they had sung an hymn," say two of the evangelists in identically the same language, "they went out into the Mount of Olives;" and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the wonderful chapter in which he argues the necessity of the incarnation — the community of nature betwixt Christ and his brethren, touchingly portrays him as discharging the office of their preacher and of their precentor, saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Nothing do we hear of instruments of music; but, as Justin Martyr, or the pseudo-Justin, says of the psalmody of the early church, only "simple singing." De Quincey (*Writings*, Vol. i. p. 224; Boston: Ticknor, Reed and Fields, 1851.) has contemptuously represented the singing of the English Dissenters "as a howling wilderness of psalmody." He might have spared his ridicule, had he reflected that one of the clerks who have led that kind of singing was Jesus Christ himself. But "vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." He has, with magnificent rhetoric, described "the swell of the anthem, the burst of the hallelujah chorus, the storm, the trampling movement of the choral passion, . . . the tumult of the choir, the wrath of the organ." Perchance he wrote better than he knew, when he represented the organ as bringing forth wrath; and his prelatical scorn for Christ's humble and obedient people, as well as his splendid rhetoric in glorifying the pomps of cathedral-service, may be offsetted by the following passage from the coryphaeus of British liberty: (Milton's *Prose Works*. Vol. i., p. 135; Philadelphia: John W. Moore. 1847.) "in times of opposition, when either against new heresies arising, or old corruptions to be reformed, this cool unpassionate mildness of positive wisdom is not enough to damp and astonish the proud resistance of carnal and false doctors, then (that I may have leave to soar awhile as poets use) Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete diamond, ascends his fiery chariot drawn with two blazing meteors, figured like beasts out of a higher breed than any the zodiac yields, resembling two of those four which Ezekiel and St. John saw; the one visaged like a lion, to express power, high authority and indignation, the other of countenance like a man, to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers: with these the invincible warrior, Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates, and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels." Or, we may listen to the rolling thunder of a mightier rhetoric than De Quincey or Milton wielded — a thunder that, like the angry growl of a coming storm, preludes the doom of that apostate mother from whose fertile womb have crept the monstrous corruptions which have slimed the purity of Christ's fair and glorious bride: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and

hateful bird. . . . Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! . . . Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. . . . And the voice of harpers, and of musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more in thee. . . . And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in

heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever."

(To be continued)

---

## George Gillespie on Church Censures

By R. D. Eagleson, M.A., Dip. Ed.

(Continued from last issue)

Note: This article by a scholar in Australia expounds the classic Presbyterian view of Church Discipline as held by the 17th century Scottish divine George Gillespie. — Editor.

We learn from 1 Timothy 5:8 that a scandalous and profane person is worse than a heathen. Romans 2:25 and 1 Corinthians 5:1 would seem to support this evaluation. There is therefore good reason that the restrictions which were placed on heathens in the Jewish Church should be placed on the scandalous person and we begin to understand the real nature of excommunication.

The excommunicated person is also to be regarded as a **publican**. Our Master was not using the word here in its primary meaning of tax-gatherer, but in the sense of a very wicked man, the connotation it possesses in the oft-recurring phrase, "publicans and sinners." To be esteemed as a publican in this sense comprehends three things. It means to be esteemed the worst of men, impious, abominable, execrable, infamous. It means also that we are not to hold or keep with such a one the Christian fellowship which we keep with church-members; and further, that we are not to keep with such a man that civil fellowship which we are permitted to keep with pagans and unbelievers, with whom, when bidden to a feast, we may go and eat together as the apostle resolves in 1 Corinthians 10:27. (Husbands, wives and children — those tied by natural relations — are excepted in order to perform natural duties to the excommunicated person.) Now in both these aspects the commination **let him be as a publican** adds to the meaning of **as a heathen**; in its third meaning it is coincident with **as a heathen**. It requires an exclusion from communion and fellowship with the church in holy things. In the parable in Luke 18, the publican was obviously a devout one, as is attested by the Pharisee's words in verse 11, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." But even so this devout publican stood afar off, that is, not in the inner temple. How much more then should the wicked publicans of whom Christ is clearly re-

ferring in Matthew 18 be kept back from fellowship with the church in holy things?

We have confirmation of this interpretation of the severity of the punishment imposed by our Master in 1 Corinthians 5:11. There we read, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company . . . . with such an one no not to eat." Fellowship is excluded by these words and when the apostle says "with such an one no not to eat" he indicates a greater punishment than a withdrawal of social hospitality. If not eating ordinary meals, then more so are Christians particularly not to join in the Lord's Supper with a censured person; in other words we are to practice complete separation in holy things.

Such a severe penalty is to be inflicted by the whole church and not by individual members. It is a judicial sentence imposed by the church. Our Master was speaking to the whole church in Matthew 18:17, and it was to the whole church at Corinth that the apostle was writing in 1 Corinthians 5. Every member is to withdraw from the excommunicated person. It is not an individual responsibility. Just as excommunication cannot be decreed by an individual member of the church, but must be determined by the church meeting as a judicial body, so, once the sentence has been deemed worthy and passed, the whole church must obey and withdraw from the excommunicant, regarding him as a heathen and a publican.

Because this final stage in discipline is so severe, it should be invoked only as a last resort. The church should exert itself to the utmost to induce the erring member to repent before this sentence becomes necessary, and it should be careful that all the preliminary steps have been scrupulously followed. Nevertheless if there is no sign of repentance, the church must proceed to excommunicate. Though painful, it is an unavoidable act of government and responsibility. The will of the King of the Church is clear on this point, and it is as unlawful for us not to comply with His will as to deliberately transgress it.

Such then is the procedure or method to be followed in the execution of church discipline. It needs always to be remembered that the whole aim of the procedure is to help the person see the error of his ways and repent to gain our brother; it is not to punish or to excommunicate. Discipline, therefore, should be administered with tact and restraint. It should not be used hastily nor, in its harsher elements, against every sin. As the Confession advises, the various degrees are to be employed "according to the nature of the crime, and the demerit of the person." (Chapter 30 section 4). A private rebuke should settle the majority of offences, an admonition from the Session most of the remainder. Suspension and especially excommunication should be imposed only for malignant and persistent errors which are grossly inconsistent with the Christian profession and subversive to the well-being and order of the church. Fornication, covetousness, rabid heresy, slander, drunkenness, extortion — such unrepented sins as these, listed in 1 Corinthians 5:11, are the ones for which suspension and excommunication are primarily intended. They are all visible, scandalous sins, presenting an obvious assault on the integrity of the Church and its witness.

It sometimes happens that a member commits a scandalous sin and almost immediately repents. The Church, however, will proceed to suspend that person for a period. The period may vary in length, on some occasions being three months, on others as much as eighteen months or more. The reason for this is the necessity for the church to be assured of a true repentance. The period of suspension is a testing time. Just as the imposition of suspension is not a question of judging the heart of a man, but his works ("by their fruits you shall know them" (Matt. 7:20), so the Church must have outward proof that the sinner has turned his back on the particular scandal of which he was guilty. It cannot take the man's word for it: the situation is too serious. It must be certain that there has been a change of heart, and only time can produce this certainty. Not that this method is entirely foolproof and the Church may still be deceived despite this precaution, but we must be reasonable. It would be wrong to keep one who had truly repented too long from the benefits which flow from fellowship together at the Lord's Table, for fear of admitting a hypocrite.

This practice raises the whole question of how long a man is to endure suspension and excommunication, or to use Scriptural terms how long is he to be **bound**. In the early Christian Church the period of suspension for each scandal was clearly stipulated, just as the maximum penalties for civil offences are still proclaimed. Gillespie was opposed to the rigidity of this system while he held to its principle. He would not abolish the period of suspension entirely, but he believed that each case should be judged on its particular cir-

cumstances and not determined beforehand. The modern church accords with this arrangement.

There is one aspect of loosing, or absolving from suspension and excommunication, in the early Church with which Gillespie did agree. This was the public and particular confession of the crime committed. Gillespie did not believe that it was sufficient for a disciplined member to join in the general confession of the congregation or to confess his scandal privately to God. He must make an open declaration of his repentance, and until this was done he could not be received again into the membership of the Church. Moreover, the Church must be assured that this repentance is true, and as we have just discussed, this is generally determined by a period of trial. Erastus, and later his followers, was opposed to this idea of public confession ('public' could mean before Session or Presbytery — it is not always necessary for it to come before the whole congregation, for example a scandal which is known only to a few), and especially refused the ruling courts of the Church the right to judge the sincerity of a man's profession of sorrow and repentance. Gillespie stood against the Erastians on this issue. He firmly held that the Church must examine. To act otherwise would weaken the position of the elders and of the Church. If public confession were removed, the elders would have no power to prevent a man living in sin from coming to the Lord's Table without repentance; they would have no means of knowing his spiritual state. Furthermore, a man's word is not sufficient when such a holy cause as the sacrament is at stake. As the Session carefully examines a man before he is admitted to membership and full fellowship, so it should be extremely careful in readmitting a scandalous sinner. It has perhaps even more ground to be cautious with him than with a new candidate. The responsibility for declaration whether a man is clean or unclean, acceptable or unacceptable, rests, not with the individual himself as Erastus claimed, but with the Church. In Christ's name and according to His will, it admits, as the divinely appointed government, men to His visible kingdom or excludes them.

In support of this regulation that absolution or loosing from excommunication depends on a worthy public confession, there are many verses in Scripture. In Ezra 10:10-11 we read: "And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now, therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives." Here we have a particular sin and scandal discussed, and God through His priest declares that the forsaking of sin is not enough. The people must also confess their sin, and this we gather from verses 12-14 the people did, and individually because it took several days. There are also

the many verses in Leviticus and Numbers, such as Leviticus 1:4; 5:5-6; Numbers 5:6-7 in which confession for particular sins was required. Now it is clear from the texts—and it was practised in the Jewish Church — that before a person could make a sacrifice for sin he had to confess his sin publicly to the priest and in the presence of the congregation. Only when this condition was fulfilled could the priest accept his trespass offering and make an atonement for him concerning his sin. It is essential that these early commandments and this practice of the early Church be continued in the Church to-day. The sins which warrant discipline are scandals, public sins. The Church at Corinth was rebuked for harbouring public sinners and so bringing the name of the Church and its Lord into disrepute (1 Corinthians). To its own members and in the face of the outside world as far as possible the Church is to maintain a holy witness. It most certainly should not be tarnished with outrageous sins. It therefore must excommunicate when necessary, and the only means whereby a scandalous sinner could be permitted to remain in the Church is for him to confess publicly, in other words to renounce openly his former action as wicked. In this way the integrity of the Church and its testimony would be maintained and its authority upheld.

Gillespie acutely saw this requirement for repentance and confession to be the great distinction between civil and ecclesiastical censures. The civil magistrate — Christian or heathen — can only punish sin. Once a sinner has served his sentence, the magistrate can do no more. The sinner is not obliged to repent and confess his sin, but only to satisfy the law of the land. Should such a man, Gillespie agreed, be admitted to the Sacrament, though impenitent? In other words should his penal satisfaction to the civil magistrate be a sufficient penitential satisfaction of the Church? This, Gillespie saw, was a stumbling stone to the Erastians unless they admitted a distinct ecclesiastical judgment concerning the signs of repentance in a scandalous sinner. He also realised that while the aim of civil censures was primarily to satisfy justice, the aim of church censures was more far-reaching and sought a spiritual revival.

The desired conclusion, then, of an act of dis-

cipline is repentance and a return to holy living. To this end should all members of the Church be striving, praying ceaselessly to God for the enlightenment and softening of the heart of the sinner that he may understand his error and return to God. The purpose of discipline is not a delight in punishment but a desire for reclamation. As the Father has no delight in the death of a sinner neither should we, and it should be particularly grievous to us that a man should have to be excluded from the blessings of Christian fellowship.

Discipline then is scriptural. We must practise it because it is scriptural, and because it is scriptural there can be no objections to it. It is not intended to be harsh, but is done in love. Love is its characteristic, its impelling power — love for Christ and His glory, love for an erring human being. In its severe degrees it is a last resort when all other endeavours have failed and when other souls are endangered. When the Church finally excommunicates, all men should be able to say that the sinner has brought the judgment himself. When this last stage of discipline has been imposed, however, men should not assume that the Church's concern for the sinner is at an end, for should he ever indicate a goodly desire to return, the Church will seek to guide and comfort him. (11 Corinthians 2).

We have now encompassed Chapter 30 of the Confessions of Faith and drawn heavily on George Gillespie's exposition of it. We have seen how it opened with the basic proposition of the independent government of the Church in spiritual matters. This is the basic principle on which the right of the Church to censure depends. In its turn, the possession of the power to discipline is incontrovertible evidence of government in the Church. But more important than this interdependence and consistency between the sections of chapter 30, is their substantiation separately and conjointly from Scripture. The chapter is solely a codification of the teachings of the Word of God on these matters. Since the purity of the government of the Church is commanded by Christ and essential to our full blessing, it remains for us to adhere joyfully to these principles which have been revealed to us from Scripture.

**The End**

---

## *Some Noteworthy Quotations*

**THE MOST UNREASONABLE SIN** which men commit is refusing to accept of the Son of God as their Saviour.

— Charles Hodge

**FREE-WILL HAS CARRIED** many souls to hell, but never a soul to heaven yet.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

**I AM QUITE SURE** that the best way to promote union is to promote truth. It will not do for us to be all united by yielding to one another's mistakes. We are to love each other in Christ; but we are not to be so united that we are not able to see each other's faults, and especially not able to see our own. No, purge the house of

God, and then shall grand and blessed times dawn upon us.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

I BELIEVE that very much of current Arminianism is simply ignorance of gospel doctrine.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

I WOULD HAVE YOU STUDY much the Word of God till you get a clear view of the whole scheme, from election onward to final perseverance, and from perseverance to the second advent, the resurrection, and the glories which shall follow, world without end.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

IT DOES MY HEART GOOD to think that the worst the Devil can do is to burn off the bonds of God's children. If Christ be with us, the worst afflictions can only loosen our earthly bonds, and set us free to soar higher.

— D. L. Moody

I WOULD A GREAT DEAL SOONER have five minutes' communion with Christ than spend years before pictures and images of Him. Whatever comes between my soul and my Maker is not a help to me, but a hindrance. God has given different means of grace by which we can approach Him. Let us use these, and not seek for other things that He has distinctly forbidden.

— D. L. Moody

WHAT MAKES THE DEAD SEA DEAD? Because it is all the time receiving, but never giving out anything. Why is it that many Christians are cold? Because they are all the time receiving, never giving out.

— D. L. Moody

WE TALK about heaven being so far away. It is within speaking distance to those who belong there.

— D. L. Moody

ONE SENTENCE from the lips of the Son of God in regard to the future state has forever settled it in my mind. "Ye shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 8:21). If a man has not given up his drunkenness, his profanity, his licentiousness, his covetousness, Heaven would be Hell to him. Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people. What would a man do in Heaven who cannot bear to be in the society of the pure and holy down here?

— D. L. Moody

A THOUSAND PROBABILITIES do not make one truth.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

A PREJUDICED MAN puts out his own eyes. He refuses to see the other side of the question. His judgment is blinded by his own wilfulness, and this is the worst of blindness.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

## *Religious Terms Defined*

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of "Blue Banner Faith and Life". The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

**MYSTERY.** A truth which could never be discovered by human reason, but can be known only by special divine revelation (such as the truth stated in 1 Cor. 15:51).

**NATURE.** The orderly, uniform system of the universe, operating according to the law of cause and effect as ordained by God, against the background of which God's miraculous acts stand out in sharp contrast to the ordinary course of events.

**NESTORIANISM.** The ancient heresy which taught that in Christ there are not merely two natures, divine and human, but two persons, one divine, the other human.

**NICOLAITANS.** A sect of heretics mentioned in Rev. 2:6, 15, who taught that Christians are free to indulge in the lusts of the flesh.

**OATH.** "A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person

swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth, or promiseth; and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he swear-eth" (**Westminster Confession of Faith, XXII. 1**).

**ORDINANCES OF GOD.** Those institutions or practices which are of divine authority in human society, such as the family, the church and the state; baptism; the Lord's Supper; church government and discipline; etc.

**ORDINATION.** The act of setting a person apart to office in the church by prayer and the laying on of hands. (The ordained officers of the New Testament Church are ministers (pastors, bishops or teaching elders), ruling elders, and deacons). According to the Presbyterian form of church government, ordination is the act of a "presbytery", or plurality of presbyters (teaching and ruling elders).

**ORTHODOXY.** Literally, "straight teaching"; that religious doctrine which conforms to a

fixed and recognized standard. The true standard of orthodoxy is the Word of God, by which all teachings are to be tested and measured. Subordinate standards of orthodoxy, such as Confes-

sions of Faith and catechisms, are valid and proper in so far as they are in accord with God's revelation, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

---

## *Studies in Old Testament History*

### LESSON 88

#### THE LORD GIVES ISRAEL THE LAND OF CANAAN

(Joshua)

The book of Joshua contains the history of the conquest and occupation of Canaan by Israel under the leadership of Joshua. It will be recalled that part of the Promised Land had already been conquered and occupied by Israel during the lifetime of Moses, namely the part east of the Jordan River. After the death of Moses, followed by a period of mourning, Israel crossed the Jordan and occupied the part west of the river.

Chapters 1-5 recount the confirmation of Joshua as Moses' successor, the crossing of the Jordan and the encampment at Gilgal just west of the river. Chapters 6-12 tell of the conquest of the land, including Jericho, Ai, southern Canaan and lastly northern Canaan. Included in this section is an account of the erection of an altar at Mount Ebal, and of the affair concerning the Gibeonites. The capture of Jericho and Ai are recorded in detail, whereas the later campaigns in southern and northern Canaan are related in outline form only.

Chapters 13-22 record the apportionment of territory to the various tribes and their settlement upon it. This part of the book also tells of the appointment of cities of refuge and of the cities for the priests and Levites, and the return of the fighting men of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh to their land east of the Jordan, following the practical completion of the conquest of the land west of the river. The last two chapters of the book (23 and 24) are Joshua's last message to the people of Israel, together with an account of his death and burial.

Moses, under God, was a many-sided genius: author, prophet, diplomat, administrator, law-giver, judge and military leader. Joshua, on the other hand, was primarily a military commander, although he was certainly in the truest sense a God-given religious leader to his people. As a military commander Joshua was a brilliant success. There was only one important point at which Joshua failed — his blunder of making a peace pact with the deceitful Gibeonites (chapter 9) without first taking time to ascertain the will of God concerning the matter. This was a terrible blunder, not only because of the religious presumption involved in it, but because it re-

sulted in a piece of non-Israelite territory, which Israel was pledged by solemn oath not to eliminate, dividing between the northern and southern parts of the land. This problem was compounded by the fact that for a long time Israel proved unable to conquer and hold Jerusalem, plus the fact that further west, along the coast, was a strip of non-Israelite (Philistine) territory which Israel did not effectively conquer for centuries. This Jerusalem-Gibeon-Philistine band across the middle of the country was an embarrassment and a weakening force for Israel for a long time.

The city of Jericho has been shown by archaeological excavation to have been one of the oldest inhabited places on earth. It was already an ancient city in Joshua's day. The Jericho of New Testament times and of the present day are located near, but not exactly upon, the site of the Old Testament city. In the early years of this century Dr. Garstang, a British archaeologist, excavated the Old Testament Jericho and published his findings. He claimed to have discovered the very city destroyed by earthquake and fire at the time of Israel's entrance to Canaan under Joshua. A great deal was made of this finding in evangelical religious books. Halley's **Bible Handbook** is an example. Garstang claimed that his findings set the date of the fall of the city at 1401 B.C. Since his time, Jericho has been re-excavated by another British archaeologist, Miss Kathleen Kenyon. She claims that Garstang misinterpreted his findings and that what he took to be the city of Joshua's day was actually much older. Miss Kenyon holds that nothing whatever of the city of Joshua's day has remained. It is possible that Miss Kenyon's own interpretation is colored by the fact that she holds the "late" chronology of the Exodus, which would put the fall of Jericho at about 1250, or 150 years later than the "early" figure held by Dr. Garstang. This matter is still unsettled. There are very good reasons, however, for holding to the "early" chronology, which according to the latest conservative scholarship sets the Exodus at 1447 B.C. and the fall of Jericho at 1407 B.C.

The destruction of Jericho by the power of God (rather than by human military force) teaches the lesson that Canaan is the inheritance

of a people who live by faith. Israel had to fight in many later battles, but this fortress which barred the way to the main part of the promised inheritance was reduced by the power of God. This also explains the curse pronounced by Joshua on the rebuilding of the city at any future time. (6:26). The ruins were to be left untouched as God's monument or memorial to the fact that Israel had entered Canaan by grace — not by human achievement but by the power of God. Incidentally, the curse came true centuries later when Hiel, the architect of Bethel, undertook the rebuilding of Jericho in the days of the wicked Ahab (1 Kings 16:34).

Something must be said about the moral problem involved in God's command for the total destruction of the Canaanites. The destruction of the Canaanites cannot be justified on ordinary ethical principles, and it would not be justifiable today. It is not attributable to Israelite savagery. The Israelites were not a savage and blood-thirsty people. Actually, they were more ready to marry the Canaanites than to kill them.

The destruction of the Canaanites was specially commanded by God, and should be regarded as a pageant or preview of the Judgment Day at the end of world history. It was not murder and it was not ordinary warfare; rather, it was the execution of divine justice or judgment. The Canaanites had forfeited every right to live on in God's world. The Israelites exterminated them only because God had commanded that this be done. Moreover the evidence indicated that the Israelites did a very incomplete job of extermination. Considerable numbers of Canaanites were left alive and became a serious problem in the later history.

We may easily fail to realize the utter vileness of the Canaanites or Amorites (each of these names serves as a blanket designation for most of the non-Israelite inhabitants of the land of Canaan). In Abraham's day their iniquity was not yet full (Genesis 15:16). Discoveries at Ras Shamra (the ancient Ugarit) in northern Syria have served to bring out the utter vileness and corruption of these people and their religion. Their religion was the worst thing about them,

being saturated with such revolting practices as prostitution and infant sacrifice.

God allowed the Canaanites 400 years in which to repent, then finally sent judgment upon them. It is a strange fact that those who strongly condemn the destruction of the Canaanites, often justify horrors of modern warfare which have much less justification — for example, mass bombing of cities with their multitudes of helpless civilians including women, children, hospital patients, etc. Those who wish a more detailed account of the abominable character of the Canaanite religion are referred to **Archeology and the Old Testament**, by M. F. Unger (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. \$4.95. Chapter XV, "The Religion of the Canaanites", pages 167-178).

#### Questions:

1. What part of the Promised Land was gained by Israel before the death of Moses?
2. Of what two cities is the capture and destruction recorded in detail in Joshua?
3. What was the primary function of Joshua as the successor of Moses?
4. What one serious blunder did Joshua commit?
5. What bad consequences resulted from this blunder?
6. What did Dr. John Garstang claim to have found in Jericho?
7. How is Garstang's claim disputed by Miss Kathleen Kenyon?
8. What consideration may have colored Miss Kenyon's interpretation of the facts?
9. What religious lesson is taught by the nature of the fall of Jericho?
10. When and how did Joshua's curse come true?
11. How should we view the command of God for the destruction of the Canaanites?
12. What have discoveries at Ras Shamra shown about the ancient Canaanites?

### LESSON 89

#### DIVINE GRACE SUBDUES ISRAEL UNTO THE LORD

(Judges)

The Book of Judges covers the interim period between the heroic age of Moses and Joshua, and the establishment of the monarchy in the days of Samuel. During this time the nation of Israel was a loose federation of twelve tribes located on both sides of the Jordan River (the territory to the east of the Jordan had been conquered by Israel during the lifetime of Moses, before the crossing of the Jordan and the fall of Jericho).

Their common history and their religion (with a single sanctuary and priesthood) tended to draw them together. However there were also centrifugal forces at work, and they did not always hold together very effectively.

God was to be their king, therefore they had no human king. All around them, however, were nations which had more tightly organized governments than themselves. When the people

of Israel were unfaithful to God, these neighboring nations were permitted to oppress them. This happened repeatedly. The often repeated pattern of the Book of Judges is like this:

1. The people forget God and commit sin.
2. Trouble comes in the form of foreign oppression.
- 3 The people cry to God for help.
4. A leader appears in answer to their cry.
5. Victory over enemies.
6. A period of peace, the leader being their acknowledged champion or "judge".
7. The people forget God.
8. Trouble comes in the form of foreign oppression. Etc., etc.

The history of Gideon is chosen for special study as typical of the history of the period of the Judges.

All history, including Bible history, can be viewed at different levels. We might say, "Abraham Lincoln died because a bullet went through his head." This would be a true statement, but would give only the surface-level explanation of Lincoln's death. The deeper explanation would include the fact that he was President of the U. S., that it was the period of the War between the States, and that a fanatic hated Lincoln and therefore killed him.

Similarly in the history of the Period of the Judges, the real and deep reason for Israel's troubles was **sin** — the people's unfaithfulness, forgetfulness and disobedience. In moral judgment on these lapses God permitted the neighboring nations to oppress Israel. Yet there is also a surface-level explanation of Israel's troubles which is perfectly true and valid **as far as it goes**. There was a technological lag of perhaps 100 years between Israel's enemies and Israel. Israel was in the late bronze age; the enemies were in the early iron age. This gave a definite advantage to the enemies. One of the Canaanite kings had 900 chariots of iron — a real "armored division" for those days. Israel had no chariots and no iron weapons or practically none.

The making and use of iron was early known — remember Tubal-Cain in the period before the Flood — but this art was apparently lost and had to be recovered later. When iron was first made, it was a mere curiosity, as aluminum was 100 years or so ago. There was no known process by which iron could be produced economically in commercial quantities. Then the Hittites in what is today Turkey discovered how to produce iron in quantities. This was a guarded secret. Israel's enemies were in on the secret but Israel was not. The possession of iron weapons gave the Canaanites and Philistines a real "edge" over the Israel-

ites. It was not until the time of Saul and David that this iron monopoly was successfully cracked by Israel.

Some of the Judges were evidently contemporaneous or partly overlapped in different parts of the country. The chronology of the period of the Judges involves some difficulties which cannot be fully cleared up. However Jephthah's remark (11:26) to the effect that in his day Israel had already held Heshbon 300 years proves that the "late" chronology which puts the fall of Jericho at 1250 B.C. cannot be correct. Dr. Whitcomb's chart of "Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges" places the fall of Jericho at 1407 B.C. and the accession of Saul, Israel's first king, at 1043 B.C. This gives a period of roughly 350 years for the period of the Judges.

The term "Judge" is not entirely satisfactory. "Leader" or "Champion" brings out the meaning. The men raised up by the Lord to lead Israel to victory over enemies later became judges who were acknowledged as having authority to settle disputes.

The history of Gideon is found in Judges 6-8. Note how the Biblical record stresses the moral and spiritual reasons for Israel's troubles. Because Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, the Midianites were permitted to oppress Israel for seven years. These Midianites were a roving, Gypsy-like people who lived on the fringe of the eastern desert in Transjordan. Their national philosophy of life, apparently, was that it is easier to steal than to work. The Israelites were hard-working farmers, and when their crop of wheat or barley was harvested, the Midianites in vast numbers would swoop down on them and take everything, vanishing again into the eastern desert. This affliction became so severe that Israel was reduced to acute distress and even to the danger of starvation. Finally, having been brought "very low" by Midian, Israel cried to God for help (6:6).

Gideon, a man of the tribe of Manasseh, was called by the angel of the Lord to lead Israel to victory over the Midianites. First, however, he was to destroy the altar of Baal and the "grove" for the worship of Asherah which existed on his father's farm land. (In the Canaanite mythology Asherah was the wife and/or sister of Baal. The worship of Baal and Asherah was an abominable pagan nature and fertility cult). The existence of such a pagan shrine on the property of Gideon's family indicates the meaning of the statement that Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. The evil done was not mere neglect of the Lord, but actual lapse into the abominable practices of heathenism. Before the Lord could consistently give Israel relief from the Midianite oppression, there must be at least some evidence of repentance for the lapse into false religion. Hence Gideon was commanded to destroy the heathen shrine. Fearing to do this in the daytime, he did it at night.

The story of Gideon's great victory over Midian is a familiar one. With only 300 men equipped with the most unconventional weapons, but energized by the almighty power of the Lord, the impossible was accomplished and Midian was utterly defeated. The people of Israel never forgot this victory. It rang down through the centuries in inspired Psalmody and prophecy as "The Day of Midian" — the day when Israel was enabled by the power of God to defeat the formidable Midianites.

#### Questions:

1. What are the two periods of Israelite history between which the book of Judges forms an interim period?
2. What was the general political situation of Israel in this period?

3. What forces tended to draw and hold the people of Israel together?

4. How did the government of Israel, in the period of the Judges, compare with the governments of the nations surrounding them?

5. What is the often repeated pattern of the book of Judges?

6. On what two levels can history be viewed?

7. What technological difference existed between Israel and Israel's enemies in this period?

8. How long was the period of the Judges?

9. Where did the Midianites live, and what was their national character?

10. What kind of sin was Israel involved in at the time of the Midianite crisis?

### LESSON 90

#### "THY GOD SHALL BE MY GOD"

(Ruth)

This book gives a beautiful picture of peaceful rural life in the time of the Judges. It is the other side of the turbulent picture seen in Judges.

Just as literature, the Book of Ruth is a masterpiece. It gives a beautiful view of the life and customs of Israel in those days. Someone has remarked that the Book of Ruth is the Bible's answer to all cheap mother-in-law jokes. It presents a mother-in-law in a very good light.

The scene of most of the action is laid in Bethlehem — "House of Bread" — later to become famous as the birthplace of King David and the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

The story of the Book of Ruth speaks for itself. Deuteronomy 25:5-10 should read in connection with Boaz' actions. Naomi's instructions to Ruth, in Ruth 3:1-5, while they may impress us as involving unconventional conduct, in reality involved nothing in any way immodest or improper. These were pious, clean living and clean thinking people and no evil is implied. It was Naomi's way of appealing to the law of Deuteronomy 25:5-10. Ruth's action in obedience to Naomi's instructions would set the wheels of legal procedure in motion.

The purpose of the law in Deuteronomy was to prevent the extinction of a family line and the alienation of land from the family that held it.

Ruth's devotion to Naomi involved more than mere personal affection. It also involved **change of nationality** ("Thy people shall be my people") and **religious conversion** ("thy God shall be my God"). The outcome of the story shows that Ruth was sincere. She became an ancestress of Jesus Christ.

Three reasons may be assigned for the presence of the Book of Ruth in the Bible:

1. It gives an essential link in the genealogy of David and of Jesus Christ.
2. It gives a sidelight on social life and customs of Israel which we would not have otherwise.
3. It shows the peaceful side of life in the Period of the Judges, in contrast to the troubled scenes of the Book of Judges.

The action of Elimelech in moving to the land of Moab, and the action of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion in marrying Moabite women, may raise questions in our minds as to the propriety of this conduct. Was there no place in all the land of Israel to which they could have moved in time of famine? We can only answer these questions by saying that it is not the purpose of the book of Ruth to discuss the ethics of association with non-Israelites, or of intermarriage with people of an idolatrous culture such as that of Moab was at this period. The book of Ruth records the facts without pronouncing any moral judgment upon them. Such matters are sufficiently dealt with in other parts of Scripture. Quite evidently, the purpose of the book of Ruth is along different lines entirely. This does not imply that marriage with adherents of a false religion is condoned as lawful.

Some writers have allegorized the story of Ruth, making Boaz a type of Christ, Ruth a type of the believer or the church, etc. This we believe is a mistake. There is nothing in the story to indicate that it is intended to be so handled, nor is it treated in this way anywhere in the New Testament. To regard something as a type (or small-scale sample of some later reality) it is necessary not merely that there be a correspondence of meaning, but also that there be evidence that Scripture itself intends the typological mean-

ing. There is abundant Bible evidence that Adam and David were types of Jesus Christ. But to make Boaz a type of Christ and Ruth a type of the Church is to go beyond what Scripture warrants and to indulge in fantasy or guesswork.

#### Questions:

1. Where in Biblical history does the book of Ruth fit in?
2. How does the book of Ruth compare with the book of Judges?
3. How does the book of Ruth rate as literature?
4. Where does most of the action in the book of Ruth take place?
5. What is the literal meaning of the name "Bethlehem"?

6. What law is found in Deuteronomy 25:5-10?
7. What was the purpose of this law?
8. What were Naomi's instructions to Ruth in 3:1-5?
9. What statements of Ruth show that she was moved by something more than mere personal attachment to her mother-in-law Naomi?
10. What should be thought of the ethics of the family's move to Moab?
11. Why does the book of Ruth not pronounce any moral judgment on Mahlon's and Chilion's marriages to Moabite women?
12. What statement of Ruth implies religious conversion to the Lord?
13. Why is it a mistake to treat the story of Ruth as allegorical?

### LESSON 91

#### GEOGRAPHY AND CUSTOMS OF PALESTINE

As we are about to enter the kingdom period of Israel's history, this is a good point to consider some of the circumstances of Israel's existence, and especially the geography of the country and the customs of the people. A set of Bible maps should be used with this lesson, especially a good clear map of Palestine in the Old Testament period.

Palestine is located in the southwestern corner of the great continent of Asia, roughly at the center of the three great continents of the old world — Europe, Asia and Africa. The two great centers of very early civilization were Egypt (the Nile Valley) and Mesopotamia (the Tigris-Euphrates valley). There was always some traffic, in war and in peace, between these two civilizations. This traffic crossed Palestine. Thus this little country, in which most of Bible history is located, was at the crossroads of the ancient world.

Biblical Palestine was approximately 10,500 square miles in size, 150 miles from north to south ("from Dan to Beersheba") and 50 to 75 miles from west to east. This territory is today divided between Israel, Jordan, Syria and Egypt.

Along the Mediterranean shore there is a coastal plain. The southern part of this was called Philistia, and the northern part the Plain of Sharon. Proceeding inland, the central range of mountains runs north and south. In Abraham's day this central mountain range was heavily forested. In later Biblical times (and today) it appears practically bare of trees. These mountains rise to 3,000 and at one point about 4,000 feet high.

On the eastern side of the range the mountains slope off steeply to the Jordan valley. This is the deepest ditch on the surface of the globe,

most of it being far below sea level. On the east of the Jordan valley are the highlands of Transjordan, merging finally into the Syrian desert.

Palestine is a country of marginal water supply. In the high mountains of the north there is abundant water but the supply decreases toward the south. In the far south, called the "Negeb" or "Negev", the scarcity of water is acute. Modern engineering may bring relief, but this is conditioned upon the existence of stable peace in the Holy Land. Because of the problem of scarcity of water, the inhabitants long ago learned how to make cisterns to conserve water for use in the dry season of the year. When such a cistern had been used for many years it would develop cracks and begin to leak. Experience taught that it was easier to make a new cistern than to repair an old one effectively. Consequently, the soil of Palestine has been dotted with abandoned, empty cisterns. It was apparently into such an empty cistern that Joseph's brothers dropped him before selling him to the caravan of Ishmaelites. People have accidentally fallen into deep abandoned cisterns and perished before help could reach them.

The great east-west highway of the ancient world passed through Palestine. Leaving Egypt, it followed the Mediterranean coast of Palestine northward to the Carmel range, then veered eastward, crossing Mount Carmel at the Pass of Megiddo. Just north of the Sea of Galilee it crossed the Jordan, and then proceeded north to Damascus and east to Assyria and Babylonia. The Pass of Megiddo was a natural bottleneck on this important highway both in war and in peace. This was a relatively low place at which the Carmel ridge could be crossed. It was often fought over in ancient times, and the name also figures

in Biblical prophecy, for the name **Armageddon** is simply "The Mountain of Megiddo".

The Jordan River has been called earth's most storied river. Although certainly not striking in appearance, it is important because of its geographical peculiarities and its historical associations. The sources of the Jordan are at the base of Mount Hermon in the far north of Palestine. Before reaching the Sea of Galilee the river descends below sea level, and its entire course from this point to its end at the Dead Sea is below sea level. Because it is so low, the Jordan Valley has tropical or sub-tropical climate and vegetation. Although on a map the river appears straight, an air photograph shows that it consists of a seemingly endless series of meanders or S-type curves. The current is swift and dangerous, and many have perished in attempting to cross the stream. No bridge was ever constructed across the Jordan until Roman times. Instead, people crossed at certain points where the river (at some times of year) could be forded. In the plain at the bottom of the Jordan valley there is a very dense jungle of bushes, tall weeds and scrubby trees. In Biblical times this was a lair of lions and other predatory wild animals, and a place where men could hide from the strong arm of the law.

Mount Hermon, a beautiful snow-capped peak in the far north of the country, rises to a height of 9166 feet. The surface of the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Chinnereth) is 685 feet below sea level, while that of the Dead Sea (Salt Sea) is 1275 feet below sea level (this latter figure varies slightly from season to season). Jerusalem is about 2500 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea, or 3775 feet above the surface of the Dead Sea (which is only about 20 miles away).

The Mediterranean coast of Palestine lacks good natural harbors. The Joppa of the Old Testament (which was Jonah's point of embarkation) is called Jaffa today. The modern Israeli port of Haifa is located in the bay just north of Mount Carmel. The Roman capital of Palestine was Caesarea, built on the Mediterranean coast by Herod the Great slightly before the time of Christ. This was long the chief port of the country, but today only ruins remain there. The port of Ezion-Geber on the Gulf of Aqaba (Red Sea), located adjacent to the present-day Elath, was not ordinarily accessible to Israel or Judah in Biblical times.

During most of the year Palestine is dry and the climate is mild and sunny. There are however two periods of rainfall, in November and in March or April. In the Bible these two rainy periods are called the early and latter rains. The time between them — the winter season — is a rainy, damp, chilly period with intermittent rain. During the rest of the year, from May to October, rain is practically unknown. A very heavy fall of dew is of some help to vegetation.

The division of the kingdom into the two na-

tions of Israel and Judah took place about 931 B.C. Judah was the larger of the two in actual square miles of territory, though much of this land was the almost useless desert called the Negeb. Israel or the Northern Kingdom had the most square miles of good land. Israel, however, was more exposed to enemy attack than was Judah, partly because of lying across the main east-west (Egypt to Mesopotamia) highway. In economic life Israel was much the richer of the two nations, and it also had much the larger population. However, Judah was more important religiously and historically — from it came Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

With regard to housing, the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived in tents. In Egypt the Israelites apparently lived in houses or huts. In the wilderness following the Exodus they lived in tents. After the occupation of Canaan under Joshua they began living in houses, those of the poor being made of mud, while those of the more prosperous were constructed of stone or brick. Obviously stone was an easily obtainable building material in a mountainous country like Palestine. Houses were ordinarily one story high, with flat roofs which were used for sleeping on hot nights, for entertaining visitors, for private devotions, and sometimes for the improper purpose of spying on one's neighbors. The roof was reached by an outdoor flight of steps, without having to enter the house.

Furniture was simple but practical. Clothing was light and simple, the generally mild climate not requiring any heavy garments. The common garb consisted of an undershirt and an outer robe.

The two principal grain crops were wheat and barley. Other common products were fruits, milk, butter, cheese, honey. Meat was eaten, but only a very little. The people of Israel were not vegetarians as a matter of religious principle, but they were almost vegetarians because of sheer economic necessity. There were two meals, morning and afternoon. On the whole, as compared with other nations of iniquity, the Israelites were clean in their persons and in their habits of living.

#### Questions:

1. On what continent is Palestine located? In what part of that continent?
2. What were the two great centers of very early civilization?
3. What important highway crossed ancient Palestine?
4. What was the approximate size of Biblical Palestine?
5. What were its dimensions from north to south, and from west to east?
6. Describe the central mountain range of Palestine.

7. What part of Palestine has an abundant water supply? What part lacks water?

8. Why have there been many abandoned cisterns in Palestine?

9. What is the Pass of Megiddo and why was it important in Bible times?

10. What can be said about the climate of the Jordan Valley?

11. What feature of the Jordan River is remarkable?

12. When was the first bridge built across the Jordan?

13. How high is Mount Hermon?

14. What is the altitude of Jerusalem?

15. How far is the surface of the Dead Sea below sea level?

16. When is the rainy season in Palestine?

17. Compare the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, as to possession of land.

18. In what kind of houses did the Israelites live in the period following the conquest of Canaan under Joshua?

19. What use was made of the roofs of houses?

20. What were the principal crops or products of Biblical Palestine?

## LESSON 92

### INTRODUCTION TO THE KINGDOM PERIOD

This lesson is intended as a preview of the entire kingdom period, covering about 400 years of historical time. It is helpful to view the entire period as a whole before taking up the parts of it in detail. This will tend toward a clear understanding of the significance of all parts of the history, and will help to avoid confusion which might be caused by the mass of details to come later.

The Kingdom Period of Israel's history is divided into (1) **The United Kingdom** and (2) **The**

**Divided Kingdom.** The United Kingdom lasted 112 years and had three kings, as follows:

1. Saul, about 1043-1011 B.C.

2. David, about 1011-971 B.C.

3. Solomon, 971-931 B.C.

The death of Solomon in 931 B.C. was followed by the division of the kingdom into the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The following is a capsule comparison of the history of these two kingdoms:

Kingdom of Israel (Northern)
10 tribes. Capital at various places; finally Samaria.
19 kings. All bad, but some were worse than others.
Destroyed by Assyria, 722 B.C. People carried away as captives.
Progressive unfaithfulness to God, idolatry, apostasy.
Important prophets: Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Jonah, Hosea.
Lasted 209 years (931-722 B.C.)

Kingdom of Judah (Southern)
2 tribes (Judah and Benjamin). Capital at Jerusalem.
19 kings, not counting the usurping queen Athaliah (who held power 6 years). All these kings descended from David. Partly good, partly bad.
Destroyed by Babylon, 586 B.C. People carried away to Babylon ("The Babylonian Captivity").
Comparative faithfulness to God, followed by apostasy of the majority, resulting in Babylonian Captivity.
Important prophets: Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah.
Lasted 345 years (931-586 B.C.)

#### Table of Kings of Israel (Northern Kingdom)

##### DYNASTY I (22 years)

1. Jeroboam ("made Israel to sin"). 931-910 B.C.
2. Nadab. 910-909 B.C.

##### DYNASTY II (24 years)

3. Baasha. 909-886 B.C.
4. Elah. 886-885 B.C.

#### DYNASTY III (1 week)

5. Zimri (7 days). 885 B.C.

#### DYNASTY IV (44 years)

6. Omri (politically great). 885-874 B.C.
7. Ahab (terribly wicked). 874-853 B.C.
8. Ahaziah. 853-852 B.C.
9. Joram or Jehoram (killed by Jehu). 852-841 B.C.

**DYNASTY V (88 years)**

10. Jehu (exterminated Ahab's family). 841-814 B.C.
11. Jehoahaz. 814-798 B.C.
12. Joash or Jehoash. 798-782 B.C.
13. Jeroboam II (politically great). 782-753 B.C.
14. Zechariah (6 months; last of Jehu's dynasty). 753 B.C.

**DYNASTY VI (1 month)**

15. Shallum (1 month). 753 B.C.

**DYNASTY VII (12 years)**

16. Menahem (fiendishly cruel, wicked). 752-742 B.C.
17. Pekahiah. 742-740 B.C.

**DYNASTY VIII (8 years)**

18. Pekah. Co-regent 752-740 B.C. Sole king 740-732 B.C.

**DYNASTY IX (10 years)**

19. Hoshea. 732-722 B.C.

**Table of Kings of Judah (Southern Kingdom)**

All of one dynasty, descended from David and his son Solomon (with the exception of the usurping queen Athaliah).

1. Rehoboam. 931-913 B.C.
2. Abijah or Abijam. 913-911 B.C.
3. Asa. 911-873 B.C. (Good)
4. Jehoshaphat (good). 873-853 B.C.
5. Jehoram. 853-841 B.C.
6. Ahaziah. 841 B.C.
7. (Usurping queen) Athaliah. 841-835 B.C. (extremely wicked)
8. Joash. 835-796 B.C.
9. Amaziah. 796-767 B.C.
10. Uzziah or Azariah. 767-739 B.C. (Mostly good. Smitten with leprosy)
11. Jotham. Co-regent from 750. 739-731 B.C.
12. Ahaz (very wicked). 731-715 B.C.
13. Hezekiah (very good). 715-686 B.C.
14. Manasseh (worst king of Judah, but later repented). 695-642 B.C.
15. Amon (bad). 642-640 B.C.
16. Josiah (very good). 640-609 B.C.
17. Jehoahaz (3 months). 609 B.C.
18. Jehoiakim. 609-597 B.C.

19. Jehoiachin (3 months). 597 B.C.

20. Zedekiah. 597-586 B.C.

Note: All chronological data in the preceding tables have been conformed to recent research in Old Testament chronology as represented by the Chart of **Old Testament Kings and Prophets**, by John C. Whitcomb, Jr., Copyright 1960, and based in turn upon the chronology worked out by Edwin R. Thiele. It should be realized that some of the reigns overlap others.

**The Succession of World Powers Affecting Bible History in the Old Testament Period**

The history of the people of Israel can be correctly understood only by viewing it against the larger background, the continuous struggle of the great nations for supreme power. Palestine, a very small country, was so located that it was often involved in the wars of the great nations of the ancient Near East. The history of the ancient Near East is a story of a succession of empires, each being larger or more powerful than the preceding one. Each held power for a time, only to be overthrown in turn by the next rising power.

During the period covered by the preceding lessons Israel had been oppressed by Egypt and had had conflicts with comparatively small nations such as the Canaanites, Philistines, Midianites, Moabites, etc. In the period covered in the lessons which follow we find Israel increasingly involved in conflicts with much greater powers.

**1. Syria or Aram.** The first great nation to cause trouble for the Israelites was Syria, more properly called Aram. The capital of this kingdom was Damascus, one of the oldest cities in the world that is still inhabited today. The rise of Syria to power was formerly poorly understood. The discovery in northern Syria of an important inscription — the stele of Benhadad I — in 1940, has shed important light on the matter. Benhadad I came to the throne about 890 B.C. By this time Syria had become the strongest power in this part of western Asia. The expansion of Syria was resisted by Omri and Ahab, kings of Israel. During the reign of Ahab and later kings there was intermittent warfare between Syria and Israel. Jehu, king of Israel (841-814 B.C.) lost all his territory east of the Jordan River to Syria; it was not recovered by Israel until the reign of Jeroboam II (782-753 B.C.). Finally the rise of the mighty Assyrian power effectively checked the power of Syria or Aram.

**2. Assyria.** Located in the northern part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Capital, Nineveh. The Assyrians were cruel and ruthless. They conquered the Kingdom of Israel (northern ten tribes) in 722 B.C. Assyria itself was conquered by Babylon, and Nineveh destroyed, 612 B.C.

**3. Babylon.** Located in the southern part of

the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Defeated Assyria 612 B.C. Defeated Egypt at battle of Carchemish near the great bend of the Euphrates River, 605 B.C. This battle made Babylon the supreme power in the world of that day. Babylon conquered and destroyed Jerusalem, 586 B.C., carrying many Jews to Babylon as captives. Babylon in turn was conquered by the Persians, 539 B.C.

**4. Medo-Persia.** This new power conquered Babylon, 539 B.C., and held supreme power for about 200 years. Allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. In general they were more tolerant and humane than previous powers. The Medo-Persian empire was finally broken by a European, Alexander the Great, 331 B.C. (The Medes and the Persians were originally two distinct nations, which combined to form the Medo-Persian empire).

**5. Macedonian-Greek Empire.** Alexander the Great, a Macedonian, in 13 years of military campaigns (336-323 B.C.) conquered the ancient world from Greece to northern India. He would have gone farther but his soldiers refused. He died in 323 B.C. at Babylon. Alexander's was the greatest empire that had existed up to that time. His conquests spread the Greek language and culture widely over the ancient Near East, thus preparing the way for the circulation of the Bible in Greek. After Alexander's death, his great empire soon broke up, power being divided by his successors. Counting both the lifetime of Alexander and the divided empire after his death, this period of history lasted from 331 to 146 B.C. In 146 B.C. Macedonia became a Roman province.

**6. Rome.** 146 B.C. to the end of the period. The Jews were under Rome from 63 B.C. The Roman Empire was greater and stronger than all previous powers. A noteworthy feature was the great network of highways built by Rome, which at a later date contributed to the spread of the Christian Gospel over the ancient world.

#### Questions:

1. How long did the United Kingdom of Israel last?
2. How many kings ruled over the United Kingdom? What were their names?
3. What was the moral character of all the kings of the Northern Kingdom?
4. How may the moral character of the kings of Judah be described?
5. How do the two kingdoms compare with regard to faithfulness to the Lord?
6. How many dynasties of kings did the Northern Kingdom have? The Southern?
7. What larger background must be viewed if we are to understand the history of the people of Israel in the Old Testament period?
8. What was the first major power with which Israel came into conflict?
9. Where was its capital located?
10. Where was Assyria located? What was the character of its people?
11. Where was Babylon located? What great battle made Babylon supreme?
12. About how long did the Medo-Persians hold power, after the fall of Babylon?
13. Who was the founder of the Macedonian-Greek Empire?
14. What happened to the Macedonian-Greek Empire when its founder died?
15. In what year did the Jews come under the dominion of Rome?
16. Specify one way in which the Roman Empire unknowingly prepared the way for the spread of the Christian Gospel.

### LESSON 93

#### THE LAST OF THE JUDGES AND FIRST OF THE PROPHETS

##### 1 Samuel, chapters 1-8

Samuel was the last of the Judges and the first of the prophets. He prepared for the Israelite monarchy. He marks the transition from the federation of tribes of the period of the Judges to the centralized government which came with the anointing of a king. Samuel was of the tribe of Levi and he functioned as a priest on certain occasions.

Under God, Samuel was the product of two influences: (1) the faith and devotion of his godly mother Hannah; (2) the instruction of the priest Eli. Eli had failed in bringing up his own sons to fear God, but with Samuel he did better.

Samuel was one of the great men of history, and one of whom the Bible has almost no evil to record. The one evil recorded concerning him (1 Sam. 8:1-3) was the complaint of the people that his sons were not upright as he was, but accepted bribes to corrupt justice. This fact was one of the factors leading to the establishment of the monarchy.

The story of Samuel's birth is recorded in 1 Sam. 1:1 to 2:11. At that time the Tabernacle was located at Shiloh, a few miles north of Jerusalem.

The political situation at this time was one of

constant trouble with the Philistines, dwelling on the southwest coast of Palestine. They were pagans, comparatively late-comers in Palestine, probably originally from the island of Crete. A war-like people, they troubled Israel for centuries, but finally were conquered and apparently assimilated into the people of Israel; they are not mentioned in the New Testament as a people then existing in Palestine.

Samuel's call to be a prophet is recorded in 1 Sam. 3. In chapter 4 are recorded a disastrous battle with the Philistines, the loss of the ark of the covenant, and the death of Eli's sons. In chapter 7 Samuel leads the Israelites to victory over the Philistines, thus reversing the tragic defeat of 20 years before.

In Chapter 8 the people demand a king, and Samuel warns them of the cost of monarchy.

King Saul was helped and coached by Samuel until the Lord rejected Saul because of the latter's disobedience.

#### Questions:

1. Describe the family into which Samuel was born, including the condition in the home and the attitude of the members of the family to each other.

2. What should be thought as to the regular-

ity or irregularity of such a marriage as that of Samuel's father?

3. Describe the events which took place at Shiloh on the occasion of the family's going there to worship the Lord.

4. Tell how Hannah kept her vow to the Lord.

5. Tell the story of how the boy Samuel came to know the voice of the Lord.

6. Describe the revelation from the Lord concerning the family of Eli, and Eli's reaction to this message.

7. Give as complete information as you can about the Philistines, their origin, character, location and what finally became of them.

8. Describe how Samuel led the people of Israel back to God and how they defeated the Philistines.

9. Explain why the people of Israel demanded a king to reign over them.

10. Describe Samuel's attitude toward the people's demand for a king, and the Lord's response to this attitude.

11. Summarize Samuel's speech to the people of Israel concerning their demand for a king.

## LESSON 94

### ISRAEL'S FIRST HUMAN KING (SAUL)

1 Samuel, chapters 9-15, 17, 28, 31

Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, son of a man named Kish, of good family and good reputation. Chosen by God to be king and privately anointed by Samuel, he was later publicly proclaimed to be king. (The rite of **anointing** consisted of pouring oil on the person's head. The oil was a symbol of the Holy Spirit of God which was to impart the qualities necessary to discharge the office aright. The king was called "the Lord's anointed", was thus divinely sanctioned, and was not a mere political ruler, but the representative of God in governing the nation).

At first Saul was humble and modest, but later power went to his head and he became self-important and rejected the commands of the Lord.

Saul's first military campaign was against Nahash the Ammonite, who had attacked the city of Jabesh-Gilead. The Spirit of God energized Saul and he won a great victory over the Ammonites. Saul was now not only a king but a national hero. Following this he was solemnly confirmed as king in a ceremony at Gilgal (11:14, 15).

#### Saul's First Major Disobedience to God

This is recorded in I Samuel 13. Jonathan,

Saul's son, smote a Philistine garrison, thus stirring up the Philistines to reprisal. They gathered for battle. Saul and his army waited for seven days as appointed by Samuel. They were waiting for the prophet to come and offer sacrifice, invoking the blessing of God on the campaign. When Samuel failed to arrive during that period of time, Saul ventured to offer sacrifice himself (13:9,10). Then Samuel appeared and rebuked Saul (13:11-14). He told Saul that the kingship would be only temporary in his family.

#### Saul's Disobedience Concerning the Amalekites Chap. 15

The Amalekites were a nomadic or semi-nomadic, gypsy-like tribe on the fringe of the Sinai desert. Wicked and deceitful, they had a long record of unprovoked hostility to Israel. God now commanded their utter destruction.

Saul undertook this mission and defeated the Amalekites. According to God's command, not only the people but also the animals were killed. This would prove to the world that it was not a raid for plunder but an execution of God's justice. Saul killed the people as commanded, but saved the king alive (15:8). The people saved the best

of the animals alive (15:9). Samuel then appeared and rebuked Saul for disobeying the command of God (15:10-23).

Saul offered two very lame excuses: (1) He claimed that the people had forced his hand; (2) he asserted that they had saved the animals for a religious purpose, to offer in sacrifice to the Lord. Note Samuel's judgment upon Saul (15:22,23): "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord he also hath rejected thee from being king."

David of Bethlehem had been privately and secretly anointed king by Samuel (chapter 16, not included in assigned reading). Following Saul's disobedience, the Spirit of the Lord departed from him and an evil spirit came upon him, with resultant symptoms of mental illness. David was brought to play the harp in order to soothe Saul. This did not cure Saul but it quieted him temporarily each time.

At times Saul was moved by the most uncontrollable fury. More than once he attempted to kill David. David's success in killing the Philistine Goliath only roused in Saul an intense envy and jealousy of David, whom Saul regarded as a rival seeking to gain the throne. Saul deteriorated mentally, physically and spiritually.

The next to the last episode in the story of Saul's life is his mysterious visit to the woman ("witch") of Endor (who was what would be called a spiritist medium today). This is recorded in 1 Sam. 28. This visit was the desperate attempt of a man who had alienated himself from God and who could find no way of access to God's help.

Kipling's poem, **En-Dor**, brings out vividly the wickedness and folly of Saul's recourse to spiritualism. The last stanza runs:

Oh the road to En-dor is the oldest road  
And the craziest road of all!  
Straight it runs to the witch's abode,  
As it did in the days of Saul,  
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store  
For such as go down on the road to En-dor!

#### The Death of Saul

1 Samuel 31:4 says that Saul fell upon his sword; 2 Sam. 1:9, 10 states that an Amalekite finished killing Saul. The most probable way of reconciling these two accounts is to accept that in 1 Sam. 31 as factual, and to hold that the Amalekite falsely claimed to have killed Saul, his motive in making this claim obviously being the expectation of a reward from David. Actually, we must suppose, the Amalekite found Saul already dead, and brought his crown and bracelet three days' journey to David.

Saul is the tragic figure of the Old Testament as Judas Iscariot is of the New. Starting life with the most favorable background and circumstances, he failed and lost all by stubbornly disobeying God. This was followed by demon-possession which resulted in insanity and depression, running into despair which finally ended in suicide.

God had given the people of Israel a taste of bad government. Next He gave them a good king, David, described as "a man after God's own heart." We should note especially David's patient waiting for God's time and his conscientious refusal to take matters into his own hands or to harm Saul in any way. In spite of his bad character, Saul was "the Lord's anointed," therefore his person was sacred.

#### Questions:

1. Describe the first meeting between Saul and Samuel the prophet — how they came to meet, and what was said and done.
2. Describe the public choice of Saul as king; who presided, how the choice was made, and what Saul's attitude was.
3. Describe Saul's attitude toward the minority who were not pleased with his becoming king.
4. Describe the relations between Nahash the Ammonite and the citizens of Jabesh-Gilead.
5. Describe Saul's reaction to the news about the situation of Jabesh-Gilead.
6. Tell how the expedition to Jabesh-Gilead affected Saul's popularity.
7. Describe how Saul offended against God in connection with his first campaign against the Philistines.
8. Tell the story of Saul's failure to obey God's command concerning the Amalekites.
9. Describe how David came into contact with Saul, and why David was needed at Saul's residence.
10. Tell all you can about Goliath of Gath.
11. Describe how Goliath was killed.
12. What was the effect of the victory over Goliath on David's popularity? On Saul's attitude toward David?
13. What acts of Saul show his attitude toward David, and what acts of David show his attitude toward Saul?
14. Describe Saul's visit to the woman of Endor. What does it show concerning Saul's state of mind? What would such a woman be called today?
15. Describe the death of Saul, and explain how the problem concerning it can be solved.

## LESSON 95

## A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART (DAVID)

2 Samuel 7:1-17; chapters 11, 12, 15-18

The history of David is partly interwoven with that of Saul. David was of the tribe of Judah and an ancestor of Jesus Christ. Note the closing verses of the book of Ruth.

The life of David may be outlined as follows:

1. David the shepherd lad in Bethlehem.
2. David the musician at the court of King Saul.
3. David the "outlaw" fleeing from King Saul.
4. David the King reigning over the tribe of Judah (7 years at Hebron)
5. David the King of all Israel (33 years; capital: Jerusalem)

Besides being king, David was famous for his divine inspiration and authorship of many of the Psalms, including the 23rd Psalm which is a favorite of many people.

The following are of special importance in the life of David:

1. David's great double sin — murder and adultery — 2 Sam. 11, 12. "Thou art the man." "I have sinned against the Lord." "The Lord hath put away thy sin."

2. The rebellion of David's son Absalom. 2 Sam. 15 and following chapters. Absalom was finally killed in battle by Joab, David's field commander.

3. God's gracious promises to David. 2 Sam. 7:1-17. These promises are in their deepest meaning **Messianic** and have their fulfilment in Jesus Christ, the great Son of David (see New Testament: **Luke** 1:31-33.). God promised David that his kingship would continue for ever. This was an **unconditional** divine promise. The time came when the last Jewish king descended from David was taken prisoner to Babylon, never to return. The Jewish people later returned from their captivity in Babylon but they never had another real king. But Christ, the true Son of David, is King forever, not in the earthly city of Jerusalem, but in the glory of heaven.

David is a very clear example of the sovereign grace of God. The youngest of eight brothers, he was divinely chosen to be king. Thus the claims of nature and human custom were set aside in the interest of the sovereign choice of God. For many years thereafter it seemed almost impossible, humanly speaking, that David could ever actually become king of Israel. Think of the many times that Saul attempted to kill him. Yet through all this the sovereign purpose

of God was at work. David, moreover, waits on the Lord and refuses to act unethically by taking matters into his own hands. When the death of Saul finally took place David was far from the scene and had absolutely nothing to do with it — Saul committed suicide following defeat by the Philistines.

The sovereign grace of God is seen, too, in the divine forgiveness and overruling of David's grievous sins. Surely if any character in Scripture disproves the notion of salvation by works, David is the man. Following David's great lapse into sin in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite, David suffered trouble in his own family circle until the end of his days. There was scandal and there was treason in the family of David. By these afflictions the Lord humbled and chastened David that he might become in the fullest sense a man after God's own heart. The sin was forgiven but the consequences lingered on. Yet the covenant promises stand and David stands out in Scripture as the ancestor of twenty kings from Solomon to Zedekiah — but more important, as the ancestor of Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Saviour of the world. Like Paul in the New Testament and Augustine in the early Church, David in the Old Testament is a classic example of what the sovereign grace of God can do for a sinful man. When we think of David we should immediately call the word **GRACE** to mind — the powerful, undeserved favor of God — and we should thank God and take courage for our own lives from this man's experiences and example.

**Questions:**

1. Give the approximate date of David. Where does this place David between Abraham and Jesus Christ?

2. From what persons already studied in Bible 101 was David descended? What important person or persons were directly descended from David?

3. What experiences in the life of David did we study in Lesson 94?

4. Into how many distinct periods can the life of David be divided, and what are they?

5. For what is David important besides being king and ancestor of Christ?

6. How long did David reign at Hebron over his own tribe of Judah?

7. How long did David reign at Jerusalem over the entire nation of Israel?

8. When David was fleeing from Saul, was David really an "outlaw"? Who was really obeying the law of God and of the nation, David or Saul?

9. What special promises did God give to David?

10. What is meant by saying that a promise is **unconditional**?

11. Show how David is a clear example of the sovereign grace of God.

12. How many kings of Israel or the Jews were descended from David?

13. What is the ultimate and absolute fulfillment of the promise of God that David's kingship would last forever? What New Testament text proves this?

## LESSON 96

### "THOU ART THE MAN" (DAVID)

2 Samuel 11:1 to 12:25

The army of Israel was besieging Rabbah, sometimes called in Scripture Rabbath-Ammon. The city was the capital of the kingdom of the Ammonites, who were distant kin to Israel, being partly descended from Lot, Abraham's nephew. The Biblical Rabbah or Rabbath-Ammon is identical with the present-day city called Amman, which is the capital of the Kingdom of Jordan and has a population of 280,000 people. In Old Testament times it was of course much smaller than this.

According to the customs of those times, David as king should have been at the battle front where the fighting was going on. Instead of this, however, David was enjoying ease and luxury in his palace at Jerusalem, while his field commander Joab conducted the campaign at Rabbah. It was under these circumstances that David yielded to temptation and fell into the most terrible sin.

From the roof of his palace (which was perhaps higher than ordinary houses of Jerusalem) David saw a woman bathing in a neighboring courtyard. Common modesty and decency, not to mention conscience and moral principle, should have moved David to turn away his eyes from this sight and not look that way again. Instead, he dallies with temptation, and soon is deeply involved.

Making inquiry as to the woman's identity (why was David not ashamed to do this?) he learns that she is Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Uriah is a godly Jew, but is called "the Hittite" presumably because there was a Hittite ancestor somewhere in his family tree. Uriah is a faithful, loyal soldier in David's army, and while David is seducing this man's wife, Uriah is facing hardships and possible death at the battle front near Rabbath-Ammon. This makes David's crime even fouler.

Each temptation yielded to makes it easier to yield to the next one. David sent for Bathsheba to come to the royal palace. The sin of adultery is committed. We may wonder whether Bathsheba herself was not partly responsible for this — apparently she came to the palace without

protest or resistance. The Bible account, however, places all the emphasis on the sin of David. Bathsheba becomes pregnant and sends a message informing David about this.

Now David tries desperate remedies to cover up his sin. The only righteous course would have been to repent, make a full confession not only to God but to Uriah, offer what restitution was in his power — and perhaps abdicate as king. But instead of facing and confessing his sin David tries desperately to hide it. So he sends a message to Joab, his field commander, asking that Uriah be sent home to Jerusalem with a report on the progress of the war. Uriah arrives, reports to David and is told to go home to his house. This would lead people to think that the child which would be born was Uriah's. But Uriah refuses to go home — instead, he sleeps at the service entrance of the royal palace. Did he perhaps already suspect that something was wrong?

The second day after, David invites Uriah to dinner and deliberately plies him with liquor, until Uriah is actually drunk. Again he is told to go to his house. But Uriah, even when drunk, refuses to go home. Now David becomes really drunk, refuses to go home. Now David becomes really desperate. The following morning he sends Uriah back to the battle front carrying a sealed letter to Joab. Poor Uriah does not know that his own death warrant is inside that letter!

The letter directs Joab to station Uriah in a dangerous spot, where the enemy is likely to attack. Suddenly all other Israelite soldiers are to withdraw, leaving Uriah alone to face the attack of the Ammonites. Thus Uriah will be killed and it will seem to the public that his death was an ordinary battle casualty.

That David, the man after God's own heart, could write such a letter shows how deeply he was involved in sin. Uriah delivers the letter to Joab, who reads it. Joab should have torn the letter up and sent a reply to David saying, "Your Majesty, I am a soldier, not a murderer of my own men. If you do not like that, you can get someone else to be your field commander in

this war." But Joab is one of those "tough" men who say "orders are orders" and ask no questions based on conscience or moral principles. So Joab carries out David's instructions.

Uriah is no coward and he stands where he has been ordered to be. Suddenly all withdraw leaving him exposed and alone. Still he remains there. Presently it happens — the Ammonites stage an attack, and Uriah is killed. A message goes to David at Jerusalem informing him that Uriah is dead. David, of course, thinks that now at last his problem is solved — no one will ever know, and when the child is born no one can make any accusations. Bathsheba goes into mourning for the death of her husband. We cannot help wondering whether this mourning was sincere or merely a display to impress the public. After this David openly marries Bathsheba.

Chapter 11 ends with the telling comment, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord" (11:27b). David might be able to deceive the public but he could not mock the Lord and he could not silence his own conscience. It is believed the Psalm 32 was written later by David, describing his terrible unrelieved guilt feelings during this period between his sin and his repentance.

The tendency today is to define sin in social terms — how it affects ourselves and other people. The Bible describes sin in terms of relationship to God. David had grievously injured both Bathsheba and Uriah, but in doing so he had sinned against God. The important thing to ask about any course of conduct is not what other people will think about it, nor what its social consequences will be, but rather **is it displeasing to God**. David later came to recognize the truth of this when he wrote "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. . ." (Psalm 51:4). We injure our fellow men, but we sin against God. There will be no great revival of evangelical religion in our day until we get back to thinking of sin as an offense against God. Many people today never think of it in this way — they are just concerned about the effects in human society.

Months go by, and David continues stubborn, unrepentant and, of course, miserable, without spiritual peace and joy. It is almost time for the child to be born. God sends Nathan the prophet — incidentally, one of David's best friends — to lead David to repentance and bring him around to a spiritual state again. This is a very difficult task, and the difficulty is compounded by the friendship between Nathan and David. Remember, Nathan is not simply to denounce David, or pronounce judgment upon him — he is to seek to win him. How to tell the whole, terrible truth to David without making him so angry that he will not repent? Nathan, guided by the Holy Spirit, does it by a parable. Parables are used

in the Bible for various purposes, such as to emphasize a point, or to illustrate a truth. Sometimes a parable is used to catch a man in a trap, and this is what Nathan does. Get the man to admit the principle before he realizes that the matter concerns him personally. When he realizes this, it is too late to back out — he is trapped by his own admission of the principle involved.

Nathan tells the parable of the rich man and the poor man, and David, while thinking that the whole matter only concerned the theft and slaughter of a lamb, is filled with righteous indignation, and with an oath ("As the Lord liveth") angrily says, "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die. . ." (12:5b).

At this point Nathan must have looked David straight in the eye with a look that almost bored a hole through his head. Perhaps he also pointed his finger straight at David, as he said the terrible words: "Thou art the man!" Nathan goes on, in the name of the Lord and by divine inspiration, and accuses David flatly of adultery and murder (12:9), and pronounces the awful sentence: "The sword shall never depart from thine house." Further terrible details follow of the consequences which will come to David on account of his double sin.

After months of stubborn impenitence, David now breaks down. "I have sinned against the Lord" (12:13). Remember that David had himself said that the man who had done the evil deed must surely die. It looks as if David has pronounced a death sentence on himself. But God's forgiveness is as quick as man's repentance. "And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (12:13). So David is forgiven and he need not die. But Nathan continues: "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house" (12:14, 15). The guilt of the sin is forgiven; the consequences linger on. David has given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. Think of it — all the wicked people and scoffers against religion will make capital of David's deed — they will say that religious believers are all hypocrites and shams, and they will back this up by relating the story of David, Bathsheba and Uriah. So God's displeasure must be shown by the death of the child that shall be born as the result of David's sin with Bathsheba.

The child is born, but at once it sickens and after a week it dies. David is heartbroken. The man who could have Uriah murdered in cold blood cannot stand for a newborn baby to take sick and die. But the baby dies as Nathan had said. And following this David rises up, bathes, goes to worship the Lord, and returns to break his long fast with a meal. His palace servants cannot understand this conduct — while the child

was alive he fasted, now that the child is dead he eats his food. David explains in words that should bring great comfort to Christian parents who have lost a little child: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (12:23b). This does not mean "I shall join him in the grave" but "I shall join him in the life that is beyond this life of sense and time and space; I shall meet him again in heaven, the eternal home of God's people."

Time passes. Another son is born to David and Bathsheba, this time with the approval of conscience and the full blessing of God. This baby is named "Solomon" ("Peace"), and it is recorded that "the Lord loved him". Perhaps in an effort to make some amends for the awful wrong done to Bathsheba, David promised her that this second son would be king to reign after David on the throne of Israel (1 Kings 1:17).

#### Questions:

1. What was the first step in David's course of sinful conduct?
2. To what extent was Bathsheba to blame for what happened?
3. Where was Bathsheba's husband, and what was he doing, when David seduced his wife?
4. What was David's first attempt to cover up his sin? His second attempt?
5. What message did David send to Joab?
6. What should have been Joab's response to this message?

7. How does the last verse of chapter 11 summarize the moral quality of David's conduct?

8. How is sin often wrongly defined or described at the present day?

9. What Psalm probably was written to describe David's guilt feelings after his sin but before his repentance?

10. What are some of the uses of parables in the Bible?

11. What was Nathan's purpose in using a parable in dealing with David?

12. What was David's reaction to Nathan's parable?

13. What confession did David make when Nathan said "Thou art the man"?

14. How was David assured of God's forgiveness?

14. How was David assured of God's forgiveness?

15. What bad consequences were certain to come to David after all this?

16. Why did God decree that the child born of David's sin must surely die?

17. What is the meaning of David's statement "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me"?

18. What promise did David make to Bathsheba concerning their second son?

### LESSON 97

#### ABSALOM STEALS THE HEARTS OF THE MEN OF ISRAEL

2 Samuel chapters 15-19

Troubles piled up in the family of David. One of his sons, named Amnon, became infatuated with his half-sister Tamar. Yielding to this unholy lust, he got the girl to his bedroom by trickery and raped her. Tamar was the full sister of Absalom. Quite understandably, Absalom hated Amnon because of this deed. Two years later Absalom had his servants kill Amnon while the latter was drunk at a feast. Following this Absalom found it necessary to flee the country. He went to Geshur, a Syrian kingdom located north and east of the Sea of Galilee. There he remained for three years, until Joab finally negotiated permission for him to return to Jerusalem on condition that he would not see the face of his father king David. Finally permission was given for Absalom to see David, and David kissed Absalom in token of reconciliation (2 Sam. 4:33.)

It was with this checkered background that Absalom embarked on a campaign to make him-

self king of the nation of Israel. He was a "playboy" type, considered very handsome, and certainly he was extremely vain about his personal appearance. He had very long hair, which he had cut precisely once a year, no more and no less. And when it was cut, Absalom had every bit of what was cut off saved and weighed, and it was found to weigh two hundred shekels, that is, about six pounds. Apparently Absalom used to boast to his friends about the weight of his year's crop of hair (2 Sam. 14:25-27). His hair was heavy, but his character was of light weight, and certainly he was unfit to rule as king. But the ambition to do just that gnawed at his heart, though he must of course have known that his half-brother Solomon was slated for the kingship.

Absalom went about his conspiracy methodically. He obtained a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. This was quite in keeping with his stage-acting and playboy character. Standing in the open plaza by one of the

city gates of Jerusalem, he would accost persons arriving from distant points, inquiring with earnest solicitude as to their business in Jerusalem, expressing sympathetic approval of those who told him of the lawsuits or other matters they had come to press in the capital, and of course always proving himself the perfect, courteous listener. Having heard a person out, he would say, "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee" (2 Sam. 15:3). Then he would add, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man that hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!" (verse 4). Thus he insinuated that the government was stalled in inaction and that his father David was incompetent or neglectful of duty. This of course was completely untrue and unjust to his father. David had his faults, and they were bad ones, but inefficiency and neglect of government business were not among them.

Absalom continued this propaganda campaign. He would embrace and kiss total strangers, to impress them with his tender regard for their interests. "And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam. 15:6). Adolf Hitler is quoted as having said that if you tell a lie often enough, people will come to take it for truth. Hitler was not the first that believed this, and acted accordingly. Absalom put on a clever and protracted campaign of lying propaganda, and finally it was effective. He had stolen the hearts of the men of Israel. The people, or at any rate the majority of them, came to believe that David was incompetent and that Absalom ought to be made king.

Finally Absalom felt secure enough to come out openly against his father David in armed rebellion (2 Sam. 15:7-12). "And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom" (verse 12b). Absalom actually had himself proclaimed king; this was done in the city of Hebron, where David had once reigned over the tribe of Judah. Faced with this situation, David found it necessary to flee from Jerusalem, accompanied by a relatively small company of loyal friends and supporters. Meantime Absalom entered Jerusalem and occupied the royal palace. A vain, ambitious, self-centered, unprincipled fool had become the king of Israel.

After various developments (including the diverse counsels of Ahitophel and Hushai), a showdown battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim, east of the Jordan River. As David's men went out to the battle, he stood by the city gate and commanded the officers: "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom" (2 Sam. 18:5). Poor David was torn between his feelings as a father and his duty as king. Absalom was guilty of high treason — armed, open warfare against his rightful king and country — and the penalty for such a crime would be death, in any country, at any period of the world's his-

tory. By every consideration of law and right, Absalom deserved to die. But David cannot bear to have the guilty Absalom suffer the just penalty. He wants this traitorous rebel to be treated "gently" because, after all, Absalom is his own son. And all the people heard David's command to the officers concerning Absalom.

Absalom's long hair, of which he was so inordinately vain, proved to be his ruin. As he rode on a mule under the thick boughs of a great oak (terebinth) tree, having to bend low to get past under the branches, his long flowing hair caught and became tangled in the tree. The mule kept right on going, leaving Absalom hanging by his hair from the tree. Very likely his feet were not more than a foot or so off the ground, but that made no difference. He could not touch the ground, and as he threshed about to get free, his hair would only get caught tighter in the tree.

A soldier came running to Joab, saying, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak" (18:10). Joab asked, Why didn't you kill him then and there? to which the soldier replied, How could I disobey the king's orders, which we heard this morning, by harming the king's son? To this the rough-and-ready Joab replied, "I may not tarry thus with thee." Taking three darts, Joab went and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. Thus Absalom perished, as he deserved to do.

The battle was over; there was nothing left to fight about. A trumpet was blown. The body of Absalom was cast into a pit in the forest, and a great heap of stones raised over it. The people returned to their tents. The monument which Absalom had built for himself near Jerusalem still stood, but it was not his tomb (18:18).

When David finally learned that Absalom was dead, he was heartbroken. Going up to a little room over the city gate he cried and wept, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (18:33). This is how parents feel about a son or daughter. The young person may have disgraced the family, committed a serious crime, even become a traitor to the country, but still it is their son, or their daughter. The love of parents for their offspring persists in spite of everything. Reason and emotion strove within David, and for the time being, emotion won.

Joab, the "tough" soldier, undertook to rebuke David for his attitude. He said in effect, I see you care more about that worthless son of yours than about all the people who have been loyal to you and have served and suffered with you. "If Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well" (19:6). David, if you don't come down and thank your soldiers for what they have done for you, by tomorrow morning you will not have a single supporter left, and you will be worse off than when Absalom was against you.

This was a pretty salty dose of medicine for David, under the circumstances, and Joab could never be diplomatic or tactful — he was always blunt and pointed to the extent of crudity. Still, Joab was right in what he said, and the king needed to hear it. And David recognized that he must act in accordance with Joab's urgent counsel. So David went and sat in the city gate, and met the people. And thus this crisis was averted.

It was some little time before David got back to Jerusalem and was fully re-established as king of Israel. Still later another son of David, Adonijah, attempted to become king by a stroke of state. He was actually proclaimed king at Enrogel just south of the city wall of Jerusalem, but Nathan and Bathsheba informed David of this while it was still going on. David was weak in body and bedfast, but his mind was perfectly clear. He acted with resolution and dispatch. Solomon was anointed and proclaimed king within the hour. David thus abdicated in favor of his son Solomon. Adonijah's plot came to nothing, as all his supporters deserted him on hearing that Solomon was made king.

## LESSON 98

### SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY

#### 1 Kings, chapters 3-11

In David's old age another of his sons, Adonijah, attempted to become king by a **coup d'etat**. This plot failed, and David had Solomon, his son by Bathsheba, crowned king while he was still living.

The life of Solomon may be outlined as follows:

1. Solomon's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt. 1 Kings 3:1. This was a political marriage. Such marriages were common among royal families in ancient times. This was only the first of many such marriages on Solomon's part. Early and late he is recorded to have had 700 wives and 300 concubines — not a world's record, but certainly outrageously scandalous for a member of Israel, the covenant people of God. Marriage with people of a false religion was categorically forbidden by the Law of God.

2. Solomon's early faithfulness to God, and an exception to it. 1 Kings 3:2-4. The exception was the continued worship on the "high places." These "high places", often mentioned in the historical books of the Old Testament, were hilltop shrines left from pre-Israelite (Canaanite) times. The previous inhabitants of the land — the Canaanites — had worshipped their false gods on these hilltops. Sometimes the Israelites not only adopted the shrines but also took over the worship of the pagan Canaanite gods. In other cases the Israelites adopted the old shrines, but pro-

#### Questions:

1. Describe the personality and character of Absalom.
2. What kind of career had Absalom had before he attempted to become king?
3. Describe Absalom's propaganda campaign and its effects.
4. What was the effect on David of Absalom's activities?
5. Where was the decisive battle fought?
6. How did Absalom meet his death?
7. What was David's reaction to the news of Absalom's death?
8. How did Joab intervene to save the situation?
9. Who was Adonijah and what did he attempt to do?
10. How was the plot of Adonijah frustrated?

fessed to use them only for the worship of Jehovah, the true God. Naturally this was less serious than worshipping the false gods would be, but still it was wrong, for it was contrary to the law concerning the worship of God. The worship mentioned in I Kings 3:2-4 was a sincere worship of Jehovah, although it involved an element of irregularity.

3. Solomon's dream and his prayer for wisdom. 3:5-15.

4. The wise judgment of Solomon in the case of the two women, and the public reaction of approval of the king's action. 3:16-28.

5. Elements in Solomon's greatness. 1 Kings 4:20-34.

- (a) The great number of his people. 4:20.
- (b) The extent of his dominion — from the Euphrates River to the border of Egypt. 4:21, 24.
- (c) Large number of chariots and horses (contrary to divine law). 4:26.
- (d) Author of Proverbs. 4:32.
- (e) Student of nature. 4:33.
- (f) Internationally famous. 4:34.

From the political and economic standpoint, Israel reached the peak of its greatness under Solomon. From the moral and religious point of view, however, Israel was greater during the reign of David. In the time of Solomon religious deterioration has already set in.

6. Solomon the builder of the first Temple in Jerusalem. This was the central sanctuary of the Israelite nation, where the priesthood and the sacrifices were centered. There was never to be more than one such sanctuary at any one time. We may pause briefly here to list the successive sanctuaries:

- (a) The Tabernacle made in the Sinai desert in the time of Moses (later placed in various locations in Palestine).
- (b) The Temple built by Solomon. Destroyed by the Babylonian army, 586 B.C.
- (c) The Second Temple, built under the leadership of Zerubbabel, 536-516 B.C.
- (d) The Temple built by Herod the Great, beginning 19 B.C. This was the Temple which was standing when Jesus Christ was on earth. This Temple was destroyed by the Roman army, A.D. 70.

7. The visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. 1 Kings 10. Sheba was a kingdom in far southern Arabia. In addition to wishing to ask Solomon hard questions and test his famed wisdom, she may have wished to make a trade treaty between her kingdom and Solomon's, though the Bible does not mention this. The notion presented in a recent motion picture, that there was romance or flirtation between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, is entirely without Biblical foundation.

8. Solomon's multiple marriages and their consequences. This multiple matrimony was flagrantly in violation of divine law, and resulted in terrible compromises with false religions. 1 Kings 11:1ff. By this course of conduct Solomon planted the seed of apostasy which was to grow into terrible trouble later. Inevitably the people would be influenced toward tolerance of false religions, and toward participation in idolatry.

#### Questions:

1. Tell about the first recorded marriage of Solomon. Whom did he marry, and why? How were such marriages regarded in antiquity? How are they regarded by the Law of God in the Bible?

2. What was Solomon's attitude toward God in the early part of his life? What exception to this is recorded?

3. What were the "high places", their history and uses? How should we regard Solomon's worship at the high places?

4. Describe how God revealed Himself to Solomon in a dream. What did Solomon ask for? What did God promise to give him?

5. Tell the story of the incident of Solomon's judgment in the case of the two women, which proved him to be a very wise king.

6. Name as many elements as you can in the greatness of Solomon. How does the time of Solomon rank in Israel's history, as to politics, economics and religion?

7. What is known of Solomon as a builder? How many sanctuaries or temples existed in succession in the history of Israel? What was the difference between the first one and the other three?

8. Describe the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. Where was Sheba? Why did she come? What did she give Solomon? What was her reaction to his splendor?

9. To what extent did Solomon become involved in polygamy ("multiple matrimony")? What was the probable motive behind this development? How was this sort of thing commonly regarded in the ancient Near East? What evil resulted from Solomon's polygamy?

10. God promised Solomon that he would be the wisest of men. In what respect can we recognize him as the wisest of men, and in what respect must we rate him as very foolish?

### LESSON 99

#### THE SECESSION OF THE NORTHERN TRIBES

1 Kings 11:26-43; chapters 12, 13

Jeroboam the son of Nebat was a civil service official under Solomon, and a man of courage and ability. He was met by Ahijah the Shilonite (i.e., Ahijah, the prophet who lived at Shiloh). The announcement was made that the kingdom would be divided and that Jeroboam would rule over ten tribes. The reason for this from God's standpoint was the religious unfaithfulness of the nation under Solomon, especially the increasing tendency to compromise with idolatry.

Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, who fled to

Egypt until the death of Solomon. Following Solomon's death, his son, Rehoboam, was crowned king. Jeroboam returned from Egypt and became the spokesman of the people in demanding concessions of Rehoboam. Rehoboam consulted with the old men, then with the younger men, and finally returned a harsh and unreasonable answer to the people (1 Kings 12:14).

Back of this stubborn attitude of Rehoboam there was a mysterious, deeper purpose of God

(12:15). We may conclude that God regarded the separation of the ten northern tribes as religiously necessary, because of their tendency to fall into false religion. Even so, the people of the northern tribes were to blame for splitting the kingdom. Evidently back of their demands upon Rehoboam there lay a deeper resentment and dissatisfaction with the dynasty of David — a dissatisfaction which was at bottom not only economic but religious. The subsequent history of the northern tribes, in the Kingdom of Israel, bears out the idea that even in the time of Jeroboam they were not wholeheartedly committed to the religion of Jehovah.

Thus the ten northern tribes revolted from the dynasty of David. This separation proved to be permanent. Rehoboam attempted to regain the northern tribes by the use of military force, but was forbidden by God (through a prophet) to do so. He abandoned the attempt for the time being. Later, however, there were hostilities between Rehoboam and Jeroboam (14:30).

#### Questions:

1. What official position did Jeroboam hold under Solomon?
2. What do we know about the character and ability of Jeroboam in his youth?
3. Who met Jeroboam as he was leaving the city of Jerusalem?
4. Describe the interview between Ahijah and Jeroboam.
5. What was the reason why God wanted the kingdom divided?
6. What was Solomon's reaction to the announcement that Jeroboam would reign over ten tribes?

7. How did Solomon know anything about the secret interview between Ahijah and Jeroboam?

8. How did Jeroboam escape being killed by Solomon?

9. Who became king on the death of Solomon?

10. Who called Jeroboam back from Egypt to Palestine?

11. What position did Jeroboam immediately assume on returning from Egypt?

12. What demand was made on Rehoboam by Jeroboam and his followers?

13. What was Rehoboam's reply to the petitioners?

14. What method did Rehoboam use to reach a decision on how to answer the people?

15. What counsel was given by the old men?

16. What counsel was given by the young men?

17. How does the Bible explain Rehoboam's foolish decision (1 Kings 12:15)?

18. What was the reaction of the people to the announcement of Rehoboam's decision?

19. What was Rehoboam's **first** move to try to retain authority over the northern tribes?

20. What was the outcome of the attempt to collect taxes from the northern tribes?

21. What was Rehoboam's **second** attempt to retain authority over the northern tribes?

22. What was the outcome of this plan?

23. Relate the incident of Jeroboam's withered hand.

### LESSON 100

#### THE NORTHERN KINGDOM FROM JEROBOAM TO AHAB

1 Kings 14:1-20; 15:25 to 22:40

After becoming king of the ten northern tribes (commonly called the kingdom of Israel, in distinction from the southern kingdom, commonly called the Kingdom of Judah), Jeroboam feared that the northern tribes would later return to the kingdom of Rehoboam. He feared that the people's participation in the religious worship at Jerusalem would draw them back to the southern kingdom and the dynasty of David.

Jeroboam's way of preventing this from happening was to set up a counterfeit religion within the boundaries of the northern kingdom, so that the people would not need to go to Jerusalem for religious worship. Two golden calves were made; one of these was set up at Dan in the far north of Jeroboam's kingdom; the other was set up at

Bethel, near the border between Jeroboam's territory and that of Rehoboam. An illegitimate priesthood was formed and a schedule of religious festivals set up. Jeroboam's purpose in fabricating this new religion was purely political; he was certainly not a religious man. However, he sold this new man-made religion to the people of his kingdom on the plea of convenience, as eliminating the "long" journeys to Jerusalem.

The sickness and death of Jeroboam's son Abijah is recorded in I Kings 14:1-20. This event is significant for two reasons: (a) It shows that Jeroboam himself had no faith whatever in the religion of the golden calves which he had set up. When he personally was in trouble and needed divine help he did not go to the priests of the

golden calves at Dan and Bethel, but to Ahijah, whom he knew to be a true prophet of the Lord. (b) It tells of the curse pronounced on the family and dynasty of Jeroboam. Of his family, only this son Abijah would receive burial.

At this point the student should glance at the kings of Israel. The character of the relations between the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, through their entire history from the division of the kingdom (931 B.C.) to the destruction of the northern kingdom (722 B.C.) may be tabulated as follows:

- (1) Jeroboam (division of kingdom, 931 B.C.) to Ahab (874 B.C.) — 57 years. This was a period of hostility, intermittent warfare.
- (2) Ahab (874 B.C.) to accession of Jehu (841 B.C.) — 33 years. This was a period of friendly relations.
- (3) Jehu (841 B.C.) to fall of the northern kingdom (722 B.C.) — 119 years. This was a period of renewed hostility, bitterness and strife. The total length of the period from the division of the kingdom to the fall of the northern kingdom was 209 years.

Through the reigns of the first few kings of the northern kingdom (Israel) the religious apostasy begun by Jeroboam continued and became worse. One of the greatest kings of Israel was Omri, the father of Ahab (Omri: 885-874 B.C.). This man was great from the political and economic viewpoints, and indeed was internationally recognized as a great king. Religiously, however, he was a failure, for he continued the apostasy begun by Jeroboam and even made it worse. The Bible does not record very much about Omri, because the Bible is not concerned **primarily** with political or economic history, but with the relation of the nation to God.

Under Ahab (874-853 B.C.) and his wicked queen Jezebel the kingdom of Israel sank to an all-time low in religion. Ahab not only continued the apostasy of Jeroboam but also tried to force the Phoenician religion of Baal-worship on Israel. Jezebel was the daughter of a Phoenician king (Ethbaal of Sidon) and she doubtless made Ahab worse than he otherwise would have been. She had a dominating personality and Ahab was greatly under her influence. A temple for Baal was erected in Samaria, and persecution was used against those who would not conform to the religion of Baal. Baalism became the official "state religion" of the Kingdom of Israel. The Lord raised up the prophet Elijah to oppose this prevalence of Baalism.

The following are some of the most important events in the life of Ahab:

- (1) The prolonged drought followed by the encounter between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. I Kings 17, 18.

- (2) God grants Ahab two notable victories over the Syrians or Arameans. I Kings 20.
- (3) The incident of Naboth's vineyard and its consequences. I Kings 21.
- (4) Micaiah's prophecy against Ahab, followed by Ahab's death. I Kings 22.

The story of Elijah is interwoven with that of Ahab and Jezebel. Note I Kings chapters 17 and 19. Elijah may be called a second Moses, and also a model or type of Christ, the perfect Prophet whom Moses had predicted; Deuteronomy 18:15.

#### Questions:

1. After becoming king of Israel, what change in the people's attitude did Jeroboam fear?
2. What program did Jeroboam adopt to try to prevent his people from returning to allegiance to the dynasty of David?
3. What two important lessons are taught by the incident of the sickness and death of Jeroboam's son?
4. How long was the entire period from the division of the kingdom to the end of the northern kingdom?
5. Into what periods may this entire span of time be divided, with regard to friendliness or hostility between the two kingdoms?
6. What can be said about Omri, the father of Ahab?
7. Why, may we suppose, does the Bible not devote much space to Omri?
8. Who was Ahab's queen and where did she come from?
9. What was her religious faith? Her influence on Ahab?
10. What was the status of the true religion of Jehovah under Ahab?
11. For what great task was the prophet Elijah raised up by God?
12. What was the encounter on Mount Carmel, and what was its outcome?
13. Why should God give Ahab, who was a very wicked king, victories in war?
14. Tell the story of Naboth's vineyard and the prophecy about Ahab's death.
15. What was the occasion of Micaiah's prophecy about Ahab?
16. How was Micaiah's prophecy fulfilled?

(To be continued)

## Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of *Blue Banner Faith and Life* each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers. Do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

**HOLY GROUND** (Expositions from the Book of Exodus), by Douglas M. White. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, pp. 144. \$2.50

This is the second volume in a series entitled the "Evangelical Pulpit Library." This particular volume consists of twelve sermons on the book of Exodus. There is one theme that unites all of the discourse "a 'Pilgrim's Progress' of the Old Testament." The author traces Israel from the lowest level of licentiousness in Egypt to height of Sinai.

This book contains a gratifying emphasis on God's sovereignty and man's depravity. However, the book manifests a warped view of the Covenant. The author defines the covenant as a mutual agreement rather than a unilateral agreement between God and man. The emphasis in the book is on the moralistic and pietistic elements in the life of Moses and the children of Israel rather than the great Christological concepts that are present in the Book of Exodus. These sermons do not study the book in the light of God's dealing with His covenant people, and it doesn't comprehend the book of Exodus in the light of the unfolding History of Redemption.

Dr. White gives us some keen devotional insights; however, one will want to pursue a study of the Book of Exodus with a clearer understanding of progressive revelation and God's Covenant, than these studies display.

— John H. White

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BARTH'S THEOLOGY** (An Appraisal: with Special Reference to election and reconciliation), by Fred H. Klooster. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 98. \$2.95

This book contains three lectures delivered by Dr. Klooster, professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Seminary, delivered at Calvin College Chapel in 1960. They contain an able and forthright study of these aspects of Karl Barth's theology. Some of the critical works written against Barthianism are difficult to understand but even the average reader will find these studies clear and yet precise in their criticism. Dr. Klooster demonstrates that he is not simply attacking Barth, but that he has made a real attempt to un-

derstand him. The general significance of Barth's theology is discussed and then his doctrines of election and reconciliation. The philosophical premises of Barth's theology are by-passed. Thus this is by no means a complete study of Barthianism. Nevertheless this little book is an excellent introduction to Barth.

Each section of the discussion follows Barth's position quite carefully and quite fairly and concludes with a brief and pointed evaluation. Dr. Klooster's view point is demonstrated by the following words: "The very foundation, basic framework, and entire structure of his theology is so different from the theologies of the past, that it is almost impossible to make a contrast on various points of doctrine . . . . The dialectical theology is a new theology even though it has roots in the past and similarities with other positions of today." (p. 32).

Klooster points out throughout his book how Barth weakens historicity. Barth by-passes the atonement to find reconciliation in the incarnation rather than the cross. This incarnate Christ is not related to the ontological Trinity. The author points out that Barth fails to distinguish between the person and the work of Christ which further weakens Christ's historicity. The result is a "dis-closure, not a historical event."

This book is a most able, readable, and helpful study. One wonders, however, why there is no reference to one of the keenest students and critics of Barth, Cornelius Van Til?

— John H. White

**PREACHING FROM REVELATION**, by Albert H. Baldinger. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1960, pp. 128. \$1.95

The publication of this volume grew out of numerous requests of the editor of "**The United Presbyterian**" for back copies containing sermons on the Book of Revelation by the author, preached in his Butler, Pa., pastorate. Mr. Baldinger warns us in the preface to remember "that the sermons were originally prepared with no thought of publication. Neither were they prepared primarily for preachers and theologians." He goes on to say that they "were prepared for, and preached without notes to a congregation of everyday busy people. . ."

Contained within the book's 128 pages are 22 sermons from all but two of the chapters of **The Apocalypse** of John. The author's style is clear, and paragraph headings aid in understanding complex portions. Replete with imaginative language and apt illustrations, this little volume might enthusiastically be recommended to the layman desirous of studying the Bible's last book.

— Thomas E. Tyson

**LEADING LITTLE ONES TO GOD**, by Marian M. Schoolland. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1962, pp. 286. \$3.95

A very excellent book written to teach children about God and their relationship to Him. A book of Biblical doctrine that young children can really understand. The book is arranged in progressive sections to teach doctrine. Short chapters within the sections contain subject matter, discussion questions, Scripture portions to be read from the Bible, a suggested memory verse, a hymn for which a Psalm can easily be substituted, and prayer suggestions.

Excellent for family worship when children are involved or for their private worship. A very helpful book.

— Floy Smith

**BIBLE PICTURES WITH SIMPLE STORIES**, by Al Bryant. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1961, pp. 54. \$2.95

Primarily a picture book with simple stories which are followed by questions to help impress the Bible truths on the child's mind. Beautifully illustrated by some of today's top artists but perhaps undesirable for wide use because of pictures of Jesus. A good first Bible story book and a good visual aid.

— Floy Smith

**ALL ABOUT BABIES**, by Dorothy Grunbock Johnston. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 32. \$1.95

**All About Babies** is written to teach young boys and girls about life in a simple wholesome manner. It is well written in story form — the child learns along with the Norton twins when the mother is expecting a baby. Nicely illustrated. The dialogue is unrealistic at times but is a helpful book. For older primary and young junior.

— Floy Smith

**52 THREE MINUTE TALKS TO CHILDREN**, by Marion G. Gosselink. W. A. Wilde Co., 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1961, pp. 160. \$2.95

This book offers a full year of Bible-based talks written for children. It is full of ideas, texts,

illustrations, stories that take advantage of the seasons, patriotic holidays, special days, etc. A good source book for teachers, parents, and pastors. Dr. Gosselink is an ordained Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church so writes from the Reformed viewpoint.

— Floy Smith

**1001 SENTENCE SERMONS**, by Croft M. Pentz. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 61. \$1.00

This book offers short, eye-catching sayings. Some are trivial, as "lie down with the dogs and you will get up with fleas"; others have Arminian errors, "the Lord's tomorrow of blessing is only waiting for our today of consecration." Some are good, "wild oats need no fertilizer." The reader, perhaps, detects the book's tone.

— Robert More, Jr.

**OUT OF THE EARTH**, by E. M. Blaiklock. William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1961, pp. 92. \$2.00

This book deals with "the witness of archaeology to the New Testament." A previous edition was reviewed in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, January-March 1958, p. 42.

Dr. Blaiklock seems to be conservative, although he writes: "the saying recorded (about Jesus) in the Moslem poet is a genuine echo" of Scriptural truth. To his credit (following J. G. Machen) he writes: "to say that the Christian Church borrowed doctrine and ritual widely from Mithraism is quite absurd. . .". He adequately defends the dual census of Quirinius ("Cyrenius" in Luke 2:2). He very succinctly argues against the thought suggested by a well-known hymn ("O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie") that Bethlehem was quiet when Jesus was born, and against the common view that Jesus was born in a "manger". He says (correctly) that the town was in a hubbub that night, and that the word used by Luke, translated "manger" in the King James Version, means "crib" — cradle, bassinet, and that the place was a cave in the neighborhood (of which Qumran is now the most famous).

For secular materials contemporary with the New Testament, this brief work is invaluable. The reviewer found it refreshing to the mind.

— Robert More, Jr.

**LIMITED INSPIRATION**, by Benjamin B. Warfield. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1962, pp. 54, paper cover. \$1.25

Dr. Warfield was the conservative defender of Verbal (Plenary) Inspiration of Scripture against the liberalism of Dr. H. P. Smith and Dr. C. A.

Briggs. The summary of the arguments is best given by the two translations of 2 Tim. 3:16. Dr. Smith wrote: "Every writing breathing the Spirit of God is also profitable for teaching. . . ." Dr. Warfield, on the other hand, wrote: "Every Scripture is inspired of God. . . ." With a burst of power, Warfield summarizes: "Dr. Smith. . . cannot fight the battle of the Book on the old lines. He must yield the husk that he may save the kernel. Possibly, if the country around be yielded, they may spare the citadel; or mayhap the citadel may be defended if the surrounding country be given up; or perhaps, even, it may be removed to shadow-land, where darts cannot reach it." May such rebuttals live long!

— Robert More, Jr.

PAPERS COMMEMORATING THE QUARTER-CENTENARY OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION, a symposium. Westminster Standard, 183 Rutene Road, Gisborne, New Zealand, pp. 68 and insert. 6d.

These articles were presented to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1960. There are eight chapters dealing with the history of the church and her leaders. Of note is the statement by Rev. John Colquhoun. "The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland which stands aloof from the other Churches in Scotland on the ground of political dissent, is the smallest. . . . The few who did not join that Union might be regarded as of the stern spirit of the original Reformed Presbyterians, but their successors seem to be lacking the spirit of their ecclesiastical ancestors, and to have gained no advantage from their associations with our backsliding age. . . ."

This book has a wealth of historical data which will be informative even after reading it several times.

— Robert More, Jr.

A DISTINCTIVE TRANSLATION OF GENESIS, by J. W. Watts. William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1963, pp. 154. \$1.95

The author is a professor of Hebrew at a Baptist seminary. He is to be commended for bringing out the literal difference between the progressive and the completed "waw consecutive". His explanation of this seems to be accurate, but the complexity of the matter demands evaluation by experts.

The author regularly uses the form Yahweh instead of "Jehovah" or "the LORD." In this he is linguistically correct. This book has several fresh insights into the interpretation of Genesis.

— Robert More, Jr.

SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS, by F. F. Bruce (revised edition). William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1961, pp. 160. \$3.00

Frederick F. Bruce is a professor in England, and an evangelical scholar. This book is recommended without qualification.

The main subjects treated in this book are the history of the Dead Sea discoveries, the history of the people, their doctrines, and their relation to the Bible and to the Christian Church.

The reviewer offers only two minor criticisms of this work. First, "Shapira's forgeries" were mentioned several times. Having read Menahem Monsoor's critique of this, the reviewer thinks that those statements need more evaluation. Second, there is no mention that a Hebrew text has been found for the so-called "151st Psalm" previously found only in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. Since the author mentions Hebrew texts for other apocryphal books, this too should be added.

— Robert More, Jr.

THE BIBLE AND ARCHAEOLOGY, by J. A. Thompson. William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1962, pp. 468. \$5.95

Mr. Thompson is a professor of the Old Testament at a Baptist college in Australia. He is a conservative, evangelical writer.

The book is filled with excellent pictures of pertinent facts, as well as line maps. Many historical and exegetical insights commend the work. The author shows convincingly that Jesus was born in a cave, not a "manger" in the common sense of the term.

There are, however, several serious errors. 1st. The earliest Gnostic writers (like Valentinus, whose work we now possess) were not extreme heretics. 2nd. The author adheres to the "late dating" (1280 B.C.) for the Exodus. In connection with this he asserts that the forty-year reigns of David and Solomon are only deductions, not necessarily facts. 3rd. He says that the Israelites crossed "the Sea of Reeds", not "the Red Sea." There is no problem here about the translation of the Hebrew; "Sea of Reeds" may well be correct. However, "the Sea of Reeds" must have been closely connected with the Red Sea since Acts 7:36 and Heb. 11:29 use a Greek word which clearly means "red" not "reed". ("Red" is *eruthros*; "reed" would be *kalamos*). In view of this, we must say that if the Israelites crossed a swampy, marshy reed lake, still this must have been connected with and properly designated by the term "Red Sea". (It should be remembered that the Suez Canal has changed the topography in modern times. See discussion in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, July-September 1963, page 137).

This book contains much excellent material, even though some of its statements are questionable.

— Robert More, Jr.

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND, by J. H. Merle d'Aubigne. Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 2 volumes, total pages 1022. Clothbound edition, 21 shillings for each volume; paperback edition, 7s. 6d. for each volume.

Dr. d'Aubigne wrote in a lucid style. His work skilfully intersperses quotations from original authorities with his own interpretations, though it gives but meager documentation.

As a point of special interest, d'Aubigne gives much original data concerning Sir Thomas More, prime minister of Henry VIII. A portrait of More is included. D'Aubigne is not bombastic against the papists; where true piety is evident, he allows credit for it.

The frequent occurrence of names of many different persons may cause the cursory reader some difficulty.

For basic source materials and character sketches of persons connected with the Reformation in England, this is a very profitable book.

— Robert More, Jr.

COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY BIBLE, by Matthew Poole. Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 2 volumes, total pages 2061. Each volume 35 shillings.

Matthew Poole lived from 1624 to 1679. He was a conservative writer and a believer in an infallible Bible. He spent years in exile, and was almost assassinated for his evangelical pen.

His method is to give a Bible verse and then make a short, terse comment on it — or an expansive one on the great texts. At times the reviewer experienced some difficulty in establishing a continuity in Poole's thought. For those who like good, old commentaries, this one is excellent.

The present reviewer, however, agrees with another in a previous issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** who expressed the opinion that commentaries are not timeless. Poole never dreamed that some would question the unity of the book of Isaiah — that came long after his day, but it is a problem for us today and we must face and answer it. Poole had not the faintest notion that the time would come when some would say that the book of Daniel is to be dated about 170 B.C. This, too, we must face and answer. Again, Poole knew absolutely nothing about the divisive so-called Documentary Hypothesis concerning the Pentateuch. On the other hand, he writes of Psalm 119: "the author of this Psalm was David; which I know none that deny, and of which there is no just reason to doubt." To be frank, this was the first time I had heard the matter so stated.

This is not to condemn Mr. Poole. The prob-

lems mentioned above have been generated since his day. However, they are our responsibility to answer, and we cannot meet them by studying commentaries which know nothing about these problems. With the other reviewer, previously mentioned, I would ask that we take up evangelical pens and write learned books, even as Poole did in his day three centuries ago.

—Robert More, Jr.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Merrill F. Unger. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 350. \$4.95

Dr. Unger, a Dispensationalist, teaches at Dallas Theological Seminary, Texas. This book contains a vast amount of historical, geographical and artifactual material. Among other things, the relation of findings at Qumran and the recently discovered Gnostic writings to the New Testament is brought out in a very instructive manner.

Some of the book's faults are the following. The photographs, at times, are blurred. The reference to the "63 papyri" of the New Testament is incorrect. Bastiaan Van Elderen in **Christianity Today** gives the number correctly as 78.

Dr. Unger says that "Gnosticism is much later than the Gospel of John." Since the Gnostic Valentinus wrote about A.D. 155, having been born about the time of John's death, the word "much" is too strong. Although Acts 8:37 is a text of doubtful genuineness, being missing in some of the most important manuscripts, nevertheless Unger uses it to clinch a point. He also calls the disciples of Apollos "subnormal" Christians, something which demands more study. Again, he says that Apollos "was probably a pupil of Philo and undoubtedly followed the allegorical method of the latter, attempting to reconcile Moses with Plato. Inasmuch as this is precisely the area of a thesis by the reviewer, he yearned that the "probably" would have been documented. However, at this point, it cannot be done, hence the fact is an ethereal one which must be rejected.

The most serious error of the book is a theological one, namely the author's Dispensationalism. Of Acts chapter 15 he writes: "it was an announcement that the Christian message, apart from the ceremonies of Judaism and the legalism of the Mosaic system, had been divinely authenticated as the medium of salvation to the nations." This apparently means that Christianity and grace replaced Judaism and the law as the true and final means of salvation. Unger says that the book of Acts proves that Christianity was "distinct from" Judaism, yea, completely independent of it.

For secular facts as they relate to the New Testament, this book is noteworthy. It does con-

tain some factual and theological errors. All in all, however, it is recommended, with reservations noted.

— Robert More, Jr.

**THE GIST OF THE BIBLE**, by Alvin E. Bell. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1961 (reprint), pp. 169. \$1.50.

This is a brief analysis of the whole Bible, book by book. The author is apparently a pre-millennialist, holding that Daniel's seventieth week is still unfulfilled. He strongly discounts the need to use the Psalms in worship today. Rahab's crimson cord is affirmed to be a type of God's grace and salvation. Jesus is said to have "visited" Haggai's temple — actually, it was the temple built by Herod the Great, which had replaced Haggai's temple. The author holds to the "long ending" of the Gospel of Mark in spite of the weakness of the textual evidence for these verses. He follows the translation of 2 Tim. 3:16 given in the margin of the Revised Standard Version ("Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable. . ."), which is an erroneous translation. Titus is called "Spiritual Cosmetics". This is based upon the word translated "adorn" which in the Greek is *kosmeo*, from which our English word "cosmetic" is derived. It certainly was attractive there!

— Robert More, Jr.

**THE SCRIPTURE SOURCEBOOK, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY D. L. MOODY**. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962 (reprint), pp. 192 and appendix. \$2.50

This book is a topical concordance of the Bible, utilizing both exact words and also ideas. Under **resurrection**, for example, both Job's classic statement and 1 Cor. 15 are listed.

There are some weaknesses where lack of grasp of the precise meaning of the Greek of the New Testament is evident.

There are indexes of the Bible, the Gospels, miracles and parables, together with several chronologies, harmonies and collections of names and prophecies. A great many types are listed. The book follows the rule that "if the New Testament refers to the Old Testament fact, then it is a type." It is the most extensive (and still correct) listing that I have ever seen. This book is unconditionally recommended.

— Robert More, Jr.

**CHURCH AND KINGDOM**, by Raymond O. Zorn. The Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N.J. 1962, pp. 228. \$3.75.

This book is one of the Philosophical and Historical Studies Series, edited by Rousas J. Rushdoony, who states in the Foreward, "The radical significance of the concepts of church and kingdom is too seldom appreciated in our time,

even by churchmen. These doctrines are of more than ecclesiastical concern in that they are basic to any philosophy of history which sees in history movement and unity. As Zorn observes, 'Man want a Utopia. Man is incomplete without one. And the marrow and bone of his basic being still continue to cry out unto him that this is so. But man in sin does not want the only Utopia which will ever be, the Utopia of God.' From Babel to the United Nations, from the Egypt of the Pharaohs to modern messianic democracies, men have sought in states ostensibly secular as well as states professedly holy, to embody history's final order in at least tentative form. These states have thus been man's interpretations of the kingdom concept."

"The importance of a Biblical knowledge of church and kingdom is therefore manifest in that church, state, and every other sphere of human activity are alike menaces to man's hope of liberty if the Biblical concepts are not in force."

Raymond O. Zorn is an ordained minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, now serving (since 1961) a congregation of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand in that country. During World War II he served with the U. S. Navy Air Force in the Okinawan campaign, and since graduated from Gordon College and Westminster Theological Seminary, receiving the degree of Master of Theology from the latter institution.

The book is divided into three sections: I. The Church in relation to the Concept of the Kingdom. II. The Church and the Kingdom in Eschatological Fulfilment. III. The Task of the Church and the Kingdom of God. He discusses the theoretical aspects of the subject in the first two sections, and makes a practical application in the third. He quotes from the writings of 52 authors, including Geerhardus Vos, both Abraham Kuypers (Jr. and Sr.), Charles Hodge, Loraine Boettner, Oswald T. Allis, Herman Ridderbos, Edward J. Young, Oscar Cullman, and others. His index of Scripture references alone covers six pages.

In the first section, he defines the Kingdom of God etymologically, timewise (is it only future or is it also present now?), and in its relation to the Church of this dispensation. He traces the Church from Old Testament Israel and finds that the New Testament Church is the successor and embodiment of the true Israel. He discusses the relation of the Church and the Kingdom, how they are allied and differentiated.

In the second section he discusses the merging of Church and Kingdom, and finds that eschatological principles which are to be fulfilled in the new heavens and new earth are already present in this present age. He discusses cosmic renovation, the completion of the body of Christ, the total victory of Christ over the world, the Devil, the flesh, and death, and the termination of

Christ's mediatorial rule when "God is all in all." In this section he deals in a very fair and scholarly way with both premillennialism and post-millennialism, particularly the former, finding them both Scripturally defective.

In the third and final section he treats the role of the New Testament Church in its battle against the kingdom of darkness, and its relationship to the individual, the family, the State and Society. Concerning the State, Zorn quotes the senior Abraham Kuyper on the three duties of the Magistrate as follows: 1. (Duty to God). "God's supremacy is to be recognized by confessing His name in the Constitution as the Source of all political power, by maintaining the Sabbath, by proclaiming days of prayer and thanksgiving, and by invoking His divine blessing. **God's Word** must rule, but in the sphere of the State only through the conscience of the persons invested with authority . . . statecraft flows from Christ." 2. (Duty to the Church). "It is the duty of the government to suspend its own judgment and to consider the multiform complex of all these denominations as the totality of the manifestation of the Church of Christ on earth . . . **Because the Government lacks the data of judgment, and because every magisterial judgment here infringes the sovereignty of the Church**" (Emphasis added by Zorn). 3. Duty to the Individual). "In the first place, it must cause this liberty of conscience (before God) to be respected by the Church; and in the second place, it must give way itself to the sovereign conscience." And then Zorn comments (p. 189): "It may be questioned if Kuyper, in presupposing the conditions of the governmental situation of his own time, has not perhaps unconsciously involved himself in contradiction between the first and other two points. The Church collectively and its members particularly would delight to have the State acknowledge all of that which is specified under the first point, but **is this officially legitimate for the State to do?**" (Emphasis added by the reviewer). "If the State, as Kuyper says, lacks the data of proper judgment (point two), and should cause liberty of conscience to be respected (point three), we are therefore prompted to ask, **Which God's supremacy must be recognized by the State from among those which are worshipped by religious blocs of its varied constituency? Again, What Sabbath is to be maintained? Friday (Islam's), Saturday (that of Judaism and certain Christian sects), or Sunday? So also with prayer. What God should be invoked for blessing?**" (Emphasis added by the reviewer). In a footnote Zorn says further, "For the State at best can hold to Unitarian principles of religion acceptable to all members of its constituency which is no better than a false religion it might otherwise impose."

It seems to this reviewer that, on the basis of clearly stated Scriptural principles (e.g., Isaiah 60:12, "For the nation and kingdom that will not

serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.") that Zorn condemns the State to inevitable destruction (at this point we might exclaim, "The poor State!"). Zorn's point is consistent, however, insofar as it is based on Kuyper's statements concerning the three duties. But would not the Scriptural principle of Christ's mediatorial Kingship over the nations require a modification of Kuyper's second duty, to the effect that every State is under a Scriptural mandate to cast a judgment regarding Christ, either for or against? The State must, therefore, possess the data of judgment to decide this much at least, and to legislate accordingly, certainly not to elevate any denomination to the level of a State Church, but just as certainly to recognize the *de facto* existence of its condition as a servant to its King. A third certainty is that in ignoring its King (the equivalent of rejection, Luke 11:23, etc.) the State invites its own destruction.

With this one important exception, however, this reviewer heartily endorses "Church and Kingdom" as a substantial contribution to our understanding of the Scriptural relationships of these two entities. Zorn's appeal to Scripture is thoughtful and scholarly, and if we may disagree with any of his conclusions, we are forced thoroughly to document our objections in the revealed and infallible Word of God. A careful reading of this book will do much to strengthen and clarify our concepts of the nature of the Kingdom of God and of Christ, and to assist us in gaining a Scripturally oriented understanding of eschatology, particularly as this is related to the Reformed doctrine of the Church.

— Raymond P. Joseph

THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT, by Roland Allen. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1962 (reprint), pp. 208, paper cover. \$1.65.

Allen presents the Holy Spirit as a person and defines His work from the Scriptures. The highlight of the discussion is his presentation of the Gift of the Spirit as the sole test of communion with God. "If the Holy Spirit is given, those to whom He is given are certainly accepted in Christ by God . . . God gave the Holy Spirit; they admitted at once that nothing more was needed for salvation, nothing else was needful for communion." Allen's ideas on voluntary clergy take us back to the enthusiasm of the layman in the Scriptures for his Lord: "The suitable men (voluntary clergy) are the men whose ministrations the group will accept. Such men are suitable ministers for that group. . ." A group which suggested that it should be constituted as a church by the ordination of men who had not the apostolic qualifications would prove that it was not a suitable group. These truths should be thought through for herein lies the power for a new evangelistic thrust by Christ's Church.

— Donald McClurkin

**EVANGELISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH**, by Stanley C. Brown. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1963, pp. 71. \$2.00.

In seeking to evaluate the efforts of modern-day evangelism in the light of the first century Christians, Brown summarizes the Book of Acts in a cogent Bible study. It is written so that it can be used as a study guide for an adult course in evangelism. Discussion questions and projects follow each chapter. The writer has an interesting approach to the subject that captures the student's interest. "But in whatever way the Holy Spirit comes to us we are not prepared for effective evangelism until we are filled by God, by the Spirit of Christ." Contact, cultivation, commitment and conservation comprise his method of evangelizing. The book is well organized and could well be expanded by the use of other resource materials for an elective course in the adult and youth departments of the church school or midweek get-together.

— Donald McClurkin

**MODERN VIKING: THE STORY OF ABRAHAM VEREIDE**, by Norman Grubb. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1961, pp. 206. \$3.50.

International Christian Leadership gets its proper recognition in this story of its founder, Dr. Abraham Vereide. This man of God pioneered the Presidential Prayer Breakfasts. Included in

this book are many of his encounters with concerned men in important positions of leadership. Grubb's style captures the thrilling activities of Vereide, now in his mid-seventies, to make the reader feel that he knows him. Christians who are concerned about their nation should read this book and become informed about God's activity through the work of laymen.

— Donald McClurkin

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, LEARNING AND TEACHING**, by Cornelius Jaarsma. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1960, pp. 301. \$6.00.

Jaarsma endeavors to present educational psychology as the light of God's Word would fall upon it. Skillfully he presents psychological truths in this college textbook so that the student is aware of the Master Psychiatrist, Christ. The case studies correlate the person's problems to his total personality, including his concept of God. Scriptural answers are worked right into the text without apology. We should use such scholarly books as resource tools better to understand others and to apply the Scriptures more ably to our emotional needs and frustrations. This book will help the church school teacher and administrator to become more effective in his contact with his student. Parents also will benefit from reading this book as they relate it to their opportunities with their children.

— Donald McClurkin

## Our Present Financial Needs

**Blue Banner Faith and Life** is completing 18 years of publication with the present issue. At no time during these eighteen years have subscriptions and sales of back issues been sufficient to pay the cost of publication. Always we have been dependent on the generous contributions of the Lord's people who felt that this magazine was performing a worth-while function and should be continued. Long ago the Editor and Manager of this magazine learned not to worry about money to pay the printing and other bills connected with the magazine. It was always provided sooner or later, and without any high pressure campaigning being done.

Summer is always a relatively slack season for contributions. This is quite natural and understandable. At the same time our publication expenses continue the same the year around — it costs just as much to publish a 50-page issue in July as in January. The accounts for the period from July 1, 1963 to September 25, 1963 are as follows:

### Receipts

Balance on hand July 1 .....	\$184.74
Subscriptions .....	45.75

Same, Britain and Ireland .....	86.72
Contributions .....	113.50
Back issues sold .....	23.50
Binders sold .....	2.50
Miscellaneous .....	51.84
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>\$508.55</b>

### Expenditures

Printing and envelopes .....	\$582.60
Postage .....	43.33
Supplies purchased .....	25.62
Bank service charges .....	1.84
Miscellaneous .....	18.26
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>\$671.65</b>
<b>Deficit Sept. 25, 1963</b> .....	<b>\$163.10</b>

This deficit of \$163.10 has been advanced by the Manager of the magazine from personal funds so that all bills could be paid promptly. In addition to this deficit, we need approximately \$575.00 to pay for the printing and mailing of the present issue (the final issue of 1963). Thus our total present needs come to about \$738.10. This amount is needed if we are to start publication for 1964 "in the black."

If the Lord has prospered you and you are

able to help in this matter without adversely affecting your prior Church and Kingdom obligations, please send a contribution at your convenience. Receipts for all contributions are issued

on printed form of the Board of Publication of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, so that gifts can properly be claimed as deductions from taxable income.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

3408 Seventh Avenue

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010

## *Acknowledgements and Announcements*

### **Contributions Received**

The Manager of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine received since our last issue went to press.

**July, 1963:** No. 1219, \$5.00. No. 1220, \$5.50. No. 1221, \$28.00. No. 1222, \$50.00.

**August, 1963:** None.

**September, 1963 (to September 25):** No. 1223, \$25.00.

These generous contributions from friends and readers of the magazine who have in this practical manner shown their concern for the continued publication of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is received from subscriptions. For the rest we are dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this maga-

zine by contributing to the cost of publication as the Lord enables you.

### **Circulation of this Issue**

U.S.A., 815. Australia, 55. England, 50. Canada, 48. Northern Ireland, 38. Scotland, 37. Japan, 27. Cyprus, 16. New Zealand, 10. Ceylon, 9. South Africa, 9. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 7. Korea, 6. Syria, 5. India, 5. Lebanon, 5. Peru, 3. Netherlands, 3. 2 copies each to Eire, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Greece, Hong Kong. One copy each to U.A.R. (Egypt), Argentina, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Sweden, Thailand, Ghana, Costa Rica, Jordan. Total circulation, 1169. Total outside U.S.A., 354. Number of countries reached, 34.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager  
3408 Seventh Ave.

Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010, U.S.A.

## *Blue Banner Question Box*

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, Doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

### **Question:**

Does not Romans 14:1 have some bearing on **membership** in the Church as well as just **fellowship**? "Receive ye", written by Paul, surely cannot mean simply our recognition of another as a Christian brother, but would also have reference to whether we accept him into our inner circle of fellowship, that is, membership, would it not? If this is true, in what sense then is the Church prepared to receive the "weaker brother"?

### **Answer:**

The present writer believes that the modern distinction between "fellowship" and "membership" is without foundation in the Scriptures. In New Testament times there were no denominations; there existed only the apostolic Church and some incipient heretical sects. Everywhere that the latter are mentioned in the New Testament

documents it is with disapprobation; they are to be "rejected" and the Christian is to "withdraw" from such (Titus 3:10; 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rev. 2:6, 14, 15, 20-22; Titus 1:10, 11, 16). Those preaching a counterfeit or false Gospel were to be regarded as accursed (Gal. 1:8, 9). There is no room for tolerance for, or co-operation with, those who proclaim a false Gospel.

On the other hand, the person who is described as "weak in the faith" is to be received. Romans 14:1 is not very clearly translated in the King James Version. The American Revision (1901) is clearer: "But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples." The Revised Standard Version (1946) reads: "As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions." Williams' translation reads: "Make it your practice to receive into full Christian fellowship people who are over-scrupu-

ious, but not to criticise their views." The Berkeley Version reads: "However, welcome the weak believer, and do not criticise his views." The New English Bible (New Testament, 1961) reads: "If a man is weak in his faith you must accept him without attempting to settle doubtful points."

We refer the reader to our full discussion of this passage in the Epistle to the Romans, which will be found in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, October-December 1952, pages 180-191, and January-March 1953, pages 21-22. The kind of weakness which characterizes the weak brother, concerning whom Paul is writing, is often misunderstood. This is not, as often represented, a weakness consisting of lack of moral principle; it is not the weakness of a ready tendency to indulge in practices which are sinful, nor is it a shaky inability to face and resist certain kinds of temptations, as, for example, to intemperance. On the contrary, what Paul is describing is the weakness of being over-scrupulous, hyper-conscientious, the weakness of having doubts, hesitations and problems about matters which to the normal ("strong") Christian are not spiritual or moral problems at all. The "weak" brother is **diffident**; he has a doubting, hesitant way of thinking about many matters which do not trouble the normal ("strong") Christian at all.

Such persons, the apostle enjoins, are to be "received." This cannot mean "recognized as Christians but rejected as candidates for church membership." It can only mean received into the full enjoyment of church membership and the privileges pertaining thereto. They are to be "received" without the Church attempting to pass judgment on the matters they are over-scrupulous about. The hope is, of course, that the means of grace in the body of the Church will eventually make this "weak" brother truly strong. This cannot be expected if other members are constantly making an issue of the things that trouble the weak brother. Such a situation would be more likely to confirm the weak brother in his "weakness" — his immature and erroneous ideas about certain things.

Calvin in discussing a related matter distinguishes between "the offense of the Pharisees" and the "offense of the weak." The "Pharisee" is a professing Christian who holds deviant views, which the Church regards as "weakness", but which the "Pharisee" holds to be important truth for which he must constantly witness — indeed, if possible, he must insist that the Church as a body adopt and adhere to his views (which actually are "weakness" — they are erroneous and immature). Calvin holds that this kind of domineering, assertive person is not a real "weak brother" to be sympathetically tolerated and borne with; On the contrary, this "Pharisee" is to be resisted, squelched and put in his place emphatically. On the other hand, the real "weak brother" is to be borne with patiently. This "weak

brother" is really having a hard time being a Christian. The problems that bother him are intensely real to him. He cannot relax and be a normal "strong" Christian, at least not yet; instead, he is tense and worried, and tied in knots by inhibitions. This "weak brother" is not trying to dominate the Church; he is not staging a propaganda campaign to bring the whole body to his way of thinking; rather, he is personally bothered by personal problems. This man, Paul says, is to be treated with Christian patience and kindness, to be "received." At the same time, we must always remember that the "weak brother" is **wrong** about his scruples, while the "strong" brother is right. Therefore the tendency, often met with, to erect the scruples of the "weak" into a code of conduct for the Church as a whole, is certainly unbiblical and wrong.

— J. G. Vos

#### Question:

In the study of the Epistle to the Hebrews (**Blue Banner Faith and Life**, July-September 1961, page 168) the statement is made under (4) that "the new covenant is characterized by a greater degree of **spirituality** than the old covenant, 8-10. . . . under the old covenant the law of God was written on tables of stone; under the new covenant the law of God is written on the hearts of His people." Believing that the New Testament commands the exclusive use of Psalms in worship, how can we answer the objection that the Psalms, with all their excellence, were penned under the old covenant, and therefore do not reflect in any **exact** way the religious experiences, feelings, and even **viewpoint** of believers under the new covenant dispensation? Are we to teach that the Psalms were particularly far advanced in their language, etc., and are free from the limitations characteristic of the old covenant, and therefore exactly adequate for new covenant believers?

#### Answer:

The contrast between the law of God written on tables of stone and the law of God written on the hearts of His people is a contrast in **motivation**. It is not a different law, but a different and more effective kind of motivation to obey the law. The law written on the heart involves a powerful spiritual impulse to obey the law — to live out its implications in the believer's daily life. The Old Testament believer was not totally lacking in this, of course, but in his case the internal motivating impulse was evidently much weaker and less energizing than in the case of the New Testament believer.

Evidently the apostles and the Church in their day did not feel that the Old Testament Psalter was inadequate or out of adjustment to their religious emotions and experiences. As a matter of fact, the Book of Psalms is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more times than any other Old Testament book. This may of course be partly due to the length of the Psalter; still, the num-

ber of quotations and allusions is very impressive. Moreover, the **manner** in which it is quoted is highly significant. The Psalter is quoted in such a way that it is evident that it is **organically related to** — woven in with — the New Testament writings. This is dramatically brought out by the late Dr. K. Schilder of Holland in his monumental work on the sufferings and death of Christ, where he heads a chapter with the words "The Author Sings His own Psalms."

As a matter of fact, it seems never to have occurred to the apostles, their associates, or the church under their leadership in their day, that there was a need for producing new religious poetry which could be sung in place of, or in addition to, the Psalms in divine worship. The two or three places in the New Testament which seem to have a metrical swing or cadence (which are often cited as the beginning of hymnody) of course do not disprove the above proposition. These may very well have been bits or parts of a confession or creed that catechumens (prospective members) were taught to recite.

Actually, there were no extra-biblical hymns in the apostolic church, nor were there any for a long time afterward. The **Gloria in Excelsis Deo** may have been the first of such (though it is actually based on the words of Scripture). When hymns began to come in, it was long after the time of the apostles. The hymns were first introduced by heretics, to spread and popularize their doctrines. Then orthodox Church leaders (such as Ambrose, bishop of Milan) began to produce orthodox hymns to counteract the heretics — "fighting fire with fire." If we regard the age of the apostles as the purest period of Christianity, we can hardly hold that the use of hymns is "more spiritual" than exclusive Psalmody. Can we say that the apostles and the apostolic church were naively unconscious of their real need for hymns which would express truly their Christian experience?

Certainly there is a prophetic and also a timeless quality about the Psalms. Psalm 22 contains numerous detailed predictions of the sufferings and death of Christ, which are recorded as ful-

filled in the New Testament. Though it is a Psalm of David, much in the Psalm is foreign to David's own experience. Actually, this Psalm and the similar Psalm 69 give us our Saviour's own account of his feelings as he endured crucifixion. The New Testament does not give this — it treats the crucifixion with the severest objectivity. For a description of the terrible agony which our Saviour endured for us, — his subjective feelings as He suffered and died — we are absolutely dependent on the Psalter.

The present writer cannot help feeling that the real reason many people fail to appreciate the Psalter, and want extra-Biblical hymns in place of it, is that they are poorly adjusted to the Biblical pattern of religion. The Psalms are God-centered, and even where they describe human experience it is with a God-centered orientation. The emphasis is on the mighty works of God for human redemption, His perfections, His infinite worth, and the like. Many (not all, of course) hymns are man-centered, experience-centered, and give the impression that man's experiences and feelings are the all-important matters in religion.

Of course, a case can also be made that many hymns contain theological error. Hymns are not products of divine inspiration, as are the Psalms. Therefore hymn-writers are fallible men subject to human error. The illumination of the Holy Spirit does not render any man an infallible teacher of truth. The error in hymns may be classified as (1) Error of omission; (2) Error of emphasis; and (3) Error of statement. Some hymns, of course, are much better than others. "Rock of Ages" expresses beautifully much precious Christian truth; "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" is a bit of vague, sub-Christian sentimentalism. There is, however, one collection of sacred song which is pure truth, without admixture of error — the Biblical Psalter. Perhaps some of the low regard in which the Psalter is held by many today may be partly the consequence of the religious superficiality of our age, which has resulted in a lack of serious study of the Old Testament in general, and of the Psalms in particular.

— J. G. Vos

Open communion logically leads to open church membership, and a church membership open to all, without reference to the qualifications required in Scripture, or without examination on the part of the church as to the existence of these qualifications in those who unite with it, is virtually an identification of the church with the world, and, without protest from Scripturally constituted bodies, would finally result in its actual extinction.

— Augustus Hopkins Strong

#### CORRECTION

An error appears in this issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** in paragraph 7, Lesson 96, on page 189. The paragraph should read as follows:

"The second day after, David invites Uriah to dinner and deliberately plies him with liquor, until Uriah is actually drunk. Again he is told to go to his house. But Uriah, even when drunk, refuses to go home. Now David becomes really desperate. The following morning he sends Uriah back to the battle front carrying a sealed letter to Joab. Poor Uriah does not know that his own death warrant is inside that letter!"

## *Index of Blue Banner Faith and Life for 1963*

- INABILITY, definition of, 22
- INCARNATION, definition of, 22
- INDEPENDENCE OF GOD, definition of, 23
- BAPTISM AND MIXED MARRIAGES, 156
- BELIEVER'S LIFE OF CHRIST, A, by John C. Rankin
- Resurrection and Ascension, 13
- Humiliation and Exaltation, 69
- Christ on the Throne, 119
- The Coming of the Lord, 165
- BLUE BANNER QUESTION BOX, 51, 155, 204
- BOOKS RECEIVED:
- All About Babies (D. G. Johnston), 198
- Apocalyse Today, The ( T. F. Torrance), 102
- Archaeology and the New Testament (M. F. Unger), 200
- Backgrounds to Dispensationalism (C. B. Bass), 106
- Basic Sources of the Judaeo-Christian Tradition (F. Berthold), 48
- Beatitudes of Jesus, The (W. Fitch), 100
- Beneath the Cross of Jesus, (R. E. O. White), 103
- Beyond the Tangled Mountain (D. C. Percy), 44
- Bible and Archaeology, The (J. A. Thompson), 199
- Bible Pictures with Simple Stories (A. Bryant), 198
- Biblical Doctrine of Judgment, The (L. Morris), 106
- Bill and Betty Learn about God (M. J. Anderson), 104
- Birds of the Bible (P. Hubartt), 104
- Brownlow North, His Life and Work (K. Moody-Stuart), 46
- Brown Shadow (C. Massey), 44
- Capital Punishment: Christian or Unchristian? (T. L. Daniel), 49
- Child Prays, A (J. Ballard and E. Elling), 104
- Christian College in the Twentieth Century, The (B. Ramm), 152
- Church and Kingdom (R. O. Zorn), 201
- Clouded Sky, The (F. E. Beausay), 44
- Commentary on the Holy Bible (M. Poole), 200
- Daily Manna Calendar (M. Monsma), 44
- Darius the Mede (J. C. Whitcomb), 101
- Distinctive Translation of Genesis, A. (J. W. Watts), 199
- Earth-Bound Vision, The (M. Campbell), 107
- Evangelism in the Early Church (S. C. Brown), 203
- Faith's Unclaimed Inheritance (F. Houghton), 107
- Fifty-two Three Minute Talks to Children (M. G. Gosselink) 198
- Find out for Yourself (E. Price), 153
- Free Presbyterian Pulpit (Symposium), 100
- Gist of the Bible, The (A. E. Bell), 201
- Green Olive Tree, The (I. Murray), 44
- Guide to Christian Living, A (A. F. Walls), 45
- Happy Married Life (W. S. Deal), 151
- Heart of a Stranger, The (L. Woodrum), 44
- Hidden Fire (A. Pryor), 44
- Holy Ground (D. M. White), 197
- Holy Spirit of God, The, (W. H. Griffith Thomas), 153
- How We Got the Bible (N. R. Lightfoot), 151
- Human Development, Learning and Teaching (C. Jaarsma), 203
- Intellectual Schizophrenia (R. J. Rushdoony), 100
- Kierkegaard (S. U. Zuidema), 46
- Leading Little Ones to God (M. M. School-land), 198
- Leading Little Ones to Jesus (J. Waterink), 104
- Limited Inspiration (B. B. Warfield), 198
- Meaning of Justification, The (F. Colquhoun), 107
- Ministry of the Spirit, The (R. Allen), 202
- Miracles and Parables of the Old Testament (Anon.), 102
- Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? (R. Allen), 107
- Modern Viking: the Story of Abraham Vereide (N. Grubb), 203
- Motives and Methods in Evangelism (J. R. W. Stott), 107
- Mukle Kate, a Trophy of Grace (Anon.), 101
- My Favorite Picture Stories from the Bible (D. Korfker), 104

- New Bible Dictionary, The (J. D. Douglas), 108
- Next Door to Happiness (L. Storsve), 44
- Nurse's Victory, The (M. A. Yoder), 44
- Obadiah and Habakkuk (E. Marbury), 150
- One Thousand and One Sentence Sermons (C. M. Pentz), 198
- Orphan by Choice (C. Verner), 44
- Out of the Earth (E. M. Blaiklock), 198
- Oxford Annotated Bible, The (H. G. May, B. M. Metzger), 47
- Oxford Bible Atlas, The (H. G. May), 50
- Paco and Pacquita of Mexico (E. L. Murphy), 150
- Papers Commemorating the Quater-Centenary of the Scottish Reformation, 199
- Pastoral Genius of Preaching, The (S. Volbeda), 103
- Peloubet's Select Notes for 1963 (W. M. Smith), 46
- Phantom Ship, The (A. Stewart), 44
- Philippians Through Revelation: An Expanded Translation (K. S. Wuest), 105
- Planting and Development of Missionary Churches (J. L. Nevius), 105
- Plus Living: Meditations on Discipleship and Grace (M. A. Augsburg), 153
- Prayers of the Bible, The (P. Watters), 103
- Preaching from Revelation (A. B. Baldinger), 197
- Psychology of Counseling, The (C. M. Narramore), 104
- Reformation in England, The (J. H. M. d'Aubigne), 200
- Return of Spotted Eagle, The (P. Roam), 44
- Scripture Sourcebook, The (Anon.), 201
- Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls (F. F. Bruce), 199
- Secret of Radiant Living, The (S. Blocker), 105
- Sermons of Robert Murray McCheyne, 45
- Significance of Barth's Theology, The (F. H. Klooster), 197
- Soul Winner, The (C. H. Spurgeon), 151
- Supplementa Calvinia (T. H. L. Parker), 45
- Teaching of Calvin for Today, The (H. J. Whitney), 101
- These, Too, Were Unshackled! (F. C. Bailey), 107
- This Side of Tomorrow (R. L. Hill), 44
- Toward the Understanding of St. Paul (D. J. Selby), 47
- Truth about Seventh Day Adventism, The (W. R. Martin), 102
- Unchanging Commission, The (D. H. Adeney), 45
- Vacation Bible School Materials (Great Commission Pubs.), 108
- CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, booklet on, 209
- CIRCULATION STATISTICS, 109, 155, 204
- COMMON GRACE OF GOD, definition of, 22
- CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED, 50, 109, 154, 155, 204
- DISPENSATIONALISM, AN EXPLANATION AND APPRAISAL OF, by J. G. Vos, 57
- ENGLISH BIBLE, THE, by Robert More, Jr., 75
- EVOLUTION, SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE THEORY OF, by J. G. Vos, 73
- FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP, 204
- GIFT OF PEACE MEDALLION, propriety of, 51
- GEORGE GILLESPIE ON CHURCH CENSURES, by R. D. Eagelson, 8, 63, 115, 173
- GOSPEL MINISTER'S APPEAL TO CONSCIENCE, THE, by J. G. Vos, 113
- GOSPEL, definition of, 21
- GRACE OF GOD, definition of, 22
- GRACE OF GOD, COMMON, definition of, 22
- GRACE OF GOD, SPECIAL, definition of, 22
- HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS, definition of, 22
- HEAVEN, definition of, 22
- HEBREW SANCTUARY, THE: A STUDY IN TYPOLOGY, by W. B. Nicholson, 10, 65
- HELL, definition of, 22
- HERESY, definition of, 22
- HERETIC, definition of, 22
- HERODIANS, definition of, 22
- HETERODOX, definition of, 22
- HOLINESS, definition of, 22
- HOLINESS OF GOD, definition of, 22
- HOPE, definition of, 22
- HUGUENOTS, definition of, 22
- HUMANITY OF CHRIST, definition of, 22
- HUMILIATION OF CHRIST, definition of, 22
- HUSSITES, definition of, 22
- HYMNS, theological error in, 206
- IDOLATRY, definition of, 22
- ILLUMINATION, definition of, 22
- IMPLICIT FAITH, definition of, 22

- INFANT BAPTISM, ground of validity of, 157
- INFINITY OF GOD, definition of, 78
- INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE, definition of, 78
- INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH, by J. L. Girardeau, 16, 67, 117, 169
- INSURANCE, propriety of, 155
- INTERCESSION OF CHRIST, definition of, 78
- JUDAIZERS, definition of, 78
- JUSTIFICATION, definition of, 78
- KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, definition of, 78
- LEGALISM, definition of, 78
- LENT, definition of, 78
- LEVITY, definition of, 78
- LIBERTY, CHRISTIAN, definition of, 78
- LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, definition of, 78
- LIFE THROUGH DEATH, by Joseph P. Duggan, 161
- LOT, definition of, 78
- LOYALTY TO TRUTH IN THE FACE OF PRESURES, by J. G. Vos, 3
- MARTYR, definition of, 78
- MATERIALISM, definition of, 78
- MEANS OF GRACE, definition of, 79
- MEDIATOR, definition of, 123
- MERCY, CHRISTIAN, definition of, 123
- MERCY OF GOD, definition of, 123
- MERIT, definition of, 123
- MESSIAH, definition of, 123
- MILLENNIUM, definition of, 123
- MIRACLE, definition of, 123
- MISSIONS, definition of, 124
- MIXED MARRIAGES AND BAPTISM, 156
- MOABITES, prohibited from entering congregation, 157
- MONTANISTS, definition of, 124
- MONOPHYSITES, definition of, 123
- MONOTHELITES, definition of, 124
- MYSTERY, definition of, 176
- NATURE, definition of, 176
- NESTORIANISM, definition of, 176
- NICOLAITANS, definition of, 176
- OATH, definition of, 176
- OPEN COMMUNION, 206
- ORDINANCES OF GOD, definition of, 176
- ORDINATION, definition of, 176
- ORTHODOXY, definition of, 176
- PENTECOSTALISM, theological tenets of, 53
- POEMS AND POETICAL QUOTATIONS:
- Faith (E. B. Heins), 160
- From Covenant Times (H. C. Wilson), 56
- Lord, Grant Us Eyes to See (C. G. Rossetti), 2
- Mock On, Mock On, Voltaire, Rousseau, 62
- New Jerusalem, The (Anon.), 112
- No Scar? No Wound? (Anon.), 160
- Our Martyrs' Answer (O. F. Thompson), 2
- Passing Away (C. G. Rossetti), 112
- Safe Where I Cannot Die Yet (C. G. Rossetti), 2
- Somebody (Anon.), 99
- Stranger, The (J. Clare), 160
- Till the Perfect Day, (Anon.), 2
- PSALM 51, metrical version with music, 110
- PSALM 81, metrical version with music, Oct.-Dec. back cover
- PSALM 118, metrical version with music, 54
- PSALM 140, metrical version with music, 158
- PSALTER, suitability of for New Covenant believers, 205
- PSALTER, timeless and prophetic character of, 206
- RELIGIOUS TERMS DEFINED, 21-23, 78, 123, 176
- SCHWEITZER, ALBERT, theological teachings of, 52
- SCRUPLES, conscientious, 204
- SEEING THE UNSEEN, by A. Barkley, 163
- SOME NOTEWORTHY QUOTATIONS, 23, 79, 122, 175
- SPECIAL GRACE OF GOD, definition of, 22
- STUDIES IN OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY, by J. G. Vos (Series of Bible Lessons), 24-43, 77-99, 124-150, 177-196
- TRANSMISSION OF SCRIPTURE, THE, by Robert More, Jr., 19
- WEAK BROTHERS, 204

---

The article entitled **What is Christian Education?** by J. G. Vos, published in the April-June 1957 issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, pages 57-61, is now available in booklet form. A single copy will be sent free to any reader of this magazine who will write requesting it and sends a 5c stamp for postage. Price for larger quantities, 10c per copy postpaid. Address Rev. J. G. Vos, 3408 Seventh Avenue, Beaver Falls, Pa.

## PSALM 81

William B. Bradbury

KEOKUK. 8,6,8,8,6.

1. To God our Strength, to Ja - cob's God, A song and shout now raise;

With psalm and tim - brel, harp and lute, A - wake to joy - ous praise.

With chang - ing moons the trum - pets blow, On sol - emn fes - tal days.

2. For 'tis a law of Jacob's God,  
To Isr'el His command;  
For Joseph He this witness set  
When smiting Egypt's land;  
And where I heard an alien speech  
I did not understand.
3. I from thy shoulder took the load;  
Thy hands from toil set free;  
Delivered thee from trouble sore,  
When thou didst call on Me;  
Proved thee at streams of Meribah;  
In thunder answered thee.
4. I now to thee will testify;  
O ye, My people, hear;  
O Isr'el, if thou only wouldst  
Attend with willing ear;  
Thou shalt not worship foreign gods,  
Nor idols vain revere.
5. No alien god shall be in thee.  
The Lord thy God am I,  
Who brought thee up from Egypt's land  
And will thy needs supply;  
In longing open wide thy mouth,  
And thee I'll satisfy.
6. My people would not hear My voice;  
My counsel Isr'el spurned;  
I let them go the way their hearts  
In stubbornness were turned;  
That they might walk in counsel vain  
For which their souls had yearned.
7. O that My people would Me hear,  
And Isr'el choose My way;  
Right soon I would their foes subdue,  
Their enemies dismay.  
Who hate the Lord should yield to Him,  
And His commands obey.
8. But as for Israel their time  
Should evermore abide;  
He with the finest of the wheat  
Had all their wants supplied;  
And thee with honey from the rock  
Would I have satisfied.

(Reprinted by permission from **The Book of Psalms with Music**. Copyright 1950 by the Trustees of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Price of book (359 pages) is \$1.50 postpaid. Order from Chester R. Fox, Treasurer, Empire Bldg., Pittsburgh 22, Pa., U.S.A.)

Printed in the United States of America by The Record Publishing Company, Linn, Kansas