
BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

J. G. VOS, Editor and Manager

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In Immanuel's Land

By Anne Ross Cousin

The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair, sweet morn awakes;
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
But dayspring is at hand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! well it is for ever,
Oh! well for evermore—
My nest hung in no forest
Of all this earth-doomed shore;
Yea, let the vain world perish,
As from the ship we strand,
While glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

There the Red Rose of Sharon
Unfolds its heartmost bloom,
And fills the air of Heaven
With ravishing perfume:
Oh! to behold its blossom,
While by its fragrance fann'd,
While glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

The King there in his beauty,
Without a veil is seen;
It were a well spent journey,
Though sev'n deaths lay between;
The Lamb, with His fair army,
Doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! Christ He is the fountain,
The deep sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above;
There to an ocean fulness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oft in yon sea-beat prison
My Lord and I held tryst;
For Anworth was not Heaven,
And preaching was not Christ;
And aye, my murkiest storm-cloud,
Was by a rainbow spann'd,
Caught from the glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land.

But that He built a Heaven
Of His surpassing love,
A little New Jerusalem,
Like to the one above;
"Lord, take me o'er the water",
Had been my loud demand,
"Take me to love's own country,
Unto Immanuel's land".

But flow'rs need night's cool darkness,
The moonlight and the dew;
So Christ from one who loved it,
His shining oft withdrew;
And then for cause of absence
My troubled soul I scann'd —
But glory, shadeless, shineth
In Immanuel's land.

The little birds of Anworth,
I used to count them blest —
Now, beside happier altars
I go to build my nest;
O'er these there broods no silence,
No graves around them stand,
For glory, deathless, dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Fair Anworth, by the Solway,
To me thou still art dear,
E'en from the verge of Heaven
I drop for thee a tear.
Oh! if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My Heaven will be two Heavens,
In Immanuel's land.

I've wrestled on towards Heaven,
'Gainst storm, and wind, and tide;
Now, like a weary traveler
That leaneth on his guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
While sinks life's lingering sand,
I hail the glory dawning
From Immanuel's land.

Deep waters cross'd life's pathway,
The hedge of thorns was sharp;
Now, these lie all behind me —
Oh! for a well-tuned harp!
Oh! to join Hallelujah
With yon triumphant band
Who sing, where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

With mercy and with judgment
My web of time He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lustered with his love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that plann'd,
When throned where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

Soon shall the cup of glory
Wash down earth's bitt'rest woes,
Soon shall the desert brier
Break into Eden's rose;
The curse shall change to blessing —
The name on earth that's bann'd
Be graven on the white stone
In Immanuel's land.

(continued on back cover)

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NUMBER 1

The "Mystery" of the Holy Spirit

A Brief Analysis of Recent Manifestations of the "Tongues" Movement

By the Rev. Kenneth G. Smith

The first encounter the writer experienced with "speaking in tongues" occurred about ten years ago. Since that time there has been, with the growth of the Pentecostal denominations and now much more recently through several large traditional Protestant branches, an evident surge of interest in the person and work of the Holy Spirit, no doubt spurred on by alleged manifestations of the charismatic gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 12-14. Even news magazines have featured articles describing these "mysterious" happenings along with a host of religious periodicals; and to be sure not all scholars are agreed on what to make of it.

As with any so-called "movement," analysis must be carefully made in the light of scripture after examining the facts; and even then, as the writer feels about the present phenomenon, it may be difficult as well as premature to assess the benefits which some report. We must therefore guard against unscriptural skepticism, as it says in Proverbs 18:13, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." And at the same time, we must avoid the gullibility causing many to go astray for lack of scriptural evaluation.

Whereas it remains yet too early to determine the value of the present movement, and/or at least this writer does not wish to go on record in this area, there appear to be certain evident problems which we should recognize. As Christians we should understand the nature of this movement. We must not be passive; for not only do we owe this to intellectual honesty, but there are those in our Reformed circles whose heads are beginning to be turned toward this movement, and in some cases they are adopting the concepts which underlie it. The following appear to the writer as significant danger points in the movement.

The tendency to divide unscripturally between Christ and the Spirit. While serving as a pastor, I discussed fully with a member who had experienced this 'tongues' phenomenon why she felt this particular experience of the Spirit was necessary. Her reply was to quote from John 1:12 indicating that ". . . as many as received him (Christ), to them gave he power (authority) to become the sons of God. . ." Then

turning to Romans 8:14 she read, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In other words she reasoned that upon receiving Christ one was given the "right" to become a child of God, but that the real blessing did not happen until he was baptized of the Spirit.

Upon hearing the testimony of others, including that of Harold Bredeson, Reformed Church of America leader in the movement, there is in common the idea that prior to this 'experience' they were Christians, but — The insidious implication lies in the inference that Christ is not adequate. There had to be a "baptism" of the Spirit.

Now what does the Scripture say about this dichotomy? In Colossians 2:9,10 Paul writes "For in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily. And ye are **complete** in him (Christ), which is the head of all principality and power." According to the Bible, if one has Christ, he is **complete**, not inadequate. In Romans 8:9 scripture records, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And when one takes this with Colossians 1:27 where Paul says, ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory," it becomes evident that to have Christ is to have the Spirit. And vice versa. Add to this the clear statement in John 16:13 and we discover that Jesus said of the Spirit, ". . . he shall not speak of himself." Let it be said it is possible to be in a meeting where much is said about the Spirit, but where the attitude and environment may make one question if the "**Holy**" Spirit is present. On the other hand, let it be said with equal vigour that where Christ is preached and loved, there is the Spirit! Those who seem so intent on giving honor to third person of the Trinity, should remember that God has decreed His Son as the One whose name is above every name. It is dangerous to act as though Christ is insufficient! The blessings of the covenant are bound up with the Mediator of that covenant, even Christ. To depreciate the Son of God under any pretense is blasphemous.

The underlying concept of the "second blessing." This danger point follows closely the first, but nonetheless requires separate consideration. "The movement" indicates that the "baptism"

of the Spirit usually follows one's conversion at some subsequent time and can only be experienced by complete surrender. Willingness to hear coming from one's own mouth unintelligible gibberish is sometimes used as a "test" of one's surrender. Testimony also seems to build on the presupposition that one can accept Christ as Saviour, but not as Lord. The "lordship" of Christ implies surrender, but this seems to come in this subsequent experience of the "baptism." Speaking in "tongues" generally is considered the initial evidence of the "baptism."

What does Scripture say? In II Corinthians 5:17 we read "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a **new creature**. . ." Note here the transformation in the converted man. Couple this with Luke 14:33 where Christ spells out the cost of being His disciple: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Obviously there is a radical change in one truly converted if this characterizes the attitude of the true disciple. Again in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus indicates the nature of conversion when He compares respectively the wide and narrow doors to destruction and life. What is the point to all this? Simply this: our day is not a day when this "costly grace" is preached. Generally the gospel is presented as a doctrine which can easily be accepted. "All you have to do is simply . . ." we hear. Thus many respond with an "easy believism" which neither saves nor satisfies. Hence, because so many have not experienced true faith, even after their "decision" they must keep looking for something to "change the life." It is the writer's opinion that many seeking this "second blessing" do so because they have never heard, nor accepted, the full-orbed gospel which requires absolute surrender to a sovereign God. Therefore, the statement coined is true: "No one ever found the 'second blessing' who had found the 'first;' but many have found the 'first' while looking for the 'second.'" This no doubt represents at least in part the alleged benefits from this movement, viz. some are finding the first blessing. There is no Christianity without surrender to Christ!

The tendency to confound terminology. Now before indicting those connected with this movement, let it be said that all of us have tended to be slipshod in our use of theological terms. However, regardless of the theological circle, choice of words and precise definition are necessary both to the comprehension and the communication of knowledge. Where this shows itself in the present movement largely centers in the use of such terms as "baptism" and "filling" of the Holy Spirit. The "baptism" represents this experience when the Holy Spirit comes upon a person, or as some say "when one receives the 'power,'" the **initial** evidence of which reveals itself in "speaking in tongues." So also the term

"filling" is used. Generally "speaking in tongues" evidences this "filling."

Scripture does not seem confusing on these terms. Consider Galatians 3: 26, 27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Note here "baptism" unmistakably refers to the conversion experience. Compare this with I Corinthians 12:13. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body — and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Here again becoming a part of the "body of Christ," the church, is identified with the Spirit's baptism. Understand therefore that in Scripture the term "baptism" can in no way be defined as a 'second' experience. It refers to the initial experience of being united to Christ.

The term "filling" as used in Ephesians 5:18 means "under the control" of the Spirit as contrasted with being under the control of intoxicants. If being "drunk" with the Spirit is inferred, there is no scripture that warrants the implication that there is a similarity in the physical and emotional activity of persons under the respective control of the Spirit and liquor. That this "filling" evidences itself in "speaking in tongues" necessarily loses foundation in Acts 4:31 where the record says ". . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Tongues are not mentioned.

The term "fruit" of the Spirit deserves at least a passing comment here; for again it would seem that if the Spirit is present, His "fruit" would evidence it. Now His "fruit" is this: ". . . love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ." Galatians 5:22,23. To insist one must seek a manifestation of "tongues" as initial evidence of the Spirit's presence seems to eclipse this simple, yet again, life-changing, fruit.

Add one other point which often seems to be obscured. In I Corinthians 12:11, the scripture says, "But all these (gifts) worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." Whether one believes these charismatic gifts were limited to the apostolic age and their immediate descendants, as argued by Warfield, or whether he believes they are still manifest, one thing is clear: a **sovereign** Spirit rules in their distribution. No human inducement is required. And obviously everyone in the Christian family does not receive the same gifts. How then can the "baptism" so-called be set down as the required experience the **first** evidence of which is **tongue-speaking**? Where does sovereignty fit into this?

The mystical nature of the movement, discounting theology and exalting experience. Living in a culture that continues to grow more and more man-centered and existential in philosophy, we who believe in the objective revelation of

scripture find difficulty in maintaining our balance. It is not surprising then to find some evangelical Christians overstating their aversion to "dry" theology in favor of vibrant Christian living. There is no basic tension between theology and spiritual vibrancy. In fact, there cannot be one without the other. The following earmarks of the movement under discussion represent gross deviations from scriptural teaching seen in their attempt to gain this "experience."

1. In receiving the "gifts" (I Cor. 12:7-11) one does not use his **mind**. So states a book in the writer's library sub-titled A TEXTBOOK ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS. Generally in the present day movement the same inference is made regarding solid, intellectual faith, viz. this has nothing to do with receiving the gifts. In fact, you should not try to use your mind in this regard.

That this concept is both dangerous and unscriptural can be seen in I John 4:1, ". . . believe not every spirit, but **try** the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." How can one "try" the spirits without using his mind? Paul's pointed injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," demands use of mental faculties. Jesus included the "mind" when describing how one should love the Lord his God. (Luke 10:27)

2. In claiming immediate revelation, the scriptures are not consulted. Now this criticism must be defined; for whereas the idea does not infer a disbelief in the infallible nature of the word of God, the point is that on many occasions persons indicate "just knowing" this or that in their experience, apart from scripture. For example, in his testimony, Bredeson tells of trying to witness to a woman on a bus, of having been rebuffed, and "upon looking into her eyes I **knew** she was demon-possessed." Apparently there was no doubt in his mind as he drew his conclusion. Even skilled phychiarists of a Christian bent might be a little more reluctant to state conclusively the woman's problem, but not Bredeson. He "Just knew."

That the Spirit leads in making judgments need not be debated. But John 14:26 identifies the teaching of the Spirit with "...whatsoever I (Christ) have **said** unto you." John 16:13 also says of the Spirit that "...he will guide you into all truth..." which can hardly be construed as leading apart from God's **written** revelation. The Christian is guided by the Spirit as he studies the word so that when judgments are made, he can have reasonable assurance that his judgments are correct. Yet, as a sinner he often makes mistaken judgments, which God overrules as sovereign, and which keep the Christian humble and seeking more understanding of the word.

3. In creating an inner circle of those who "have" versus those who "have not" an unscriptural division is caused. The writer again refers

to his experience in this regard, for on many occasions he has witnessed an attitude of pity as it were for those not having experienced this phenomenon. But more objectively the movement itself by its very nature produces a group who have had this experience, and a "fellowship" is often built around it.

Let it be said plainly that the real division described in scripture is not between those having experienced the so-called "baptism" and those not having spoken in tongues, but rather between the "sheep and the goats," between those who are true believers and those who are hypocrites. Read Matthew 7:15-20 where Christ warns of false prophets. He submits the "fruits" of their life as evidence of their real nature, not their ability to do "miracles." And as for the attitude of pity for those who "have not," Isaiah 65:5 indicates how God countenances a "holier than thou" attitude. It is like smoke in His nostrils!

4. In believing "signs" to be "proofs", the true basis of judgment is discounted. When observing one person "under the power" and experiencing her pleadings that I too might come under it, I was very conscious that she was undergoing some kind of "experience." Later in quiet discussion after having explained my refusal to cooperate because of lack of scriptural reason as to why I should covet this power, the woman said, "But what about my experience?"

Now this is a critical question. What about this experience? As the writer said then, he repeats. We do not deny the experience. But where is the scriptural proof that this experience is the "filling," the "baptism", or anything else caused by the HOLY SPIRIT? Here is the rub. Read Carroll Stegall's MODERN TONGUES AND HEALING MOVEMENT and it is evident that this whole phenomenon **could** be explained psychologically. We do not draw this conclusion, but we certainly object to labelling this ipso facto the Holy Spirit's activity. Scripture just does not warrant it. In fact a study of Matthew 24:24 in its context should cause any Christian to distrust any "sign" not clearly supported by God's Word.

The source of the movement. It is no new phenomenon we are considering, for there have been upsurges of this ever since it apparently died out with the decrease of those directly fellowshipping with the apostles. During past decades the Pentecostal churches have maintained their commitment to these concepts, but it should be noted that they are Arminian in their orientation. The most recent surge has stemmed from liberal circles, or at least from those leaning in that direction. The Seminaries where this has been showing itself, much to the embarrassment of many of their administrators, are neo-orthodox, and as such tend to lay a rather

good foundation, as does Arminianism, for such subjectivism. These two circles are certainly seldom categorized together, but in this regard they are not strange bed-fellows. That this latter group are looking for more than neo-orthodoxy has given them no doubt underlies this quest for this experience; and many of the traditional protestant churches having lost their vitality years ago have persons in them who long after something more. There does not seem to be a "rediscovery of Spiritual truth" behind this; for if this were the case, we might also expect the Spirit to be inclining at least some to the the great doctrines of sovereignty, depravity, etc. so evidently taught in Scripture. We must pray He will! So far at least there seems little evidence of this.

In this regard Hebrews 13:7 "Remember them . . . who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow . . ." and Jude 3 ". . . contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" challenge us to see what the giants of the faith in church history have said to us about this phenomenon. Significantly enough, they are almost silent.

In conclusion let it be repeated that as Christians we should understand the nature of this movement. Consideration of the above problems does not in any sense answer all the questions surrounding the charismatic gifts, nor is this the intent of this analysis. In fact, the movement probably reveals that we do not know what we believe about this subject. A larger and more significant question looms, viz. how can those Christians committed to the Reformed faith witness a greater demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power in our times. Both of these questions require attention; but suffice it to say here that the answers to both lie in the same general area. That solution is a deeper study of the Word of God, with prayer for God's guidance. There is no short-cut to spirituality. Apart from biblical knowledge we can hardly expect great demonstrations of the power of the Spirit of Truth. Peter's injunction to Christians who were experiencing all kinds of cross-fire from various groups seems therefore most fitting. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To HIM be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

Why Reach the Moon?

By Clyde H. Dennis

Note: This article is reprinted from a tract by permission from Good News Publishers, Westchester, Illinois. — Editor.

"There's a lot of talk about getting a man to the moon. Had you taken a pair of scissors and deleted everything from this morning's paper that had to do with moonshots, satellites, and Communism, you'd probably have had shredded newspaper for breakfast.

"With all this furor about getting a man to the moon, it had better be soon, or there will be a lot of disappointed scientists — and a lot of dissipated dollars. Everybody knows it's borrowed billions we're spending to get a man up there, but few seem to comprehend one grave danger in this wild, headlong scamper to keep pace with the Reds in their probes into outer space. We are so all-fired concerned that the Russians may beat us there that we are actually stampeding into a crash spending program, seemingly unaware that we are about to satellite ourselves into bankruptcy."

This is the Honorable Walt Horan of Washington speaking before the House of Representatives as he quoted Clay Cooper of Spokane.

Mr. Cooper further points out that the Communists don't want the moon half so much as they want this world. "Unless we wise up to

their strategy of diverting our attention away from their real pearl — they'll have a lot less trouble engulfing the earth!"

Any thinking person should ask these questions: **Why reach the moon?** Aren't we having enough trouble looking after this world without trying to solve the problems of outer space? Why send a man to the moon until men have learned to live peacefully together on this earth?

World-famous Dr. Albert Schweitzer, when asked by newsmen in Copenhagen what he thought of Russia's success in sending rockets to the moon, said: "Until now, the moon has inspired me only with poetic dreams. I don't think humanity will be happier when it has taken over control of the moon."

The Bible says: "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men" (Psalm 115:16).

Yes God gave man the earth — to work, to live on, to enjoy. But more important is the fact that He gave us this life on earth to prepare us for a greater life in heaven. He has given us the "here" to prepare us for the "hereafter." Placing our souls in heaven is much more urgent than placing our bodies on the moon.

Jesus asked, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own

soul?" (Mark 8:36). What shall it profit you if you have life insurance but no eternal life assurance? What shall it profit you if you shall reach the moon but never reach God's heaven?

Your "inner space," your soul, is more important in the Lord's sight than "outer space." In fact, God's concern over your immortal soul prompted Him to send His Son, Jesus, into the world. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Notice, He didn't send Jesus to the moon or to Mars. God sent His Son into the world.

On this earth the Lord Jesus lived, died and rose again for one purpose: to **save you** from your sin; to give you **joy, peace and satisfaction**. Isn't that better than rockets to the moon? Christ's coming to earth to die for you deserves bigger headlines than men going to the moon to explore for you! A personal faith in Him will change your destiny from hell to heaven.

Remember, **God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved**" (John 3:17.) Jesus didn't come to condemn you for your sins. He came to save you from your sins!

Yes, the Bible says you have a soul which can be cleansed from **all sin!** If you will repent, believe, and receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, your soul will some day soar far past the moon to God's prepared place where there is no sin, no tears, no death. God calls it heaven. Will you trust the Lord Jesus RIGHT NOW and be eternally saved?

In the meantime, every Christian believer has the glorious opportunity and serious responsibility to **reach** not the moon but **this world for Christ!** He commanded, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

News of a landing on the moon would leave two-thirds of the people of the world cold. What could landing a man on the moon possibly mean to a starving man in Morocco? News of the landing of the Son of God on this planet, one starlit night, would mean a lot more and this is the news the majority of mankind is waiting to intelligently hear for the first time.

Each must take this verse personally: "**You go. . .**" And if you can't go you must send a substitute, either a flesh and blood missionary or literature, "paper missionaries."

If Christians would spend a **fraction** of the money spent on missiles on **missions instead**, the future would look a lot brighter. Missiles won't change earth's troubled millions. But **missions can, and will**, if we put it at the top of our prayer list and budget!

It's time for every Christian to ask: "Why should anyone hear or read the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once?" We must put the "go" back in the "go-spel" by our going, our giving, and our praying until we reach those untold millions who are still untold!

Let's put our shoulder behind the wheel of every soul-winning, missionary ministry. Let the Russians reach the moon if they want to. But let us reach the world — for our wonderful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Justification

By P. J. Baldwin

"How should man be just before God?" 1 This question arises inevitably in the despairing consciousness of sinners truly awakened by the Spirit of God. The words seem, however, to have a special poignancy as they fall from the lips of the patriarch Job. Depicted by Scripture in rapid sequences as "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" 2 and who was for substance, "the greatest of all the men of the east"; 3 then stripped of possessions, family and health yet his high thoughts of God's righteous justice remain unwavering, his integrity unimpaired. Here surely was a just man whose cry seems but the more insistent. The saints in all ages have been troubled with the same question. Certain of the heathen philosophers seem to have had some awareness of the problem, but it is the monk Luther of whom we ordinarily think as the one who gave a real

impetus to the Reformation with the rediscovery of Paul's teaching, viz., that a man may be justified only ". . . through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . that God might be just and the justifier of him which believeth. . .". Therefore "The just shall live by faith. 4 Of Course Job and his successors had a sufficient intimation of Paul's answer long before the latter wrote, as it lay implicitly in the promise to Adam and Eve, 5 was exemplified by Abraham 6 and set forth by the prophets such as Habakkuk who declaimed "the just shall live by his faith". Such is the centrality of this truth in the Gospel and so important are its implications that it is not surprising that it became the keynote of the Reformation nor that men who abhorred schism in the church soon found themselves constituting a resurgent religious movement under the name of Protestantism.

What is surprising is that in the current ecumenical ferment this doctrine is so neglected by us who are the natural heirs of the real Protestants. We read much of the barriers between Rome and ourselves in terms of the Pope's alleged infallibility, apostolic succession, mariolatry and the idolatry of the mass, but justification by faith, by far the most important of all the barriers, is rarely mentioned in the hearing of the laity. When mentioned in academic circles it has been too often in terms which tend to strip it of all that makes it Biblical and significant.

The theme of Justification attracted the early post-reformation writers. They quickly applied themselves to a comprehensive study of its true nature; when it takes place, and what part, if any, man has in its process. Its development was necessarily related to considerations of the place of the Law in the life of the justified believer and the nature and extent of the Covenant of Grace. The Non-Conformists were much agitated by these questions in the seventeenth century, and when a type of legalism had invaded the Scottish Church in the eighteenth century the rediscovery of justification by faith was as a "light which the Lord had seasonably struck up . . . in the darkness . . ." 8

The Scriptures, including by implication the doctrine of justification, were written for our learning and in a subordinate but none-the-less true sense so also were the studies of these themes by the reformers and their successors. Accordingly it is against this background that we are required to give an account of the hope that is in us — i.e., how we believe we are justified, both to everyone that asks of us and at the Last Day.

This responsibility is not easily discharged. Neither the glib word nor the more sincere personal word of witness is capable of doing justice to this grand ingredient in God's scheme for man's redemption. A scheme that shall be worthy of the admiring study of angels throughout eternity and which is so closely related to the Great Mystery of Godliness — God manifested in the flesh. Accordingly we must be prepared to apply ourselves to a complex study, to define our terms and to be sure of the sense we apply to the linguistic usage of other men. This can be a rich and rewarding experience, for our creeds were hammered out in the hearts of believers 9 and truly blessed is he who knows the warm affirmative response of his innermost self to something clearly apprehended in his intellect.

The Nature of Justification

For a man to be just before God means to have righteousness imputed (or in a legal sense put to his credit) and thus made his, not by means of or on account of anything he does or can do to procure or merit it, but through the instrumental-

ity of faith alone, by which he apprehends or lays hold of that which has been provided and is freely offered to him in the Gospel. Such righteousness is not a quality **infused** into him; God's declaration does not thereby recreate him personally righteous, rather he is given the **status** of a righteous man. 10 This righteousness is in a legal sense made over to him from the merits of Christ Who paid the penalty for his sins and Who on his behalf perfectly kept the requirements of the Law requisite unto Life. The justified man is therefore not only a forgiven man whose debt, with respect to sins past, present and future, has been paid, but he is declared in the court of heaven to be a righteous man restored to favor in the sight of God, united to Christ, and made a joint heir with Him of eternal felicity. He is thus raised to a status higher than that of Adam in innocency.

The forensic or legal grant of justification is received by the believer through the instrumentality of faith alone. Such faith is not meritorious whereby it in anyway earns, buys or is exchanged for righteousness; it is simply the hand or instrument whereby righteousness is received from God. Neither is faith "alone" insofar as it is ordinarily accompanied or followed in due time and order by repentance, love and good works. All human efforts to be good and all kindly deeds are utterly excluded in the process of justification. Such works are completely unable to procure man's righteousness. This is why the Pharisee's prayer was not accepted, whereas the Publican who cast himself on the mercy of God went home **justified**. God is the Justifier; He recognizes only the merits of Christ, and then to exclude even the last vestige of ground for boasting on man's part, the faith by which this grant of a righteous status is received is itself "the gift of God".

The Covenant of Grace and our Union with Christ our Surety

We may think of a Covenant of Grace in an abstract way, i.e. as the terms spelled out in a draft agreement. In this sense the Covenant may be defined as the Gospel which is to be preached to all men. When, however, through the preaching of the Word or the reading of it, the Holy Spirit brings its terms home we begin to realize that it has a particular meaning for us. Then by His assistance, subscribing it by faith, we find that it is already subscribed by God and it becomes a valid instrument between God and us so that we can say with David, "Although my house be not so with God," — (i.e. although I am unable in anyway to merit this) — yet "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, . . ." 12 When this has taken place we realize that we did nothing to procure the transaction and by Scriptural warrant we note that rather than being akin to a covenant

between contracting human agents with mutual stipulations and obligations, this covenant is in many respects like a testament, will or bequest whereby God has irrevocably bound Himself to make us a free gift of pardon and life eternal including the status of being justified before Him. He has made a gift, too, of the grace of faith whereby we receive this great legacy.

Finally, we may think of the Covenant in its outward administration, i.e., as we conceive of the local churches, the many who enter into Christian fellowship, make promises at Baptism or otherwise and enjoy certain privileges and blessings which flow from the Cross without really closing by faith with its terms. In this sense there can be covenant breakers although the Covenant is "everlasting . . . ordered in all things and sure". The grace by which they receive these very real but temporal benefits is a "supernatural" form of common grace rather than the special grace by which the habit or disposition of faith is implanted by God and the reflex act of faith is performed by the believer. Those who "break the covenant" have never known the latter. The very benefits which they have enjoyed will, as it were, "rise up in the judgment against them". 14

The Covenant of Grace could not exist apart from the mediatorial work of Christ, both in respect of His expiation of sin and His perfect fulfilling of the Law. The believer closing with the Covenant of faith is inescapably involved in a special relationship of union with Christ, and in the opinion of many theologians the whole transaction of justification is grounded on that union. It is the sense in which they become one that gives validity to the interchange of their qualifications. It is because of it that God can justly punish Christ for the sins of the elect. Conversely they have a real part and interest in Christ's righteousness, resurrection and reward. The reality of this interest is not lessened by the fact that it is granted on the ground of representation rather than an absolute identification of the parties. He who knew no sin became sin for us "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 15

When does Justification take Place?

There is a sense whereby the elect have been justified in Christ in the mind of God from all eternity. But until they are actually justified they remain "the children of wrath, even as others". 16 The performance of all that was required to justify them was completed when Christ cried "It is finished" for He had fully atoned for the sins of His own; He had fulfilled the Law on their behalf and had offered Himself in a sacrifice of perfect obedience to God. Here was an infinitude of merit to guarantee the righteous status of all persons who should come unto Him by faith.

Justification as a declarative act of God does not ordinarily take place until that moment when a man by faith receives His grant. (Children dying in infancy and persons of unsound mind are, of course, incapable of exercising faith). The believer is then instantaneously declared by God in the court of Heaven to be just or righteous. This declaration is wholly apart from his own subjective character and the old sinful nature which continues to adhere and inhere in him. Such too is the immediacy between the gift of faith and justification that we may not think of the latter as being consequent upon the former for Scripture clearly declares that God "justifies the ungodly". 17

Man's Part in the Transaction Is Faith a Condition upon which Justification Hinges?

The immediate post-reformation writers 18, having carefully explained that man is wholly passive during regeneration by the Spirit of God; that faith is only an instrument or the hand by which the gift is received, were conscious of no incongruity in referring to faith as a condition prerequisite to justification. The pardon of sin and promise of righteousness in Scripture were clearly suspended till one believes, viz., "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved . . .". Till a man, who had come to years of accountability and was in full possession of his rational faculties, believed he could not be saved; "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God". 20 Yet with some men like John Nevay, preaching in exile to a congregation of believers the question does not seem to have arisen. They (in the judgment of charity) were already justified. Later writers became concerned whether defining faith as a **condition** did not necessarily imply that man was called to the performance of something that would be a righteous or meritorious act on his part, and if so, this would run completely counter to Scripture which clearly says the condition, namely ". . . faith is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast". 21 Samuel Rutherford recognized the problem as he wrote. "If it be said that the new Covenant is without any conditions whatsoever on man's part it says too much . . .". 22 This question was answered by several able men including Herman Witsius who wrote "whatsoever can be conceived of as a condition (on man's part) is all concluded in the universality of the promises (made and performed by God)". 23 Thomas Blake, a man who contended most rigidly for retaining the idea of a condition simply because Scriptural language seems to demand it, says "The conditions of the Covenant of Grace are not performed but by special grace; a power from God must concur for their work in man; man has no abilities in himself to answer what God requires . . ."; 24 but the writer who most succinctly clarifies the question, defined faith as being God's effective and

man's receptive instrument. 25 We are correct in saying that from the standpoint of the elect, the Covenant of Grace is absolute and unconditional, but let no unsaved person complain, for he is invited, even commanded to believe, and promised that if he believe he shall be saved. To him the promise is conditional on his believing. About the same time another old heresy raised its head and many people were carried away with antinomianism, namely an erroneous idea that being justified freely by His grace and "not under the law but under grace . . .", 26 we may adopt a view that the moral law has no relevancy for the Christian as a rule of faith and practice.

Many and profound were the efforts to resolve these questions. One of the least satisfactory was put forward by Richard Baxter whereby he seems to suggest that the merits or satisfaction of Christ procured only the New Covenant and under this the exercising of faith is the fulfilling of a new law. 27 'The habit or disposition to such faith was God-given but the exercising of it was considered meritorious in the place of keeping the old law. This "healing middle way" 28 tended instead to promote a kind of legalism which became strongly entrenched in Scotland in the early 18th century. About the same time an ill wind from an entirely different quarter had beclouded the freeness of the terms of the Gospel under which it comes to all its hearers. In this doubly confused situation serious would-be enquirers were not encouraged to entertain any hope of pardon of sins, justification or of "an interest in Christ" until they could believe that Christ had died in a specific personal sense for them. Nor could they attain to any degree of assurance of salvation until they could demonstrate their possession of not only faith but repentance, love and other Christian graces. Before they could be justified they must exercise a degree of faith which Scripture nowhere demands and before they could be sure they were justified they must first pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. Obviously this was to make justification truly conditional and dependent on man's achievement of a kind of righteousness by his works. In this situation troubled souls despaired of any hope or else flagellated their spirits and strove as Luther did in the manner of the Roman Church to achieve a gracious state by their own human efforts.

It was in these circumstances that Thomas Boston discovered an old copy of **The Marrow of Modern Divinity** 29 and upon reading it realized afresh that we are saved by grace through faith. His problems concerning the relation of a child of grace to the claims of God's law were correspondingly clarified. He correctly retained the Calvinistic concept of particular redemption without making it an element of faith on which justification is suspended. Unfortunately "The Marrow" contained many unguarded expressions and

lacked theological precision; so much so that Boston in republishing it found it necessary to add explanatory notes. Because of this inherent weakness it was opposed by sincere persons who were genuinely afraid of its antinomian implications as well as by those who had themselves become legalists after the manner of Rome. Boston and his colleagues were charged with antinomianism, whereas what they were really opposing was Baxterian legalism, and if they were to be subjected to any such opprobrium it would have been more accurate to have styled them antineonomians, i.e. against the new law.

One other approach to the solution of the conditional problem consisted of the describing of faith as a condition *causa sine qua non*. ("cause without which not"). In this view it was not strictly a condition on which justification hinged or was bestowed, but something requisite to the enjoyment of the covenant relationship; or as a lawyer might say it: something without which the action cannot proceed. John Owen and John Brown were so concerned for the unconditional, unmerited and free favor of God on the one hand and the appointed place of faith on the other as to decline to endorse the idea of faith as a *causa sine qua non*. They considered this expression ambiguous and capable of conveying either too much or too little. William Cunningham, commenting on question 32 of *The Larger Catechism* says "this statement plainly implies that there is a sense in which faith, though it justifies only as an instrument, may yet be said to be the condition of an interest in the blessings of the covenant, and, of course, of pardon and acceptance". 30 A present day theologian says, "the conditions . . . are simply the reciprocal responses of faith, love and obedience, apart from which the enjoyment of the covenant blessing and the covenant relation is inconceivable. By breaking the covenant what is broken is not the condition of bestowal but the condition of consummated fruition." 31

While utterly refusing to entertain any idea of faith as having a meritorious place in procuring our justification, we must nevertheless insist on faith's indispensability in God's scheme for the redemption of men. We must also highly value it as a precious and unique gift of God both as an infused habit or disposition and as we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to exercise it upon its Object, namely Christ with all His benefits. What we have to avoid are the two extremes — first of raising faith "into a subordinate righteousness . . . antecedently unto the imputation of the righteousness of Christ . . . whereof it is the condition", or second, in a more restricted sense of a *causa sine qua non* where it "hath no causality in any kind, not (even) that of a receptive instrument". 32 "There is a Priority of order; Faith, receiving Christ, and resting on his Surety-righteousness, going before; and Justification following, and a firme connexion between

the two, that whosoever believeth thus, shall be justified, . . .". 33 Paul strove as much as any man while a young Pharisee perfectly to keep the law, but when he was confronted by Christ on the Damascus road he found himself bankrupt of any merit, and thereafter counted "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . and be found in him not having mine own righteousness . . . but the righteousness which is of God by faith:". 34

The Mysteries Contained in Justification

We have noted the close relationship between justification and the Mystery of Godliness. There are sublime and hidden depths and heights in God's scheme of justification, the study of which is most rewarding.

A Scotsman, John Brown of the Perish of Wamphray in Annandale, one of the greatest theologians of a race that produced some of the best Biblical scholars, was exiled in a penniless condition for his adherence to the Gospel. Like Job, stripped of possessions and family, but unlike Job never permitted to return to his home and proper station, it is not too surprising that while in Holland he should turn his intellectual powers to the production of one of the finest works 35 on justification that we have. In the course of his book he gives some tremendous insights into the wonders of justification which we shall try to summarize. These are:

1. Sinners, who are dead by the Law and so bound over to the wrath of God, having no means of defending themselves, appeasing God or making any satisfaction to God are hereby really, formally and effectually absolved by the sentence of the Judge and so made and declared to live as free of the curse and penalty of the Law as if they had never been guilty of the transgression of it.

2. God, who has declared that it is an abomination for any man to justify the wicked, 36 has so contrived the plan of justification that such as are in themselves ungodly may be considered as clothed with the righteousness of Christ by a judgment that is most righteous and most consonant to truth.

3. Transgressors of the Law are justified upon the account of what their Mediator did and suffered for satisfaction to Law, Justice and the Lawgiver; thereby the Law is more fully established than it would have been by anything that they could do or suffer, because His keeping of the Law, and satisfaction of its sanctions, was perfect in all respects.

4. By faith believers are united to Christ and become members of His mystical body. Thereby He and they are legally one person (being one Spirit) and thus they have a true interest in His righteousness and the obedience to the Law

which He yielded not on His own account, since He was not obliged thereunto, but rather as theirs. The same is true of His satisfaction of the penalties of the Law which we, not He, had broken.

5. Sinners, laying hold of the righteousness of Christ by faith, are not only pardoned but are adopted as sons and receive the right to the inheritance. It was one thing for Christ "to make reconciliation for iniquity" and another thing "to bring in everlasting righteousness". 37 Accordingly in today's language justified sinners are, on the basis of Christ's active obedience, accounted by God as having a positive, proven righteousness.

6. Justified sinners are so dealt with by God as righteous juridically and legally, or as possessors of a complete and perfect righteousness. All the effects of which shall really and certainly be bestowed upon them in God's appointed time and by His determinate method.

7. God is glorified in the exercising of His Free Grace and Mercy. In fact, in Romans 3:24-26 free grace is exhibited as triumphing and yet justice is vindicated and righteousness manifested: God is declared to be just and righteous, and yet sinners who believe are justified freely by grace. (The Socinian argument that if Christ rendered satisfaction there is no need of grace is swept away in our wonder at this sovereign act of grace).

8. Nothing is forgiven and yet all is forgiven. Nothing was forgiven our Surety, for "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Yet while God causes our sins to pass from us, He also, as in the case of Joshua, clothes us with a change of raiment, 38 even the robe of Christ's righteousness.

9. Faith is required in order to justification, and faith is the gift of God. Yet in the wisdom of God this is contrived so that a sinner renounces all claim to any personal merit or righteousness, flees to the righteousness of Christ as his only refuge, and resting there adores and magnifies God as holy, just, righteous and the Only Wise.

10. Repentance considered by itself and distinct from faith does not have the same instrumentality for receiving justification or securing union with Christ as faith, yet it is so inseparably connected with faith that where true faith is there must also be repentance, "at least in its root and begun exercise."

11. There is a great difference between the life and privileges of life as sons by adoption, and the life promised in the old covenant of works. The imputation of Christ's righteousness to sinners as the ground of their justification is also the ground of their adoption.

12. Because we are justified solely and exclusively by faith in Christ, there is no lessening

of our obligation to holiness and conformity to the Law of God in all points, as our rule for daily living. There is a sweet consistency between Christ's righteousness imputed to us for our salvation and a serious study of personal holiness.

The Importance of the Doctrine of Justification

The importance of a clear understanding of justification is twofold. Firstly, the believer is as fully and validly justified as soon as he believes as he ever can be. As he grows in grace his awareness of his own shortcomings is bound to increase; he may temporarily lapse even into gross sin; he may know dark days when the sense of his Saviour's presence is withdrawn; he may, through illness or accident, lose his mental powers; he may know the assaults of Satan; in all of these he may rest in the finished work of his Saviour. For "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect . . . (who is he that condemneth?) . . . It is God that justifieth." 39

Secondly is its importance in respect of our children. Confidently laying hold on the means of grace we may hope to see them in due time also freely justified. We will at the same time use all the proper channels to promote their believing in Christ Jesus.

The right understanding and believing of the Gospel is of the utmost importance. As soon as we admit any temporizing by allowing good works or penance or even faith to have any substantive part in justifying ourselves before God we come under Paul's condemnation of the Galatians who had fallen into this very trap, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth . . .". 40

Until Rome will cast out the bondwoman of human works, penance, merit of the saints and all the attendant apparatus, there can be no fellowship with her. For our own part, we are putting much emphasis upon a certain concept of "Christ as Lord". Perhaps we should revert to a more solid consideration of the manner in which He is our Saviour. For those who may be afraid that complete dependence on grace is but an invitation to carelessness in personal conduct, we reply in the words of John Murray, "The more enhanced our conception of the Sovereign grace bestowed, the more we are required to posit reciprocal faithfulness on the part of the recipient". 41 We should also pray that the Word of God through the work of the Holy Spirit may once again exercise its power in the Roman Church.

References and Notes

1. Job 9:1 (Margin)
2. Job 1:1
3. Job 1:3

4. Romans 3:24-26 and 1:17
5. Genesis 3:15
6. Genesis 15:6
7. Habakkuk 2:4
8. Jean L. Watson, *The Life and Times of Thomas Boston*, 1883, p. 53
9. vide B. B. Warfield, *The Power of God unto Salvation*, 1915, p. 30
10. vide Wm. Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, II, 1863, p. 13
11. Ephesians 2:8
12. 2 Samuel 23:5
13. John Norton, *The Orthodox Evangelist*, 1657, p. 220
14. Luke 11:32
15. 2 Corinthians 5:21
16. Ephesians 2:3
17. Romans 4:5
18. e.g. Wm. Pemble, *A Treatise of Justification by Faith*, 1635
19. Acts 16:31
20. John 3:18
21. Ephesians 2:8
22. Samuel Rutherford, *The Covenant of Life Opened*, 1655, p. 345
23. Herman Witsius, *The Oeconomy of the Covenant*, p. 374-5
24. Thomas Blake, *Vindiciae Foederis*, 1653, p. 60
25. John Crandon, *Mr. Baxter's Aphorisms Exorcised*, 1654, Pt. 1, pg. 333
26. Romans 6:14
27. John Brown, *The Life of Justification Opened*, 1695, p. 335 says "Mr. Baxter also telleth us, in his book against D. Tully p. 66, that **that which Christ did by his merites, was to procure the new Covenant . . . & the like he saith elsewhere frequently**". The present writer has not seen the book referred to by Brown but the same idea is reported by Blake, *ibid.*, p. 24 and in other replies to Baxter. Baxter was not easy to pin down and like many men modified his position in some respects yet in his "*Of Justification: Four Disputations*" 1658, which is in the writer's possession, pp. 259-278, he retains the idea of "faith and repentance at the first and sincere Obedience added afterwards" as conditions of justification and constituting " . . . a particular special righteousness, subordinate to Christ and his Righteousness in order to our further participation of him and from him."

Baxter would insist that this is an evangelical rather than a legal righteousness although he retains the term "Law of Grace". The need for the performance of these conditions is presupposed by his statement, "Christ's obedience (had) perfect conformity to the Law: But not so as an Evangelical righteousness; for he gave us many Laws for the application of his Merits, that he was neither obliged to fulfill, nor capable of it . . . Christ's righteousness . . . was principally the righteousness of the special Covenant of Redemption . . . but not of the Covenant of Grace made with man (he did not repent or obey for pardon and salvation to himself as a Believer:)" *ibid.*, p. 263 "External obedience goeth before Justification at (the Last) Judgement and Justification as continued here". *ibid.*, p. 289.

When pressed Baxter would reluctantly allow the sufficiency of Christ's merits on behalf of the person unable to attain to "a personal evangelical righteousness", "for it is possible that death may suddenly after conversion, prevent opportunity; and then the inward faith and repentance will suffice; though I (cannot think) . . . of such (an instance) . . .; not the thief on the cross; for he confessed, prayed, reproved the other and etc.," *ibid.*, p. 263.

28. *ibid.* pp. 184 and 187

29. E. F. (Edward Fisher), *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, first published 1645

30. W. Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, II, 1863, p. 74, 75

31. John Murray, *The Covenant of Grace*, p. 19

32. John Owen, *Works*, Russel Edition, 1826, XI, p. 141

33. John Brown, *ibid.*, p. 345

34. Phil. 3:8-9

35. John Brown, *ibid.*

36. see Prov. 17:15

37. Daniel 9:24

38. Zech. 3:4

39. Romans 8:33, 34

40. Galatians 3:1

41. John Murray, *ibid.*, p. 18

A Believer's Life of Christ

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

HIS FINAL GREAT APPEARING

The Lord Jesus Christ clearly declared himself before his enemies; and, in opposition to their verdict, predicted his eventual vindication. In answer to the high priest's challenge for a statement from him concerning his Messiahship and Sonship he said, "Thou hast said": (a colloquialism for strong asseveration); "nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:63-64). Both this prophecy itself and its fulfillment have been considered under the head of the coming of the Lord.

And yet his great and final coming still awaits. For the Lord shall come in personal, visible, glorious and triumphant appearing. It shall be in full and final demonstration of his and God's own power and glory. For "he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe" (II Thessalonians 1:10).

"The second coming" of Christ, as we see it, shall be actually only his last great appearing. It shall be an event in his life; the crowning exhibition of his being and nature as the incarnate Son. It shall be an event, it is true, of all-sur-

passing grandeur and glory; and yet only the great climactic event of his life. It shall be great in itself and also in its association with other events to accompany and follow from it. Simultaneously with it there shall be the general resurrection; and issuing from and ensuing upon it, the general judgment of all men.

It may as well be acknowledged that there are many difficult questions and great and knotty problems involved with regard to all that shall occur when Jesus comes. There is serious question concerning the course of world history prior to the event and especially as to the series of events leading up to his final great appearing.

However there are three things that stand out with perfect clearness.

(1) "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God" (I Thessalonian 4:16). "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations"

(Matthew 25:31, 32). "Behold, he cometh with clouds: and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Revelation 1:7).

(2) "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29). And the apostle John, in a vision, foreseeing the event as having taken place says that "the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them" (Revelation 20:13).

(3) "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:12, 13).

"The harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 13:39b-43).

"Before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left" (Matthew 25:31-33).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10 and see Romans 14:10).

Certain things are to be noted in any consideration of these events.

(1) Christ will come again — and "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

(2) The dead shall be raised with bodies prepared for their eternal state, but differing according to their standing and state.

(3) The believers, living and dead, "shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

(4) All mankind, of all the ages; those living at the time and all the dead, shall be gathered before the throne and judgment seat.

(5) This present world as it has been shall

have an end and be no more; and, in its place a new creation of a new heaven and earth shall appear.

(6) The unbelievers and the believers as they have lived and died in essential separateness in this present life will be separated in the judgment day itself and thereafter forever and forever.

(7) Then indeed all of the believers shall be made perfect in one, in Christ. They will be "all of one accord, in one place." And Jesus' prayer for them, "I will that they shall be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory" (John 17:24) will be fully realized.

"What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection? At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity" (Shorter catechism, no. 38). They shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads" (Revelation 22:4). As says the beloved apostle in his first epistle, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

It may be profitable to ponder for a moment on the term "the second coming of Christ" as popularly employed. Warrant may be found for the use of this term in Hebrews 9:28. Here it is said that Christ "was once offered to bear the sin of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

It is in order to note that the focus of attention here is on Christ in his appearings. It is said that "he shall appear the second time." This future appearing is in distinction from and is set in contrast with a past appearing, and is described as differing in certain respects from the former.

What are these two appearings; of the first of which it is implied that it was with sin, and of the second stated that it shall be "without sin" and both of which are "unto salvation"? The former of the two is clearly identified as pertaining to the time when he "was offered to bear the sin of many." It is in obvious reference to the day of his appearing among us in the flesh when he was "made of a woman" and "made under the law" for us. He came and lived and died under the weight of our sins which were laid upon him. It was the period extending from birth to death and which was continued for a time in his post-resurrection and post-ascension appearances.

It had a very distinct and definite beginning and ending in the now long distant past. When he again appears it will be, of course, without any burden of sin; from which, when he had

borne our sins and suffered for them, he was forever released.

But what of the expression "unto salvation" as used in connection with the second appearing or day of appearing? Certainly the first day of his appearing was "unto salvation," when he was "made sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Consequently, the expression as used of his second appearing can only mean the completion, the final consummation of the salvation secured for his own when he lived, obeyed and suffered; died and rose again.

As for the post-ascension appearances referred to; Stephen saw the glorified Jesus and to Saul of Tarsus he appeared and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:1-8).

This was indeed an appearance of the Lord in glory. "Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth and heard a voice." Such as this appearance to Paul and his associates will be the final glorious appearing to all men when Jesus comes. In addition it was also given to Paul to experience the presence and hear the voice of the Lord in dreams and visions though not again in the blinding light.

So also to the aged John, in exile on the isle of Patmos, were granted many great and awesome visions. He saw the glory of the Lord and heard him speak. An oft-repeated vision given to him of the Christ was that of the Lamb upon the throne.

The day of revelation came to an end and the visions ceased never to be renewed until he comes again. We know however where Jesus is and something of how he there appears; and, with him, we wait for his coming; the great day of his glorious appearing "the second time without sin unto salvation."

It is evident, however, that it is not so much the actual coming of the Lord that is in view in the text as it is the two diverse appearings. As appearings they of course differ in form and appearance. The first was in the comparative obscurity of the nativity, growth and public life. The second will be in absolute publicity. The first was in the lowliness of the humiliation; the second shall be in all of the radiant glory of the exaltation. The first was for a strictly limited time-period; the second will know no end but shall continue on to all eternity.

But underlying these two diverse appearings or times of appearance are two essentially different kinds of comings, in which distinct and separate kinds of action are involved. These two differ radically in kind and stand in sharpest contrast the one from the other.

While this is true, it cannot be said that there

is nothing in common between them. They are both comings, though radically differing in form and content. And they are both descents. And both issue in appearings.

But the first was by way of incarnation; the second will be the final great and glorious appearing. The first was original; the second will be secondary and predicated on the first. Radiant and endless as it shall be, it is in no way comparable to the coming of the incarnation. That was in its own nature absolutely incomparable, perfectly unique.

Thereby it was that God the Son became man; God the Living Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and so received the name Immanuel, God with us. All else in the life of Christ to all eternity is predicated upon this One Great Coming. Such a thing as another incarnation anytime or anywhere could never be.

"The second coming," or appearing, will be by way of descent and will be as he now is in his glorified state. But it will be a coming infinitely removed in kind from the infinite condescension and descent in which he came when he took our nature and came among us in the lowliness of his human conception and birth.

That coming came and was brought forth out of the singleness of his eternal preincarnate being and nature as divine. It was in his nature as the second person in the tripersonal being of God. All that proceeds and follows from it to all eternity proceeds upon the basis of the one great, utterly unique and incomparable fact of "God's great adventure in taking on himself a human nature to save the blessed destinies of mankind."

That there will be another coming of the Lord in the sense of an appearing, we know. There is no warrant, however, for the use of the term as suggestive of another coming comparable in any way with the original advent of the incarnation. Thus we conclude that to speak of Christ's second or final appearing as his "second coming" is somewhat ambiguous, and may be misleading; at least unless the facts are clearly recognized and understood.

The final great appearing of the Lord will consummate the salvation of the redeemed who, raised up in glory, shall be fully acquitted in that day. Also it is said that in the resurrection of that day the Lord shall "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Philippians 3:20, 21). On the other hand the fearful and the unbelieving will be covered with shame and confusion. They will be crazed with unutterable terror; prostrate in their fear. They will call upon the mountains to fall on them and the rocks to cover them.

No more shall the blessed gospel call be

heard. There will be no more regeneration and conversion; no more sinners converted and saved by Christ.

Those who have lived and died in unbelief will disbelieve no more, but will experience only suffering and remorse as the effect of their "faith." Their persuasion of the truth will have no saving value and will be found to have come too late. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: he that is righteous let him be righteous still: he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11).

When the judicial process of the Great Assize is over, "the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And "unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:31-46).

The End

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Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

(2) The teaching of the apostles excluded instrumental music from the public worship of the church.

Among the parts of that worship which are enumerated in the New Testament the singing of praise is included, but not instrumental music. The passages which are relevant are: 1 Cor. xiv. 26: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." Eph. v. 19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Col. iii. 16: "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

"The cause of all the contention," says the Rev. A. Cromar, (Vindication of the Organ, pp. 93, 94) "is in the fact, that the word **psalm** and the word translated **making melody**, suggest at once to the mind the idea of instrumental music. A psalm is with propriety defined, a sacred ode designed to be sung to the accompaniment of the lyre, and the word rendered **making melody** literally signifies, to strike the string of the same instrument. Taking the words in their simplicity, the passage, as far as music is concerned, seems to consist of two parts — the one enjoining the **general** duty of praise in compositions sung either with or without an instrumental accompaniment; and the other **particularly** stating that praise, whether it be **with** or **without** instrumental guidance, must always be of true gospel character, that is, must be an exercise of the heart. If this, the most **probable**, be also the **true**,

sense of the passage (Eph. v. 19); then we have in it what the friends of the organ believe to be the divine mind in the matter."

The weight of scholarly authority is certainly against Mr. Cromar, and those who, like him, would twist these passages to the support of instrumental music in the public worship of the church. Dr. James Begg, in noticing the exception taken by an anonymous writer to our translation of the Bible, and his affirmation, with others, that **psallo** radically signifies playing on a stringed musical instrument, has these remarks which are worthy of attention: (The Use of Organs, p. 264, ff.) "This attempt to fix the meaning of the word as implying playing instead of singing, as used by the New Testament writers, was thoroughly set aside by Dr. Porteous, by a variety of evidence, one part of which is thus concluded: 'From these quotations from the Greek fathers, the three first of whom flourished in the fourth century — men of great erudition, well skilled in the phraseology and language of Scripture, perfectly masters of the Greek tongue, which was then written and spoken with purity in the countries where they resided; men, too, who for conscience sake would not handle the Word of God deceitfully, it is evident that the greek word **psallo** signified in their time singing with the voice alone. Had they conceived otherwise, we may be assured that they had both sufficient firmness of mind and influence in the church to have induced their hearers to have used the harp and psaltery in the public worship of God.'

"It is curious to observe how constantly, and with what pretence of learning, mistakes are repeated. In a late discussion, the correctness of

our authorized translation of James v. 13 was confidently called in question, and it was affirmed that **psalleto** meant to strike as on the lyre, and that the passage ought not to have been translated 'let him sing psalms,' but 'let him play on an instrument.' The issue thus raised is a very broad and important one, being neither more nor less than whether instrumental music is divinely appointed in Christian worship. It indicates, at all events, how far some hymnologists are prepared to go. If this idea is correct, the Christian church in the early ages had entirely mistaken the meaning of inspired men, and so has our church (the Scottish) since the Reformation. We affirm, however, that **psalleto** in James can mean nothing else than 'let him sing psalms.' The substantive **psalmos** occurs not oftener than seven times in the New Testament; and its use there, apart from other evidence, would be sufficient to determine the meaning of the verb **psallo**. The noun occurs three times (Luke xx. 42, xxiv. 44; Acts i. 20), where it refers to the book of Psalms; **once** (Acts xiii. 33), where it refers to the second psalm; **twice** (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16), where with other two words the rendering is 'psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs'; and **once** (1 Cor. xiv. 26), 'When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm'. In regard to the verb itself, besides the passage in James and in Ephesians v. 19, just referred to, **psallo** only occurs three times in the New Testament; **twice** (1 Cor. xiv. 15), where its use absolutely excludes instrumental music, and must imply singing inspired (?) songs or psalms — 'I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also;' and **once** (Rom. xv. 9), 'As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.' It is interesting to notice that the latter passage is exactly copied from the Septuagint (Ps. xviii. 49), and this affords a striking proof of the correctness of the rendering for which we are now contending. As thus quoted by the apostle, we have an inspired rendering into the Greek verb **psallo** of a Hebrew word which is usually translated 'sing praises' or 'sing psalms'. 'Singing psalms' was the only authorized vocal praise of the church of old. The question now, as every one knows, is not about the roots or the original meaning of words, but about the sense in which they were used by the inspired writers; **psallo** never occurs in the New Testament, in its radical signification, to strike or play upon an instrument.

"The forty or fifty high scholars of England through whose hands the authorized version of our Scriptures passed, were thoroughly acquainted with these things, and seldom fail, in matters of the least importance, to give, either in the text or in the margin, a correct version of the original language — although, of course, they were not infallible. In connection with this, it is not uninteresting, however, to observe how fully the correctness of our authorized version is confirmed

by Luther and the early Reformers. Luther translates **psalleto** (Jam. v. 13) 'der singe psalmen;' Wickliffe, 'and seye he a salm;' Tyndale, 'let him singe psalmes;' and Cranmer, 'let him synge psalms.' Dean Alford, too, among recent critics, strong Episcopalian as he is, and interested in vindicating instrumental music, renders the word 'let him sing praise.' Mr. Young, in his translation of the Bible 'according to the letter and idioms of the original languages,' renders the passage, 'let him sing psalms;' and Dr. Giles, late Fellow of Christ Church College, Oxford, in his New Testament, 'translated word for word,' London, 1861, also renders it, 'let him sing psalms.' "

There is no need to multiply authorities. All commentators admit that psalms primarily designated sacred odes which were suited to be accompanied, when sung, by instruments of music. But the great majority concur in holding that the secondary sense, of sacred compositions to be sung, is that in which the word is used in the New Testament. How could it be otherwise with men who had learning enough to know, that instrumental music was excluded from the public worship of the apostolic church? If it be urged that this is begging the question, and proof be demanded, the appeal is taken, first, to the preceding argument; and, secondly, to the practice of the post-apostolic church. If the apostles had allowed the employment of instrumental music in the church, it is morally certain, from the very constitution of human nature, that it would have continued to be used subsequently to their time. But it was not; and its absence can be accounted for only on the ground that the New Testament Church had never adopted it. If it had been in use under the apostles, its ejection could only have been accomplished by a revolutionary change which would have been a revolt from apostolic practice. Such a supposition is on every account absurd — indeed is impossible. The proof that the early church knew nothing of instrumental music it is proposed to furnish in a subsequent part of this discussion. Its presentation is, therefore, postponed.

Even if the foregoing argument from the New Testament Scriptures had only a respectable degree of probability, it would seem to be preposterous to attempt its refutation by a single ambiguous word — a word conceded by those who take that position themselves to have both an original and a secondary signification. As, further, it is not pleaded that the words "hymns and spiritual songs" imply the accompaniment of instruments, they who stand on the primary sense of the word **psalms** would be obliged to admit that some of the singing of the apostolic church was accompanied by instrumental music and some was not. When they succeed in proving that such was the case, they may with some plausibility claim the surrender of their opponents. Is it not evident that the argument which rests on the single word **psalms** swings on a rickety hinge?

5. The only other argument from the New Testament Scriptures will be derived from the condemnation which they pronounce upon "will-worship." Will-worship is that which is not commanded by God, but devised by man. We have seen that God commanded instrumental music to be employed in connection with the temple. It was, therefore, in that relation not an element of will-worship. It was of course legitimate. But had the Jew employed it in the synagogue, he would have been guilty of the sin of will-worship. Why? Because, without the divine warrant he would have asserted his own will in regard to the public worship of God. Now that the temple is gone, all that was peculiar to it is gone with it. To revive any of its defunct services, and borrow them from its ruins for the ornamentation of the Christian church, is an instance of will-worship. The general principle is enounced by Paul in the Epistle to the Colossians, although he applies it specifically to a certain class of cases. "Wherefore," says he, "if

ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which are all to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." Instrumental music, as has been proved, was one of the rudiments of that ceremonial and typical ritual by which it pleased God to train the Israelites, as children in a preparatory school, for the manhood of the Christian dispensation with its glorious privileges and its expanded responsibilities. This was the view of even Aquinas and Bellarmin. He, therefore, who would import that effete element into the Church of the New Dispensation would impugn the wisdom of God, assert his will against the divine authority, and abandon the freedom of Christ for the bondage of Moses.

(To be continued)

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.

PAGANISM. The religious belief and practice of those who worship false gods.

PANTHEISM. The false system which holds that everything is divine, or that God is the soul of the universe, and that God attains personality and self-consciousness only in man.

PARABLE. A story told for the purpose of teaching or emphasizing a point of religious truth.

PARADISE. The garden of Eden, which was the home of the human race before the Fall. Also used to mean heaven (Luke 23:44).

PARDON. That act of God, included in justification, by which the guilt of the sinner is remitted, that the corresponding penalty be not inflicted.

PASSION OF CHRIST. Our Saviour's sufferings, culminating in His death upon the cross.

PATIENCE. "That calm and unruffled temper with which a good man bears the evils of life" (Buck's Theological Dictionary).

PATIENCE OF GOD. God's longsuffering or forbearance, by reason of which He waits long

before visiting His judgments on men, that they may have opportunity to repent, or be left without excuse.

PATRIARCHS. Heads of families, especially those who lived before the time of Moses, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

PATRONAGE. The practice, which caused long controversy and great evils in Scotland, by which a Christian congregation is deprived of the right of choosing its own pastor, the minister instead being appointed by some person holding the right of patronage pertaining to that congregation.

PELAGIANS. A heretical sect which arose late in the fourth century after Christ, which denied the doctrines of original sin, total depravity, and salvation by free grace alone. (Founded by Pelagius, a British monk; opposed by Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa).

PENTATEUCH. The five books of Moses, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

PENTECOST. A feast of the Jews, celebrated fifty days after the Passover (Levit. 23:15).

PERJURY. The taking of an oath in order to tell or confirm a falsehood.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS. The doctrine that "They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally, nor finally, fall away from the state of grace: but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved' (Westminster Confession of Faith, XVII.1).

PHARISEES. A sect of the Jews in the time of Christ which held with zeal to "the traditions of the elders," regarding these as of equal authority with the Scripture itself. They were characterized by religious earnestness and zeal, accompanied by legalism, formalism and hypocrisy.

PIOUS FRAUDS. "Those artifices and falsehoods made use of in propagating the truth, and endeavoring to promote the spiritual interests of mankind" (Buck's Theological Dictionary). (Pious frauds are forbidden by Scripture: Rom. 3:8).

PLENARY INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE. The doctrine that the Scripture is fully inspired of God, so that not only the ideas but the very words of the genuine text in the original Hebrew and Greek are the Word of God, being exactly what God intended them to be, and being completely free from errors of whatever kind.

POLYGAMY. The state of having more wives than one at the same time. This is contrary to the original institution of marriage. (Genesis 2:24). During the Old Testament period polygamy was temporarily tolerated but not actually sanctioned by God; its worst features were restricted by God's law, pending its complete elimination.

POLYTHEISM. Belief in many gods.

POPE: The title claimed by the Bishop of Rome as supreme earthly head of the Roman Catholic Church. ("Pope" originally meant "father.") (There is no other head of the Church,

but the Lord Jesus Christ; not can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof . . ." — Westminster Confession of Faith, XXV. 6).

POPERY. The system of doctrines and practices maintained by the Roman Catholic Church: This system is chiefly summarized in the Decrees of the Council of Trent (A. D. 1545-1563). It is a mixture of truth and error; giving false answers to the crucial questions about the way of salvation, it must be adjudged, as a system, to be false.

PRAYER. "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, 98.)

PREACHING. The public proclamation and application of the Word of God, by one who has been duly approved and called to the office of the ministry of the Word. (See the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 158, 159. Strictly speaking, preaching is a function of ordained ministers and licentiates, in distinction from exhorting which may properly be done by other Christians).

PREDESTINATION. "The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, 7).

PRESBYTER. Literally, an elder. Presbyters are officers of the New Testament Church, of two classes: (1) those who only rule (today called "elders" or "ruling elders"); (2) those who in addition to ruling also teach or preach (today called "ministers"). All ministers and all ruling elders are presbyters.

PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS CHRIST. The doctrine that Jesus Christ, before His birth of the Virgin Mary, existed from all eternity as the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. (See Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 21, 22).

Some Noteworthy Quotations

Better go swimming and wet through our waters than drown by the way: especially now when truth suffereth, and great men bid Christ sit lower and contract Himself in less bounds, as if He took too much room.

— Samuel Rutherford

The bush has been burning these five thousand years, and no man yet saw the ashes of that fire.

— Samuel Rutherford

There cannot be a more humble soul than a

believer. It is no pride in a drowning man to catch hold of a rock.

— Samuel Rutherford

We cannot understand God's providence till He hath done His work; he is an impatient spectator that cannot tarry till the last act, wherein all errors are reconciled.

— Thomas Manton

Thou darest not pray, Lord, let me have my worldly comforts, though they damn me; let me not be afflicted, though it do me good; and if thou

darest not pray so, wilt thou murmur when God ordereth it so?

— Thomas Manton

Nothing can go amiss to him that is found in the way of duty.

— Thomas Manton

We cannot be saved by a dead Christ, who undertook but could not perform, and who still lies under the Syrian sky, another martyr of impotent love. To save, He must pass not merely to but through death. If the penalty was fully paid, it cannot have broken Him, it must needs have been broken upon Him. The resurrection of Christ is thus the indispensable evidence of His completed work, of His accomplished redemption.

— B. B. Warfield

Men no longer cast us to the lions when we proclaim Jesus the only Saviour the world can know; His name the only name under heaven given among men wherein they must be saved. But the world of today endures with no more real patience than that older world two thousand years ago the arrogance of such lofty claims. This is above all others that have preceded it the day of eager and appreciative study of other faiths; and equally with the others that have preceded it, the day of indifference, if not hostility, to the high claims of Jesus.

— B. B. Warfield

The whole earthly career of Christ, including his death, was obedience in one aspect and suffering in another. Inasmuch as it was suffering, it expiated the sins of his people; inasmuch as it was obedience, it merited for them the covenanted reward of eternal life.

— A. A. Hodge

It is certainly as impious, and perhaps more foolish, to refuse to see clearly what God has revealed clearly, as it is to attempt to understand in detail undefined facts which God has seen fit to leave upon the verge of our horizon.

— A. A. Hodge

Let me speak to Christless persons who are at ease. Many of you hearing me know that you are in a Christless state; and yet you know that you are at ease and happy. Why is this? It is because you hope to be brought to Christ before you die. You say, another day will do as well, and I will hear thee again of this matter; and therefore you take your ease now. But this is very unreasonable. It is not worthy of a rational being to act in this way. God has nowhere promised to bring you to Christ before you die.

God has laid Himself under no manner of obligation to you. He has nowhere promised that you shall see tomorrow, or that you shall hear another sermon. There is a day near at hand when you shall not see a tomorrow. If this be not the last, there is a sermon yet to be preached which will be the last you will ever hear.

— Robert Murray McCheyne

The starting-point of every motive in religion is God and not man. Man is the instrument and means, God alone is here the goal, the point of departure and the point of arrival, the fountain from which the waters flow, and at the same time the ocean into which they finally return.

— Abraham Kuyper

God regenerates us, — that is to say, He rekindles in our heart the lamp sin had blown out. The necessary consequence of this regeneration is an irreconcilable conflict between the inner world of our heart and the world outside, and this conflict is ever the more intensified the more the regenerative principle pervades our consciousness. Now, in the Bible, God reveals, to the regenerate, a world of thought, a world of energies, a world full of beautiful life, which stands in direct opposition to his ordinary world, but which proves to agree in a wonderful way with the new life that has sprung up in his heart.

— Abraham Kuyper

All organized communities, civil and ecclesiastical, have a common responsibility, a moral personality in the sight of God, and are dealt with accordingly, rewarded or punished according to their conduct, as such. As their organized existence is confined to this world, so must the retributive dispensations of God respecting them be.

— Charles Hodge

Give me the evidence that I am saved from the punishment of sin by saving me from its power.

— Thomas Chalmers

The greatest argument of the Saviour's power is His patience.

— Stephen Charnock

Lip-homage paid to all religions is the virtual denial of each.

— R. A. Vaughn

The secret of holy living lies in the doctrine of the union of the believer with Christ.

— Charles Hodge

It is an inexpressible grief to me to see the church spending its energies in a vain attempt to lower its testimony to suit the ever-changing sentiment of the world about it.

— Benjamin B. Warfield

Taking the line of least resistance makes rivers and men crooked.

— Anonymous

Love will stammer rather than be dumb.

— Robert Leighton

For ourselves, we do not affect the designation of moderate Calvinists. We believe the whole Calvinism of the Canons of the Synod of Dort, and of the Confession of the Westminster Assembly, and we are willing to attempt to expound and defend, when called upon, the whole doctrine of these symbols, to show that it is all

taught or indicated in Scripture. We have been only confirmed in our Calvinism by all the study we have given to this subject.

— William Cunningham

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

— Augustine of Hippo

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

It may sometimes seem difficult to take our stand frankly by the side of Christ and His apostles. It will always be found safe.

— Benjamin B. Warfield

Studies in Old Testament History

LESSON 101

The Kingdom of Israel from the Death of Ahab to the Death of Joram (853-841 B.C.) Conflict between Israel and Aram (Syria). The Career of the Prophet Elisha

(2 Kings, Chapters 2-8)

The death of Ahab occurred in 853 B.C. He was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who continued the religious apostasy and general wickedness of his father. His reign was short, however (2 years or less), as he died from injuries resulting from an accident. He was succeeded by his younger brother Joram or Jehoram, who reigned some 12 years (852-841 B.C.). He, too, was bad, and continued in "the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin." However he did remove the image of Baal which his father Ahab had set up in Samaria. This meant that the foreign religion of Baal worship was no longer established as the official religion of the kingdom.

The reign of Joram (Jeroram) in the Kingdom of Israel is closely connected with the activities of the prophet Elisha, the successor of Elijah.

Joram was killed by Jehu, whom God had raised up to execute divine judgment upon the family of Ahab and to exterminate the religion of Baalism. Following this Jehu became king of Israel, starting a new dynasty.

The life and work of the prophet Elisha is related in connection with the reign of Joram of Israel, in the early chapters of the second book

of Kings. The following are specially important events in the life of Elisha:

(1) Elisha officially called to be the successor of the prophet Elijah. I Kings 19:19-21.

(2) Elisha sees Elijah taken up from him to heaven, and thereupon begins his public work as a prophet of the Lord. II Kings 2.

(3) Miracles performed through Elisha for the benefit of humble people:

(a) The poor widow who was in debt. II Kings 4:1-7.

(b) The Shunammite woman and her son. 4:8-37.

(c) The poisonous wild gourds and the sons of the prophets. 4:38-41.

(d) Naaman the Syrian cleansed of leprosy, and Gehazi, Elisha's servant, smitten with leprosy. 2 Kings 5.

(e) The axe-head recovered from water. 6:1-7.

(4) Elisha is significant because of his connection with the school of the prophets. These were communities of men founded for the purpose of calling the nation back to its true faith in the Lord.

(5) Elisha and the war between Aram (Syria) and Israel. II Kings 6:8 to 7:20.

(a) Elisha informs the king of Israel of the movements of the enemy forces. 6:8-12.

(b) The Syrians seek to capture Elisha. They are blinded (temporarily) and he leads them to Samaria. He instructs the king of Israel to release them unharmed to return to their own country. 6:13-23.

(c) At a later time Benhadad king of Syria attacks Israel again. Samaria is besieged. Famine results, and the inhabitants are reduced to cannibalism. The prophet Elisha announces that the next day food will be sold at cheap prices at the city gate of Samaria. This prophecy is remarkably fulfilled. II Kings 6:24 to 7:20.

(6) Elisha sends a junior prophet to anoint Jehu as king of Israel. II Kings 9:1-26. The Lord had commanded **Elijah** to anoint Jehu as successor to Ahab, I Kings 19:16, 17. This commission was not actually carried out in person by **Elijah**, however. Rather, it was passed on as unfinished business to **Elijah's** successor Elisha, who carried it out by sending a young prophet to anoint Jehu. Jehu was not only anointed to be king over the kingdom of Israel, but was also commissioned to destroy utterly the entire family connection of Ahab.

Questions:

1. What good or bad can be said about Joram or Jehoram, king of Israel?

2. What prophet was associated with the reign of Joram?

3. How was Elisha called to be a prophet?

4. Describe the scene when Elisha saw **Elijah** for the last time in this world.

5. Tell about the miracle for the widow who was in debt.

6. Summarize the story of the Shunammite woman and her son.

7. Tell the story of Naaman the Syrian.

8. What were the schools of the prophets?

9. What happened when the Syrians tried to capture Elisha?

10. How was the prophecy about cheap food in Samaria fulfilled?

11. How and by whom was Jehu anointed king of Israel? What was Jehu's rank prior to this incident?

12. What special commission was given to Jehu?

LESSON 102

The Life and Activities of Jehu (841-814 B.C.)

(2 Kings, chapters 9, 10)

Jehu the son of Nimshi reigned over the kingdom of Israel for some 27 years (841- 814 B.C.). Jehu was a rough and ready soldier, and God called him to do a difficult and terrible piece of work. It was not a nice task but it had to be done.

In the book of the prophet Hosea (Hos. 1:4, 5) Jehu is condemned because of the bloodthirsty manner in which he carried out his commission to destroy the family of Ahab. Some critics of the Bible have claimed this statement of Hosea is a contradiction of II Kings 9:7 which says that God commanded Jehu to destroy Ahab's family. But there is really no contradiction involved. God commanded Jehu to do this piece of work, yet God did not approve of the attitude and motives with which Jehu went about it. What God condemned through the prophet Hosea was Jehu's bloodthirsty attitude and his wrong motives for acting as he did. It was not Jehu's acts of killing but his **lust** for killing that displeased God.

Jehu not only exterminated the family of Ahab,

as he had been commanded, but he also abolished the religion of Baal worship which had been set up in Israel by Ahab and Jezebel. However, Jehu was also criticized for not going all the way in obeying God (II Kings 10:29-31).

The following are the most important events in the life of Jehu:

(1) His being anointed to be king, which took place at Ramoth-Gilead where he was with the army. At the same time he was commissioned to destroy the house (i.e., the family) of Ahab. II Kings 9:1-10.

(2) Jehu's seized power and reigned as king, killing Jehoram (Joram) who had been reigning as king before this. II Kings 9:11-26. Ahaziah of Judah also killed.

(3) Jehu killed Ahab's widow Jezebel. She had been living as a widow about 14 years since the death of Ahab. II Kings 9:30-37.

(4) The killing of Ahab's 70 "sons" (i.e., male descendants). II Kings 10:1-11.

(5) The killing of the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah. II Kings 10:12-14.

(6) The massacre of the Baal worshippers. II Kings 10:15-28. Jehu has been severely criticized for this action. However, according to the Law of God (Deuteronomy 13:12-18) the worshippers of Baal deserved to die. However, the treacherous and deceitful manner in which Jehu went about killing the worshippers of Baal was inexcusable.

(7) Jehu was commended by God for exterminating the family of Ahab (II Kings 10:29-31) and was promised as a reward that his family would occupy the throne of Israel to the fourth generation. At the same time Jehu was criticized for not obeying God fully. Especially he was criticized for his failure to do something about the worship of the golden calves at Dan and Bethel. And, as we have noted, in Hosea 1:4, 5 Jehu is condemned because of his bloodthirsty attitude and excesses. Jehu is an example of a man who wanted to obey God, but wanted to do this in the way most pleasing to himself.

(8) Jehu lost all of Transjordan to Syria. It was taken from Israel by Syria and the Syrians held it until the reign of Jeroboam II (782-753 B. C.) II Kings 10:32-36. II Kings 14: 25-28.

Questions:

1. Describe the scene of Jehu's anointing.
2. What was Jehu's mandate or commission from the Lord?
3. How did Joram king of Israel meet his fate?
4. Who was Ahaziah, and why was he killed by Jehu's orders?
4. What relation was Ahaziah to Joram, king of Israel?
6. Describe the massacre of the Baal worshippers.
7. Describe the death of Jezebel.
8. What did Jehu do about Ahab's sons? How could Ahab have so many sons?
9. What is your appraisal of Jehu, taking his career as a whole?
10. How can we explain the condemnation of Jehu which is found in Hosea 1:4, 5?
11. What promise did the Lord give to Jehu, and why?
12. What part of Jehu's territory did he lose to a foreign enemy? Who was the enemy?

LESSON 103

The Kingdom of Judah from Rehoboam to Ahaziah (931-841 B.C.)

(I Kings 15:1-13; 2 Chronicles chapters 13-17; 22:1-9)

There was long conflict between Rehoboam and Jeroboam (I Kings 14:30). Although the kingdom of Judah remained comparatively more faithful to God than the kingdom of Israel, still even in the kingdom of Judah religious deterioration had already set in. Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord. "High places" were built (I Kings 14:22, 23). These "high places" were not legitimate places of worship, and they tended to lead the people into idolatry.

I Kings 14:25-28 tells the story of the attack on Jerusalem by Shishak king of Egypt (Sheshonk in the Egyptian records). The gold shields of the Temple were taken by Shishak. Rehoboam made brass shields to replace the gold ones that had been taken away. Just as brass now replaced gold in the Temple, so we may also say that compromise replaced purity in the religion of the nation (14:27). After the death of Rehoboam he was succeeded by his son Abijam. At this point the student should glance at the list of the kings of Judah on page 184 of the October-December 1963 issue of this magazine.

Rehoboam died in 913 B.C. His son Abijam

(or Abijah) reigned three years, died, and was succeeded by his son Asa (911-873 B.C.) who reigned some 41 years. Asa was one of the good kings of Judah, who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. His story is told most fully in II Chronicles chapters 14-16.

The most important events in the life of Asa king of Judah may be outlined as follows:

- (1) Religious reform, taking away altars of false gods, destroying idols, etc. "High places" used for the worship of "strange gods" were taken away, i.e., obliterated. II Chron. 14:1-5.
- (2) Maachah, his mother, was deposed from the position of Queen Mother, because of her idolatry. "An idol in a grove" (King James Version) should be translated "an abominable image for Asherah". I Kings 15:13.
- (3) Fought a war with Baasha king of Israel.
- (4) Asa made a league with Benhadad king of Syria to get help against Baasha king of Israel.

II Chron. 16:1-6. He was rebuked by a prophet named Hanani for trusting in foreign allies rather than in God (II Chron. 16:7-9). Asa put the prophet Hanani in prison in a rage, verse 10. This is the first recorded instance of bad treatment of a prophet of God by a king of Israel or Judah. Ahab's treatment of Micaiah came before this in the arrangement of material in this course, but in the actual history it came long after Asa's abuse of Hanani.

The story of Jehoshaphat king of Judah (873-853 B.C.) is told in I Kings 22:41-50, but much more fully in II Chronicles, chapters 17, 19 and 20. He was one of the good kings of Judah, his main faults being his making an alliance with the wicked king Ahab of Israel and his reluctance to say "No" when asked to do something he knew to be wrong.

We have already noted the connection of Jehoshaphat with the battle in which Ahab was killed (I Kings 22; II Chron. 18). Other important facts in the reign of Jehoshaphat are:

(1) He made a treaty of alliance with Ahab king of Israel. II Chron. 18; compare I Kings 22:44.

(2) He reformed and promoted the administration of justice. II Chron. 19.

(3) He arranged for the people to be taught the law of God. II Chron. 17:7-9.

(4) He gave his son Jehoram (Joram) in marriage to Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. A terrible mistake.

Jehoram and Joram of Judah (853-841 B.C.) was one of the bad kings of Judah. His story is found in II Kings 8:16-24 and II Chron. 21:2-20. He introduced the idolatries of Ahab and Jezebel into the kingdom of Judah. His wife was Athaliah, the wicked daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

Jehoram or Joram of Judah was succeeded by Ahaziah, who reigned less than one year (841 B.C.). He also followed the evil ways of Ahab and Jezebel. His mother was Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Ahaziah was therefore a grandson of Ahab and Jezebel. He was killed by Jehu while visiting his uncle, Joram king of Israel, who was recovering at Jezreel from battle wounds received while fighting the Syrians. This was the same encounter in which Joram or Jehoram, king of Israel, was killed by Jehu.

Questions:

1. What form of religious deterioration occurred in the kingdom of Judah in the period covered by this assignment?

2. What foreign power attacked the Kingdom of Judah during the reign of Rehoboam?

3. What was the name of the foreign king?

4. What was the outcome of the campaign?

5. How does the replacement of gold with brass in the Temple shields illustrate the religious conditions of the time?

6. How long did Asa, grandson of Rehoboam, reign?

7. How is the reign of Asa rated as to its moral and religious character?

8. What religious improvement did Asa undertake?

9. What courageous act did Asa carry out concerning his mother? What had she done? Why did the king's decision require courage? What would be its influence on the people of the kingdom?

10. What one great mistake was made by Asa?

11. How did Asa treat the prophet who rebuked him for his sin. In what respect was this unique?

12. In what connection have we already learned something about Jehoshaphat king of Judah?

13. What wrong and foolish policy, from the standpoint of God's will, did Jehoshaphat undertake? (See II Chron. 19:1-3).

14. What religious and social reforms can be credited to Jehoshaphat?

15. What mistake did Jehoshaphat make concerning the marriage of his son?

16. What was the general character of the reign of Jehoram or Joram of Judah, son of Jehoshaphat? Considering his good father, to what can the evil character of his policies be attributed?

17. How long did Joram or Jehoram of Judah reign?

18. How long did Ahaziah of Judah, son of Jehoram and Athaliah, reign?

19. How did Ahaziah of Judah meet his death? Why was he killed?

20. What religious results could be expected from a royal marriage between the families of Ahab and Jehoshaphat?

from Athaliah's palace, probably, but Athaliah was evidently not in the habit of going to the Temple of the Lord. The concealment of Joash was done with the connivance of the High Priest, a godly man named Jehoiada.

At this time God's promise of redemption seemed to hang by a thread. It had been promised that the Christ would come of the seed of David. But Athaliah attempted to kill every heir to the throne of the seed of David. She came within a hair's breadth of achieving her wicked aim. If Athaliah had succeeded in killing all the heirs of David, how could God's promise of a Messiah of the house of David be fulfilled? But God was taking care of this, and Athaliah, wicked as she was, could not frustrate the plans of God.

The High Priest, Jehoiada, a very godly man, took the initiative in putting an end to the usurping reign of Athaliah. This story is very dramatically told in II Kings chapter 11. Careful plans were laid beforehand. After elaborate precautions, the child Joash was crowned in the Temple. Athaliah arrived on the scene but it was too late. Crying "Treason! Treason!" she was driven outside the Temple and killed.

The High Priest Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people (II Kings 11:17). This was not to be an arbitrary tyranny but a limited theocratic rule — a rule under God and for the glory of God.

This was followed by a thorough reformation of religious abuses (II Kings 11:18). The worship of Baal, which had been introduced by Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was abolished.

Joash (also called Jehoash) (835-796 B.C.) was crowned at the age of 7 years. His story is continued in II Kings 12 and II Chron. 24. Instructed by the godly priest Jehoiada, Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord. The Temple of the Lord was duly repaired. Finally Jehoiada died at the advanced age of 130 years (II Chron. 24:15).

After the death of Jehoiada, Joash no longer remained faithful to God as formerly. At the insistence of the princes, Joash permitted the resumption of idolatry. Bad days came to the

kingdom of Judah. Zechariah the son of Jehoiada was stoned to death at the command of king Joash (II Chron. 24:21) in the court of the Temple of the Lord. Following this outrageous crime, Joash had more and more troubles. He was attacked by Syria, and only saved Jerusalem from the Syrian army by a heavy payment; even so, many of the people of Judah were either killed or taken away by the Syrians. Next, Joash was sick with great diseases. Finally, his own servants (perhaps ministers of state, not merely household servants) conspired against him and killed him in his own bed. He was buried, but was not considered worthy of burial in the royal tombs of the kings of Judah.

Questions:

1. What is known about the parentage of Athaliah?
2. What event opened the way for her to grasp power?
3. What would have been the normal procedure following the death of a king?
4. By what acts did Athaliah seize power?
5. How near did she come to complete success in carrying out her plan?
6. How can we explain the fact that she did not achieve complete success?
7. What was the status of God's promise of redemption at this time, according to the human view of the matter?
8. Who took the lead in the conspiracy ("underground movement") to overthrow Athaliah?
9. Why did the High Priest not act sooner?
10. Tell how Joash was crowned as king.
11. Describe the death of Athaliah.
12. Describe the early years of Joash's reign.
13. What even proved to be the turning point in the life of Joash?
14. Of what crime was Joash guilty?
15. What circumstances rendered this deed specially evil?
16. Describe the death of Joash.

LESSON 105

The Kingdom of Judah under Amaziah (796-767 B.C.), Uzziah 767-739 B.C.), Jotham (739-731 B.C.) and Ahaz (731-715 B.C.)

(2 Chronicles, chapters 25 to 28)

The reign of Joash lasted about 40 years. He was succeeded by his son Amaziah, who reigned 29 years. When he had his power well established, he executed justice upon the murderers of his

father Joash. In keeping with the Law of Moses, he executed only the actual murderers, not their children with them. His story is told in II Chron. 25.

By payment of a large sum of money, Amaziah hired 100,000 mercenary soldiers from the northern kingdom (Israel) to fight against Edom. But at the word of a prophet of God he dismissed them, losing the money he had already paid them. Going against the Edomites with the forces of his own kingdom of Judah alone, he won a notable victory. Meantime the dismissed Israelite soldiers were extremely angry that they had been dismissed and did not have to fight in the campaign.

Amaziah adopted the worship of some of the gods of the land of Edom. On account of this God was angry with him. Following bad counsel, Amaziah needlessly challenged Joash (798-782 B.C.), king of the northern kingdom (Israel) to fight with him. Joash (also spelled Jehoash) king of Israel tried to avoid this conflict, but Amaziah insisted on fighting. The result was that Amaziah was not only defeated by Joash king of Israel, but was also taken prisoner and brought back to his own capital, Jerusalem, as a prisoner of the northern kingdom. The soldiers of the northern kingdom also broke down part of the city wall of Jerusalem, took gold and silver objects from the Temple of the Lord, took persons as hostages, and returned to their own capital, Samaria.

After Amaziah had turned away from God, a conspiracy was formed against him. However, he learned of it in time and fled to Lachish, a strongly fortified city in the lowlands of Judah. Twelve years later he was murdered there.

Amaziah was succeeded by his son Uzziah (also called Azariah), who reigned some 52 years (767-739 B.C. (Some 23 years of this time, apparently, he was co-regent with his father Amaziah. These 23 years would be 790-767 B.C. Then on the death of Amaziah he became sole king in his own right, 767 B.C.). He was 16 years old when he became king (co-regent). Uzziah was one of the good kings of Judah, though he was not without serious sin, as we shall see.

First, he conquered the Philistines effectively. Then he built up the strength and security of the kingdom of Judah. The description of his military equipment in II Chron. 26:14, 15 is interesting.

But strength and security caused him to become self-confident instead of trusting in God. He sinned against God by a presumptuous act of venturing to burn incense upon the altar of incense in the Temple. This usurping of priestly functions was challenged by Azariah the priest, accompanied by 80 courageous priests of the Lord. The outcome of this showdown was that Uzziah was smitten with the disease of leprosy, which he had until his death. He had to live in quarantine in a house by himself.

Uzziah was succeeded by his son Jotham. On

the whole Jotham was a good king. He continued the good work of his father. It is recorded of him that "he entered not into the temple of the Lord." The meaning of this statement is not that he neglected divine worship, but rather that he did not copy the bad deed of his father in entering the Temple of the Lord improperly to take over functions reserved to the priesthood. It is recorded of Jotham, however, that in his time "the people did yet corruptly" (II Chron. 27:2). Jotham fought a successful war with the Ammonites who lived on the edge of the desert east of the Jordan and north of the Dead Sea.

Jotham was succeeded by his son Ahaz (731-715 B.C., a very wicked man. His story is recorded in II Chron. 28 and II Kings 16. Ahaz undid all the good things that his father and grandfather had done. He copied the evil ways of the kings of the northern kingdom, re-introducing the worship of Baal in the kingdom of Judah, and putting up images of Baal. But this was not the worst of his wickedness. He "burnt his children in the fire" as sacrifices to the god Moloch, and he also offered sacrifices and burnt incense "in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree." Because of all these terrible sins God allowed enemies to attack and defeat him — Syria and Israel from the north, the Edomites from the east, and the Philistines from the west. These wars resulted very disastrously for Ahaz and his kingdom. The casualties were terrific (II Chron. 28:5,6,8).

Through the intervention of a prophet of the Lord named Oded, the captives from Judah who had been taken to the northern kingdom were released. At the height of his troubles Ahaz did not think of repenting and turning to God, but rather "he sent unto the kings of Assyria to help him" (II Chron. 28:16). "For the Lord brought Judah very low because of Ahaz" (verse 19). Ahaz took treasure from the Temple of the Lord, and from the royal palace of Judah, and gave it to Tiglath-Pileser III (also spelled Tilgath-Pilneser) in an attempt to buy his help against Israel and Syria. The Assyrian king accepted the presents, but failed to render the expected help.

Ahaz sank still lower in sin and apostasy from the Lord. The depth of this apostasy is described in II Chron. 28:22-25. Closing the Temple of the Lord, he established the worship of false gods in all the cities of his kingdom. When he died he was not buried in the royal tombs.

Questions:

1. What happened to the men who killed Joash king of Judah?
2. Why were their families not treated in the same way?
3. What war was undertaken by Amaziah king of Judah?

4. Where and how did he get the additional troops he thought he needed?

5. What made the mercenary soldiers very angry?

6. What acts of Amaziah incurred God's anger?

7. What unprovoked aggression did Amaziah commit?

8. What was the attitude of Joash king of Israel to Amaziah?

9. What was the outcome of the war?

10. Where did Amaziah die? What caused his death? Why was he in that place?

11. What good points did Uzziah king of Judah have?

12. What effect did great success have on Uzziah?

13. What great sin did Uzziah commit?

14. What punishment came to him from God?

15. What was the character of Jotham's reign?

16. What special sins did Ahaz commit?

17. Why did Ahaz take treasure from the Temple of the Lord?

18. What depth of religious apostasy was reached under Ahaz?

LESSON 106

The Kingdom of Judah under Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.). The Assyrian Invasion of Judah

(2 Kings, chapters 18-20. 2 Chronicles, Chapters 29-32. Isaiah, chapters 36-39)

Ahaz was succeeded by his son Hezekiah, one of the very best of the kings of Judah. It is remarkable that such a good son could be descended from such a bad father.

When Hezekiah came to the throne, conditions were very bad. He began his reign with a religious reformation, repairing the Temple of the Lord and having the worship resumed. King and people rejoiced together in their return to the Lord (II Chron. 29:36). Hezekiah continued his work by having the observance of the Passover resumed. Not only was the Passover observed in Judah, but Hezekiah even sent messengers through the territory of the (recently obliterated) northern kingdom (Israel) inviting the people who remained there to come to Jerusalem for the Passover. It will be recalled that Jeroboam I had set up his counterfeit religion at Dan and Bethel just in order to prevent this sort of thing. By Hezekiah's time the kingdom which Jeroboam had founded had already been liquidated by the Assyrian army (722 B.C.). The general reaction to Hezekiah's invitation in the northern territory was that the people laughed at his messengers, and mocked them (II Chron. 30:10). However, some people from some of the northern tribes did accept the invitation and came to Jerusalem for the Passover. In the kingdom of Judah itself the Passover was observed with great unanimity. This was a genuine religious revival. "So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem" (30:26).

This religious revival was accompanied by a radical separation from the idolatry. (II Chron. 31:1). Hezekiah and his kingdom enjoyed prosperity. His service to God is summarized in II Chron. 31:20,21.

At this time the powerful Assyrian Empire was looming on the horizon as a menace to the

kingdom of Judah. It will be recalled that the northern kingdom (Israel) was liquidated by Assyria in 722 B.C. The Assyrian invasion of Judah is described in II Kings 18:13-16. The Assyrians captured all the walled cities of the kingdom of Judah except Jerusalem, the capital. Hezekiah paid a heavy tribute to the Assyrians.

The history of Hezekiah and Sennacherib involves some extremely difficult and complicated chronological problems. It is difficult to harmonize the three accounts — those in Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah. These problems of chronology do not imply that the Bible contains errors, or contradicts itself; they only imply that we do not have all the information needed to harmonize fully the various accounts of what happened.

In II Kings 18:13-16 it is stated that Sennacherib, having captured all the fortified cities of Judah except Jerusalem, was paid a tribute of 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold by Hezekiah, evidently as a condition of sparing the city of Jerusalem from destruction and looting. Then in verse 17 and the following verses Sennacherib makes an insulting demand for the immediate surrender of the city. The problem arises, how can this demand for surrender be reconciled with the statement of verses 13-16 that he was paid a heavy tribute (as a condition of sparing the city)?

The most probable explanation of this problem is that Sennacherib, after receiving the silver and gold, double-crossed Hezekiah and demanded the surrender of the city anyway. The following statement is quoted from **The New Bible Commentary** (Davidson, Stibbs and Kevan), page 328:

"The most natural interpretation of this section is that Judah collapsed completely against Sennacherib (13). Hezekiah in extremis begged for terms, and had to accept what Sennacherib demanded (14). Then Sennacherib treacherously

(cf. Isaiah 33:1,7,8) changed his mind and demanded the surrender of the city (17ff.)."

This supposition, which is quite in line with what is known about the character of the ancient Assyrians, clears up the problem and makes the story consistent.

The record of this campaign has been found among the Assyrian records, written in cuneiform characters on a clay prism. The following is a translation of part of Sennacherib's own story of the campaign:

"As for Hezekiah, king of Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke, 46 of his fortified cities, and smaller cities without number, with my battering rams, engines, mines, breaches and axes, I besieged and captured. 200,150 people, small and great, male and female, and horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, sheep, without number, I took as booty. Hezekiah himself I shut up like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city. I built a line of forts against him, and turned back everyone who came forth out of his city gate. His cities which I captured I gave to the king of Ashdod, king of Ekron, and king of Gaza."

Ekron, Gaza and Ashdod, mentioned in the last sentence of the above quotation, were Philistine cities on the southern coast of Palestine.

It is noteworthy that even the boastful Assyrian Sennacherib did not claim to have captured Jerusalem, but only to have besieged it. His statement about having shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage has a distinct ring of "sour grapes" about it.

As Sennacherib invaded the kingdom of Judah, Hezekiah made great preparations for defence (II Chron. 32:1-8). At the same time he put his trust in God (verses 7, 8). What followed is most clearly told in Isaiah, chapters 36-39. The Assyrians, having captured the walled cities of Judah, made their headquarters at Lachish, about 27 miles southwest of Jerusalem. From there Sennacherib sent the Rabshakeh or chief officer to Jerusalem to demand the surrender of the city. This is one of the most dramatic and moving stories of the whole Bible. The blasphemous, insolent, arrogant demands of the Assyrians are met with quiet, God-fearing courage on the part of Hezekiah, who spread the letter before the Lord in the Temple, and prayed for help. The answer came through Isaiah (Isa. 37:21ff.). The outcome was the destruction of 185,000 of Sennacherib's troops by a mysterious stroke or plague, spoken of as "the angel of the Lord." There is no basis for the rather common notion that this happened just outside the walls of Jerusalem. It may very likely have been several miles away.

The incident of Hezekiah's sickness, restora-

tion to health, and promise of 15 more years of life, told in Isaiah 38, may perhaps have taken place before the events described in chapters 36 and 37. So also the account of the visit of ambassadors from Babylon, described in Isaiah 39, apparently concerns events which actually happened before Sennacherib's final invasion of Judah. On the surface the messengers from Babylon came to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery from sickness; actually, as suggested by II Kings 20:13 ("hearkened"), the purpose seems to have been to invite Hezekiah to join Babylon in a projected revolt against Assyria. The Assyrian king found out about the plot before it could be carried out, so it came to nothing.

We note that Sennacherib followed the common pattern of arrogant tyrants and aggressors, and came to a miserable end (Isaiah 37:37-38). The man who had spread death, destruction and sorrow far and wide to satisfy his selfish ambitions and lust for power, was finally murdered by his own sons while worshipping the god which he supposed had given him such wonderful military success.

Hezekiah's readiness to display his wealth and resources to the ambassadors from Babylon was condemned by the prophet Isaiah, who informed the king that the day would come when all these things would be taken to Babylon (Isaiah 39:3-7). This was fulfilled more than 100 years later when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and carried the Jews captive to Babylonia.

The destruction of Sennacherib's army by the angel of the Lord has been celebrated by Byron's well-known poem, **The Destruction of Sennacherib**. Through all this history we see a wicked, pagan, aggressive power — Assyria — being permitted by God to afflict the people of Israel and Judah, partly to punish them for their sins, and partly to purify the faith of those who believed in and served the Lord.

The Destruction of Sennacherib

By George Gordon, Lord Byron

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
 And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
 But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
 And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
 And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
 And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
 The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
 Hath melted like snow at the glance of the Lord!

Questions:

1. Whose son was Hezekiah?
2. What were the religious conditions when Hezekiah became king?

3. What program marked the beginning of Hezekiah's reign?

4. Why did Hezekiah send messengers to the territory of the former northern kingdom?

5. How were Hezekiah's messengers treated?

6. How was the Passover kept in Jerusalem?

7. What foreign power was beginning to threaten to invade Judah at this time?

8. How successful was the Assyrian invasion of Judah?

9. How can we explain the fact that Sennacherib demanded the surrender of Jerusalem after accepting payment as the price of sparing the city?

10. Besides the Biblical record, what source of knowledge do we have of this Assyrian campaign?

11. How did Hezekiah meet the final demands of the Assyrian commander?

12. What prophet of the Lord counselled and encouraged Hezekiah in this crisis?

13. What happened to the Assyrian forces?

14. What finally happened to Sennacherib?

15. What serious mistake did Hezekiah make?

16. What prophecy came as a result of this mistake? When was it fulfilled?

LESSON 107

The Kingdom of Israel from Jehu (841-814 B.C.) to Hoshea 722-722 B.C.)

(2 Kings, chapters 14-17)

Jehu died in 814 B.C. The northern kingdom (Israel) came to an end in 722 B.C., when it was finally destroyed by the Assyrian forces. At this point the student should refer to the list of the kings of Israel, as found in Lesson 92 of this course. From the death of Jehu to the end of the kingdom was a little less than 100 years. During this period there were 9 kings, part of whom reigned less than one year. We have already learned something about one of these kings, Joash or Jehoash, king of Israel (798-782 B.C.). This king fought and defeated Amaziah king of Judah.

Joash or Jehoash king of Israel was followed by Jeroboam II (782-753 B.C.). His story is found in II Kings 14:23-29. This king was powerful and successful from the political, economic and military viewpoint, but from the moral and religious viewpoint he was bad. During his reign the northern kingdom reached its greatest extent of territory and also of power. It is recorded of him that he "restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the Sea

of the Plain" (verse 25). Jeroboam II even succeeded in capturing Damascus, the capital of Syria, and Hamath, a Syrian city located about 120 miles north of Damascus. Hamath had been captured and held by Solomon long before, but later the city and region became independent again, until re-captured by Jeroboam II. "The Sea of the Plain" means the Dead Sea. So Jeroboam II recovered for Israel the territory from Hamath to the Dead Sea, making his kingdom very large and powerful. During the time of Solomon and again during the time of Jeroboam II Israel-Judah possessed all the land promised by God to Abraham.

Three famous prophets carried on their work during the reign of Jeroboam II: Jonah, Hosea and Amos. The prophecies of these men give us a very clear picture of social and economic conditions in the time of Jeroboam II. It was a time of wealth, prosperity, forgetting God, the rich living in luxury and oppressing the poor, and other notorious evils. It was also a time of religious complacency and easy toleration of false

religion. As for Jeroboam II himself, "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (II Kings 14:24).

After the death of Jeroboam II he was succeeded by his son Zechariah, who reigned only about six months. Zechariah was the last king of the dynasty of Jehu. It will be recalled that the Lord promised Jehu that his descendants should reign over Israel to the fourth generation. Zechariah was the fourth generation, and with him the dynasty of Jehu came to an end. His story is found in II Kings 15:8-12. He continued the same evil kind of life that his ancestors had lived. After reigning as king for half a year he was murdered by a man named Shallum, who became the next king.

Shallum obtained the throne by committing murder, and it was not long before he was murdered himself. He reigned only one month (II Kings 15:13), and was then murdered by a man named Menahem, whose story is told in II Kings 15:14-22. Menahem was a cruel, wicked king, noted for outrageous atrocities. He was attacked by Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, and only escaped destruction by paying 1,000 talents of silver (nearly two million dollars, and much more than that in actual purchasing power). Menahem continued the worship of the golden calves which had been started by Jeroboam I long before. His reign lasted about ten years.

After Menahem's death his son Pekahiah became king of Israel (742-740 B.C.). The kingdom was only about twenty years from its final destruction (722 B.C.). Pekahiah continued the wickedness of his father. After reigning for about two years he was murdered by one of his officers, Pekah, who became the next king.

Pekah (co-regent with Menahem and later Pekahiah, 752-740 B.C. Sole king 740-732 B.C.) was the next to the last king of the kingdom of Israel. He continued the worship of the golden calves. He made an alliance with Syria and then attacked the kingdom of Judah, just at the beginning of the reign of Ahaz king of Judah. Ahaz sought help from Assyria, which however did not do him any real good. However, it did bring Assyria into the picture as a very menacing power. We have already noted Ahaz's negotiation with Tiglath-Pileser III king of Assyria, and Pekah's invasion of Judah. At this time the Assyrians conquered much of Syria and Israel.

The last king of Israel was Hoshea (732-722 B.C.), whose history is given in II Kings 17. In 732 B.C. Pekah king of Israel was murdered by a man named Hoshea, who thereupon became king in Pekah's place (II Kings 15:30). According to the Assyrian records, this was done with the approval of Tiglath-Pileser III king of Assyria. Hoshea reigned for about ten years. It is recorded of him that he did evil in the sight of the Lord,

but was not as bad as some of the kings who had reigned before him.

Shalmaneser, the new king of Assyria, attacked Israel, and Hoshea surrendered to him, paying tribute. But later Hoshea failed to pay the annual tribute, and tried to get military aid from Egypt, and this became known to Shalmaneser. On account of this the Assyrian army marched against Israel again. Samaria was attacked and Hoshea was soon captured and imprisoned. Samaria fought on without its king, and in spite of extreme distress, was able to hold out for three years, after which it was captured by the Assyrians. About the time of the fall of Samaria, Shalmaneser was succeeded by Sargon II as king of Assyria.

The kingdom of Israel had run its course of sin, and finally the righteous judgment of God fell upon it. It was wiped out and never existed as a kingdom again. Many of the people of the ten northern tribes were transported as captives to distant eastern parts of the Assyrian Empire. From this captivity they never returned as a nation or organized body of people, though scattered individuals did return at times.

In place of the people of the ten northern tribes, the Assyrians placed people transplanted from the eastern regions of their empire. This is described in II Kings 17:24ff. These foreign people mingled with the remaining Israelites in the area and became the Samaritans, mentioned in the New Testament. They were a mixed race and had a very bizarre mixed religion — "they feared the Lord and served their own gods" (II Kings 17:33). A small remnant of the Samaritans exists in Palestine at the present day. The Pentateuch (Five Books of Moses) is the only part of the Bible they recognize. The idolatry mentioned in II Kings 17:33 was evidently later given up. Jesus Christ said that the Samaritans did not know what they worshipped (John 4:22).

Questions:

1. When did Jehu die?
2. How many years after the death of Jehu did the northern kingdom exist?
3. How many kings reigned during this final period of the northern kingdom?
4. What king reigned the longest during this period?
5. How long did Jeroboam II reign?
6. In what respects was Jeroboam II a successful king?
7. How much territory did Israel hold under Jeroboam II?
8. What three famous prophets worked in

the northern kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam II?

9. What were the social, religious and economic conditions of Israel under Jeroboam II?

10. What was the religious character of Jeroboam II himself?

11. What king followed Jeroboam II?

12. How long did Zechariah reign?

13. What prophecy was fulfilled by Zechariah's reign?

14. How did Shallum become king? How long did he last?

15. How did Menahem become king, and how long did he reign?

16. What foreign power attacked Menahem?

17. How did Menahem escape destruction?

18. What was the line-up of powers in the time of Pekah?

19. Who was the last king of the northern kingdom? How long did he reign?

20. What did Assyria have to do with Hoshea's becoming king of Israel?

21. How bad was Hoshea, from the religious and moral standpoint?

22. Why did Assyria finally crush the kingdom of Israel?

23. What happened to the last king of Israel?

24. How long did the siege of Samaria last?

25. What was the outcome of the war?

26. Who were the Samaritans, and what was their origin?

LESSON 108

The Kingdom of Judah under Manasseh (695-642 B.C.) and Amon (642-640 B.C.)

(2 Chronicles 33)

At this point the student should refer to the list of the kings of Judah, in the Oct.-Dec., 1963 issue, p. 184. The kingdom of Judah outlasted the kingdom of Israel by 136 years, finally being destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. From the death of Hezekiah (686 B.C.) to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was a period of just 100 years. During this period of 100 years, Judah had 7 kings. Of these only one (Josiah) was good; all the rest were of varying degrees of wickedness. From this fact we can realize that this was a period of religious and moral decline, ending in apostasy from God.

Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, is recorded as having reigned 55 years. As nearly as can be figured out from the Biblical data, during the first 9 years or so of this period (695-686 B.C.) he must have been co-regent with his father Hezekiah. He is believed to have been sole king from 686 B.C. to 642 B.C., a period of 44 or 45 years. This single reign thus covers almost half of the entire period between the death of Hezekiah and the end of the kingdom. The other six kings in this period reigned an average of about 9 years each. When we realize that Manasseh was extremely wicked, we will grasp what this means concerning the character of the kingdom during this period of time.

Manasseh's reign is summarized by the statement that "he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel" (II Chron. 33:2). The details of his evil-

doing are next specified: he rebuilt the high places which his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he built altars for Baal, and promoted the worship of Asherah ("groves"), who was the mythical wife and/or sister of Baal. Besides all this, he practiced various other forms of idolatry; he "worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them." This was polytheistic star-worship, and typically Assyrian. He also put up altars for the Assyrian gods in the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.

Manasseh also burnt his son as a sacrifice to Moloch. (II Kings 21:6 says "his son"; II Chron. 33:6, "his children"). Also he observed "times", probably meaning superstitious choosing of "lucky" times for special projects; he practiced magic, divination (fortune-telling) and spiritism (attempted communication with the spirits of the dead). All these practices, of course, were forbidden by the Law of God. All this is summed up in the statement: "He wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger" (II Chron. 33:6). Besides all this, he set up a carved idol in the temple of the Lord, a particularly grievous offence. All this wickedness was perpetrated in the face of solemn warnings from God (II Chron. 33:10). Moreover, his religious policy was accompanied by bloody religious persecution: "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another" (II Kings 21:16). According to a Jewish tradition (not recorded in the Bible) Manasseh had the prophet Isaiah put to death by having him strapped between two planks of lumber and sawed in two.

Later in his life Manasseh repented of his sins. This is not mentioned in II Kings, but we learn of it in II Chron. 33:11-17. Because of the sins of Manasseh, God punished him and his kingdom by an Assyrian invasion. Manasseh himself was captured and taken to Babylon as a prisoner in chains (Assyria controlled Babylon at this time). While suffering as a prisoner in Babylon, he humbled himself and prayed to the Lord. God answered his prayers, and Manasseh was freed and allowed to return home and reign as king (under the shadow of Assyrian dominance, of course) in Judah again. "Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God". This repentance was followed by a religious reform (II Chron. 33:15-17), which removed many (but not all) of the features of idolatry.

It seems probable that Manasseh's repentance came very late in his long reign, and that his reign after his return to Jerusalem was brief. Manasseh could not undo all the evil that he had done through many years. However, he did do something to show that his repentance was sincere. II Chron. 33:13, 19 shows that God accepted Manasseh's repentance as genuine. Here we have a wonderful example of the depth of God's mercy — even as wicked a man as Manasseh can be forgiven if he repents and prays to God for mercy on the basis of the redemption provided by God.

Manasseh was followed by his son Amon (642-640 B.C.), who reigned two years. Amon was bad like his father, but with this difference: Amon never repented, but only went on in his wickedness. Finally he was murdered in his own house by his own servants (II Chron. 33:21-24). Amon was succeeded by his son Josiah, one of the best of Judah's kings.

Questions:

1. How long did the kingdom of Judah last after the fall of the kingdom of Israel?
2. How long was the period from the death of Hezekiah to the fall of the kingdom of Judah?
3. How many kings reigned over the kingdom of Judah after Hezekiah's death?
4. How many of these kings were good?
5. What does this show concerning the general character of this period?
6. Who became king on the death of Hezekiah?

7. How can the reign of Manasseh be summarized?

8. What details of his evil-doing are specified in the Biblical record?

9. What is meant by worshipping all the host of heaven?

10. Of what country's religion was this astral worship typical?

11. What altars did Manasseh build in the Temple of the Lord?

12. How did Manasseh treat part of his own children?

13. What superstitious practices did Manasseh engage in?

14. What is the probable meaning of "observing times"?

15. What is meant by "divination"?

16. What is magic?

17. What is spiritualism or spiritism?

18. What is the attitude of the Law of God toward these practices?

19. How can it be shown that Manasseh did not commit these sins in ignorance, not knowing he was doing wrong?

20. How did Manasseh treat people who did not agree with his religious policy?

21. How extensive was Manasseh's religious persecution?

22. What, according to Jewish tradition, did Manasseh do to Isaiah?

23. How did God punish Manasseh for his sins?

24. Where was Manasseh imprisoned by his enemies?

25. What change in Manasseh's attitude came while he was in prison?

26. How can we know that God accepted Manasseh's repentance as sincere?

27. What does the history of Manasseh show about the mercy of God?

28. How did Manasseh show his sincerity after his return to Jerusalem?

29. Who followed Manasseh as king of Judah?

30. How did this successor compare with Manasseh?

LESSON 109

The Reign and Religious Reform of Josiah king of Judah (640-609 B.C.)

(2 Kings, chapters 22, 23. 2 Chronicles, chapters 34, 35)

Josiah was the son of Amon, grandson of Manasseh and great-grandson of Hezekiah. He was the 16th in the line of kings descended from

David (counting Solomon, omitting Athaliah). Beginning when he was 8 years old, he reigned 31 years. It is recorded of him that "he did that

which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left" — a very fine tribute.

At the age of 16, after being king 8 years, Josiah experienced a religious awakening and began to seek God. At the age of 20 he undertook a religious reform of the kingdom of Judah. Idols, high places and "groves" were destroyed; images were ground to powder and sprinkled on the graves of the people who had once worshipped them. The bones of the priests of the false religions were burnt on their altars, thus defiling the altars so that people would not want to use them again. Josiah also undertook an expedition to the territory of the former northern kingdom (Israel) destroying altars, high places, etc.

In the 18th year of his reign, Josiah commissioned men to repair and renovate the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The damage and ruin were repaired and the Temple was made fit for the worship of God again. Divine worship was resumed.

During this work of cleaning and repairing the Temple, Hilkiah the high priest found "a book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses" which he brought to the attention of the king. This book was either the entire Pentateuch — the first five books of the Bible — or it was a manuscript of a part of the Pentateuch. As to how it came to be in the Temple, there are various possibilities. It may have been lost or thrown away during the long reign of Manasseh when the religion of Jehovah was being persecuted. Or it may have been intentionally hidden for safe keeping by some scribe or priest who was opposed to Manasseh's religious policies. Still another possibility is that it may have been intentionally placed in a cornerstone or other place in the Temple at the time when the Temple was originally built by Solomon.

The modern critical theory (held by "negative" critics who do not fully accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God) as to this book found by Hilkiah is very difficult. This theory holds that the book found in the Temple was not really written by Moses, but was in fact a new book only recently written. It is held that some unknown priest or priests, either in the time of Josiah or perhaps a little earlier, wrote this book, after which it was either lost, or deliberately "planted" in the Temple. The theory holds that the name of Moses was attached to the book in order to gain acceptance for it as a religious book. It is held that the Book of Deuteronomy as found in our Bible was this book found in the Temple by Hilkiah, and therefore Deuteronomy is no older than the time of Josiah or a little earlier. In other words, the modern negative critical theory

holds that the Book of Deuteronomy is what would today be called a literary fraud or a hoax — in blunt language, a forgery. Some critical scholars who do not believe that Moses wrote Deuteronomy, hold that it was written as long before Josiah as the time of Samuel; others hold that it was written in Josiah's day; a few even hold that it was written later than the time of Josiah. All these "negative" critics agree in the one point that Moses did not write it.

Over against all these negative critical views, we believe there are good reasons for holding that Deuteronomy was written by Moses, some 800 years before the time of Josiah, and that the book found by Hilkiah in the Temple was the **genuine** Law of Moses, either complete or in part. Those who are interested in further discussion on the critical theory of Deuteronomy are referred to the following works:

Manley, **The New Bible Handbook**, pp. 146-153

The New Bible Commentary, by Davidson, Stibbs & Kevan, pp. 195-6

Edward J. Young, **An Introduction to the Old Testament** (consult Index)

G. T. Manley, **The Book of the Law: Studies in the Date of Deuteronomy**, pp. 1-192

The first book listed above is published by the Inter-Varsity Press, 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Illinois. The last three are published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan.

After hearing the book read, Josiah was greatly moved. He realized that the kingdom had departed far from the Law of the Lord. The king sent men to inquire of God through a female prophet named Huldah. The message that came from God through Huldah was to the effect that God would surely punish the kingdom of Judah for its sins. However, because Josiah had humbled himself before God, this evil and destruction would not come until after Josiah's death.

The discovery of the Book of the Law was followed by a solemn service of covenanting (II Chron. 34:31, 32) in which both king and people pledged themselves to live according to the will of God. Following this there was a distinct improvement in the moral life of the nation (verse 33). The Passover was again duly observed (II Chron. 35:1-19). This was done with great care and solemnity. In II Chron. 30:26 it is stated that the Passover as observed by Hezekiah was the greatest since the time of Solomon. But in II Chron. 35:18 it is stated that the Passover as observed by Josiah was the greatest since the days of Samuel the prophet. This was in the 18th year of Josiah's reign.

Meanwhile great changes had been taking

place in the international scene. Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was destroyed by Babylon in 612 B.C. An invasion of southwestern Asia by a people from southern Russia called the Scythians had also greatly weakened the power of Assyria. Egypt was trying to make a return to world power. Under the king Pharaoh-Necho the Egyptians marched toward the Euphrates River. This expedition was intended to help what was left of the Assyrian army in a final resistance against the rising power of Babylon. Pharaoh-Necho's plan involved crossing the territory of the kingdom of Judah. Josiah put his army into the field to oppose the Egyptians as they marched across Palestine. Presumably Josiah did not want anyone to help Judah's old enemy, Assyria. A battle was fought at the Pass of Megiddo, at Mount Carmel, in which Josiah was killed (609 B.C.). The Egyptian forces went on to meet the Babylonians in a head-on crash at the Battle of Carchemish on the Euphrates River, 605 B.C. Egypt and Assyria were decisively defeated, and thus Babylon gained undisputed world supremacy. From this time Judah was under the shadow of Babylonian domination, until Babylon in turn was conquered by the Medo-Persians (539 B.C.).

Questions:

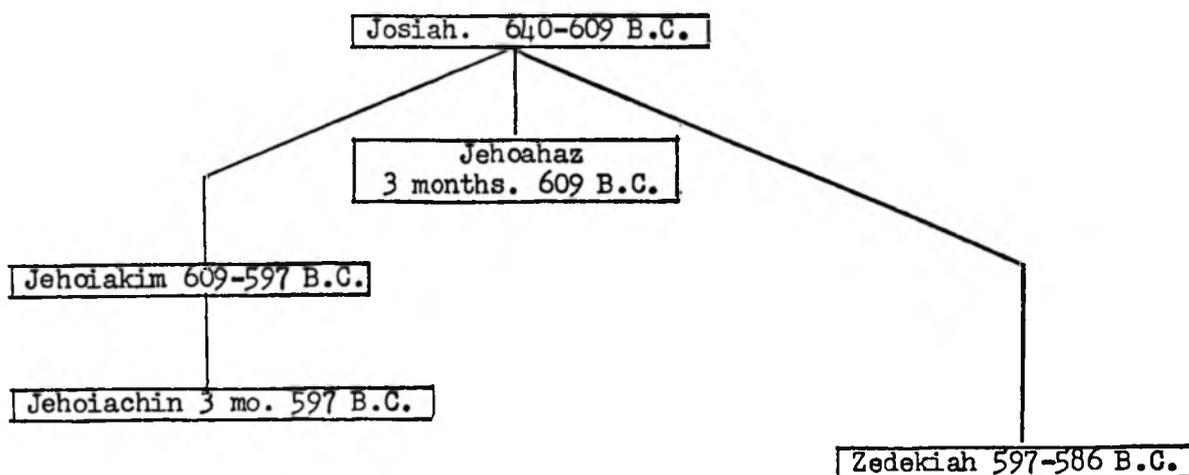
1. What was the relationship of Josiah to Manasseh?
2. What was the relationship of Josiah to Hezekiah?
3. How old was Josiah when he became king?
4. What other king was crowned at a comparably tender age?
5. What is the character of Josiah's reign in the Bible?
6. How many years did Josiah reign?
7. What is the first religious fact recorded about Josiah?
8. What was the first important project undertaken by Josiah? How old was he at the time?
9. What steps in reform did Josiah take?
10. What discovery was made at the time of repairing the Temple?
11. Who made this discovery?
12. What possibilities exist as to why the book of the Law came to be found in the Temple?
13. What is the "negative" critical theory about the book that was found?
14. How should this negative critical theory be regarded?
15. What are some of the reasons for regarding Deuteronomy as a genuine writing of Moses? (cf. material in Manley, **The New Bible Handbook**, pp. 146-153).
16. What was the effect of the reading of the newly discovered book?
17. To whom did the king send to ascertain the will of God in the existing situation?
18. What religious revival resulted from the discovery of the Book of the Law?
19. What international changes were taking place at this time?
20. Who were the Scythians, and what was their connection with Bible history?
21. What power defeated Assyria, where, and when?
22. What great battle made Babylon the supreme world power?
23. What were the circumstances of Josiah's death?
24. How long after the battle of Carchemish did Babylon hold world power?

LESSON 110

The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah 609-586 B.C.

(2 Kings, chapters 24, 25. 2 Chronicles, chapter 36)

Diagram Showing Relationships of the Last Five Kings of Judah



On the death of Josiah, the people of Jerusalem made his son Jehoahaz king. However, he reigned only 3 months. Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt (who had defeated the forces of Judah at Megiddo) deposed Jehoahaz and made his brother Jehoiakim (originally named Eliakim) king. Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king; he reigned approximately 11 years. He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. For three years he was subject to Egypt and had to pay tribute to Pharaoh. Then in his fourth year he became subject to Babylon, which had defeated Egypt at Carchemish.

In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon left Jehoiakim on the throne of the kingdom of Judah, with the understanding, of course, that he was to act as a vassal or subject of the king of Babylon. In 597 B.C. Jehoiakim, having revolted against Babylon, was captured by the Babylonians for deportation to Babylon as a prisoner or war criminal. He was not actually taken there, however, as he either died or was killed by someone. His dead body was thrown out without burial (Jeremiah 22:19; 36:30). This king Jehoiakim was extremely wicked and was bitterly opposed to the prophet Jeremiah. The story of how the king cut up and burnt the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies is told in Jeremiah chapter 36.

Jehoiakim was followed by Jehoiachin, his son, who reigned only 3 months. He was evil like his father. In II Kings 24:8 it is stated that Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he began to reign, and that he reigned 3 months. In II Chron. 36:9 it is stated that Jehoiachin was 8 years old when he began to reign, and that he reigned 3 months and 10 days. With regard to the length of the reign, it may be that 3 months and 10 days is intended as an exact statement, while 3 months is intended merely as an approximate statement of the length of his reign. With regard to his age on becoming king, it is generally held by scholars that the statement in II Kings (18 years old) is the correct one, and that the statement in II Chronicles 36 (8 years old) is a textual corruption caused by a scribe's error in copying an ancient manuscript.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon sent his army to besiege Jerusalem. Jehoiachin was taken prisoner to Babylon and for many years was kept in prison there. After 37 years he was released from prison on parole (but not allowed to return to Judah) and given a daily ration of better food (II Kings 25:27-30).

At the time when Jehoiachin was taken captive, the Babylonians set up Zedekiah, a son of Josiah, to be king in Judah. Like Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, Zedekiah did evil in the sight of the Lord. Finally Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. In the 9th year of Zedekiah's reign, Nebuchadnezzar came with his armed forces and besieged Jerusalem. The city held out for nearly

two years, but finally the Babylonians succeeded in entering it.

On capturing Jerusalem, the Babylonians systematically carried out a work of destruction (II Kings 25: 8-17). The Temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and all other important buildings were destroyed by fire. The Babylonians also broke down the city wall of Jerusalem, and left the city in smoking ruins and ashes. The sufferings of the people were terrible. Many of those remaining alive were taken to Babylon. The book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah graphically describes the tragic scenes of Jerusalem's defeat and destruction.

At the last minute, Zedekiah and the soldiers he had in Jerusalem attempted to escape to the open country. But they were pursued by the Babylonians and caught near Jericho, and the soldiers were scattered. Zedekiah was taken to Riblah, a city in the land of Hamath (north of Damascus), where Nebuchadnezzar pronounced judgment on him as a war criminal. The cruel sentence involved three penalties: (1) Zedekiah's sons were killed before his eyes; (2) Zedekiah's eyes were put out, so that the last thing he would ever see was his sons being killed; (3) Zedekiah was bound with brass chains or fetters and taken to Babylon as a prisoner, and he was kept there as a prisoner until he died (Jeremiah 52:11).

Table of the Chronology of the Babylonian Captivity

- 612 B.C. Nineveh, capital of Assyria, captured and destroyed by Babylon.
- 609 B.C. Josiah, king of Judah, falls at Megiddo while attempting to prevent the Egyptian forces from crossing Palestine.
- 609 B.C. Jehoiakim made king of Judah by Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt.
- 605 B.C. Egypt and Assyria defeated by Babylon at Carchemish.
- 605 B.C. Daniel and others taken to Babylon.
- 597 B.C. Jehoiakim, having revolted, is captured by the Babylonians, but dies or is killed before they could take him to Babylon.
- 597 B.C. Jehoiachin reigns as king of Judah for 3 months.
- 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem captures Jehoiachin, takes him to Babylon as a war criminal. Many people taken captive. In II Kings 24:12, "eighth year of his reign" means eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.
- 597 B.C. Zedekiah made king by the Babylonians.
- 586 B.C. Jerusalem destroyed by the Babylonians. Zedekiah taken to Babylon.

581 B.C. Babylonian forces return to Jerusalem, take more people. Jeremiah 52:30.

539 B.C. Babylon falls to Medo-Persian forces.

536 B.C. First Jewish party returns to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel.

516 B.C. Second Temple completed at Jerusalem.

457 B.C. Second party returns to Jerusalem. Ezra the Scribe.

444 B.C. Arrival of Nehemiah with others to rebuild wall of Jerusalem.

Questions:

1. How many Jewish kings followed Josiah?
2. Who became king immediately after Josiah's death? How long did he reign?
3. How did Jehoiakim become king?
4. To what foreign powers was Jehoiakim subject, and how long to each?

5. What happened when Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon?

6. What incident shows Jehoiakim's extreme wickedness?

7. How long did Jehoiachin reign?

8. What put an end to Jehoiachin's reign as king?

9. What finally happened to Jehoiachin?

10. Who was the last king of Judah?

11. What was the relationship of Zedekiah to Josiah? To Jehoiakim? To Jehoiachin?

12. What act of Zedekiah brought the Babylonian forces against Jerusalem in power?

13. Describe the capture and destruction of Jerusalem.

14. Describe the attempt of Zedekiah to escape.

15. Describe the doom of Zedekiah.

LESSON 111

Hebrew Prophecy. The Prophet Isaiah

(Isaiah, chapters 6, 9, 11, 53)

At this point we shall pause in our tracing of the history to look at the development of Hebrew prophecy, especially in the lives of two of the greatest prophets, namely, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Both of these men were prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord to the southern kingdom, Judah. Isaiah was active at the time when the northern kingdom (Israel) came to its end. Jeremiah was active at the time when the southern kingdom (Judah) was destroyed by the Babylonians.

Isaiah worked during the reigns of Uzziah (767-739 B.C.), Jotham (739-731 B.C.), Ahaz (731-715 B.C.), Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.) and Manasseh (695-642 B.C.), kings of Judah. The contemporary kings of Israel were Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah and Hoshea. The Bible does not inform us about the death of Isaiah, but there is a Jewish tradition that he was sawed in two by order of the wicked king Manasseh of Judah. Isaiah's active work as a prophet covers a period of fifty years or more, beginning about 739 B.C.

The background of Isaiah's work was the growing military and political power of Assyria. Under the shadow of Assyrian power the prophet spoke in the name of God to the people of Judah. Isaiah himself lived to see the kingdom of Judah, with the exception of its capital, Jerusalem, destroyed by the invading Assyrian forces.

Isaiah is the author of the Book of Isaiah in the Bible, a long book containing 66 chapters, in-

cluding many wonderful prophecies of the coming Messiah (Jesus Christ.)

Modern "negative" criticism (on the part of scholars who do not fully accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God) holds that Isaiah wrote only a part of this long book. It is commonly held by "negative" critics that Isaiah wrote most of the first 39 chapters of the book, while chapters 40-66 were written by one or more unknown writers who lived long after the time of Isaiah. These unknown writers are designated by the names "Deutero-Isaiah" (Second Isaiah) and "Trito-Isaiah" (Third Isaiah). As matter of fact these figures are purely hypothetical. Nothing whatever is known about any person other than Isaiah the son of Amoz as the writer of any part of the 66 chapters of the book.

It is beyond the scope of this course to take up the technical arguments involved in this controversy. However, it may be said that there are very strong reasons indeed for believing that the prophet Isaiah himself wrote the entire 66 chapters of the book. Not the least among these reasons is the fact that Jesus Christ, and the New Testament writers, quote repeatedly from chapters 40-66 attributing the quoted material to Isaiah as its author. Those who wish to study further on the question of the unity of authorship of the book of Isaiah are referred to the following works:

Manley, *The New Bible Handbook*, pp. 211-213

Edward J. Young, **An Introduction to the Old Testament** (see Index)

Davidson, Stibbs & Kevan, **The New Bible Commentary**, pp. 558-562

Edward J. Young, **Who Wrote Isaiah?** (pocket size paperback)

Edward J. Young, **Commentary on Isaiah**, Volume I (published Spring 1963)

Oswald T. Allis, **The Unity of Isaiah**

The first of these books is published by the Inter-Varsity Press, 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Illinois. The next four are published by the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Avenue, S. E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. The last, by Dr. Allis (a paper-bound volume at \$1.50) is published by The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, New Jersey. These are all works by conservative scholars who accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God and who defend the literary unity of the entire book of Isaiah. Numerous works which reject the genuineness and unity of the entire book of Isaiah will be found in the college library.

Chapters 36-39 of Isaiah are of a historical nature, dealing with events in the time of Hezekiah. The part of the book following chapter 39 contains marvellous prophecies of the future of God's people. Some of the best known Messianic prophecies are found in chapters 9, 11 and 53. (Messianic prophecies are those that predict the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ). Isaiah's call to the prophetic office is related in chapter 6 of the book.

The language of Isaiah is poetical, but it is not like ordinary English poetry. The poetical character does not consist in rhyme, nor in metre as we think of it, but rather in the marvellous comparisons, parallelisms, figures of speech and lofty language used. Just considered as literature, Isaiah's prophecies have never been surpassed. However, they are much more than great literature, for they are inspired revelation of the truth of God. After more than 2500 years, the glowing words of the prophet Isaiah have lost none of their power. They will be loved, studied and remembered until the end of time.

Something should be said at this point about the nature of Biblical prophecy in general. The popular idea of prophecy is that it is prediction of the future. It is true that the Bible prophets did predict future events, and prediction is a major element in Biblical prophecy. However, this is not the **essential** idea of prophecy. (The **essence** of something is that which makes it what it is, in distinction from things which differ from it). The essential idea of a prophet, in the Bible, is that of a **man who speaks for God**. The

prophet is God's mouthpiece, God's spokesman. He receives a message of truth from God, and then communicates it to men. Thus the prophet is God's representative in addressing man. In this respect the prophet is the exact counterpart and opposite of the priest. The priest is sinful man's representative in approaching the holy God and effecting reconciliation through sacrifice and intercession. The prophet moves from God toward man; the priest moves from man toward God.

Moses was a prophet, but also much more than a prophet. He towers over the Old Testament in unique grandeur. Samuel is usually considered the first of the series of Old Testament prophets. At first the prophets only spoke their messages to men. What we know of these is learned from the historical books of the Old Testament. Later the prophets also wrote their messages down in book form for future generations to read. The great **writing prophets** start in the eighth century B.C.

In addition to predicting the future, the prophets had much to say to men about the will of God for their own time. Sometimes what they said or wrote has a **double reference**, for their own time and also for the more or less distant future.

The "modern" idea about the Bible prophets is that these men were essentially thinkers or intellectuals, something like the Greek philosophers. It is held that they were men with a special gift for religious discernment, far above what the ordinary person would have. As thinkers, the prophets tried to analyze the trends and meaning of the events of their time, and to deduce from these moral and religious lessons which they then announced to the people. In order to give their messages prestige and authority, it is held, they used such formulas as "Thus saith the Lord" to introduce what they were about to say to the people. Modern "liberal" authors who hold this view of the prophets constantly speak of Isaiah, for example, as having "felt," "thought," "been convinced," "discerned," "realized", etc., etc., that certain things were true or that certain things would happen. This liberal idea of prophecy is that prophecy was essentially **subjective**, that is, a product of the thinking and mind of the prophets. Over against this, the Bible itself presents the **objective** view of prophecy — the revelation came **through** the prophet, but it came **from** God. The prophet was the channel or medium of communication, but the **source** of the message was always God Himself. This is strongly brought out in the New Testament by II Peter 1:21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The prophecy, we should note carefully, came **through the instrumentality of man** but **NOT by the will of man**. The source was the Holy Spirit.

Questions:

1. What is the **basic** meaning of the terms "prophet" and "prophecy" in the Bible?
2. Who was the first of the Old Testament prophets?
3. What is the relation of **prediction** to **prophecy**?
4. What is the **subjective** view of Biblical prophecy?
5. What is the **objective** view of Biblical prophecy?
6. Give a New Testament text which affirms the objective view of Old Testament prophecy.
7. When did the prophet Isaiah live? Under what kings did he work?
8. What was the political situation in Isaiah's day?
9. How was Isaiah called to be a prophet of the Lord?
10. What Jewish tradition exists as to the manner of Isaiah's death?

11. How many chapters are there in the book of Isaiah?
12. What is the view of negative criticism concerning the authorship of the book of Isaiah?
13. What reason can be given for accepting the Isaianic authorship of the entire book?
14. On what grounds do negative critics reject a part of the book as a genuine writing of Isaiah the son of Amoz?
15. What remarkable prophecy names a Persian king 150 years before his time? (Isaiah, end of chapter 44 and beginning of chapter 45).
16. What chapters in the book of Isaiah are historical in nature? What crisis do they document?
17. What are Messianic prophecies?
18. How does Hebrew poetry differ from English poetry?
19. Locate some of Isaiah's Messianic prophecies.
20. What is the theme of Isaiah chapter 53?

LESSON 112**The Life and Work of the Prophet Jeremiah**

(Jeremiah chapters 1, 11, 36-38, 50, 51)

Jeremiah lived about 100 years after the time of Isaiah. During this 100 years the international scene had changed radically. No longer was Assyria the great threat on the horizon; now Judah was menaced by an even more powerful enemy, Babylon. The prophetic work of Isaiah, under God, had saved Jerusalem from destruction by Assyria; Jeremiah in turn tried to save Jerusalem and Judah from Babylon, but in this he was not successful, for the people refused to repent and return to God. Jeremiah worked during the reigns of Josiah (640-609 B.C.) and the kings which followed him, down to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. After that Jeremiah was taken to Egypt by some of the Jews. He finally died at an unknown date in Egypt.

Jeremiah was called to the office of prophet about 627 or 626 B.C. In 586 B.C. Jerusalem was finally destroyed by the Babylonian army. Between these two dates there was a period of about 40 years. This was a most terrible period of apostasy from God, with the exception of the reign of Josiah, who did what he could to bring the nation back to God. It will be recalled that Josiah was killed in battle by Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt, at Megiddo, in 609 B.C. In 605 B.C. Babylon defeated Egypt and Assyria at the great battle of Carchemish on the upper Euphrates River. Thus just as Isaiah had lived

and worked under the shadow of Assyria, Jeremiah lived and worked (after 605 B.C.) under the shadow of Babylon.

A large part of the book of Jeremiah, which contains 52 chapters, consists of warnings to Judah to repent and return to God, with predictions of judgment which will fall on the king and people if they do not repent and return to the Lord. As time passed, the people's apostasy from God only became worse. Finally, the condition of the majority was written off as hopeless, and hope centered on a "remnant" or small nucleus of the people who remained faithful.

Jeremiah was of a priestly family. His home was in Anathoth, about 1½ hours' walk northeast of Jerusalem. The Book of the Law was discovered in the Temple about four or five years after Jeremiah was called to be a prophet. Jeremiah was an unmarried man — he was forbidden by God to marry, as his lonely condition was to be a sort of dramatization of the lonely character of the people of Judah who had forsaken God. Jeremiah not only lived a lonely life — he had to face powerful opposition throughout almost his entire career. In psychological type he was what would today be called an introvert. Repeatedly he gave way to spiritual depression. See, for example, 20:7-18. On occasion, he even wished he had never been born

(15:10; 20:14-19). When he gave way to this sort of depression, the Lord patiently built him up until he once again had faith and courage to go out and face opposition as a prophet of the Lord.

Sometimes it was not merely opposition, but outright physical violence and persecution, that the prophet Jeremiah had to face. He learned by experience what it feels like to spend long periods in a filthy prison because of faith and conscience. The incident of the burning of the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies by Jehoiakim, king of Judah, is recorded in chapter 36. Chapter 38 tells of his imprisonment under Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, and how he was rescued from a cistern by Ebed-Melech ("Servant of the King") the Ethiopian.

Perhaps the greatest Messianic prophecy in Jeremiah is chapter 31:31ff, which predicts the coming of Christianity in the Messianic age of the future. This is the great prophecy of the New Covenant. It is expounded in the New Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Another great Messianic prophecy in Jeremiah is 31:15-17. The immediate reference of this was doubtless to some of the sorrows and anguish experienced by the people of Judah, especially mothers of little children, at the time of the Babylonian invasion with its unspeakable cruelties, barbarities and atrocities. But the passage is cited in the New Testament (Matthew 2:16-18) as having its ultimate and absolute fulfillment in the slaughter by Herod of all male infants under two years old in the vicinity of Bethlehem. The grief-stricken mothers are offered comfort. Their murdered children shall come back from the land of the enemy — the realm of death. Death is man's last enemy that shall be destroyed (New Testament: I Corinthians 15:26). Death is not to have the last word. By the almighty power and infinite grace of God, **life** will have the final word for all who are truly God's people. Jeremiah by prophetic revelation looks far down the avenue of historic time, thousands of years, to the very end, and predicts (in language which also had a limited and relative application to his own day and the near future) God's final victory over the last great enemy, death.

Through the darkness and gloom of Jeremiah's own day there shines a bright ray of hope for the future of God's people. God is the Lord of the future and the ultimate outcome is bound to be good, for those who are truly the Lord's. There are also stirring prophecies of the future destruction of Babylon. Chapters 50 and 51 are truly great from the literary viewpoint, but even more because of their confident assurance of the victory of the Kingdom of God over all worldly powers. If anyone is not thrilled by reading these two chapters (50 and 51) there is

something lacking in his religious life and outlook. Needless to say, the spirit of these chapters is not a selfish, sinful lust for vengeance, but a spiritual exultation in the triumph of Justice — God's bringing down the proud and haughty aggressors, and vindicating His own meek, humble people. God used Babylon to punish Judah for its terrible sin, but Babylon was not to have the last word. Like all militaristic, aggressor nations, Babylon itself was doomed to destruction — a prediction that has been literally and absolutely fulfilled.

After the Babylonian forces captured and destroyed Jerusalem, they gave Jeremiah his freedom. He could go to Babylon as their guest, or he could remain in Judah, or he could go wherever he pleased. He elected to remain in Judah. Later the Jewish governor whom the Babylonians had left in charge of the city was murdered by a die-hard faction of fanatical Jews. This act, of course, brought the Babylonian army back in reprisal. The Jews who had been involved in this deed, and others, felt that they must escape to some safety zone immediately. Jeremiah prophesied in the name of the Lord against this and commanded them to stay and face the consequences. However, they refused to listen to this Word of the Lord, and fled to Egypt. Jeremiah accompanied them — apparently he was compelled to do this, against his will. The time and circumstances of his death in Egypt are unknown.

The book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which follows the prophecy of Jeremiah in the Bible, is Jeremiah's own inspired reaction to the terrible sufferings of the people of Jerusalem at the time of the fall of the city to the Babylonians. This short book of five chapters is all in poetry. It will always be great as literature. It is one of the most eloquent, stirring, heart-rending expressions of sorrow in all world literature. The sense of tragedy was heightened and made more poignant by the fact that **all this need not have been** — all this anguish and sorrow came on the people of Jerusalem and Judah because they stubbornly refused to obey the Word of the Lord which was announced to them by the prophet Jeremiah during a forty year career.

Questions:

1. About what time did Jeremiah live and work?
2. How long was this, approximately, after the time of Isaiah?
3. Who was king of Judah when Jeremiah was called to be a prophet of the Lord?
4. What was Jeremiah's first reaction when he was called to be a prophet?
5. What commission was Jeremiah given by the Lord?

6. What special promise was given him by God?

7. What great tragedy did Jeremiah live to see?

8. How many years did Jeremiah serve as a prophet (prior to going to Egypt)?

9. What foreign power was dominant during Jeremiah's time (after 605 B.C.)?

10. What subject forms a large part of the contents of Jeremiah?

11. What was the people's response to this message?

12. Describe the incident of the burning of the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies.

13. Describe the incident of Jeremiah being rescued from the cistern.

14. What is the center of hope toward the end of Jeremiah's work as a prophet?

15. What is meant by Messianic prophecies?

16. What chapter in Jeremiah contains a prophecy of the coming of Christianity?

17. Explain the meaning and fulfillment of the prophecy found in Jeremiah 31:15-17.

18. What did Jeremiah predict concerning the future of Babylon?

19. What is the theme of Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51?

20. What incident concerning Jeremiah shows the wickedness of Jehoiakim?

21. What chapter of Jeremiah tells this incident?

22. What happened to Jeremiah after Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians?

LESSON 113

History and Prophecy in the Book of Daniel

(Daniel, chapters 1-8)

The battle of Carchemish, in which Babylon crushed Egypt and Assyria (605 B.C.) made Babylon the supreme world power, a position which was held until Babylon in turn was defeated by the Medo-Persians in 539 B.C. The Book of Daniel belongs partly to this period and partly to the beginning of the Persian period which followed it. Daniel was one of the young Jews deported from Judah to Babylon at the time when Nebuchadnezzar left Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah as his puppet (605 B.C.). He lived to a great age and held important positions under the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires.

The Book of Daniel is regarded by orthodox Biblical scholars as being entirely written by Daniel. Modern negative criticism does not accept this, holding instead that the book was written some 400 years later (second century B.C.), and that it is therefore not a genuine book by Daniel. The real reason why the negative critics hold this is **their rationalistic and naturalistic philosophy of religion** which forms the assumed approach and frame of reference in terms of which they view all Biblical data. These critics have a definite anti-supernaturalist bias. They do not believe in real miracles and they do not believe that real predictive prophecy is possible. Therefore when they come to a book like Daniel, which reports amazing miracles and which, on a **prima facie** reading, contains predictive prophecies which were fulfilled in amazingly accurate detail four centuries and more later, they react by pronouncing the miracle stories to be mere **legends** and the prophecies to be actually reports written after the things described had happened on the field of history. Thus the offensive supernatural features are eliminated, but at the

same time the genuineness of the book is destroyed and its authority as real divine revelation is thrown to the winds.

These negative critics buttress what they have to say by the sweeping claim that "all scholars are agreed" that Daniel was written in the second century before Christ. **This statement is simply untrue.** It is only negative and naturalistic scholars who are agreed in this, and they hold this viewpoint **because of their assumed philosophy of religion**, not because it is necessary for a scholar to hold it. In other words, when one starts with an **a priori** bias against everything supernatural, one will inevitably decide that a book full of supernatural features cannot be true. There are scholars with Ph. D. degrees in Old Testament studies and Semitic languages from the world's greatest universities, who yet believe that the Book of Daniel is genuine and was written by Daniel in the 6th century B.C. What a scholar says about the Book of Daniel, or of the Book of Daniel, or of Isaiah, or of Deuteronomy, is not simply a question of scholarship **versus** ignorance; it is a question of **basic philosophy of religion** — does the scholar approach the Biblical data with **naturalistic** or with **supernaturalistic** assumptions? The claim of "liberals" to have a monopoly of scholarship is an arrogant and utterly unwarranted claim. A man with a doctor's degree from a renowned university is a scholar, whether he agrees with me or not. Indeed, this sweeping claim that "all scholars are agreed" may itself indicate a sub-conscious suspicion on the part of "liberals" that **not** all scholars are agreed — it may be comparable to a little boy's whistling to keep his courage up as he passes a cemetery at night.

There are many good reasons for holding that the book of Daniel is genuine and that Daniel wrote it. Those who hold the orthodox Christian view of God, of the supernatural and of divine revelation, will have no difficulty in accepting the book as written by Daniel.

The Book of Daniel is in two languages. Chapter 2:4 to 7:28 is in the Aramaic or Aramaean language (called Syrian or Syriac in the Bible), which was the language of commerce and diplomacy at the time when the book was written. This language is cognate to Hebrew but not the same. The rest of the book of Daniel is written in Hebrew. For further discussion of this matter see Manley, **The New Bible Handbook**, pages 232-235. It has been suggested that the part of the book chiefly concerning the Jews and their future, is written in their language, Hebrew; and that the part concerning the international scene and the world empires is written in Aramaic, the recognized language of international affairs and diplomacy.

Part of the book of Daniel presents historical material about the Babylonian Captivity of the Jews; part of the book presents prophecies about future events. During this period of history the heathen nations had triumphed over the Jews, and to human eyes it looked as if the heathen gods had triumphed over Jehovah, the God of the Jews. The sacred objects of the Lord's Temple in Jerusalem had been placed in the temples of the Babylonian gods as trophies of victory. The Jews had been terribly defeated and humiliated, and their city and nation had been destroyed. How could they hold their heads up in the face of all this? How could they answer the arrogant taunts of their heathen enemies? At this time of religious crisis, God intervened with a series of wonderful miracles, which served to lift the morale of the Jews and to show the heathen that Jehovah was still living and powerful. The miracle of the burning fiery furnace is found in Daniel chapter 3; that of the handwriting on the wall in chapter 5 and that of Daniel's delivery from the lions' den (in the Persian period) in chapter 6.

Among the prophecies of Daniel, some have

already been fulfilled, and some relate to events that are still (from our standpoint) future. Especially important are Nebuchadnezzar's dream of four successive world empires followed by the Kingdom of God (chapter 2), and Daniel's great vision of "one like unto the Son of man" (Chapter 7). It is probable that Jesus Christ took the title "Son of man", which He used as His favorite self-designation, from this vision in Daniel 7. In Daniel 12:1-4 the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead are predicted.

Questions:

1. What power was dominant at the beginning of Daniel's career?
2. What power was dominant at the close of Daniel's career?
3. Who was the king of Judah when Daniel was taken to Babylon?
4. How long was Daniel in Babylon before Jerusalem was destroyed?
5. What is the orthodox belief about the authorship and genuineness of the book of Daniel?
6. What is the negative critical theory about the book of Daniel?
7. What is the real source of the critical (negative) theory about Daniel?
8. Give a verse in which Jesus Christ quoted Daniel as genuine. (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14).
9. In what languages was the book of Daniel originally written?
10. What may perhaps be the reason for the bi-lingual character of the book?
11. What reason can be given for the necessity of the miracles recorded in the book of Daniel?
12. Name three important miracles in the book of Daniel. In what chapter is each of these recorded?
13. What is the importance of Daniel's vision of the Son of man in chapter 7?

(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.

MAMMON, THE DEMON OF GREED, by John Harris. Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Pa. 1959 reprint of 1836, pp. 311. \$3.75.

This book is a reprint of a book which was published in London in 1836; "the original subtitle of 'Mammon' was 'Covetousness The Sin of

the Christian Church', and suggests more pointedly the express aim of the author." "However, the publishers of the 1959 edition have chosen the phrase, 'The Demon of Greed' from the author's text, in order to give the title of this remarkable book a wider application to the whole drama of human selfishness."

The author begins by writing of God's great love, of our opposition to this love by sin which he shows to be largely selfishness. He traces this through the Bible and shows that Covetousness is the great sin of the Christian church. He brings out the prevalence of this sin by showing its many disguises. He seeks to open our eyes by considering its symptoms. Though his illustrations are of Britain 125 years ago, one forgets this and feels that he is writing of modern America.

The writer has chapters on 'the guilt and evils' and 'the doom' of Covetousness. Most interesting is his list of 'Excuses of Covetousness for Its Want of Liberality'.

John Harris rejects tithing as applying to us today; it was a divine law for the Jewish nation, but he insists that we should have a plan for giving. Though he pleads for our response through the great love of Christ, (and spends almost the last one-fourth of the book doing this), the following is one of the weak links in his reasoning and plea:

"For some, one half would be too little; while, for others, a twentieth, or even a fiftieth, would require the nicest frugality and care. Indeed, of many among the poor it may be said, that if they give any thing they give their share, they cast in more than all their brethren."

This book does have much to offer in the study of Christ's claims on our possessions; it is an attempt to solve the problem which limits the work of the majority of churches — lack of funds. It speaks to us in this day when people spend so much time in the service of Mammon that little is left for Jesus Christ.

— Paul E. Faris

BIBLICAL EXEGESIS IN THE QUMRAN TEXTS, by F. F. Bruce. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1959, pp. 82, \$2.50.

In this very interesting work Professor Bruce discloses the principles of Biblical interpretation by the Essene writers at Qumran. The conclusion is that although there are certain points of contact with Biblical interpretation as it appears in later Old Testament prophets and in the New Testament, there is a radical difference. Qumran saw the Messianic figures of the Servant, Son of Man, the Branch of David, Melchizedek as fulfilled corporately in their community and in a secondary sense in certain representative in-

dividuals (p. 76). The New Testament interpretation is that they are primarily fulfilled by Jesus Christ in His own person and secondarily by the Lord in His body, the church.

Qumran considered that prophecy was mystery, sealed until the interpretation was revealed by the Teacher of Righteousness. This meant that the prophecies had no meaning to the original hearers, and even much of history was considered by them as allegory of the time of the end. This is radically different from New Testament interpretation which sees history as the record of God's saving acts and the prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who gives them new meaning, in which their original meaning is not set aside, but caught up into something more comprehensive and far-reaching than was foreseen before He came (pp. 68, 77).

Professor Bruce discusses the types of interpretation found in the **Qumran Commentaries**, and **The Zadokite Work** and in **The Book of Daniel**, and he examines their interpretation of the Messiah, the Servant of the Lord. The last chapter has a valuable summary and comparison between Qumran interpretation and the faith delivered in the New Testament. Qumran looked for a great prophet, a great priest, and a great king — three individuals to come at the end of time. Early Christians saw all three realized and transcended in their Lord.

There is pertinent material here for the preacher as well as the specialist in the intertestamentary and first century movements. Possibly the Essenes were not the only exegetes who robbed the text of its proper historical and eschatological content by a superimposed moral or theological structure.

— E. Clark Copeland

ABRAHAM KUYPER, by Frank Vanden Berg. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1960, pp. 307. \$4.00.

In the foreword Mr. Vanden Berg tells us he writes to introduce Dr. Kuyper to the general public by a factual and interpretive account of his times as well as his life. This we think he has succeeded well in doing. The approach is simple, chronological and brief. The style is plain, almost monotonous. The biographer is an admirer of his subject, but not an idolizer. We wish he had displayed a bit more colorfully the brilliance of the master "builder in the major areas of religion and the church, of education and the university and of politics and government" (preface) whom he likens to Nehemiah. But the author has let the facts speak for themselves.

Abraham Kuyper was a brilliant and versatile man, an indefatigable student, a voluminous writer. Though his career began under the shadow of the higher critical theological views of the

day, he soon became the great Dutch Calvinist churchman and writer. Then in an effort to realize a vision of every sector of life redeemed and made to prosper to the glory of the triune God, in conformity with His revealed will and ordinances, he gave himself to political life. In his zeal to propagate this life — and—world view, he became one of the founders of Free University. The Christian church is much indebted to this practical genius.

We need some Abraham Kuypers on the American and world scene today. No doubt this desire motivated Mr. Vanden Berg to write this book. It will make a worthy addition to the church library.

— E. Clark Copeland

THE PATIENCE OF HOPE, by Spiros Zodhiates. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ., Co., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1960, pp. 299. \$4.00.

This is the third of a three-volume study of The Epistle of James and the Life of Faith (sub-title). It covers chapter 4:13-5:20. The titles of the three volumes are Paul's three phrase description of the Thessalonian Church; and they make most appropriate titles for the three sections of James' Epistle: **THE WORK OF FAITH, THE LABOUR OF LOVE, and THE PATIENCE OF HOPE.**

The author is known to many of our readers as the executive secretary of the American Committee for the Evangelization of the Greeks. Reared in a Greek home in the middle East, he brings to his exposition an intimate knowledge of eastern customs and of modern Greek. These he uses most effectively to highlight the Greek of the New Testament and the customs of men about which James speaks. This historical and lexical material is presented in fluent, vivid, layman's English.

The commentary is based on a close examination of the Greek text. The approach is homiletical and practical. Some of the interesting chapter titles are In Planning Don't Leave God Out, What is Sin? Does Wealth Rot? Safeguard Against Moths, Holding Grudges Against Each Other, Variety is the Spice of Life, Is it Possible to Defect From the Truth and Never Return to It? The last section of the book is a worthy exegesis of apostasy in Hebrews 6:4-6 related to the last chapter title mentioned.

The exegesis is sound. One example will suffice, James 5:13-15. Rev. Zodhiates prefers to consider the introductions as propositions rather than questions: "One is afflicted among you, . . ." "One is sick . . ." "One is merry . . ." with the suggestion that James may have a specific case in mind. There are no punctuation marks in the original manuscripts so this is a possible approach, but it does not materially affect the con-

clusions. The enlightening points of his exegesis are (1) the responsibility of the elders to act for the material welfare of members of the congregation, (2) the anointing because of the Greek word used, in medical aid, rubbing the body with oil for relief of pain, (3) the praying is that of faith in the infinite wisdom of the will of God, and not an instrument to change the providential will of God and bring about the healing of every sick individual for whom the elders pray.

There is a bibliography of more than 100 commentaries, expositions and introductory works on the book of James; and more than 70 works, chiefly sermon collections, in which there are chapters on James. There are also valuable indices to the Scripture passages to which reference is made, and to the Greek and English vocabulary. Thus these volumes provide a basic source on this very practical epistle.

— E. Clark Copeland

LISTS OF WORDS OCCURRING FREQUENTLY IN THE HEBREW BIBLE, by John D. W. Watts. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1959, pp. 31, Paper. \$0.75.

A STUDENT'S VOCABULARY OF BIBLICAL HEBREW, LISTED ACCORDING TO FREQUENCY AND COGNATE, by George M. Landes. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1961. pp. 56. Paper. \$1.50.

Both of these lists have been prepared by instructors of Hebrew in theological seminaries to aid their students in the mastery of Hebrew vocabulary. In the introduction, Mr. Watts tells us that he assigns 25 words per week to his first year students in addition to their study of Hebrew Grammar.

Mr. Watts' lists classify alphabetically according to frequency 369 verbs used 25 or more times, 346 nouns used 50 or more times, and 22 prepositions and prepositional phrases. The lists are based on W. R. Harper's **HEBREW VOCABULARIES** (1890), revised and corrected in comparison with Koehler and Baumgartner's **Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon** (1953). These 800 words are arranged with the Hebrew words numbered on one page and the English equivalents numbered correspondingly on the opposite page.

Mr. Landes has arranged his frequency lists alphabetically according to three classifications: (1) Verbal roots, their nominal and other cognates occurring ten or more times; (2) Verbal roots which occur less than ten times with their nominal and other cognates which occur ten or more times; and (3) Nouns and other words without extant verbal cognates in the Hebrew Bible. All words occurring less than 70 times have the actual number of appearances given according to S. Mandelkern's **OLD TESTAMENT CONCORDANCE OF THE HEBREW AND**

CHALDEE. These lists have also been checked against Koehler and Baumgartner's Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon. The appendix lists proper and place names used 70 or more times. An alphabetical index to every entry enables ready reference.

The latter has the advantage over the former of bringing all cognates together, and giving reference to other roots having the same consonantal spelling. This greatly simplifies the learning process. The introduction to the latter also has a useful chart suggesting how the lists should be used for progressive memorization of the basic vocabulary of the Old Testament. The format of the former is more practical in size for carrying in the pocket for use at odd moments.

— E. Clark Copeland

THE WORD OF THE LORD IN JEREMIAH, by J. G. S. S. Thompson and **THE DATE AND ROUTE OF THE EXODUS**, by C. De Wit. Monographs by Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. 1959 and 1960, pp. 20c each. 1/6d (21c) each.

Every minister would do well to re-examine his own call and ministry in the light of Jeremiah's experience, and particularly if the minister has been tempted, as was Jeremiah (20:9), to stop preaching. Dr. Thompson's monograph is an excellent guide for this.

Here we have a definite study of the prophet's experience as recipient, servant and communicator of the divine Word. Not only is the prophet's tongue obedient to the divine order; his mind, heart and will are under God's control. The messenger is always subject to the message. He speaks with divine authority whether it be "thus saith the Lord" or what he has consciously received by the Spirit working in his prophetic consciousness. In either case he is aware that what he speaks is God's word, not his own thoughts. Hence he speaks with all the authority divine inspiration can impart. God's word must go forth; His servant can not resist it. If men reject it, they are rejecting the word of God which lives and abides forever.

The assistant keeper in the Egyptian department of the Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels, writes to support the late date, c 1230, and the southern route of the Exodus. His reasons for this date are that Ex. 1:11 states that the Hebrews built store-cities, Pithom and Raamses. Egyptian sources locate these in the lower delta east of the Nile. Excavations have not given evidence that the kings of dynasty XVIII (previous to 1440) did any building in this area. The writer agrees that Biblical data seems to be more strongly in favour of a date c 1440 when it says that Solomon's temple was begun 480 years after the Exodus. Solomon is dated by all

at about 960. This is set aside on the assumption that it is a systematized chronology (to represent twelve generations equal to twelve generations from Jacob's altar at Bethel to the setting up of the tabernacle, and twelve generations from Solomon's temple to Zerubbabel's) which can only be approximate, with the explanation, "we do not expect it (the Bible) to be a modern treatise of historiography" (p. 8).

Mr. De Wit recognizes that evidence is inconclusive on many points, particularly in regard to the geography of the Exodus route, and his concluding statement reads, "The problems cannot be solved, but the present evidence weighs in favor of a late date for the Exodus and a southern route" (p. 20).

Although a number of conservative scholars, e.g. F. F. Bruce, concur with Dr. De Wit in dating the Exodus about 1230, we prefer to let the doubt rest with the archaeologists' conclusions, and to allow the weight of Scripture tip the scales for us.

— E. C. Copeland

A WOMAN'S WORLD, by Clyde M. Narramore. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 207. \$2.95.

Dr. Narramore is a Christian psychologist who seeks to deal with the emotional problems of men and women from a conservative Christian point of view. In this book he confines himself to the problems of women. He uses case histories to illustrate different problem areas. The topics include the frustration of a young mother, marriage where there is no love, sex in marriage, and the maladjusted child.

In reading these clinical studies one might well gain a better understanding of what it means to be emotionally well-balanced and improved ability to recognize emotional problems in himself and others.

The final chapter states that many seek happiness without ever finding it for they never come to the source of true happiness — Jesus Christ the Son of God. To help a Christian woman guard against a "spiritually-dwarfed existence" Dr. Narramore offers several suggestions for spiritual growth.

— Shirley McMillan

NEW TESTAMENT GUIDE, by John H. Bratt. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1961, reprint of 1946, pp. 143. \$3.00.

Dr. Bratt is chairman of the Department of Bible at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church before accepting his appointment to Calvin College.

NEW TESTAMENT GUIDE is an introduction to the New Testament, beginning with a chapter on the period between the Old and the New Testaments. He discusses the predictions of Daniel and then the four main periods prophesied in Daniel, as interpreted from Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Dr. Bratt is not the least dogmatic in his interpretation. In this short chapter of three pages, he "assumes" three times, uses "likely" three times, and "perhaps" and "probably" once each. His brief review of the four kingdoms represented in Nebuchadnezzar's image is most helpful as an introduction to the period of the coming of Christ.

The author then takes up the books of the New Testament, book by book, and follows the same outline for each book: The Author, The Main Addresses or the Recipients, The Purpose, The Theme and The Contents.

The book is one of the best outline studies of the books of the New Testament that this reviewer has ever seen. I would recommend it to ministers who would preach on a whole book, or to any laymen who wish to know their Bible better.

— Herbert A. Hays

TOTAL PRAYER FOR TOTAL LIVING, by Thomas A. Carruth. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, pp. 116. \$1.95.

In the foreword, Eugenia Price writes, "I know of no one more qualified to write a book with the daring scope of **TOTAL PRAYER FOR TOTAL LIVING**." The author, Dr. Carruth, has traveled extensively across the United States and other countries, in prayer schools, retreats and conferences, and has been called to Europe in 1962 to help promote the prayer movement there.

In the first chapter, the author elaborates on what prayer really is. It is the act of communicating with God, God communicating with the person, and the person communicating with God.

In the second chapter, he discusses the individual in prayer. It is some need in one's life which leads him to pray. All of us have some weakness, some of us, many. He gives twelve questions for each one to ask himself. The questions are only suggestions and each one may think of many more. Then, turning to God, think of Him as the Great Physician. He gives ten guiding principles for building a prayer life, such as, personal surrender, team learning, day by day practice, etc. Then he deals with patterns in daily prayer, how to 'pray without ceasing.'

From the individual, he moves on to the family, the prayer group, the congregation, the community and the world, showing how prayer groups have circled the world and many of the results of earnest prayer. This book, read and studied

will deepen your prayer life and broaden your interest in the work of Christ's kingdom.

— Herbert A. Hays

FORGOTTEN SAINTS, by Anna Talbot McPherson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 113. \$1.95.

FORGOTTEN SAINTS is not a collection of biographies, but rather a collection of incidents and experiences from the lives of such men and women as James Paton, Caroline Talbot, John Dyer and Suzan Talbot Wengatz, to name only four of the fourteen.

If you want to know the power and influence of a godly father, read **The Father of a Saint**. If you want to know what it costs to follow God's command, read **I Can Do Naught But Obey**. If you want to know what it means to forsake all, yes even children for His Name's Sake, read **God's School for Heroes**. If you want to read the power of a mind stayed on God over matter, read **A Mad Dog and God**.

If you start to read this book be prepared to read it through. The stories grip your soul.

— Herbert A. Hays

THE LANTERN IN THE WINDOW, by Ruth B. Van Deusen. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 88. \$1.95.

Grace Bradford, the heroine of this short novel, is a heart warming, motherly soul who moves into a new housing area where all the typical problems of modern society flourish. Grace, who was recently bereft of her husband who was a minister, moves from the manse but takes with her her love of humanity and her desire for continued Christian service.

The young married folks and their children are soon drawn to her home by her winning ways and genuine interest in each one and all are introduced to the Savior. Through her efforts the children of the community meet together for a Sunday School; the parents become interested and soon a community church becomes the center of activity and a stabilizing influence in their lives.

— Marian M. Vos

GOD'S WAY TO THE GOOD LIFE, By Robert Schuller. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1963, pp. 105. \$2.50.

The ten chapters of this book give us a down to earth study of each of the ten commandments. Mr. Schuller begins by saying that the "Good Life" lies in serving the right God. You will see yourself and your problems as they measure up along side the perfect law of God.

This is a good book for personal study or for group study in church circles and societies.

— Marian M. Vos

ELECTION AND REPROBATION, by James Henly Thornwell, edit., Marcellus J. Kik, in International Library of Philosophy and Theology, **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES**. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N.J. 1961, pp. 97, paper cover. \$1.50.

The editor contends that the arguments against the Reformed doctrine of predestination remain, "for the most part, the same since the days of Augustine." Hence he feels justified in reprinting this article first published in 1870. The reviewer would take serious issue on this point and maintain that this work of Thornwell has only relative value in the contemporary theological world. Any study of the doctrine of predestination by a Reformed believer is always of some value to those already committed to the position. But classic formulations which contain no reference to contemporary thinking on the subject bypass the interest and appreciation of those who are searching for the first time. The study itself is wordy, although theologically sound from a Calvinistic viewpoint. The material itself remains difficult in any age for anyone to digest seeing that it is presented as one chapter nearly a hundred pages in length with very insignificant attempts at outlining and divisions. The ardent Calvinist will definitely profit from reading of this work, but it is not recommended for the uninitiated.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

ROMAN CATHOLICISM, by Loraine Boettner. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N.J. 1962, pp. 466. \$5.95.

This is a long, detailed and accurate account of classic Roman Catholicism. With his clear and straightforward style, Boettner deals honestly with all the major issues concerning which Orthodox Protestantism has taken exception to Romanist doctrines. Much time is given to setting forth accurate quotations from the Roman Catholic sources themselves. Equal time is taken to refute these doctrines from a Biblical standpoint. Typical of Boettner, this is not an impersonal documentary, but an easy-to-read, yet informative presentation. He does not oversimplify the basic issues, nor does he "play up" the gross inconsistencies that have sometimes occurred in isolated instances. The scope of the book is a timely endeavor to picture the exact hold of Romanism upon the world today.

One vital weakness is the apparent naivete concerning the internal conflicts in present day Roman Catholicism. The author fails to treat the wide theological divergence present in contemporary Roman Catholic thought. He limits himself to official dogma and thus avoids discussion of some of the primary issues that plague the Church.

This book is still highly recommended by the reviewer for anyone who wishes to gain an honest and over-all picture of Roman Catholicism as opposed to the many sensational and oversimplified "studies" that are presently available.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND, by J. H. Merle d'Aubigne, volume I, edited by S. M. Houghton. Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W.1, England. 1962, reprint of 1853, pp. 467, paper cover, 7 shillings sixpence. Cloth, 15 shillings.

This is by no means an up-to-date volume. It may even contain certain historical "inconsistencies" that have been brought to light through present day research. However, this is a thrilling account of the struggle for Reformation truth in England. The author makes no apologies for his Christian philosophy of history. Says he, "History should be made to live with its own proper life. God is this life. God must be acknowledged — God proclaimed — in history. The history of the world should purport to be annals of the government of the supreme King. . . . Strange! this interposition of God in human affairs, which even pagans have recognized, men reared amid the grand ideas of Christianity treat as superstition. . . ."

For the first time in many years, this readable and impressive account is now available in a moderately priced volume which has its proper place in the home of anyone sincerely interested in history of Protestantism.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE THEOLOGY OF JAMES DAANE, by Cornelius Van Til. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1959, pp. 126. \$3.00.

Dr. Van Til is again defending the historical Reformed faith. In this case he is endeavoring to point out the dangers in the thinking of James Daane concerning the sovereignty of God and the ontological trinity. The book is definitely beyond the scope of interest of the average layman, but commends itself to those interested in serious investigation of Reformed theology and a true Christian philosophy. The closing sections concerning Barth's doctrine of election are particularly helpful as they point to the direction in which Daane's controversial thinking is leading. The deep problem of the nature of God and Scriptural revelation comes to new focus in this timely material.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE THEOLOGY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESS, by George D. McKinney. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 130. \$2.50.

The author of this work appears to be neither

an astute theologian nor an able exegete. He endeavors to present the theology of the J. W.'s, but lacks a full understanding of orthodox theology himself. His treatment is spotty, oftentimes disorganized, showing little effort to set up a Biblical refutation of the Witnesses' position. This is a generally helpful work because of its frequent use of the literature published by the Witnesses themselves. However, it is not the most lucid of studies for the person unschooled in the thinking of the J. W.'s.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THEOLOGY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM, by Herbert S. Bird. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1961, pp. 137. \$3.00.

In a study of a cult it is very easy for the author to deal mainly with his pet peeves and fail to give an overall evaluation of the movement. Mr. Bird escapes this weakness in his thorough, well-documented study of the SDA. The emphasis here is placed upon the evaluation of Adventist **Theology**. In each case the key doctrines of Adventism are presented with many primary references from SDA sources. A critique is then offered in terms of a Biblical evaluation. This is by far the best study the reviewer has seen on this cult. It is not the most easily readable, but it does come to real grips with the problem underlying the differences and similarities between Adventism and Biblical Christianity. Mr. Bird well establishes his conviction that SDA may not rightly be considered a true church of Christ, especially in relation to its doctrine of salvation and in particular the Adventist conception of the meaning of the Old Testament Sanctuary services.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE CHILDREN'S VERSION OF THE HOLY BIBLE, edited by Jay P. Green. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, N. Y. 1962, pp. 352. \$7.95.

In a day of a dozen and one new translations of Scripture, the King James version in modern English struggles for uniqueness. This particular attempt has merit in that it is not given over to paraphrasings or contemporary slang. It is a well-printed and attractive volume which endeavors only to up-date the language of the King James version of Scripture. In so doing, the editor appears to have achieved his aim. It is a useful translation to put into the hands of young people.

The glaring deficiency is that the editor does not take into account any of the work in Biblical criticism that has gone on since 1611. No credence is given or use made of valuable manuscripts of Scripture discovered since the Authorized Version was printed. In neglecting honest scholarship, Mr. Green has greatly reduced the value of his work.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE MODERNS, by William C. Fletcher. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 160. \$3.00.

This book purports to be a conservative evaluation of contemporary theology. The conservatism and theological perceptiveness of the author is seriously in doubt. (E.G., "Tillich's strange, unbiblical system may well be first stage in the return of a great number of intelligent people to the truth of the Gospel.") The author displays a general ignorance of the philosophical viewpoints of the thinkers he discusses. The book is a superficial presentation of current theology. He has tried to cover too much in too little space. The book is definitely not recommended.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

VARIETIES OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS, by Bernard Ramm. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1961, pp. 199. \$3.95.

This book represents Ramm's second attempt at an introduction to the major systems of Christian apologetics and philosophy of religion. As such, it is a valuable work. Ramm treats here nine major thinkers from Augustine to Abraham Kuyper. It is regrettable that he proceeds no further and does not include the work of men such as Van Til, Carnell and Dooyeweerd. The least valuable portion of the book is the introduction in which Ramm advocates a rationalistic apologetics. His claim here is that a Christian apologete must first have a philosophy which he then uses as a frame-work for his defense of Christianity. He allows no possibility of someone working from Scripture first and developing his "philosophy" from the Scripture. He does not always indicate even in his discussion of the nine thinkers what he believes their underlying philosophical viewpoint to be. With these weaknesses in mind the book is still a valuable and thought-provoking endeavor which deserves a place on the educated Christian's book shelf.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

EXPOSITION OF PHILIPPIANS, by William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 218. \$5.95.

Conservative commentaries of Scripture cannot be overlooked if for no other reason than their scarcity. Hendriksen's treatment of Philippians is decidedly evangelical and obviously Reformed and hence of merit to the conservative. It is regrettable that the author displays a tendency to "popularize" the meaning of this book. He gives himself over to irrelevancies and unrelated sermonizings in a distressing number of cases. He is certainly not unaware of the exegetical and theological questions, but spends much time in generalizations. Even those who do not accept our position on exclusive Psalmody may well be annoyed by the excessive amount of hymnodic

poetry that occurs throughout the book. Yet, in the main, the author does have something to say and does deserve a hearing.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

KARL BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE, by Klaas Runia. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1962, pp. 225. \$4.00.

Anyone who dares to explore the area of Barthian thought deserves attention, especially if the explorer is a man of the caliber of Dr. Runia. His work on Barth's doctrine of Scripture is of inestimable value. This is a serious, scholarly treatment of one of the key theological issues of our day. Runia approaches the question as a Reformed Thinker committed to Scripture as the authoritative Word of God. He seeks here not only to present Barth's view of Scripture but he also points out how this diverges from the view of Biblical Christianity. One can only regret that this book has not been printed sooner. No pastor or layman who comes in contact with those who hold to neo-orthodox theology should neglect to read and study this valuable work.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE WORD OF GOD ACCORDING TO ST. AUGUSTINE, by A. D. R. Polman. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1961, pp. 242. \$5.00.

This is a magnificent endeavor on the part of Polman to present a Calvinistic view of Augustine. The treatment is illuminating, authoritative and exceptionally well-written. The development in Augustine's thought from Neo-Platonism to a more consistent Christian viewpoint is clearly traced. Dr. Polman also relates the thinking of Augustine accurately to the historical situation of Augustine's time. It is rich in quotations, not given to excessive praise, honest in its evaluations. The material is presented in terms of current theological issues and an excellent effort is made to systematize an unsystematic thinker. A very valuable work for all interested in this phase of doctrine.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

SCIENCE RETURNS TO GOD, by James H. Jauncey. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 120. \$1.95.

The author was born in Australia. He has an impressive educational background, holding ten degrees, including two doctorates and three masters. He has a professional standing in the British Psychological Society, as well as a fellowship in the Royal Geographic Society, and is listed in "Who's Who in American Education." He is presently the minister of the First Christian Church in El Paso, Texas.

In view of these credentials, this reviewer

receives the distinct impression that the author could have said much more than he did on the subjects covered. Of the 120 pages, 28 of them are blank, used for chapter headings, leaving 92 pages of rather large print.

The book has nine chapters plus a conclusion: 1. The Great Armistice, 2. The Science of the Bible, 3. The Supernatural, 4. The Mystery of Antiquity, 5. The Origin of Man, 6. Special Difficulties in the Bible, 7. Archaeology, 8. Biblical Eschatology and Science, 9. The Validity of Experience. In the conclusion, called "The Future Outlook", there is one paragraph each on nuclear physics, the E equals mc² law and its relation to time, astronomy, carbon-14 dating and oxygen-18 dating, mathematical dating of manuscripts, organic evolution and spontaneous generation, prolonging of human life, archaeology, psychology, and the tendency of religion to God-centeredness. All of this in 1400 words. There is a good bibliography covering 31 books.

The title is somewhat misleading, since much of the book is devoted to such subjects as the longevity of the patriarchs, Jonah in the whale, the virgin birth and resurrection of Christ, and other New Testament miracles. The author manifestly accepts the inspired Word of God as true in these details, but deals with them in sketchy fashion. He says that organic evolution has not been proved, but says that if it should be, there would be no conflict with Bible record of the creation of man.

The book needs to be better organized, and its subject matter should be treated with more scholarly detail. The author's stated purpose is "to present Christianity in such a way that it can capture the imagination and conviction of the scientific mind." He presents some thought-provoking statements throughout the book, but this reviewer doubts if he achieved his purpose.

— Raymond P. Joseph

GOD-CENTERED EVANGELISM, by R. B. Kuiper. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1961, pp. 216. \$3.95.

Theology and evangelism are not mutually exclusive. In fact, one's concept and practice of evangelism will reveal his theology, and vice versa. That such a volume as this will meet a great need in showing the relevance of theology — Reformed theology — to the mission of the church in the evangelistic task can be shown in many ways, but certainly one way is through checking the absence and/or brevity of this subject in the contents of most books on evangelism.

The author makes clear his purpose both in the striking title and in his introduction when he says, "The following study is a plea for **God-centered**, in contradistinction to man-centered, evangelism. In other words, it presents a **theology** of evangelism." This is not therefore a

manual on method. Each of the titles of the nineteen chapters begins with the word "God," such as "God and the Scope of Evangelism," and Dr. Kuiper clearly yet succinctly shows the relationship between God and each phase of evangelism. His arguments are devastating to the truncated concepts so prevalent today, and at the same time shattering to those complacently sitting in their churches content to "hold" the Reformed faith without holding it "forth."

Readers will quickly recognize the similarity in style and structure to the equally helpful **THE GLORIOUS BODY OF CHRIST**. Kuiper has a way of treating deep and penetrating subjects with short chapters yet wonderfully clear explanation. Some therefore who feel they could not understand such a volume will be persuaded, in the opinion of the reviewer, after the first chapter that they can and should read it. The chapter entitled "God's Gracious Covenant and Evangelism" is worth the price of the book.

— Kenneth G. Smith

THE ZONDERVAN PICTORIAL BIBLE DICTIONARY, edited by Merrill C. Tenney. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 928 (plus 40 pages of full color maps). \$9.95.

This book contains more than 5000 entries, contributed by 66 writers, 700 recent photos, charts, and drawings, and 40 pages of color maps. In addition to being a dictionary, this volume contains monographs on Biblical and theological topics, including biographical sketches of Biblical characters.

Contributors to the volume include Oswald T. Allis, F. F. Bruce, Philip E. Hughes, Edward J. Young, also G. W. Bromiley, J. O. Buswell, Jr., George E. Ladd, Allan A. MacRae, Merrill F. Unger, and others.

This is a highly useful volume. However on some very important theological topics it is defective. The subject "Election" is an exception (900 words by C. B. Bass). After giving the Greek word and the English translation, he begins, "Since the whole of humanity is fallen in sin from which it cannot extricate itself, none will be saved apart from the redeeming grace of God. The decree, as a sovereign choice of God, as to who may receive this grace is the basis of election."

On the following topics, however, it leaves something to be desired. On "Perseverance" it presents both Calvinistic and Arminian views. On "Depravity" it presents definitely a "Cal-Arminian" view. On "Grace" it states, "He has from all eternity determined to extend favor towards all who exercise faith in Christ as Lord and Savior." Only this sentence in the monograph on "Grace" touches on irresistible grace (the rest of the monograph is very helpful), and it is in-

adequate, not in what it says, but in what it doesn't say. On the "Atonement", it is adequate, except for an ambiguity concerning the extent of the atonement. It says, "He (Christ) reconciled a world of sinners with God." On "Baptism" it is utterly inadequate and defective from the Reformed point of view. While the mode of immersion is merely recommended over other forms, the Scriptural relation of baptism to circumcision and its bearing on infant baptism is completely ignored and "believers baptism" is presented.

In general, however, this volume represents a high degree of conservative scholarship and will be very helpful to the Bible student.

— Raymond P. Joseph

SERMONS AND MEDITATIONS, by James A. Tallach, Ross-shire Printing Company L.T.D., Dingwall, 1962, pp. 1-110, 3/6. (Available from Mrs. E. Tallach, Ashlyn Craig Road, Dingwall, Ross-shire, Scotland)

This small paper back book is a memorial volume of sermons by the late Rev. James Tallach, a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Many of these messages were originally printed in the Free Presbyterian Magazine. It includes a brief memoir, ten complete sermons, and eight shorter meditations.

These sermons and meditations display a keen insight into the meaning and application of Scripture as well as a very clear homelitical development. Rev. Tallach was a faithful defender and teacher of Reformed Theology and in several instances displays a brilliant insight into Biblical Theology. This is seen particularly in a sermon on the authority of Jesus Christ.

This reviewer would take exception to one sermon and one meditation which use the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon as the basis for their structure. The things that are said in these sermons are true, but can only be deduced from the Song of Solomon by the process of fanciful allegorizing. With this exception ministers will find here a Biblical and covenantal approach to homelitics which will prove refreshing in this age of pietistic pep-talks. Laymen will find help in understanding the Scripture and its application to life.

— John H. White

AT THE CROSSROADS, by Sallie Lee Bell. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, 1963, pp. 151. \$2.50.

Donna, the rich, self-centered daughter of a wealthy western rancher, experiences thrilling romance and also tragedy. The author brings out the idea that difficulty and tragedy are used by the Lord to accomplish His purpose in human lives. For teen-agers and young adults.

— J. G. Vos

WHEN TOMORROW COMES, by Marjorie A. Pegram. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 152. \$2.50.

Jim, the orphaned son of foreign missionary parents, becomes the pastor of a small town church. He was deeply in love with Laurie, a rich girl who refused to marry him. Then he fell in love with Patty Anderson. But in the end Laurie helped him to see the Lord's will for his life. For teen-agers and young adults.

— J. G. Vos

HYMN FESTIVALS, by Ernest K. Emurian. W. A. Wilde Company, 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1961, pp. 126. \$2.95.

The author is a Methodist and naturally believes in singing hymns in the worship of God. The viewpoint of *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, of course, is that only the Psalms of the Bible should be sung in public worship. Most of our readers will also share this viewpoint, therefore for most of us the publication of a book of this type is irrelevant. The author has provided background material and suggested programs for hymn-singing festivals. The dissatisfaction of Isaac Watts (1674-1748) with the Biblical Psalter is related (pages 43-44), and the old metrical version of Psalm 133 is actually called "ridiculous." Though author Emurian praises Watts' efforts to improve on the Biblical Psalms as they were rendered in the early metrical versions, the present reviewer thinks of Watts as the man who spoiled the Psalms by trying (as he put it) to "make David speak like a Christian." In attempting this Watts introduced a literary sophistication into the Spirit-inspired simplicity of the Psalms. Unlike the simple metrical versions of the Psalter, Watts' reconstructions are "dated" by the literary spirit of his time.

This book will be welcomed by those who have no conscientious convictions on the subject of Psalm-singing. For committed Psalm-singers it has little to offer.

— J. G. Vos

THE DAYS OF NOAH AND THEIR PROPHETIC MESSAGE FOR TODAY, by M. R. DeHaan. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 184. \$2.50.

The author suggests a typological interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis. For example, Tubal-Cain (Gen. 4:22), the first discoverer of metal-working, is treated as a type of the present-day steel age. Jubal, the inventor of musical instruments, is regarded as a type of modern jazz. There is much more of this sort of unwarranted interpretation of historical narratives. Typology is a hazardous business and can easily lead to unrestrained indulgence in fantasy. For something to be regarded as a type (a small-scale specimen of something which later

in history appears on the larger scale), there must be not only a real correspondence of meaning, but evidence that Scripture itself *intends* the typological interpretation. There is evidence that Scripture intends Adam and David to be regarded as types of Christ, but there is no evidence that Scripture intends Jubal to be regarded as a type of modern jazz music.

On page 154 the value of the study of Biblical archaeology is denied, on the ground that at best archaeology only discovers what the Bible already teaches. This is a very superficial judgment. Archaeology is not the Gospel and will not save anyone's soul, nor is it the foundation of our Christian faith. It has its value, however, which is (1) To fill in gaps in historical knowledge, where Scripture is silent; (2) to aid in understanding obscure passages by providing background material on ancient laws, customs, etc.; (3) to silence radical critics by showing that their destructive theories are untenable. Critics used to deny the existence of the ancient Hittites; no one would dare to contradict the Word of God on this point today. There is some value in just getting the mouths of radical critics shut on this point or that, even though the critics are not converted to the Lord; see on this matter Titus 1:11.

Besides the foregoing faults, this book is seriously erroneous, from the standpoint of *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, in that it moves within the framework of Pre-Tribulation Rapture Futurist Premillennialism. This view, which actually is that of a minority of a minority of Christians, is presented with dogmatic confidence as if it were the unquestionable teaching of the infallible Word of God. We must demur.

— J. G. Vos

ESSENTIAL CHRISTIANITY: A HANDBOOK OF BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES, by Walter R. Martin. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, pp. 114. \$1.95.

This book treats, in a brief and "popular" fashion, the Trinity, the Deity of Jesus Christ, His Virgin Birth, the Atonement, the Resurrection, Sovereign Grace and Human Works, Christian Hope, the Judgment, the Error of Universalism, and "The Unanswerable Argument." Much of what is presented is standard evangelical Christian truth. A book as brief as this (just over 100 pages) could of course not be expected to be very profound in its treatment.

Along with much that is good, the reviewer found some serious weaknesses in this book. Especially, the treatment of the Atonement is not satisfactory (pages 43-51). The author describes five "theories of the atonement" (Ransom, Recapitulation, Satisfaction, Moral Influence, Example). These are listed co-ordinately, with the introductory statement that each makes "definite contribution to the idea of atonement" but that

"they do not deal with the basic issue of man's alienation from God and the necessity of vicarious reconciliation" (p. 47). (The Governmental theory of Hugo Grotius is mentioned but not explained or described). The Satisfaction view, which author Martin lists as a mere "theory" along with the Ransom Theory, Example Theory, etc., is usually considered to be the historic orthodox doctrine of the substitutionary atonement, though not in exactly the form in which Anselm stated it back in the middle ages. It is certainly surprising, though, to find the Satisfaction view labeled a "theory" and listed co-ordinately with the most notorious **false** theories of the atonement. Author Martin comments: "While none of the theories of the atonement then are complete in themselves, each contains some truth" (p. 50). "Only when we understand the fact that no **one** aspect of the atonement fully explains the marvellous character of the **whole**, will we come to appreciate the marvelous display of boundless grace which was offered to a fallen race by the mercy of a loving Creator" (p. 50). Is a true doctrine of the Atonement to be sought, then, by simply combining the various false or defective "theories", on the principle that the whole is equal to the sum of the parts? How can this be, when the various "theories" actually **contradict** each other at crucial points? As a matter of fact, most of these "theories" have sprung from sinful man's sub-conscious desire to be rid of "the offense of the cross". The Example Theory, Moral Influence Theory, Governmental Theory, Mystical Theory, etc., are not partial explanations of the great truth of the atonement — essentially, they are rather, in the main thrust or point of each, rival or substitute explanations which avoid or evade the offense of the cross (vicarious penalty-bearing by Christ). Author Martin provides no clear doctrine of the atonement himself. He merely repeats Paul's statement that "Christ died for our sins" and says that the atonement "is a sublime declaration of the fact that God's justice demands perfect satisfaction and that this was accomplished once for all when 'God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. . . and reconciled us unto Himself by the death of His Son.'" This statement either (1) adds nothing to the well know Satisfaction doctrine (which Martin lists among the inadequate "theories", or (2) it leaves in question-begging ambiguity just how the death of God's Son reconciled us to God by doing something more than, or different from, what the Satisfaction view, as stated in the historic creeds, affirms.

There are other examples of ambiguity and superficial treatment in the book. On page 73 the author says "Paul goes on to point out that a man's faith in Christ is counted by God as the supreme work of righteousness. . ." — a careless statement, to say the least, when we realize that Paul places **faith** and **work** in antithesis, and treats faith as a **non-work** (Rom. 4:5; 3:28)

Again, "God promised Abraham redemption **because** of his faith. . ." (p. 73). This is an unguarded statement which may easily lead some readers to conclude that faith is the **ground** of salvation. Actually, in the Bible we are said to be saved **by faith** and **through faith**, but never **because of faith** or **on account of faith**. The ground of salvation is the blood and righteousness of Christ; the means or instrument of salvation is faith. The New Testament uses **dia** with the genitive, and **ek** with the genitive in speaking of the relation of faith to justification ("by faith", "through faith", "from faith"), but never **dia** with the accusative (which would mean "because of faith" or "on account of faith"). The Revised Standard Version has confused this issue in its treatment of Romans 3:30, but author Martin should have clarified it on the basis of the Greek original.

Some extreme statements are found in the last chapter of the book ("The Unanswerable Argument"). For example: "We have nothing to fear from higher education, and every step that science takes vindicates the record of Scripture. Archaeology has established the accuracy of the Word of God. Psychology has validated the structure of man's immaterial nature" (pp. 113, 114). Would that these statements were true! Alas, most higher education is today in the firm grip of a non-theistic secularism which regards God as unreal or irrelevant for scholarship. Numerous archaeologists, on the basis of their interpretation of archaeological data, boldly deny the truth of statements of the infallible Word of God, such as I Kings 6:1. A glance at any standard college textbook in psychology will show that God is not even mentioned or listed in the index, man is not regarded as having a soul that is distinct from the brain or nervous system, and the study of mankind's "mind" is approached from the standpoint of experiments on the behavior of rats, mice and dogs. There are various schools of psychology, and perhaps in no other science is there so much basic disagreement about its scope and principles, but at all events it is a rare psychologist who would affirm anything basic about "man's immaterial nature."

— J. G. Vos

BEST-LOVED HYMN STORIES, by Robert Harvey. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 160. \$2.50.

The author is a minister of the United Church of Canada. He provides a wealth of background material on well-known hymns. The (usually complete) text of the hymn follows each story. This book will be welcomed by those who believe in singing non-inspired (i.e., extra-biblical) hymns, but will have little appeal other than its historical interest to Christians committed to the exclusive singing of the Psalms in worship.

— J. G. Vos

THE CHILDREN'S HYMNBOOK, compiled and edited by Wilma Vander Baan and Albertha Bratt; illustrated by Armand Merizon. Published by The National Union of Christian Schools and William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1962, pp. 196, with music and pictures, 7x10 inches. \$2.95.

This book is beautifully produced, with large, clear type, fine paper and very attractive illustrations. We regret the inclusion of some so-called "pictures of Jesus", though these are not prominent in the book.

Being committed as a matter of principle to the exclusive use of the Psalms as songs for use in divine worship, we are not specially interested in the publication of a book of this type. The reviewer looked through it carefully to see how many Psalm selections are included among the many hymns. The following are included: Psalm 121, with the Scottish tune Caithness; Psalm 23 (tune Evan); Psalm 100 (tune Old Hundredth); a brief chorus from Psalm 150; a chorus from Psalm 122:1; a selection from Psalm 103; Psalm 119:9-16; Psalm 1; Psalm 24; a brief selection from Psalm 33. This is all, and while we are glad that these at least are included, as a matter of fact even when taken together they form only a tiny fraction of the book's contents. Children are bound to get the impression that most of the Psalter is inferior to the hymnology of post-Biblical writers. As a matter of fact, the Church in its purest and most vital period (the age of the Apostles) sang only the inspired Psalms of the Bible in worship. From our standpoint, which we certainly hold to be in harmony with the example of the Apostles, the production of extra-biblical hymnbooks is not progress but retrogression. Hymnbooks come and go; the Biblical Psalter stands and will stand until the end of time.

— J. G. Vos

CHRISTIAN WORKER'S TESTAMENT WITH PSALMS Edited by J. Gilchrist Lawson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, reprint of 1924, pp. 336 and 91, India paper, pocket size 4x5¼ inches, ⅝ inch thick, flexible black cover with gold lettering. \$2.50.

This New Testament with Psalms contains a system of notations which indicates especially all subjects "connected with the theme of salvation." This is done in red ink in the New Testament. In the Psalms, there are no special indications or markings.

To edit a New Testament with special markings for verses connected with the theme of salvation, of course, raises the question of what is meant by "connected with the theme of salvation." In a very true sense everything in the Bible after Genesis chapter 2 is connected with

the theme of salvation. Thus the question is not "is this or that text connected with salvation?" but rather, in any given case, "What is the connection?" and "How direct or indirect is it? These must inevitably be matters of judgment. In the present volume, the genealogy of Jesus as given in Matthew and in Luke is unmarked, indicating that in the editor's view this is not connected with the theme of Salvation. But surely it must be — the genealogies show that Christ is the Seed of Abraham and the Son of David predicted as the Saviour in the Old Testament. It would seem that the editor has a somewhat narrower concept of salvation than would be afforded by a truly biblical-theological orientation. On the other hand, much of truth and real value is brought out by the system of notes and indications in this volume, and anyone who will follow it through in reading will surely gain benefit and blessing thereby. The print is a bit small for easy reading — some may want to use a magnifying glass in reading longer portions. The appearance is very attractive indeed. This volume was published by the John C. Winston Company in 1924 and 1959, and has now been taken over by the Zondervan Publishing House. The book comes in a neat box. There is also an edition with a cheaper binding available at \$1.50, and one with a finer binding at \$3.95.

— J. G. Vos

PASTOR'S POCKET RECORD BOOK. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, reprint of 1948, pp. 192, pocket size (3½x5¼ inches, ⅝ inch thick), black flexible imitation leather cover, gold lettering. \$1.00.

This pocket record book was published by John C. Winston Company in 1948 and has now been taken over by the Zondervan Publishing House. It contains a form of marriage ceremony, funeral service, funeral suggestions and Scripture passages, Scripture passages for various special occasions, and many pages for recording pastoral calls, church officers, sermons preached, committees, members received, and other records. There is space for addresses, appointments, books purchased, and last of all there are yearly calendars through 1965.

As this little book is of very convenient size for carrying in the pocket, it will be welcomed by many pastors. However, most will want to use this as a pocket record, and transfer the data later to a card file or a larger record book for permanent keeping.

In the review copy which we received, the binding was coming apart when the book was first opened, the book coming unglued between pages 16 and 17, with an eighth inch of the black binding material showing between. Presumably this was a mere accident, and a copy found in this condition after purchase could be returned to the publishers for exchange.

— J. G. Vos

DAILY MANNA CALENDAR FOR 1964. Edited by Martin Monsma. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. \$1.95.

Many of our readers are familiar with the Daily Manna Calendar. It comes in a neat box, size 4¼ x 6 inches by 1¼ inches thick. There is a single page or sheet for every day of the year, with the date in large, bold type, followed by a Scripture text and a brief comment or meditation thereon. The material is orthodox and edifying. This type of material is a good help to personal or family devotions. The selections and meditations are by a large number of well-known ministers, each minister contributing one week's meditations. This calendar is recommended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

QUESTIONS TEEN AGERS ASK, Answered by Ted W. Engstrom, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 63, paper cover. \$1.00.

The author (president of Youth for Christ, International) answers 76 questions on Dating, Romance, and Love, Living the Christian Life, Careers, School Problems, Home and Parents, the Church, and Miscellaneous questions. An excellent book to place in the hands of your young people.

— Raymond P. Joseph

CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN, by E. Margaret Clarkson. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1962, pp. 80, \$2.50.

Of this book of 80 poems, A. W. Tozer says in the Foreword, "Clear Shining After Rain" contains much truly good verse. It is emotionally warm, but restrained and worshipful. It expresses the thoughts and feelings of a devoted Christian heart in the language of today, while preserving the chaste forms of the past. A fine craftsmanship enables the poet to body forth the true poetic spirit with which she is so clearly possessed."

Poetry is a mode of expression, which, for the Christian, may be difficult to employ, but which, when done well, produces some of the sparkling gems of human thought. "Clear Shining After Rain" has many sparkling gems in its pages.

— Raymond P. Joseph

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1964, by Wilbur M. Smith. W. A. Wilde Co., 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1963, pp. 419. \$2.95.

It is a pleasure again to recommend a new issue of this old reliable, tried and true help on the International S.S. lessons, ably compiled and edited by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith. Not only is the

material of excellent quality, but the price, in these days of inflation, is a real bargain — only three-quarters of a cent per page! This is a book with substantial cloth binding, well printed on good paper. The publisher is to be commended for keeping the price reasonable.

This material is Scripturally sound and eminently usable. There are good illustrative materials, explanations of difficult words and texts, practical lessons to be drawn from the Scripture passages, and many other splendid features. It is suited for teachers of all grades and ages of pupils, as long as they are using the International lessons.

This endorsement should not be taken as implying that the reviewer agrees with every detail of the volume. Users naturally may dissent from detailed points of interpretation here and there. Dr. Smith holds a moderate form of the Premillennial interpretation of prophecy, but this is not at all prominent in his expositions of the International lessons. Teachers who have experienced difficulty in finding truly adequate and usable helps should purchase this volume — thereafter they will want to get it year after year.

This book is unswervingly loyal to the Bible as the infallible Word of God. We commend it to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

SEVEN KEYS TO A MORE FRUITFUL MINISTRY, by Arnold Prater. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1960, pp. 120. \$2.00.

In writing this book Mr. Prater, pastor of the First Methodist Church, Lebanon, Missouri, has done a great service to the ministers of the Gospel who read it and to the congregations in which they minister as well. The book is specifically addressed to ministers and deals very frankly and searchingly with some of the major barriers limiting the effectiveness of ministers. The fact that the theological perspective of the writer differs from that of this reviewer does not detract appreciably from its value. It is not a theological book or a book dealing with methods or techniques. It is rather a book which deals with the inner motives, struggles and sins of the preacher's own heart.

In his opening chapter entitled "Prophet as well as Priest," Mr. Prater says "A preacher who can't preach is like a clock that can't run." (p. 17) He maintains that God does not call a man into the ministry who does not have the potential to become a preacher. Other chapters are entitled "Loyalty to God's Message," "Triumph over Laziness," "Shun the Pitfall of Pride," "Beware of Professionalism," "the Conquest of Jealousy," and "Victory over Discouragement."

One who can read these chapters without be-

ing challenged to a new consecration to God and a new determination to overcome these common pitfalls of the ministry is indeed a very callous person. Every minister would profit from reading this book and it is especially recommended for those who have been in the ministry for fifteen or twenty years and have had opportunity to become discouraged with the work or lost some of the deep joy and satisfaction which the Lord's work should give. One minister in this reviewer's denomination was seriously considering leaving the ministry to go into secular work, but has continued in the ministry at least partly due to the renewed vision and encouragement which God brought to his heart through the reading of this book.

— Kenneth A. McBurney

THE SPONTANEOUS EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH, by Roland Allen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1962, pp. 158, paper cover. \$1.65.

The author of the well known "Missionary Methods, St. Paul's or Ours?" and "The Ministry of the Spirit", Roland Allen is an Anglican who wrote in the 1920's. His writings fell on deaf ears among his contemporaries, but in more recent times they are receiving wider attention.

As would be expected, he expresses himself in terms of Anglican ecclesiology, and consequently more than one of the difficulties with which he deals in his book would be for some of us a straw man. But even if we do not share the difficulties which are peculiar to Allen's background (he deals with other difficulties which do apply) we certainly share with him a desire to measure the effectiveness of today's church by New Testament standards. And, sharing this desire as we do, we must accept the challenge which he offers. Any such acceptance will prevent us from taking a cheap satisfaction in the inadequate rationalizations by which we occasionally attempt to explain our failures (e.g., "The Holy Spirit hasn't chosen to convert men through our ministries today as He did in N. T. times", or, "The Church in N. T. times didn't have to maintain the high standards of membership that we have to maintain today," etc).

The central burden of Allen's thought is his plea for an every member, every Christian witness as the only answer to the challenge of world evangelism. This is being emphasized today by thoughtful Christians of several backgrounds. Allen treats this concept from the aspect of "unleashing" a "latent force" in the new Christian convert on the mission field by removing all unnecessary control by the mother church. He contends that by placing the control of the new church in native hands we can see duplicated today the rapid ("spontaneous") spread of the gospel which took place in the apostolic and post-apostolic era. Regrettably, he is apparently not

aware of the concept of Christian growth which emphasizes the need for careful and continued "follow-up" of the new convert.

However, Allen structures some penetrating questions which we would do well to attempt to answer. For example, are we training men as Christ trained them? Allen says, (p. 20), "Christ trained His leaders by taking them with Him as He went about teaching and healing, doing the work which they, as missionaries, would do; we train in institutions. He trained a very few with whom He was in the closest personal relation; we train many who simply pass through our schools with a view to an examination and an appointment. Christ trained His leaders in the midst of their own people, so that the intimacy of their relation to their own people was not marred and they could move freely among them as one of themselves; we train our leaders in a hothouse, and their intimacy with their own people is so marred that they can never thereafter live as one of them, or share their thought."

He asks, "Church must beget church, as individual begets individual. Is not that the only way? Or is our way of looking hopelessly into the world and saying, 'This is closed to us,' 'That is unreachable,' 'We have not enough paid workers,' 'We cannot afford to open a new station,' a better way?" (p. 40). He maintains, "There is that in the Gospel which demands expression and is never satisfied without propagating itself." (p. 41).

Then Allen gives several reasons, as he sees them, why the mother church does not gather new converts into a fellowship, equip them with **ordained** leaders, and give them the authority to administer their own sacraments, thus setting them free to reproduce themselves in new churches. They are: Chapter 4, Fear for the Doctrine ("It ought to be a cardinal principle with missionaries that anyone who knows enough to be saved by Christ knows enough to tell another how he may be saved." p. 54); Chapter 5, The Christian Standard of Morals (Some of this chapter smacks of antinomianism. Nevertheless, he maintains, "To have baptized men who confessed Christ without insisting that they must first accept our laws, to have established churches in native villages under their own elders without breaking up their social order, would no more have been a lowering of our standard of morality than the establishment of a kindergarten class in a school is a lowering of the standard of education in the school." p. 74); Chapter 6, Civilization and Enlightenment (here he argues for the preaching of the "foolishness of the Cross" instead of the "social gospel"); Chapter 7, Missionary Organization ("For missionary work we have two organizations; one which is ancient and one which is modern; one simple, the other very cumbersome; the simple necessary organization is the organization of the Church, the cumbersome

modern organization is the organization of missionary societies". p. 96); Chapter 8, Ecclesiastical Organization ("Just as divorce was permitted for the hardness of men's hearts because they were unable to observe the divine institution of marriage in its original perfection, so the organization of missionary societies was permitted for the hardness of our hearts, because we had lost the power to appreciate and to use the divine organization of the Church in its simplicity for the purpose for which it was first created." p. 117).

Occasionally it appears to please the Lord to allow the voice of a "rebel" to challenge the status quo . . . "the way we have always done things" . . . and thus we are stimulated and prodded to re-think and reevaluate our actions in the light of Scriptural principles. Such a "shaking up" may do us some good. It is not hard to find several statements in "Spontaneous Expansion" with which we do not agree. Yet, there is much that is right about this book, and we would do well to study it carefully.

—Raymond P. Joseph

COMING EVENTS IN PROPHECY, by M. R. De Haan, M.D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, pp. 151. \$2.50.

Perhaps a few short quotations from the author's introduction will best serve to set both the tone and the theological bent of the book: "That prayer (Jesus' 'Thy kingdom come') has remained **unanswered** for almost two milleniums. . ." — "Yes, the promise of the angels, 'peace on earth,' will **some day** be realized;" — "The only hope for this old world is the **Second Coming** of Jesus Christ." (The accented bold type is mine.) Without wrenching these statements from their context, it is surely fair to state that the author is enamored of a dispensationalism of an extreme sort. His avowed purpose is to dispel "The overwhelming amount of error and misunderstanding of the events of the future," caused, he believes, by "ignorance of God's prophetic outline," and "failure to know God's pro-

— Benjamin B. Warfield

There is an impassable gulf fixed between those who hang the efficacy of Christ's work upon the "free" action of man's will, and those who ascribe it all to God's free grace. They are of different religions.

(Published in the Blue Banner Faith and Life, Jan. 1, 1964)

**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP
MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION**

Act of October 23, 1962.

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gram for the Church, the nations, and Israel." In kindness it must be said that nothing substantially new appears in the book, either as an advance upon, or clarification of, historic dispensationalism.

The author's apologetic burden appears to drive him to make a number of statements which he would probably care to clarify, so amazing are their implications. For instance, "To place anything, any event, before our Lord's return is a terrible sin, which will be severely judged." (p. 25) — "Far more is said concerning the glorious Second Coming of Christ in the Old Testament than about His first coming in humiliation . . ." (p. 27) — "But just as the test of orthodoxy is one's belief concerning Christ's **first** coming, the test of spirituality is this: 'What do you believe concerning Christ's **Second** coming?' " (p. 40) — "Old Testament prophets saw in the future the coming of Christ but were confused, because they saw Him both suffering and coming in glory." (p. 45) — "Only by distorting the Word of God and doing violence to its literal meaning can we find the Church in the Old Testament." (p. 47). And so it goes, throughout the volume.

Besides such unhappy dogmatisms as the above, a few others are to be found which might be classified in the "he-claims-to-prove-it" category, such as that found on pp. 101, 102, where Dr. De Haan points out that Daniel's prophecy (12:4), "many shall run to and fro," finds its particular fulfillment in today's Federal Highway Building Program. Again, on p. 116 (and this appears to be the book's prize exegetical blunder), " 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,' has reference, among other things, to man's present dream of conquering the heavens by space travel and breaking through the barriers set by the Creator."

All in all, the book appears to be of value only as small calibre, out-moded, ammunition for the soldier already committed to the cause of dispensationalism.

— Thomas E. Tyson

Life; published quarterly, by the Record Publishing Company, Linn, Washington County, Kansas, 66953; J. G. Vos, Manager, 3408 7th Ave., Beaver Falls, Pa.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

TOM M. MALL, Publisher

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.

Note: Because of the increasing trend toward toleration of the view known as "Theistic Evolution" on the part of Christians, and the increasingly bold advocating of evolution as "proved scientific fact" in the public schools, colleges and universities of our country, we are reprinting the following material written by the late Dr. Robert Park. This was originally published in **Blue Banner Faith and Life** for April-June 1956, pages 95-96. This answer is as true today as it was when Dr. Park wrote it seven years ago, and if anything even more relevant now than it was then. — Editor.

Question:

Is belief in "theistic evolution" or "creative evolution" consistent with acceptance of the doctrinal standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church?

Answer:

Belief in "theistic evolution" or "creative evolution" is not consistent with the doctrines of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. A false theory or interpretation of God's work of creation cannot be corrected or nullified by labeling it with a label of the truth. Those who claim to be "theistic" or "creative" evolutionists hold virtually to the same basic ideas and claims as the Darwinian evolutionists. I shall give several excerpts from a recent book by Ralph Sadler Meadowcroft, pastor of an Episcopal congregation in Charleston, South Carolina and from all evidences a "theistic" evolutionist. In his book, "Postlude to Skepticism," on page 11 he writes: "The liberal calls for the right of increasing knowledge. According to him, the first sentence of Genesis is true, 'In the beginning God made,' but the explanation which then follows is the ancient Babylonian myth, the best explanation of the creation process known by the Hebrews at that time of writing. If, however, a modern theologian were writing the account he would use the same opening words, 'In the beginning God made,' but would follow that sentence with a contemporary scientific explanation of sun-spots, star-dust and heat, while man would emerge not out of dust and breathe, but as the climax of a tediously long evolution. Yet the liberal would not demand that his explanations become sacrosanct. On the contrary, he anticipates that three thousand years hence men may have other explanations of creation that our knowledge will then seem as important as we consider the Garden myth to be."

Now another excerpt from the same on page 125: "For many centuries the Genesis myth of

human creation was accepted as a correct account. Actually the only religious fact in the first three chapters of the Scriptures is contained in the first phrase, 'In the beginning God,' for so far as religious truth goes, it does not matter how creation occurred. Yet many religious people rose up in great indignation when Darwin's theories gained popular attention; and among religious groups it is still averred that if evolution is accepted as a factual account of human origin, the whole structure of belief will come tumbling down, which is palpably ridiculous."

Now one more quotation to reveal the mind of the "theistic" evolutionist, and this quotation is on the origin of sin (page 141):

"The origin of sin is not traceable to an event in human history, but rather is born out of the conflicting tensions (Darwin's survival of the fittest) which compose the life of mankind. To account for man's depravity by the mythical fall of Adam, by which Adam's descendants inherited the same fallen nature, is to make the first man in a sense responsible for all the human evil which has occurred through history. In so doing, men in history cease to be equally responsible with Adam for the sins they commit. Such a conclusion must also mean that man is less truly human than his original parent. . . . If, however, the fall of Adam is understood as a representative condition which occurs inevitably in the life of every individual, the responsibility and the fullness of human nature are alike the property of all men."

These excerpts may well represent the teaching of those who call themselves "theistic" evolutionists.

Now let us quote several statements from the **Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America** to show what our Church believes concerning the creation of man and the fall and depravity of man. On page 11: "After God had made all other creatures, He created

man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endowed with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after His own image; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it: and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures." On pages 130-1 are answers to several questions in the Shorter Catechism. "Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God." Gen. 3:6, 7, 8, 13. "The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit." Gen. 3:6, 12. "The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression." Gen. 3:16, 17. Rom. 5:12. 1 Cor. 15:21, 23.

No one can consistently hold these two opposite beliefs concerning creation, the origin of sin, and the consequences of sin. One could go on and show that there is just as great an inconsistency in relationship to all the great doctrines of the Faith.

— Robert Park

Question:

Why do Bible-believing Christians have to make such a point of being opposed to evolution? Can we not believe that God could have created man by evolution from lower animals?

Answer:

It is the responsibility of Bible-believing Christians to bear witness to truth at the points where truth is being challenged or denied. As Martin Luther said, we are not really confessing Christ unless we witness faithfully for the precise point of truth which the world and the devil are attacking. The Biblical doctrine of Creation is such a point today — it is under serious, sustained attack from many directions, and many Christians have, it would seem, grown weary of defending it, and seem to be ready to surrender to the false teachings of a non-Christian philosophy.

It is not a question of whether God **could** have produced mankind by evolution. God is almighty and can do anything which does not involve a contradiction of His own nature. The real question is not whether God **could**, but whether God **did**. The Bible teaches the direct creation of mankind and it teaches that the origin of

mankind involved the creation of a real, individual Adam and Eve. It is quite impossible to combine any consistent scheme of evolution with the statements of Scripture. To start with a scientific theory which is accepted as unquestionable fact, and then bend the Bible to adjust it to this scientific theory, is certainly not consistent with regarding the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith. Scientific theories and human philosophies are constantly changing — the Bible lives on unchanged, the abiding Word of the living God. It is time for Christians to stand up for their beliefs and not be frightened by the sweeping (but often ill-founded) claims of scientists and philosophers. The servant of the prophet Elisha was badly frightened when he saw the city surrounded by armed men with horses and chariots (2 Kings 6:15). But the prophet said to him, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (verse 16). "And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (verses 17). There are spiritual hosts and powers to help us, if we will but cast off carnal fear and witness in faith for the truth of God. The Christian people of America could put a stop to the teaching of evolution as "proved scientific fact" in our public schools and in denominational and tax-supported colleges and universities, if they really cared enough to bear a faithful, sustained and practical witness against this evil. This is no mere trifle, no petty prejudice. Anti-Christian philosophy which cuts to the very heart of the Christian view of man and the world is involved. We are shocked that the Supreme Court has ruled against the use of the Bible in the public schools. Are we equally shocked that public schools all over the nation are taking organic evolution for granted and teaching this to our youth as "scientific fact" which all intelligent people must of course accept? Are we afraid of being called "Fundamentalists", or said to be "behind the times"? Men said of our Lord that he had a devil, and was insane (John 10:20). "The servant is not greater than his Lord" (John 13:16). Who are we that we think we can be faithful Christians and still avoid enduring reproach for Christ's sake?

Dr. V. Raymond Edman, President of Wheaton College, wrote: "Evolution, organic or theistic, does not accord with the teaching of creation in the Scriptures and is therefore unscriptural. Evolution is essentially a philosophy of science, and a bad philosophy in my opinion, and is not science. The evolutionist and the creationist have, or should have, the same facts; but their explanations thereof differ decidedly" (*Christian Life* magazine, February, 1963).

— J. G. Vos

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The statistics of our circulation will be published, D.V., in the next issue. At the time of going to press many subscriptions have not yet been renewed for 1964, so a reliable figure for the circulation of the present issue cannot yet be given.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager
3408 Seventh Avenue
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010, U.S.A.

He Giveth His Beloved Sleep

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if there any is
For gift and grace surpassing this:
"He giveth His beloved sleep" —?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse;
The monarch's crown to light the brows?—
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

What would we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to over weep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake?—
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved," we sometimes say,
Who have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
He giveth His beloved sleep.

— Elizabeth Barrett Browning

At the Close of Day

The camel at the close of day
Kneels down upon the sandy plain
To have his burden lifted off —
And rest again.

My soul, thou too shouldst to thy knees,
When daylight draweth to a close,
And let thy Master lift thy load —
And grant repose.

Else how couldst thou tomorrow meet,
With all tomorrow's work to do,
If thou thy burden all the night
Dost carry through?

The camel kneels at break of day
To have his guide replace his load,
Then rises up anew to take
The desert road.

So thou shouldst kneel at morning's dawn
That God may give thee daily care,
Assured that He no load too great
Will make thee bear.

(Author unknown)

Christians should unite the harmlessness of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent. They should be careful neither to cause divisions or scandals themselves, nor allow others to deceive and beguile them into evil.

— Charles Hodge

P S A L M 9 8

DESERT (C.M.)

T. JARMAN.

O SING A NEW SONG TO THE LORD FOR WONDERS HE HATH
DONE FOR WONDERS HE HATH DONE HIS RIGHT HAND AND HIS

HOLY ARM THE VIC-TO-RY HAVE WON THE
THE VIC-TO-RY HAVE WON THE VIC-TO-RY HAVE

VIC-TO-RY HAVE WON THE VIC- TO-RY HAVE WON
WON THE VIC- TO-RY HAVE WON
VIC-TO-RY HAVE WON THE VIC- TO-RY HAVE WON
WON THE VIC- TO-RY HAVE WON

2. The great salvation wrought by Him
Jehovah hath made known;
His justice in the nations' sight
He openly hath shown.
3. He mindful of His grace and truth
To Isr'el's house hath been;
The great salvation of our God
All ends of earth have seen.
4. Let all the earth sing to the Lord
And make a joyful noise;
Lift up your voice aloud to Him;
Sing praises and rejoice;
5. With harp, with harp and voice of psalms
Jehovah's praises sing;
With trumpets, cornets, gladly sound
Before the Lord the King.
6. Let seas and all their fulness roar,
The world and dwellers there;
Let floods clap hands, and let the hills
Together joy declare
7. Before the Lord, because He comes;
To judge the earth comes He;
He'll judge the world with righteousness,
All men with equity.

(continued from inside front cover)

Oh! I am my Beloved's,
And my Beloved is mine!
He brings a poor, vile sinner
Into His "house of wine";
I stand upon His merit,
I know no other stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.
I shall sleep sound in Jesus,
Fill'd with His likeness rise,
To love and to adore Him,
To see Him with these eyes;
'Tween me and resurrection
But Paradise doth stand;
Then—then for glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land.
The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of Grace —

Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand —
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land.
I have borne scorn and hatred,
I have borne wrong and shame,
Earth's proud ones have reproach'd me
For Christ's thrice-blessed Name;
Where God's seals set the fairest
They're stamp't their foulest brand,
But judgment shines like noonday
In Immanuel's land.
They've summoned me before them,
But there I may not come —
My Lord says, "Come up hither",
My Lord says, "Welcome home!"
My kingly King at His white throne
My presence doth command,
While glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.



BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

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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.

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That His Light Shine

By Esther Belle Heins

The craftsman cleansed and chipped the stone
We had thought commonplace;
His trained eye saw a beauty there
No grime could quite efface.

Each facet like a wound, a tear
Deep in the Christian's heart,
To better show the Light of God;
Of His plan be a part.

Beneath an artist's hand appeared
Small facets, wrought with care,
But still — small value could be seen
Till sunlight lingered there.

When Peter, likened to a stone,
Once wept, his grief sufficed—
That God might mold a finer gem
To glorify the Christ.

There is a Peace

(Author unknown)

There is a peace, though kingdoms fall and
crumble,
A peace amid this hurricane of war,
A quiet peace that passeth understanding,
While chaos rages at our very door.

There is a peace deep down within the Christian,
A rock on which to lean in time of storm,
A lasting peace that will outlive the ages,
In spite of those who ridicule and scorn.

There is a peace, not bought by worldly honor,
Nor at the price of many millions slain,
But by the blood of One, God's Son, who suffered,
And even now, He did not die in vain!

There is a peace! Let's cling to it and hold it,
In life or death, in days of peace or war,
That quiet peace which passeth understanding,
Though chaos rages at our very door.

What Then?

By J. Whitfield Green (adapted)

When the great plants of our cities
Have turned out their last finished work;
When the merchant has sold his last yard of silk
And dismissed his last tired clerk;
When the banks have rolled in their last dollar
And paid out their last dividend;
And the Judge of the world says:
"Close for the night,"
And calls for a balance — what then?

When the actors have played their last drama,
And the mimic has made his last fun;
And the movie has flashed its last picture,
And the billboards displayed their last run;
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished,
And gone out into darkness again;
And a world that rejected its Saviour
Is asked for a reason — what then?

When the choir has sung its last anthem,
And the preacher has made his last prayer;
When the people have heard their last sermon,
And the sound has died out on the air;
When the Bible lies closed on the altar,
And the pews are all empty of men;
And each soul stands facing his record,
And the Great Book is opened — what then?

When the bugle dies out in the silence,
And the long, marching columns are still;
When the millions of earth are gathered
From ocean and valley and hill;
When the day that has no morrow
Has come to the last, last end;
And the voice of God from the heaven
Says, "It is done!" — what then?

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Who are the Covenanters?

By J. G. Vos

The name Covenanters is used to denominate those Presbyterians who entered into one or more of the public covenants connected with the Scottish Reformation, especially the National Covenants (1580 and 1638) and the Solemn League and Covenant (1643), together with those who subsequently adhered to these bonds and held the obligations involved in them to be perpetually binding.

The Covenants of the Scottish Reformation

It was characteristic of the Reformation movement in Scotland for the godly to band themselves together under the Lord by solemn oath for mutual assistance and support in the defence of the Gospel and the reformation of the Church according to the Word of God. The earliest known such covenant was made in 1556 under the leadership of John Knox. This was followed by several others through the years 1557-1572.

The first covenant of epoch making significance in Scotland was the National Covenant, written in 1580. It was occasioned by fear of Jesuit plots to destroy the Reformation. The covenant was written at the request of King James VI by John Craig, a minister. It was signed by the king and his household in 1580, by many persons of all ranks in 1581 and again in 1590. It became the basis of the National Covenant as adopted in 1638, in which year it was signed in its new and enlarged form by great numbers of people, as it was again in 1639. The National Covenant of 1638 was ratified by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in that year and again the next year, and by an Act of Parliament in 1640. It was also accepted by King Charles II in 1650 and at his coronation in 1651.

The Solemn League and Covenant was a bond between England, Ireland and Scotland, aimed at securing uniformity of religion on a Reformed and Presbyterian basis in the three lands. It was drafted by Alexander Henderson, and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1643. It was then sent to England, where it was adopted and sworn to by the House of Commons and the Westminster Assembly of Divines jointly. Following this it was signed in Scotland by the Committee of Estates of Parliament. Then it was publicly distributed for signature, and signed with great unanimity by all classes of people except those who favored Popery of Prelacy. With an added "Acknowledgment of

Sins and Engagement to Duties" it was again signed by multitudes in Scotland in 1648, and adopted by the Scottish Parliament in 1649. Last of all, it was subscribed by King Charles II in 1650 and at his coronation, 1651.

The National Covenant of 1580 contains about 1,000 words. It is a profession of faith in the Gospel, of acceptance of the Scots Confession of Faith of 1560 (the original creed of the Scottish Reformation), and a renunciation of the whole Roman Catholic system, including a detailed list of rejected errors and abuses of Romanism.

When this covenant was renewed in 1638 it consisted of three parts: first, the Covenant of 1580 without change; second, a legal section listing many acts of Parliament, to show that the adoption of the Covenant was in keeping with the national law; third, an application to the special conditions existing in 1638. This third part contains a rejection of Prelacy (government of the Church by bishops), of "novations" (corruptions) in the worship of God, and of the civil power held by church officers until tried and allowed by lawful church assemblies and Parliament. The corruptions in the government and the worship of the Church are rejected as being without Scriptural warrant, contrary to the Scots Confession of Faith, contrary to the intention of the Scottish Reformers, and contrary to the acts of Parliament listed in the Covenant. The signers of the covenant "promise and swear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, to continue in the profession and obedience of the foresaid religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life."

The Solemn League and Covenant is much briefer. In an introductory paragraph followed by six articles, the subscribers swear to endeavor the preservation of the Reformed religion in Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, and the reformation of religion in England and Ireland, according to Scripture "and the example of the best reformed Churches." The swearers also bind themselves to endeavor the "extirpation" of all contrary systems and practices, including Popery, Prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, etc. The remainder of the document implements the foregoing by pledges of

unity and mutual assistance against all opponents.

The only point somewhat unclear in the Solemn League and Covenant is what is meant by "the example of the best reformed Churches." It is not stated which churches these are; however, as the document originated in Scotland, it was generally understood at the time that the Church of Scotland and the Continental Churches holding the Calvinistic theology and the Presbyterian form of government were meant.

The Perpetual Obligation of the Covenants

There is reason to believe that in 1638 and 1643 the subscribers of the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant universally believed these bonds to be of perpetual obligation. Through the 28 years of persecution which followed the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 this principle was unlawful in the nation of Scotland, but it was maintained by the Covenanters who dissented from the prelatie (Episcopal) church and maintained separate ordinances in the form of conventicles. As the number of one-time Covenanters who conformed to the Prelatic Church increased, the number of dissenters who maintained the principle of the continuing obligation of the covenants decreased proportionately.

The principle of the perpetual obligation of the covenants was the formal principle of the Covenanting movement in the sense that this principle was characteristic of Covenanters as such in distinction from Presbyterians as such. Every Covenanter was a Presbyterian, but not every Presbyterian was a Covenanter. Those who held the principle of the perpetual obligation of the covenants were Covenanters, both before and after the Revolution of 1688.

The Covenanters Become a Dissenting Minority

The Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in the person of Charles II in 1660 marks the end of the state Church of Scotland as a covenanted church, and the beginning of the history of the Covenanters as a dissenting group or party distinct from the authority of the Church of Scotland as established by national law. The Church of Scotland became officially prelatie or Episcopal, and true Presbyterianism could be practiced only in dissenting conventicles and unofficial society meetings, until the Revolution of 1688. After 1688 Presbyterianism was indeed restored by law in Scotland, but on a somewhat different basis from the covenanted Presbyterianism of the middle of the seventeenth century, commonly called the period of the Second Reformation.

In 1662 an act of the Privy Council required all ministers installed since 1649 to obtain approval by the Episcopal bishops on pain of removal from their pastoral charges. The result

of this action was that nearly 400, or about one-third, of the ministers of Scotland were forced out of their churches. Later enactments of a similar character forced even more to leave their charges for the sake of their conscience.

Many of the ministers ejected in 1662 and subsequent years continued to preach, conducting services in private homes and also addressing large audiences in open fields. These activities incensed the bishops and the government, and resulted in a series of increasingly severe laws against conventicles or unauthorized religious meetings. Fines were imposed for failure to attend the parish churches. Later much more severe penalties were imposed for attendance at conventicles. A Court of High Commission, authorized by no law but proceeding from the royal prerogative alone, was set up to deal in drastic fashion with offenders. At first this court could inflict any penalty short of death. Many were fined, imprisoned, banished or sold as slaves. There is no record of any person tried by this court ever being acquitted, or escaping without some penalty.

In 1670, 1676 and 1681 increasingly stringent enactments against conventicles were passed. Persons attending conventicles were declared to be outlaws and it was forbidden to others to aid them in any way. All protection of the laws was denied them. In 1685 giving, taking or writing in defense of the National Covenant or the Solemn League and Covenant was declared to be treason, and to be punishable accordingly. Another act decreed the penalty of death, not merely for preaching at a conventicle, but even for attending one as a worshipper.

The period from 1685 to 1688 became known as "the killing time." During 1685 persecution reached its height. Many were put to death by soldiers, without process or form of law. The fact or presumption of having been at a conventicle was sufficient ground for instant execution without legal prosecution; ensnaring and contradictory oaths and questions were proposed to persons apprehended, and in the event of unsatisfactory answers, immediate death by shooting was the outcome.

The conventicle movement reached its height in great gatherings at which the Lord's Supper was administered, in the years 1677 and 1678. One such assembly was attended by some 7,000 unarmed persons and 600 armed men. During the first years of persecution the conventicles were unarmed gatherings for Presbyterian worship, but with the passing of time, as the laws and decrees against them became more stringent, and were more strictly enforced, the Covenanters adopted the practice of attending conventicles armed for self-defence. They did not intend to propagate their religion by the use of armed force, but they considered themselves warranted

by Scripture in using arms to defend it when it was attacked by force.

Concurrently with the use of force to intimidate and subdue the Covenanters, the government sought to win them by persuasive offers. During the period from 1660 to 1688 King Charles II issued three "indulgences" and King James VII issued four of these. These "indulgences" were royal offers to permit some of the expelled ministers to resume their ministry in the parish churches under certain regulations and stipulations laid down by the government and to be accepted by the ministers.

The first indulgence was proclaimed in 1669. Ministers who accepted the offer had to obtain official approval of the Episcopal bishops, if they wished to receive their salary and enjoy the use of the parish manse. If willing to serve without salary or manse, they could be permitted to do so without the bishops' approval. An evil feature attached to this indulgence was the condition that ministers accepting it thereby pledged themselves not to speak or preach against the idea that the king was the head of the church. This indulgence was offered only to a favored few of the expelled ministers; eventually some forty accepted it, all of them making some qualifying statement about the king's supremacy over the church. Few of the forty sought endorsement from the bishops, a fact which shows that their conduct, while it certainly involved a sacrifice of principle, proceeded from unselfish motives.

The effect of the first and all following indulgences was to weaken the Covenanters' cause by driving a wedge of division into their ranks. From 1669 on the Presbyterian ministers of Scotland were divided into the indulged and the non-indulged. The indulged compromised with Prelacy and Erastianism (the claim of the civil government to control the church), while the non-indulged avoided these compromises at the cost of suffering and sacrifice. The indulgences proceeded from the king's alleged supremacy over the church, and to accept the indulgence meant to accept that false principle of Erastianism.

As time passed more and more of the ministers returned to their pulpits by accepting the indulgences. A dwindling minority of ministers, however, and some thousands of people scattered throughout Scotland, realized that accepting the indulgence meant recognizing the king as head of the church and Prelacy as the lawful government of the Church. These loyal Covenanters held out to the end, in the face of the most savage and bitter persecution, against such sacrifices of principle.

Driven to desperation by their persecutors, the Covenanters once and again rose up in armed resistance and defence of their religious rights and liberties. The first of these armed revolts oc-

curred in 1666, the second in 1679. The wisdom of these desperate attempts may be questioned, but the Covenanters had been driven beyond the breaking point by cruelties and oppressions. Both uprisings were suppressed by the government forces, and those who had taken any part in them were treated with barbarous cruelty.

Another desperate act of a few Covenanters was the murder of Archbishop Sharp, in 1679. Sharp was a notorious persecutor who had once been a Covenanter himself. This act of assassination cannot be justified, and it never was justified by the main body of the Covenanters, most of whom abhorred the deed.

To the loss of leaders by way of indulgences must be added the loss of leaders by persecution unto death. Many of the ministers, as well as other Covenanters, were shot, hanged or sent into banishment. Finally only a handful of the ministers remained. Richard Cameron was killed in 1680 in a clash with the king's troops soon after the posting of the Sanquhar Declaration (which declared that the king had violated his coronation oath and was therefore not qualified to occupy the throne). Donald Cargill, an elderly minister, was hanged in 1681. James Renwick, a youth of twenty-four, was hanged in 1688 on the verge of the Revolution. This left the Covenanters almost without ministers. They had paid the price of their testimony in anguish and blood.

The Principles of the Covenanters

Doctrinally, the Covenanters were Calvinists and adhered to the Westminster Standards. Their special claims, which resulted from the persecutions which they suffered, were set forth in published declarations, sermons and the dying testimonies of their martyrs. The specific claims of the Covenanters during and after the period of persecution, in distinction from the Prelatic Church of Scotland, the indulged ministers and the Stuart monarchy, consisted in a practical, as distinguished from a merely theoretical, testimony for: (1) the continuing obligation on the church and nation of Scotland of the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant; (2) the sole headship of Christ over the church, in opposition to the Erastian claim of the king to headship in ecclesiastical matters; (3) Christian civil government, in opposition to the tyranny of absolutism under which they had been suffering.

The Covenanters Since the Revolution of 1688

Freedom came at last with the end of the Stuarts and the accession of William of Orange as King of Scotland. The Prelatic form of government of the state Church of Scotland was abolished and the Presbyterian form restored, not as of divine right but as preferred by the majority of the people. The obligations of the great covenants of the Scottish Reformation were

not reaffirmed. The Covenanters who had witnessed and suffered through twenty-eight years of persecution attempted to get a fair hearing, but were haughtily brushed aside by those in positions of leadership and authority. The Covenanters were especially grieved that the king still claimed and was granted a degree of headship in the reconstituted Presbyterian Church. Unable to get satisfaction, they elected to remain

outside the official Church of Scotland, and to continue their worship in "society meetings." In 1733 they were able to attain ecclesiastical organization as the Reformed Presbytery, from which has come the Reformed Presbyterian Church as it exists today in Scotland, Ireland, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and foreign mission fields including Syria, Cyprus, China and Japan.

The Second Commandment

The Principle that God is to be worshipped only in ways prescribed in Holy Scripture and that the Holy Scripture prescribes the whole content of worship — Taught by Scripture itself

By William Young, Th. D.

Before inquiring into the Scripture warrant for the principle in question, it may be in the interest of clarity and accuracy to attempt a more precise formulation of the principle than that provided in the sub-title of this paper. We may first state the principle positively, then set it in contrast to other views, then mention certain qualifications of the principle.

The statement of the principle in the sub-title of this paper is redundant. That God is to be worshipped only in ways prescribed in Holy Scripture is implied in the statement that the Holy Scripture prescribes the whole content of worship. The principle in question may then be stated simply by the latter proposition, i.e., "The Holy Scripture prescribes the whole content of worship." By this is meant that all elements or parts of worship are prescribed by God Himself in His Word. This principle has universal reference to worship performed by men since the fall. In other words it has equal application to the Old and the New Testament. It is also universal in that it is regulative of all types of worship, whether public, family or private. It is in order to observe the universality of the principle, although our special concern is with public worship under the New Testament.

This principle has been formulated in contrast to other views, particularly to the principle that anything not expressly forbidden in the Word of God is allowable in the worship of God. QUOD SCRIPTURA NON VETAT, PERMITTIT (What Scripture does not forbid, it permits): This is the principle of the Romish Church, also of Lutherans and Anglicans embodied in the 20th Article of the Church of England: "The church has power to decree rites and ceremonies . . . and yet it is not lawful for the church to ordain anything contrary to God's Word written". The doctrine of the Calvinistic churches clearly formulated in the Westminster standards is sharply opposed to this: QUOD SCRIPTURA NON IUBET, VETAT (What Scripture does not command, it forbids). "The

silence of Scripture is as real a prohibition as a positive injunction to abstain."

We may also contrast this principle with the ambiguously stated principle that God is to be worshipped according to His Word. Of course it is true that God is to be worshipped according to His Word, but it is also true that the civil magistrate should administer his office according to the Word. In this sense, the worship of God would not be in principle regulated by the Word more directly than the conduct of civil government. Such is not the Calvinistic view of the character of the worship of God. Neither may we say that God's Word provides us with general principles of worship, but leaves the particulars of practice to the discretion of the Church. The whole content of worship includes the specific acts of worship as well as the broad principial basis of these acts. The Word of God, moreover, obviously prescribes specific acts of worship even in quite minute detail, in addition to laying down the general principles of worship. This principle may not be construed as admitting that Scripture itself opens up in the New Testament economy an area of liberty in the worship of God within which area nothing is prescribed by God and everything left to the judgment of men. The admission of such an area of liberty is tantamount to asserting the un-Reformed principle that anything not expressly forbidden in Scripture is allowable in the Worship of God. On the Reformed principle no part of the content of God's worship can be regarded as belonging to the adiaphora, to the class of actions neither required nor forbidden by Divine commandment. Whatever has not been commanded is IPSO FACTO prohibited.

That no misunderstanding may exist with respect to this principle it is necessary to make two qualifications, both of which are stated in Sec. 6 of the first chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith. First, that which may be derived by good and necessary consequences from the express statements of Scripture is no less binding than an

express command itself. Approved example has equal validity with a direct command, and even where approved example and express command may both be lacking or uncertain, as in the baptism of infants, necessary inference from the doctrine and commandments plainly set forth in Scripture may sufficiently warrant a practice of worship. Secondly, there are "some circumstances concerning the worship of God . . . common to human action and societies, which are to ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the word which are always to be observed."

That these circumstances constitute no part of the content of worship is clear from the following quotation from Gillespie, who writes of the conditions "requisite in such a thing as the church hath power to prescribe by her laws." First, it must be only a circumstance of divine worship; no substantial part of it; no sacred, significant and efficacious ceremony. For the order and decency left to the definition for the church, as concerning the particulars of it, comprehendeth no more but mere circumstances."

Again he writes, "We say truly of those several and changeable circumstances which are left to the determination of the church, that, being almost infinite they were not particularly determinable in Scripture; for the particular determination of those occurring circumstances which were to be rightly ordered in the works of God's service to the end of the world, and that ever according to the exigency of every present occasion and different case, should have filled the whole world with books. But as for other things pertaining to God's worship which are not to be reckoned among the circumstances of it, they being in number neither many, nor in change various, were most easily and conveniently determinable in Scripture." (Dispute against the English Popish Ceremonies in Presbyterian's Armoury, Vol. I, pp. 130, 131).

An even more precise definition of the circumstances that may be ordered by the church in connection with God's worship is given by John Owen in his "Discourse Concerning Liturgies." Owen distinguishes circumstances "which follow actions as actions from circumstances which do not of their own accord, nor naturally nor necessarily attend them." The former kind of circumstances "not determined by divine institution may be ordered, disposed of and regulated by the prudence of men." "As the action cannot be without them, so their regulation is arbitrary, if they come not under some divine disposition and order, as that of time in general doth. There are also some things which men call circumstances, also that no way belong of themselves to the actions whereof they are said to be the circumstances, nor do attend them, but are imposed on them, or annexed to them, by the arbitrary authority of those who take upon them to give order and rules in

such cases; such as to pray before an image, or toward the East, or to use this or that form of prayer in such gospel administrations, and no other. These are not circumstances attending the nature of the thing itself but are arbitrarily super-added to the things they are appointed to accompany. Whatever men may call such additions, they are no less parts of the whole wherein they serve than the things themselves whereunto they are adjoined. The schoolmen tell us that which is made so the condition of an action, that without it the action is not to be done, is not a circumstance of it, but such an adjunct as is a necessary part. But not to contend about the word, such additional that are called circumstantial, are made parts of worship as are made necessary by virtue of command to be observed." (Owen's Words, Gould's Ed., Vol XV., pp. 35, 36).

The qualification with respect to circumstances far from weakening the force of the regulative principle of worship rather sets in the sharpest focus the position that everything properly belonging to the content of worship must be the matter of divine commandment, not of human devising.

Having attempted a precise formulation of the principle regulative of worship, we may now turn to inquire as to the Scripture warrant for this principle. Before appealing to particular texts in which the principle is asserted, we should observe that it is a principle involved in several cardinal doctrines of the Word of God. The case for this principle rests not on a string of isolated proof texts, but upon the central concepts and doctrines of the Word of God. We shall content ourselves with stating five fundamental articles of our faith, from which this principle follows as a good and necessary consequence.

First: The Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and are therefore sufficient for all the needs of the church. II Tim. III, 16, 17. It clearly follows from the accepted Reformed doctrine of the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, that Scripture is the sole and sufficient rule for worship, particularly the worship of the Church. If the prescriptions of worship contained in Holy Writ are sufficient, why add ordinances of worship for which there is no need?

The attempt to avoid the force of this argument by the assertion that Scripture itself opens up an area of liberty in which it prescribes nothing as to the content of worship is vain. Such a position is a virtual denial of the sufficiency of Scripture and is certainly not the view of Scripture on which the Calvinistic reformation in Geneva, France, the low countries, and the British Isles proceeded. Just such an area of liberty would make allowance for Romish ceremonies retained by Lutherans and Anglicans but rejected universally by the Calvinists. The Calvinistic conception of the sufficiency of Scripture, which I

trust my readers are prepared to acknowledge to be the Scriptural conception, thus involves the regulative principle of worship. It is no accident that the regulative principle of worship makes its first appearance in the Westminster confession in connection with the discussion of the sufficiency of Scripture.

Second: The sole object of worship is the absolutely Sovereign God. The basic conception of Calvinism, God's absolute sovereignty, excludes worship of human devising. In anthropocentric systems of doctrine like Lutheranism or Arminianism, the human will may be allowed to define the content of worship at least in part, even as it contributes in part to man's salvation. But in the theocentric system of Calvinism, the autonomy of man's will is rejected in the face of God's absolute sovereignty. This is true at every step of the way, with respect to worship as well as to the plan of salvation. Man's will may contribute nothing more to God's worship than to God's plan of salvation, and it is no accident that will worship and rejection of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone flourish together. As Sovereign, God is the supreme Law-giver. As His sovereignty extends to His worship, so it is His sole prerogative to appoint the laws of His worship, to command of His subjects the way they ought to worship Him. Can it be anything other than presumption in a subject of the absolute Sovereign to offer as worship anything which has not been commanded? Can the inventions of the human will be set on the same level as the commands of the Divine Will as proper material of worship? That God shall allow worship other than what He has commanded is contrary to reason itself. Gillespie writes "How absurd a tenet is this, which holdeth that there is some particular worship of God allowed and not commanded? What new light is this which maketh all our divines to have been in the mist, who have acknowledged no worship of God, but that which God hath commanded? Who ever heard of commanded and allowed worship?" (op. cit. 118). The question raised by the Lord in Isaiah 1:12 thus applies to all worship offered to Him: "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand . . . ?"

Third: The total corruption and deceitfulness of the human heart disqualifies man from judging what is to be admitted into the worship of God. It may be that before the fall, our first parents had written on their hearts the law of worship and by looking within the depth of their own beings, could read off the commandments of God. Yet even then, they were not without direct external communication of the will of Him who walked and talked with them in the garden.

Since the fall, however, though the human conscience still witnesses in all men that worship is due to the supreme Being, no information can be gained from the heart of man as to how God is to be worshipped. The idolatry and superstition not only of the heathen in their blindness

but of the professing Christian Church enjoying the full light of God's Word sufficiently demonstrates this to be the case. It goes without saying that the unregenerate consciousness, blind to spiritual things, is unfit to determine matters concerning the worship of God. Worship that is the invention of the heart of men, every imagination of the thoughts of which is only evil continually, in the nature of the case cannot be acceptable to a holy God.

What requires, however, to be emphasized is that the regenerate consciousness is no more fit than the unregenerate to decide what may be introduced into God's worship. The regenerate, it must be remembered, ever groan under the burden of sin that dwells in them, and therefore should well know that their understanding and will are not to be trusted to determine what is acceptable worship before God. The enlightened understanding is content to learn God's precepts and the renewed will to walk in them, but the regenerate heart as such cannot desire to make the slightest addition to God's commandments. Whenever true believers have acted inconsistently in this respect, they have invariably allowed great corruption to be introduced into God's sanctuary.

Fourth: Christ is the sole Head and King over His body, the church. In the exercise of His headship and Kingship, the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed the ordinances of His house. This applies in particular to the public worship of the New Testament Church. How may a minister of Christ with a clear conscience administer any rite or ceremony of worship in the Lord's house without warrant from his Lord and King? To add human inventions to Christ's express commands is to usurp an authority which is not ministerial, but which is tantamount to placing the doctrines and commandments of men upon the same level as the commands of the Lord Jesus. The pretense that the humanly invented modes of worship are optional, whereas Christ's commands are mandatory, is to no avail. We have already noted the absurdity of distinguishing two kinds of worship, prescribed and allowed.

It is also worthy of note that in practice no difference is made between the two types of worship. Hymns of human composition and divinely inspired psalms are sung the one after the other, as if the one were offered to God in obedience to the Lord's appointment as much as the other. Furthermore, the people are led to feel that the one type of worship is of the same character as the other and that they are no less bound to engage in the one than in the other. Quite apart from the evil of singing the word of man alongside of God's Word, we would now stress the inevitable binding of the conscience of the ordinary worshipper by the inventions of men, as soon as those inventions are given the same place as Divine institutions which truly bind the conscience.

In this connection it should be observed that the regulative principle of worship, far from abridging the scope of genuine Christian liberty, is the preeminent safeguard of Christian liberty in matters of worship. It is this principle that has again and again liberated Christ's little flock from the impositions of man in the worship of God. Deliverance from human tyranny and complete subjection to Christ's commands are involved in one another, and these two are but the negative and positive elements of Christian liberty in the worship of God.

Fifth: In the same connection the character of the Church's constitution should be kept in view. Even as the doctrine, government and discipline of the Church have been prescribed by Christ, so also has its worship. May any doctrine be taught which the great Prophet has not revealed? May any new office or function be added to the government of the Christ's Church that the Head of the Church has not provided for? May anything be counted an offense but that which Christ has declared to be such in His Word? So also may anything be added to the content of His worship that He has not prescribed?

We may sum up the above argument from the central teachings of Scripture in the words of William Cunningham: "The truth of the principle, as a general rule for the guidance of the Church, is plainly enough involved in what Scripture teaches concerning its own sufficiency and perfection as a rule of faith and practice, concerning God's exclusive right to determine in what ways He ought to be worshipped, concerning Christ's exclusive right to settle the constitution, laws and arrangements of His kingdom, concerning the unlawfulness of will-worship and concerning the utter unfitness of men for the function which they have so often and so boldly usurped in this matter."

In adducing Scripture warrant for the regulative principle of our Reformed worship, we will not confine ourselves to inferences, as good and necessary as these inferences are. The inferences prove the principle by bringing to light that it is part and parcel of the Calvinistic system. But that system itself rests on Scripture revelation and so also does this principle which we may defend by direct appeal to Scripture passages. Let us first consider a number of passages expressly asserting this principle and then observe certain Scripture examples confirming it.

The first passage we may consider in this connection is the Second Commandment, Ex. XX, 4, 5. It might be said that the Second Commandment contains an express prohibition of idolatry and nothing more and thus has no bearing upon the question. From the point of view of historic Presbyterianism, however, this is not the case. Our Larger Catechism states, among other rules to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments "that under one sin or duty,

all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded, together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto." (Q. 99). The Larger Catechism further includes among the sins forbidden in the second commandment, "all devising, counselling, commanding, using and any wise approving any religious worship not instituted by God Himself . . . all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, added to it, or taken from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense whatsoever." (Q. 109).

The prohibition of idolatry is thus understood to involve the regulative principle. As John Knox expressed the matter pointedly: "All worshipping, honoring, or service invented by the brain of man in the religion of God, without his own express commandment, is idolatry." (Works, Vol. III, p. 34). One might view the matter this way. Idols are the work of men's hands. Men make them unto themselves for the worship of God as fit means for the worship of God. Deeper even than the fact that the idol is unfit to represent the invisible God, is the fact that it is the product of man's own brain and hand. And every product of man's brain and hand introduced into God's worship is, in the very nature of the case, an idol.

The correctness of the historic Presbyterian doctrine of the Second Commandment is verified by several other passages of the Mosaic Law, in which the Church is expressly forbidden to add anything to the commandments of God respecting His worship and service. (Deut. IV, 2; XII, 32; cf. Proverbs XXX, 6). When Moses was about to make the tabernacle, he was admonished by God, "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." (Exodus XXV, 40; Heb. VIII, 5).

The minuteness of detail in the divine prescriptions as to the construction of the tabernacle and as to the practice of worship to be performed in it made it perfectly plain to God's ancient people that whatever was not commanded was forbidden. Those who, contrary to such clear light, worshipped God with their own inventions, as we shall see, became the object of the fearful vengeance of a jealous God. In this connection observe that the jealousy of God is revealed to idolatrous corruptions of and superstitious additions to His worship. Meditation on this much forgotten attribute of God should impress us with the grave importance of the purity of God's sanctuary. The Lord will not suffer His bride to seek after her own heart and eyes, after which she is accustomed to go a whoring (Numbers XV, 39, 40), but visits such faithfulness with the severest rebukes.

A most remarkable passage bearing on the question is Jer. VIII, 31: "They have built the

high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart." How clearly does this passage show that God does not view sin as does man. Man would revolt at the unnatural and inhuman cruelty of the burning of the fruit of one's own body before an idol. But in God's mind this is but secondary, the essential evil being that it is worship which He did not command, neither came it into His heart.

Owen writes in this connection: "Moreover to testify what weight He laid on the observance of these general prohibitions, when men found out other ways of worship than what He had appointed, though the particulars were such as fell under other special interdictions, yet the Lord was pleased to place the great aggravation of their sin in the contempt of those general rules mentioned. This is that He urgeth them with, that they did things by Him not appointed; of not observing anything in religion but what He requires, that He presseth them withal. The command is general, 'Ye shall add nothing to what I have instituted.' And the aggravation of the sin pressed by Him relates not to the particular nature of it, but to the general command or prohibition, 'ye have done what I commanded you not.' That the particular evil condemned was also against other special commands of God, is merely accidental to the general nature of the crime they were urged withal. And whereas God hath given out these general rules and precepts, 'you shall do whatever I command you, and according as I command you; you shall add nothing thereunto, nor take anything therefrom,' can the transgression of this rule be any otherwise expressed but this, 'They did the thing which He commanded not, nor did it ever come into his heart?'" (op. cit. p. 41). As Gillespie puts it briefly, "Howsoever manifold wickedness might have been challenged in that which they did, yet if any would dispute with God upon the matter, He stoppeth their mouths with this one answer: 'I commanded it not, neither came it into my heart.'" (op. cit. p. 136).

The objection may be raised that, while it became the state of the Church in the Old Testament to have all ordinances of worship prescribed even in minute detail, the New Testament economy is free from such restriction. The Church, it may be said, has passed from childhood to years of maturity where it can exercise discretion and liberty in determining its own worship.

In reply, it must be said that this would be contrary to the identity of the Covenant of Grace in both the old and the new dispensation. The principle regulating the worship of God's people belongs to the substance of the covenant of grace. With reference to the heavenly Father, the most mature saint remains a covenant child, and the most mature state of the Church itself remains

subject to the ordinances imposed by the Church's Head and Lord. Notwithstanding the changes involved in abrogation of the ceremonial law, there is no change in the Divine prerogative of appointing the worship to be rendered by the Church. The teaching of our Lord and His apostles on this matter is quite express. In condemning the Pharisees for their tradition as to eating bread with unwashed hands, the Lord quotes the words of Isaiah: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mk. VII, 7) and comments "For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do." (vs. 8). The Lord goes on to show that human traditions added to God's Word have the effect of making that Word of none effect. Additions to the Word of God in worship will not allow the Word itself to stand. Professor Petticrew observes: "Laying aside the commandments of God, that they may keep their own tradition! Is there not a close likeness between this action, thus condemned by Christ, and the action of those in modern times who lay aside the Divine Ordinance of the singing of the Psalms that they may keep their own man-appointed ordinance of the singing of uninspired hymns in the place of the Psalms? (In Psalm Singers' Conference" p. 73).

Observe also the terms of the Great Commission: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Mt. XXVIII, 20). Here there is to be found authority for worship in the New Testament Church by the means appointed by the Church's Lord. But there is no authority for anything besides those appointed means. Observe the Lord does not give authority to His disciples to teach man to observe what He has not forbidden, but only what He has commanded them. The charter of the New Testament Church at this point is expressed in identical terms as those of the Mosaic economy which we have seen so expressly to exclude the inventions of men from the worship of God. No addition to or subtraction from Christ's commands may be allowed in the New Testament any more than with respect to the commands given on Mount Sinai in the Old. As we read concerning Moses again and again that he did all as the Lord commanded him, so the Apostles organized the worship and government of the Christian Church according to Christ's commands. We have no more right to alter that Divinely instituted pattern of ordinances for the New Testament Church than Nadab and Abihu, Saul, Jeroboam, or any others in the Old. The apostle Paul expressly condemns will worship, worship according to the doctrines and commandments of men. (Col. II, 22, 23). The will of God, not the will of man, is the rule of the worship of the New Testament Church.

The examples by which Scripture enforces this principle may occupy our attention briefly.

First: The sacrifices of Cain and Abel. Though Abel was accepted as coming in true faith which was lacking in the case of Cain, yet it would appear that Abel's offering was also intrinsically more excellent than his brother's. True faith will bring to God the offering of penitence and praise that He has appointed as He has appointed, while unbelief brings an offering of its own choosing in a perfunctory manner. Cain appears not to have brought the best of what he had as did Abel. (Gen. IV, 3, 4). Equally striking is the reference to the atoning blood in Abel's offering for which he had the precedent of the animals slain by the Lord's own hand to provide coats of skin to cover the nakedness of our parents. (Gen. III, 21). From the beginning, acknowledgement of the imputed righteousness of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and meticulous observance of Divinely instituted methods of worship appear to be yoked inseparably.

Second: If there be doubt as to the case of Cain and Abel, there is no obscurity in the least in the instance of Nadab and Abihu. (Lev. X, 1,7). The strange fire they offered before the Lord "Wherefore God had given to them no charge" was "a common fire and not of that fire which God had commanded to burn day and night before the altar of burnt sacrifice, which only ought to have been offered unto God." (John Knox). Nadab and Abihu were Aaron's Sons, priests next to himself. They seem to have had no unworthy motive in their offering, they desired no earthly gain but only to honor God, and that in a way he had not expressly forbidden. They did nothing more than substitute fire of their own for that which the Lord had commanded. Yet for this act they were instantaneously consumed by fire from the Lord.

John Knox comments further: "Whereof it is plain, that neither the pre-eminence of the person of man that maketh or setteth up any religion, without the express commandment of God, nor yet the intent whereof he doeth the same is accepted before God. For nothing in his religion will he admit without his own Word, but all that is added thereto doth he abhor, and punisheth the inventors and doers thereof, as you have heard in Nadab and Abihu, by Gideon and diverse other Israelites setting up something to honour God, whereof they had no express commandment." (op. cit. p. 38). Can the Lord be pleased with the fire of strange praise on the lips of men, which He has not commanded, any more than with the strange fire offered by Nadab and Abihu? Disrespect for His Command and neglect of His own provision in the interest of our inventions cannot but provoke His indignation.

Third: Reference may be made also to (a) Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Numbers XVI; (b) Moses smiting the rock at Kadesh, Numbers XX; (c) The rejection of Saul, I Sam. XIII; (d) The

handling of the ark, I Chron. XV, 13, as a few instances chosen from among many.

We may conclude this discussion with the following quotation from Dr. James Begg: "The first thing necessary is to fix the principle which regulates New Testament worship. There is a tremendous emphasis in the question of the king of Moab, 'Wherewithal shall I come before God, and bow myself before the Most High?' To hear many speak at present, one would suppose that there was nothing less solemn than an act of worship, and that, instead of raising the question, 'What in worship is pleasing and acceptable to God?' they have simply to consider, 'What is pleasing and acceptable to themselves and each other?' They perfectly well understand that they must study the most minute rules of the court before they can dare to be permitted to approach an earthly sovereign; but they presumptuously imagine that it is, and ought to be, the easiest thing possible to enter into the presence of the King of kings, before whose awful majesty angels veil their faces whilst they adore. They forget that it is in connection with His own worship that God proclaims Himself in the second commandment to be 'a jealous God,' and that it has been in the same connection with His worship that this jealousy has most frequently flamed forth in the past history of the Church — in the case of Cain, of Korah, of Uzzah, of the buyers and sellers in the temple. Corruption here is corruption at the fountain head, fitted to cause the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit of God, and thus to leave the Church to sink under deeper and more hopeless evils; whilst, if we consider the relation of the thrice holy God to fallen sinners, the wonder is not that our mode of access into His presence is strictly regulated, but that any such access is permitted to us at all" (James Begg, "The use of organs and other instruments of music in Christian worship Indefensible," pp. 11, 12).

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Is there some problem in your life to solve,
Some passage seeming full of mystery?
God knows, Who brings the hidden things to light.
He keeps the key.

Unfailing comfort, sweet and blessed rest,
To know of every door He keeps the key. —
That He at last just when He sees 'tis best,
Will give it thee.

Violence in the Old Testament

By the Rev. J. R. Muirden

Note: The following article is reproduced, with grateful acknowledgment, from the July, 1962, issue of **The Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland**. We regard this article as a valuable contribution to serious efforts to face a difficult problem on the basis of acceptance of the Bible as the infallible Word of God. — Editor

There appeared lately in the correspondence columns of one of our Scottish newspapers a series of letters on this subject. The dispute was occasioned by newspaper reports of an address by Mrs. Knight of Aberdeen, well known as the advocate of Scientific Humanism. In that address she questioned the wisdom and moral rightness of instructing children from the historical parts of the Old Testament, replete as they are with tales of violence and bloodshed. The story of Joshua and the invasion of Canaan, figured very largely in the ensuing correspondence.

The Problem Involved

There is without doubt a question here which has often perplexed Christian people, and has occasioned at times real distress of mind to those who regard the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Their problem is simple. How can the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, as the New Testament so rightly calls Him, be the same Who commanded Israel to deal with the Canaanites with such pitiless severity? Men, women and little children were to be slaughtered without mercy. "Ye shall save alive nothing that breathes." Can we, must we, then believe that God actually insisted on the destruction of these people, and that His servants, Moses and Joshua, were willing instruments in a work which to men of today savours of the utmost barbarity?

To put it quite bluntly, does He Who in the New Testament says to His people "Be ye also merciful, even as your Father which is in heaven is merciful," appear to say to His people in the Old Testament, "Be ye merciless to the Canaanites?" And if so, why? That is the problem.

It is well to point out here that in the course of the correspondence one problem in the wider O.T. connection was solved by Mrs. Knight herself. For this we should be grateful to her. She had quoted, as an example of Old Testament savagery 2 Sam. 12: 31, where the A.V. declares that David put the defeated Ammonites "under saws and under harrows of iron". It appears, as Mrs. Knight pointed out in a later letter that the A.V. translation is faulty. The R.S.V. says, "he made them to labour with saws and iron picks"!

But to return to our main problem that of the treatment meted out by Joshua to the Canaanites, it is quite clear that there is no question of mistranslation here. The command for their wholesale destruction is too often repeated, and its practical implementation too frequently demonstrated to permit such easy explanation. The massacre, for that is what it was, of the Midianites, the obliteration of Jericho with the shocking fate of Achan and his family, are only the first stages in the progress of slaughter and desolation which left only the Gibeonites as a strangely isolated instance of what must appear a quixotically scrupulous display of mercy on the part of those who were otherwise quite merciless.

Now these are facts which have to be faced. It will not do for us to push them to the back of our minds, or to step lightly over them when we come across them in our reading, stilling our incipient doubts with the assurance that there must be an explanation somewhere, and a good one, since the Bible is the inspired Word of the God Who is revealed in Jesus Christ. But what happens when someone like Mrs. Knight rudely and publicly, as she has every right to do, takes the lid off what we have been so hopefully concealing from our own conscience? The problem can no longer be shirked.

Is there an answer? Above all, is there an answer to the greatest problem that is involved, namely, why did God command these things? That men might be so apparently cruel does not surprise us so much. But all this was done at the Divine and repeated command!

Inadequate Explanations

We only dodge the problem, and incidentally introduce, by implication, new problems of an even more profound kind, when we offer as explanation, a commonly accepted theory of Progressive Revelation which makes the God of the Old Testament in effect just the tribal deity of the Israelites, and the Old Testament itself the record, not of the Progressive Self-Revelation of God, but of something more like the Progressive Discovery of God by man. This theory misuses the word Revelation, and involves ascribing to the Most High, particularly in the early stages of such Discovery, commands and utterances which have the stamp of the ignorance of the times upon them. If this is so, then we cannot be sure, even today, if the God Whom we worship is anything more than a creation of man himself, developed over the millenia out of his progressive consciousness of deity. This is only one stage removed from worshipping a god made by our own hands! One would be better to be an honest atheist like

Mrs. Knight herself than fool oneself by worshipping a God Who has no objective existence outside of man's own consciousness. One would at least be more clear-eyed as to what one was doing.

No indeed, it does not help, far otherwise, to suggest that in the story of the subjugation of Canaan, words and actions ascribed to God there are to be regarded as merely representing a stage in Israel's religious development when Jehovah was their tribal deity and therefore one who, according to the universal practice of such deities in such times, was all for his own, and had no interest in other nations except in their destruction. Let man's errors about God be ascribed to man alone. To transfer them to God is to make Him the creature of our own frailty and ignorance, and therefore ultimately non-existent!

But if one believes that the God of the Bible, Old Testament and New, is One and the Same, the Eternal Maker of Heaven and Earth, the transcendent and sovereign God of Truth and Holiness, Faithful and unchanging in Goodness and Love, then a better explanation of the Book of Joshua has to be sought. He does not change. He does not progress or develop. He does not command in the Old Testament, even when man was at his most primitive, things which He forbids and condemns in the New.

So that explanation will not do. There is another however which is free from the gravest inadequacies of that one. Nevertheless it has its own weakness, or so it appears to the writer, in that it is hardly sufficient to cover the unique character of the problem. Let me state it first.

We realize if we are at all acquainted with the story, that all those nations which then inhabited the land of Canaan, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, and so on, were heathen idolaters. We may even have recognized that they were, mainly as a result, morally depraved to a degree hardly imaginable by us. The Bible indicated that they were. And therefore we may have seen, in their wickedness itself a sufficient reason for the fate which Divine Justice assigned to them. But even then, a nagging doubt remains. In this an adequate explanation in what is plainly a special and distinctive case? For this case is unique. History has the record of other nations and other civilisations which grew old in wickedness and were overthrown and destroyed by the judgment of God. In their case, however, we see a procession of second causes operating. They became rich and so grew flabby. Ease and the love of pleasure made them weak, so that they became increasingly the prey of their more virile neighbors, until they perished. In this we can see the hand of God. Every civilisation has in it the seeds of its own destruction which germinate and develop and at length become a harvest of the Wrath of God. But the seed is their own.

But here are a number of peoples wiped out of existence, without prior warning or offer of mercy. There was no Jonah sent to call them to repentance. No possibility either of repentance or of escape was offered to them. Here are no second causes in operation whereby they contributed to their own inevitable dissolution, and no natural forces called into action to overwhelm them as Sodom and Gomorrah. Instead we have a direct and patent intervention of God Who prepared, equipped and sent His own chosen people with an emphatic command to destroy them without mercy. He not only destroyed them, He used His own people to do so! Nowhere else in human history, in the Bible or out of it, can we find a parallel!

So the question becomes even more urgent. Why were these people destroyed? To say the Israelites needed their land is no answer at all. They could have driven them out. They could have enslaved them. They did neither. They simply erased them from among men, without pity; and they did so because God commanded them to do so.

A Possible Explanation

All we have done so far is to indicate the insufficiency of all the accepted explanations, and thereby, be it admitted, so give only a keener edge to the mystery. One possibility remains, but there are elements in it and implications involved which are too disturbing for us to state it plainly at this point. Let us as it were work our way gently towards it.

We remember of course that we are not seeking to justify Israel, or even Moses or Joshua in this matter. That is not our problem. Our problem concerns the Divine Commandment. So for the moment let us forget the human instruments.

We believe that God never commands without reason. That we take as an axiom. There are many commandments in His Word, to different people, at different times, for different immediate ends. We can take it that none of these are ever arbitrary; behind them, each and all, we can find, if we look for it, a gracious purpose for men. We do not see His Laws aright unless we see this. Even when, for instance, in the First Table of the Law, the first four Commands of the Decalogue appear at first sight to be concerned solely with the maintenance of the Divine honour, they are nevertheless expressive always of a loving desire for the good of man. They are all, every one of God's commandments for the benefit of mankind, and would, and do, prove so when they are rightly observed. What our Lord said of the Fourth Commandment is true of them all. They were "made for man", for his highest and best good.

But here is a command for the destruction of a section of mankind! Must we make an exception here? I do not think so! We dare not! However strange it may appear the rule must hold good here too, namely that the commandment for the destruction of the Canaanites was a gracious one, ultimately, for mankind. It cannot be different from His other commandments.

They had to perish for the good of mankind! That is what we are saying. A tremendous statement, surely, and one which insists on proof being forthcoming. Is there evidence to suggest that their annihilation was for the good of the race, or conversely, that their continued survival was a real threat, a positive danger to humanity?

Such an explanation is the only one left. I have stated the theological case for it. But is there Biblical evidence to substantiate such a startling conclusion? Let us "to the Law and to the Testimony"!

The Biblical Evidence (a) Midian

When we examine the Scriptural record we find something which only we today, in this 20th century, could perhaps be expected to find, or could understand when we did find it. There is one factor which has never been given the prominence which is owing to it, in the story of the invasion of Canaan, but one which nevertheless throws light on many a mysterious thing, and in particular, on many a dark and bloody deed. It lies, thinly veiled, beneath the simple account of Israel's war with the Canaanites and, when revealed, it shows that if the Old Testament here seems to exalt violence and bloodshed it is only because it is drawing that veil over more shocking things still!

This factor is the medical one. Not only were the Canaanites morally corrupt because of the idolatry they practised, but it is clear from the story that they were physically degenerate too, from the same cause, so much so in fact that they were a long-term danger to the human race, as well as a more immediate danger to Israel. For the good of humanity they had to be destroyed!

But the evidence! It is plainly there in the Books of Numbers and Joshua. First of all, because it gives us the whole thing in a nutshell, we must take the case of the Midianites. Again, I am indebted to Mrs. Knight. It was she, strange as it may seem, who drew attention to the one instance which explains the rest. The story is in Numbers 15: 1-13 and 31: 1-24. The reader had better at this point get out his Bible and read the account of Israel's sin in the matter of Baal-Peor of the plague that followed, the action of Phinehas, and the subsequent campaign (chap. 31) for the total destruction of Midian.

Now once we understand one thing here, the rest falls into place and the jig-saw of recorded

events becomes a complete story, that grips and startles the imagination. We have to realise that the plague which as a result of the sin of Baal-Peor, slew 24,000 of Israel with such horrifying rapidity, was one caught by infection from the Midianites. Involved is the fact, not to be disputed, that these people were rotten with disease! In Numbers 31: 15, 16, Moses indicates that it was through the women of Midian that the evil operated. The action of Phinehas (chap. 25) confirms this. It is quite clear that the disease was a venereal one. It was endemic among the Canaanites, and because of the evils associated with their particular form of idolatry virtually the whole population was infected. Doubtless it took its own deadly toll among them, but when those like Israel without an acquired or inherited measure of immunity came into contact with them, its virulence must have been frightful. The terror and dismay that its ravages caused can be seen in chapter 25: 6.

It is however when we come to chapter 31 that we find remarkable confirmation of this assessment of the situation. Midian, like Carthage, but with far more reason, had to be destroyed! The command was given, and the army set out. For safety's sake it was the smallest that could do the dreadful work, 12,000 chosen men out of Israel's 600,000 warriors. They knew what they had to do, and to make sure they did it, the resolute Phinehas went with them. But let it be said, they had little stomach for the job. Even though they knew, by bitter observation, the havoc wrought among their countrymen by contact with the women of Midian they could not do a thing so hateful to their natural feelings. They brought the women and children home.

The rest of the story is really astonishing. When they return laden with booty leading their captors and driving the flocks and herds before them Moses and Eleazar forestall them. They bring deadly danger with them; they must not enter the camp. Before they do so there is much to be done.

The first and most dreadful thing is the killing of the women and children. There are implications here too horrible almost to contemplate. Let us be brief. These women were poisoners. A feature of Midianite idolatry was apparently the universal prostitution of the womenfolk. One does not comment beyond mentioning the fact, that far too many of the young boys had the disease within them for any of them to be spared either.

Now what neither bitter experience nor the presence of Phinehas could bring these men to do, the authority of Moses achieved. What a man that was! How complete was his control over Israel by this time! Those soldiers were brave men, but they were not brutal. Their feelings revolted from the slaughter of the defence-

less and the weak. But Moses knew and they in their hearts knew, that their own survival and that of their own women and children was in the balance. And while their natural dislike for the task was proof against the memory of what these women had already done to their friends, and against the example and the presence of Phinehas, it could not stand against the authority of Moses. So the fell work was done.

In some ways the most remarkable part of the account is what follows. Remember, these events took place 35 centuries ago! Modern medical science has accustomed us to such things as isolation, quarantine, restriction of movement, sterilisation and so on as means for controlling the spread of infection. But who told the Israelites about these things? They are supposed to have been primitive. At least, that what we have been told time and again by the Old Testament experts, so often in fact that some of us have been in danger of believing them. Let the reader take up his Bible and read the passage again, recalling the proper procedure in the case of an outbreak of smallpox or of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and he can hardly help coming to the conclusion that Preventive Medicine has taken 3,500 years to catch up with the Book of Numbers!

The Biblical Evidence (b) Jericho

All this happened however in Moses' time and "on the other side Jordan". ! The real task facing Israel lay across the river where the city fortresses of the Hittites and the Amorites awaited subjugation. Things were no different there. The same idolatry, the same evil, the same danger all existed there. Here surely was the greatest test yet facing Israel, one which demanded not just courage, for they had plenty of that, but that kind of cold-blooded resolution which can override a man's natural feelings of pity. Would they stand such a test? If they failed, they perished.

Could they do what had to be done? As they stood by Jordan, that question was made doubly agonising for those who understood the issues, by the fact that Moses was dead (Joshua 1: 1-2). His personal ascendancy and authority had died with him. Strange indeed it must have seemed, that when his presence was most needed, he should be taken away! Would they follow his successor as they had followed and obeyed him, implicitly? But see Joshua 4: 14. Authority had not after all died with Moses. It only returned to its source, to be redeployed, in Joshua. Christian, look and learn!

But even then, more had to happen before Israel's fighting men were equipped, mentally, for the fearful work they had to do. Has the reader ever wondered why the one city Jericho was singled out for such special treatment? I do not refer to the strange way in which it was overthrown and flung open to the invading armies.

That was intended to reassure Israel that, although the nation was now "under new management", the promises made to Moses of the Divine Power and Protection still held good. I refer instead to the enactment whereby everything, literally everything, within that city was "devoted". Every living thing was to be killed; anything that would burn was to be burnt. Only the metal, precious or otherwise, was to go into the Treasury. The ruins of the city itself were put under a curse (Joshua 6: 17). Many other cities did Joshua destroy (see for instance (Joshua 10: 28-43). Yet none of these was treated as Jericho was.

Partly the aim, no doubt, was to strike fear into the hearts of the rest of the Canaanites, and at the same time induce them to resist in very desperation, thus ensuring their destruction. But principally, it was all intended as a hardening, stiffening process on the Israelites themselves. Jericho was the first city they met. It was a kind of test case. It was to be destroyed utterly. If Israel obeyed here, the rest would be easier. Hence the whole weight of what we would call nowadays the propaganda machine was brought to bear, to bring Israel to the point of complete obedience for the future. Even the dreadful thing that happened to Achan and his family because he took the "accursed thing" falls into place within the scope of this great purpose. One pauses to wonder here if Achan had actually brought infection into his home by his action. However, be that as it may, the memory of the Valley of Achor with its solitary heap of stones must often have served as a deterrent to dangerous weakness in the grim days ahead.

Now it may be for all I know or can foresee, that archaeology may yet have something to say on this whole question. But that the explanation I have given is the right one, I am convinced. No other will fit the facts, or explain so many mysterious things in the record. From it all there emerges a new image of Joshua and Israel very different from that presented by the critics of the Bible. They were not blood-thirsty savages, who killed for the lust of killing, but honourable men, far from devoid of the finer feelings, who acted, partly out of a desperate fear for their own lives, and partly (we do hope they knew it) for the welfare of humanity at large. The Divine Commandment in the matter takes its place alongside God's other precepts, as being for the ultimate and long-term good of the human race. For, brutal as such an estimate might appear, these peoples of Canaan were a cancer in the body of humanity, for which there was only one treatment possible, excision! We regret the fate that overtook them, but only in the same way as we regret the amputation of a gangrenous limb.

One question remains. What the particular disease was that was so swift and deadly in its effects, is not easy to say. One's first conjecture is that it is now unknown. Joshua buried it with

the Canaanites. But second thoughts suggest otherwise. Apart from the fact that in all likelihood there was more than one disease involved, which complicates the whole question, it is evident that the evil thing contracted through the "iniquity of Peor" was not in every case quickly fatal, for it continued to trouble Israel for many a day (Joshua 22: 17). Moreover, not all the Canaanites perished (Judges 1). Although the worst features of their idolatry were probably suppressed, many of themselves lived on, to be "scourges in the sides and thorns in the eyes" of the Israelites. So no doubt the evil thing among them survived too, but not to the extent or in the virulent form the Israelites met at Peor. Then, like other diseases, it had probably lost some of its deadly power over the centuries. But it is still with us, unhappily for society.

If now we stand back a little, artist-fashion and view the picture which has emerged from between the lines of the simple Old Testament account of events, the impression we gain is surely one that is sombre indeed, dark in places to

the point of horror. Yet it has its highlights too. We see stern and high resolve, of men faced with the most fearful dilemma, whether to be merciful or to perish! Among other things, the thought occurs to compare these times with our own. We should do so, of course, every time we read our Bibles. Today we fear, with good reason, the powers of destruction involved in possible nuclear war. But the story of Midian and the Canaanites reminds us that men have in their day endured the threat of even more horrible things. One notices that men can speak, vociferously at times, of the dangers of nuclear attack, but that there is one form of warfare they do not care to think about too much — biological warfare. Joshua and Israel met it long ago, for that was what Balaam the son of Beor deliberately let loose against them. But they survived, and in surviving did more for mankind than posterity gives them credit for. As for the Canaanites, they fell as casualties in the long struggle between good and evil, on one occasion in human history when that struggle erupted into physical conflict. Only, they fell on the wrong side.

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

IV.

ARGUMENT FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN STANDARDS.

In arguing against the use of instrumental music in public worship from the Presbyterian standards—that is, the formularies of doctrine, government and worship of the Presbyterian Church—I desire it to be distinctly understood that they are not viewed or treated as an authority independent of the inspired Word of God. All the authority which they possess—every whit of it — is derived from that Word. Apart from it they have none. In the first place, as human compositions they may or may not exactly accord with the Scriptures and faithfully represent their meaning. So far as they do, and only so far as they do, they are clothed with the authority of the divine Word itself, and as every Christian admits that the authority of that Word is binding upon all men, they, to that extent, confessedly exercise a controlling authority upon all men. In the second place, the members, and especially the officers of that church of which they are a directory of faith and practice, are, over and beyond this general obligation which rests upon all men, under a special obligation resulting from their voluntary acceptance of these standards as a

true interpretation of the Scriptures, and from their covenanted agreement with their brethren of the same faith and order to be governed by them as the constitution of their church. It is, therefore, with reference to them, not exclusively, but in a very special sense, that, in the construction and development of this particular argument, the appeal is made to the Presbyterian standards. I speak as unto wise men; let them judge what may be said in relation to this venerable tribunal.

Let it be also noticed that, in pursuing this particular line of argument, it is by no means claimed that new material proofs are derived from these formularies. The proofs have already been presented from the Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and of the New, and the conclusion which they justify has already been reached and enounced. The present appeal is to the standards as clearly summing up the scriptural proofs and definitely enforcing the conclusion, and as having a peculiar authority for those who, in the conflict of religious opinions, have adopted them as, in their judgment, a correct statement and exposition of the law of the Lord. But in addition to this, let it be remarked, these standards clearly define the limitations upon such discretionary power in the sphere of worship, and in every other

sphere, as is to be conceded to the church. They define it both negatively—declaring what it is not; and positively—declaring what it is; and it is in this especial regard that the reference to their authority is invested with interest and importance.

1. Instrumental music is, by good and necessary consequence, excluded from the public worship of the church by the exposition which the Catechisms furnish of the Second Commandment. In the citation of their words, only such will be adduced as bear upon the subject of worship and are relevant to the question in hand.

“What,” asks the Larger Catechism, (Questions 108, 109, 110.) “are the duties required in the second commandment?” “The duties required in the second commandment are the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his Word . . . Also, the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship, and, according to each one’s place and calling, removing it.”

“What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?” “The sins forbidden in the second commandment are: All devising, counselling, commanding, using, and any wise approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself; . . . all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever; . . . all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed.”

“What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it?” “The reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it, contained in these words, For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments; are, besides God’s sovereignty over us and propriety in us, his fervent zeal for his own worship, and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom; accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations, and esteeming the observers of it such as love him and keep his commandments, and promising mercy to them unto many generations.”

The Shorter Catechism (Questions 50, 51, 52) thus condenses these statements of the Larger: “The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath

appointed in his Word.” It “forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his Word.” “The reasons annexed . . . are, Gods sovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.”

Let us attentively consider the features of this commandment which are signalized by these formularies:

(1.) The zeal and jealousy, fervent and lasting, which God manifests touching everything that concerns his worship. This is suited to arrest our notice, and to alarm and restrain those who assert their right to decree rites and ceremonies, and to regulate divine worship according to their own judgment and taste as to what is fitting and decorous in the services of the Lord’s house. He himself stands guard over his own sanctuary, and, armed with bolts of vengeance, threatens with condign punishment the invaders of his prerogative, the usurpers of his rights. We have seen how awfully this lesson was enforced under the old dispensation, how swiftly, like lightning, his judgments flashed against rash and insolent assertors of their own will in regard to the mode in which he was to be worshipped, and how severely he dealt with his own choicest and holiest servants for departures from his prescriptions in this matter. This vehement zeal and jealousy of God for the purity of his worship should deter us from venturing one step beyond the directions of his Word. Who, for the sake of the ornaments of art and the suggestions of fancy, would unnecessarily challenge the visitations of his wrath? In this dispensation he is patient and forbearing, but who will coolly elect to go, with the unexpunged guilt of encroaching upon the sovereignty of God over the worship of his house, to the tremendous bar of last accounts?

(2.) The great principle is here brought out and emphasized, that not only is what God has positively commanded to be obeyed, but what he has not commanded is forbidden. The law is, not that we are at liberty to act when God has not spoken, but just the contrary; we have no right to act when he is silent. It will not answer to say in justification of some element of worship that God has not expressly prohibited it; we must produce a divine warrant for it. The absence of such a warrant is an interdiction. The exposition of the second commandment enforces the obligation, not only to receive, observe and keep pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God **hath instituted** in his Word, but also not to devise, counsel, command, use and any wise approve any religious worship **not instituted** by God himself. The instance, already commented on, of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, God’s venerable high priest, is exactly in point. They were visited with summary judgment, as we are explicitly told, for performing a function in worship which God had not commanded. We cannot without guilt transcend divine appointments. No

discretion is allowed the church to introduce into public worship what God himself has not instituted and appointed. He has not constituted her his vicegerent or his confidential agent. She is intrusted with no powers plenipotentiary. She acts under instructions, and is required to adhere to the text of her commission.

The application to instrumental music in the public worship of the church is plain. It was permissible, as has been shown, only when God commanded it, and he commanded it in connection with the typical and temporary services of the temple. He did not command it to be used in the ordinary Sabbath worship of the synagogue, and accordingly it was not employed in that institute. The Jew obeyed the divine will in that respect. God did not command it to be introduced into the Christian church, and in conformity with his will it was not employed in the apostolic or the early church. It was not known in the church for centuries. It was, as will be shown, a late importation into its services — an importation effected without divine authorization, and therefore in the face of the divine will. If our exposition of the second commandment is valid — and we acknowledge it to be both valid and authoritative — we violate that commandment when we employ instrumental music in public worship, because we devise, counsel, command, use and approve a mode of “religious worship not instituted by God himself.” That God did not institute it, either in connection with the Jewish synagogue or with the Christian church, has been irrefragably proved.

These things being so, we cannot, in accordance with the requirements of this commandment, acquiesce in the employment of instrumental music in the public worship of the church. No “title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever,” will justify or excuse us. It will not avail us to plead that we found it in use, and are not called upon to urge or enact revolutionary measures. We are bound to disapprove, detest, oppose all false worship, and as this is in that category, to disapprove, detest and oppose it. The argument to prove its want of divine warrant must be overthrown before the position of inaction and acquiescence can be conscientiously maintained. Nor will it do to say that we have not examined the question — that we do not know. We ought to examine, we ought to know, for as Presbyterians our standards plainly expound to us the divine law on the subject, and as Christians we have no right to be ignorant of the teaching of Scripture in regard to it. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to them, it is because there is no light in them.”

The principle, thus strongly emphasized by the exposition of the second commandment, that a divine warrant is required for everything entering into the worship of God, is also enounced and enforced in the following utterances of the Con-

fession of Faith; “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, **or beside it** in matters of faith and worship.” (Chap. xx., sec. 2.) “The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, **or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.**” (Chap. xxi., sec. 1.) In these words the Confession declares, that the conscience is left free to reject the teaching of any doctrines and the authority of any commandments which are beside the Word of God in the matter of worship; and that it is not permissible to worship him in any way not prescribed in the Scriptures. If, as has been evinced, instrumental music in public worship was in the Old Testament only prescribed as an appendage of the temple, and was not prescribed in connection with the synagogue, and is not prescribed in the New Testament, it is obviously beside the Word of God, destitute of his authority, and therefore to be rejected.

2. Instrumental music is excluded from the public worship of God’s house by the declarations of the Confession of Faith and the Directory for Worship concerning singing.

The Confession of Faith, in enumerating the “parts of the ordinary religious worship of God,” specifies “singing of psalms with grace in the heart.” The Directory for Worship thus speaks: “It is the duty of Christians to praise God by sing psalms.” “The proportion of the time of public worship to be spent in singing is left to the prudence of every minister.”

(1.) These provisions of the Confession of Faith and the Directory for Worship exclude instrumental music from the public worship of the church which acknowledges them as its formularies, in accordance with the legal maxim, **Expressio unius est exclusio alterius**: the express statement of one alternative is the exclusion of the other. If two men were supposed, upon probable grounds, to be chargeable with the same offence, the indictment of only one of them would be the exclusion of the other from the indictment. No formal naming of the person not included in the indictment is necessary. If of two acts, which might be performed under given circumstances, one only is commanded in a statute to be done, the other is excluded — it is not commanded. And so, if of two acts which might be done under given circumstances, one only is by statute permitted, the other is excluded from the permission — it is forbidden. To apply the principle to the case in hand: the singing of psalms or hymns and the performance of instrumental music are two distinct acts which may be done at one and the same time. The ecclesiastical law commands only one of these acts to be done in public worship. It

follows that the other is excluded — it is not commanded. But does this, it may be asked, rule out the other? May it not be done, although not commanded? The answer is to be found in the great principle, already established by scriptural proofs, that what Christ has not commanded to be observed, men have no right to introduce into the worship of his church; and those who acknowledge the ecclesiastical law which is now appealed to, as correctly representing or rather reproducing the divine law, are bound to hold that what the ecclesiastical law does not authorize cannot be legitimately introduced into the worship of the church. We have seen that it not true that what is not forbidden is permitted, but on the contrary, what is not commanded is forbidden. It follows that, as the law in the Presbyterian standards does authorize singing and does not authorize instrumental music the latter is excluded. It is extra-legal, and therefore contra-legal.

(2.) This interpretation of the law in the standards is confirmed by what we know of the mind and intention of its framers in regard to this matter. Before the Westminster Assembly of Divines undertook the office of preparing a Directory for Worship, the Parliament had

authoritatively adopted measures looking to the removal of organs along with other remains of Popery, from the churches of England. On the 20th of May, 1644, the commissioners from Scotland wrote to the General Assembly of their church and made the following statement among others: "We cannot but admire the good hand of God in the great things done here already, particularly that the covenant, the foundation of the whole work, is taken, Prelacy and the whole train thereof extirpated, the service-book in many places forsaken, plain and powerful preaching set up, many colleges in Cambridge provided with such ministers as are most zealous of the best reformation, altars removed, the communion in some places given at the table with sitting, the great organs at Paul's and Peter's in Westminster taken down, images and many other monuments of idolatry defaced and abolished, the Chapel Royal at Whitehall purged and reformed; and all by authority, in a quiet manner, at noon-day, without tumult." (*Acts of Assembly of Church of Scotland, 1644*). So thorough was the work of removing organs that the "Encyclopedia Britannica" says that "at the Revolution most of the organs in England had been destroyed." (art., **Organ**).

(To be continued)

Religious Terms Defined

PRESBYTERIANISM. That form of church government in which the church is governed, under Christ, by a plurality of prebyters (ministers and ruling elders) in a series of graded courts of which the highest is the synod or general assembly. (See article, "Bible Authority for Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods", by the Rev. Frank D. Frazer, in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, July-September 1952, pages 119-123):

PROFESSOR. "Any person who makes an open acknowledgment of the religion of Christ, or who outwardly manifests his attachment to Christianity. All real Christians are professors, but all professors are not real Christians" (*Buck's Theological Dictionary*).

PROTESTANTS. Those who adhere to the evangelical religion of the Bible over against the doctrines and claims of the Roman Catholic Church. The name "Protestants" was first given in Germany in 1529 to the adherents of the Reformer Martin Luther because they protested against a decree of the emperor Charles V and the Diet of Spires, and appealed to a general council of the Church.

PROVIDENCE. "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions" (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, 11).

PURGATORY. According to Roman Catholic theology, purgatory is the state in which persons who die guilty of venial (slight) sins, or have not fully satisfied for the punishment due on account of their sins, suffer for a period of time after their death. According to this doctrine, all souls in purgatory will eventually enter heaven. (The doctrine of purgatory is wholly without Scriptural support, and is contrary to the Bible truth that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. See the Westminster Confession of Faith, XXXII.1, which, after speaking of heaven and hell, adds: "Besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.")

PURITANS. That party in the Church of England in the 17th Century that sought a greater degree of reformation and purity of the Church than had yet been attained. (After the passing of the Act of Uniformity, 1662, the Puritans were commonly called Nonconformists, and later Dissenters).

POSITIVISM. The system of philosophy which holds that the only real knowledge is knowledge of phenomena, that is, knowledge of facts obtained through our senses, such as sight and hearing. This philosophy is destructive of Christianity because it teaches that it is impossible to have any real knowledge of God or of the human soul.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

IT IS DANGEROUS dressing for another world by the looking-glass of this world.

— William Secker

THE DOCTRINE of an eternal purpose of God is the foundation upon which all the teaching of the Bible is really based. Back of all the events of human history, back of all the changes in the inconceivable vastness of the universe, back of space itself and time, there lies one mysterious purpose of Him to whom there is no before or after, no here or yonder, to whom all things are naked and open, the living and holy God.

— J. Gresham Machen

THE CHRISTIAN MAN finds in the Bible the very Word of God. Let it not be said that dependence upon a book is a dead or an artificial thing. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was founded upon the authority of the Bible, yet it set the world aflame. Dependence upon a word of man would be slavish, but dependence upon God's Word is life. Dark and gloomy would be the world, if we were left to our own devices, and had no blessed Word of God. The Bible to the Christian is not a burdensome law, but the very Magna Charta of Christian liberty.

— J. Gresham Machen

IT IS PERFECTLY TRUE that no mere man can pay the penalty of another man's sin. But it does not follow that Jesus could not do it; for Jesus was no mere man but the eternal Son of God.

— J. Gresham Machen

WRESTLE, FIGHT, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray; and then ye have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you.

— Samuel Rutherford

CHRIST'S CROSS is the sweetest burden that ever I bore; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbor.

— Samuel Rutherford

I HAVE HAD MANY THINGS in my hand and I have lost them all; but whatever I have been able to place in God's hand, I still possess.

— Martin Luther

IF I PROFESS with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of

God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle-field besides, is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.

— Martin Luther

THE TERM "evolution" has several definitions, and these account for much confusion. Organic evolution has been defined as "the gradual development from the simple unorganized condition of primal matter to the complex structure of the physical universe; and in like manner, from the beginning of organic life on the habitable planet, a gradual unfolding and branching out into all the varied forms of beings which constitute the animal and plant kingdom." Theistic evolution teaches that this process was begun by God and continued under natural law which He established. Evolution, organic or theistic, does not accord with the teaching of creation in the Scriptures and is therefore unscriptural. Evolution is essentially a philosophy of science, and a bad philosophy in my opinion, and is not science. The evolutionist and the creationist have, or should have, the same facts; but their explanations thereof differ decidedly.

— V. Raymond Edman (in *Christian Life Magazine*, February, 1963)

SOMEONE HAS SAID: "There are three ways to look. If you want to be wretched, look within; if you wish to be distracted, look around; but if you want to have peace, look up." Peter looked away from Christ, and he immediately began to sink. He had God's eternal Word, which was sure footing, and better than either marble, granite or iron; but the moment he took his eyes off Christ down he went.

— Dwight L. Moody

"THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). You may pile up your sins till they rise like a dark mountain, and then multiply them by ten thousand for those you cannot think of; and after you have tried to enumerate all the sins you have ever committed, just let me bring this one verse in, and that mountain will melt away.

— Dwight L. Moody

HE WHO IS ANGRY with sin does not sin in his anger.

— C. H. Spurgeon

GOD CHOSE HIS PEOPLE for His love, and He loves them for His choice.

— C. H. Spurgeon

GOD CONCEALS HIS PURPOSES, that we may live on His promises.

— C. H. Spurgeon

JACOB'S VOICE should not go with Esau's hands. This almost led to Jacob's being found out by his father; and when men are not dealing

with a blind Isaac, they will soon be seen to be deceivers if they talk one way and act another.

— C. H. Spurgeon

THE FUNDAMENTAL FAULT OF THE MODERN CHURCH is that she is busily engaged in an absolutely impossible task — she is busily engaged in calling the righteous to repentance. Modern preachers are trying to bring men into the Church without requiring them to relinquish their pride; they are trying to help men avoid the conviction of sin.

— J. Gresham Machen

Studies in Old Testament History

LESSON 114

The Babylonian Captivity of the Jews

(2 Kings 25:22-30; Ezra chapters 1-7)

The Babylonian Captivity took place in four stages:

(1) In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon left Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah as a puppet king, but took Daniel and others to Babylon.

(2) In 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar came again, took Jehoiachin and 10,000 leading Jews to Babylon. II Kings 24:14-16.

(3) In 586 B.C. the Babylonians came again, destroyed Jerusalem, took Zedekiah and most of the remaining people, leaving a remnant of the poorest people in the land.

(4) In 581 B.C. (following the murder of the governor they had appointed) the Babylonians came again, took 745 more captives, even after many had gone to Egypt. Jeremiah 52:30.

Jeremiah predicted that the captivity would last 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12). It is not specified from what precise date this 70 years is to be reckoned. Presumably, however, it is to be reckoned from the first deportation, 605 B.C. This would give the date of 535 B.C. for the end of the Captivity, which would be approximately the time of the arrival at Jerusalem of the first returning party after the fall of Babylon and the accession of Cyrus.

The Babylonian Captivity was extremely bitter medicine for the Jews to swallow. Never before had they been so disgraced and humiliated before the world. They learned in bitter experience that the way of the transgressor is hard and that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. This humbling of their pride and breaking down of their haughty self-confidence was

necessary if they were really to be brought back to a right relationship with God.

There were also some positive benefits that came out of the Babylonian Captivity. This bitter experience permanently cured the Jews of their tendency to idolatry. For a thousand years before this time, from Moses to Jeremiah, God had been working on these people to teach them the lesson of **monotheism** — that there is only one God, the living and true God, and all others are false. Israelite history for a thousand years had been largely concerned with this lesson, which they were so slow to learn. Monotheism had **always** been the **official** faith of Israel, and it had, indeed, been the actual faith of the best and most consistent from the time of Adam and Eve. But the majority had been corrupt and inconsistent, and monotheism was not **consistently practiced by the nation as a whole** until after the Babylonian Captivity. What the endlessly repeated instruction and warning of the prophets had failed to do, the bitter suffering of the Captivity finally accomplished. Israel or the Jews were cured of idolatry. From this time on to be a Jew was to be known everywhere as a hater of idolatry. There is of course a spiritual idolatry which anyone can be involved in — as, for example, when we say of some greedy person that "money is his god". But the common, outward form of idolatry, in which a person really believes that there are many gods, and he bows down to a heathen image in a temple of Baal or some other "divinity" came to an end, so far as the Jews were concerned, with the Babylonian Captivity.

Thus there is at this point a major shift of emphasis in the religious thought and life of godly Jews. Before this the primary emphasis had been

on vindicating and maintaining monotheism **versus** idolatry. Now this problem has been solved. The emphasis from this point on is **Messianic prophecy** and the **Messianic hope**, the expectation of the coming of the Redeemer first promised in Genesis 3:15, the Seed of the woman who would finally destroy the serpent and his works. Not that Messianic prophecy was new in this period, or previously unknown — think of the wonderful Messianic prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah and the Psalms — but that the Messianic hope became the main topic and center of attention in a new way in this period.

Another positive gain in the Babylonian Captivity was the development of the Synagogue. A synagogue is a local congregation of the Jewish faith. The origin of this institution is obscure, but it is generally held to have originated at the time of the Babylonian Captivity or about that time. Synagogues are only slightly mentioned in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament they were found wherever Jewish people live. The destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, and the removal of most of the people to far-off foreign lands, may have occasioned the development of synagogues as local groups for fellowship and worship. The Jewish synagogue became extremely influential in preparing the ancient world for the coming of Christianity. Not only was Palestine dotted with synagogues, but they existed in foreign lands. There were many synagogues in Rome, as there were in Alexandria (Egypt) and other cities. Each of these was not only a place of religious instruction and worship, but often also a library, a common school and a center of social life. The synagogue brought a dark, pessimistic pagan world something better than it had from any other source — a religion with a reasonable belief in one God, a pure and righteous moral code, a type of serious, thrifty, hard-working living, and a firm hope for immortality beyond the death of the body. The early apostles and missionaries of the Christian Gospel usually got their start in any new location through the Jewish synagogue. Thus in the Providence of God the synagogue prepared the way for the Christian Church.

The return of the Jews from the Captivity resulted from the Medo-Persians taking over power from the Babylonians. This return took place in three stages, as follows:

(1) In 536 or 535 B.C. under the leadership of Zerubbabel. 42,360 Jews; 7,337 servants; also 5,400 gold and silver objects belonging to the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem were returned.

(2) In 457 B.C. under the leadership of Ezra the scribe. 1754 Jews; also 100 talents of gold and 750 talents of silver. Ezra chapter 7.

(3) In 444 B.C. Nehemiah with others arrived to rebuild the city wall of Jerusalem, with the sanction of the Persian king.

The Temple was rebuilt during the period of Zerubbabel's leadership, 535-515 B.C. The wall was rebuilt in the period of Nehemiah's leadership, 444-432 B.C. The history of Esther belongs between these two periods.

Only part of the Jews in Babylonia elected to go to Palestine. Many for various reasons preferred to remain in Babylon. This had a sifting and purifying effect. The ones that made the journey to Judah would be the ones who were willing to sacrifice everything for their religion. The ones that loved money and comfort most would choose to remain in Babylon. Therefore the returning groups were on the whole select groups, and thus well fitted to form the nucleus of the reconstituted Jewish nation.

Questions:

1. How long did the Babylonian Captivity last? When did it begin and end?
2. In how many stages, and in what years, did the deportation of the Jews to Babylon take place?
3. What religious benefit resulted from the Captivity?
4. What religious institution apparently began as a result of the Babylonian Captivity?
5. What was the historical importance of this institution?
6. In what year was Daniel taken to Babylon? In what year was Jehoiachin taken?
7. What Persian king permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem?
8. When was this permission granted? (See Ezra 1:1).
9. What did the decree include?
10. How many Jews were included in the first return? How many servants?
11. How many horses, camels, etc., were taken along by the returning Jews?
12. What offerings were contributed by the Jews? (Ezra 2:69).
13. When did work on the new Temple start? (Ezra 3:8).
14. What emotions were manifested when the foundations were laid? (Ezra 3:10-13).
15. Who was the leader of the first returning party?
16. How long was it after the first return before a second group returned?
17. What sifting or purifying effect did the return from the Captivity have on the Jews as a nation?

18. When did Nehemiah and his party reach Jerusalem?

19. How long was this after the first return?

20. Under whose leadership was the Temple rebuilt? How long did it take?

21. Why did it take so long to build the Temple?

22. Under whose leadership was the city wall of Jerusalem rebuilt?

23. Where does the story of Esther belong in relationship to the various stages of the return from the Babylonian Captivity?

24. How long a period was covered between the first deportation of the Jews to Babylon and the rebuilding of the city wall of Jerusalem after the Captivity?

LESSON 115

The Jews in the Persian Period

(Esther, chapters 1-10; Nehemiah, chapters 1, 2, 6)

In the Persian period the Jews were no longer independent. Judah was now a part of the immense Persian Empire, which included 127 provinces and covered territory from Ethiopia south of Egypt in Africa to the borders of northern India in Asia.

One benefit the Jews enjoyed in this period was peace. The wars of the period were mostly fought far from Palestine and scarcely affected the Jews. Moreover the Jews were exempt from military service. The Persians tried and tried to conquer the Greeks, but failed.

It was apparently in this period, or perhaps during the Babylonian Captivity, that Aramaic or Aramean (Bible: Syrian or Syriac) replaced Hebrew as the ordinary spoken language of the Jews. In the New Testament period we find the Jews in Palestine speaking Aramaic and in other countries speaking Greek or some local language. While Hebrew continued as a language of scholars and scribes, the everyday speech of the people changed to Aramaic. The causes of this linguistic shift are not fully clear.

From being a despised, disgraced and oppressed people, the Jews rose rapidly in status and prestige once the Babylonian Captivity was over. The fall of Babylon and the rise of the Medo-Persian Empire no doubt had something to do with this. It was not the Persians who had conquered the Jews and deported them from their own country. At any rate, in the Persian period we find some Jews holding important office and high rank. Nehemiah, the king's cupbearer under Artaxerxes Longimanus (Artaxerxes I) is an example of this. So are Esther and Mordecai in the reign of Xerxes I (Ahasuerus). This does not mean, of course, that all Jews were important or rich, but it means that some had risen to high and responsible office, and no doubt the general average status of the Jews was tremendously improved over what it had been in the Babylonian period.

Nehemiah's work was the rebuilding of the city wall of Jerusalem. We may wonder why this city wall was regarded as such an important

matter. Cities get along well enough without walls at the present day. In answer to this question, it may be said that in ancient times walls for cities were important for two reasons. First, the wall gave actual physical security to the inhabitants against bandits, robbers and attacking enemies. When firearms and aircraft were unknown, and fighting was done with swords, spears, bows and arrows, a good strong stone wall was real protection. It not only kept enemies out, but it gave the defenders a tremendous advantage. They could welcome attacking enemies by throwing things down on them from the top of the wall. Among things used in this way in ancient times were stones, bricks, rags dipped in oil and set aflame, and sometimes boiling oil or boiling water.

In the second place, the rebuilding of the wall was necessary for psychological reasons. It gave people a terrible feeling of inferiority to live in a city whose wall was in ruins. They would be the butt of ridicule and the laughing-stock of foreigners and visitors, especially those who came from traditionally enemy or rival countries. As long as the city wall lay in ruins, Jerusalem was really just a slum. Just as people today who have any morale and self-respect like to live in a neat and properly painted home, with a neat and well cared-for yard, so people in ancient times who had morale and self-respect liked to live in a neatly walled city. As long as the city wall continued to lie in ruins, the inhabitants of Jerusalem were bound to feel that they were a sort of shiftless and incompetent people. The fact that the wall had lain in ruins so long would even make this worse. It is reported that practically all places in Europe that were devastated by bombing in World War II (1939-1945) have by now been cleared and rebuilt — in many cases much better than they were before the War. But the wall of Jerusalem lay as a mass of rubble with weeds growing here and there, from 586 B.C. to 444 B.C. — a period of 142 years. In United States history, 142 years ago would be the year 1821 — some 40 years before the Civil War! What would we think if ruins of a devastating enemy attack on Washington, less than half a mile from Capitol Hill, had been al-

lowed to lie from 1821 to 1963 without any effort to clean up and rebuild?

Still another consideration, of course, was that the honor and good name of God were involved. Jerusalem was the city of God. Here was located the Temple of the true God, the Lord of the universe. The Temple had indeed been rebuilt, and this was completed about 515 B.C. But this Temple is located in a city whose wall lay in ruins within sight of the Temple grounds. These ruins proclaimed to all that Jerusalem had been conquered and destroyed by a foreign power. Was it fitting and proper that the Temple dedicated to the Lord of the universe be situated in a battered, ruined, unrestored city? Reverence for God required the rebuilding of the city wall of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah was an efficient executive as well as a pious believer. He got the "impossible" job done in just 52 days of concerted effort. Now everyone in Jerusalem felt better. The honor of God was vindicated and the people no longer need feel ashamed of that disgraceful, ruined city wall. Also, they could sleep better at night knowing that that wall was between them and bandits or robbers.

The story of Esther is one of the most dramatic in the Bible. The Persian king was Xerxes I of secular history, called in the Bible Ahasuerus. The Book of Esther is remarkable for the fact that the name of God does not occur in the entire book. However, God is certainly present in the book of Esther, though behind the scenes. Indeed, we might say that God is the principal character in the Book of Esther. This book relates the amazing providence of God in keeping the Jewish people from mass destruction. The modern term for what Haman attempted is "genocide" — the attempt to exterminate an entire people. If Haman had been successful, what would have become of God's promises that the Saviour of the world would be born of the seed of David? In Haman's wicked plan we see one chapter in the long story of the "seed of the serpent" trying to prevent the redemptive work of the "Seed of the woman" (cf. Genesis 3:15). God of course, frustrates this sinister program of evil, and the program of divine redemption moved forward.

Questions might be raised about the ethics of a God-fearing Jewish maiden like Esther entering the harem of a pagan monarch like Ahasuerus and becoming his queen. As a matter of fact it seems that Esther was "drafted" and did not really have any freedom of choice in the matter. Also, it is not the purpose of the Book of Esther to discuss the ethics of mixed marriages and polygamy. These evils are sufficiently dealt with in other parts of the Bible. Esther is obviously written to show the providence of God in preserving the Jews from mass destruction.

Though it deals with terrific tensions and is saturated with the sense of impending tragedy, the book of Esther is not without some humorous touches. The scene of Haman leading Mordecai through the streets of Susa (Esther 6:10, 11) is thoroughly laughable. So also is the scene in Haman's mansion where he is boasting to his assembled friends of his riches and honors, and his loving wife Zeresh suggests the construction of a 75-foot gallows for hanging Mordecai on, in the light of the fact that eventually Haman himself is hanged on this gallows (5:10-14, 7:10).

Susa or Shushan has been thoroughly excavated by archaeologists. Nothing **directly** confirming the history in the Book of Esther has been discovered. However a great deal of background material was discovered. Susa was indeed just such a city, with such a palace, as is described in the book of Esther.

The Greek historian Herodotus records that after Xerxes was defeated by the Greeks at Thermopylae, Salamis and Plataea (479 B.C.) he returned home and paid attention to his harem. This is probably a reference to events related in the book of Esther.

Questions:

1. What was the political status of the Jews in the Persian period?
2. What was the military status of the Jews in the Persian period?
3. What change in the spoken language of the Jews took place about this time?
4. Give two examples to show the rise in prestige of the Jews in the Persian period.
5. Give two reasons why the rebuilding of the city wall of Jerusalem was important.
6. How long had the city wall of Jerusalem lain in ruins?
7. How long did it take to rebuild the wall under Nehemiah's leadership?
8. How was the honor of God involved in the question of rebuilding the wall?
9. How many times does the name of God occur in the book of Esther?
10. What is the primary importance of the Book of Esther in the Bible?
11. What promise of God would have been nullified if Haman had succeeded?
13. Does the book of Esther imply that polygamy and mixed marriages are right?
13. Give an example of humor in the book of Esther.
14. What has archaeology shown concerning the city of Susa or Shushan?

LESSON 116

The Old Testament Messianic Hope

The Hebrew word **Messiah**, like its Greek equivalent **Christos** (Latin, **Christus**; English, **Christ**) means **Anointed**. The concept of anointing was originally one in common, everyday life — it meant putting oil or ointment on a person or thing for any reason or purpose whatever — for example, as a hair-dressing; to relieve the itching of mosquito bites; to heal a burn; to stop the squeaking of a hinge.

Later these terms were lifted into the vocabulary of religion, and used in the religious sense of anointing, that is, setting a person apart to a special sacred office. In Israel the kings and priests were anointed as their inauguration into office. The prophets, apparently, sometimes but not always were. The oil was made from olive oil and was **symbolic** of the Holy Spirit. The idea was that the Holy Spirit was to enter the personality of the anointed individual and confer on him the qualities needed for him to be an adequate king or priest according to the will of God.

Every Israelite and Jewish king was anointed with oil and was called "the Lord's anointed." In some cases, to be sure, the person was not qualified by the Holy Spirit and thus in those cases the outward rite of anointing with oil was a mere form, since the spiritual meaning was absent. We can readily think of examples of this — Saul, the first king of Israel; Ahab; Jehoiakim; Zedekiah; and others. The **idea**, however, was endowment with special qualities by the Holy Spirit. Since every Israelite or Jewish king was **supposed** to possess these qualities, each was called "the Lord's anointed", even though some were wicked men and terribly unworthy of what the rite of anointing stood for. In Isaiah 45:1 Cyrus, king of Persia, is called "the Lord's anointed", not because Cyrus himself knew or worshipped the Lord (he was a Zoroastrian), but because God would raise him up to accomplish a special purpose in the plan of redemption.

Later the term "Anointed One" or **Messiah** was used more specifically with prophetic reference to the ideal king of the future. "The Anointed One" is always regarded as human, but also always regarded as the special Agent of God the Saviour. Gradually the concept of the **Deity** of the Messiah was revealed in the Old Testament. This is shown, for example, by Isaiah 9:6, where it is predicted that the child who shall be born will be called "the mighty God."

The concept of the Deity of the Messiah, which we as Christians know to be true, depends on the Christian doctrine of the divine Trinity. The Messiah is the second Person of the divine Trinity. The Trinity or three-one nature of God is a truth which is suggested or alluded to in the Old Testament, but clearly and fully set forth only in the

New Testament. The doctrine of the Trinity could not be safely revealed in explicit fulness until its presupposition, the idea of **monotheism**, had been satisfactorily learned by Israel. Monotheism was a truth revealed by God from the very beginning. However it was not consistently practiced by the Israelite or Jewish nation as a whole until after the Babylonian Captivity.

Hence it was after the Captivity that we find interest centering on the Messianic hope. From this point on there did not need to be the strong polemic against idolatry and polytheism. This lesson had been learned and something new followed.

The first Messianic prophecy in the Bible is in Genesis 3:15, spoken just after the fall of mankind into sin: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This verse predicts an age-long conflict between good and evil, and that Someone descended from Eve will finally win the victory and destroy the evil. This is prophecy in germ form. A seed of a plant viewed under a high-power microscope shows the cells of the germlasm. All the potentiality of the future plant is present in the seed, but only in latent or germ form. When the seed is planted and begins to grow, then differentiation takes place. Cells divide and divide again, and the different structures of the plant gradually appear.

Adam and Eve could not possibly have known the **time** and the **circumstances** of the fulfilment of Genesis 3:15. On the other hand, they could understand the **essential meaning**, and thus they had a faith to live by. As the Old Testament moves on, the promise of a Messiah becomes more and more specific, the functions of the future Messiah become more and more differentiated.

Dr. Campbell Morgan of England once said that the entire Old Testament can be summed up in three things, namely, a sigh for a prophet, a sigh for a priest, and a sigh for a king. This is a correct analysis of Scripture as far as it goes, but it can be improved by realizing that the Old Testament is more than "a sigh" for these things. It is not merely a desire that arises from man; it is a program planned, revealed and implemented by God. So we may say that the Old Testament is: the promise of a prophet, the promise of a priest, and the promise of a king.

At the same time we should realize that these promises precisely meet man's deepest needs. Man in his weakness and sinfulness needs:

(1) A prophet to reveal the truth and will of God;

(2) A priest to make atonement for his sins and reconcile him to God;

(3) A king to challenge his loyalty and to provide leadership and protection.

The Old Testament predicts the coming of the perfect prophet, the perfect priest and the perfect king. When we reach the New Testament we find that Jesus is the fulfilment of all three of these divine promises. He combined in Himself the functions of all three. The perfect prophet is predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15-22. The perfect priest is predicted in Psalm 110. The perfect king is predicted in Psalm 2, Isaiah 11:1-10 and numerous other places. Every true prophet was a small-scale sample of the final and perfect prophet; every true priest was a small-scale sample of the final and perfect priest; every true king was a small-scale sample of the ideal, final perfect king, the Messiah.

The Messianic hope moved toward a goal. It involved a philosophy of history and a theology of redemption. It involved definite progress toward a consummation. And above all things it involved **the divine initiative and monergism**. (The term **monergism** means that the power in salvation is entirely that of God alone, not that of God and man combined. Salvation is the work of God for man and the work of God in man, but it is not properly regarded as the work of man. Salvation is by divine grace, by the power of God — it is not a “do it yourself” project, though of course it is our duty to obey the commands of God to repent, believe and make use of the appointed means of Grace.

Another way of viewing Old Testament Messianic prophecy is to realize that in some places the Old Testament predicts a **glorious, reigning figure who is victorious over all enemies**, while in other places it predicts the coming of a **Messiah who will be rejected, despised, shamefully treated, and who will suffer and die**. These two lines of prediction may seem at first sight to be contradictory. But actually they are mutually complementary and organically inter-related. The glory comes as the fruit and reward of the suffering.

Both of these lines of prediction are deeply imbedded in the Old Testament. The Messiah will not only be a glorious King and deliverer; He will also be one who suffers bitter humiliation, even unto shameful death. In some parts of the Old Testament these two kinds of Messianic prophecy occur side by side, closely combined, even in the same chapter. An example of this is Psalm 22. Another is Isaiah chapter 53. In both of these passages sufferings which terminate in death are described as followed by the enjoyment of consummate glory. The resurrection of the Messiah from the state of death is implied between the two parts of Psalm 22 and between the two parts of Isaiah 53.

The “Servant of the Lord” Theme in Isaiah

Liberal scholars constantly declare that the figure called “the servant of the Lord” in the so-called “Second Isaiah” is the people of Israel collectively considered — Israel the Lord’s servant to bring a blessing to the world. There is an element of truth in this claim but it is far from being the whole truth, or the main truth. Indeed, these “liberal” scholars seem to be positively allergic to any belief that any part of these chapters is predictive of Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact these chapters are repeatedly cited in the New Testament as predictions of Jesus Christ. The Book of Acts, chapter 8 verses 26-40, is an example of this.

The “Servant” theme in Isaiah may be briefly analyzed as follows:

(1) **Israel** is called the Servant of the Lord. 44:1, 2, 21. 49:3.

(2) The Servant is God’s servant to the tribes of Israel. 49:6.

(3) The concept is carried further to represent the Servant as being the faithful, spiritual, nucleus, remnant or core of Israel. 50:10, “the voice of His servant.” 52:13, “My servant shall deal prudently.”

(4) Last of all, it is made clear that the Servant is an individual Person, **the ideal and perfect Israelite, the One to whom** the name Israel really belongs, in the fulness of its meaning and implications. This is none other than Jesus Christ, as demonstrated by the New Testament.

Analysis of Isaiah Chapter 53

(1) The Servant’s humble environment and lack of natural glory. Verses 1-3.

(2) The Servant’s **vicarious** (substitutionary) sufferings and death. 4-9.

(3) The Servant, **after death**, exalted to supreme honor and glory (implying resurrection. Verses 10-12.

For further discussion of the interpretation of this chapter, the student is referred to Dr. Edward J. Young’s little book, **Isaiah Fifty-three**.

Questions:

1. What is the literal meaning of the Hebrew word **Messiah** and the Greek word **Christos**?

2. What was the original usage of the words concerning anointing?

3. Of what was the anointing oil a symbol?

4. What officers were anointed with oil in the Israelite system?

5. What should be thought about cases where a person was anointed but later turned out to be a wicked man?

6. Give an Old Testament verse which proves the **Deity** of the Messiah.

7. Why could not the idea of the Deity of the Messiah be fully and explicitly revealed in the Old Testament?

8. Why did religious interest turn especially to the Messianic hope after the Babylonian Captivity?

9. What is the first Messianic prophecy in the Bible? What does it mean?

10. To what extent could our first parents understand this prophecy?

11. How did Dr. Campbell Morgan summarize the entire Old Testament?

12. How can his analysis be amended to bring it more fully in line with the Biblical data?

13. How does this threefold analysis concern man's three deepest needs?

14. What is meant by saying that the Messianic hope involved a philosophy of history?

15. What is the meaning of the term **monergism** and what is the connection of this with the idea of the Messiah?

16. How can we explain the apparent contradiction between prophecies which predict a glorious, reigning Messiah and other prophecies which predict a suffering, dying Messiah?

17. What is implied between the two parts of Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53?

18. What is the relation of "the Servant of the Lord" to Israel in Isaiah chapters 44-53?

19. What three main themes are found in Isaiah chapter 53?

20. What is meant by **vicarious** suffering on the part of the Servant?

The End

A Christian Introduction to Religions

Note: This series of lessons was originally published in our October-December 1959 issue (Volume 14 Number 4) under the title **An Introductory Study of Religions**. Because of continued interest in this material, together with our inability to supply copies of the issue in which it was published, it is repeated here. — Editor.

This series of lessons is intended to deal, from a distinctly Christian and Biblical point of view, with the origin, nature and development of religion, the Christian missionary approach to people of non-Christian faiths, and the principal

features of some of the great non-Christian religions of the world. It will be endeavored to bring out clearly the difference between "modern" views of religion and the Biblical view. The description of some of the non-Christian faiths is intended to enable the student to have a better understanding of the problems and difficulties faced by the Christian missionary enterprise throughout the world. An intelligent interest in Christian missions requires some understanding of the non-Christian religious systems of the world, from which the Church seeks to win converts to Christ.

LESSON 1

Religion as a Fact of Human Life

What is Religion?

Everyone has some idea of what religion is, yet religion is one of the hardest things in the world to define. Here are some suggested definitions:

"Religion is the quest for the values of the ideal life."

"Religion is the recognition on the part of man of a controlling superhuman power entitled to obedience, reverence and worship."

Obviously religion is extremely difficult to define. If we define it in terms of what we regard as religion, our definition will be too narrow.

Historically Buddhism at its beginning was pure atheism. Yet it was certainly a religion.

Confucianism in its pure form is at best only agnostic concerning the existence of God. Yet it has usually been called a religion.

We must bear in mind, too, that the word "religion" is used in an objective sense and also in a subjective sense. When we say "Mohammedanism is a monotheistic religion", we are using the term "religion" objectively. In this sentence "religion" signifies an objective reality, just as when we say "Asia is the largest continent," the noun "continent" signifies an objective reality.

On the other hand, when we say "Religion is characteristic of mankind everywhere," we are using the term "religion" in a subjective sense. In this sentence "religion" is something which can be attributed to the human personality. In this subjective sense, religion is not a complex of

doctrines, worship, organization, laws, temples, sacrifices, and the like, but a fact of the human consciousness. We might perhaps express the distinction between the objective and the subjective sense by saying that in the subjective sense we speak of **religion**, while in the objective sense we speak of **religions** or of **some particular religion** (as Buddhism, or Mohammedanism.)

Another suggested definition of religion is: Religion is man's response to what he believes to be the ultimate meaning of life.

What about those who say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die?" Is this attitude to be regarded as their religion? Does their conduct reflect what they believe to be the ultimate meaning of life?

Of course, a definition of **true** religion would have to be much narrower. True religion would have to be defined as **man's proper response to the revelation of the true God**. But in seeking for a general definition of religion, we are not limiting ourselves to **true** religion; we are considering **religion as such**, religion as a phenomenon of human life, regardless (for the time being) of questions of truth or value.

The Universality of Religion

It has been said that "man is a religious animal." Another common statement is that mankind is incurably religious. It is a fact that religion in some form or other is universal in the human race.

Sometimes the statement has been made that paleolithic man (man in the "old stone age") was non-religious. This however is not a proved fact but merely a speculative theory. Because the anthropologists have not found evidence proving that paleolithic man was religious, some jump to the conclusion that he was non-religious. The truth is that we know very little indeed about paleolithic man, and an argument based on silence or lack of evidence is dangerous. I might say, "There are no foxes in Beaver County. I know this to be true for I have lived a year

in Beaver County and have never seen a fox." The fallacy in such a statement is obvious.

As a matter of fact, religion is not only universal in the human race, but also persistent. Forty years of atheistic and anti-religious propaganda and pressure in Soviet Russia have not succeeded in eliminating religion from the life of the people there.

Missionaries and anthropologists report that religion, in some form, is universal among mankind at the present day (whatever some may assert about paleolithic man). The philosopher David Hume, though himself a sceptic, is reported to have said on one occasion: "Look out for a people entirely devoid of religion, and if you find them all, be assured that they are but a few degrees removed from the brutes." But even Hume did not say that such a non-religious people can be found.

Questions

1. Why do you think "Religion" is difficult to define?
2. Give a sentence using the word "Religion" in the subjective sense.
3. Give a sentence using the word "Religion" in the objective sense.
4. How may **true** religion be defined?
5. How may religion in general (or religion as such) be defined?
6. Are these suggested definitions adequate? If not, how can they be improved?
7. What can be said about the universality of religion?
8. Of what kind of people has it been claimed that they were non-religious?
9. Why can this claim not be regarded as proven?
10. What illustration can be given to show the persistence of religion as a part of people's life?

LESSON 2

The Origin of Religion

Views as to the origin of religion can be divided into (1) Naturalistic views, and (2) the Biblical view.

Naturalistic views of the origin of religion have resulted from the application of the theory of evolution to the concept of religion. It is held that not merely man's physical organism and his mind are products of evolutionary development, but that man's religion has gradually developed by an evolutionary process, from very primitive beginnings to the great monotheistic religions

(Judaism, Christianity, Islam) which exist at the present day.

Those who hold this evolutionary theory of religion differ among themselves as to the details of the process, but they are agreed in the central idea that human religion developed gradually by a natural process. This idea of evolution is regarded as applicable both to religion in the subjective sense (i.e., to man's religious nature) and to religion in the objective sense (the various religious faiths and systems).

Among those who hold the evolutionary theory of the development of religion, the origin of religion is variously regarded. Some have held that religion originated as a device of chiefs or rulers to keep people in subjection to themselves. This is a form of the Communist notion that religion is "the opium of the people" — something invented and promoted by a certain social class as a way of keeping the mass of the people quiet and contented and obedient. This theory is very unrealistic, for it assumes that people had organized government before they had religion — certainly a very doubtful assumption.

Another notion is that religion originated from fetish-worship. This means the worship of inanimate objects — a piece of bone, a bird's claw, a stone—which somehow were regarded as sacred and as possessing special powers. This of course does not explain the **origin** of religion; it only asserts that the more developed religions sprang from something less developed. The question of the origin of fetish-worship is left hanging in the air without an answer.

Another notion is that religion originated from spirit-worship, or from ancestor-worship. It is held that mankind naturally conceived the idea that the spirits of the dead were influential in human life and must be feared or placated. Still another idea attributes the origin of religion to a primitive form of nature worship. As we shall see later in considering the Biblical view, this last is closer to the truth than the other theories. Yet it is not the whole truth by any means.

None of these evolutionary theories explains the real **origin** of religion. Evolution means the development of something already existing into something else. It necessarily has to start with something which is regarded as already in existence. Therefore evolution cannot really explain the **origin** of anything. A theory of how things developed does not explain how things got there in the first place.

Evolutionary anthropologists attempt to solve this problem by having recourse to vast periods of time. When asked how religion could develop

from a non-religious condition, they reply that that was a very gradual development which took vast ages of time. But the mere lapse of time does not explain anything. The lapse of time is not itself a cause of any effect. What is needed to solve the problem is not ages of time, but an **adequate cause** for the origin of religion. As someone has aptly remarked, "All eternity is not sufficient to complete that which has not yet been begun."

All the evolutionary views of the origin of religion assume that man (or man's hypothetical pre-human ancestor) was once non-religious, and gradually man became a religious being. But the **a priori** nature of this type of thinking is evident. Such a "non-religious" man has never been discovered or proved to exist, either at the present day or at any time in the known past.

Such evolutionistic anthropologists regard the evolutionary theory as a fixed and determined matter, and then they proceed to outline the (supposed) history of the development of religion in terms of that theory. This is really unscientific, for it approaches the actual phenomena of human religion with a ready-made theory in mind and proceeds to impose that theory upon the facts.

Questions

1. Into what two categories can views of the religion be divided?
2. Why is the theory that religion was invented by chiefs or rulers to keep people in subjection an unrealistic theory?
3. Why can no evolutionary view really explain the **origin** of religion?
4. Why can the origin of religion not be explained by saying that it was a gradual process which took vast periods of time?
5. What is meant by fetish-worship? Why is it not satisfactory as an explanation of the origin of religion?
6. What other ideas of the origin of religion have been advocated?
7. Why is the evolutionistic attempt to explain the origin of religion unscientific?

LESSON 3

The Origin of Religion According to the Bible

We shall now proceed to consider the **Biblical view of the origin of religion**.

The Bible teaches that man was created a religious being, and that the original religion of the human race was monotheism. Before man's fall into sin, man enjoyed communion with God and was in a covenant relationship with God.

The background of man's original religion was God's revelation in nature. This includes both (1)

Nature outside the human personality — what we ordinarily call "the world of nature", and (2) Nature inside the human personality — what we ordinarily call "human nature."

The external world bore witness to Adam and Eve of the existence and power of the true God, and this external testimony was confirmed by the testimony of their own hearts. The revelation of God was written upon the human personality. Man found within himself a witness to

the existence of the true God. Man instinctively believed in the true God.

This natural revelation of God, however, was not sufficient for the enjoyment of the fullest religious communion of man with God. Man could not attain the full religious destiny for which he had been created on the basis of natural revelation alone. The natural revelation — outside and inside man's personality — was good and it was a true witness to the true God. But it was not sufficient for the highest religious attainment of man.

Therefore God took the initiative and added "special" or **supernatural** revelation. God spoke to man, not only by the voice of God in nature, but by the clearer voice of God's Word. (When we say "Word", we do not mean **Scripture**, at this early stage of human history, but merely a special message from God to man, **distinct from the witness in nature**.)

The distance between God and man being so great — God being infinite and man finite — the highest religious communion could be established only by God taking the initiative in **an act of condescension**. Man could not build a ladder to reach God, but God could and did stoop to man's level. This act of condescension on God's part is called in theology a **covenant**. It was an act of God by which man was brought into a relation of religious communion with his Maker.

We are considering the early period, before man fell into sin. God revealed Himself to man, bringing man into a covenant relationship with God. This covenant took the form of a probation or test of man's willingness to obey the will of God. The record is found in Genesis chapters 2 and 3.

God dealt with man very simply, by object lessons, as it were. The scene was the Garden of Eden. Four great principles were symbolized in

a way that man could grasp. The **principle of life** was symbolized by the tree of life. The **principle of probation or testing** was symbolized by the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The **principle of temptation** was symbolized by the serpent. The **principle of death** was symbolized by the return of man's bodily organism to dust.

If man had obeyed God, the outcome of the test would have been that the human race would have been confirmed in moral uprightness and happiness; sin and death would have become impossible; and the entire history of the human race would have been radically different from what is actually has been.

Questions

1. According to the Bible, what was the original religion of the human race?
2. According to the Biblical view, what is the background of man's original religion?
3. What two parts did this background include?
4. Besides God's revelation in nature, what was needed for man to enjoy religious communion with God?
5. What is meant by God's "Word" at the beginning of history?
6. Who took the initiative in bringing man into a religious relationship with God,
7. Why was this an act of "condescension" on God's part?
8. Name the elements in the covenant which provided for a probation or test of man in the Garden of Eden.
9. What would have resulted if man had obeyed God perfectly?

LESSON 4

Religion After Man's Fall Into Sin

We should realize that man never existed without a **super-natural** revelation from God. Even before man sinned, God's witness in nature was never sufficient of itself for man's religious needs. The revelation in nature (including human nature) was only the background for the revelation of God by His Word.

But man fell into sin, and with this fall his religion was greatly changed. Before the fall there had existed only **true** religion; after the fall religion branches into two kinds, true and false. True religion after the fall becomes **redemptive**; that is, it became predominantly a matter of redemption from sin. The divine program of redemption, which was first announced to man-

kind at Genesis 3:15 in the promise that there would be a Seed of the woman who would ultimately destroy the serpent, took the form of a progressive historical development.

First God allowed human sin to develop with comparatively little restraint, to give an object lesson, once for all, in what sin really is and does. This was the character of the period from the Fall to the Flood.

With the call of Abraham the implementation of the program of redemption began to make rapid progress. The period from Abraham to Christ was a period of preparation for the coming of Christ and for His redemptive work. The period from Christ to the end of the world is the period of ap-

plication of redemption to the world and its people. This redemptive religion was **essentially** (though not in its external forms) the same in both the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament it was the religion of Israel; in the New Testament period it is Christianity.

We shall now consider the Biblical view of the rise and development of **false religion**. The Biblical teaching on this subject is found most fully stated in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 1 verses 18 to 32 and chapter 2 verses 14 to 16. In this section of Paul's letter to the Romans we have placed before us a terrible picture of human sinfulness. First of all, Paul tells us about God's attitude toward human sinfulness: "For the wrath" of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). The Greek word here translated "hold" (**katechontoon**) means **hold down, withhold or restrain**. It may well be translated **suppress**. The implication is that mankind is guilty of suppressing the truth of God.

Paul goes on to discuss the effects of sin in the human race. He speaks first of the **religious** effects of sin and then of the **moral** effects of sin (contrary to the order that many people would prefer today because of the man-centered rather than God-centered character of our time). Human sin resulted in a wicked life and bad conduct. Finally the wicked life ends in the divine sentence of death.

The revelation of God in the book of nature was terribly misused by men. Instead of leading men to reverence and worship God, to glorify God and be thankful to God, it became twisted and distorted, resulting in **the false religions of the world**. In Rom. 1:21-23 Paul tells us the real origin of the world's false religious systems. They originated from perversion of God's revelation in the book of nature. God's revelation in nature was itself clear, but something had happened to the human race which affected man's spiritual vision. In Paul's words. "They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

If we look through amber-colored glasses, everything we see will be amber colored; if we look through blue glasses, all we see will appear blue. God's revelation in the book of nature was itself clear and plain, but mankind had fallen into sin, and thereafter men looked at the book of nature through colored glasses, as it were. What man saw was distorted and misinterpreted.

Man's fall into sin not only affected man's moral sense, making him wicked; it also affected his intellect, making him foolish. The fall damaged man's ability to interpret God's revelation in nature aright. Man could no longer see straight or think straight in matters of religion. He look-

ed in his heart, and then he looked out on the world of nature, and then he became an idolater. Seeing the sun, he became a sun-worshipper. Seeing the moon, he became a moon-worshipper. Seeing the stars, he began to worship them instead of their Creator. He worshipped the heavens instead of worshipping the God who had created them.

Taking another look at himself, man became a man-worshipper. He "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man" (Rom. 1:23). Man had been created in the image of God, but after the fall he sought to reverse the order, and began to make himself gods fashioned in the image of man. The old myths of Greece and other countries show us what kind of gods man invented for himself. The gods reflected the moral corruption of the human heart — they were a copy of the character of their makers. There was no kind of wickedness or crime that the Greek gods and goddesses were not involved in. Decent people in ancient Greece were ashamed about some of the old stories about the gods.

Idolatry — the worshipping of false gods and images — is the most degrading practice that the human race has ever engaged in. The Bible says concerning the worship of man-made idols: "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them" (Psalm 115:8). Idolatry drags man down until he becomes a slave to falsehood, superstition and fear. Some people consider the pagan religions quaint and romantic, with their interesting customs and their strange temples and rites. They should see these religions at closer range, and they might perhaps reconsider their opinion of them in the light of their results.

But false religions are not limited to the age-old false religions of the world. The outstanding false religion of the present day is **Communism**. For Communism, in spite of its boasted atheism and its claim to be against all religion, is itself really a religion, for it claims **absolute and supreme devotion** of all its adherents. People are even willing to die for their devotion to Communism. A faith that can call forth such loyalty and such sacrifices is certainly a religion.

Another false religion of the present day is **Humanism**, which is the religion of **faith in man**, or, as someone has said, the religion of **faith in faith**. This exists in various forms, but in all of them humanity rather than God is regarded as the object of religious devotion, loyalty and hope.

Questions:

1. Why is it incorrect to say that supernatural revelation is needed only because of sin?
2. What changes took place in religion when mankind fell into sin?

3. What change took place in **true** religion when man fell into sin?

4. What is the first promise of redemption in the Bible? In what book, chapter and verse is it found? Who is the Speaker? Who is addressed? What does the verse mean? How has it been fulfilled?

5. What was the moral character of the period from Adam to Noah? What reason may be assigned why God allowed this?

6. What event in early Bible history marks the point where God's program of redemption began to make rapid progress?

7. What was the main purpose, in God's plan, of the period from Abraham to Christ?

8. What is the main purpose, in God's plan, of the period from Christ to the end of the world?

9. What two forms has the true religion of redemption had in the course of history?

10. Where is the Bible's teaching on the origin and development of false religion most fully stated?

11. What truth about God's attitude to false religion is taught in Romans 1:18?

12. What is the true meaning of the word translated "hold" in Romans 1:18?

13. What two kinds of effects of sin are described in Romans 1 and 2?

14. Which kind is described first? How does this differ from the common order today?

15. What is the Bible's teaching as to the origin of the false religions of the world?

16. What is shown by the old myths of Greece and other nations?

17. How can we explain the immorality of the Greek gods and goddesses?

18. What does the Bible say about idolatry?

19. What is the effect of idolatry on people?

20. What is wrong with the romantic attitude toward pagan religions?

21. What is the outstanding false religious system of the modern world? How can it be shown that it is really a religion?

22. What is humanism? What is its status today?

LESSON 5

The Good Elements in False Religions

It is obvious that no religion is wholly false. There are elements of truth in all religions, even though as systems they must be regarded as false. How can this fact be explained?

According to the evolutionary theory of religion, the differences between religions are only a matter of degree. Some religions may be regarded as better than others, but there is no absolute or essential difference between them, it is said. This view of course follows from the notion of a gradual development from the most primitive to the most advanced. All religions are regarded as mixtures of good and bad features, only the proportions of good and bad vary in the different religions.

If we do not accept the evolutionary theory, we must seek another explanation of the good features in the false religions. The Christian explanation is that these good features are products of God's **common grace**. "Common grace" means God's grace given to all people of the world, apart from salvation in the Christian sense. This "common grace" does not save people's souls, but it does have an influence for good on the human level, and it has a restraining effect upon sin and evil. This results in the good features of the various false religious systems of the world.

Moreover, the good in the false religious systems is only a **relative** good. It is not good

in the highest sense. Buddhism and Christianity, for example, both teach that it is wrong to steal. As to the formal statement that stealing is wrong, Buddhism and Christianity are identical. But if we go a step further and ask **why** stealing is wrong, the two religions diverge. Christianity teaches that stealing is wrong because it is contrary to the will of God; Buddhism has no such insight.

Again Buddhism and Christianity both teach that it is a duty to relieve the distress of the poor by giving alms or charity. In this respect the two are identical. But when we inquire **why** this is a duty, we again face divergence. The Christian, if properly informed, gives alms to the poor from a motive of love for God. He is expressing his thankfulness to God for grace and salvation received from Him. But the Buddhist has no such motive. His motive is usually a selfish one — to gain a certain amount of spiritual merit or "credit" for himself. His motive is not compassion for the poor, nor love for God, but a desire to obtain personal merit.

For something to be good in the highest sense, according to Christian teaching, three things are necessary: (1) It must be something required by the will of God; (2) it must be done with a motive of love for God; (3) it must be done by faith. When measured by this test, it will be seen that many of the resemblances be-

tween Christianity and the false religious systems are merely formal and superficial, while in the essential content, beneath the surface, there is a wide divergence.

We are discussing elements of good in the false religions, not elements of good in the lives of their adherents. It is certainly true that people may be better than their creed, just as they may be worse than their creed. Some who profess to be Christians are very poor advertisements for Christianity. And some who profess what we regard as false religious systems may exhibit in their lives many good and noble traits.

For example, a man who does not know or love the true God may sacrifice his life in an attempt to save another human being from drowning or from perishing in a burning building. Certainly such an action must be regarded as "good" as contrasted with the opposite action, namely allowing your neighbor to drown or burn to death without making an effort to save his life.

But when we describe such actions as "good" we must remember that this is not the highest kind of goodness. Such actions, and the attitudes that lie back of them, are good in a relative and limited sense. They are good, we might say, on the human level. So long as we are considering only the horizontal dimension of life—our relationships within human society—such actions must be classed as "good." But when we take in the vertical dimension of life, and consider also our relationship and obligation to God, we must say that no attitude or action which disregards Him or which is not done out of love for Him, is truly good in the highest sense.

In considering the various religious systems, we must avoid two extremes. We must avoid the extreme of saying that they are all good and differ only superficially from Christianity, and we must also avoid the extreme of saying that they are all bad and contain nothing that can

truly be called "good." Both extremes are wrong. We should seek to attain a judicial and balanced attitude toward the various religious systems.

When we say that the good features in the false religious systems are "good" only in a relative and limited sense, this is not a reflection on the sincerity of the adherents of those systems. We can regard the people with respect, even when we are compelled to pronounce their beliefs false. The people may be not only sincere in their profession of their religion, but, by the common grace of God, they may in their personal lives be much better than the religion which they profess. But we must remember that this does not amount to salvation in the Christian sense.

Questions:

1. According to the evolutionary theory of religion, what is the difference between religions?
2. What is the Christian explanation of the good features in false religions?
3. What is meant by God's common grace, and what effect does it have?
4. What is the good in false religious systems not good in the highest sense?
5. What is the common motive of the Buddhist who gives alms to the poor?
6. What should be the motive of a Christian in helping the poor and needy?
7. What is necessary for an action to be good in the highest sense?
8. Give an example of something good done by someone who is not a Christian.
9. What two extremes must be avoided in considering the world's religious systems?
10. Why is it not a reflection on people's sincerity to say that the good in non-Christian religions is not good in the highest sense?

LESSON 6

The Christian Approach Toward Adherents of the Non-Christian Faiths

Christianity is a missionary religion. It cannot rest satisfied with merely perpetuating itself among its own adherents, but must seek to win all the world to its faith. This missionary aim is based on Christ's "Great Commission" to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). But what should be Christianity's attitude toward the non-Christian faiths? Opinions on this question have varied widely.

One extreme which has existed is to regard all non-Christian faiths as simply the works of the devil and condemn them absolutely and without reservation. This is an attitude of simple and absolute condemnation, accompanied by a call

for repudiation of all non-Christian faiths. In its extreme form, however, this attitude fails to recognize that there are elements of relative good in the non-Christian faiths. While the call for separation from false religions is certainly Biblical, and the demonic character of pagan religions is taught in Scripture (1 Corinthians 10:20, 21; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18), still it is also true that elements of limited, relative good exist in these religions. While it is true that they are demonic in character, it is also true (and Scriptural) that they are products of man's distorted interpretation of God's revelation in nature. Even though they may be works of the devil, still they are not simply works of the devil, but partly products of

God's common grace and partly products of sinful man's abuse of God's revelation in nature. True scholarship and sound thinking should always be on guard against too-simple answers to difficult questions and too-simple solutions of baffling problems.

Another attitude may be described as the attitude of co-operation. It regards the proper relationship between Christianity and the non-Christian faiths as an attitude, not of competition or rivalry, but of mutual helpfulness. Christian missionaries and churches are to co-operate with the forces of the non-Christian faiths in a great effort to make this world a better place to live in.

This attitude was exemplified some years ago (in the early 1930's) by the Laymen's Appraisal Commission for Foreign Missions. This organization, after extensive surveys and investigations of the great foreign mission fields in Asia and Africa, published a book entitled **Rethinking Missions**, in which the attitude of co-operation with the non-Christian faiths was advocated. The position taken was that missionaries should not attempt to win converts from the non-Christian faiths. Instead, they should recognize these as allies in the great modern struggle against secularism and irreligion. Thus Christianity was to be soft-pedalled in order to further the cause of "religion."

In practice, the adoption of this proposal would lead to a strong emphasis on the humanitarian aspect of missionary work — such as medical work, agricultural work, social work — and a corresponding lack of emphasis on the evangelistic phase. The aim would not be to win converts but to help the non-Christian faiths and generally to promote the interests of religion rather than to promote Christianity.

The publication of **Rethinking Missions** stirred up a great amount of discussion and controversy at the time. Orthodox Christians and churches generally rejected the principal proposals of the Laymen's Appraisal Commission. It became evident that back of these proposals lay not orthodox Biblical Christianity, but a type of Liberalism which regarded the non-Christian faiths as essentially good and valid.

Another attitude may be described as the round-table attitude. This is exemplified by Dr. E. Stanley Jones' book **Christ at the Round Table**. The idea is that every religion can contribute something to the religious life of man: No doubt the Christian religion can contribute more than others, but all can contribute something. The missionary aim should be, not so much to win converts, as to lead non-Christian people to see the good points and values in Christianity and to accept these, even though they do not come out and receive baptism.

The late Mr. Gandhi of India was a good example of a non-Christian who nevertheless had

come to admire Jesus Christ and had come to accept certain features and values of Christianity. By his own explicit statement, Gandhi was an adherent of Hinduism. He made no claim of being a Christian. Yet he accepted certain elements of Christianity.

Needless to say, such a missionary aim is much easier to attain than that presented in Christ's Great Commission. The adherent of Hinduism or Buddhism can admire Jesus Christ and adopt certain values of Christianity without any special difficulty. But as soon as he comes out openly and receives baptism in obedience to Christ's command, he has to start bearing the cross for Christ's sake. He must endure persecution and reproach for Christ's sake. Dr. Albertus Pieters, a life-long missionary to Japan, says:

"In countries like India or Japan, no one is greatly concerned over the doctrinal belief of another. A son or daughter may say that he or she believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, and may pray or read the Bible at home. Father and mother are usually quite unconcerned about this, and perhaps rather inclined to be pleased with it, especially if, as often happens, this coincides with some improvement in the conduct of the said son or daughter. But let the young person propose to be baptized, and at once the storm breaks. Nothing of the kind can be tolerated, and if it takes place, it not infrequently leads to expulsion from the home and ostracism from all polite society. Mr. Gandhi is at present the idol of all India, and he may praise Jesus Christ to his heart's content; but all India would spit in his face tomorrow if he were baptized." (**Why We Baptize Infants**, page 22; written before the death of Gandhi).

The Biblical aim of missionary work, of course, is not merely to get the non-Christian peoples to appreciate Christianity and adopt some of its teachings and values, but to win them personally to be disciples of Jesus Christ, as He commanded in the Great Commissions.

Still another attitude may be described as the "fulfilment" attitude. According to this idea, the non-Christian religions are good as far as they go, but they are incomplete, and therefore they cannot fully satisfy man's needs, Christianity, it is said, provides something extra which is needed to make them complete. They are regarded as the stones in an arch, which is incomplete until the keystone is put in place at the top of the arch.

Missionaries having this approach will tell the people of China, for example, that Confucianism is fine — it has a noble philosophy and wonderful teachings, but unfortunately it lacks something — it is not complete. They must add Jesus Christ to the teachings of Confucianism. Missionaries with this type of message have been

quite popular among the Chinese people. But whether they are loyal to the truth of the Gospel is another question. For this type of approach fails to reckon with the elements of evil and falsehood in the various religions. And these elements of evil are really **dominant**. A faith such as Buddhism or Confucianism is not mostly good, with a few minor faults; it is mostly bad, with a few features that can be called good in a relative sense. As is clearly seen in the Book of Acts, the Apostles of Christ did not represent Christianity as merely the keystone of the religious arch. They called upon people to repent of past false beliefs and to embrace Christianity as the one and only true religion (Acts 17:30; Acts 14:15, 16).

What, then, should be the true missionary aim and attitude to the non-Christian faiths and their adherents? First of all there can be no compromise of the command of Christ to confess Him publicly before men, becoming His disciple and receiving baptism. The person who refuses to take this step and bear the reproach which it involves is simply not a Christian. We may regard him with great sympathy, but we cannot recognize him as a Christian.

It goes without saying that every missionary should be a diligent student of the faith of the people among whom he works. Only by being accurately informed can he present the Christian message effectively. It is not enough that a missionary have a good knowledge of the Bible and of Christian theology. He must also have a good knowledge of the non-Christian faith which exists in his field. He should be familiar with its history, its principles, and its practices and results.

It should go without saying that ridicule, satire and denunciation are not proper methods for a missionary to use in speaking of a non-Christian faith. A sober exposition of the errors or evils of a religious system may be in order, but no man's religious beliefs should be subjected to ridicule.

In past times some missionaries have shown an unfortunate tendency to identify Christianity with European or American culture. This was more common 100 years ago than today, but it still continues in some places. A missionary among American Indians in the U. S. Southwest was heard telling Sabbath School children in New Jersey that we must send missionaries to the Indians, because the little Indian children do not even know how to use a knife and fork when they eat! Some missionaries in the past have

assumed that their converts should adopt European customs and costumes. But the whole idea is a mistake. Christianity is one thing; western culture is another. No doubt the adoption of Christianity in Asia or Africa will produce cultural changes. But it is no part of the missionary task to ask people to copy the cultural pattern of Europe or America. For instance, there is no reason why the Gothic style of architecture should be used for church buildings in China or Japan. We could easily think of numerous other examples.

Questions:

1. Why is Christianity necessarily a missionary religion?
2. What should be the Christian attitude toward governments which prohibit Christian work among non-Christians (I. e., seeking to limit evangelization and Christian education to those already professing to be Christians)?
3. Why is it incorrect to say that pagan religions are simply works of the devil?
4. What attitude toward non-Christian faiths was advocated by the Laymen's Appraisal Commission for Foreign Missions?
5. What would be the long-term result of general adoption of the proposals of the book **Re-thinking Missions**?
6. What is meant by the "round table" attitude toward non-Christian faiths? How may this attitude be criticized?
7. What was Gandhi's attitude toward Christianity?
8. What did Dr. Albertus Pieters say about Gandhi's attitude toward Christianity?
9. What is the "fulfillment" attitude toward non-Christian faiths? How does this attitude fall short of the Bible's teaching?
10. What should be thought of a person who refuses to receive baptism?
11. Why should every missionary be a diligent student of the faith of the people in his field?
12. Why is ridicule not a proper method of dealing with the errors of a false religion?
13. What is meant by identifying Christianity with American or European culture? Why is it wrong to make this identification? What harm may result from doing so?

LESSON 7

Hinduism, the Major Religion of India

Throughout its long history, the great sub-continent of India has been quite fertile in producing religious ideas and systems. In general,

the people of India have been pre-occupied with the things of the mind and the spirit, regarding material things as of minor importance, if not

actually unreal. Indian religion has sought union with the real and eternal beyond what is regarded as the illusory and transitory world of matter and the senses.

India was early inhabited by dark-skinned aborigines. About the time that the Israelites were undergoing oppression in Egypt (1500 B. C.) India was invaded from the northwest by people known as Aryans. These Aryans were closely related to the ancient Persians, who appear in Old Testament history. They spoke a language related to Latin, Greek and most of the languages of Europe. They were a cattle-herding people, and possessed horses, sheep, goats and dogs. Gradually they dominated most of India, reducing the earlier inhabitants to a subordinate status. This was the beginning of the rigid social class structure of India, called the "caste system."

The oldest religious book of India is the Rig-Veda, a book of hymns or praises. The word "Veda" means "knowledge," and comes from the same root as the English words "wit," and "wisdom." The Rig-Veda contains over a thousand hymns. It was first written down in the eighth century before Christ — about the time of Isaiah in the Bible — but the hymns are much older than that. The religion of the Rig-Veda is a polytheistic (having many gods) kind of nature-worship, with gods of the sky, storms, war, sun and others. This religion was essentially similar to the early religion of the Greeks and the Romans, who were, indeed, remote kin of the ancient Aryans of India. It was also more or less similar to the ancient heathen religion of our own ancestors in northern Europe and the British Isles.

Though the early religion of the Indo-Aryans was an unsophisticated polytheism, Hinduism moved more and more in the direction of **pantheism** — the idea that only God exists, and all is God. The religious outlook of the Rig-Veda is optimistic and cheerful, but Hinduism became more and more pessimistic as time passed, until it became almost totally pessimistic about human life and the world of sense experience.

Among the important later religious books of India are the Upanishads, which come from about 700-300 B. C. The name means "sittings near a teacher." These books raise the question, What is reality? They grapple with the problems of the meaning of human life and of the world. Is the world of everyday life real, or is it only an illusion? It is the expression of something invisible which is truly real? And how did human life and experience come to be?

The answer given to these questions is that the only true reality is a being called Brahma. Brahma is regarded as impersonal, though some of the later writings seem to ascribe a kind of personality to Brahma. Brahma is self-existent,

infinite, omnipresent, and **real**, while the physical universe is unreal, a mere illusion. By profound meditation the Hindu mystics sought union with Brahma, the truly real. Such a state would be the highest possible spiritual experience; it would be beyond all ordinary consciousness in which a person is aware of external objects and of his own thoughts.

A prominent idea of Hinduism is **reincarnation**, sometimes called "transmigration of souls." The most desirable outcome of death, from the Hindu viewpoint, would be the absorption of the human personality into Brahma. This, however, is not the ordinary outcome of death. The person who dies is re-born and lives another life, either on this earth, or in one of several heavens or hells. The life into which the soul is re-born may be human, or it may be vegetable, animal, or even insect life.

What kind of life the person is re-born to depends on the working of the law of Karma (the word means "deeds"). The totality of a man's deeds during his life determines the kind of re-birth he will have after death. The ordinary person must face the dismal prospect of thousands of re-births, most if not all of these being to a life of misery and suffering. This belief has cast a pall of unhappiness and pessimism over the emotional life of the people of India. Theirs was a religion almost without hope.

Belief in Brahma as the only reality tended to cut the nerve of individual human initiative, and fostered a fatalistic attitude on the part of the people. It also tended to undermine the moral life of man, for if the world and the individual human life are after all unreal, there can scarcely be any strong motivation against evil and for righteousness. Belief in the law of Karma induced deep depression in thoughtful people, although the common people, being absorbed in the endless task of earning a living, were not so deeply affected by it.

At a later period Hinduism became somewhat more practical. Today Hinduism recognizes three ways of salvation, namely, (1) The Way of Works, (2) The Way of Knowledge, and (3) The Way of Devotion.

The Way of Works prescribes sacrifices to the gods, study of the Vedas, begetting of offspring for the benefit of the spirits of one's ancestors, and extending hospitality to one's fellow men. These good works would add merit to the person's karma, so that the next re-birth might be a better one rather than the contrary. Besides the good works mentioned above, there are numerous others of a legalistic nature. It is believed that a widow who remarries will be re-born as a jackal. To millions of people in India these barren works represent their only hope and comfort.

The Way of Knowledge is based on the

Upanishads. According to this view, ignorance is the cause of human misery and all evil. Especially the kind of ignorance that consists in believing in one's real, individual existence apart from Brahma, the all. Man's individual life, it is held, is like a drop of water dashed up by an ocean wave, which presently falls back into the ocean again and loses forever its apparent individual identity. The Way of Knowledge seeks salvation by the attainment of insight or intuition following deep meditation.

The Way of Devotion consists in loving and worshipping a particular god or goddess. This "way of salvation" appealed to many people for whom the Way of Knowledge was too intellectual. It also appealed to the people's religious nature in a way that the barren, legalistic Way of Works could not. Hence the Way of Devotion has been immensely influential in Hinduism. And it naturally has fostered idolatry, for the devotion is not to the true God but to the gods and goddesses of Hinduism. There are many gods and goddesses in Hinduism. Among the greatest are Shiva, the Destroyer, and Vishnu, the Preserver.

The common man may know very little of Hindu philosophy and theology, and usually worships the gods in a traditional and uncritical manner. There are pilgrimages to holy places, especially the sacred river Ganges, which is held to flow from the feet of the god Vishnu in heaven.

There have been efforts to purify Hinduism of idolatry and to combine it with the teachings of Jesus, as well as to abolish some of the notorious evils such as suttee (burning of widows), child marriage and polygamy. While this movement has had some influence it has not changed the character of Hinduism on any large scale. Christian missions, modern secularism, western science, communism and modern communications have all affected India and its people. Yet Hinduism remains essentially unchanged, and also dominant. There are however prominent leaders in India who seek human betterment rather than absorption of personality in the all as their goal. What the future will be, no one can say.

How shall we appraise Hinduism from the Christian standpoint? In the first place, it is obvious that at its best Hinduism is a serious, earnest effort to come to grips with some of the problems of human existence. It affords a very clear example of the helplessness of human thought apart from special divine revelation. The human mind is darkened by sin and after the most earnest reflection it arrives at false answers. Among many other things, Hinduism is lacking in:

1. A belief in a personal, almighty God, creator and ruler of all things, who is Himself distinct from the universe.

2. A belief in the doctrine of creation, which is basic to any true understanding of the universe.

3. A true conception of moral obligation, or moral law.

4. An adequate and true conception of human sinfulness and guilt. It seeks to save from unreality rather than from moral evil.

5. A Saviour who gave Himself as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of men, died and rose again.

6. A true belief in personal immortality and eternal life.

The real hope of India, we may properly conclude, lies not in reforms or adaptations of Hinduism, nor in missionary work of the "social gospel" type, but in the clear, faithful proclamation of the true God, the Holy Bible, and Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the only salvation of sinners — the Way, the Truth and the Life, without whom none can come to God.

Questions:

1. What has been the predominant attitude or tendency of Indian religion?

2. About when did the Aryans enter India? What was going on in Bible history at that same time?

3. What resulted from the contact of the Aryans with the earlier people of India?

4. What is the oldest religious book of India? When was it written? What is its character?

5. What was the nature of the early religion of the Aryans of India?

6. What is meant by saying that the tendency of Indian religion has been from polytheism to pantheism?

7. What are the Upanishads? What problems do they deal with?

8. What is the nature of Brahma according to Indian thought?

9. Describe the Hindu belief in reincarnation.

10. What is the meaning of the word "Karma"?

11. What is the effect of belief in Karma on the ordinary person in India?

12. What three "ways of salvation" are recognized in Hinduism?

13. How has it been attempted to purify or reform Hinduism?

14. What does Hinduism show as to the limitations of the sin-darkened human mind?

15. Name six cardinal truths which Hinduism lacks, but which are found in Christianity.

LESSON 8

Buddhism, the Quest for Escape from Misery

Buddhism, the most important religion of Asia, originated in India, although there are very few Buddhists in India today. It began in the sixth century before Christ — about the time of Daniel and the Babylonian Captivity in the Bible. A son named Siddhartha Gautama was born in 560 B. C. to a chief or petty king of a district in northern India. While still in his 'teens he married a "princess." According to legend, his father tried to shield him from all contact with sadness, sickness and death. But one day the young man rode forth and saw in succession a feeble old man, a sick man, a corpse and an ascetic monk. According to some forms of the story these were seen on different days. Gautama resolved to leave his home and follow the life of an ascetic monk. This is called "The Great Renunciation." He took one last look at his sleeping wife and infant son, and rode away into the night. For six years he sought salvation by extreme asceticism or self-mortification. So severe was his self-denial that he almost died of starvation. At the end of six years he was bitterly disappointed, for he had found no spiritual enlightening or peace of soul.

Following this disappointment, Gautama renounced his extreme asceticism as a failure. Five disciples who had been his companions thereupon left him. Sometime later Gautama had an experience which is called "The Great Enlightenment." This came to him while he was sitting under a tree called the Bo (knowledge) Tree. The insight which came to him was that the real source of human misery and unhappiness is **desire**. If one could only rid himself of all desire, he would have spiritual peace. The way to Nirvana would then be open. (Nirvana means the loss of all individual consciousness and existence by absorption in the impersonal all).

Following this experience Gautama was called "the Buddha" (the Enlightened One). Strictly speaking, "Buddha" is a title, not a personal name, but it is often used as a name. Buddha was tempted to keep his newly found secret to himself, but he overcame this temptation and resolved to share his insight with the world. His five disciples returned to him, becoming the first Buddhist converts, to be followed in later ages by countless millions of souls.

Buddha founded an order of monks. He went about northern India preaching his new doctrine. He issued ten precepts, which are: 1. Refrain from destroying life. 2. Do not steal. 3. Do not be unchaste. 4. Do not be untruthful. 5. Abstain from intoxicants. 6. Eat in moderation, and not after noon. 7. Avoid viewing dancing, listening to singing, and seeing dramatic performances. 8. Use no garland, perfumes, jewelry or cos-

metics. 9. Do not sleep on broad or high beds. 10. Do not accept gold or silver.

All ten of these precepts were to be kept by the monks, but the lay members of the Buddhist religion need keep only the first five.

Gautama Buddha finally died, of food poisoning, at the age of 80 years, after 45 years of active work in the promotion of the Buddhist faith.

Unlike many of the great thinkers of India, Buddha had no interest in speculative philosophical problems. He was interested, rather, in what is today called psychology, and he sought a psychological remedy for man's troubles. He held that man's basic trouble does not lie in his thinking but in his emotions, especially in his desires when they are not strictly controlled. He did not believe in any real God, and held that prayer is utterly useless. The Vedas and the priestly rituals of India he pronounced to be worthless.

Buddhism as taught by Gautama Buddha is pure atheism, and it is absolute self-salvation. Man is saved, not by God or the gods, but by a strict regimen of psychological self-culture. Therefore in the strictest sense, man is his own saviour. This is nothing more nor less than religious humanism. Man saves himself by his own powers and efforts intelligently directed toward ridding himself of desire.

Buddha took over the Hindu doctrine of Karma, but he modified it. Where Hinduism looked for thousands of re-births, Buddha held that it is possible to escape from the law of Karma in one individual lifetime. This means that it is possible in a single lifetime to reach the end of the chain, so that there will be no re-birth.

Buddha taught the duty of love for all men. But it must be impersonal, a love for mankind in general, not for any particular person or persons. Further, he outlined "The Four Noble Truths" and "The Eightfold Path" as the way of salvation, by which the serious Buddhist can escape the otherwise endless process of re-birth. The "Four Noble Truths" are:

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering.
2. The Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering: Desire.
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering: It ceases when desire comes to an end.
4. The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path which leads to the Cessation of Suffering.

The Eightfold Path is:

1. Right belief. 2. Right purpose. 3. Right speech. 4. Right conduct. 5. Right means of livelihood. 6. Right effort. 7. Right thinking (controlled thoughts). 8. Right meditation or absorption, which assures entrance upon Nirvana at death.

Though Gautama was really a psychologist who did not believe in God, after his death people began to worship him, deriving comfort more from Buddha as a person than from his difficult teachings. He came to be regarded as "the compassionate" as well as "the enlightened one."

Buddhism spread rapidly after the death of Buddha. In the first three centuries there were no less than sixteen different sects or denominations of the Buddhist faith. A king in India named Asoka who reigned about 250 B. C. spread Buddhism far and wide, sending Buddhist missionaries to island of Ceylon and even as far as to Syria, Egypt and Greece.

The Buddhism of Southern Asia — Ceylon, Burma, Thailand (Siam), Cambodia — is called Hinayana Buddhism. The word "Hinayana" means "Lesser Vehicle." This type of Buddhism is closest to the original teachings of Gautama Buddha. It holds that Buddha has entered Nirvana and no longer exists as a human individual — he is beyond all becoming and ceasing to be. This southern Buddhism emphasizes salvation through strict self-discipline and self-culture, as taught by Buddha. It has also acquired some religious features, such as reverence for relics of the Buddha.

The temples of Hinayana Buddhism contain immense images of Buddha. In theory these are merely statues, but in actual practice they are idols, and the ordinary Buddhist worships them. The common people believe that prayers offered before these images will be answered.

The other great form of Buddhism is called Mahayana Buddhism ("Mahayana" means "Greater Vehicle"). This originated somewhat later, about the time of Christ. In this new form of Buddhism psychological self-culture is no longer the main thing. It has been replaced by distinctly religious ideas and features. Gautama Buddha himself is worshipped as divine; it is held that he came to earth to help suffering mankind. Many myths grew up around the person of Buddha. It came to be held that Gautama was not the only Buddha, but one of many, some of which came to this earth, while others remained in heaven. Salvation was no longer regarded as completely a matter of self-discipline, for it was held that there are divine beings with boundless reserves of merit which they will gladly bestow on needy, suffering men.

Mahayana Buddhism proved immensely popular in Northern Asia. It grew and prospered in China, Korea and Japan. It is the most

idolatrous form of Buddhism, worshipping great numbers of divine and semi-divine beings. There are said to be whole classes of divine and semi-divine saviours for mankind. At the heart of the universe is a Buddha-essence or "love-behind-things - that - produces - Buddhas." This Buddha-nature is in every man, and can be fostered and cultivated.

The most extreme form of Buddhism is called Lamaism. This is the Buddhism of Tibet and Mongolia, which believes in a "Lama" as a living reincarnation of the Buddha.

A Christian scholar has called Buddhism "the will-o-the-wisp of the Far East." This system, in one form or another, has gained an amazingly strong grip on many, many millions of people in the world's largest and most populous continent. How shall we account for the success of Buddhism? Perhaps by noting that Buddhism addresses itself to a very real and universal human problem — the problem of pain or suffering. Where people do not have the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation, Buddhism is the best they know. It certainly provides a kind of peace and calm to distressed minds and hearts. The suffering and anguish of the millions of Asia is past comprehension of people who have lived all their life in Europe or America. The strength of Buddhism is in its seeming promise of relief from endless misery. But, alas, it is a false promise and can only bring disillusionment in the end.

For Buddhism, in spite of its appealing features, is essentially a false system. First of all, Buddhism is concerned about the wrong problem — it starts with the problem of suffering, not with the problem of sin or moral evil which is the real cause of suffering. Christianity preaches salvation from sin, Buddhism proclaims relief from suffering.

Secondly, Buddhism has no clear and true idea of God. And without knowing the true God man can never have real peace. As the great Augustine said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee." In its original form Buddhism is an atheistic psychological discipline; in its later forms it is polytheistic and idolatrous beyond all limits. Of the living and true God it knows nothing.

Thirdly, Buddhism has essentially false views of salvation and of human destiny. It is without Jesus Christ and His atoning blood. It has many "saviours" but lacks the true Saviour of sinful mankind. And Buddhism regards man's ultimate destiny as extinction of individual personality by absorption in the ocean of Nirvana. It is here that its difference from Christianity is most clearly seen. According to Buddhism, the continuation of individual human life and consciousness is an evil to be rescued from. Non-existence

is the ideal goal. But according to Christianity, human life is the good gift of God, and an individual human life was created to live forever. The individual life can be purified of selfish and evil desires, and all pure and holy desires shall be satisfied, fully and forever. Thus where Buddhism seeks the extinction of desire, Christianity envisions the satisfaction of desire on a higher plane. Buddha promised suffering men Nirvana, but Jesus Christ said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ brings, not the vanishing of life but the fulfilment of life.

Questions:

1. What and where did Gautama Buddha live?
2. What, according to legend, induced him to become a monk?
3. What was "The Great Renunciation?"
4. What was the result of Gautama's six years of self-denial?
5. What was "The Great Enlightenment?"
6. What temptation did Buddha overcome?
7. What are the Ten Precepts enunciated by Buddha?
8. What is the essential character of Buddhism as taught by Gautama Buddha himself?
9. What change did Gautama Buddha make in the Hindu doctrine of Karma?

10. What did Buddha teach about love for mankind?

11. What are "The Four Noble Truths"?

12. What attitude did the Buddhists adopt toward Gautama Buddha after his death?

13. To what countries did the Indian king Asoka send Buddhist missionaries?

14. What is Hinayana Buddhism? In what countries does it exist?

15. What is the attitude of the ordinary Buddhist to the images of Buddha in the temples?

16. How is Mahayana Buddhism different from Hinayana Buddhism?

17. In what countries did Mahayana Buddhism prosper?

18. What is the special belief held by Lamaism? In what countries is it the dominant form of Buddhism?

19. How can we account for the success of Buddhism?

20. Explain what is meant by saying that Buddhism starts with the wrong problem.

21. What is wrong with the Buddhist idea of God?

22. How does the Buddhist idea of human destiny stand in contrast to the Christian view of eternal life?

LESSON 9

Confucianism, China's Form of Faith in Man

When Siddhartha Gautama, who later became the Buddha, was a boy of nine or ten years old, a child was born far away in northern China who was also destined to have an immense influence on later generations. The time was about 551 B.C. — the time of Daniel in the Bible. The place was the old province of Lu in the Shantung peninsula. The family name was K'ung. ("Confucius" is a Latinized form of K'ung-fu-tzu, which means "Master K'ung"). His father died while Confucius was still in his infancy. His mother made sacrifices so that her son could get an education. He studied under a village tutor, taking up poetry and music. He learned to play the lute and sing old Chinese songs. When he was fifteen years of age he became more seriously interested in his studies and decided to devote himself to the life of a scholar. He was also fond of hunting, fishing and archery. It is recorded that in these sports he always maintained a gentleman's attitude of good sportsmanship.

Before Confucius was twenty he entered upon government service, becoming a tax collector in

his native province. This position he resigned after his mother's death. After over two years of mourning for his mother, he became a private teacher, instructing pupils in such subjects as literature, history, political science, music and divination. Soon he had a circle of disciples, some of whom admired him greatly and remained with him for many years. His aim was that his good pupils should accept high political office, in order to effect needed reform in Chinese society.

At the age of fifty he is said to have become a cabinet official under the Duke of Lu, finally rising to the post of Prime Minister. His conduct of government business was so honest and incorruptible that he began to have political enemies. Finding it impossible to continue in this post without compromise of his high ideals, he resigned.

Following this Confucius became a wandering free-lance teacher and political expert. It was his hope to find a government position where his counsels would really be taken seriously and

put into practice, but he found none. Sometimes he was persecuted, and on one occasion he was actually jailed. At the age of 67 he came home to the province of Lu, where he spent his last years in retirement. He died in 479 B.C. at the age of 73 years, expressing deep discouragement at the apparent failure of his life's work. His disciples found him saying over and over to himself:

"The great mountain must crumble,
The strong beam must break,
The wise man must wither away like a plant."

To his disciples he said: "No intelligent ruler arises to take me as his master. My time has come to die." A week later he died quietly, without prayer, without expectation of immortality, and apparently without fears.

Our main sources for the teachings of Confucius are **The Five Classics** and **The Four Books**. The former writings are partly by Confucius himself, and perhaps partly from before his time. **The Four Books** contain teachings and sayings of Confucius recorded by his disciples, though they also contain a good deal of material from later than the time of Confucius. The modern Western reader of these ancient Chinese writings finds in them some sage, common-sense wisdom, together with a good deal that seems boringly repetitious and even trivial. It is remarkable, however, that in the entire body of the Chinese Classics there is not a single sentence that could not be read without embarrassment in any company. This is in sharp contrast to much literature coming down from the ancient world.

Confucius regarded himself as a transmitter of the values of the past, not a creator or innovator. He said "I believe in and have a passion for the Ancients." "I am not a born wise man. I am merely one in love with ancient studies and work very hard to learn them."

Confucius regarded the China of his day as decadent and corrupt, but not beyond the hope of reform. He held that the reason for China's troubles was that men had failed to live according to the teachings of antiquity. He placed stress on the term "li" (pronounced "lee"), which is variously translated as "propriety," "courtesy," "correct forms," "due order of ceremony." Lin Yutang, a present day Chinese scholar, defines "li" as "An ideal social order with everything in its place, and particularly a rationalized feudal order, like that which was breaking down in Confucius' days."

He taught that there are five basic human relationships, which must be adjusted and maintained according to the teachings of antiquity. These five relationships are: 1. Ruler and subject. 2. Father and son. 3. Husband and wife. 4. Oldest son to younger brothers. 5. Elders to younger persons. These social relationships can

be rectified by the practice of "li", resulting in social harmony. Confucius really believed that the ancient Chinese had attained this social ideal. Unquestionably he idealized "the good old days," which must have been very different from his nostalgic picture of them. His great aim in life was to call China back to the glories and perfections of the past.

On one occasion Confucius came near to enunciating the Golden Rule, but with a great difference from the Golden Rule as stated by Jesus, for Confucius stated the Golden Rule **negatively** whereas Jesus stated it **positively**. Confucius taught men not to do to others what they would not want others to do to them.

Confucius had a shallow optimistic view of human nature. He had no inkling of the real sinfulness and corruption of the human heart. He held that mankind is good at heart, and that people only need wise instruction to make them what they ought to be. He said: "If rulers are good and just, the people will be virtuous and obedient." He held that reform must begin at the top of society, among the ruling class. Starting with the Emperor, it penetrates down to the humblest citizen of China. Each class will be good and virtuous if the class above it sets a good and virtuous example.

Besides being anti-Biblical, Confucius' view of human nature is psychologically unrealistic and superficial. The factors that make human conduct what it is are not by any means as simple and elementary as he supposed. Confucius, of course, knew nothing of modern psychology. He was totally unaware of the influence of the unconscious mind on man's conduct. But even in his own day, Buddhism, though itself a false system, had a more penetrating and less superficial analysis of what is wrong with humanity.

Holding that the human problem is basically intellectual rather than moral, Confucius sought to make people virtuous by enlightenment. But he gave no answer to the questions: "Why should people want to be virtuous?" "What makes a person begin to want to be virtuous?" He left these problems hanging in the air, apparently not even realizing that they existed.

Confucius had no real faith in God or even in the heathen gods — when questioned about such matters he was non-committal or agnostic. He recommended observing customary religious ritual, without committing himself as to the real existence of gods or spirits. When asked about death, he replied that we do not yet understand life, and how can we know about death?

His basic attitude toward religion was rationalistic and humanistic. He valued only what could be shown to serve some social purpose; that is, he regarded religion as a means to a

human end — which is just another way of saying that he was not a religious man.

After Confucius' death his teachings had their ups and downs, finally being proclaimed as the official faith of China by the emperor Wu Ti, about 136 B.C. Following this the Confucian scholars were put in charge of government-sponsored education, beginning two thousand years of training the governing classes of China in Confucian thinking. In the course of time there arose a tendency to regard the dead Confucius as divine, and to accord him religious worship.

The Confucian idea of "filial piety" became the main structure of the social order of China. Under Confucianism the first loyalty of a Chinese is to his family, and this means his parents and his ancestors. No man who has a father or older brother living is regarded as of age or free to act independently, and no woman is ever free to act independently — she is always subject to her father, her husband or her son. China has greatly exaggerated filial piety and has claimed wonderful benefits from it, far beyond the real facts. However, it has certainly been a stabilizing force in Chinese society.

The influence of Confucianism on China has been to condition the people to a backward rather than a forward look. All the emphasis was on the teachings of antiquity. Confucianism's agnosticism concerning God and the supernatural, together with its easy-going optimism about the moral condition of the human personality, have fostered in the people of China a hard-headed indifference to religious truths and values, coupled with a superficial, complacent attitude toward moral or ethical problems. The ideal Confucianist is a gentleman according to the prescribed rules, but he has never come to grips with the evil in the human heart, and he is quite indifferent to the spiritual and eternal dimensions of human life; the supreme need for a right relationship to God does not impress him as a practical matter. He is concerned about the human, not the divine; about the here and now, not the hereafter.

Communism, which dominates the Chinese mainland today, is the direct contradiction of almost everything that Confucianism has stood for, even though perhaps the materialism of both systems may seem to constitute a common ground. But Confucianism is essentially aristocratic, with little room for democracy and certainly none for what Mao Tzu-tung has called "the democratic dictatorship of the people." Whether Confucianism will have sufficient vitality to rise again from its present low condition, only the future can show.

To summarize the faults of Confucianism from the Christian standpoint: it lacks any idea of the true God; in place of divine revelation its standard

is the teachings of the ancients; it is without any true conception of human sinfulness and guilt, and of the way of salvation; its easy optimism about human nature fosters complacency and spiritual pride; its backward look has prevented normal human progress; its lack of any clear view of a future life has made it entirely a this-worldly faith; and the superficial, stereotyped character of its ethical teachings has made it very difficult for the Chinese people to come to any real conviction of sin when the Christian Gospel is proclaimed to them.

Questions:

1. When and where was Confucius born? What was going on in Bible history about this time?
2. Describe the early life and education of Confucius.
3. What was Confucius' first government position? Why did he give it up?
4. What was the highest government post ever held by Confucius? Why did he resign this position?
5. How did Confucius spend the remaining years of his life?
6. What are our main sources for Confucius' teachings?
7. What was Confucius' belief as to the cause of China's troubles?
8. What is the meaning of the Chinese term "li"?
9. What are the five basic human relationships, according to Confucius?
10. What was Confucius' attitude toward the remote past?
11. What is the difference between the Golden Rule as stated by Confucius, and the Golden Rule as given by Jesus?
12. How, according to Confucius, must social reform start?
13. Wherein was Confucius' view of human nature unbiblical?
14. Why was Confucius' view of human nature psychologically unrealistic and superficial?
15. What basic questions did Confucius neither ask nor answer?
16. What was Confucius' attitude toward religious worship?
17. What was his attitude with regard to the existence of God?
18. When and by whom was Confucianism made the official faith of China?

19. How did Confucianism come to influence the ruling classes?

20. What is the meaning of "Filial Piety" according to Confucianism?

21. What characteristics of the Chinese peo-

ple have been fostered by special emphasis of Confucianism?

22. What is the contrast between Confucianism and Communism?

23. What are the special faults of Confucianism from the standpoint of Biblical Christianity?

LESSON 10

Shinto, the Deification of Japan

The word **Shinto** means literally "Divine Way" or "Way of the Gods." The form **Shintoism** is sometimes found, but Shinto is more correct, for the **to** in Shinto means "way" and is therefore roughly equivalent to "ism." In this lesson we shall use the term Shinto.

Shinto is typically Japanese, and is unknown except among the Japanese people. It is rooted in ancient Japanese mythology. According to the old myth, a god and a goddess, Izanagi and Izanami, created the Japanese islands and the people of Japan. In bathing himself, Izanagi washed some dirt out of his left eye and thus produced Amaterasu, the sun goddess, most important of all Japanese divinities. The grandson of Amaterasu was Ni-ni-gi, whom she sent to rule on earth. The great-grandson of Ni-ni-gi was Jimmu Tenno, the first human emperor of Japan, whose date is given as 660 B.C. Thus, according to the myth, the historical line of Japanese emperors is directly descended from Amaterasu, the sun goddess.

Essentially, Shinto consists in according a religious quality or value to Japan — the islands, the people, the emperor being regarded as having a divine character which makes them unique among nations of the world and requires that they be regarded with religious veneration. Shinto therefore, is the deification of Japan.

The Japanese people have mixed racial origins — partly from the Asiatic mainland and partly from south Pacific islands. These two racial strains — the one of Mongolian type and the other of Malayan type — combined in the Japanese islands to form the historical Japanese people. The earlier population of Japan, the light-skinned Ainu, were displaced and driven northward to the island of Hokkaido.

In the fifth century after Christ Japan came under Chinese influence, the civilization and culture of China being much more ancient than that of Japan. As a result of Chinese influence, Confucian ethics, filial piety and ancestor worship were largely adopted by the Japanese. In the next century Buddhism reached Japan from China, and after a period of resistance it soon found a hearty acceptance. Buddhism became so popular that Shinto was almost submerged by the flood of Buddhist propaganda. In the 17th century after Christ (the time of Cromwell and the West-

minster Assembly in England, and of the colonization of Massachusetts Bay in America), there occurred a strong revival of pure Shinto. This led to increased emphasis on the idea that the emperor is a direct descendant of Amaterasu, the sun goddess.

Moto-ori, who has been rated as the greatest scholar in all the history of Japan, asserted the divine descent of the emperor, and held that Japan should be ranked high above all other nations. The foreign nations should rightly acknowledge the supremacy of Japan and pay tribute to the emperor. Moto-ori also opposed the tendency to borrow ethical teachings from Confucianism, this being a foreign (Chinese) system.

Japan had been largely isolated from contact with the rest of the world, but this isolation was broken by the American Admiral Perry in 1853. The Japanese decided to make their country great as a military power by modernizing and industrializing it — something which was accomplished with amazing energy and speed.

In 1868 there was a political change, called the Restoration of 1868, by which the "Shogun" who had been holding power and had negotiated with Admiral Perry, abolished his own office. The emperor thus became the supreme ruler in fact as well as in name. Soon after 1868 the Emperor Meiji made Shinto the official state religion of Japan. A Constitution adopted in 1889 "granted" religious freedom, but this could not be real freedom as long as Shinto held the privileged place of the state religion of Japan.

As western ideas, including Christianity but especially western science and philosophy increasingly influenced Japan, many people lost their former naive faith in Shinto with its ancient mythology. The Japanese Government sought to meet this threat by reinterpreting the Shinto myths, representing the gods and goddesses as human beings possessing special gifts and powers. The Government sought to use Shinto to mold the thinking and attitudes of the Japanese people.

In 1882 an official separation was made between "Sect Shinto" and "Shrine Shinto." "Sect Shinto" was declared to be a religion, on the same basis as Buddhism, Christianity or any other religion. But "Shrine Shinto" or "State Shinto" was officially declared to be non-religious, and participation in its rites was declared to be the

patriotic duty of all Japanese. In 1911 the Government went further and ordered that school teachers must take their pupils in a body to the local "State Shinto" shrine to perform obeisance. Also school pupils were required to bow before the emperor's portrait daily, which caused deep concern to Christians. The Government insisted that these various practices were "non-religious" and merely patriotic. We may comment that patriotism in a nation which regards itself as divine cannot be "merely patriotic" but inevitably partakes of the nature of religious devotion if it is expressed in ways which imply recognition of the divine character of the nation.

More than one hundred thousand shrines were set apart as "State Shinto" shrines by the Japanese Government. These shrines were served by sixteen thousand priests, appointed and paid by the Japanese Government. These priests were to conduct the "non-religious" rites of State Shinto. These shrines were made national property and thus separated from the "Sect Shinto" system. They remained, however, definitely shrines of the Shinto faith, with unmistakable Shinto features and practices.

The Japanese word for "shrine" means "god house." The shrines are often of great beauty and attractiveness. Made of natural, unpainted wood, the shrine is set in a park of fine trees, carefully fenced in, with a single entrance surmounted by a "torii" or ceremonial gateway. The whole atmosphere of the shrine and its surroundings is one of silent, awesome mystery, the immense, old trees adding a sense of almost timeless antiquity.

The worshipper approaches the shrine after cleansing his hands and mouth, claps his hands to draw the attention of the gods to his presence, bows, presents an offering of food or cloth, prays silently, bows again, and departs solemnly and quietly.

Inside the shrine is kept a *shintai* ("god body") — some sacred object carefully treasured but seldom or never seen. This is regarded as symbolic of the spiritual reality which the shrine exists to honor. It may be a mirror, an old sword, a piece of ancient manuscript, or even a rock or stone. The more ignorant among the people regard this "god body" as divine and actually pray to it. Others, more sophisticated in their outlook, regard the "god body" as having power to bring good luck, or as a mere symbol of some great man or men of the ancient past.

The most important of the State Shinto shrines is the one located at Ise on the southern shore of the main island, near the Inland Sea — a region of great natural beauty. This shrine is devoted to the worship of Amaterasu, the sun goddess. From ancient times it has been a place of pilgrimage of devout and loyal Japanese people. Before 1945 the Japanese emperors would either worship

at the Ise shrine in person, or would send a special imperial messenger to the shrine.

Beginning with the invasion of China in 1931 the militaristic party which controlled the Japanese Government actively promoted the Shinto mythology and ideology through all sorts of means of propaganda, especially the elementary and secondary schools. What was originally and in its true meaning a nature myth now was vigorously promoted as a support for the idea that it was the divine destiny of Japan to conquer and rule other nations — ultimately to rule the whole world.

The real meaning of State Shinto as promoted by the militarists during the period 1931-1945 was **the deification and worship of the Japanese State**. The Shinto myths about the sun goddess, etc., served as supports for this state-worship, which was somewhat similar in essential meaning to the absolutizing of the State under Hitler and the Nazis in Germany at the same period. Conscientious Christians were greatly troubled by this program in Japan, and their freedom was seriously infringed by the requirements of a Government headed toward World War II. All this promotion of Shinto by the militarist-dominated Government, it must be remembered, was declared to be "non-religious" and only patriotism.

State Shinto was abolished by the Allied Occupation in Japan under General Douglas MacArthur in 1945. The official bond between the Japanese Government and the shrine system was broken, and the "State Shinto" shrines became dependent on private offerings and generosity for their support. They are still being frequented by throngs of Japanese people, even though they are no longer officially sanctioned by the Government.

At the same time that State Shinto was abolished, true and complete religious liberty was established in Japan for the first time in the nation's history. As Professor John Young has aptly remarked, freedom was Christendom's gift to conquered Japan. This freedom has continued officially to the present time, though today there are some signs on the horizon indicating the danger of a possible return to the former government sponsorship of various features of the Shinto system. The Emperor has disclaimed divinity, but the Shinto ideology is deeply rooted in the minds of the Japanese people, and some turn of events may spark a return to the old State Shinto system. On the other hand, Communist propaganda is seriously active in Japan and there is a real possibility that the nation may turn Red. Either of these outcomes would be most tragic from the Christian standpoint. We should not forget to pray for the continuance of true freedom in Japan.

Besides the now-abolished State Shinto, there has been "Sect Shinto" and Shinto in the homes of the people. Most Japanese homes have a "god-

shelf" bearing paper or wood tablets with the name of a god or some ancestor. Offerings may be placed before the god-shelf, and devotions are supposed to be performed there daily, though they may be extremely brief and simple in character. The religious life of the people includes beliefs and practices of Buddhism as well as of Shinto.

What shall be said of Shinto from the Christian standpoint? First of all, the ancient myths, like those of other nations, are filled with fantastic features and are unworthy of being taken seriously. The attempt to reinterpret the myths in the interest of Japanese national greatness is a rationalization which disregards their true character — in reality the old myths are chiefly ancient people's response to the mysterious forces of nature. The whole complex of the divinity of Japan — her emperor, islands and people, and her alleged destiny to rule the world—is simply false. It is not only an extreme form of idolatry which robs the true God of the honor which is His alone, but it is a flat contradiction of the Biblical truth and scientific fact that mankind is a single natural species—God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth (Acts 17-26). All "super-race" ideologies, wherever found, are essentially idolatrous and anti-scientific.

The declaration of the Government that the rites and ceremonies of State Shinto were "non-religious" must be judged to be a mere legal fiction—the rites and the shrines were and are obviously religious by any ordinary criterion of what constitutes "religion". It is amazing that a modern government could officially declare that ceremonies involving a "god house", priesthood, prayer, offerings and a very real recognition of gods and spirits were "non-religious" and must therefore be participated in by all Japanese, even by the Christians who believed in the God who commanded, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The former program of requiring participation in the ceremonies of State Shinto was therefore essentially tyrannical and idolatrous—a grievous sin against God and a serious infringement of the freedom of Christian people.

Theologically and ethically Shinto is so thin and barren that, even if true, it could not support the religious and moral needs of the people. This may partly explain the popularity and success of Buddhism in Japan. Buddhism is a false system, but it is not "thin" or lacking in essential content. Shinto cannot support a real world-view or philosophy of life, nor a well-developed system of ethics or morality. It has hardly any conception of sin or of moral law. Of the living and true God it knows nothing. The people and nation of Japan need Christianity, with the Holy Bible of the Old and New Testaments as the special revelations of the true God. They need the Bible's revelation of the doctrine of creation to take the place of the incredible Shinto myths of the origin

of things. And they need Jesus Christ and Him crucified and risen from the dead as the one and only Saviour of men and nations.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word **Shinto**?
2. What is the Shinto myth about the origin of the Imperial line of Japan?
3. What is the essential meaning of Shinto?
4. What were the racial origins of the Japanese people?
5. When did Japan come under Chinese influence, and with what result?
6. When did Buddhism come to Japan, and with what success?
7. What change in the Japanese religious situation took place in the 17th century after Christ?
8. What were the teachings of the scholar Moto-ori?
9. How was Japan opened to contact with the rest of the world, and with what result?
10. What was the Restoration of 1868?
11. When and by how was Shinto made the official state religion of Japan?
12. Why could the religious freedom "granted" by the Constitution of 1889 not be true religious freedom?
13. What was the effect of the coming of western ideas on the Japanese people's faith in Shinto?
14. How did the Japanese Government try to counteract this tendency?
15. When were "Sect Shinto" and "Shrine Shinto" separated?
16. What was the character of "Shrine Shinto" or "State Shinto", according to the Japanese Government?
17. In what ways were the people required to participate in State Shinto?
18. How many State Shinto shrines were there in Japan?
19. How many priests served the State Shinto shrines?
20. What is the meaning of the Japanese word for "shrine?"
21. Describe the appearance and surroundings of a Shinto shrine.
22. What acts are performed by the worshipper at a shrine?
23. What is kept inside a shrine, and what

different attitudes may the people have toward this object?

24. Which of the State Shinto shrines is the most important one? Where is it located, and to what divinity is it devoted?

25. What use was made of Shinto by the militarist-dominated Japanese Government in the period 1931-1945?

26. What is the real meaning of State Shinto as promoted by the militarists during 1931-1945?

27. What parallel development took place in Germany during this same period?

28. When and by what authority was the system of State Shinto abolished?

29. What is the present status of the former State Shinto shrines?

30. When and how did religious liberty come to Japan?

31. What two possible dangers to freedom exist in Japan today?

32. How is Shinto practiced in the homes of the people?

33. What should be thought of the Shinto myths from the Christian standpoint?

34. Show that the claim that the Japanese race is superior and unique is both a contradiction of Bible truth and also contrary to scientific fact.

35. What must be thought of the claim that the rites of State Shinto were "non-religious"?

36. What is the theological and ethical character of Shinto?

37. How can the remarkable success of Buddhism in Japan possibly be explained?

38. What essential truths of true religion are lacking in Shinto?

39. Why is the Bible's doctrine of creation needed in Japan?

40. What is Japan's deepest and most real need?

(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.

THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST, by James S. Stewart. Abingdon Press, Nashville 2, Tenn. 1957, pp. 292. \$1.50.

Commended by the publishers as "an excellent beginning study of the essential facts of the life and teaching ministry of Jesus," this book is attractive and readable, and shows throughout the literary charm and moral earnestness which have made its author famous as a teacher and preacher in Scotland.

In view of the foregoing, the wide divergence between the author's presentation and the historic faith of Christianity is deeply regrettable. Stewart is silent on the virgin birth of Christ. He portrays Jesus as a great and good man of God, as the Messiah, and (in connection with Peter's confession at Caesarea-Philippi) as divine. Whether he holds the ontological or eternal Deity of our Lord is perhaps not fully clear.

Likewise, Stewart is practically silent on Jesus' acceptance of the full authority and integrity of the Old Testament Scriptures — a major feature of our Lord's teaching. He attributes to

Jesus the ideas of the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man (pp. 74, 75, 78). These are commonplaces of liberal theology but are rejected as unscriptural by orthodoxy, which holds that, in the religious and ethical sense, God is the Father of Christians only, not of men as men. Further, Stewart is not clear as to the **uniqueness** of Jesus' relationship to the Father in distinction from that of the disciples or other men.

Very evidently Stewart does not accept the orthodox view of the atonement, namely vicarious penal suffering of Christ to satisfy the justice of God. Instead, he repeatedly (pages 87, 121, 122) sets forth a moral influence view of the atonement, regarding the death of Christ as **revelatory** rather than **expiatory**; Christ died, he says, to reveal the nature of sin and the love of God. Nowhere does Stewart clearly affirm that Christ bore the just penalty of the sins of His people as their Substitute.

Stewart is weak in his view of the relation of the Old Testament to Jesus. He does not in any

positive or effective manner show the fulfilment of Old Testament predictive prophecy in the events of the life of Jesus Christ.

Stewart strongly stresses Jesus' miracles of healing, but is silent about the great "nature miracles" such as the feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water.

To summarize: Stewart is weak in his view of Scripture, stresses predominantly the humanity of Jesus rather than His Deity, attributes an unbiblical universalism to Jesus, and holds a moral influence view of the atonement which is contrary to the satisfaction doctrine which is the real heart of the historic Christian faith. That this book has good features and that the author is a man of exceptional talents are unquestionable. But those who are weak in Biblical and theological knowledge are likely to be misled by it, and those who truly love the Christ of the Scriptures will be sadly disappointed by it.

—J. G. Vos

GOSPEL GLEANINGS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. No author. Published by Publications Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, c/o Publications Treasurer, Palmerston Villa, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, Scotland. 1961, pp. 125. 5 shillings.

A selection of true Christian narratives in words and style of a hundred years ago. Many of these are based on lives of children or missionary events. Not very appealing to present day young people.

—Fay D. Farley

IF YOU ASK ME, by Mary Hope. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 152. \$2.50.

This book is composed of practical answers to life's problems. This West Coast columnist has answered hundreds of questions in the light of her careful Bible study; every problem has an answer — in the Word of God — whether it be personal, marital, parental, teenage, financial or spiritual.

—Fay D. Farley

DAVID BRAINERD: BELOVED YANKEE, by David Wynbeek. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1961, pp. 256. \$3.75.

Portrays his dedication and heroism while giving a digest of his diaries. It is a remarkable story of the soul-struggle of a man of prayer and his involvement with the great events and people of his day. Some of his intimate friends were Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Aaron Burr, Sr., the Tennent family, Zinzendorf and Benjamin Franklin. Never in robust health, yet he endured hardships and exposures almost unbelievable in his unquenchable yearning to preach Christ to "his Indians." Many times he was "near exhaustion from his constant ministering to them."

His life is summed up on his gravestone: "A faithful and laborious missionary."

—Fay D. Farley

RIGHT SIDE UP, by Betty Carlson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 120. \$2.50.

A book of inspirational essays to show that happiness lies in your point of view. Many illustrations are drawn from people the author has known. Of cartoons she says: "You can get across a point so much more forcefully when you can make people laugh." A good "pick up" book to keep near you.

—Fay D. Farley

THE BIG READ-TO-ME STORY BOOK, by W. G. Van de Hulst. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 178. \$3.95.

A delightful and charming book that appeals to children 4-8 years of age. The stories are imaginative, full of the wonderland of make-believe. They are concerned with the kinds of people and things children are interested in, and unobtrusively but quite effectively they teach many moral lessons. The makeup of the book is appealing to both children and adults. The artistic sketches of the Dutch country give an almost fairy like quality to this beautiful book. Professor Jan Waterink, child psychologist, says of these stories: "One cannot adequately recommend them, for . . . they are rare jewels of story telling." A well bound book.

—Fay D. Farley

FROM PURITANISM TO NON-CONFORMITY, 1662-1962, by D. M. Lloyd-Jones. Evangelical Library, 78A Chiltern St., London, W.1, England. 1962, pp. 48, paper cover. 2 shillings 4d.

D. M. Lloyd-Jones skilfully and accurately discusses the Puritans' influence upon England between 1662 and 1962. In several places the contemporary problems of the Scottish Church and the expulsion of the Puritans from Christian leadership are exposed in this enlightening history. This short booklet gives new insight into the projection of the Reformation in the British Isles and deserves the attention of contemporary Christians.

—Don McClurkin

WAS THE REFORMATION IN VAIN? and THE PROTESTANT REFORMED RELIGION, by Fred S. Leahy and Hugh Wright. Evangelical Protestant Society, 26 Howard Street, Belfast, Northern Ireland. 1962, pp. 21, paper cover. 1 shilling.

F. S. Leahy endeavors to review clearly the purpose of the Reformation so that Christians today would understand the continued controversy with the Roman church. Hugh Wright,

Moderator of the Irish Reformed Presbyterian Synod, contrasts present trends on the part of church leaders with the Reformation protest. The authors ask, in the light of recent visits to the pope on the part of Protestant denominational leaders, "Do they think that Rome has changed?" The book advocates a re-examination of the Reformation confessions and new faith in King Jesus that would introduce the right basis for Biblical ecumenicity.

—Don McClurkin

LASSIE OF THE RED SHIELD, by Virginia Dailey. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 119. \$1.95.

A fictional story presenting life in Shirley House, a home for underprivileged girls conducted by the Salvation Army in New York City. The principal character is Lt. Corliss Wickham, who in spite of problems and difficulties is able to help many of those under her care to find peace and joy in Christ.

—J. G. Vos

CHRISTIAN FICTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The following eight books are all published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. While not superlatively excellent as literature, they are attractive and will prove enjoyable and profitable to young readers. These books are suitable as gift items and for placing in congregational or church school libraries.

—J. G. Vos

KRISTIE AND BILL AT THE MYSTERIOUS MANSION, by Margaret Bull. 1964, pp. 86. \$1.95. For junior high age group. A mystery story involving two children, their uncle, and an immense mysterious house.

A DOG NAMED CHIP, by Shirley K. Johnson. 1963, pp. 118. \$1.95. For junior high age group. Two boys, a dog, a farm and adventures.

THINE ENEMY, by Ralph W. Neighbour. 1963, pp. 158. \$.50. A young pastor of a rural Pennsylvania church has a difficult task maintaining Christian love and witnessing in the face of bitter criticism and slander. Love and forgiveness win out over bitterness and hatred. Romance and suspense are interwoven with the theme.

ROSE AMONG THISTLES, by Jean A. Rees. 1963, pp. 216. \$2.50. This is an American reprint of a book published earlier in Britain by Pickering & Inglis, Ltd. A young woman inherits a hotel with its adjacent golf course and bathing beach. Included in the inheritance, but unknown to her at the time, was enough trouble to defeat almost anyone. She advertises for a hotel manager, and gets one who not only solves the hotel's problems, but leads her to know the Lord.

THE SECRET CONFLICT, by Sallie Lee Bell.

1963, pp. 135. \$2.50. A young girl faces thrilling romance and is tempted to disregard God's will and her own conscience by marrying an unbeliever. Spiritual conflict with a happy ending.

INTERRUPTED MELODY, by Sallie Lee Bell. 1964, pp. 151. \$2.50. A young concert violinist is struck down by an automobile accident. Facing the disappointment of realizing that she may never be able to play the violin again, she becomes bitter. A young hospital interne who is a witnessing Christian is used of the Lord to help her. The bitter disappointment becomes a means of bringing her to the Lord. At the end of the story she is enabled to play again.

THE STEADFAST LOVE, by Lon Woodrum. 1963, pp. 161. \$2.50. The Christian witness of April Wynan and how God used it in the lives of a bitter, worldly writer and a brilliant but cynical intellectual.

THE HIGH PLACE, by Margaret Jessup Van Briggie. 1964, pp. 152. \$2.50. Karl Fredrick shows kindness and Christian concern for Annette, a 17-year old girl. Though separated for years, they cannot forget each other. God works through many experiences in their lives, and the story ends with a long-delayed engagement.

THE ONE HUNDRED TEXTS, by T. C. Hammond. Evangelical Publishers, 241 Yonge Street, Toronto, Canada. 1958, pp. 527. Also published by Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd. 33 Ludgate Hill, London, E. C. 4, England. Price not stated.

This is a unique text that will be valuable to anyone who wishes to make a systematic assessment of the relation between Scriptural Doctrine and Roman Catholic Theology. The book consists of one hundred excerpts from Scripture, arranged in groups of ten. Each text forms the basis for a catechism of forty or fifty questions and answers expositive of the passage concerned, culminating in a section headed Error Condemned in which the teaching of the text is opposed to a given Roman Doctrine. This is followed by a note which provides a general discussion of the Christian Principles enunciated by the text and any matters of translation, interpretive commentary and related Bible passages. A second section of the note includes authority for the preceding statements of Roman Dogma with an assessment of their historical development and practice. An index to Roman literature cited, a glossary of Roman theological terms, and a cross index of Dogmas to Scripture are also provided.

The reviewer has found this book to be in general accord with Reformed Doctrine, and has used it as supplemental material in adult Sabbath School Classes. It is recommended to those who desire a better understanding of the beliefs of 'our separated brethren'.

—Rex Downie

THE CUP, by Ellen McKay Trimmer, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 117. \$1.95.

A teen-ager has been raised in the social circles of a large city. Around this her life revolves. Jan's grandfather dies and disrupts everything she holds near and dear. Her father, a prominent dentist, had been raised in a very religious farm home, but had rebelled at his father's strictness. At his father's death, Dr. Anderson finally realizes the necessity and wisdom of his father's ways and is led to Christ. Jan's own home is now torn between two ways of life and she cannot decide whether her mother's or her father's way is best, until a community disaster, and the love and prayers of her grandmother, her uncle, and her new friend, Peter, bring them together again in the Lord.

—Sandra L. Hemphill

OUT OF THE NIGHT, by Adel Pryor. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1963, pp. 156. \$2.50.

A Protestant and a Catholic meet and fall in love, at first sight. Colleen has been prepared all her life, by her mother and their priest, to become a nun. Although she enters the convent she cannot forget Dan. Dan's employer is Colleen's Protestant father who is used of God to guide and encourage Dan in his Christian life and help him change from a nominal to a born-again Christian. God uses these two men to awaken Colleen and her mother to the unscriptural bases of Catholicism. The conflicts between the Scriptures and Catholicism are vividly pictured as the reader lives with Colleen the daily routine within the convent walls.

—Sandra L. Hemphill

A THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE, by Eduard Thurneysen. John Knox Press, Box 1176, 8 North 6th St., Richmond 9, Virginia. 1962, pp. 343. \$5.50.

The phase of the pastor's work that has come under critical scrutiny in recent years is that of counseling. Out of the realization that people in and out of the church bear burdens that require help, the pastor has been forced to devote more and more time to personal interviews with those who come to him for spiritual aid. Pastoral Counseling, as it has been discussed in pamphlets, journals, books, and countless symposiums in pastor's conferences, has been closely identified with psychology and psychiatry. In seeking to understand and deal with the problems of people there has been a temptation to view those problems in a context of humanism and naturalism that has characterized our age.

With the translation into English of Eduard Thurneysen's study originally published in German, there is brought to the American church this

appeal to relate "pastoral care" to the Word and Sacraments.

"Whoever engages in pastoral care must know that he occupies a special place. To use a picture, it is the place which lies between the Word of God and sinful man. The Word stands on the one side, the sinner on the other; the Word wants to cross over to speak to the sinner. This requires a bearer, a mediator. This bearer and mediator of the Word is the pastoral counselor." (p.334).

The view of Scripture adopted by the author is "neo-orthodox". But throughout the book, Thurneysen appeals to Biblical propositions to support his insistence that the pastoral task is no mere "problem solving", nor "resolving of personality maladjustments", but rather a serious consideration of the shepherding of those whose sin requires the radical analysis of the Word of God, the redemptive communication of God's redemptive word for the forgiveness of sins, and repentance which leads to the commitment of the whole life to God.

The value of this book to the pastor whose doctrinal commitment is to the Scriptures and to the subordinate standards of the Westminster standards, is that he is aided to traverse that difficult path a little better, wherein he seeks to be true to the judgment of Scripture on human sin, while at the same time he seeks to bring the sinner the assurance of Christ's compassion, in the light of the valid insights contributed by the medical and psychological disciplines of our day.

—S. Bruce Willson

YOU CAN WITNESS WITH CONFIDENCE, by Rosalind Rinker, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, 1962, pp. 105. \$1.95.

A unique book on witnessing that does not follow the usual pattern and brings into focus the relation between the witness of our lives and when we should begin to witness with our lips.

It is provocative and cannot be read without thinking about our responsibility. It seems to lower the place of the Church in some places and to emphasize study or prayer groups and then in other places to emphasize the place of the Church.

It can be used as a study book because following the brief chapters are thought provoking questions on what has been stated. It is also published in a paper back edition for the use of study groups.

—Robert A. Henning

IDELETTE, by Edna Gerstner. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, 1963, pp. 160. \$2.50.

Idelette is a novel based on the life of Madam John Calvin. The author, Edna Gerstner, is wife of Professor John Gerstner of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Little is written of Idelette Calvin, but this account is interesting, moving, descriptive, and easy to read. It follows her through private and public life and through many tragic experiences. Writing after her death, John Calvin wrote to Pierre Viret: "She has always been a faithful helper in my work. Never have I suffered the least hindrance from her."

Idelette is highly recommended for pleasurable reading and for insight into the family life of John Calvin.

—Mrs. John White

THE GROWING STORM: Sketches of Church History from AD 600 to AD 1350, (Volume Two of Series, The Advance of Christianity Through the Centuries.), by G.S.M. Walker. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan, 1962. pp. 252. \$3.75.

It is a difficult task to sketch the history of the church from AD 600 to 1350 in one volume. Dr. Walker has chosen to do this by taking certain representative lives. Such men as Gregory the Great, Boniface, Alcuin, Hildebrand, Anselm, Abelard, Innocent III, Francis and Thomas Aquinas as well as others are discussed. Though the author's method of approach centers around the biographical sketch, he discusses ably the relationship of theology to person and event. In a brief sketch one is given a remarkably clear insight into Anselm's ontological argument. One of the distinct areas of contribution in this book seems to be in its account of the attempts of the church to dominate the state, and of the lay investiture controversy.

Dr. Walker enables his reader to see the period through the eyes of those who lived in it. This book, as is true of all of those now published as a part of this series, has a delightful human flavor. The author describes the sporting events of the Franciscan "Brother Juniper" and the "faith missions" of the Dominicans.

This book has its limitations. The treatment of the Eastern Church is quite limited. There is little or no discussion of the philosophical and theological development of this period. The serious researcher will want to have on hand a more thorough treatment of the period. There are no footnotes, yet it contains one of the best English bibliographies that this reviewer knows of for the Medieval Period. Without question, this is the best brief history of the Medieval Church produced by the Evangelical Press to date. It is recommended as delightful reading and as that which will remind the Protestant that God was remarkably active in the minds of some men during the period from Augustine to Wyclif.

—John H. White

MARY BUNYAN, THE DREAMER'S BLIND DAUGHTER, by Sallie Rochester Ford, Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Pa. 1962, pp. 488. \$3.75.

A vivid story of the persecution of John Bunyan and the effect that it had upon his young blind daughter. It is pathetic but at the same time it is a dramatic story of the care that God gave to this family. The love of Mary Bunyan which was interfered with by the persecution gives us a good illustration of some of the struggles that ragged in the hearts of Christians of that time.

Through the story we get a glimpse of life during that period in practically all areas and circumstances that existed. It is a good story to remind us in our prosperity of the afflictions that our forefathers suffered in the faith.

—Robert A. Henning

CALVIN'S NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES, Vol. 8, THE EPISTLES OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS AND THESSALONIANS, Translated by Ross MacKenzie, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1961, pp. 433. \$6.00.

A translation of a standard commentary that presents the writings of Paul as a living message for Christians today. The translation flows in an easy style that is very readable. The print is excellent so that this is a very usable tool in Bible study.

It is refreshing to use such a commentary where Christian terms are used to present the great doctrines of faith in contrast with the guarded or warped use by so many writers today.

—Robert A. Henning

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS, Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia 26, Pa., 1964. Sample Kit, \$3.95, may be returned at no cost if in good condition and returned within three weeks.

This year the three-year-cycle for Great Commission Vacation Bible School materials begins again. The material features "The Children's Savior" for beginners, "Kings" (a comparative study between King David and King Jesus), for primary, "The Lord in the Land" for juniors, and "The Gospel of John" for intermediates. The materials, including manuals, workbooks and supplies are now available and you may draw upon the supplies you may have kept from your 1961 Vacation Bible School. The material is highly recommended because of its depth, its conformity to our Reformed Standards and its appeal to young people. The handwork is carefully integrated to supplement the Biblical lessons.

Enough new material is given to challenge and stimulate the dedicated teacher who wishes to learn as well as to teach. Especially important is the fact that a Reformed Presbyterian edition of these materials is readily available if you will so specify on your order blank. These materials are attractively prepared, of moderate cost and of far greater value in presenting the Gospel truths than many of the more popular materials with a broad-

er and weaker doctrinal and denominational approach. No teacher should expect to cover all that is presented, rather the wealth of material should

enable him to choose wisely that which best fits the needs of his particular situation.

—Ronald W. Nickerson

Acknowledgments and Announcements

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.

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Circulation of this Issue

1300 copies of this issue were printed. Of these 1181 were immediately mailed out to readers, leaving 119 copies for sale as back issues. The distribution by countries was as follows:

U. S. A., 771. Australia, 68. Canada, 64. England, 51. Scotland, 51. Northern Ireland, 37. Japan, 29. Cyprus, 21. South Africa, 11. New Zealand, 9. Ceylon, 9. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 6. Korea, 6. Syria, 5. India, 5. Lebanon, 5. Erie, 4. Peru, 3. Netherlands, 3. Indonesia, 2. Ethiopia, 2. Greece, 2. Hong Kong, 2. One copy each to U. A. R. (Egypt), Argentina, Brazil, France, Switzerland, South Rhodesia, Sweden, Thailand, Ghana, Costa Rica, Jordan, Mexico, Wales, British Guiana, Chile. Number of countries reached, 38. Circulation outside of U. S. A., 410. Total, 1181.

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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:

As quoted in a recent issue of **Torch and Trumpet**, the Scottish theologian William Cunningham wrote: "The followers of Cameron (an early advocate of universal atonement) maintained that the Synod of Dort did not condemn their

views . . . "(Cunningham, **Historical Theology**, Vol. II, p. 329). Is this a reference to the Covenanter martyr Richard Cameron, and is it true that he did not believe in the Calvinistic doctrine of the limited or particular atonement?"

Answer:

A case of mistaken identity. Cunningham, like many old writers, cited authors by surname only, without Christian name or initials. He refers to "Cameron" in his second volume, on pages 324, 329 and 364. On page 324 he describes "Cameron"

as a professor of theology in France. His reference is to John Cameron, who was born in Scotland 1580 and died in France 1625. This man held an inconsistent form of Calvinism, sometimes called "Amyraldism" or "Hypothetical Universalism." See A. A. Hodge, **Outlines of Theology** (Grand Rapids, 1949 edition), pages 231 and 341.

The Covenanter martyr Richard Cameron lived later. He was killed in the battle of Ayrsmoss, Scotland, 1680. Richard Cameron was a thorough and consistent Calvinist. He held all the Five Points of Calvinism and the whole doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

I understand that members of the various bodies of Presbyterians believe in the Postmillennial interpretation of prophecy. Is this correct?

Answer:

Only partly correct. As a matter of fact, members of the Presbyterian and Reformed denominations are divided in their views on prophecy between the Postmillennial view and the Amillennial (or non-millennial) view of prophecy. There are also those who hold a Premillennial view. It should be noted that the question asked by our correspondent does not concern what view is taught in the official Presbyterian Standards, but what view is held by the membership of the Presbyterian denominations.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

If our Lord intends that His elect shall pass through the time of Jacob's trouble, or the Tribulation period, does it not follow that all the dead in Christ shall be resurrected to partake of it also? Otherwise, there must of necessity be a partiality shown toward those who have died, and an extra measure of punishment for those alive at the time of God's wrath. Shall those who have felt His wrath under the Law, and been redeemed from its curse, now look with dread for His hand to fall upon them, as well as the unredeemed, throughout the Tribulation period? Shall we that are eagerly watching for our Saviour, cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for who shall be able to stand? Is not the story of Saul on the Damascus road, a type of the translation of the saints, before the Tribulation? Saul saw, and heard the Lord, but those around him heard only a voice as the voice of thunder. If He comes only to those who look for Him, how will they see Him, until He reveals Himself in His role of Judge?

Answer:

This question is rather complicated. It really involves several distinct matters. Besides that, it involves assumptions which are not actually stat-

ed, and which we may not be able to grant. We shall attempt to deal with each question separately.

(1) What is "the time of Jacob's trouble"? The phrase is taken from Jeremiah 30:7, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." The context makes it clear that the primary reference is to the Babylonian Captivity and Israel's return from it at its end. Dr. Theodore Laetsch, in his excellent Commentary on Jeremiah, writes as follows on this passage: (Jeremiah 30:4-11)—"The days preceding the return shall be days of fear and agony, the death throes of the mighty Babylonian world empire. For Babylon the great day will come, the like of which it had not experienced in all the centuries of its existence, the final judgment day, the *dies irae*, when even the strongest men will tremble with fear, their faces turn, take on that ashen-gray pallor characteristic of deathly fright. (Compare Daniel 5:1-7, 22-30). This day of judgment for Babylon is for Israel also 'the time of Jacob's trouble.' Israel (vv.2,4,10) is the honorable name, the man who conquered God (Gen. 32:28). Jacob, 'deceiver' (vv. 7, 10, 18), the one looking only to his own profit (Gen. 25:29-34; 27:12-24, 35-36), sinful, weak Jacob. Israel-Jacob was exposed to the ravages of warfare, the hardships accompanying Babylon's destruction, just as the Church of God will be affected by the woes preceding the final Day of Judgment (Jer. 25:29; 49:12; Ezek. 9:6; 1 Pet. 4:17). But there is a great difference between Babylon, the mighty ruler, and Jacob, the despised exile. Babylon is to be destroyed, Jacob is to be saved! (Compare Luke 21:28-31; 2 Thess. 1:4-10). The yoke of the Assyrian-Babylonian captivity would be removed from Israel's neck, and once more would they be able to worship and serve in their homeland the Lord, their God, and David, their King, great David's greater Son, the Messiah (compare Hos. 3:4-5; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-28). Long before His coming the Messiah, Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, forever, was worshiped (Heb. 13:8). Therefore they should not be terrified at the horrors of these days, because the Lord will be with them to deliver them (compare Jer. 1:8-9)" (Laetsch, **Commentary on Jeremiah**, pp. 240-1). We are in agreement with Laetsch's interpretation as cited above. The present writer believes that the "Great Tribulation" mentioned in Revelation 7:14 is a time of trouble and persecution for the saints, almost immediately before the second coming of Christ. The "time of Jacob's trouble" at the end of the Babylonian Captivity was a sort of sample or preview of this "Great Tribulation." The writer does not believe, however, that the Tribulation before our Lord's second coming is properly called "the time of Jacob's trouble", nor that it necessarily concerns the Jews more than other people.

(2) Will the elect of God pass through the

Tribulation period? It should be borne in mind that not all Bible-believing Christians understand Scripture to teach that "the Great Tribulation" will be a period just before the Lord's second coming. The present writer believes Scripture teaches that there will be, and that the elect or Christian believers will pass through it. The doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture (the saints removed from the world before the Tribulation period) is peculiar to one particular form of Premillennial interpretation of prophecy. It is a view held by a minority of Christians. This does not prove that it is untrue, but it does indicate that it cannot be assumed to be truth without a thorough study of the rival interpretations and their claims of Scriptural support.

(3) If the saints are to pass through the Great Tribulation, does this mean that they must endure the wrath of God during this terrible period? No. There is never any wrath in God's dealing with His saints. The sufferings which to the wicked are wrath, to the Christians are divine chastening, for his profit, that he may be more fully partaker of God's holiness (Hebrews 12:10). The same catastrophic event — say an earthquake — is judgment proceeding from wrath to the wicked, and chastening proceedings from God's love for the saints. To the one suffering is a penalty, to the other it is a discipline. To the one it is the wages of sin, to the other it is a consequence of sin. Death itself is called "the wages of sin" in the Bible, yet it cannot be the wages of sin to the Christian, for Christ bore all the wrath of God in the Christian's stead, as his Substitute. So to the Christian "to die is gain", even though death in itself is an unnatural and dreadful thing.

(4) If the saints living when the Lord returns have to pass through a period of "great tribulation", whereas many saints of earlier periods of history did not have to experience such dreadful sufferings, does this represent God as being "partial", in that He does not treat all alike? In answer to this, we affirm that God is **Sovereign**. He does as seems good to Him. He is under no obligation to treat all people, or even all saints, alike. John the apostle died a natural death in old age; the other apostles suffered violent deaths as martyrs. Jeremiah apparently died a natural death, whereas Isaiah, according to Jewish tradition, was sawed in two by the wicked king Manasseh. The man in John chapter 9 was born blind, not because of some sin of his own or of his parents, but that "the works of God might be made manifest in him". Paul in Romans 9:10-13 affirms that God's choice of Jacob rather than Esau was revealed even before the birth of the two sons, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand . . .". All through history God treats men unequally. He gives to some what He withholds from others. Look at the sufferings of Job in the Old Testament as an example of the sovereignty of God. That Job suffered thus when oth-

ers did not, certainly involves God treating people with partiality.

We should bear in mind that **inequality** or **partiality** is not the same thing as **injustice**. God is often partial, but He is never unjust. When God spares some saints sufferings which he ordains others to pass through, He is not being unjust to anyone. He does not owe the blessings of peace, good health, comfort, etc., to anyone. That He gives these to some is a matter of His sovereign grace.

(5) Is Saul's experience on the road to Damascus a type of the pre-tribulation rapture of the saints? The writer believes it is **not**. A "type" in Scripture is a sample of something, on a smaller scale or lower plane of reality, which is later to appear on a larger scale of higher plane of reality. Thus the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was a "type" of the Judgment Day, David as king was a "type of Christ" and also Adam was a "type" or "figure" of the coming Christ (Rom. 5:14b). For something to be regarded as a type, more is necessary than a mere similarity of meaning. It is necessary to show that **Scripture itself intends the typological meaning**. Where this sound rule is ignored, fantasy has free play, as when a recent writer says that Tubal-Cain was a type of the present-day steel industry.

(6) How will the wicked see or recognize Christ when He comes again, if He comes only to those who look for Him? In answer to this, Scripture does not teach that Christ is coming **only** to those who look for him. The word "only" has been added, where Scripture leaves it out ((Hebrews 9:28). This text teaches the truth that Christ shall appear "the second time without sin unto salvation" "unto them that look for him." This by no means rules out the truth that when He comes again, "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him" (Rev. 1:7). We believe that the Premillennial distinction between "the Rapture" (Christ's coming for His saints) and "the Revelation" (Christ's coming with His saints) is an unscriptural distinction. We hold that the Scripture passage commonly cited for this distinction do not prove it, when rightly interpreted, and that these two aspects of our Lord's advent will be simultaneous or nearly so. As to how the wicked can see or recognize Christ, we need not trouble our minds. God is able to bring this to pass.

—J. G. Vos

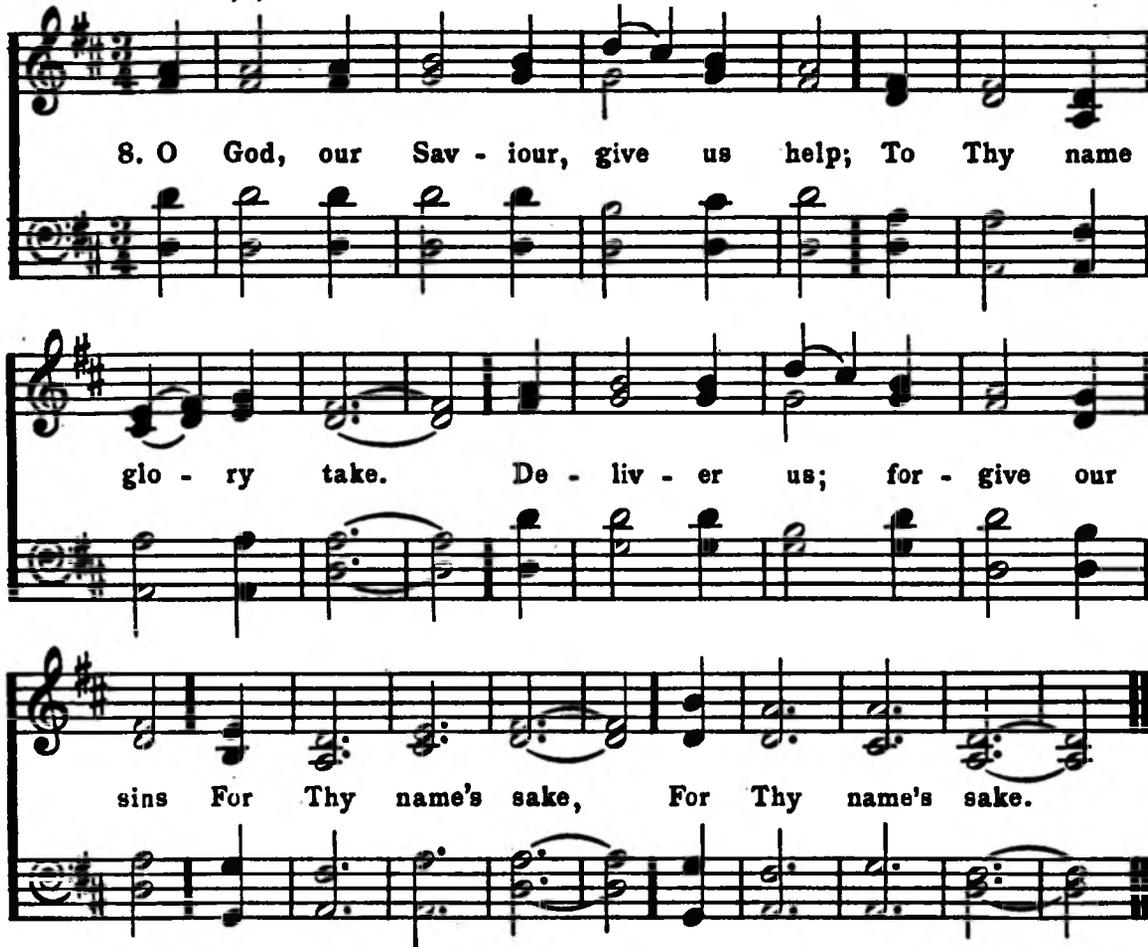
The more I study the Scriptures, the example of Christ, and the history of my own heart, the more I am convinced, that a testimony of God, placed without us and above us, exempt from all intermixture of sin and error which belong to a fallen race, and received with submission on the sole authority of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

— Adolphe Monod

PSALM 79

FAIR HAVEN. 8, 6, 8, 4.

D. Bruce Martin



8. O God, our Sav - iour, give us help; To Thy name
glo - ry take. De - liv - er us; for - give our
sins For Thy name's sake, For Thy name's sake.

9. The heathen say, Where is their God?
But let is now be shown
Thou dost avenge the blood of those
Who are Thine own.
10. O let the pris'ner's sighs ascend
Before Thee, heard on high;
According to Thy might preserve
Those doomed to die.
11. And to our neighbors' bosom turn,
In seven-fold reward,
All their reproach which they have cast
On Thee, O Lord.
12. So we Thy people, Thine own flock,
Will ever bless Thy name;
And unto ev'ry age will we
Thy praise proclaim.

(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.)

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



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The Wigtown Martyrs

(Author unknown)

On Solway sands the tide flows fast,
The waters swiftly rise;
Alas for him whom lingering there
The rushing waves surprise!
Full quickly must he hurry thence,
Full swiftly must he ride,
Who tempts his fate on Solway shore
And races with the tide.
Past Wigtown Borough to the sea
The Blednoch River goes,
With many a pool and shifting shoal
Across the sand it flows.
Ah! Blednoch's stream and Wigtown bay
Have sights of sorrow seen,
When ships were stranded on the shore,
And boats have shipwrecked been.

There many a time has woman wept,
And wrung in grief her hands,
When loved ones she longed for have been
Found dead on Solway's sands.
But sight so strange was never seen
As when those martyrs died,
And gave their life on Wigtown shore,
And perished in the tide.
For many years ago 'tis now,
'Twas in the month of May;
The level sands were smooth and dry,
The tide out in the bay:
'Twas then the brother of fierce Graham
Of Claverhouse rode down,
With Winram, Strachan, and with Cultron
The Provost of the town.
And cruel Grierson of Lagg
The persecutor came,
To do that day on Blednoch's bank
A deed of sin and shame.

At ebb of tide two stakes of wood
Were driven in the sand,
And fastened there two prisoners were,
At Grierson's command.
An aged widow one of them,
And one a maiden young;
And thus amid the rising waves
The virgin martyr sung:
"To Thee I lift my soul, O Lord,
My God, I trust in Thee;
Let me not be ashamed; let not
My foes triumph o'er me."
The aged widow was the first
Drowned by the rising tide.
"What think you of her now?" in scorn
The persecutors cried.

"What think I of her? In that saint
Whose soul is on the wing
I see but this," the maid replied:
"My Saviour suffering."
Still ever deeper flowed the tide;
The billows higher rose,
And there that young defenceless girl
Was tempted by her foes
To buy her life by breach of faith
To Him who was her Lord;
Oh, she was young, and life is sweet,
And it was but a word.

Yet was temptation vain. She chose
For Christ to suffer wrong;
And still amid the rush of waves
The men could hear the song:
"Let not the errors of my youth,
Nor sins remembered be.
In mercy, for Thy goodness, Lord,
Do Thou remember me."
By this the waves rose to her lips;
The voice that sung was still.
They raised her head: "Pray for the King!"
"God save him if He will,"
She answered. Then they dragged her forth
Half drowned amid the tide.
"Will you renounce the Covenant?
Abjure your faith!" they cried.

She raised her eyes nigh dimmed in death:
"Renounce my Saviour? No!
I'm one of Jesus' little ones,
I pray you, let me go!"
They let her go. The waters closed
Above her youthful head.
One of the glorious martyr throng,
One of the deathless dead.
Her name shall never be forgot,
While Blednoch's waters run,
And Solway kindles into gold
Beneath the setting sun.
They speak it oft in Scotland's homes;
'Tis told in far-off lands,
How in the bloom of youth she died
Upon the Solway sands.

And souls are thrilled, and hearts beat high
To hear the story told,
How nobly she maintained her faith
In days that now are old;
And how she kept her trust in God,
And how she scorned the foe,
And how she lived and how she died,
So many years ago.

Note: Margaret MacLachlan, a widow aged 63, and Margaret Wilson, a girl of 18, were drowned in the tide at Wigtown, Scotland in the year 1685, because of their loyalty to Christ, His Crown and Covenant.

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The Work of the Holy Spirit

By J. G. Vos

The Holy Spirit is God. He is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, and as such as the same in substance with God the Father and God the Son, as He is also equal with them in power and glory. The present article seeks to summarize briefly the teaching of Scripture concerning the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Cosmic Operation of the Spirit

This means the operation of the Holy Spirit in the cosmos or universe. It is a truth closely connected with the immanence of God in all things. It is not limited to the sphere of redemption nor even to the sphere of personality. The Holy Spirit is active even in the atoms and molecules which constitute matter — yes, even in the electrons and other sub-atomic particles. None of these could function or even exist for a single instant except for the cosmic activity of the Holy Spirit who sustains them in existence. The Pantheist who says "All is God, and God is all" is terribly wrong, but the Christian who says "In all in God, and God is in all" is stating a basic Scriptural truth.

This cosmic operation of the Holy Spirit is first mentioned in Genesis 1:2, at the very beginning of the Bible: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. . .". When the Holy Spirit moved or "brooded" upon the waste and void, things began to happen. He is the source of order, law, pattern, power, energy, life, beauty, wherever these occur. This cosmic activity of the Holy Spirit is alluded to in the mention of His omnipresence in Psalm 139:7ff, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" Again, Paul sail to the Athenian philosophers, speaking of the true god, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being. . .".

The Spirit in the Sphere of Common Grace

It is clear from Scripture that there is an activity of the Holy Spirit in human lives which is apart from redemption. Thus God said before the Flood, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man. . ." (Gen. 6:3). The martyr Stephen accused the non-Christian Jews of resisting the influences of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51): "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Other texts could be cited along the same line.

This work of the Holy Spirit involves a restraint of evil and a promotion of good on the

civil or non-redemptive level. It includes the good elements in false religious systems. It includes the good deeds done by unregenerate persons. It includes social and cultural values apart from redemption — for example, whatever of truth and of moral value can be found in the Greek philosophers and in the Chinese classics.

More specifically, the work of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of common grace includes the institutions of the family and the state, by which evil is restrained and civic good promoted. What we must always remember, though, is that common grace is not saving grace, and the work of the Holy Spirit in common grace does not bring about real spiritual renewal nor does it lead people to accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

The Spirit in the Sphere of Redemption

Many things could be mentioned here. The Holy Spirit qualified men for sacred office, as prophets, priests or kings, in the Old Testament period. He was the source of revelation to the true prophets of the Old Testament. He was the source of the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures. Today He illuminates the mind of the Christian to understand the inspired Scriptures.

Again, the Holy Spirit, through the centuries of Church History, has been guiding the Church into grasp of the truth of the written Word, and sharp formulation of that truth over against error. This guidance was promised by our Lord in John 16:13, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. . .".

The Holy Spirit is the source and agent of the spiritual regeneration of the individual person, as was so emphatically set forth in the Lord's discourse to Nicodemus in John chapter 3. He is also the source and agent of sanctification and of endowment for Christian service. Finally, the Holy Spirit is the source and agent of the Christian's complete redemption from death and corruption at the resurrection day. This is brought out in Romans 8:11, "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," and also in Ephesians 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (compare Ephesians 1:13, 14).

The Spirit in the Life of the Individual Christian

The Holy Spirit may be received prior to the

conscious exercise of faith. This was true in the case of John the Baptist (Luke 1:15). This may also be true in the case of those today whose conversion follows a **covenant** rather than a **crisis** pattern — that is, whose conversion follows the common pattern of those born and reared in Christian homes.

Acts 19:2, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" has been claimed as teaching that receiving the Holy Spirit is a distinct and separate experience coming later than salvation by faith in Christ. However, the King James Version is misleading at this point. The text should be translated "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" as the Revised Standard Version gives it correctly. In Greek it is **Ei Pneuma Hagion elabete pisteusantes?** which means literally: **Whether having believed ye received the Holy Spirit?** This text teaches that the normal experience for those whose conversion follows a crisis pattern rather than a covenant pattern is to receive the Holy Spirit upon becoming consciously a believer in Christ.

The believer's receiving the Holy Spirit is described in Scripture by various metaphors, such as sprinkling (Ezek. 36:25-27); God's law written on the heart (Jer. 31:33); blowing of the wind (John 3:8); the Spirit poured out (Acts 2:17); anointing with oil (1 John 2:20, 27); dwelling in the Christian (John 14:17).

These various metaphors all describe in various ways the Holy Spirit's functioning in the personality of the Christian, whereby the redemption which was purchased by Christ is applied to the person's life.

There is no warrant for a separate and special doctrine of the **Baptism** of the Spirit which some have tried to maintain. We might with equal warrant seek to formulate a doctrine of the sprinkling of the Spirit, the outpouring of the Spirit, the anointing with the Spirit. To do this would be to ignore the fact that these expressions are metaphors. It would be to substitute **tropical** for **theological** treatment.

(**Tropical** means of, or having the nature of a trope; figurative. The word **trope** means: (a) the use of a word in a figurative sense; (b) a figure of speech; (c) figurative language in general. The word **trope** is derived from the French **trope**, Latin **tropus**, Greek **tropos**, a turning, turn, figure of speech, from the verb **trepein**, to turn; ultimately derived from an Indo-European base meaning "to turn". Reference: Webster's **New World Dictionary of the American Language**, 1959).

To substitute tropical for theological treatment is to make progress backwards in the study of truth. The metaphors are there that we may discern the theological truth which they present. It is not progress to ignore theological truth and

stay with the metaphors, withal forgetting that they are metaphors. A similar procedure, in the case of the work of Christ, would be to set up special doctrines of Christ as the Light of the World, Christ as the Good Shepherd, Christ as the Bread of Life, Christ as the Lamb of God, Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Christ as the Foundation, Christ as the Door, Christ as the Way, Christ as the Truth, Christ as the Life, etc. These all set forth truth about Christ, but that truth is not adequately grasped or stated if we keep the metaphors as part of the doctrines. Rather, we speak of Christ **theologically** as the Mediator, as God and man; of His Person, natures, offices (prophet, priest, king) and of His states (humiliation and exaltation).

The Christian's being filled with the Holy Spirit may be variable in experience — it may be increased, diminished and increased again from time to time. Thus we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18); we are also to pray that we may receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). We are commanded not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30), and are enjoined against quenching His gracious influences (I Thess. 5:19).

Some Errors Concerning the Holy Spirit

A common and serious error is that of classifying Christians (theoretically if not in actual practice) 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" and if it is implied that previously the Holy Spirit was not present 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). That is, the person devoid of the Holy Spirit is not a Christian at all. What he needs is not a "second work of grace" but to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Another error is the common confusion of the **grace** of the Spirit with the **gifts** of the Spirit. The grace is the same for all Christians. Note Gal. 5:22, "The **fruit** of the Spirit is love, . . .". Note that **fruit** is singular in number: it is fruit, not fruits as the verse is often misquoted.

The grace is one, the gifts are many, as is brought out in I Corinthians 12. Note also I Cor. 12:13, "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." Therefore the baptism of the Spirit is not a special gift to be received later, but something that each and every Christian has already received.

According to Scripture the **ethical** has priority over the **charismatic** as evidence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. By "ethical" we mean love of righteousness, seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, living in accordance with His revealed will and commandments. By "charismatic" we mean special gifts of the Holy

Spirit, including speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, prophesying, etc. All who emphasize the charismatic (gifts of tongues, gifts of healing, etc.) at the expense of the ethical fruit (love, temperance, etc.) have departed from the highway of truth. (I Cor. 13).

Some Tests of the Spirit's Presence in our Life

First, the real presence of the Holy Spirit is shown by emphasis being given to Christ rather than to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not bear witness to Himself, but to Christ (John 16:14). A sect in China claimed to preach what they called "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit." There can of course be no such thing. Where there is faithful testimony to Jesus Christ, there is the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. Much talking about the Holy Spirit does not necessarily imply His presence and power; much faithful witness to Christ does.

In the second place, the real presence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life is shown by a ready and cordial acceptance of the teaching of the Scripture. The Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian moves him to **accept readily** what the Holy Spirit has inspired in the written Word. "They who have been inwardly taught of the Spirit feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture" (Calvin).

Objections to teachings of the Bible, picking flaws in the Bible, resisting and arguing against teachings of the Bible — all these vanish when the Holy Spirit is in a person. We become "as little children," that is, **receptive**, willing to learn what God's Word really says. Objections and attempts to explain away teachings of the Word will melt away like snow in warm sunshine when the Holy Spirit thaws the heart and illuminates the mind of a person. The person who chronically reacts to teachings of the Bible with an attitude of rebellion is at war with God. This does not mean, of course, that the Christian can have an infallible and exhaustive understanding of the teachings of Scripture; he is still subject to error and may unintentionally hold some false doctrines and misinterpret some parts of God's Word. It does mean, however, that once the teaching of Scripture on any matter is understood, the Spirit-led person will accept it, he will not continue in revolt against it. The man who said "I will not believe in the doctrine of election even if the Bible teaches it!" was simply betraying an attitude of rebellion against the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not lead people to rebel against the teachings of the Scripture He inspired.

It is very common in our day for people to hold concepts which are really derived from public opinion, propaganda of one sort or another, or the sinful motives and desires of their own hearts, and at the same time to deceive themselves into thinking that these ideas are taught in the Scripture and that they are holding them

on the basis of Scripture. The person who does not have the Holy Spirit will react to criticism of his traditional ideas and values by an impatient, even angry, resentment. He does not want his comfortable position shaken or challenged, and is likely to react against the person who dares to do this — a reaction which often takes the form of an abusive personal attack, or an imputation of base and unworthy motives to the challenger. The person who is really taught by the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, will be keenly conscious of his own limitations and fallibility. He will realize the danger of confusing his own thoughts and desires with the impulses of the Holy Spirit, and also the peril of reading into the Bible ideas which are really derived from quite other sources. His attitude will be like that of the Bereans (Acts 17:11), who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." He will learn to react to the admonitions of godly brethren with the attitude of the inspired Psalmist (Psalm 141:5) who wrote: "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head. . .".

In the third place, the Holy Spirit in a person's life motivates to fellowship with those who confess and love the truth. I am frankly not impressed when I hear about allegedly amazing works of the Holy Spirit involving a minister and congregation who are unwilling to separate from the organized ecclesiastical apostasy of their denomination (one of the largest in America, and in its top leadership completely dominated by men who are enemies of the cross of Christ). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of **truth**. A person's attitude toward divine truth is much more important than his experience of emotional manifestations. Those who profess to know the Lord and believe His Word should be willing to bear the reproach of Christ — they should be willing to separate from those who crucify Him afresh by denying the cardinal truths of His holy Word.

What is needed in American Protestantism today is a revival that will truly honor the Holy Spirit as **the Spirit of Truth**. Augustine once prayed, "Lord, save me from my sins, but not yet!" And today there are those who want **some of the gifts** of the Holy Spirit, but they have no intention of committing their lives wholly to the Truth to which the Holy Spirit testifies — at least not yet.

The Lord Jesus Christ hath instituted Church Discipline, in order to remove scandals, and prevent their unhappy effects; and no Church can, without the faithful and spiritual application of it hope for His countenance and blessing.

— R. P. Testimony

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

IV.

ARGUMENT FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN STANDARDS (CONTINUED)

When, therefore, the Assembly addressed itself to the task of framing a Directory for Worship, it found itself confronted by a condition of the churches of Great Britain in which the singing of psalms without instrumental accompaniment almost universally prevailed. In prescribing, consequently, the singing of psalms without making any allusion to the restoration of instrumental music, it must, in all fairness, be construed to specify the simple singing of praise as a part of public worship. The question, moreover, is settled by the consideration that had any debate occurred as to the propriety of allowing the use of instrumental music, the Scottish commissioners would have vehemently and uncompromisingly opposed that measure. But Lightfoot, who was a member of the Assembly, in his "Journal of its Proceedings" (*Works*, Vol. xiii, pp. 343, 344: London, 1825.) tells us: "This morning we fell upon the Directory for singing of psalms; and, in a short time, we finished it." He says that the only point upon which the Scottish commissioners had some discussions was the reading of the Psalms line by line.

If anything were lacking to confirm these views, it would be found in what is known of the state of opinion in the Puritan party, the party represented in the Westminster Assembly, as well before as during the sessions of that body.

"Her Majesty (Elizabeth) was afraid," says Neal, "of reforming too far; she was desirous to retain images in churches, crucifixes and crosses, vocal and instrumental music, with all the old popish garments; it is not, therefore, to be wondered that, in reviewing the liturgy of King Edward, no alterations were made in favor of those who now began to be called Puritans, from their attempting a purer form of worship and discipline than had as yet been established." (*Hist. Puritans*, Vol. i, p. 76, Choules's ed., New York, 1863.)

"Drs. Humphreys and Samson," says the same historian, "two heads of the Non-conformists, wrote to Zurich the following reasons against wearing the habits." After giving the reasons the writers continue: "But the dispute is not only about a cap and surplice; there are other grievances which ought to be redressed or dispensed with; as (1) music and organs in divine worship," etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 93.)

He further says: "They (the Puritans) disallowed of the cathedral mode of worship; of singing their prayers, and of the antiphone or chanting of the Psalms by turns, which the ecclesiastical commissioners in King Edward the Sixth's time advised the laying aside. Nor did they approve of musical instruments, as trumpets, organs, etc., which were not in use in the church for above 1200 years after Christ." (*Ibid.*, p. 107.)

John Owen, the great Puritan divine, who was contemporary with the Westminster Assembly, says: (*Works*, Vol. xv., p. 37, Goold's ed.) "Not only hereby the praising and blessing of God, but the use of those forms in so doing became a necessary part of the worship of God; and so was the use of organs and the like instruments of music, which respect that manner of praising him which God then required." He speaks here of the temple-service in the Jewish dispensation. This venerable servant of Christ also says: (*Works*, Vol. ix., p. 463.) "And he (David) speaks expressly, in 1 Chron. xxiii. 5, of praising God with instruments of music 'which,' says he, 'I made.' He did it by the direction of the Spirit of God; otherwise he ought not to have done it; for so it is said, 1 Ch. xxviii. 12, when he had established all the ordinances of the temple, 'the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit.' And verse 19, 'All this,' said David, 'the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.' It was all revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, without which he could have introduced nothing at all into the worship of God."

From what has been said, it is evident that the provisions in the Confession of Faith and the Directory for Worship touching singing in public worship were intended to exclude the employment of instrumental music; and it follows that its use by those who accept these formularies is in violation of their constitutional law.

3. Instrumental music is doctrinally excluded from the public worship of the church by the Confession of Faith.

The passage which is appealed to in support of this position is as follows: "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing is at any time to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding

of such things as are revealed in the Word; and that **there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church common to human actions and societies which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.**" (Chap. i. Sec. vi.).

(1.) The whole preceding argument clearly proves that the Westminster Assembly could not have intended to include instrumental music in those circumstances concerning — not in, nor of, not implicated in the nature of, but concerning — the worship of God, the ordering of which it concedes not to be prescribed by Scripture, but to depend upon natural judgment and Christian discretion. Let us glance back at that argument. It proved: that the prescriptive will of God regulates all things pertaining to the kind of worship to be rendered him in his house; that nothing which is not commanded by him in his Word, either explicitly or implicitly, can be warrantably introduced into the public worship of his sanctuary; that man's will, wisdom, or taste can, in this sphere, originate nothing, authorize nothing, but that human discretion is excluded, and absolute obedience to the divine authority imposed; that instrumental music was not commanded of God to be used in connection with the tabernacle during the greater part of its existence, and consequently it was not there employed; that God expressly commanded it to be used in the temple, and therefore it was employed in its services; that the temple itself, with all that was peculiar and distinctive in its worship, was typical and symbolical, and was designed to be temporary; that it did pass away at the beginning of the Christian dispensation; that instrumental music was a part of its typical elements, and has consequently shared its abolition; that instrumental music was not commanded of God to be used in connection with the synagogue, which existed contemporaneously with the temple, and was therefore not employed in its services; that the Christian church was, in its polity and worship, conformed not to the temple, but to the synagogue, as is admitted even by some distinguished Prelatists, such modifications and conditions having been added as necessarily grew out of the change of dispensations—the accomplishment of atonement, the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost, and the evangelistic genius and office of the new economy; that instrumental music in public worship was not one of these Christian modifications or conditions; that the New Testament Scriptures exclude that kind of music, and that it was unknown in the practice of the apostolic church, as is evinced not only by the teaching of the apostles, but also by the absence of instrumental music from the church for more than a millennium.

Now, this was the way in which the Westminster divines, together with the whole Puritan party, were accustomed to argue, and in addition

to this method of argument from Scripture, they also condemned instrumental music as one of those badges of Popery from which they contended that the church should be purged. To take the ground, then, that in the single clause in regard to "the circumstances concerning the worship of God . . . common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence," they meant to include instrumental music, is to maintain that in that one utterance they contradicted and subverted their whole doctrine on the subject. It would be to say that they made all their solemn contentions and cherished views upon that subject what the wise woman of Tekoah represented human life to be, "as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." The thing is preposterous. It cannot for a moment be supposed. One might, therefore, close the argument just here. Whatever the Assembly meant to include in the category of circumstances falling under the discretion of the church, it is absolutely certain that it was not intended to embrace in it instrumental music. But inasmuch as, notwithstanding this obtrusive fact, the clause in the Confession of Faith touching circumstances concerning the worship of God is unaccountably but commonly pleaded in justification of the employment of instrumental music in church services. I will endeavor to vindicate it from that abusive construction.

(2.) Let us determine, in the light of the instrument that we are interpreting, **what these circumstances are.**

They are expressly defined to be such as are "common to human actions and societies." It would seem needless to discuss the question. One feels that he is talking superfluously and triflingly in arguing that circumstances common to human actions are not and cannot be peculiar to church actions. It is certain that circumstances common to human societies cannot be peculiar to church societies. But these circumstances are declared to be common to human societies, to societies of all sorts — political, philosophical, scientific, literary, mercantile, agricultural, mechanical, industrial, military, and even infidel. Time and place, costume and posture, sitting or standing, and the like, are circumstances common to all societies, and therefore pertain to the church as a society. But will it be seriously maintained that instrumental music is such a circumstance? Is it common to human societies? These questions answer themselves. As instrumental music is not a circumstance common to all societies, it is not one of the circumstances specified in the Confession of Faith. It is excluded by the terms which it uses.

It may be said that, as all human societies have the right to order the circumstances in which their peculiar acts shall be performed, the church possesses this common right, and may appoint the circumstance of instrumental music as an accompaniment to its peculiar act of singing

praise. How this relieves the difficulty it is impossible to see. For the Confession defines the circumstances in question to be common to human actions, and therefore common to the actions of all human societies. But it will not be contended that the action of singing praise in the worship of God belongs to all societies as such. If that action does not belong to them, no circumstances attending it can belong to them. The community of the action infers the community of the circumstances attending it. The ground of the objection is therefore swept away; there is no such action common to all societies as the singing of praise in God's worship, and consequently no such circumstance attending it as instrumental music. The action and the circumstance vanish together. If the action of singing praise belonged alike to the church and all societies there might be some color of plausibility in the plea that the church may determine the circumstances which attend it as done by herself, so far, at least, as the terms of this particular clause in the Confession of Faith are concerned. If, however, the action of

singing praise in God's worship is peculiar to the church as a particular kind of society, the circumstance of instrumental music as attending it cannot be common to human actions and societies. It is therefore ruled out by the language of the Confession.

This argument is conclusive, unless it can be shown that instrumental music is a circumstance necessary to the performance of the action — singing of praise. A simple and complete answer to this is, that for a thousand years the church sang praise without instrumental accompaniment. How then can its necessity to the singing of praise be maintained? Can a circumstance be necessary to the performance of an act, when the act **has been** performed without it, and **is now** continually, Sabbath after Sabbath, performed without it? To say that instrumental music assists in the performance of the act is to shift the issue. The question is not, It is helpful? but, Is it necessary?

(To be continued)

The Subjects of Baptism

By J. G. Vos

Shorter Catechism, Q. 95, "To whom is baptism to be administered?"

A. "Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the Visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible Church are to be baptized."

Westminster Confession of Faith, XXV.2, "The visible Church . . . consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children."

Larger Catechism, Q. 62, "What is the visible Church?"

A. "The visible Church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children."

The subjects of baptism are the members of the Visible Church. The members of the Visible Church are those who profess the true religion, and their children. This has always been the answer of the majority of Christians to the question "Who should be baptized?", throughout the history of the Church from the earliest post-apostolic times to the present day. So far as data exist on which to base a judgment, pedobaptism has always been the standard Christian practice recognized by the main body of Christians, while anti-pedobaptism has always been a sectarian and minority view.

Warfield in **Studies in Theology**, page 402,

states that infant baptism "is possibly hinted at in Justin Martyr, assumed apparently in Irenaeus, and openly proclaimed as apostolical by Origen and Cyprian while it was vainly opposed by Tertullian." He adds that it is certain from their writings that Origen and Cyprian were baptized in their infancy, which shows that infant baptism was practiced in the age of Irenaeus.

Tertullian opposed infant baptism, thereby affording evidence that it was an existing practice in his day. The approximate dates of the "church fathers" which have been mentioned are as follows:

Justin Martyr, A.D. 100-167
 Irenaeus, A.D. 130-200
 Origen, A.D. 200-257
 Cyprian, A.D. 200-257
 Tertullian, A.D. 160-220

The scanty data we have on Polycarp, Ignatius and Papias, the very earliest of the fathers, gives no evidence either for or against infant baptism. The first evidence of anti-pedobaptism in the early Church is found in the writings of Tertullian, about A.D. 200. Tertullian opposed infant baptism, though not for the same reasons that it is opposed today. He advocated postponement of baptism because of his belief that post-baptismal sins are harder to get forgiven than sins committed before one's baptism. This of course is an unscriptural reason. But Tertullian's very opposition to infant baptism proves the

existence and the prevalence of the practice in his day.

Thus the earliest post-apostolic Christian writings that deal with the issue of pedobaptism at all show it as an existing practice in their day. From their day to our own pedobaptism has been standard Christian practice, while anti-pedobaptism has been a dissenting minority view. Whether the answer of the New Testament to the question "Who should be baptized?" is the same as that of the majority of Christians throughout the centuries of the Church's history, is the question at issue.

The books written on this subject would almost fill a library. While much of the argument on both sides of the question has been very keen, perhaps not many have been convinced by the common proof-text method of procedure.

We may admit at once that there is not in the New Testament an explicit command to baptize infants, nor is there an explicit statement that an infant was baptized. If the warrant for pedobaptism is in the Bible, it is implicit, not explicit. On this there need be no dispute.

Anti-predobaptists make a great point of this, even holding that it settles the whole controversy. There is no explicit command to baptize infants, and no explicit record of the baptism of infants, scriptural practice and did not exist in the apostolic Church.

This is a most precarious argument, however. It rests upon the untensable assumption that only doctrines and practices explicitly stated in Scripture can be regarded as true or valid. This assumption cannot be granted, for if granted it would prove far too much.

There are several unquestionable doctrines and practices of the Christian Faith which are not found explicitly stated in the Bible, but which nevertheless are implicitly present in the Bible and are derived from the Bible by valid logical inference.

To take a very clear and elementary example, there is in the New Testament no explicit command that women are to partake of the Lord's Supper, nor is there any explicit statement which proves that any woman ever did partake of the Lord's Supper. As a matter of fact only men were present with the Lord when He instituted the Supper. It might be argued, therefore, that for women to partake of the Lord's Supper is unscriptural. No one actually does hold this position, but we should realize that the participation of women in the Lord's Supper is based on inference, not on explicit statements or commands of Scripture. In other words it is implicit but not explicit in the Bible.

Again, it is generally recognized that the doctrine of the Trinity is basic to Christianity --

that the one God exists eternally in three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are the same in substance, equal in power and glory. Without this doctrine there can be no Christianity. To deny this puts one outside of Christianity among Jews, Mohammedans and Unitarians.

Yet the doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere explicitly stated in the Bible. There is no verse or passage of Scripture which actually teaches it. The elements of the doctrine are found scattered through the Bible, but the formulation of these elements into the doctrine of the Trinity rests upon inference, not upon explicit statements. The Bible teaches that there is one God — that is explicit. It speaks of the Father and calls Him God — that is explicit. It speaks of the Son and calls Him God — that is explicit. It speaks of the Holy Spirit and calls Him God — that too is explicit. But that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct persons, equal in power and glory, yet one in substance, is nowhere explicitly stated in the Bible. As Trinitarians, we hold that this is indeed implicit in the Bible, and that it is necessarily derived from the Bible by valid logical inference. But we should realize that the Bible does not explicitly teach it.

When the anti-pedobaptist demands explicit Scriptural warrant for infant baptism, he is making an improper demand. He is making a demand which we cannot and should not grant. If explicit warrant must be produced for pedobaptism, then explicit warrant must be produced for every Christian doctrine and practice all along the line. We cannot have a special kind of logic for dealing with the issue of pedobaptism. We must have the same kind of logic for the whole field of doctrine and practice.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, I.6, rightly states that "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture. . .". **The Reformed Presbyterian Testimony**, in line with the **Westminster Confession**, speaks as follows:

"The exercise of Reason, with respect to Revelation, is lawful and necessary. God addresses man in the Scriptures as a rational creature: the faculty of reasoning is the gift of God: and men are bound to exercise it in searching the Scriptures, in ascertaining all the ideas which the Word of God conveys to man, and drawing inferences for the direction of faith and manners from Scripture doctrines; and these inferences, as well as the express words of Revelation, are the Divine authority. God hath spoken nothing the full force of which he did not comprehend" (IV.1).

To let the anti-pedobaptist's demand for explicit Scripture warrant pass unchallenged, and to proceed to debate with him about the meaning and relevance of particular alleged "proof-texts",

is not the right pathway by which to arrive at a solid conviction of truth in this matter.

Many of the commonly cited proof-texts may seem to create a presumption one way or the other, but they do not afford certainty. For instance, the references to the baptism of households may very well suggest that infants were baptized, but they do not actually prove this. It is just possible that there were no infants in any of these various households.

Again, the instances of adult baptism upon personal profession of faith, in the New Testament, may seem to the anti-pedobaptist to mean that only adults who could profess their faith personally were baptized, but these instances do not actually prove this. When Christianity was new it was to be expected that most baptisms would be those of adults. The same is true in any pioneer mission field today. Individual adults are won for Christ, often against the opposition of their families and relatives. These adults are baptized. But in the second and subsequent generations of Christians in the field, infant baptisms will outnumber adult baptisms.

Anti-pedobaptists interpret the silence of the New Testament and of Polycarp, Ignatius and Papias on the question of infant baptism as evidence that the practice did not exist in their day. But the silence may equally well be interpreted as implying that infant baptism was prevalent and unchallenged by opposition or controversy in their day. People do not write in defence of doctrines or practices which are generally accepted. Paul argued in favor of the resurrection in his First Epistle to the Corinthians because a party in the Church of Corinth denied the resurrection. His lack of argument about the resurrection in the Epistle to the Galatians does not indicate that Paul thought the resurrection unimportant, far less that he doubted or denied it, but only that there was no occasion to argue with the Galatians about it, for they fully accepted it.

Similarly, the lack of explicit reference to pedobaptism in the New Testament does not necessarily imply the absence of the doctrine or the practice. It may equally well imply the prevalence of the doctrine and the practice. The anti-pedobaptist, in other words, fails to take the **occasional** character of the New Testament writings into account.

While we are dealing with this matter of argument from silence, we may note in passing an interesting point brought out by Donald Baillie in **The Theology of the Sacraments** (New York, 1957, p. 84) when he says:

"It seems very unlikely that in New Testament times adult baptism was ever administered to persons who had been born of Christian parents; either they were baptized in infancy or it was considered unnecessary for them to be baptized at all."

When our Baptist brethren challenge us to point out a clear case of infant baptism in the New Testament, we might reply by challenging them to point out a single case of adult baptism being administered to a person born of Christian parents. On the Baptist assumptions there must have been many hundreds of such cases before the end of the New Testament. Yet there is no instance of it, nor a word of instruction about it in any part of the New Testament. Admittedly, silence proves nothing, but if we are to deal in arguments from silence, it would seem even more difficult to account for silence of the New Testament about adult baptisms of second generation Christians, than it is to account for its silence about infant baptisms of the children of believers. If it was the practice for the children of Christian parents to receive adult baptism on reaching maturity or adolescence, is it not passing strange that in the Pastoral Epistles there is not a word of instruction as to the proper age and qualifications for the administration of the ordinance?

May I suggest that pedobaptists have in the past often greatly weakened their case by allowing the anti-pedobaptist to make the rules for the debate, and the anti-pedobaptist has made rules which are improper because they are not applicable to the discussion of Christian truth as a whole. The anti-pedobaptist has made special rules of controversy which give him an improper advantage. The demand that everything be based solely upon explicit Scripture warrant, and the consequent limiting of the debate to an argument from alleged silence plus the consideration of the relevance of ambiguous proof-texts, is an improper demand. The Christian Church throughout its history, in studying the Scripture and defining doctrine after doctrine, has not operated under such rules as these. Nor does the anti-pedobaptist himself operate under these rules, except in dealing with the subject of baptism.

So much for the improper method insisted upon by anti-pedobaptists. Rejecting this wrong method, what is the right method for determining the issue — what are the real roots or bases of infant baptism in the Bible?

Infant baptism, properly considered, is an implication of two doctrines of the Bible — the doctrine of the Visible Church, and the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace.

It is not at all surprising that those sections of the historically Reformed denominations in which the Reformed doctrines of the Visible Church and the Covenant of Grace are neglected or are not emphasized, are precisely the ones in which infant baptism is at present widely suspect as unscriptural.

Any church which is weak on the Biblical doctrine of the Visible Church and the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace is bound to become weak and unsure on the question of infant bap-

tism. The same is true of the individual Christian. Any Christian who lacks intelligent conviction of the truth of the Biblical doctrine of the Visible Church and the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace is bound to become weak, hesitating and unsure on the question of infant baptism.

For infant baptism is a corollary of the two doctrines mentioned. It is implicit in them, and it is properly derived from them by inference. No church and no Christian can be any stronger or sounder on infant baptism than he is on the Biblical doctrines of the Visible Church and the Covenant of Grace.

This may suggest why there is so much weakness and questioning about infant baptism today in denominations which formerly held it firmly. It may well be that in these denominations there has been a gradual but nevertheless real shift from the historic Reformed and Biblical doctrines of the Church and the Covenant, and that this has involved, as its inevitable consequence, a weakening and in some cases almost a rejection of infant baptism.

It is no accident that in the Westminster Confession of Faith and other historic Reformed creeds infant baptism is coupled with a specifically Reformed doctrine of the Church and the Covenant. And it is no mere coincidence that when the Reformed doctrines of the Church and the Covenant are lost or obscured, infant baptism is lost or obscured with them. They are organically connected and they stand or fall together.

In many churches which traditionally and officially hold the Reformed theology, this theology has been virtually replaced by a more inclusive evangelicalism which involves different assumptions and has quite different affinities. In a good many cases the theology of the Westminster Confession has given way to the theology of the popular Bible institutes, evangelical press and mass evangelism of our day. While generalizations are perilous, it may be safe to say that this change involves a shift from emphasis on the Visible Church to emphasis on the Invisible Church, from the Reformed Theology to Arminianism, and from the organic covenant concept of the Bible to an unscriptural individualism.

In some of the larger nominally Reformed denominations, indeed, the shift has gone much farther — it has been a shift from Reformed views to liberal and neo-orthodox views in which religious authority is regarded as essentially subjective rather than objective. Where this has happened, debate about the propriety of infant baptism has become largely irrelevant.

We are concerned, however, with bodies in which the shift has been from a strictly Reformed view to a more general evangelicalism. As already stated, this has inevitably weakened the church's grip on the doctrine and practice of in-

fant baptism. The fact that this shift has occurred only very slowly may explain why the change, though real, has been imperceptible.

The result of this shift has been that many people have come to doubt and question the propriety of pedobaptism, some rejecting it altogether and others retaining it as a mere matter of form or custom while entertaining grave doubts as to its Scriptural character. It can hardly be questioned that infant baptism is often practiced today on a merely traditional basis, without conviction of its Scriptural character and without attempt to defend it on a Biblical basis.

The two largest sectors of American Protestantism are the Methodists and the Baptists. These have been extremely influential, and there is scarcely a denomination of historically Reformed character that has not been strongly influenced by them. It has been remarked that most American Presbyterians that are not liberals are either Methodists or Baptists. There is truth in this. In fact it could even be said that a good many people who are supposed to hold the historic Reformed position are **both** Methodists and Baptists — they have been strongly influenced by the experience-centered and decision-centered theology of the Methodists, and also by the individualistic, non-covenantal church-concept of the Baptists.

Those who have been influenced in the ways just described are unable to resist or answer the confident polemic or antipedobaptists. Lacking a clear knowledge and strong conviction of the Reformed theology, they are unable to defend infant baptism in a sound manner by showing its organic connection with the Reformed and Biblical view of the Church and the Covenant. Too often the result is that they feel that the antipedobaptist position is unanswerable; or else they make an ineffectual attempt to answer it by the faulty method of appeal to proof-texts alone. The anti-pedobaptist seems able to provide plausible answers to all arguments based on such proof-texts, with the result that the embattled pedobaptist is left with the frustrated feeling that infant baptism is something that he is supposed to adhere to, but cannot really defend as Scriptural.

Now let us consider the Reformed doctrines of the Church and the Covenant. Of these two, the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace is the more inclusive and basic. In a sense the doctrine of the Visible Church is an implication of the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace. So we will take up the doctrine of the Covenant first, but note as we proceed how the doctrine of the Visible Church is tied in with it.

In the Reformed theology the Covenant of Grace is God's appointed way of implementing the eternal Covenant of Redemption made between God the Father and God the Son. The Covenant of Grace was first announced to men, in a some-

what veiled and mysterious manner, by the prediction of Genesis 3:15 that the Seed of the woman would eventually destroy the serpent. This is perhaps the most important single verse in the Old Testament, and it contains all the rest of the Bible in germ form. The rest of the Bible is God's process of making explicit what was implicit in Genesis 3:15.

During the period from Adam to Abraham no great advances were made in the implementation of the Covenant. There was, however, a definite body of people on earth who were embraced within the gracious provisions of the Covenant, and this covenant relationship was continued in a specific family line, from father to son, through Seth, through the antediluvian patriarchs, through Noah and Shem, to Abraham. The corporate, public worship of God began at the time of the birth of Seth's son Enos. During this long period the descendants of Adam and Eve through Seth down to Abraham formed the continuous embodiment of the Covenant of Grace among men.

With Abraham a big forward step was taken. He was separated by God from his natural and cultural background, and singled out as the progenitor of the nation of Israel — the covenant nation that was to form the stock from which the human nature of the Christ would come, and the human environment in which the Christ would perform His redemptive work. The Covenant was formally established with Abraham, as recorded in Genesis chapter 17. It should be noted that the Covenant was made with Abraham and with his seed; that it concerned a visible body of people — the clan or tribe of Abraham (Gen. 17:23); and that the covenant standing of this body of people was marked by the rite or sacrament of circumcision. At this stage the clan of Abraham was the visible Church of God on earth, and every male claiming membership in it was required to have the outward token of the Covenant, namely circumcision (Gen. 17:12-14).

Throughout the patriarchal period the covenant people constituted a tribe or clan. Then in the time of Moses the Covenant was confirmed to Israel on a national basis (Ex. 24:3-8). From the time of Moses to the time of Christ, the Covenant was embodied in the nation of Israel. We should realize the fact of the continuity of the Covenant all through Old Testament history. There is a bond of organic continuity between Israel at Mount Sinai and that small company that began to call upon the name of the Lord when Seth's first son was born. When the majority became apostate, as in the time of Jeremiah, the continuity was not broken; rather, the reality and life of the Covenant was continued in the faithful minority called "the remnant."

On the Day of Pentecost a few weeks after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, there was another major advance. The body of Chris-

tian disciples together with the Jews who became Christians constituted **the Christian Church**, and this was the true continuation of the Covenant people of God which had existed on earth since the time of Adam and Eve. The Christian Church was new and yet it was not new. In one sense it was new, in another sense it was as old as the human race. The New Testament Church was new in form, but old in essence.

The New Testament clearly teaches that the Christian Church is not something different from the Old Testament Israel; on the other hand, it is essentially the same as the real Israel of the Old Testament, and it is the real continuation of the true Israel of Old Testament times. This is shown, for example, by Paul's figure of the olive tree and the branches (Romans 11:16-24). We should note that the apostle speaks of a **single olive tree**. This tree had Jewish branches, many of which were broken off, while Gentile branches were grafted in; yet it remained the same olive tree throughout — the body of God's covenant people on earth.

The same truth is taught by Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians (2:11-13), where he explains that the Gentile Christians, who once were "strangers from the covenants of promise", have now been incorporated into "the commonwealth of Israel." Thus when a Gentile becomes a Christian he becomes an Israelite in the true sense of the term.

Thus Scripture teaches the unity and continuity of the New Testament Church with the Old Testament Israel. The form has changed, but the essence remains the same. The olive tree lives on; the commonwealth of Israel continues. This essential unity and continuity of the Christian Church with the Old Testament Israel is basic to the Reformed theology, but it is denied by many Baptists. (A contributing factor has no doubt been the increasing influence of Darby-Scofield Dispensationalism, which posits a radical discontinuity between Israel and the Church).

The truth of the unity and continuity of the Christian Church with the Old Testament Israel, the Old Testament Covenant people of God, has important implications concerning the question of the propriety of infant baptism. We may mention these implications as follows:

(1) The Covenant is not a purely spiritual concept, but involves a visible body of people with an external organization and membership, including an external sign or token of membership in the body. As Israel constituted a visible body, so the Christian Church constitutes a visible body with organization and membership. The Visible Church is not a mere human convenience, nor a mere means to an end, but is of divine appointment and is an end in itself. Just as Israel of old was a true embodiment of the Covenant of Grace, so the Visible Church today is a true embodiment of the Covenant of Grace. Therefore

the common present-day tendency to minimize the importance of the Visible Church is not Biblical.

(2) The Covenant is confirmed to believers and their children after them. Now as then, God's ordinary way of maintaining and increasing the body of His covenant people on earth is through the birth of children into covenant homes or families. The child born to an Israelite home had a covenant standing from birth. This could be despised and forfeited in later life, to be sure, but he had it from birth. If there is organic unity and continuity between Israel and the Church, then it is true that children born to Christian parents have a covenant standing from birth.

According to the sociology of the Bible, both Old Testament and New, the family, not the individual, is the basic social unit. Children are born into a social environment which involves a covenant standing and covenant obligations. Parents exercise faith and take vows for their children in a representative capacity.

(3) As infants of believers were to receive the external sign of membership in the body of the Covenant people of Israel, so infants of believers ought to receive the external sign of membership in the Christian Church, which is the continuation of the Old Testament Israel. The sign itself is different, but the meaning is basically the same. If we admit that the infants of believers received the external sign in the one case, we should also admit that they ought to receive it in the other case, the two cases being truly parallel. The sign of membership should accompany the fact of membership, in the one case as in the other. Baptism is the privilege of members of the Visible Church. If the infants of believers are members of the Visible Church, then baptism is their rightful privilege.

To these implications of the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, we may add one or two implications of the Reformed doctrine of the Visible Church which are relevant to the question of infant baptism.

(1) The Visible Church, according to the Reformed view, is the body of those who profess the true religion, together with their children. It is not necessarily composed exclusively of regenerate persons. Membership in it is based on presumption, not on proof of regeneration. Thus the anti-pedobaptist contention that infant baptism is wrong because there can be no certainty that the infants are regenerate, is quite without weight. If we are going to look for certainty of regeneration, there can be no certainty of that even in the case of adults. Simon the Sorcerer was baptized in adult life upon his personal profession of faith, yet he turned out to be unregenerate, for Peter said to him "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not

right in the sight of God . . . I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:18-24). It has often been claimed, but never proved, that the anti-pedobaptist churches are purer or contain less hypocrites, than those that practice infant baptism.

(2) The Visible Church, according to the Reformed view, includes the children or infants of believers. The infant children of believers are members of the Church whether they are baptized or not, according to Reformed thought. This is a generally recognized and accepted view in the eminent Reformed theologians. It implies that infants are baptized, not to make them church members, but because they are already church members.

We have gotten almost entirely away from this viewpoint today, and even where infant baptism is practiced and regarded as important, the baptized children are regarded as non-members for several years, until in their early 'teens they make a public profession of faith and are said to "join the Church". This manner of speaking is all but universal. It is used by elders, deacons, Sabbath school teachers, ministers — almost everyone. The few who decline to use it are considered rather peculiar.

The use of this phrase, "joining the Church," when speaking of those baptized in infancy, betrays an erroneous or defective view of the significance of and reason for infant baptism. If we could remember that infants are baptized **because they are already members of the Visible Church**, we would see the impropriety of speaking of their "joining the church" several years later. Our common use of this terminology betrays the fact that we do not regard the church membership of children as real or important.

I have endeavored to vindicate the propriety of infant baptism as a Scriptural practice rooted in the Reformed doctrines of the Covenant of Grace and the Visible Church. I must now add some remarks concerning abuses of infant baptism that should by all means be avoided. These abuses are extremely common in denominations which adhere to infant baptism by tradition rather than by intelligent conviction. And occasionally one of these abuses comes to our own parsonage or church doors in the form of a temptation to compromise with error. I shall mention three abuses of infant baptism which have given a good deal of ammunition to anti-pedobaptists, and which we should guard against with great care.

(1) Promiscuous infant baptism is an unwarranted practice and cannot be justified as Scriptural. It divorces infant baptism from the Covenant of Grace. The practice of baptizing the infants of any and all parents who request the rite, regardless of their reasons and regardless of whether the parents themselves are professing Christians and members of the Church is becom-

ing increasingly common in some circles. This is "open baptism" and is analogous to "open communion." Pastors are occasionally requested to baptize an infant of non-church parents because it is believed that the infant is near death. It is hard to refuse such a request, yet it must be refused if we are to be true to our vows and to the Word of God. Of course such anguished parents should be dealt with as sympathetically as possible and should be invited and encouraged to become Christians themselves.

(2) Baptism of infants where the parents, though church members, are not living orderly is improper. How can parents take solemn vows for their child when they are living, and intending to continue to live, in flagrant and open violation of the same vows themselves? Parents who practically never attend church except for the Sabbath morning service at the communion season, have no right to baptism for their children. Those who are flagrantly and deliberately violating the Sabbath, or otherwise openly living in sin, have no right to baptism for their children. The session should take the initiative in dealing with such covenant-breaking members, so that the entire odium of refusing baptism for the child will not crash upon the head of the pastor. The session should maintain and insist upon Scriptural standards and should back the pastor

up in administering these standards. Where this is neglected, infant baptism becomes too cheap. It is a scandal that cries to heaven when parents can stand up in the congregation for the baptism of their children, vow solemnly to God that they will attend the ordinances of divine worship faithfully, go home at the end of the service, fail to come back for the evening service, and not enter the church building again for six solid months, or perhaps a whole year. I am not speaking of those living hundreds of miles out of bounds, but of those living within easy driving distance of the place of worship.

(3) Infant baptism is meaningless apart from a serious program of Christian instruction on the part of both the parents and the church. If we expect God to be a covenant-keeping God, then we must be covenant-keeping people. The parents promise to instruct their children in the things of God. The church also, of course, has a solemn obligation to instruct its own children in Christian truth and duty. Where these responsibilities are not taken seriously, infant baptism tends to become a mere matter of form or ritual. We are not to expect that infant baptism will function automatically, or *ex opere operato*, as the Church of Rome wrongly teaches. It will not be without its proper fruit if it is accompanied by the true faith and obedience to the obligations incurred in our vows to the Lord.

TULIP

A Study of the Five Points of Calvinism

By the Rev. Robert M. More, Jr.

Tulipa gesneriana is a delicate plant. We know it better as the common tulip. Its home is naturally associated with the land of wooden shoes and windmills, for Holland is still its source. This country also provided a theological tulip, the common designation of Calvinism's five points. These are: T — Total Depravity; U — Unconditional Election; L — Limited Atonement; I — Irresistible Grace; and P — Perseverance of the Saints. Thus there is a theological T-U-L-I-P.

Reformed Theology, expanding and expounding Calvin, willed this spiritual legacy to us. T-U-L-I-P was formulated in opposition to a man named James Arminius, or Jacobus Harmensen, who was born in 1560 at Oudewater near the river Yssel in south Holland and died on 19 Oct. 1609. He was a theological professor at the University of Leyden but grew dissatisfied with the doctrinal viewpoint of the school. As a result, in a very vacillating and conniving manner, he proclaimed these contrary doctrines. 1. Partial depravity in man. 2. God elected men on the ground that He foresaw that men would later be-

lieve (conditional election). 3. Universal Atonement. 4. Resistible Grace. 5. Lapsing from Grace (falling from salvation).

Naturally this kind of doctrine disturbed the church. The crisis was intensified in 1610 with the publication of the **Remonstrance** (hence the followers are historically called the Remonstrants) framed by John Uytenbogaert. It said: 1. The eternal decree of salvation refers to those who do believe and persevere. 2. Christ died for all although only believers are benefited. 3. Man can do nothing really good until he is born again. 4. Grace is resistible. 5. The faithful are assisted by grace and do not fall if they desire Christ's help and are "not inactive." (McNeill, **History and Character of Calvinism**, p. 264).

After several aborted Synods, one was finally convened at Dordrecht. This is known as the Synod of Dort. They met 13 Nov. 1618 to 28 May 1619 (others say only to 23 April 1619) in 154 sessions. They met to decide Scriptural doctrine.

To impress the solemnity of the task upon themselves, each delegate took this oath:

I promise before God, whom I believe and worship as the ever-present Searcher of the reins and hearts that I will, in the whole business and transaction of this Synod — wherein shall be appointed an inquiry, judgment and decision as well concerning the Five Points and the intricacies arising from them as concerning all the other doctrinal matters — that I will not admit of any human writings, but alledge (*sic.*) the Word of God only, as the certain undoubted rule of faith; and that I will propose nothing whatever to myself, in the whole business, but the glory of God, the peace of the Church and especially the preservation of pure doctrine. May the Saviour Jesus Christ so be merciful to me whom I most earnestly beseech, that He would, by the grace of His Spirit, be ever present with me in this my purpose and resolution.

(Warburton, *Calvinism*, p. 59)

Two of these delegates were Peter des Moulin and Andrew Rivet, Frenchmen, whom the Roman Catholic king forbade to attend. The worst conflict, though, occurred on 16 Jan. 1619, when the president of the Synod dismissed Episcopius, Arminius' successor, from attendance rather angrily, confirming a general attitude that these men were suspect of heresy. Hugo Grotius, the Greek scholar, was also committed to prison at this general time, but escaped, in a box, engineered by his wife, who proved truly his "help meet." (McNeill, p. 265).

Since that Synod, theology has, most amazingly, divided into these two camps. While variations occur *ad infinitum*, still Roman Catholic doctrine, Methodists, Pentecostals, and others hold in general to Arminian theology. Reformed theology (stated by Dort, Westminster Assembly, etc.) is found propagated by Presbyterians, Anglicans, Reformed churches, Baptists, and sundry others. Lutherans tend to propagate both. (Melanchthon — cf. the Apology for the Augsburg Confession — is Arminian; Luther and the Formula of Concord are Reformed.) As is easily seen, these are only general evaluations.

Strange as it may seem, though, Arminian theology did not arise with James Arminius. Neither did Reformed theology appear with Calvin. These two men were only the systematizers of current historical beliefs.

Not begging the question at this point, the earliest extensive defense of "Reformed" and "Arminian" theology occurred around 420 A.D. This was the classic battle of theology between Augustine of Hippo and his British born, Irish nationality opponent, a monk named Pelagius. He wrote, "therefore, when we say that it is pos-

sible for a man to be without sin, we are even then praising God by acknowledging the gift of possibility which we have received.' He added, "everything good and everything evil . . . is done by us, not born with us" (Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 75). This was attributed to him. "New-born infants are in the same condition as Adam before the Fall" (Bettenson, p. 76). It was from this postulation of sinless humans that an autosoteriosis (self salvation) arose. John Knox has well worked this doctrine. "For he calleth himself a Saviour, which appertaineth to Christ only. What is a Saviour? but he that saveth; and thou sayest, I save myself, which is as much to say as, I am Christ; for Christ is only the Saviour of the world." (Knox, *History of the Reformation*, Bk. I, p. 71). Augustine opposed this rankling untruth with Scriptural theology. Then the third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus in 431 A.D.) condemned Pelagius.

A half-way doctrine now arose to oppose the theology of Augustine. The Synod of Arles, c. 473, formulated what is called Semi-Pelagian doctrine. It said, "man's freedom of will is not extinct but attenuated and weakened; he that is saved is in danger, and he that has perished could have been saved" (Bettenson, p. 85). It condemned this point, "that the labour of human obedience is not to be joined with the grace of God" (Bettenson, p. 85). In other words, man must assist God in order that God's grace may be given. This is just opposite Augustine's statement, ". . . it is God who makes them to will the good" (Bettenson, p. 78).

In many respects, Arminius took the semi-pelagian doctrine and so became, in the words of the *Kansas City Star* on Aug. 12, 1963, a "heretical Dutch theologian."

The continuation of this line of doctrine can be traced into the following groups. The medieval scholastics and the Roman Catholic Church in the Council of Trent dogmas. The German "synergistic" theologians, started by Philip Melanchthon but formulated by John Pfeffinger in 1555. Then finally our present day Arminians, who say, in similar words, "God votes for you in salvation; the Devil votes against you; you cast the deciding vote."

In our next instalment we shall discuss the point of doctrine designated by the letter T, namely Total Depravity.

(To be continued)

Church membership today often means nothing more, as well been said, than a vague admiration for the moral character of Jesus; the Church in countless communities is little more than a Rotary Club.

— J. Gresham Machen

Religious Terms Defined

PERFECTIONISM. The doctrine that it is possible for a Christian, in this life, to reach a state in which he no longer commits sin. Perfectionists almost invariably define what they mean by "perfection" as something short of the absolute moral ideal which God requires man to attain. Thus they lower the absolute moral standard of the Bible, in order to hold that it is possible in this life for the Christian to attain it. In other words, perfectionism teaches that it is possible to reach an imperfect perfection.

QUAKERS. A religious sect, properly called the Society of Friends, which arose in England in the 17th century and soon spread to various countries of Europe and to America. The chief distinguishing characteristics of the Friends are: (1) their Mysticism, by which their highest authority is the "inner light" rather than the written Word as such; (2) their rejection of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as unnecessary; and (3) their Pacifism, or conscientious refusal to participate in war. There are now in America several associations of Friends, with a total membership of about 125,000 people.

PROBATION. A trial or test of someone or something. The situation in which God placed Adam and Eve, commonly called the Covenant of Life or Covenant of Works, was essentially a test or probation with regard to their obedience to God.

PROPITIATION. A satisfaction of the violated holiness of God by the sacrifice of a Substitute provided by and acceptable to God. Christ by His death on the cross is the propitiation for our sins. All "theories of the atonement" which deny that it was essentially a propitiatory sacrifice are unsound.

REFORMATION. The great religious movement of the 16th century, beginning with the work of Martin Luther, by which the original truth and purity of Christianity, which had become corrupted by grievous error during the Middle Ages, were in large measure restored. The Protestant churches which arose out of the Reformation are not new churches, as maintained by Roman Catholics, but a return to the true and original Christianity set forth in the Word of God. The fact that the Protestant bodies do not have a formal history before Luther's time does not prove that they are new and therefore false. What counts is not mere continuity of organization, but identity of teaching with that of the apostles.

REFORMED FAITH. That interpretation of Christianity which gives full recognition to the absolute sovereignty of God and to man's absolute dependence upon God for every factor of his faith, salvation and life. Also called Calvinism.

REFORMED THEOLOGY. That system of theology which sets forth the Reformed Faith, or Calvinism.

REGENERATION. That supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which a sinner is instantaneously changed from being dead in trespasses and sins to being a new creature in Christ Jesus. In regeneration the dominant bent or tendency of the soul is, by the almighty power of God, re-created holy and good. In Scripture this is also called being "born again," "the washing of regeneration," "the new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17), being "begotten of God," etc.

REPENTANCE. "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience" (S.C. 87). It should be noted that this definition involves the intellect and the will, as well as the emotions.

REPROBATION. That element in the eternal decree of God by which those whom He has chosen to pass by and not elect unto eternal life, are foreordained to eternal dishonor and wrath to be inflicted on them as the just punishment of their own sin. (See Westminster Confession of Faith, III.7).

RESTITUTION. That act of justice by which we restore to our neighbor whatever we have unjustly deprived him of (Buck's Theological Dictionary). Our repentance will not be accepted by God unless we make proper restitution where it is possible for us to do so.

RESURRECTION. The supernatural event which will immediately follow the second coming of Christ, in which the bodies of all the dead shall be raised to life and re-united with their souls forever.

RESURRECTION BODY. The body as raised from the dead at the Last Day, in some way identical with the body which was buried, yet different in its properties; in the case of the redeemed, a body spiritual, incorruptible, like Christ's glorious body.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. Christ's rising from the tomb on the third day following His death, in the identical body in which He suffered, but glorified.

REVELATION. An activity of God by which He communicates truth to men.

RIGHTEOUSNESS. Moral perfection, uprightness or virtue.

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. The infinite

moral perfection of God's being and of all His relations to His creatures. Also called the justice of God.

SABBATH. The day appointed by God to be kept holy unto Himself, which is, since the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week, to continue unto the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.

SACRILEGE. The sin of treating something sacred or pertaining to God as if it were common or profane.

SADDUCEES. A sect of the Jews in the time of Christ, who had control of the priesthood and temple worship, and opposed the principles of the Pharisees. They denied the resurrection of the body, the existence of angels and spirits, and the doctrine of foreordination or predestination. As a class they were materialistic, worldly and self-satisfied.

SAINT. The name applied by the New Testament to all Christians, meaning "holy person."

Some Noteworthy Quotations

WHERE THERE IS MUCH DESIRE to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

— John Milton

ALL THE PARTS of man's nature have suffered each their own peculiar injury by the catastrophe of the Fall, but it is those parts that have more immediately to do with God and His revealed will that have suffered most. And no part has suffered such a shock and hurt as the will. It is now by nature and in every unregenerate man turned away from God, and in bondage to sin and evil. It is not that man would do good, would return to God if he could; it is not that he cannot, he **WILL not**. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." There was no hand holding them back, no cord binding them but the bands of their evil will. This is what is meant when learned divines treat of the bondage and inability of the will.

— Alexander Whyte

GOD WILL NOT BE HONORED with exceptions, nor will He allow us to cut off from His law what is less pleasing to us. It is not said of a part of the law, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

— John Calvin

A MAN IS SPOTTED though he have only one stain; a cup is broken, if only the top be broken; one disease will make a man sick; and there are a hundred ways to wander in, but only one to life and immortality.

— Jeremy Taylor

THE SOLIDARITY OF THE LAW is such, that it does not admit of being broken in one point, and yet not in the whole.

— Henry Alford

STEPHEN NEVER PREACHED BUT ONE SERMON that we know of, and that was before the Sanhedrin; but how that sermon has been preached again and again all over the world! Out of his death probably came Paul, the great-

est preacher that the world has seen since Christ left this earth. If a man is sent by Jehovah, there is no such thing as failure.

—D. L. Moody

REAL, TRUE FAITH is man's weakness leaning on God's strength. It is the Shepherd's business to keep the sheep. Who ever heard of the sheep keeping the shepherd? People have an idea that they have to keep themselves and Christ too. It is a false idea. It is the work of the Shepherd to look after them, and take care of those who trust Him. An Irishman said, on one occasion, that he often trembled, but his Rock never did.

—D. L. Moody

LIFE, ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, is founded upon truth; and the attempt to reverse the order results only in despair and spiritual death.

—J. Gresham Machen

THERE ARE, INDEED, EVANGELISTS who are not scholars, but scholarship is necessary to evangelism all the same. . . . It is out of a great underlying fund of Christian learning that true evangelism springs.

—J. Gresham Machen

THE SEPARATION of naturalistic liberalism from the evangelical churches would no doubt greatly diminish the size of the churches. But Gideon's three hundred were more powerful than the thirty-two thousand with which the march against the Midianites began.

— J. Gresham Machen

The impartial and prudent exercise of Church Discipline is useful for vindicating the honor of Jesus Christ, maintaining the dignity of His ordinances, preserving the purity of the Church, averting the judgments of God, and for the benefit of the offender himself, that by the administration of this ordinance of Christ, through grace, he may be humbled and recovered.

— R. P. Testimony

A Christian Introduction to Religions

(Continued from last issue)

LESSON 11

Islam — Militant Monotheism from Arabia

Islam, sometimes called: "Mohammedanism," is the youngest of all world religions. It is the only important world religion that is younger than Christianity. All the systems we have studied in these lessons originated long before the time of Christ, but Islam began in the seventh century after Christ. It is therefore only about twelve hundred years old.

The name **Islam** means "submission." From the same Arabic root comes the word **Moslems** or **Muslims**, which means "those who have submitted" — that is, those who accept Islam. It is estimated that there are a quarter of a billion Moslems in the world today (250,000,000), and the number is increasing rapidly, especially in the continent of Africa, where Islam is replacing polytheistic paganism with astonishing success.

A great deal of the content of Islam was borrowed by Mohammed from Jewish, Christian and other sources. There is a story of a woman who sent a manuscript of poetry to a publisher hoping that it would be published in book form. The publisher rejected it, sending a note saying: "Dear Madam: Your poetry is both good and original. But unfortunately the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good." It might be truly observed that that in Islam which is good is not original, but borrowed from other faiths; while that which is original is not good.

The background of Islam is the religious scene of ancient Arabia. The religion was crudely polytheistic, with worship of moon, stars, gods and goddesses, and with belief in a multitude of lesser spirits — angels, demons, fairies, and the like. At Mecca a meteorite was built into the corner of the Ka'bah, a sacred shrine. This shrine is mentioned in literature going as far back as 60 B. C., or more than six hundred years before the time of Mohammed. Sacrifices were offered to this black stone, which was said to have fallen down from heaven in the time of Adam and Eve. The people of Mecca had a tradition that the shrine was built by Abraham while on a visit to his son Ishmael. There was also at Mecca a holy well, called Zemzem, which was said to have been dug by the kicking of Ishmael. The Ka'bah also contained numerous idols, the chief one being that of a god named Hubal.

Mohammed was an orphan at the age of six. His guardians were zealous for the special religious superstitions of Mecca. As a young man Mohammed was troubled by the evil features of

Arabian religion as it existed at that time, especially its quarreling, idolatry, immorality and intemperance. A specially revolting custom was the burying alive of unwanted infant daughters. Mohammed was outraged, too, by the needless, endless bloodshed in wars between different Arabian tribes.

From the age of twelve Mohammed went on caravan trips to Palestine and Syria. In this way he came in contact with Jewish and Christian beliefs. These experiences led him to question many Arabian beliefs and practices.

Mohammed married a rich widow named Khadijah, who was fifteen years older than himself. She gave him affection and encouragement which enabled him to prosecute his religious interests in the face of difficulty and opposition. At the age of 40 while he was in a lonely place in the mountains he experienced a vision of the angel Gabriel who commanded him to "Recite" in the name of the Lord. Mohammed was at first skeptical about the supernatural source of this vision, and inclined to question his own sanity. But his wife reassured him and he became convinced that the vision was really from Gabriel. Soon he had another vision of Gabriel, then more frequently he received revelations. Thus he came finally to the conviction that he had been called to be a prophet of God (**Allah** is the Arabic word for "God," corresponding to **El** or **Elohim** in Hebrew).

Mohammed began preaching in his home city, Mecca, but met with bitter opposition. This continued for ten years. His first convert was his wife Khadijah. A kinsman of Mohammed named Abu Bekr, a wealthy merchant, was also an early convert. Four years of preaching gained about 40 converts to the new faith of Islam. But the opposition in Mecca was too powerful, and finally in A. D. 622 Mohammed with his followers fled to the city of Medina—a journey of eight days by camel caravan. In Medina he was honorably received, and was able to establish Islam as the faith of the city. New practices were introduced — worship services on Friday, a call to prayer from the mosque roof, giving of alms for the support of the prophet and for the poor and needy.

This was followed by war between Mecca and Medina. Mohammed and his followers were victorious and returned in triumph to Mecca. Partly by conquest and partly by influence and persuasion he gained both political and religious

supremacy throughout Arabia. He died in 632, and was succeeded by Abu Bekr, who was called the "caliph."

Islam continued to spread, being promoted by extensive military campaigns. Jerusalem fell to the Moslems in 638, Egypt three years later; Iraq or Mesopotamia in 637; Persia in 649; and most of Asia Minor by 652. Later Islam was carried by military force as far afield as India and beyond. In less than 100 years after the death of Mohammed all of North Africa and part of Spain were Moslem. The spread of Islam in western Europe was finally checked by Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours (France) in A. D. 732 — exactly a century after the death of Mohammed. Spain was later reclaimed for Christianity, but a wide belt of territory from Morocco to Pakistan and Indonesia has remained Moslem to this day. As already mentioned, Islam is today spreading widely in Africa and elsewhere. It is also dominant in parts of the Soviet Union and parts of China. A few years ago Peiping, now the capital of Communist China, had no less than 40 mosques, though Moslems were a minority of the population. How many of these mosques are still functioning today is unknown.

The main doctrines of Islam are as follows:

Monotheism — the absolute unity and simplicity of God. This involves rejection of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, with which Mohammed had come into contact. It is unfortunate that Mohammed knew Christianity only in a corrupted form which seems to have resulted in his misunderstanding the doctrine of the Trinity as belief in three Gods or Tritheism. The Moslem doctrine of God stresses His transcendence as the expense of His immanence, and His majesty and power at the expense of His love and mercy. Absolute predestination is affirmed. This Islamic belief differs from the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination in that it regards ends as fore-ordained apart from means, thus disregarding the reality of second causes.

Mohammed is the Prophet of God. Islam recognizes the existence of other prophets, including Moses and Jesus, but insists that Mohammed is the last and greatest of the prophetic line. However Mohammed is not regarded as more than human — he is simply a man through whom God is said to have spoken.

The Koran is the Absolute Word of God. Islam gives some standing to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, but claims for the Koran an absolutely unique character. It is even said to be an exact copy of an original in heaven.

Salvation is Obtained by Human Works. It is characteristic of religious Moslems that they are proud or self-righteous to such a degree that it is extremely difficult to get the Christian Gospel of sin and redemption across to them. The main

religious works or duties are repetition of the formula: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the Prophet of Allah." (To recite this makes one a Moslem;) prayer; almsgiving; specified fasting, and pilgrimage. Once in a lifetime, if possible, every Moslem is bound to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. There are also numerous moral duties; these include kindness to widows, orphans, etc.; abstinence from adultery and intoxicating liquors, as well as games of chance, and from eating blood and pork; kindness to divorced women; marriage to not more than four women at one time; and especially military service in the cause of Allah against unbelievers.

Several of these moral precepts represented real reforms in the time of Mohammed. For example, his limitation of polygamy to four wives at the same time was apparently a distinct reform in his day — it seems that before his time it was fairly common for a man to have as many as ten wives at one time. Though the ethics of Islam doubtless constituted a distinct improvement in the Arabia of Mohammed's day, the ethical aspect of Islam has tended to become petrified and externalized, with emphasis on specific commands and prohibitions rather than on genuine love in the heart for one's neighbor. In this respect Islam resembles the Pharisaic perversion of the Jewish faith.

Why is Islam so successful? How can its rapid spread be explained? And why is it so hard to win Moslems for Christ? A Moslem student once asked the present writer why Islam is so much more successful than Christianity. After a moment's thought the reply was given that Islam is an easier religion than Christianity to live up to; it makes less difficult moral demands upon people. There is nothing in Islam to lead a man to say, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" or "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." A religion with reasonable attainable objectives fosters self-confidence, complacency and spiritual pride — it leads inevitably to self-righteousness, but it does not give the sinner the anguish of a guilty conscience nor the frustration of trying without success to attain in practical living the requirements of an absolute moral standard. In brief, Islam makes a man feel good, while Christianity necessarily first (and often thereafter) makes a man feel bad. The religion of the broken heart is Christianity, not Islam.

Again, Islam is a religion which has already looked Christianity in the face and definitely rejected it. It is vastly easier to win an idol-worshipping Chinese or African polytheist to Christ than to win a Moslem who takes pride in his abhorrence of idolatry. Rejection of the Trinity, the very basis of the Christian Gospel, is not only implicit but actually explicit in Islam. The Koran states it in the plainest of language. Therefore there is a certain "hardened" character of

Moslems in relation to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet it is not impossible to win Moslems for Christ. The grace of God is sovereign and the Holy Spirit is able to break through the tough crust of prejudice and self-righteousness and bring Moslems to real conviction of sin and saving faith in Jesus Christ. If the Christian world were more concerned perhaps missions to Moslems might be more successful.

In spite of its monotheism, Islam must be judged a false faith. Its doctrine of God is too simple to be the truth. God is One but He is also Three in a different sense. Its view of Jesus Christ gives him scant honor by rating him as merely a prophet of less importance than Mohammed. Its way of salvation is essentially false, being without the atoning blood of the only Redeemer of men. And it fosters a proud self-righteousness rather than a broken-hearted faith in a God-given Substitute. As an ethical system it is largely vitiated by externalism. Its sacred book, the Koran, falsely claims to be absolute divine revelation, and sanctions some of the greatest evils in the Moslem system, such as the low position occupied by women historically throughout the Moslem world.

Questions:

1. What is unique about Islam as to the time when it began?
2. What is meant by the word **Islam**?
3. What is the meaning of **Moslems** or **Muslims**?
4. How many Moslems are there in the world today?
5. Where is Islam progressing rapidly today?
6. From what sources did Mohammed borrow many of his ideas?
7. What was the religion of pre-Islamic Arabia?
8. What special features were found at Mecca?
9. What features of Arabian religion troubled Mohammed?
10. How did Mohammed come in contact with Jewish and Christian beliefs?
11. What was the effect of Mohammed's marriage on his religious career?
12. Describe how Mohammed came to regard himself as called to be a prophet.
13. What was Mohammed's success as a prophet at Mecca?
14. Why did Mohammed go to Medina, and with what results?
15. How did Mohammed gain political and religious supremacy throughout Arabia?
16. How far had Islam spread by 100 years after Mohammed's death?
17. How and when was the spread of Islam in western Europe checked?
18. What lands or areas of the world have remained Moslem to the present day?
19. What are the features of the Mohammedan doctrine of God?
20. How does the Mohammedan doctrine of predestination differ from the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination?
21. What is the attitude of Islam toward Jesus?
22. What is the sacred book of Islam? What claim is made for it?
23. What is the way of salvation, according to Islam?
24. What are the main religious duties of Islam?
25. What are some of the moral duties of Islam?
26. Mention one of Mohammed's moral precepts which was a real reform in his day.
27. What is the general character of Islamic ethics?
28. How can the success of Islam be explained?
29. Why is it easier to win an idol-worshiping polytheist to Christ than to win a Moslem to Christ?

LESSON 12

Judaism — the Old Testament without Atoning Blood

The religion of the Old Testament is a religion of grace, that is, it is a religion of the love of God providing salvation for sinners as a free, undeserved gift. It is also a religion of redemption, for it represents human sin as being canceled through the shed blood of a Substitute ac-

cepted by God. Thus the religion revealed in the Old Testament is both **gracious** and **redemptive**. The most spiritual of the people of Israel always realized this gracious-redemptive character of the Old Testament religion. But there were probably always forces and tendencies at work

to change it or reinterpret it in the direction of a non-redemptive religion of human merit (works or achievement of some kind).

As we open the pages of the New Testament, we find the religious leadership of the Jewish people sharply divided between two sects or parties — the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Sadducees had control of the Temple organization and worship. They were the party most influenced by Greek philosophy, and may be called the liberals or modernists of the day. They doubted or denied many teachings of the Scriptures, including the resurrection.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, were separatists and clung tenaciously to everything Jewish against everything Gentile. In all the points at issue between them and the Sadducees, the Pharisees were right and the Sadducees were wrong. This does not imply that the Pharisees were correct on all matters, for they surely were not. They had grievous faults and errors of their own. In particular, they had transformed the redemptive-gracious religion of the Old Testament into a system of human merit or works, by which a man saves himself by his diligent, consistent efforts at keeping the laws and commandments of God. The apostle Paul, before his conversion to Christ on the Damascus road, was an adherent of this Pharisaic perversion of the religion of Israel. Though they still offered blood sacrifices and still observed the Passover, including the killing of the lamb, their theology was essentially meritorious or legalistic. They gave a false answer to the question, "What must a sinner do to be saved?" for they answered this not in terms of faith but in terms of human works.

The outcome of the Jewish-Roman war was the utter defeat of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. Those of the Jews that were not killed were dispersed far and wide through the Roman world, many of them as slaves. The Jewish faith, as distinguished from the Christian faith, had received a very severe blow, from which it would have seemed that recovery would be impossible.

A short time before Jerusalem fell to the Romans, a learned rabbi named Johanan ben Zakkai escaped from the city to a place at the seacoast called Jabneh or Jamnia, where he began to act as a teacher of the laws and principles of the Jewish faith. This man sought to adapt the Jewish religion to the historical changes that were taking place. The Sanhedrin (Council of 70 elders) was dead, so Johanan ben Zakkai organized a new council to take the leadership and make rules and decisions for the Jewish faith as a whole, wherever located. It must be realized that these men simply took this upon themselves — they were not called to this function by God nor by any lawful continuation of Old Testament institutions. However, the Jamnia Council gained wide recognition

and came to be regarded as the official mouthpiece of the Jewish religion. Even the Roman Government so recognized it, treating its Patriarch (presiding officer) as the head of all Jews throughout the Empire.

The Jewish religion as it exists at the present day is only partly based on the Old Testament Scriptures. It is only in a very limited sense that the Judaism of the present day can claim to adhere to the religion of the Old Testament. Much has been added in the way of traditions and interpretations. Among these additions are the **Mishnah**, made in the second century after Christ — a list of four thousand rabbinic precepts calculated to adapt the Torah (Law of Moses) to the conditions existing in the second century. The Mishnah was made by Jewish scholars in Galilee. The same groups of Jewish scholars produced the **Palestinian Talmud**, which was not a very important work.

The next important additions to the Old Testament Scriptures came from Jewish scholars living in Mesopotamia or Babylonia. It is thought that there may have been as many as one million Jews in Mesopotamia soon after the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

Learned Jewish scholars in Babylonia carried further the elaboration and codification of details of Jewish religion. Part of the Mishnah was an exposition of the **Halakah**, or so-called unwritten Law, while part of it consisted of what were called **Haggadah** (traditions other than interpretations of laws; they were historical, religious, moral and practical items collected from countless sermons and sayings of noted rabbis of former times). The Jews in Babylonia now brought together all previously unrecorded **Halakah** and **Haggadah** material into an immense book called the **Gemara**. Then the Gemara was combined with the Mishnah, forming the enormous work known as the (Babylonian) **Talmud**. The Talmud is the real authority of present day Judaism. It was completed by about A. D. 500. Some idea of its immense size can be gained from noting that it contains 63 volumes, divided into six major parts. From that day to this, the orthodox Jew views the Old Testament through colored spectacles — he views the Old Testament as reflected and interpreted in the Talmud.

More time passed, and the Jews adhered tenaciously to their religion in spite of much persecution. The greatest Jewish scholar of the Middle Ages was Moses ben Maimon (Moses Maimonides), who was born in Spain but driven by persecution to Egypt. Maimonides lived 1135-1201, and wrote several very important books. One was a commentary on the Mishnah in which he reduced that work to thirteen basic principles. Another book by Maimonides was a simplified condensation of the Talmud. Still another book by him was his **Guide to the Per-**

plexed, a reasoned defence of the Jewish faith in terms of the philosophy of Aristotle. Maimonides in this book explained away miracles rationally and interpreted the creation story of Genesis allegorically instead of literally. Maimonides was extremely influential in Jewish circles, even though there were not lacking some who opposed his new ideas.

At the present day many Jews are secular, without religion; they are Jews by race but not by religion. A considerable portion of the Jewish population of the Republic of Israel is secular. The Zionist movement which advocated return of the Jews to Palestine was pre-eminently a secular, social-political or nationalistic movement rather than an expression of religious faith.

Religious Jews of today are divided into various branches or denominations. The Orthodox Jews adhere very closely to the historic documents of Judaism, especially the Talmud. They hope for salvation from careful, painstaking observance of every detailed precept of the Law. Some of them hope for the coming of a personal Messiah who will make Israel free and great again, though many have given up the expectation of a personal Messiah and hold that Israel collectively is the Lord's anointed with a mission to the world. Of the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament they have nothing. Even the Passover is observed without the killing of a lamb. Their religion is essentially legalism, moralism, or self-salvation by human works.

What are called Reform Jews are very much like "liberal" Protestants in their attitudes and manner of worship. The synagogue services rather closely resemble those in a Protestant congregation. The strict Jewish dietary laws are regarded as more or less optional and some Reform Jews disregard many of them. The Talmud is no longer regarded as authoritative. No personal Messiah is expected. The Jewish faith is not regarded as a fixed or closed system but as something capable of indefinite development in varying conditions. Many Reform Jews have a characteristically "liberal" attitude toward the Old Testament, holding the "higher critical" views about the authorship and date of the various books, such as that Moses wrote little of the Books of Moses, Deuteronomy was written in the time of Josiah, and Isaiah chapters 40-66 was written by the "Second Isaiah" during the Babylonian Captivity.

There are other developments in the Jewish world of today, but lack of space forbids discussion of them in this lesson.

The thing that the student should by all means learn from this lesson is that **twentieth century Judaism and the Religion of the Old Testament are two entirely different kinds of religion.** The difference between them is as

great as that between Saul of Tarsus before his conversion and Paul the apostle after the conversion. It is the difference between a religion of works and a religion of grace, a religion of human achievement and a religion of divine redemption. The present writer has met a number of people in orthodox Protestant churches who naively assumed that the Jewish faith of today is a point-by-point reproduction of the religion of the Old Testament, lacking only faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Some were utterly astonished when told that many religious Jews of today do not believe in a personal Messiah at all. Others are unaware that the Passover is observed today without its principal feature, the killing of the lamb.

The observations in the preceding paragraph will indicate how difficult it is today to win a Jew for Christ. It is not simply that he must be convinced that Jesus is the expected Messiah—much more than that is necessary. He must be convinced of man's utter sinfulness and inability to save himself—of the sinner's desperate need of an absolutely gracious salvation. And this is hard to do, for the religious Jew is extremely self-righteous. Only the almighty power of the Holy Spirit can really bring a Jew to Christ in repentance and saving faith.

Questions:

1. What kind of religion is the religion of the Old Testament?
2. What is the meaning of the terms **gracious** and **redemptive**?
3. What were the two main sects of the Jewish leaders in the time of Christ? What did each group stand for?
4. Why was the theology of the Pharisees essentially false?
5. Who was Johanan ben Zakkai and what did he do for the Jewish faith?
6. What is the **Mishnah**? the **Gemara**? the **Talmud**?
7. Who was the most famous Jewish scholar of the Middle Ages?
8. What important books did this scholar write?
9. What was the attitude of Moses Maimonides toward the miracles of the Old Testament? Toward the Creation story of Genesis?
10. What is the character of the Zionist movement?
11. What is the general character of the religion of Orthodox Jews today?
12. How do Reform Jews of the present day differ from Orthodox Jews?
13. What is the attitude of many Reform Jews to the Old Testament Scriptures?
14. Why is it difficult to win a Jew for Christ?

LESSON 13

Religion or Christianity?

The preceding twelve lessons have outlined the idea of religion, naturalistic versus Biblical views of the origin and development of religion, how to account for the elements of relative good found in false religious systems, and how the Christian church through its missionary program ought to approach the non-Christian religions and their adherents. Following this several historical religions were described and discussed — Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shinto, Islam and Judaism. It was attempted to bring each of these non-Christian religions under criticism from the viewpoint of Biblical Christianity. In this final lesson of the series some general observations are in order concerning the basic falsehood of all non-Christian religions, their inadequacy to meet man's real need, and the real uniqueness of the Christianity of the Bible.

Even though the non-Christian faiths all contain some elements of truth or some particular features that can be called "good" in a limited and relative sense, still as **systems** they are all false, because they give wrong answers to the great questions of life. Such questions as (1) What is the nature of God? (2) What is the relation between God and the universe? (3) What is the real reason for humanity's troubles? (4) What must a man do to be saved? (5) What is the real meaning of death? and (6) What comes after death? — such questions as these are given false or ambiguous answers by all non-Christian religious systems. In spite of limited elements of truth and good, they are false as systems and they cannot save mankind from sin and misery.

In particular, there is no non-Christian faith that sees man's predicament and need as it really is. That man is actually dead in sin they do not and will not admit. Only Biblical Christianity gives the correct diagnosis of humanity's case — man is hopelessly sunk in sin by reason of moral and intellectual revolt against the living God. Only Biblical Christianity, therefore, realizes man's desperate need for an absolutely gracious salvation. The other religions offer man advice — some of it good, some not so good — but Christianity brings men **good news**, the Gospel, the message that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has done for man what he could never do for himself.

In missionary work among semi-illiterate people in China the writer used to use a large poster which was divided into several panels. The first panel showed a man who had fallen into a pit. The pit was deep and the sides were steep, and his efforts to climb out were futile. The second panel showed a scholarly

representative of Confucianism standing at the brink of the pit. He says to the poor man in the pit something like this: "Why didn't you watch where you were walking? A careful man does not fall into pits. In the future be careful where you walk!" This, of course, leaves the poor man helpless in the pit. In the next panel there comes a Taoist priest (Taoism is a Chinese religion replete with magic and superstitious beliefs). He advises the man in the pit to burn incense and propitiate the spirits, but he does nothing to get him out of the pit. The next panel shows a Buddhist monk addressing the man in the pit somewhat as follows. "Poor man, the trouble with you is that you want to get out of the pit. All our human misery comes from desire. We want things that we cannot have. Just rid yourself of that evil desire and you will have peace. Try to attain a detached attitude, so you will not care whether you get out of the pit or not." But Buddhism is not the effective remedy, so the next panel shows a Christian evangelist on his knees, reaching deep down into the pit to help lift the man out. The final panel shows the now rescued man standing on a great rock singing praises to God, who took him out of the fearful pit and put a new song into his mouth, even praise to God.

Only Biblical Christianity recognizes the pit into which man has fallen for what it really is. Only Biblical Christianity realizes the utter hopelessness and futility of all human schemes of salvation by man's own efforts, works or achievements. Only Biblical Christianity carries within itself the almighty power of the Holy Spirit by which a man is born again and his will renewed and his character changed and re-oriented from sin and self to righteousness and God. And only Biblical Christianity can approach modern man, whether in Europe and America or in Asia and Africa with a fully confident, assured "Thus saith the Lord" to back up the message.

Nothing is more pitiable than the efforts of theological liberals and modernists to carry on some kind of missionary work. All they have to offer the people of non-Christian lands is essentially good advice. Their message is essentially works, moralism, salvation by education and human culture. The heathen have no shortage of advice. They have plenty of sages and philosophers, past and present, just as the world of Paul's day had plenty of merchants of human wisdom. Liberalism or Modernism has no faith in, and therefore cannot proclaim, the one message that carries saving power — the message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

It is the hope of the writer that this series of lessons may help some to realize more fully the world's desperate need of the one and only true religion — the Christianity of the Bible.

Questions:

1. What subjects have been studied in the preceding twelve lessons of this series?

2. Why must all non-Christian religions, when viewed as systems, be regarded as false?

3. What fact about human need is recognized only by Christianity?

4. What power is found only in Christianity?

5. What is the essential difference between good advice and good news?

6. Why can theological liberals and modernists not carry on any really effective missionary work?

The End

The Law of God for the Modern World

Note: This series of lessons is an introduction to the study of the Moral Law of God, including its source, nature, functions and relevance for

the present day. It follows the order of treatment in **The Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly, beginning with Question 91.

LESSON 1

Our Supreme Duty to God

Q. 91. What is the duty which God requireth of man?

A. The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to his revealed will.

Scripture References:

Romans 12:1, 2. The duty of conformity to the will of God.

Micah 6:8. God requires obedience to His revealed will.

1 Samuel 15:22. Without sincere obedience to God's will, all worship is vain.

John 7:17. Willingness to do God's will is the key to knowledge of God's truth.

James 1:22-25. Hearing the Word of God, without being willing to do God's will, is useless.

James 4:17. To fail to do God's will, when we know what it is, is sinful.

Questions:

1. Why do we owe a duty to God?

Because God is our Creator and we are his creatures, we are under moral obligations to love and serve him. As Christians, we are under an **added** obligation to love and serve God, because he has **redeemed** us from sin and hell.

2. What classes of people deny that human beings owe a duty to God?

(a) Atheists, who do not believe that there is a God. (b) Pantheists, who believe that everything is divine, and deny that God is a person except as he attains personality in man. (c) Humanists, who believe that our highest loyalty

must be to our fellow-men, or to humanity. These usually regard God as someone who exists for the benefit of the human race, or at least that God and man exist for the mutual benefit of each other. They regard religion as a means to an end, for promoting human progress and welfare.

3. Why is it wrong to say that our highest loyalty should be devotion to the welfare of humanity?

This humanistic attitude, which is extremely common and popular at the present day, and is taken for granted by the leading newspapers and magazines of America, is really **idolatry**, for it puts the creature in place of the Creator and amounts to **deifying and worshipping mankind**.

4. Is it not true that serving our fellow men is a noble way of serving God?

It all depends on our **motive** for serving our fellow men. If our real motive is a desire to serve God, so that we serve our fellow men not just for their own sake, **but for God's sake**, then we may be truly serving God, provided we act in accordance with his revealed will. But if our motive is merely a desire to help humanity, so that we serve our fellow men **for their own sake**, then we are idolaters, and we are not truly serving God, even though we may be doing some of the things commanded in God's Word.

5. Do we have a right to choose whether we will obey God's revealed will or not?

God does not force or compel anyone to obey his revealed will. He permits free agents to make their own decision. However no person has a **right** to choose to disobey God. To decide against obedience to God's will is to be in rebellion against our Creator.

In accordance with the prevalent idea of human evolution from a brute ancestry, the moral law is not regarded as a **revelation of God** but as a **discovery of man**. This theory holds "that mankind originated not in the Garden of Eden but in the slime, and that the law originally written on the human heart was not the law of God but the law of the jungle; then through ages amounting to millions of years mankind gradually developed and improved, and discovered more of the true moral law inherent in "the nature of things", until the law of the jungle in the human heart was transformed into the moral law as men recognize it today.

9. What errors are involved in this "modern" view of the moral law?

(a) This "modern" view of the moral law regards it not as a revelation of the will of God, and expression of the nature of God, but as something existing of itself as a kind of impersonal force or principle in the universe. (b) This theory holds that mankind originated in the depths and has gradually climbed to the heights, whereas the Bible teaches that mankind originated on the heights and later fell into the depths by disobeying God. (c) This theory holds that the moral law is a human development or discovery, whereas the Bible teaches that the moral law is a divine revelation. In short, modern thought has no room for the three great Bible truths of (a) the creation of the universe by God; (b) the original perfection and subsequent Fall of mankind; and (c) the revelation of the moral law as the will of God.

LESSON 2

An Absolute Standard of Right and Wrong

Q. 93. What is the moral law?

A. The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding every one to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man; promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.

Scripture References:

Deut. 5:1-3. God's moral law requires obedience.

Deut. 5:31-33. God's law is a revelation of God's will.

Luke 10:26, 27. The moral law requires conformity of the whole man to God's will.

Galatians 3:10. The law of God requires total and perfect obedience.

1 Thess. 5:23. God's law is binding on all elements of the human personality.

Luke 1:75. God's law requires both holiness and righteousness in serving him.

Acts 24:16. God's law includes duties owed to God and duties owed to men.

Romans 10:5. Galatians 3:12. God promises life upon the fulfilling of his law.

Galatians 3:10. Genesis 3:17-19. Death is the penalty involved in the breach of God's law.

Questions:

1. How does the Catechism define the moral law?

It defines the moral law as "the declaration of the will of God to mankind". This involves the following Scripture truths: (a) The moral law is not a human discovery, but a divine **revelation**. (b) The moral law is not a force or principle inherent in the universe, but a revelation of the will of God. (c) God is not simply another name for "the best that is in humanity", but a supreme Person, who has a **will** which he reveals to his creatures.

2. Who is subject to the moral law of God?

Every human being that ever lived or ever shall live.

3. Does the moral law of God bind the heathen who know nothing of the Bible?

Yes. Apart from the Bible the moral law of God is written on their hearts by God's natural revelation. Romans 2:14-16.

4. Does God's moral law bind atheists who do not believe in God?

Yes. At the Judgment Day they will have to answer for their denial of God's existence as well as for all their other sins. As long as they do not believe in God, even their "good deeds" are really wicked. Their rejection of God cannot cancel the authority of God's law over their lives.

5. Does the moral law of God bind Christians?

Certainly it does. Christ saves us **unto a life of obedience to God's moral law**.

6. Does God's moral law ever change, or is it always the same?

Although the real meaning of God's moral law is always the same, we see in the Bible that the particular form in which it was revealed was changed from time to time, chiefly by the addition of more detailed commandments.

6. Why does God not consult our wishes before imposing his will on us?

We tend to forget that God does not manage the universe according to the principles of democracy. The kingdom of God is not a democracy, but an absolute monarchy; God is sovereign; he has total, absolute and unchallengeable authority over all his creatures. It is not for us to say whether we like God's commandments and laws; it is for us to obey them whether we like them or not, **simply because they are the revelation of God's will**. To attempt to place God on the same level with ourselves, as if he were responsible to us, or as if we could criticize or question his requirements, is irreverent, irreligious and wicked.

Q. 92. What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

Scripture References:

Genesis 1:26, 27. Mankind created in the image of God, with a moral nature.

Romans 2:14, 15. The law of God written on the human heart by God's natural revelation.

Romans 10:5. The standard of righteousness is the moral law of God.

Genesis 2:17. God's special command to Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Questions:

1. What do we call the condition of the human race before the Fall into sin?

The estate of innocence.

2. What special command did God give to mankind in the estate of innocence?

The command not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This special command formed **the condition of the Covenant of Works**.

3. How was this special command of God given to mankind?

This special command of God was given to mankind, not by nature, but by a special revelation or message from God, which Adam and Eve unmistakably recognized as a declaration of the will of God (Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:3).

4. Apart from this special command, what rule of obedience did God give to mankind?

Apart from the special command which form-

ed the condition of the Covenant of Works, God gave to mankind **the moral law** as the rule of obedience.

5. How was the moral law given to mankind in the estate of innocence?

The moral law was given to mankind in the estate of innocence **by God's natural revelation in the human heart**. Mankind as created had the moral law of God written upon their hearts. It was not necessary for God to address Adam and Eve with a **special** revelation of the moral law, for the moral law was already written by God in their own nature. No special revelation of the moral law was needed so long as mankind had not fallen into sin.

6. Do people have the moral law of God written on their hearts by God's natural revelation today?

Yes. The law of God is written by God's natural revelation upon the heart of every human being in the world. But the writing has been terribly darkened and distorted by human sin, so that this natural revelation of the will of God is no longer adequate as the guide for human conduct. Since the Fall the light of God's **special** revelation has been necessary. Apart from the light of Holy Scripture, men inevitably change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator (Romans 1:25).

7. Why did God not reveal the Ten Commandments to Adam and Eve?

As long as sin had not entered the human race, there was no need for a detailed list of commandments. The simple moral law of God written on the human heart was sufficient, for it told Adam and Eve that their highest obligation was to love God for his own sake, and that their next highest obligation was to love each other for God's sake. Only when sin had entered did specific detailed commandments such as "Thou shalt not steal", "Thou shalt not kill", "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor", etc., become necessary. As long as the human race existed in the state of innocence, such specific commandments would have been meaningless as well as unnecessary.

8. What is the popular "modern" view of the moral law?

The popular "modern" view of the moral law is not based on the Bible but on human philosophy and scientific theories. According to this popular notion the moral law is not a revelation of the will of God, nor an expression of the nature of God. It is thought of as existing of itself, as a part of "the nature of things". Modern thought regards the universe as existing of itself (that is, not created), and the moral law as existing of itself as a part of the universe. According to this view, if there is a God, he too is subject to the moral law which exists above and beyond him.

7. Does God's moral law change now, in our own time?

No. Since the completion of the Bible, the revelation of God's will to mankind is complete and unchangeable and will stand in this fixed form till the end of the world.

8. What attitude do many modern people take toward the idea that God's moral law is fixed and will remain unalterable till the end of the world?

Many people who have been influenced by "modern" thought oppose this idea, calling it "narrow" and "static", and saying that it is absurd to suppose that detailed commandments given to men two thousand and more years ago can be adequate for the needs of humanity in this modern age of scientific progress.

9. How should we answer this objection to the unchangeable character of God's moral law?

(a) Those who raise this objection do not think of the moral law as a revelation of God; they regard even the laws in the Bible as products of human experience and progress. If the laws in the Bible are really **man-made or man-discovered**, then of course we might as well make or discover our own today, instead of depending on the attainments of men who lived ages ago. But if these laws are **God-given**, then they are equally adapted to the needs of all ages, for God is not limited by the passing of time, and he was able to give laws which would last until the end of the world. (b) When rightly interpreted, according to sound principles of Bible study, it will be found that the moral law of God as revealed in the Bible is exactly suited to the condition of humanity in the twentieth century, just as in any other period of human history since the Fall.

10. What kind of obedience does God's moral law require of mankind?

God's moral law requires **absolute** obedience, that is, **conformity of the whole man to the whole law through his whole life**. Thus God's moral law demands absolute perfection in our thoughts, words and deeds, as well as in the state or disposition of our heart, through our entire life, without falling short even for one instant.

11. Does the moral law of God require us to be good?

The moral law of God requires us to be not merely "good", but to be **absolutely good**, that is, to be **morally perfect**. The common manner of speaking about "being good" amounts to a lowering of God's standard. God requires not merely "goodness" but absolute moral perfection.

12. Is not such a standard far too high for the human race?

We must freely recognize that the ideal of

moral perfection presented in the Bible is not attainable in the present life. The standard is not too high, though. If Adam and Eve had not sinned, all humanity would have attained to this standard of absolute perfection, and the human race would have been very different from what it actually turned out to be. That the standard is too high for **fallen** man to attain is **mankind's own fault** by reason of the fall into sin and resultant corruption and inability. God's standard has remained the same ever since the day that he created mankind. It is the human race that has changed. Also we should realize that the fact that the standard is too high for fallen man to attain shows **the divine origin of the moral law**. A stream cannot rise any higher than its source. If the moral law were the product of man's experience, it would present a standard low enough to be attained by sinful human beings. The **absolute** moral standard which we find in the Bible must be from God; human beings could never have produced it. Apart from Christ, human thought has never even been able to form an idea of a **perfect** man in whom no evil whatever exists. The Bible presents an absolute moral standard, and portrays Christ who fully embodies that absolute moral perfection in his own character. It is high; we cannot attain unto it; but that very fact shows that it is not man's standard, but God's.

13. What kind of duties does God's moral law obligate us to perform?

God's moral law obligates us to perform the duties of holiness and righteousness which we owe to God and man.

14. What is the difference between "duties of holiness" and "duties of righteousness"?

While the terms "holiness" and "righteousness" no doubt overlap to some extent, it may be said that "duties of holiness" are **religious** duties in the strict sense, while "duties of righteousness" are **moral** duties in the strict sense. For example, prayer and reading the Bible are "duties of holiness"; to work industriously six days of the week (Ex. 20:9), avoiding idleness, is a "duty of righteousness".

15. What is the difference between duties owed to God and duties owed to man?

Strictly speaking, all duties are owed to God. There is no duty owed to man which is not owed to God also; that is, it is owed to man **for God's sake**. But some duties are owed to God **solely and directly**, while other duties are owed to God **indirectly**, by reason of our relation to our fellow men. For example, to reverence God's name and refrain from taking it in vain is a duty owed directly to God. But to love our neighbor as ourself is a duty owed to God indirectly. In this case our duty to God requires us to love our neighbor and seek his welfare; thus our duty to God involves a subordinate duty to man.

16. What does God promise upon the fulfilling of his moral law?

God promises life upon the fulfilling of his moral law; this is of course to be understood in the fullest sense, meaning **eternal** life.

17. Can eternal life be obtained in any other way than by the fulfilling of God's moral law?

Absolutely not. There is and can be no other way. God's standard has never been changed or lowered. Adam and Eve could have obtained eternal life by **themselves personally** fulfilling God's moral law. If they had done that, we too would thereby have obtained eternal life, and we would have been born unto the world **unable to commit sin**. However, Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and the human race fell into sin, with the result that no one can adequately fulfil God's moral law now. Still God's standard has not been lowered. Eternal life still depends upon absolute obedience to God's moral law. But God himself has provided the Second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, who perfectly fulfilled God's moral law **on our behalf, as our representative**, so that "by the

obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). We should always be careful to avoid the error that the Gospel involves a lowering of the terms on which mankind can obtain eternal life. The Gospel does not involve a lowering of the terms; it involves a **substitution of the person who complies with the terms**; God graciously accepts Christ's fulfillment of the moral law as if it were our own attainment, and imputes or reckons it to our credit.

18. What penalty came upon mankind because of the breach of God's moral law?

The penalty of death. Romans 5:12; 6:23.

19. What is the meaning of "death" as the penalty for breaking the moral law of God?

"Death" as "the wages of sin", or the penalty for the breach of God's moral law, means **death in the most inclusive sense**, including (a) alienation of the person from God's favor; (b) by the death of the body, and its return to dust; (c) eternal separation from God's love and favor, called in the Bible "hell" or "the second death."

LESSON 3

The Relevance of the Moral Law in a Sinful World

Q. 94. Is there any use of the moral law to man since the fall?

A. Although no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the moral law; yet there is great use thereof, as well common to all men, as peculiar either to the unregenerate, or the regenerate.

Scripture References:

Romans 8:3. Galatians 2:16. Since the Fall, no man can attain righteousness and life by personal obedience to the moral law.

1 Timothy 1:8. The law is good in itself, but must be rightly used.

Questions:

1. What popular error concerning the moral law does this question of the Catechism guard against?

The very common error that sinful human beings can save themselves by their "good works" or "good character", that is, the notion that mankind, since the Fall, can attain to righteousness and life by personal obedience to the moral law. The Catechism rejects this false idea emphatically. Thus at the very beginning of a long section on the moral law and the Ten Commandments (continuing through Question 148), the Catechism carefully guards against the idea which the sinful human heart naturally tends to take for granted, **that it is possible for sinners adequately to obey**

the moral law. The moral law, and its expression in the Ten Commandments, have great use to all classes of men; but it is of the utmost importance that we recognize and reject the lie inherent in the Pharisees' system, the belief that the commandments can really **be kept**. The truth is that unregenerate people cannot keep the moral law at all so as to please God; even their "good works" are sins that need to be repented of; and true believers in Christ, by divine grace, are enabled to keep the moral law only in a partial and inadequate way, so that their "good works" are acceptable to God only by reason of Christ's mediation. It has sometimes been alleged that the Westminster Standards, by their very strong emphasis on the Ten Commandments, encourage the idea of "salvation by works". This charge is utterly unfounded and overlooks the express statements of the Westminster Standards both on the way of salvation and on the moral law.

2. If the moral law is of no use as a way of attaining righteousness and life, then of what use is it?

The moral law is affirmed by the Catechism to be of great use (a) to mankind in general; (b) to unregenerate sinners; (c) to regenerate persons. Questions 95, 96 and 97 take these classes up in detail.

Q. 95. Of what use is the moral law to all men?

A. The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk according-

ly; to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives; to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.

Scripture References:

Leviticus 11:44, 45. Leviticus 20: 7, 8. Romans 7:12. The moral law is an expression of the holy nature and will of God.

Micah 6:8. James 2:10,11. The moral law serves as a revelation of the duty of all men, as creatures of God, to obey him.

Psalms 19:11,12. Romans 3:20. Romans 7:7. The moral law serves to convince men of their sinful and spiritually helpless condition by nature.

Romans 3:9, 23. The moral law serves to humble sinners by convincing them of their sin and misery.

Galatians 3:21,22. The moral law serves to help men to gain a clearer insight into their need of Christ as Saviour from sin.

Romans 10:4. The moral law serves to give men a high idea of the character and righteousness of Christ, who fulfilled the law perfectly.

Questions:

1. What four uses does the moral law of God have for all men?

The moral law of God is of use to all men in the following four ways: (a) as a revelation of truth concerning God; (b) as a revelation of truth concerning man's moral obligation to God; (c) as a means of convincing men of their utterly sinful condition by nature; (d) as a help toward a right estimate of the matchless character of Christ.

2. How is the moral law a revelation of truth concerning God?

The moral law is a revelation of truth concerning God because it is **an expression of his holy nature and will**. This is contrary to the "modern" view of the moral law which regards it as a force or principle existing of itself in "the nature of things". That which is right is right not because it is right of itself, but **because God's own holy nature demands it**. We should note that the Catechism mentions the **nature** of God before the **will** of God. The nature of God determines what is right, and the will of God imposes this on mankind as a moral obligation.

3. How is the moral law a revelation of man's moral obligation to God?

As an expression of the will of God, the moral law comes to man with a **demand for absolute and total obedience**. This demand for obedience is based in the Bible, not on utilitarian considera-

tions such as "the greatest good of the greatest number" or "the welfare of humanity", but upon the **Creator-creature relationship** which is grounded in the **Scripture doctrine of creation**. "And God spake all these words, saying, **I am the Lord thy God** Thou shalt have no other gods before me", etc. (Ex. 20:1-17). Nothing could be more **immoral** than the popular modern idea that the moral law is to be obeyed for selfish or utilitarian reasons. The moral law is to be obeyed because it is our **duty** to obey it in view of the fact that God is our Creator and we are his creatures.

4. How is the moral law of God a means of convincing men of their utterly sinful condition by nature?

(a) The moral law of God places before mankind an **absolute** moral standard. The harder a person tries to conform to this absolute standard, the more he must become convinced in his conscience that he cannot really attain it. Mankind as created by God, in the Garden of Eden, could have attained to this absolute moral standard. Since the Fall, the standard has remained the same, but the character of human beings has changed. The attempt of sinners to conform to an absolute moral standard, which could be attained only by sinless human beings, must serve to convince them of their sinful condition, because of their **inability** to live up to the standard. (b) The sinful human heart rebels against the holy requirements of God's moral law; thus the moral law serves to provoke man's sinful, corrupt nature into actual transgressions (Romans 7:7). The moral law actually **makes men worse sinners** because their sinful hearts rise in rebellion against it and **the sinful corruption of the heart** is translated into **sinful practice in the life** (Romans 7:8-11). (c) The moral law of God is calculated to humble men because of their sin and misery; the more keenly they realize their failure and inability really to keep the law, the more they must be humbled because of their sinful condition. Only where the lie that the law can be really obeyed is cherished, as by the Pharisees, can men be blind to their own sinfulness and consequently filled with pride. (d) The moral law of God is calculated to help men to have a **sense of need** as well as a sense of sin. It is to be a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. Personal failure to conform to the moral law should convince men of their deep need of a Saviour who has kept the law perfectly for them, and who will save them so that in the end they too can conform perfectly to the law.

5. How does the moral law of God help men toward a right estimate of the matchless character of Christ?

Christ himself lived under the law (Galatians 4:4). He perfectly fulfilled all the requirements of the moral law of God, conforming totally to the absolute standard which God had set for mankind. If we realize that Christ fulfilled the

moral law for sinners, then the deeper insight we have into the real character of the moral law, the greater will be our appreciation of the matchless character of Christ. Those who think of the moral law as a human discovery of a natural force or principle, usually also think of Christ as simply "a good man". Those who understand that the moral law is an expression

of the absolutely holy nature of God, will think of Christ as **the one and only absolutely perfect** man and also as the God-man. If Christ lived a life on earth of perfect conformity to the absolute standard of God's moral law, then Christ's obedience and righteousness are **absolutely perfect** in every respect. Christ is absolute moral perfection realized in a human life.

LESSON 4

The Moral Law and Evangelism

Q. 96. What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate men?

A. The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof.

Scripture References:

1 Timothy 1:9, 10. The moral law of God applicable to wicked men.

Galatians 3:24. The moral law is useful to drive sinners to Christ for salvation.

Romans 1:20 compared with Romans 2:15. The moral law leaves sinners without excuse.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "unregenerate"?

This means a **person who has not been born again**, and is therefore a lost, unsaved sinner.

2. What is the ordinary condition of the consciences of unregenerate people?

Ordinarily the consciences of unregenerate people are **asleep** and therefore need to be awakened or aroused.

3. How does the moral law serve to awaken the consciences of unsaved sinners?

The moral law declares that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness (Romans 1:18), and so their consciences are stirred up to be afraid of the judgment of God that will come upon them.

4. Does the moral law provide a way of escape from the wrath of God?

No. The moral law provides no way of escape. It only pronounces God's judgment on human sin. Because the law itself provides no way of escape from God's wrath, it serves to drive the sinner to Christ, who is the only way of escape.

5. Do all unsaved sinners have a knowledge of the moral law of God?

Yes. Not only those who have a knowledge of the Bible, but even those who are entirely ignorant of the Bible, including the heathen, have some knowledge of the moral law of God from God's natural revelation in the human heart.

6. Do all unsaved sinners have an **equal** knowledge of the moral law of God?

No. Those who have only the natural revelation of the moral law have but a very dim and incomplete knowledge of it, yet their knowledge is sufficient to leave them without excuse. Those who have the light of Scripture have a much greater and clearer knowledge of God's moral law.

7. Does the moral law of God awaken the conscience of **all** sinners, and drive them to Christ for salvation?

No. While it is true that all sinners have some knowledge of the moral law of God, yet there are many who never truly come to Christ for salvation.

8. Why does not the moral law drive all sinners to Christ for salvation?

The moral law **of itself alone** is powerless to drive any sinner to Christ for salvation. It is only when the knowledge of the moral law is **accompanied by the supernatural work of God the Holy Spirit** that the sinner is really driven to Christ. Acts 16:14.

9. Why does the Holy Spirit not open the hearts of **all** sinners so that **all** will come to Christ and be saved?

The Bible does not give the answer to this question, except to speak of the **sovereignty of God**, by which he elects and saves whom he will, for his own reasons which he has not revealed to us (Romans 9:15, 18). The Bible plainly teaches that God has chosen some to salvation, and that he saves those whom he has chosen. God's reasons for discriminating between men are among the secret things which he has not revealed to men.

10. What is the effect of the moral law in the case of sinners who never come to Christ?

The effect of the moral law in the case of sinners who never come to Christ is "to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof."

11. Is the moral law of any use to enable unregenerate people to live so as to please God?

No. Romans 8:8, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." The expression "they that are in the flesh" means the unregenerate, or those that have not been born again. Such people may learn from the moral law what their duty is, but they are dead in trespasses and sins and therefore they cannot please God. Their heart is not right with God, and everything they do is done with a wrong and sinful motive.

12. Is the moral law of any use to enable unregenerate people to earn their own salvation?

No. Romans 3:20. No sinner can possibly earn his salvation by his efforts to keep God's law. The harder a sinner tries to keep God's commandments the more he will realize that he is a **breaker** of the commandments and therefore a lost, helpless, needy sinner.

13. What is the place of the moral law of God in a Scriptural program of evangelism?

While the word "evangelism" means "proclamation of the gospel", we should realize that the gospel is meaningless without the law. **Gospel** means **good news**; that is, good news of **salvation from sin**; sin is **the transgression of the law**; without conviction of being transgressors of the law, people will feel no need of the gospel; without knowledge of the moral law of God, people will not feel themselves to be transgressors of the law. Therefore no program of evangelism is sound or Scriptural which does not emphasize sin as the transgression of God's moral law. Much present-day "evangelism" has but little to say about God's law, sin, and repentance; instead, the tendency is to speak only about "accepting Christ". A return to the old emphasis on God's law is urgently needed; without it, there cannot be a genuine revival of the Christian Faith.

LESSON 5

Motivation for Obeying the Law of God

Q. 97. What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate?

A. Although they that are regenerate, and believe in Christ, be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned; yet, besides the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use, to show them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead, and for their good; and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.

Scripture References:

Romans 6:14; 7:3-6. Galatians 4:4, 5. The regenerate are not under the law as a covenant of works.

Romans 3:20. Galatians 5:23. Romans 8:1. The regenerate are not justified by obedience to, nor condemned because of violation of, the moral law.

Romans 7:24, 25; 8:3, 4. Galatians 3:13, 14. The moral law shows the Christian how much he owes to Christ, who fulfilled the law's requirements for him, and bore its penalty on his behalf.

Luke 1:68, 69, 74, 75. The moral law incites the Christian to thankfulness to God for the redemption provided in Christ.

Romans 7:22; 12:2. Titus 2:11-14. The moral law is the Christian's standard of obedience, not in order to earn eternal life by obeying it, but in order to express his gratitude to God for the free gift of salvation.

Questions:

1. When a person is "born again", and becomes a Christian, how does his relation to the moral law change?

He is instantly and forever delivered from all useless labor of trying to save himself by obedience to the law, and also delivered from the condemning power of the law.

2. When did the Covenant of Works come to an end?

(a) As a way of earning eternal life for all mankind by human obedience to God's law, that is, by Adam's obedience as the representative of mankind, the Covenant of Works ended when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in Eden. (b) As the way of earning eternal life for the elect by obedience to God's law on the part of Christ, the divine-human Mediator and Second Adam, the Covenant of Works was incorporated into, and became a part of, the Covenant of Grace, and so is still in effect today. (c) In the case of those who have not yet come to Christ and received the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, they are still under the condemnation of the broken Covenant of Works, and such people often make a desperate and futile attempt to earn eternal life on the basis of the Covenant of Works, that is, by **personal** obedience to the moral law.

3. What term describes the type of religion which seeks to earn eternal life by personal obedience to the moral law?

Legalism, also called Moralism.

4. What sect of the Jews in the time of Christ was dominated by Legalism?

The Pharisees.

5. What is wrong with Legalism?

It is "too little, and too late." Too little, because God demands **perfect** obedience to the moral law, whereas the sinner renders a very imperfect obedience; too late, because the possibility of earning eternal life by law-obedience ceased in Eden ages ago.

6. Are modern Christians ever affected by Legalism?

It is sad but true that they often are. (a) Where the Bible teaching of **salvation by grace** is not known or understood, professing Christians are often completely legalistic, frankly trying to earn eternal life by good works. (b) Even those who really know and understand the Bible teaching of salvation by grace, often fall unconsciously into a legalistic way of thinking. A person may profess the **theology of grace**, and yet, without realizing the inconsistency, may be greatly influenced by a legalistic attitude or way of thinking about life and religion.

7. What is the remedy for Legalism?

(a) A realization of the utter failure and futility of Legalism. (b) A deeper understanding and personal experience of the Bible teaching of salvation by grace.

8. Should a Christian be afraid to commit sin?

Yes.

9. Should a Christian be afraid to commit sin because of the danger of eternal condemnation?

No. I John 4:18.

10. Then why should a Christian be afraid to commit sin?

Because it is right to fear that which is contrary to God's holiness, and which will offend God and hide the light of his countenance from us, even though in the case of the Christian it involves no danger of eternal condemnation.

11. How does the moral law enable the Christian to appreciate Christ?

The moral law enables the Christian to appreciate Christ by showing him how much he owes to Christ, that is, how much Christ has done for him in perfectly keeping the whole law and bearing its penalty on the Christian's behalf.

12. How does the moral law provoke the Christian to thankfulness?

The moral law provokes the Christian to thankfulness by giving him an appreciation of Christ's work and sufferings on his behalf.

13. Instead of thankfulness, what state of mind does a legalistic type of religion tend to produce?

A legalistic type of religion cannot lead to an attitude of real thankfulness to God, but on the contrary leads to a self-righteous spiritual pride.

14. How should a Christian express his thankfulness to God?

A Christian should express his thankfulness to God not only in words of prayer and praise, but also in taking care to live according to God's moral law as the rule of obedience.

15. Since the Bible teaches that the Christian is not under the law but under grace (Romans 6:14), how can he be under the moral law as the rule of obedience?

The Christian is freed from the **penalty** of the law, but not from the **precept** of the law as the standard of right living.

16. Prove from the Bible that the Christian is not freed from the **precept** of the moral law as the standard of right living.

(a) Scripture teaches that Christians may and do commit sin (I John 1:8; 2:1; James 5:16). But Scripture defines sin as "the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). Therefore Scripture teaches that Christians may and do **transgress the law**. Therefore Christians must be under the precept of the law, for otherwise they could not be said to transgress it. (b) In I Cor. 9:19-21 the apostle Paul expressly denies that he is "without law to God", and affirms on the contrary that he is "under the law to Christ". These words, of course, were written years after he became a Christian. Those modern Christians who claim that faith in Christ has set them free **from the precept of the moral law as the standard of right living** are claiming something that the apostle Paul did not venture to claim for himself, but rather emphatically disclaimed in the reference quoted above.

LESSON 6

The Ten Commandments a Summary of the Moral Law

Q. 98. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon Mount Sinai, and written by him in two tables of stone; and are re-

corded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The first four commandments containing our duty to God, and the other six our duty to man.

Scripture References:

Exodus 34:1-4. Deut. 10:4. The Ten Command-

ments divinely revealed and written by God on two tables of stone.

Matthew 22:37-40. The moral law summarized by Christ as requiring total love for God, and to love our neighbor as ourself.

Questions:

1. Where in the Bible are the Ten Commandments recorded?

Exodus 20:1-17. Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

2. Are the Ten Commandments a complete statement of the moral law of God?

The Ten Commandments are not a complete statement **in detail** of the moral law, but rather a **summary** of the moral law. Rightly interpreted, they include every moral duty enjoined by God. However the more detailed statements of God's will are needed for a right interpretation and application of the Ten Commandments. For example, the eighth commandment forbids stealing, but only by a study of other parts of the Bible can we learn what "stealing" includes and frame a correct definition of it.

3. How are the Ten Commandments commonly divided?

Following Christ's analysis of the moral law, the Ten Commandments are commonly divided into two "tables", the first four commandments containing our duty to God and the last six our duty to ourselves and to our fellow men.

4. Do not **all ten** of the Commandments deal with our duty to God?

Yes. We should not think that the last six commandments are simply a matter between ourselves and our fellow men. They too, are a matter of our duty to God. The true understanding of the matter is that the first four commandments concern the duty which we owe **directly** to God, while the last six concern the duty which we owe **indirectly** to God, that is, the duty which we owe to God in matters involving ourselves and our fellow men.

5. Why do the last six commandments concern our duty to **God** in connection with our fellow men?

Because God, not man, is the Lord of the

conscience. God is our Creator; to God we are morally responsible; by God we will be judged at the Last Day. It is only **because of our moral responsibility to God** that we owe any duties at all to our fellow men. If we ask why we should not steal or commit murder, the answer must be that to steal or commit murder would be a sin against God, because we are **responsible to God** for our conduct in the social sphere.

6. Are the two tables of the moral law equally important?

(a) So far as our obedience to the law is concerned, every one of the Ten Commandments is **absolutely** important, so that to break any one of them, whether of the first or the second table, is to transgress the whole moral law of God (James 2:10, 11). (b) But so far as the logical structure of the Ten Commandments is concerned, it is correct to say that the second table of the law is subordinate to the first table. That is to say, our moral responsibility to God is the basis of our duties to our fellow men. Thus Christ said that the "first and great commandment" is to love God, while to love our neighbor, though it is "like unto" the command to love God, none the less is "the second", that is, secondary or subordinate to the first.

7. What wrong views of the Ten Commandments are common today?

(a) The view that the Ten Commandments are a **code of human laws**, composed either by Moses or by other persons among the Jews. (b) The view that the Ten Commandments are **the product of human experience**, that is, that they are a summary of what people have found to be necessary for the general welfare of mankind. (c) The view that the Ten Commandments were **only of temporary significance**, having later been superseded by the so-called "law of love" in the New Testament, or by the evolutionary progress of the human race. All three of these views are wrong. The Ten Commandments are not a code of human laws, but a **code of divine laws**. They were not composed by Moses or any other human being, **but were spoken and written by God himself**. They were not of temporary validity, **but of permanent validity**, and until the end of the world they can never be changed, or superseded by any other laws or principles.

LESSON 7

A Perfect Law Requiring Perfect Obedience

Q. 99. What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments these rules are to be observed: 1. That the law is perfect, and bindeth every one to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteous-

ness thereof, and unto entire obedience for ever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.

Scripture References:

Psalm 19:7. God's law is perfect.

Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, 37-39, 43, 44. God's law requires absolute moral perfection, and cannot tolerate the slightest deviation from perfect and total righteousness.

Matthew 5:48. God's own perfection demands that man, his creature and image-bearer, be perfect.

Questions:

1. Why do we need rules for the right understanding of the Ten Commandments?

Because the Ten Commandments are not a complete application or detailed statement of the moral law, but only a comprehensive summary.

2. How many rules does the Catechism present for understanding the Ten Commandments?

Eight.

3. For what source are these eight rules derived?

From the Bible itself. The rules the Catechism presents are a formulation of the Bible's application of the moral law to particular problems and situations.

4. What is meant by saying that God's moral law is perfect?

This means that the moral law is a perfect revelation of God's will for man, and that we are bound to fulfill it perfectly.

5. What degree of conformity to righteousness does God's moral law require?

Full conformity; therefore partial conformity is worthless in God's sight.

6. What part of our nature is involved in God's requirement of obedience to his moral law?

The moral law binds "the whole man", that is, our **entire** nature, body and soul, including the state of our heart, as well as our thoughts, emotions, words and deeds.

7. How long will the moral law of God continue to be binding on human beings?

For ever; that is, both in this life and in the life to come. However, in the life to come the **specific form** of the revelation of God's moral law to man will no longer be the Ten Command-

ments, which are suited to our life in this present world, but a new and more direct revelation of God's will, suited to the life of eternity.

8. Wherein does God's moral law differ from all human laws?

Human laws, including all the laws of the various non-Christian religions, are satisfied with a partial, approximate and imperfect obedience, whereas God's law requires **absolute moral perfection** and cannot tolerate the slightest degree of any sin.

9. Does God's law, in demanding absolute moral perfection of human beings, demand what is impossible?

Yes. No person in the world can meet the demand of God's law for absolute moral perfection.

10. Is God unreasonable in demanding what is impossible for human being to attain or achieve?

No. As created by God, before the fall into sin, man could have attained absolute moral perfection. Man fell into sin by his own fault and thus moral perfection became impossible. But God could not lower the demands of his law to meet our sinful condition as members of a fallen race. God's law, being the expression of God's own character, is unchangeable. Since our inability to fulfill the law is our own fault, God cannot be expected to lower the demands of the moral law to fit our sinfulness, and there is nothing unreasonable in his demanding what is impossible for us to render.

11. Did any human being ever fulfill the moral law perfectly?

Yes. Jesus Christ lived a life of absolute moral perfection in this world for the entire period from his birth to his crucifixion. During this time he never broke any of God's commandments in the slightest degree in thought, word or deed, and he also perfectly fulfilled the whole positive side of the law, loving God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength, and loving his fellow man with a love second only to his love to his Heavenly Father. In our Lord Jesus Christ we see the absolute moral perfection required by the moral law, not in the abstract, but actually realized in a human life.

LESSON 8

God's Law Concerns Man's Total Personality

Q. 99 (Continued). What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments these rules are to be observed: 2. That it is **spiritual**, and so reacheth the under-

standing, will, affection, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.

Scripture References:

Romans 7:14. The moral law is spiritual in nature.

Deut. 6:5 compared with Matthew 22:37-39. The moral law requires conformity of all faculties of our mind or soul.

Questions:

1. What is the derivation or original meaning of the word "spirit" in the Bible?

The word "spirit" in our English Bible is the translation of a Hebrew word of the Old Testament and a Greek word of the New Testament, both of which primarily mean "wind."

2. Apart from the original meaning of "wind", what meaning does the word "spirit" have in the Bible?

The word "spirit" means a self-conscious, active, living being, which may be divine, angelic, demonic or human. God, the angels and the demons are **pure** spirits, having no material body. The human spirit is **normally** united with a material body to form a composite personality of spirit (or soul) and body. However the human spirit can live apart from a material body, as is the case between death and the resurrection at the Last Day.

3. What is the meaning of the adjective "spiritual" in the Bible?

The adjective "spiritual" in the Bible is **never** used in the popular modern sense of "religious" or "devotional". It is always used in the strict sense of **connected in some way with a spirit**. Almost always in the Bible the adjective "spiritual" means **connected with the Holy Spirit of God**. Thus in the Bible usage of the word, a "spiritual" man is not just a religious man, but a man in whom the Holy Spirit of God dwells.

4. What is the meaning of the word "spiritual" in Q. 99 of the Catechism?

In this question of the Catechism the word "spiritual" is used in the sense of "pertaining to the human spirit", or "concerning the spirit of man." Thus the Catechism asserts that the moral law of God is **spiritual**, that is, it concerns not only our outward conduct or actions, but our spiritual life, our thoughts and mental states, our emotions, desires and the resolutions of our will as well.

5. Are human laws "spiritual"?

No. Human laws, that is, laws enacted by the civil government, are not spiritual. They make no claim to govern the spiritual or mental life of the people. Human laws demand outward conformity of conduct only, not conformity of thoughts, desires, beliefs, emotions, etc. For example, the civil government can make a law requiring citizens to **pay** an income tax, but it has no right to require them to **believe** in the principle of the income tax, nor to pay it with joy and gladness. The civil government has no jurisdiction over men's mental and spiritual life, but

only over outward conduct. Under totalitarian governments the attempt has been made by the State to control people's thoughts, as in Japan where special police bureaus existed for the control of "dangerous thoughts"; but all such attempts are an iniquitous usurpation of the prerogatives of God, and are destructive of the liberties of men.

6. How did the Pharisees misunderstand the scope of the moral law of God?

They overlooked the spiritual character of the law, and wrongly supposed that it claimed jurisdiction only over their outward conduct. Because of this faulty and partial view of the nature of the moral law, the Pharisees could deceive themselves into thinking that they had attained moral perfection. By a scrupulous observance of the details of the law they thought they had conformed to all its requirements. What they lacked was not outward literal obedience to the precepts and prohibitions of the law, but inward spiritual conformity to its requirements. They cleansed the outside of the cup and platter, while inwardly they were full of wickedness; they worshipped God with their lips, while their heart was far from him.

7. What error concerning the moral law is just the opposite of that of the Pharisees?

Just the opposite of the Pharisees' error is the view held by some modern professing Christians who say that inward spiritual conformity to the law is all that is necessary, and we need not bother to conform our outward life and conduct to the literal requirements of the law. Such people say that if we have an attitude of love to God and our neighbor, we need not concern ourselves about such outward details as the literal observance of the sabbath. They fail to realize that our outward life is the expression of our inward spiritual life, and if the law of God is really engraved upon our hearts it must inevitably come to expression in our outward life and conduct.

8. What is meant by saying that the moral law concerns **the understanding**?

This means that our intellect is subject to the moral law of God, and it is a sin to believe what is false, to reject what is true, or to have our thinking blinded or warped by prejudice. We are responsible for our thinking just as we are for our actions.

9. What is meant by affirming that the moral law concerns **the will**?

This means that our power to make decisions or choices is subject to the moral law of God, and it is a sin to make a choice contrary to the law of God, to fail to make a choice which is according to the law of God, or to be actuated in our decisions by wrong, sinful motives.

10. What is meant by the statement that the moral law concerns **the affections**?

By "the affections" the Catechism means what are commonly called "emotions" today, such as love, hatred, anger, joy, sorrow. These emotions are subject to the moral law of God, so that to have wrong feelings, or emotions contrary to the requirements of the law, is sinful.

11. What are the "other powers of the soul" to which the Catechism refers?

Possibly the reference is to the **memory** and also to the **artistic sense** which includes the capacity for producing or appreciating beautiful music, pictures, poetry, literature, etc. All these capacities of the human spirit are strictly subject to the moral law of God.

12. In addition to our inward or spiritual life, what activities of human life does the moral law concern?

Our words, works and gestures. That is to say, the moral law concerns every possible way by which our inward or spiritual life finds expression in the external world which is around us. It concerns every possible relation of our spirit to our environment. There is nothing we can possibly do, whether in our inward spiritual life or in our outward conduct, which is not subject to the moral law of God. Truly, God's commandment is exceeding broad (Psalm 119:96).

LESSON 9

The Inclusive Scope of the Law of God

Q. 99 (Continued). What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments these rules are to be observed: **3. That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments. 4. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden: and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded: so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included; and, where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included.**

Scriptures References:

Col. 3:5. Covetousness is idolatry, hence forbidden in two commandments.

Amos 8:5. The same sinful desire violated both the fourth and the eighth commandment.

Prov. 1:19. The same sin may involve both covetousness and murder.

I Tim. 6:10. The love of money also involves many other kinds of sin.

Isaiah 58:13. Negative and positive aspects of sabbath observance.

Deut. 6:13 with Matt 4:9, 10. Positive and negative aspects of fearing God.

Matt. 15:4-6. Positive and negative aspects of the fifth commandment.

Questions:

1. May the same duty be required in more than one of the Ten Commandments?

Yes. For example, "six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work" is a part of the fourth commandment, relating to the sabbath; but the eighth commandment, which forbids stealing, also requires a person to work for

his living, for the person who lives without working is really stealing his living from someone else.

2. May the same sin be forbidden by more than one of the Ten Commandments?

Yes. For example, to bear false witness in a murder trial, resulting in the death of an innocent person, is a violation of both the sixth and the ninth commandment ("Thou shalt not kill"; "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.")

3. What is the reason why the various commandments overlap in this way?

Because **human life is complex, and** every fact of our life is related in some way to all the other facts of our life. Consequently when we look at the facts of our life from the standpoint of God's moral law, we realize that any one fact of our life may be related, in some way or other, to several of the Ten Commandments.

4. Do the Ten Commandments ever contradict each other, so that what is forbidden by one commandment is required by another?

No. Because God is the Author of all, and they are the expression of one moral law, the Ten Commandments form a harmonious whole. There can be no real contradiction between any of them. If there seem to be contradictions, we may be sure that there is an error in our interpretation of them somewhere. For example the young man who told his pastor that obedience to the fifth commandment required him to break the fourth commandment (because to honor his father and mother, he must comply with their wishes, and to comply with their wishes he must stay home from church to attend a wedding on the sabbath day) was mistaken in his interpretation of the fifth commandment. For the command to honor our father and mother requires obedience to parents "in the Lord", that is, in matters not contrary to the law of God. The

fifth commandment does not require a person to obey his parents by disobeying a command of God.

5. What is the teaching of the Catechism concerning positive and negative aspects of the Ten Commandments?

The Catechism teaches that in the Ten Commandments, positive and negative elements imply each other, even though only one or the other is expressly stated. Where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden; where a sin is forbidden, it is implied that the contrary duty is commanded; and the same principle applies to the matter of threatenings and promises.

6. What do we mean by the negative aspect of the Ten Commandments?

Their prohibition of transgression of the law of God, or doing something which God has forbidden.

7. What do we mean by the positive aspect of the Ten Commandments?

Their requirement of conformity to the law of God, that is, doing whatever God requires.

8. In the form in which the Ten Commandments are stated, which of these aspects is the more prominent?

The negative aspect is the more prominent, as eight of the Ten Commandments begin with the expression "Thou shalt not" or similar words. Eight of the Ten Commandments are **negative in form**, whereas only two are **positive in form** (the fourth and fifth).

9. Does this negative emphasis in the form of the commandments mean that God's moral law is negative rather than positive?

No. While the **form** of the Ten Commandments is largely negative, the meaning, as properly interpreted by the Catechism, is both negative and positive, with an equal emphasis on both. This interpretation is warranted by comparing the Ten Commandments with Christ's summary of the moral law as requiring us to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength; this is positive in form.

10. Which of the commandments contain threatenings and promises?

The second and third contain threatenings; the fifth contains a promise. In each case, if we interpret the commandments aright, we will realize that **both** threatening and promise are involved.

LESSON 10

Right and Wrong Differ Absolutely

Q. 99. (Continued). What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments these rules are to be observed: 5. That what God forbids, is at no time to be done; what he commands, is always our duty; and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times. 6. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.

Scripture References:

Job 13:7, 8. We may not do what God forbids, even for a "good" purpose.

Rom. 3:8. The notion of doing evil that good may come is perverse.

Job 36:21. Heb. 11:25. We should choose rather to suffer than to commit sin.

Deut. 4:8, 9. What God commands is always our duty.

Matt. 12:7. Sometimes one duty has priority over another, as mercy over sacrifice.

Eccl. 3:1-8. Every particular duty is not to be done at all times.

Matt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28. Under one sin or duty all of the same kind are included.

Matt. 15:4-6. The command to honor parents, and the prohibition of cursing parents, is rightly understood to include the duty of providing for the support of parents if they are in need.

Heb. 10:24, 25. The duty of provoking one another to love and to good works implies that it is wrong for Christian people to forsake assembling themselves together, that is, to be neglectful of the regular services of their own Church.

I Thess. 5:22. The Christian must abstain from every form in which evil appears.

Jude 23. The Christian is to hate, and abstain from, even the slightest involvement in wickedness.

Gal. 5:26. The Christian must abstain from provoking and envying other Christians, and also from **the desire for vain-glory**, which is the cause of provoking and envying.

Col. 3:21. Fathers should not provoke their children (by unreasonable requirements) lest the children fall into the sins of anger and discouragement; God forbids not only these sins, but the provocations thereunto.

Questions:

1. What great principle of ethics does the Catechism lay down concerning what God forbids?

That what God forbids, is at no time to be done.

2. What popular notion contradicts this great principle?

This great principle is contradicted by the popular notion that **whether something is right or wrong depends on the purpose for which it is done**. According to this popular notion, it may be right to do something which God forbids, provided we do it for a good purpose. For example, it may be right to tell a lie to save some person's life; or to gain money by gambling in order to donate it to foreign missions; or to maintain a gambling scheme in order to raise money to support the Church.

3. Is this popular notion a new idea?

No. It is really extremely ancient, and was known in the days of the apostle Paul, who undertook to expose its unsoundness in his epistles (Romans 3:8).

4. Why is this notion that "the end justifies the means" perverse?

This notion is perverse because it breaks down the distinction between right and wrong. To say "Let us do evil that good may come" amounts to saying "Let us do right by doing wrong". Such a notion implies that there is no real difference between right and wrong; black and white are mixed into some shade of gray. Throughout the whole Bible the distinction between right and wrong is represented as an **absolute** one. There is simply no such thing as doing wrong without committing sin, or committing sin without doing wrong.

5. Why is this perverse notion popular at the present day?

Partly, no doubt, because it naturally appears to our sinful human hearts, and is a very convenient and easy doctrine to live by; and partly because the modern world is dominated by a non-Christian philosophy which teaches that right and wrong are not absolute matters, but changing all the time, so that what is right today may be wrong 100 years from now, and vice versa.

6. What is the importance of the principle that what God commands is always our duty?

This implies that we are **always** under the moral government of God, and responsible to him for the state of our hearts and for all our thoughts, words and deeds; we can never take a vacation from our duty to God; all our life long, every moment, we have a moral obligation to God.

7. Why is not every particular duty to be done at all times?

It would of course be not only impossible but absurd to attempt to do every particular duty at all times. God's law, while it does present an ideal so high that we cannot attain it in this present life, still does not present an **absurdity**. Some duties are specifically limited to certain times, as for example sabbath observance. But even the duties that are not so limited are not to be done all at once. We are to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, but not both at the same time.

8. According to the Catechism, what are included under each sin or duty mentioned in the Ten Commandments?

Under each sin or duty are included **all others of the same class**. For example, the ninth commandment forbids bearing false witness against our neighbor. While this commandment specifically mentions only this one form of untruthfulness, it is rightly understood to prohibit **all** forms of untruthfulness. For from other parts of the Bible we learn that **all** liars shall have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8; 22:15). That is to say, the Ten Commandments are not to be taken alone, as if they stood by themselves, but must be taken in their context of the whole Bible, and we must take the entire Word of God into account in deciding the true and proper meaning of the Ten Commandments.

9. Why is it correct to say that the causes, means, occasions, appearances and provocations of or to any sin or duty are included in the meaning of the Ten Commandments?

Because God's law is spiritual, and involves thoughts, motives and intents of the heart as well as outward conduct; and because any particular act in our outward life is not something isolated, by itself, but the product of a complex chain of events and motives. Thus the commandment which forbids the sin of **murder** is interpreted by Jesus as forbidding the sin of **hatred** which is a cause of murder. And the commandment which forbids adultery is interpreted by Jesus as forbidding the sin of lust which leads to adultery.

10. What danger must we guard against in applying these rules of interpretations to the Ten Commandments?

In saying that a certain commandment includes something else, which is not specifically mentioned in that commandment, we must take the greatest care to make sure that we are not reading our own thoughts, preferences or prejudices into the Ten Commandments. We must take the greatest care that whatever we say is included in a certain commandment is really based on the teaching of God's Word and is not just our own human idea or opinion. For example, it has been claimed that the sixth commandment forbids

capital punishment and defensive warfare, but a study of the Bible as a whole shows that such an interpretation is not legitimate. It has been claimed that the second commandment forbids honoring the national flag of our country, but this claim is based on a failure to discriminate between religious worship and civil allegiance.

Similarly to claim that the sixth commandment forbids eating meat, and requires a vegetarian diet, is entirely unwarranted; the person who makes such a claim is merely reading his own prejudices into the Ten Commandments.

(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.

MAN MAKES HIMSELF, by V. Gordon Childe. Mentor Paperback No. 384, published by New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 501 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y. 1962, reprint of 1951. 60 cents.

V. Gordon Childe, who died about five years ago, was an archaeologist and prehistorian of world-wide reputation. So far as can be discerned from his published writings, he was without religious faith in the ordinary sense, and his basic philosophy of history, which formed the framework of his studies in archaeology and prehistory, was a dogmatically assumed scheme of materialistic evolution.

The very title of the book under consideration, "Man Makes Himself," is offensive to Christian faith, which regards man as a creature of God, created in the divine image, not a self-made or naturally developed being.

God is completely left out of author Childe's consideration. According to his view, man is his own creator. Organic evolution is assumed and God is omitted. Repeatedly an evolutionistic and naturalistic origin of religion from primitive magic is suggested. On page 89 the Creation account of the first chapter of Genesis in the Bible is treated as a pagan Sumerian "tradition."

The viewpoint of this book is diametrically opposed to the view of early and primitive man which is taught in the Bible. It is irreconcilable with the teaching of the Bible, and is an example of the pagan, unbelieving philosophy of our day. It leaves no room for the concept of man as created in the divine image, nor for the fall of the human race into sin by a deliberate act of moral revolt against its Creator.

Author Childe was outstanding in his grasp of the data of prehistory, but it is all vitiated by the fact that he views everything in a materialistic, evolutionistic framework. There are many

matters of detail in this book, as in other books by the same author, which are worthy of our attention and which help to explain some features of the world we live in. But if God, creation, providence, the supernatural and redemption must all be scrapped in order that we may get some glimpses of prehistoric man, the price is too high to pay. Christian young people should be warned against this book and others of the same type which they may encounter in high school or college courses.

— J. G. Vos

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR, by John Bunyan. Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Pa. 1962 reprint of 1674. pp. 111. \$1.50.

As indicated on the front of this reprint, another title for this work might be **Christian Behavior for Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, and Backsliders**. The style of writing may seem a bit "old-fashioned" but the subject matter is pertinent to the Christians of any century.

The author bases his work particularly on Titus 3:7, 8. He then presents his material under four observations: 1) That good works do flow from faith, 2) That every one that believeth should be careful that their works be good, 3) That every believer should not only be careful that their works be good and for the present do them, but should also be careful to maintain them, 4) That the best way to provoke both ourselves and others to this work, it is to be often affirming to others the doctrine of justification by grace, and to believe it ourselves.

More than two-thirds of the book is concerned with the second of the four observations. In this section, he addresses himself at some length to the various groups listed in the longer title, outlining his understanding of scripture teaching concerning these groups.

There is a problem, however, in the section relating to backsliders, where the author says, "Remember that though God doth sometimes, yea, often, receive backsliders, yet it is not always so. Some draw back unto perdition; for, because they have flung up God, and would none of him, he in justice flings up them and their souls for ever."

There is a minor annoyance caused by the random appearance of the footnotes, which are mainly scripture references. The publisher explains that this was necessary because of photo-printing from a very different edition. The only alternative was to abandon the footnotes as it was not possible to have them appear in their customary position at the bottom of the page.

— Doris Jean Mitchell

TILLICH (International Library of Philosophy and Theology) by David Freeman. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1962, pp. 42. \$1.25.

This is another of the series of critical Monographs written by Reformed scholars, analyzing contemporary theologians. Someone has said that Paul Tillich's theology is like the peace of God. . . it passes understanding. David Freeman has done an intelligible and capable job of analyzing Paul Tillich's view of God and the "New Being." Freeman demonstrates that Tillich's view of God corrupts his whole system.

One wonders however whether Freeman has really attempted to understand Tillich for what he is, before he proceeds to analyze. This reviewer agrees with the conclusions of this monograph, and the need for a forthright criticism. But if the Reformed faith is to speak to this modern, secular world, our criticism must be accompanied with an attempt to appreciate the why and how of these divergent theological systems.

Those interested in contemporary theology will want first to read Tillich, and then to read Freeman's able analysis of his "theology".

— John H. White

BREAD FOR EACH DAY, 365 DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS, by M. R. De Haan and Henry G. Bosch. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1962, not paginated. (365 pages). \$3.00.

Daily devotional readings should never be a substitute for individual and family Bible study and meditation. The authors, aware of the Christian's need of the Word of God as well as of bread, recommend the reading of a sizeable portion of Scripture along with these meditations. As for the time, right after the evening meal, when the family is all together, seems a very good time for unhurried devotions. As a family we are finding challenge, comfort, and inspiration in these pages. The illustrations sometimes contain

a touch of humor, and there is always the dignity of a serious summons to deeper Christian experience.

The authors are associated together in the conduct of the popular Radio Bible Class, which is broadcast over both national and international networks.

— Joseph A. Hill

A PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FAITH, by William Stringfellow. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1962, pp. 93. \$3.00.

Karl Barth on his visit to America described the author as "the conscientious and thoughtful New York attorney who caught my attention more than any other person." A prominent Episcopal layman, William Stringfellow has made frequent contributions to theological journals as well as those of his own legal profession.

In this volume he exposes a number of evils in present day Protestantism and pleads for a relevant and honest witness to Christ in both private and public affairs. He views the current religious revival as a symptom of the decadence of the church, which he thinks is more concerned with maintaining itself than with its true mission in the world. He deplores the contemporary emphasis on mere religion practiced for its own sake, and declares that "the religion prevalent in much of American Protestantism is essentially agnostic." He laments that the congregation, instead of the marketplace, is the field of evangelism, whereas it ought to be "the gathering of those who are evangelized for the celebration of the Word of God, namely, worship." Both clergy and laity are enlisted in "the tasks of preserving and protecting and administering the ecclesiastical entity of the congregation." The church's evangelistic mission has thus become internalized and self-centered, whereas, ideally, "the Body of Christ lives in the world on behalf of the world, in intercession for the world."

The church's mission in the world is described by the author — here his Episcopal slant is evident — as a priestly service. In connection with the ministry of the priesthood, the author pleads for a return to biblical preaching, so that the congregation which is dispersed in society may carry on a ministry of the Word in their diversified vocations and occupations in the world. Realizing that Christians are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, he says, "The Christian social witness is achieved only insofar as Christians are deeply implicated in the real life of society — in unions and political clubs and citizen groups and the like; it is not made by Christian people gathering off by themselves in a parish house to study and discuss social issues. Witness becomes possible only when the Christian is on the actual scene where the conflict is taking place, the decision is being made, the legislation is being enacted."

The church is summoned to constant reformation under the Word of God and must, to that end, submit to self-examination and self-judgment. The author, with prophetic discernment and courage, furnishes direction for this task.

— Joseph A. Hill

THE REFORMATION: A REDISCOVERY OF GRACE, by William Childs Robinson. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1962. pp. 189. \$5.00.

A preacher who has preached on a particular text sometimes finds it difficult to listen objectively to another preacher's sermon on the same text. Having seen the text from his own angle, he finds it more difficult to approach it from another direction. To some extent that is your reviewer's difficulty with this book. Having done some research into the Reformation as Rediscovery, he comes to Professor Robinson's book with a certain amount of bias. But now that that bias has been declared, let it be said that this study of the Reformation by the Professor of Church History and Polity in Columbia Theological Seminary is a very thorough and valuable piece of work. Incidentally, to describe Dr. Robinson thus by his title rather than by his name is to follow his own example, which this reviewer at times found a little irritating. Thus on p. 19 Professor Rudolf Bultmann is described as "the leader of demythology" before his name is given in the next sentence; and on p. 55 one has to be wide awake to realize that "Ulrich" in one sentence is the "Zwingli" of the previous sentence, now called in the friendliest way by his Christian name! All through, the style of writing is a little slipshod, as is perhaps inevitable with a book which was originally delivered as lectures. Would Luther really have said to his students, "The chips are down" (p. 72)? And what is meant by "The Pharisees murmured: This man receives sinners and eats with them the eschatological meal" (p. 63)?

Professor Robinson's outline of his work in the Preface is excellent, though one wonders if the place of the Word in the Reformation should not have been considered earlier than in the chapter before the last: the Reformation was essentially a rediscovery of the Word of God, and every other rediscovery that it made stemmed from that. Professor Robinson's stress on the importance of the Word for the Reformation is unmistakable: his description of it as "trustworthy for faith and authoritative for obedience" (p. 143) is a memorable statement of its relevance. But this section should have come earlier. The Word, indeed, is referred to long before chapter VI — for example, on p. 22 — and it does seem that Professor Robinson has some difficulty in keeping within the outline which he has planned for himself. Thus the description of Calvin's use of the Word on p. 125 repeats and elaborates what has already been said in the previous chapter,

on p. 98; and the discussion of the Word and the Spirit on p. 127 has been anticipated on p. 112. Justification is dealt with quite fully in Chapter I and Chapter V as well as in the chapter which purports to deal with it. No doubt it is impossible to keep the doctrines of the Reformation in water-tight compartments, but careful editing might have avoided some of the overlapping.

Professor Robinson has obviously read very widely: sometimes, one feels, he could have made his points more compellingly by more quotation from the Reformers themselves than from contemporary students of the Reformation. In his discussion of the unity of the Church, for example, (pp. 180ff), he might have added to his quotation from Calvin's "Reply to Sadoletto" the crucial sentence, "My conscience told me how strong the zeal was with which I burned for the unity of thy Church, provided thy truth was made the bond of concord."

There is an excellent section on the priesthood of all believers. One notes with approval Professor Robinson's statement that "the clergy-laity distinction does not accord with the New Testament (I Peter 2:9, 5:3), or with the Reformation. Whether or not a believer has an office in the Church, he is a king and a priest before God. The one undivided Christian people is the royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice unto God." (p. 162). And he warns against "a creeping clericalism that is not limited to the Church of Rome."

The ending of the book is something of an anti-climax. Discipline, and its purpose of restoration, occupied an important place in the Reformation, but to end a careful study of the doctrines of the Reformation with a plea for a more enlightened use of discipline seems to miss the main point.

This book provides much valuable material for the student of the Reformation, and rightly stresses the truth that the Reformation was essentially the rediscovery of Biblical truth: it is a good book, and it so easily might have been an excellent one.

— Hugh J. Blair

INTRODUCING THE PRAYER CELL, by Robert E. Coleman. Sixth edition. Christian Outreach, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. 1960. pp. 32, paper cover. 35 cents.

This "Guide to One of the Great Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life" calls the people of God to a deeper prayerfulness, and gives much practical advice on group prayer. While a few expressions such as "Let God have His way," and "Give God an opportunity" grate a little on the reader who believes in the absolute sovereignty of God, the teaching of this little booklet on the practice of prayer is most salutary and challenging. It could be used to bring new life into

a jaded congregational prayer meeting, as well as stimulating united prayer in less formal settings. "If only the people of God would live in the spirit of prayer, life would be quickened, miracles would happen, souls would be saved, and the Church would be revived."

— Hugh J. Blair

GUILT, GRACE, AND GRATITUDE, A Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, edited by Donald J. Bruggink. The Half Moon Press, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York. 1963, pp. 226. \$3.50.

The 400th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism was marked by the Reformed Church in America by the publication of this commentary, which does ample justice to a Catechism which Philip Schaff described as "an acknowledged masterpiece, with few to equal and none to surpass it."

The Heidelberg Catechism has certain unique features; it is a book of instruction, but it is also a handbook for preaching — the 129 questions and answers are arranged in 52 "Lord's Days"; this means that biblical truth is systematically expounded in the services of the Reformed churches which use this manual of doctrine. The Catechism starts from the situation of man as a sinner, showing what this situation really is in the light of the divine command of love to God and love to one's neighbour; and then goes on in the second section to declare the need of a Mediator Who is both God and man to make satisfaction for sins. It insists that not all men, but "only those who by true faith are incorporated into Him and accept all His benefits" are saved through Christ. The discussion of the essence of true faith then leads to an exposition of the Apostles' Creed and the Sacraments. The third section, dealing with Thankfulness, expounds the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. The placing of the Ten Commandments in this section is significant: the commandments are taken as the rule for the new life of the believer, as the primary manifestation of the thankfulness which is our response to the grace of God. The Catechism does not deny what is called "the pedagogical function of the law," that is, its purpose to expose man's sin, break down his defences and so lead him to Christ. But for this function of the law it presents not the Ten Commandments but Christ's summary of the law as love to God and love to one's neighbour (question 3). The discussion of the Decalogue is reserved for this third section of the Catechism. It is here that the reviewer found the most outstanding contribution of the commentary. Pp. 194ff provide an excellent discussion of the law, its relation to the gospel and its place in the life of the Christian. Its standpoint can be seen from the propositions which are laid down: "The concept of the law in the Old Testament is not legalistic; for Hebrew law is covenant law." "Jesus' apparent freedom over against the law was not a

declaration of independence from the law as such, but was a rejection of the rabbinic interpretation of the law." "The Apostle Paul completely rejects the law as a means to salvation (something it was never intended to be); but he clearly affirms the continuing validity of the law for the Christian." "The Christian cannot dispense with the law, either in its fundamental principles or in its concrete commandments. The New Testament reaffirms the validity of the law in general and the Ten Commandments in particular." "The nature and scope of the Decalog is such that it provides the basis for all consequent ethical instruction." "God's will, as revealed in the law, can be concretely and creatively applied only by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit." Here is truly biblical teaching which is an effective antidote to the dispensationalism which makes havoc of the unity of the Bible.

This is not the place to discuss the line of approach of the Catechism. The writer of the opening chapter gives an able defence of its order, beginning with the experience of the Christian — "Here is simply the story of every man who knows himself redeemed in Christ, the frank recognition of his starting point, the clear description of his rescue, the unmistakable indication of his new direction" (p. 11) — and its insistence that the important question is "What benefit do you receive. . .?" But it might be asked if there is not a danger that this approach might tend to make our theology man-centred rather than God-centred, and pragmatic rather than objective. That this danger is so carefully avoided is a tribute both to the Heidelberg Catechism and the writers of this excellent commentary. And the question keeps coming insistently to mind, "Are there scholars in the churches which hold to the Westminster standards who could provide us with a similarly attractive and compelling presentation of Biblical truth based on the Shorter Catechism?"

— Hugh J. Blair

ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS, by F. F. Bruce. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1963, pp. 254. \$3.95 (British readers may note that this book is published in Britain by The Paternoster Press at 16s.).

The title of this book is amply justified. Professor Bruce gives an excellent sketch of the history of Israel from the Exodus to the Fall of the Second Temple from the standpoint of the nation's relationship with its almost forgotten neighbours. The book travels at a breath-taking pace, and yet a great deal of scholarly information is included, sometimes thrown in almost casually — a few lines on p. 16, for example, indicate the relationship of Mosaic legislation to other ancient Near Eastern law-codes. Perhaps occasionally the account is too hurried and the uninformed reader is tantalized by references which leave him still uninformed — for example, the state-

ment on p. 173: "As a result of a plot against Antigonus, Aristobulus unintentionally gave orders for his death" — but the ground covered is so vast that detailed description and discussion are impossible.

Of great value are the links between O. T. history and the O. T. prophets, particularly in chapters VI to XI, and there is an excellent section on the Decline and Fall of the Northern Kingdom. Brief comments on the meaning of Scripture passages are often illuminating: one notes the paraphrase of Isaiah's picture, "like a lodge in a garden of cucumbers" — "like a toolshed in an abandoned allotment" (though American readers might need a definition of an allotment — a small rented garden plot!). The dry humour of "Solomon's horses were better housed than many of his subjects" is refreshing, as is Bruce's quotation of another scholar's assessment of the policy of Cyrus: "The Great King had no objection to bowing down in the House of Rimmon if there was anything to be picked up on the floor."

But there are some things in this book which a conservative reader must find disturbing. Professor Bruce has often been praised by "liberal" writers for his fair-mindedness in dealing with points of view different from his own: there are some things here which suggest that he has gone considerably beyond fair-mindedness towards acceptance of "liberal" higher criticism. On p. 97, for example, he quotes, without comment, from Dom Gregory Dix, "Deutero-Isaiah, who saw in Cyrus God's Shepherd of the nations. . . ." Does this mean that Professor Bruce is prepared to accept the view that the latter part of Isaiah was not by Isaiah the Son of Amoz? Professor Bruce's own words on p. 108, dealing with the career of Ezra, are more disturbing: ". . . the Pentateuch in its final recension, more or less in the form familiar to us." Does this mean that he does not consider Moses to be the author of the Pentateuch as we have it in the Bible today? In his whole discussion of Ezra and Nehemiah Professor Bruce seems inclined to listen more than one might have expected to views of Ezra's date which do not seem to be in accord with the statements of Scripture (footnote on p. 110). A footnote on p. 141 — "I Maccabees (1:16-19) records only Antiochus' first invasion of Egypt, making no reference to the second; II Maccabees (r. 1) records only the second, but calls it the second; Daniel records both the first (11: 25-27) and the second (11: 29f.)." — seems to imply that Daniel chapter 11 contains not prophetic prediction of future events but contemporary recording of current events. One would not like to think that a distinguished evangelical scholar like Professor Bruce is falling under the spell of "liberal" higher criticism.

— Hugh J. Blair

THE PROPHETS AND THE PROMISE, by Willis Judson Beecher. Baker Book House, Grand

Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, reprint of 1905, pp. 427. \$3.95.

This book is a reprint of a book first published in 1905. Its main thesis is that when God called Abraham, He announced a promise given through him to the human race; that the promise was renewed with David, and preached by all the prophets; that it began to be fulfilled directly after it was made, and has been in process of fulfilment ever since; that its greatest fulfilment is in the person and work of Jesus Christ; that it will never cease being in process of fulfilment; is in the person and work of Jesus Christ; that it will never cease being in process of fulfilment; and that this promise-doctrine is the sum of what the prophets teach in the Scriptures. The author maintains that the promise is one, though branching out into specific promises, and that it finds its culminating fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

The import and value of Beecher's thesis can perhaps be seen most clearly by considering the well-known problem presented by the passages dealing with the Suffering Servant in Isaiah. Is the Servant to be taken as Israel, either actual or ideal? Or is the Servant a representative Israelite, prefiguring Christ? There are passages which support each of these views, and the truth seems to be, as Professor H. H. Rowley has said, that the conception retains a certain fluidity between the thought of Israel as the Servant and the thought of an individual Servant *par excellence*. On Beecher's view, the conflict between the two interpretations does not arise. "The prophet was dealing with what he regarded as the eternally operative promise of Yahaweh (sic). He is speaking constantly of the future of Israel the Servant, though of course not to the exclusion of the past or the present. He holds that the promise has been fulfilling in the past, is at present in process of fulfilment, and will continue to be fulfilled in the future, without limit of time. . . . It follows that there is no contradiction between the statement that the Servant is Israel and the statement that the servant is Jesus Christ, provided Jesus Christ is the most significant fact in the history of Israel as the people of the promise; and this Christianity claims that he is."

Beecher supports his thesis with a careful study of the nature and functions of the prophets, and a careful examination of the promise as given to the patriarchs, renewed to Israel and to David, and as proclaimed in the prophets and the psalmists, and in every instance he goes carefully into the exact meaning of words and passages. If at times he is too dogmatic, as when, for example, he appears to suggest that there was nothing ecstatic about the prophets (p. 75); and if, again, he is occasionally too tolerant of some of the views of the higher critics, maintaining that questions of date, etc., do not affect his argument; and if, in the last chapter, he goes much too far in claiming a fulfilment of the promise in Islam as well as in the religion of Israel and in Christianity, yet in this thoughtful study he has given us

a thread of unity running through Scripture — the thread of the Divine Promise which finds its ultimate fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

— Hugh J. Blair

PROPHECY IN THE SPACE AGE, by A. Skevington Wood. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1963, pp. 159. \$2.50.

This book on prophecy, by a distinguished English Methodist scholar, who has made several notable contributions to the study of the Reformation, is written from an unwaveringly pre-millennial point of view. The author looks for a literal fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham that his seed would possess the land of Canaan, sees in Ezekiel 37 more than a return from the Babylonian exile or a picture of the soul's conversion and the Church's renewal, and takes the river of blessing in Ezekiel as a literal stream that in the millenium will bring fruitfulness and blessing to the land of Israel. It seems to your reviewer that he accepts the pre-millennial interpretation of the Last Things without due consideration of the alternatives; where he does state alternative interpretations, as he does, for example, in considering the meaning of Ezekiel's prophecies, it is only to reject them, more or less dogmatically, but always in a spirit of Christian charity.

But fortunately the value of a great deal that is in this book does not depend on acceptance of the pre-millennial standpoint. Dr. Wood's exposition of verses and passages of Scripture is careful and presented most attractively, and always he is concerned to drive home the urgent message of the gospel. A chapter on the appearances of Christ referred to in Hebrews 9. 23-28, for example, gives us expository preaching at its best. In v. 26 the reference is to our Lord's **initial appearance on earth**. It tells us that He has come. In v. 24 the reference is to our Lord's **continuing appearance in heaven**. It tells us that He is come. It speaks of His Ascension and intercession. In v. 28 the reference is to our **Lord's final appearance in glory**. It tells us that He will come. Dr. Wood deals carefully and accurately with each of the three different Greek words used to describe these three appearances, and gives a most satisfying and gripping exposition of the passage. This careful exegesis is characteristic of the whole book in dealing with the explicit statements of Scripture.

The final chapter on 'The Purifying Hope' has a message for every Christian, whatever his views on the millenium; "All of us who hold to the hope of the Lord's return should examine ourselves to see what it is doing to our lives. There is no merit in being specialists in prophecy unless we are specialists in sanctity, for without holiness no man will even see the Lord when He comes to make up His jewels. Our enthusiasm for the prospect of Christ's appearing is proved

spurious unless it issues in purity of character. Let no one claim to cherish the blessed hope who is not leading the blessed life."

— Hugh J. Blair

FACING THE UNFINISHED TASK, compiled by J. O. Percy. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1961, pp. 281. \$4.50.

This thrilling and challenging book contains the messages delivered at the Congress on World Missions, sponsored by the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association of North America. 500 missionaries met for a week at the end of 1960 to consider anew the challenge of a world in desperate spiritual need. Five forums considered the problems presented by the situation in Africa, West Asia, Europe, East Asia and Latin America. Addresses given by men who have given outstanding service to the missionary cause at home and abroad faced the challenge unflinchingly and put the responsibility squarely where it belongs — on the whole church. Titles of addresses like, "What Does God Expect of Us?", "World Missions: Total War", "The Answer Is At Home", "The Cross, the Enemies, and the Open Doors", indicate the nature of the challenge which must be faced.

Of special interest are two addresses by John F. Walvoord, President of the Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas, on "The Theological Basis for Foreign Missions," and "Foreign Missions in Relation to the Second Coming of Christ." In both of these a careful study of relevant Scripture passages is the foundation of the argument, which is presented with Biblical authority. An address by Charles J. Woodbridge on "The Evangelical Answer to Ecumenicism" sets Christian Unity in its proper perspective. "The genesis of our unity is the Spirit of God who baptises believers into one body . . . The nature of this spiritual unity has its focus in the absolute, sovereign, exclusive headship of Jesus Christ over His Body, the Church . . . The basis of our unity is an absolute, unswerving, undiluted uncompromising loyalty to the everlasting, final, authoritative, inerrant Word of the living God. . . . The impetus of our unity is a driving, soul-consuming passion for the souls of the lost around the world."

This is a book not only for those who have a particular interest in foreign mission work but for every Christian. For, as Dr. Walvoord declares, "The Christian point of view and the Biblical point of view as far as foreign missions is concerned is not that there are a few that are designated to go to the foreign field and everybody else is designated to stay home, but it is rather that every Christian is designated to be a missionary. Perhaps they serve in different functions and different places, but all are called alike to recognise that they are debtors because of God's gift of grace and salvation to them through the cross of Christ."

— Hugh J. Blair

WOMEN WHO MADE BIBLE HISTORY, by Harold J. Ockenga. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, 1962. pp. 240. \$3.50.

We have come to expect thought-provoking stimulating practical and spiritual messages from the pen of Harold Ockenga, pastor of Park Street Church, Boston, and President of Fuller Theological Seminary. This volume is no exception, and the author has selected 20 notable women of the Bible for his series of studies; — thirteen from the Old Testament and seven from the New.

The volume is not original, as some of the sketches appeared in *The Gospel Herald*, and some in a previous volume, *Have You Met These Women?*, published by Zondervan in 1940.

The character sketches summarise the lives and illustrate the problems faced by these women, and draw practical lessons with fine spiritual insight. Important doctrines are faithfully presented. Such themes as the Fall of Man, the Fact of Sin, the Sovereignty of God, the Power of Prayer, the Incarnation, and the Atonement are dealt with as they arise, and the application is always practical, with, at times, an evangelistic appeal. The book is a good sensible faithful exposition of the Scriptures.

— Adam Loughridge

THE PREACHER'S PORTRAIT, by John R. W. Stott. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1961, pp. 124 \$3.00.

This is the 9th series of Payton Lectures delivered at Fuller Theological Seminary, California, in 1961. The lectures do not deal with preaching techniques but with the preacher's actual task. The portrait of the preacher is suggested by five New Testament words, a Steward, a Herald, a Witness, a Father and a Servant. Dr. Stott expounds each Greek word carefully and illustrates his themes in a most practical manner. He deals with the message he is called upon to proclaim, his authority in making the proclamation, and the vital necessity of a personal experience of the Gospel. He analyses the preacher's motives, the secret of his power and the qualities of humility, gentleness and love that should characterise his work.

Dr. Stott, himself a gifted Anglican preacher, keeps to the point in each of his lectures. His language is simple and forthright, his illustrations telling, and effective, and his quotations, made from well-loved saints of God like Baxter, Ryle and Spurgeon, are brief and appropriate. A most worthwhile book.

— Adam Loughridge

EXPOUNDING GOD'S WORD; by Alan M. Stibbs. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan. 1961, pp. 112. (paper-back). \$1.25.

This is one of three short volumes by the Vice-Principal of Oak Hill College, London. The others bear the titles, *Understanding The Word* and *Obedying The Word*. The author sees the preacher as a steward of God's Word with a responsibility to expound its meaning and to seek to apply the truths that he has discerned with a practical and pointed relevance to the circumstances, condition and opportunities of his hearers. In order to do this vital task properly, the preacher must train his mind, discipline his life and provide himself with a suitable library, so that he may interpret and apply the truths of God's Word. Mr. Stibbs proceeds to give a series of illustrations on the proper exposition and application of the Scriptures. He states his firm conviction that an expository preacher must be moved by a compelling sense of the Divine authority of the Scriptures which will lead him to give prominence to biblical themes and the free and frequent use of biblical illustrations. The remainder of the book is an analysis of the different approach to the exposition of narratives, longer passages and texts. The book will encourage the student and preacher to cultivate a truly worthwhile expository ministry.

— Adam Loughridge

HEART-CRY FOR REVIVAL, by Stephen F. Olford. Fleming H. Revell Company, Westwood, N. J. 1962, pp. 128. \$2.50.

A series of eight sermons on Revival by the Rev. Stephen Olford in Calvary Baptist Church, New York. They are typescripts made from tape-recordings and so retain the rugged vivid style of the spoken word and the vigorous application of a fervent preacher.

The author in his introductory chapter examines the Nature, the Need and the Nearness of Revival. Thereafter he expounds a number of Scripture passages, e.g. Psalms 85 and 138, Habakkuk 3, Luke 3, Acts 1-4, and James 5, that have a bearing on the theme. He adapts the passage from James 5 to suit his title *The 'Wait' of Revival*, but in other places the Scripture portion deals primarily with the theme, Revival.

At times he is guilty of excessive quotation from other sources. Though these are quite relevant and illustrative of the point he is making, there is one quotation of two pages in a chapter of seventeen pages. His conclusion contains a seven page quotation from the biography of Joseph Kemp and a five page quotation from the prayer letter of Roy Hession. This surely is out of proportion in such a small volume.

The alliterative outline of each sermon is skilfully done, — perhaps a little overdone at times. The book is a helpful addition to the collection of works dealing with Revival.

— Adam Loughridge

PASTORING THE SMALLER CHURCH: by John C. Thiessen. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, pp 168. \$2.95.

The author is a man of wide experience. After twenty-six years in the pastorate, he acted as superintendent of a Hebrew Christian Mission in Detroit for six years, and for the past sixteen years has taught History of Missions and Pastoral Theology in Detroit Bible College.

In a brief preface, Dr. Thiessen outlines the aim of his book. When he began to teach Pastoral Theology he found that the majority of the available text-books dealt with the problems in the large city Church and had little to say to the man whose charge was a small congregation in a small town. These lectures, 23 in all, have therefore the problems of the minister of the smaller congregation in mind, particularly those of organization and administration.

This is a useful statement of pastoral Theology and within its brief compass justifies its subtitle; "A Complete and Comprehensive Guide-book for Pastors." The chapters dealing with weddings and funerals, while interesting, are of value only for American readers. In his Chapter on Church Music, the author admits that there are Christians who think that nothing but the Psalms should be sung in the worship of God. Since a goodly proportion of Blue Banner readers belong to this group, the assumption that Hymns are proper material for use in worship and the advice as to how they should be sung, will prove unconvincing. The same comment applies to the author's brief statement on the practice of Baptism by immersion.

— Adam Loughridge

THE MINISTER'S MISSION: By C. E. Colton. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. Revised Edition, 1961, pp. 220. \$3.50.

The Book carries a sub-title, A Practical Handbook for Preachers and Prospective Preachers, and this illustrates the aim of the book.

The Author is a Baptist Minister, who, after seven years practical experience in the pastorate of a congregation, was appointed Head of the Bible department in Wayland College, Texas. That he returned to the regular work of the ministry after one year is an indication of his love for the Minister's Mission, and one of the best evidences of his capability to write such a fine book.

The work is divided into five parts. It begins with a section on The Minister and His Lord. After dealing with the Divine Call to the Ministry, Dr. Colton has a helpful chapter on the suggestiveness of the titles given to a minister in everyday life and in the New Testament. There follow practical sections on The Minister and

His Work, His Preaching, His Social Life and His Personal Life.

While many readers will be dissatisfied with the arguments used in chapter 8 to present the Baptist point of view, all readers will find in the book, in a most readable style and form, an arresting and challenging discussion of ministerial duties and behaviour. A helpful bibliography is given at the end of the book.

— Adam Loughridge

THE YOUNG MINISTER, by John B. Wilder, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, pp. 120. \$1.95.

The author addresses the young minister in a personal and practical way, and analyses the problems normally associated with his calling. These problems are discussed in a frank and forthright manner and this short volume is racy in style and full of admonition and instruction.

The book begins with a helpful examination of a minister's calling and an outline of some of the features essential to a fruitful ministry. These are an unwavering faithfulness to the Word of God, an awareness of the value of the human soul, a conviction that Christ is the only means of salvation, the acknowledgement of a personal devil, and a full surrender to the Holy Spirit.

There follows a discussion of the minister in his public and private life, in his preaching, specially on the themes of Heaven and Hell, and in his pastoral work, with special emphasis on the opportunities to witness for Christ presented by bereavement, and the value of personal soul-winning.

The book is written in a simple straightforward style and has a searching and practical application. A good book for the young minister or theological student.

— Adam Loughridge

SPURGEON: THE EARLY YEARS: 1834 to 1859. A revised edition of his autobiography, originally by his wife and private secretary. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W. 1, England. 1962, 562 pages. 21 shillings.

The autobiography of Charles Haddon Spurgeon was originally published in four volumes in the years 1897 to 1900. The work had been very incomplete when he died in 1892. It was a fragmentary work composed in the rare moments of leisure that he enjoyed, mainly at the holiday resort of Mentone in the South of France. On account of the heavy demands made upon his time and energy by preaching and the regular publication of his sermons, the preparation of his autobiography could never receive priority. When it was finally published, it contained a lot of non-biographical material and there was a certain lack of continuity between the various sections. The

editors have remedied this by rearranging the material in several places, by inserting new prefaces to several of the chapters, by giving additional important information in footnotes and by omitting non-biographical material such as sermon outlines, newspaper opinions and some letters. The editing has been skilfully and lovingly done, and as a result we have in this volume a reproduction of the first two original volumes.

We are deeply indebted to the publishers for giving us such a work in its present attractive form at a price that is so reasonable as to be within the reach of every reader. The reviewer is indebted for the privilege of reading such an outstanding book. It is a soul-stirring story that exerted a tremendous influence in its earlier form. We are convinced that it will make a vital impact on readers today.

This story is far removed from the type of autobiography that is mainly self advertisement. It is rather a demonstration of what the Grace of God can do in and through a man who is fully under its power. It may seem that 500 pages devoted to 25 years of a man's life is somewhat excessive, but one must remember that C. H. Spurgeon was no ordinary man. He had begun to preach at sixteen years of age, was pastor of a congregation at seventeen, and by the age of twenty-two, he was drawing crowds of fifteen to twenty thousand people to some of his services. The book has tremendous value whether we consider it from a historical, devotional or doctrinal point of view. It is more than a record of personal achievement. It is the unfolding of the mighty work and power of the Holy Spirit in bringing Salvation to thousands through the preaching of the Word.

In the brief compass of this review, it is impossible to deal adequately with such a comprehensive work. Perhaps the best way to commend it to 20th century readers would be to show the timeliness of its message for our own day. His attitude to the Bible was one of unquestioning acceptance of its infallibility and authority. He once declared that he had no need to defend the Bible any more than there was need to defend a lion. "Let it loose"! was his cry, "it will defend itself"! He was convinced that true preaching of the Word included the exposure of error and he never hesitated to denounce the errors of Arminianism and the fallacies of Antinomianism. He spurned the sentiment that so often in the name of Christian charity compromises truth for fear of giving offence. "We are willing," he says in one place, "to be behind in the great march of intellect, and to stand by that unmoving Cross, — the guide of the soul to heaven, the one foundation other than which no man can lay, and without building upon which no man shall ever see the face of God and live".

In an age of modernistic teaching and ecumenicity run riot, it is refreshing to sit at the

feet of one who refused to be moved from the truth of the Gospel. He was highly suspicious of a professional ministry that paraded culture and academic technique as a substitute for a passion for souls and a truly biblical theology. He was wont to say that much of the teaching of his time was a dilution of the truth and a revival of ancient heresies sent out with a new face to do the same mischief that they had wrought in the past.

Spurgeon was a thoroughgoing Calvinist. He had a special love for the theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith. There was in it, he said, more truth than could be found in 10,000 volumes of the school of affected culture and pretentious thoughtfulness. "Believing that the Puritanic school embodied more of gospel truth in it than any other since the days of the Apostles, we continue in the same line of things, and by God's help, hope to share in that revival of Evangelical doctrine which is as sure to come as the Lord Himself".

It is good to commend a book that so faithfully commends the gospel of the grace of God, so lovingly exalts the Saviour, and so dependently looks to the Holy Spirit of God for life and power.

—Adam Loughridge

THE MESSIANIC CHARACTER OF AMERICAN EDUCATION, by Rousas J. Rushdoony. Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1963, pp. 480. \$6.50.

In all the argument over what should be taught in our public schools, and how, and by whom, and at whose expense, does anyone ever dare to question education itself: its authorization, its purpose, its limitations? No reader of Mr. Rushdoony's bold analysis of American education can ever again escape his responsibility for scrutinizing the assumptions that underlie our commitment to state-controlled schools.

The Messianic Character of American Education studies the evangelists of public education from Horace Mann through John Dewey and Edward Thorndike to Theodore Brameld, overlooking few if any of the big names in history of education texts. It surveys critically their claims about the liberating, elevating, unifying power of education. In the light of Scriptural teaching it reexamines cliches about education for a better world, learning by doing, teaching the whole child and fulfilling national responsibility for all American youth.

In his most recent work, however, Rousas Rushdoony writes more than a series of critical biographies, more than a scholarly, documented evaluation of the religious implications of our educational philosophy, more than a classification and analysis of educational theories. He courageously indicts the complacency of Christians toward public education's open denial of Bible teachings. He challenges the doctrines that sin is

merely maladjustment, that environment is responsible for human behavior, that man realizes his true destiny through the good society, that human problems are solved by human effort. He denies that democracy is the supreme virtue, that parents must (or even have the right to) let the state educate their children, that universal education will redeem mankind from poverty and slavery.

The reader will not be enchanted by style nor overwhelmed with pedantry. Mr. Rushdoony

does not hide shallow research under a flood of artistry, nor does he leave the reader without leadership in a maze of documented quotations. With patient precision he relates his findings and with quiet passion presents his conclusions. The Calvinist who believes what he professes will either be sorry he has read the book or determined to rethink his whole educational philosophy and practice.

—Charles R. McBurney
(Assistant Professor of Political
Science, Geneva College)

Acknowledgments and Announcements

The Management of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine which have been received since our last issue went to press.

April, 1964: No. 1342, \$51.15. No. 1343, \$50.00.

May, 1964: No. 1344, \$4.50. No. 1345, \$5.00. No. 1346, \$5.00.

June, 1964: No. 1347, \$36.00. No. 1348, \$10.00. No. 1349, \$5.00.

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 and sales of back issues. 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

1300 copies of this issue were printed. Of these 1255 were immediately mailed out to readers, leaving 45 copies for sale as back issues. The distribution by countries was as follows:

U. S. A., 801. Canada, 106. Australia, 68. England, 51. Scotland, 52. Northern Ireland, 36. Japan, 29. Cyprus, 21. South Africa, 12. New Zealand, 10. Ceylon, 9. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 7. Korea, 6. Syria, 4. India, 5. Lebanon, 5. Ireland (Eire), 4. Peru, 3. Netherlands, 3. Indonesia, 2. Ethiopia, 2. Greece, 2. Hong Kong, 2. One copy each to United Arab Republic (Egypt), Argentina, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Sweden, Thailand, Ghana, Costa Rica, Jordan, Mexico, Wales, British Guiana, Chile. Total circulation, 1255. Total outside U. S. A., 454. Number of countries reached, 38.

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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:

I have been disturbed by reading a recent paperback, **The Hidden Years of Jesus Revealed**, by Charles Francis Potter. Does this book really provide previously unknown facts about the early years of the life of Jesus Christ?

Answer:

The author of this book is an avowed Humanist. After leaving the Unitarians and the Universalists he with others organized what they called The Church of the Human Spirit. This has prac-

tically nothing in common with Christianity except the fact that it is called a "church." Author Potter has no faith in or sympathy for Biblical Christianity — he is a believer in man.

In spite of the sensational title of the book, it provides no trustworthy information about the early years of Jesus. Nothing is really known about this subject except the facts that are recorded in the canonical Gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These relate only one specific fact of the life of Jesus between the time He was 40 days old and the time when he was 30 years

old. This one fact is the visit to the Jerusalem temple at the age of twelve years. Except for this single incident, the entire period of approximately 30 years is covered only by general statements that he grew, increased in wisdom, etc.

The Church in its early period rejected a number of apocryphal Gospels, on the ground that they were not genuine writings written or approved by the Apostles. These apocryphal books contain much fantasy and no real facts beyond what we have in the canonical Gospels. The Dead Sea Scrolls have been said to require a complete re-interpretation of early Christianity — a completely unfounded assertion. The Dead Sea Scrolls have their importance and value, but there is nothing in them that has a **direct** bearing on Christianity. They do provide some background material on some of the tendencies in the Jewish world at the time when Christianity began. Nothing in Christianity requires revision because of anything in the Dead Sea Scrolls or any other non-Biblical writings.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Is it always the duty of Christians to obey the laws and orders of the civil government of his country, since "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13-1b)?

Answer:

While the Scripture in various places commands Christians to obey magistrates and rulers, it is also evident that there are some exceptions to this requirement. The apostles, for example, did not hesitate to disobey the rulers of their day, saying "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). It was "by faith"—that is, in conscientious obedience to the will of God — that the parents of Moses disobeyed the command of the Pharaoh of Egypt, "and they were not afraid of the king's commandment" (Heb. 11:23). Similarly Daniel, with the approval of God, disobeyed an edict of the Persian king Darius (Daniel 6).

The command to obey human laws and magistrates is a general one. Where there is an issue between obeying God and obeying human government, it is the duty of the Christian to obey God and, if necessary, suffer the consequences.

Also the command to obey magistrates and their laws does not imply that the Christians may not seek to have unrighteous magistrates removed from office, and to have unrighteous laws changed.

On the other hand, the mere fact that a law seems unwise or even unjust does not mean that the Christian is free to violate it. To be free in conscience to violate a human law, it is necessary that the law actually requires the Christian to

commit sin (not merely to suffer injustice). To the civil government God has committed the making of decisions in the civil sphere. Only when the Christian is forced to choose between obedience to God and obedience to civil laws is he free in conscience to violate the latter. I may believe that the progressive income tax is unjust, but I am not free to refuse to pay my tax. I have a right to seek to get the law changed, but meantime I am not free to refuse payment of the tax.

—J. G. Vos

The following letter was received by the Editor from a Geneva College student a few days before the final examination, May, 1964. By way of explanation it should be stated that all students in the first year Bible courses at Geneva are required to memorize The Ten Commandments in the Fall Semester and Isaiah chapter 53 in the Spring Semester. It is required that this Scripture material be memorized accurately, word for word, and writing the material from memory is a part of the final examination. Many students accomplish this quite well. The following letter questions the value and importance of Bible memorization. It is printed here together with the answer that was given to the student because this matter of Bible memorization is an important one which should be of general interest to our readers. —Editor.

Letter:

Doctor Vos:

I realize the importance of Isaiah 53, but why do we have to write it word for word? I think the study of the meaning of Isaiah 53 is more important than the mechanical recitation of a few hundred words. Most of us will forget the words of Isaiah (the exact words) in three or, at the most, four days. I hope I have not angered you, but I would like to know why we must know Isaiah 53 for the test.

Respectfully,

Ronald T.

Answer:

Dear Ronald:

In answer to your question:

Words are the vehicle of thought — without words thought cannot be expressed. To express a thought precisely, the exact words needed must be used. Take away the words — you have only blank paper left. Change the words, even slightly, and you change the meaning to some extent.

The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God. Therefore apprehension of its **precise** wording is important.

Suppose you buy an automobile and sign a contract for time payments on it. Later there is

a dispute about the contract. You are sued by the dealer and have to appear in court. The judge asks, "Did you sign this contract?" You reply, "Yes, your Honor, I signed it." "All right", says the Judge; "Then you will have to abide by the exact wording of the contract. It says you will pay \$50.00 on the 15th day of each month for three years, and if you fail to do this, the dealer has the right to re-possess the car." You reply, "But, your Honor, I don't see any need to insist on the exact wording. Why can't I just go by the general idea of the contract — the dealer gets his money and I get the car?" "No," the Judge will reply, "In matters of the law, the exact wording is what we go by. The general idea is not enough. We go by the precise wording of the contract."

You may think that in a few days you will have forgotten Isaiah 53. However, if you really learned it (not just crammed a bit the night before the final), it will stay with you forever. Not in your conscious mind, but in your unconscious or sub-conscious level of the mind. Nothing really learned is ever lost. People can get back the language of their childhood, which they have

not spoken for 50 years or more, with a bit of psychological technique. Even if they don't recall something consciously, it remains in the unconscious level and may exert an influence on their life. Also, when the Word of God has been stored away in the memory, it is there and the Holy Spirit can bring it to the surface of consciousness when it is needed. People sometimes when faced with some terrible crisis have suddenly recalled a verse of Scripture which they had once learned but had forgotten for years. It becomes the instrument of the Spirit of God to convict them of some truth and draw them to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

In China traditional education has over-stressed the memory. In America, the memory has been neglected almost totally. Learning a chapter of the Bible "by heart" is just one part of our required Bible courses, but it is not without its unique value.

Best wishes for a happy summer.

Sincerely,
J. G. Vos

What Then?

By J. Whitfield Green (adapted)

When the great plants of our cities
Have turned out their last finished work;
And the merchant has sold his last yard of silk
And dismissed his last tired clerk;
When the banks have rolled in their last dollar
And paid out their last dividend;
And the Judge of the world says:
"Close for the night,"
And calls for a balance —
 What then?

When the choir has sung its last anthem,
And the preacher has made his last prayer;
When the people have heard their last sermon,
And the sound has died out on the air;
When the Bible lies closed on the altar,
And the pews are all empty of men;
And each soul stands facing his record,
And the Great Book is opened —
 What then?

When the actors have played their last drama,
And the mimic has made his last fun;
And the movie has flashed its last picture,
And the billboards displayed their last run;
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished,
And gone out into darkness again;
And a world that rejected its Saviour
Is asked for a reason —
 What then?

When the bugle dies out in the silence,
And the long, marching columns are still;
When the millions of earth are gathered
From ocean and valley and hill;
When the day that has no morrow
Has come to the last, last end;
And the voice of God from the heaven
Says, "It is done!" —
 What then?

The Burial of Moses

By Mrs. C. F. Alexander

By Nebo's lonely mountain
 On this side Jordan's wave,
 In a vale in the land of Moab
 There lies a lonely grave.
 And no man knows that sepulchre,
 And no man saw it e'er;
 For the angels of God upturned the sod,
 And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
 That ever passed on earth;
 But no man heard the trampling
 Or saw the train go forth —
 Noiselessly as the daylight
 Comes back when night is done,
 And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
 Grows into the great sun,

Noiselessly as the spring-time
 Her crown of verdure weaves,
 And all the trees on all the hills
 Open their thousand leaves;
 So without sound of music,
 Or the voice of them that wept,
 Silently down from the mountain's crown
 The great procession swept.

Perchance the old bald eagle
 On gray Beth-Peor's height,
 Out of his lonely eyrie
 Looked on the wondrous sight;
 Perchance the lion stalking
 Still shuns that hallowed spot,
 For beast and bird have seen and heard
 That which man knoweth not.

But when the warrior dieth,
 His comrades in the war,
 With arms reversed and muffled drum,
 Follow his funeral car;
 They show the banners taken,
 They tell his battles won,
 And after him lead his masterless steed,
 While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
 We lay the sage to rest
 And give the bard an honored place,
 With costly marbled rest,
 In the great minster transept
 Where lights like glory fall,
 And the organ rings, and the sweet choir sings
 Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the truest warrior
 That ever buckled sword,
 This the most gifted poet
 That ever breathed a word;
 And never earth's philosopher
 Traced with his golden pen,
 On the deathless page, truths half so sage
 As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor —
 The hillside for a pall,
 To lie in state while angels wait
 With stars for tapers tall,
 And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave,
 And God's own hand in that lonely land,
 To lay him in the grave.

In that strange grave without a name,
 Whence his uncoffined clay
 Shall break again, O wondrous thought!
 Before the Judgment Day,
 And stand with glory wrapt around
 On the hills he never trod,
 And speak of the strife that won our life,
 With the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land;
 O dark Beth-Peor's hill;
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God hath His mysteries of grace,
 Ways that we cannot tell;
 He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
 Of him He loved so well,

PSALM 65

WEBB. 7, 6, 7, 6. D.

George J. Webb

1. Praise waits for Thee in Zi - on; To Thee vows paid shall be; O God, of prayer the
hear - er, All flesh shall come to Thee. In - i - qui - ties a - gainst me Pre -
vail from day to day; But as for our trans - gres - sions Thou tak - est them a - way.

2. How blest the man Thou choos'est,
And bringest near to Thee,
That in Thy courts forever
His dwelling-place may be.
We shall within Thy temple
Be wholly satisfied,
And filled with all the goodness
Thy sacred courts provide.
3. O God of our salvation,
Thou in Thy righteousness
By deeds that are most dreadful
Thine answer wilt express—
O Thou in Whom confiding
All ends of earth agree,
And people who are sailing
Far out upon the sea.
4. Thy might sets fast the mountains;
Strength girds Thee evermore
To calm the raging peoples
And still the ocean's roar.

- Thy dreadful signs and wonders
Make distant lands afraid;
Of morn and eve the going
By Thee is joyful made.
5. Thy visits bring the showers;
Thy floods enrich the field;
The streams of God prepare it
That earth her fruit shall yield.
Thou waterest her furrows;
Her ridges down are pressed;
With showers they are softened;
The springing plants are blest.
6. Thy paths are lined with fatness;
The year with good is crowned;
The pastures of the desert,
The hills with joy resound.
The fields with flocks are covered;
The vales with grain are clad.
They all rejoice with shouting;
Yea, they with songs are glad.

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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.

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Selections from "Out of the Deep Have I Called unto Thee, O Lord"

By Christina G. Rossetti

Seven vials hold Thy wrath; but what can hold
Thy mercy save Thine own Infinitude,
Boundlessly overflowing with all good,
All lovingkindness, all delights untold?
Thy Love, of each created love the mould;
Thyself, of all the empty plenitude;
Heard of at Ephrata, found in the Wood,
For ever One, the Same, the Manifold.
Lord, give us grace to tremble with that dove
Which ark-bound winged its solitary way
And overpast the Deluge in a day,
Whom Noah's hand pulled in and comforted:
For we who much more hang upon Thy love
Behold its shadow in the deed he did.

Lord, grant us eyes to see and ears to hear,
And souls to love and minds to understand,
And steadfast faces toward the Holy Land,
And confidence of hope, and filial fear,
And citizenship where Thy saints appear
Before Thee heart in heart and hand in hand,
And Alleluias where their chanting band
As waters and as thunders fill the sphere.
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, for Corner Stone.

Nerve us with patience, Lord, to toil or rest,
Toiling at rest on our allotted level;
Unsnared, unscared by world or flesh or devil,
Fulfilling the good Will of Thy behest:
Not careful here to hoard, not here to revel;
But waiting for our treasure and our zest
Beyond the fading splendour of the west,
Beyond this deathstruck life and deathlier evil.
Not with the sparrow building here a house:
But with the swallow tabernacling so
As still to poise alert to rise and go
On eager wings with wing-outspeeding wills
Beyond earth's gourds and past her almond
boughs,
Past utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

Weigh all my faults and follies righteously,
Omissions and commissions, sin on sin;
Make deep the scale, O Lord, to weigh them in;
Yea, set the Accuser vulture-eyed to see
All loads ingathered which belong to me:
That so in life the judgment may begin,
And Angels learn how hard it is to win
One solitary sinful soul to Thee.
I have no merits for a counterpoise:
Oh vanity my work and hastening day,
What can I answer to the accusing voice?
Lord, drop Thou in the conterscale alone
One Drop from Thine own Heart, and outweigh
My guilt, my folly, even my heart of stone.

I long for joy, O Lord, I long for gold,
I long for all Thou profferest to me,
I long for the unimagined manifold
Abundance laid up in Thy treasury.
I long for pearls, but not from mundane sea;
I long for palms, but not from earthly mould;
Yet in all else I long for, long for Thee,
Thyself to hear and worship and behold.
For Thee, beyond the splendour of that day
Where all is day and is not any night;
For Thee, beyond refreshment of that rest
To which tired saints press on for its delight —
Or if not thus for Thee, yet Thee I pray
To make me long so till Thou make me blest.

It is not death, O Christ, to die for Thee:
Nor is that silence of a silent land
Which speaks Thy praise so all may understand:
Darkness of death makes Thy dear lovers see
Thyself Who wast and art and art to be;
Thyself, more lovely than the lovely band
Of saints who worship Thee on either hand,
Loving and loved thro' all eternity.
Death is not death, and therefore do I hope:
Nor silence silence; and I therefore sing
A very humble hopeful quiet Psalm,
Searching my heart-field for an offering;
A handful of sun-courting heliotrope,
Of myrrh a bundle, and a little balm.

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Bible Breaking, Bible Bending and Bible Believing

By the Editor

"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever" — Psalm 12:6,7.

Today in our western culture the Bible is generally praised. It is praised by many who have not the slightest intention of living by it. It is praised by many who have never even read it except perhaps casually. It is praised by critics who have torn it to shreds and who hold that it has only human authority. But formal commendation of the Bible as something good, and really taking the Bible seriously, are two different things.

In Christianity the Bible has a double function. It is, first of all, the standard of truth and duty; and secondly, it is a means of grace in the Christian life. Many who admit the latter are nevertheless intent upon denying the former. The Bible as a help to right living, yes; the Bible as a revelation of absolute truth, no — such is the common reaction to the Bible among intellectual people today.

We shall consider in this article (1) Bible breaking, or overt denial of the Bible's authority as truth; (2) Bible bending, or covert denial of the Bible's authority as truth; and (3) Bible believing, or hearty acceptance of the Bible's authority as truth.

Bible Breaking

In the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John we have the record of a dispute between Jesus and the leaders of the Jews. He made the statement, "I and my Father are one" (verse 30). This was rightly understood by the Jews as a claim to Deity. Thereupon they accused Him of blasphemy, and were on the point of stoning Him to death. In replying to them, and defending Himself against their charge, Jesus appealed to Scripture. He cited a statement of Psalm 82:6, "I said, ye are gods." This was spoken to the judges of the people of Israel in Old Testament times. Because as judges they were clothed with authority from God and were God's servants in administering justice, they could, in that sense, be called "gods" (small "g").

Jesus' argument is as follows: It cannot be blasphemy to apply the term "God" to anyone to whom it can properly be applied. If it was proper to apply the term "god" or "gods" to the Old Testament judges — which Jesus' opponents did not and could not deny — then how much more proper it must be to apply the term "God" or "Son or God" to the One whom the Father had consecrated and sent into the world! If the Jews did not object to the ancient judges being called "gods" — and they did not — then how could they claim that it was blasphemy for Jesus to say, "I am the Son of God"?

This argument Jesus enforced by the statement, "And the Scripture cannot be broken." This is stated as an axiomatic truth, something concerning which both Jesus and His accusers were completely in agreement. Both they and He agreed without dispute that "the Scripture cannot be broken." Jesus was certainly no conformist. He disputed with the Jewish religious leadership of His day about many things — the right observance of the Sabbath, paying tribute to Caesar, proper support of needy parents, the length of public prayers. He accused them of formalism and hypocrisy in their religious life and even raised the question of how they could escape the damnation of hell. But there was one matter on which Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders were completely in agreement, namely, **the full truth and divine authority of the Old Testament Scriptures.** On this subject Jesus was the most orthodox of the orthodox, from the standpoint of the scribes and Pharisees themselves. We can see this from the fact that in all their efforts to find something to accuse Jesus of, it never seems to have occurred to them to accuse Him of a wrong attitude toward the Scriptures. On that supremely important matter, there was no dispute between Him and them.

Note that Jesus cites the words of the Old Testament by saying, "It is written in your law . . .". In **the law**. But the verse He cited was not from the books of the Old Testament commonly called "law." It was a verse from the Psalms. Yet Jesus referred to it as "the law", and then a moment later he spoke of it as "the Scripture." It is clear that to Jesus the Old Testament was an organic unity. It was all Scripture, it was

all the Word of God, it was all law, of divine truth and authority. When Jesus said that "the Scripture cannot be broken," stating this as an axiomatic truth about which there could be no argument, He referred, obviously, to the Old Testament as a whole, in its completeness, and in all its details. For the statement which He quoted was of such a nature that it might almost be regarded as an **incidental** remark of the Psalmist. Yet Jesus called it law, He called it Scripture, and He affirmed that it cannot be broken.

The word for "broken" here means dissolved, cancelled, annulled, reduced to nothing. The Scripture would be broken if it could be proved to contain false statements; it would be broken if its prophecies were to fail; it would be broken if its promises were not reliable. But "the Scripture cannot be broken."

When accused of blasphemy, Jesus answered by an appeal to a statement of Scripture on the ground that "the Scripture cannot be broken." This is characteristic of Jesus' attitude toward the Scripture throughout His whole life on earth. Never did He indicate any other attitude toward the Scriptures. For Jesus, the verdict of the Scriptures was **final**. It settled the point. There could be no more arguing by godly people after the Scripture had spoken.

What has this to do with us today? Faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour is linked with faith in the Bible as a whole, in its completeness and in all its details, as the unbreakable Word of God. Many people today want to keep Christ while at the same time they disbelieve statements of the Bible. They say that the Bible contains errors and contradictions; or that it is inspired only in its important ideas, not in its actual words; or that it is inspired only where it deals directly with religion and morals, while it contains a great deal of pre-scientific nonsense as well as glaring errors in matters of history.

A stream of sample textbooks comes to the teaching staff of the Bible Department of Geneva College. Many of these books are handsomely gotten up by large and well-known publishing firms, and endorsed by prominent clergymen and educators, yet they are absolutely unsuitable for use as basic textbooks in a Christian college. Book after book treats the Bible as a human product containing a mixture of truth and error. Book after book casts doubt on the truth of considerable portions of both the Old Testament and the New. The authors of such books are **Bible breakers**. Where such books are taken seriously, people's faith will be broken down, not built up.

All forms of open unbelief, of course, are forms of Bible breaking. Under this heading we may mention atheism, agnosticism, dialectical materialism, and most forms of present-day philosophy, including especially the currently popular

philosophy of Existentialism. The Scripture cannot be broken, but these unbelievers try to break it. In the end they will break themselves on it, just as the person who tries to break the force of gravity will break himself in the end.

H. G. Wells, whose very superficial **Outline of History** was once a very popular book, was a Bible breaker. He has aptly been called "a monolithic materialist." Immanuel Kant, the great German philosopher, was a Bible breaker. He once wrote a book called "Religion within the Bounds of Pure Reason." The British scientist J.B.S. Haldane has said that "God serves as an excuse for refusal to think, by acting as a kind of dump for all the contradictions found in our experience." Julian Huxley, popular British biologist and lecturer, has said, "God is simply fading away, as the devil has faded before him." Again, Huxley said, "Theistic belief depends on man's projection of his own ideas and feelings into nature." And again, "God . . . is a human product . . .". And Nikita Khrushchev said that a Russian astronaut circled the earth seventeen times without seeing God, therefore God does not exist! Needless to say, all such blatant unbelief is Bible breaking. But there are other forms also.

One form of Bible breaking is sheer neglect of the Bible, just ignoring it, making no effort to learn what it says nor to apply its teachings to various areas of human life. A story is told of a minister who called on a family, and as the parents were not at home, he talked to a little boy. "Do you know what the Bible is?" "Yes, sir." "What is it?" "It is God's Word." "Well, do you know what is in it?" "Yes." "What is in it, then?" "Grandma's spectacles are in it, and the ticket to my Dad's watch, and my big sister's boy friend's photo." Unfortunately, many adults have no better idea of what is in the Bible.

It is related that a party of American tourists in Egypt were being shown around by an Egyptian guide. He showed them the spot where, he said, the bones of the seven lean cows were buried. The tourists were duly impressed, none of them realizing that those seven cows existed only in a dream of Pharaoh. Such ignorance of the Bible is not uncommon today. Even among church members ignorance of the simple historical contents of the Bible is often abysmal. Many a church member cannot tell whether King David lived before or after John the Baptist. Many a church member cannot find a particular book of the Bible without consulting the table of contents or index. As for the teachings of the Bible, many people's ignorance is even more abysmal.

The Bible is addressed to everyone. The Scripture cannot be broken. Its binding character cannot be cancelled or nullified by people's careless indifference. When the Judgment Day comes millions of people will go to hell, and they will

say "We never knew." But they had the Bible. They could have known; they should have known; if they did not know, it was their own sinful fault. The words of Scripture will stand, in the Day of Judgment, over against the claim of millions of selfish, easy-going, pleasure-loving, God-ignoring people who will try to claim, "We never knew."

The most fashionable form of Bible breaking today is called Neo-orthodoxy, also known as the theology of crisis, dialectical theology, and other names. This holds that the Bible is a mixture of truth and error. It denies that the actual Bible, as a written book, is the Word of God. On the contrary, it is said that the Bible may **become** the Word of God to a person when it comes home to him or grips him in a personal encounter or crisis experience. This is certainly Bible breaking. It is nothing less than an overt denial of the Bible's authority as truth.

Bible Bending

Many people who claim to believe in the Bible, and who would not for a minute want to be classed as Bible breakers, nevertheless **bend or distort** the Bible by their way of dealing with it.

It is justly objected against almost all modern English versions of the Bible that the translators or revisers, under the plea of modernizing the English of the Bible, have as a matter of fact tampered with the theology of the Bible. This is not true of all recent versions but it is certainly true of many. The theological bias of the translators was bound to affect their product, even though they might sincerely seek a scholarly objectivity in their work. One form in which liberal theology has influenced recent Bible translation is seen in the tendency to substitute more general concepts for particular or specific ones in the Bible. Thus one of the latest of the new translations regularly substitutes the word **deliverance** for the Biblical term **justification**. This virtually cancels the whole doctrine of justification by faith, for it lifts the concept out of its legal or judicial setting and changes it to a general term which could include any kind of rescue from any kind of situation or trouble. **Deliverance** is not a true equivalent of **justification** any more than **heart trouble** is a true equivalent of **coronary thrombosis**, or **food** a true equivalent of **tomato soup**. The tendency exemplified by the substitution of more general for more specific terminology is a common and serious form of Bible bending.

The Bible is bent or distorted when it is interpreted in terms of some system of non-Biblical thought. The late Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, one of America's most distinguished theological scholars, said that there can be no objection to stating Christianity in terms of modern thought.

Every age, said Dr. Warfield, speaks a language of its own and can speak no other. Mischief only comes, he added, when under guise of re-stating Christianity in terms of modern thought what is actually done is to state modern thought in terms of Christian belief. In other words, when under guise of up-dating the **form**, what actually happens is that the **content** has been tampered with, then the Bible and its teachings have been bent or distorted.

According to orthodox Christian belief, the Bible is a **self-interpreting book**. That is, the criteria and principles needed to interpret the Bible aright are found within the Bible itself. No principles or ideologies from external sources are to be used as a key to understanding the Bible. When someone takes a non-Biblical ideology — say socialism, for example — and puts it in front of his eyes like a pair of tinted lenses, and then looks at the Bible, what he sees is bound to be colored by the tinted lenses. This bends or distorts the teaching of the Bible. Certainly there can (and must) be a Biblical interpretation of sociology, but there cannot be a sociological interpretation of the Bible without the message of the Bible being seriously bent.

If a person starts with the dialectical philosophy of Hegel, with its thesis, antithesis and synthesis, and holds this neat formula to be a universally valid key to the meaning of all reality, and then interprets the Bible in terms of this approach, he will inevitably bend or distort the Bible.

Many examples could be cited from real life. It is recorded that one of the czars of Russia was quite a Bible reader. However, he was not in the least interested in the real message of the Bible. He approached the Bible as a believer in the divine right of absolute monarchy, and searched the Bible for texts which seemed to him to support this notion. Needless to say, the Bible does not really teach this, but a person with this ready-made approach could find some things in the Bible that could be bent to fit what he had in mind.

Frances Willard, the well-known temperance leader, was an ardent feminist or champion of "women's rights". This seems to have been a powerful drive in Frances Willard's thinking, and she approached the Bible from this point of view. She wrote a book called **Woman in the Pulpit**. A minister once challenged me to read this book, and after that, of course, I had to read it. It was an eye-opener. This book does violence to nearly every recognized principle of sound Biblical interpretation. It seemed as if almost any statement of the Bible could be bent to fit Miss Willard's idea of "women's rights." Among other things Miss Willard contended that the Gospel can be preached to everyone, therefore it can be preached by everyone. She said that men have preached a creed, and left people's hearts as hard

as nether millstones, but women will preach a life. She even advocated turning the government of the church over to women in preference to men, and much more of the same caliber. This, I submit, was a classic example of Bible bending, or distorting the Bible to make it fit a ready-made non-Biblical concept.

A great deal of present-day agitation for the abolition of capital punishment as the penalty for first degree murder amounts to bending the Bible. The Bible, of course, prescribes the death penalty for murder on the ground of **justice** — not because it will deter others from committing murder, but because the murderer **deserves** to die. The opponents of capital punishment usually ignore completely the whole Biblical concept of **justice**, and assume that the interests of society are the thing that counts. Then they take certain texts of the Bible as arguments, while completely ignoring others which categorically command that the murderer be put to death. This disregards the organic structure of the Bible, and makes selected isolated texts normative for the interpretation of the whole, even when this interpretation contradicts explicit Biblical commands. This is Bible bending. What a person likes in the Bible, he calls “the spirit of Christ”, and then bends everything else to fit this.

Suppose I receive a letter from the bank in which I have a modest checking account. This letter informs me that I have overdrawn my account. The bank, it continues, is forbidden by law to carry overdrafts. The bank asks me to attend to this matter immediately. But instead of going to the bank and making a deposit to cover the overdraft, I read the letter again. I am impressed by the courteous, friendly tone of the introduction and conclusion. It starts by addressing me as “**Dear Dr. Vos**” and continues by stating that the bank **regrets** having to send me this letter. It closes with a heart-warming phrase, “**Very cordially yours.**” Now, I say to myself, the body of the letter cannot really mean that my account is overdrawn and I must immediately attend to the overdraft. That would be merely going by the **literal** interpretation. The overall tone of the letter is distinctly friendly. I decide that the **spirit** of the letter is what really counts. How could the bank really mean that I am in the wrong and must do something about it, when the spirit of the letter is so warm and friendly? So I interpret the letter as meaning that I have **not** overdrawn my account, and need not do anything in particular. The bank could rightly charge me with **bending** their communication. And similarly the person who uses the so-called “spirit” of the Bible to nullify explicit statements or commands of the Bible is guilty of bending the Bible.

A minister in a meeting which I attended reviewed a book about Christ, and in doing so cited with approval a statement of the author

to the effect that we should not accept **all** of the teachings of Jesus Christ, but only that part of His teachings which we find to be true. This, of course, is covert rationalism, and it is extreme Bible bending. If I must decide which of the teachings of Christ are true and which are untrue, then neither Christ nor the Bible is my authority — I am going by my own human reason. Such Bible benders may claim to accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God, yet really they deny its authority by their attitude to its contents. Their real authority is their own reason or their own emotions, not the statements of Scripture. They pick and choose among the statements of the Bible, taking what appeals to their prejudiced, sin-darkened minds and by-passing the rest. This “pick and choose” attitude to the Bible is very sinful. It amounts to cancelling the authority of a large part of the Bible. Even the part not cancelled is held, not because it is the Word of God, but only because it happens to fit a ready-made idea of the reader.

Dishonest interpretation, whether consciously or sub-consciously perpetrated, is a form of Bible bending. This thrives today in multitudes of people who have diverged from the well-marked pathway of truth. Satan blinds their eyes and then they begin to twist and bend the Bible to make it mean what they **want** it to mean. In Lewis Carroll’s book **Alice in Wonderland**, the character Humpty Dumpty said in a scornful tone, “When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.” There are many people like Humpty Dumpty today. They use words to mean, not what they really mean, but what they choose to have them mean. The Communists are not the only people who use doubletalk — it is also used by many religious people to bend the Bible to their ideas and prejudices.

A man says, “I believe in the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement,” but it soon becomes evident that he does **NOT** believe in the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement, but only in one of the miserable false theories of the atonement, such as the well-known “moral influence” theory. Words are the currency of thought as money is the currency of business. The words of the Bible have a meaning, which can be ascertained by careful study. They mean what they mean, not just what the reader of the Bible would like to have them mean. A well-known writer of religious education materials said that Jesus Christ was the first man who ever dared to be divine. Surely this is an instance of Bible bending, a covert denial of the authority of the Bible as truth.

Bible Believing

The Bible believer recognizes and does justice to both parts of the double function of the Bible. He accepts it not only as a means of

grace in the Christian life, but as the infallible and absolute standard of truth and duty. And he realizes that the former depends for its validity upon the latter: just because the Bible is the absolute standard of truth and duty, it is also an effective means of grace in the Christian life.

The Bible believer has an attitude of **humble receptivity** to the teachings of Scripture. John Calvin said: "They who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture." The Bible believer does not approach the Bible asking, "What do I say about this book?" Rather, he approaches the Bible asking, "What does this book say about me?" Jesus said that unless we become **as little children** we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. This statement of our Lord is not a reference to any supposed innocence or sinlessness of little children. It certainly refers to the humble, trusting attitude of little children — their dependence upon and receptive attitude toward their parents. The real Bible believer has this attitude of a little child in his approach to the Bible. He is not a Bible breaker nor a Bible bender. He believes the Bible and wants to **learn** its lessons and **practice** its requirements.

A sign of genuine conversion is the willing and complete renunciation of objections and cavils against anything in the written Word of God. When the miracle of regeneration has taken place, doubts and objections against the Scripture melt away like snow in the spring sunshine.

The rationalistic unbeliever who says he simply cannot believe in miracles or predictive prophecy is a Bible breaker. But when the hand of God is laid on him as it was on Saul on the Damascus road, he will become a Bible believer. The man who said he didn't care whether predestination is taught in the Bible or not — he would never believe it, even if taught in the Bible — needed to be born again. The woman who said about a certain one of the Old Testament Psalms, "I simply HATE that Psalm," needed to be born again. Every Bible breaker needs to be born again. It would perhaps be extreme to say that every Bible bender needs to be born again — there are degrees of Bible bending and degrees of awareness of one's sin in this matter — but certainly many do, and others need more of the Holy Spirit's work in their lives to make them humble and receptive of the Word of God.

The Bible believer not only believes but also **confesses** the truths of Scripture. He is not only a believer but also a **witness**. Martin Luther said: "If I contend faithfully for every point of divine truth, except that one little point which 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 in all the field besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that one point." It takes little courage to witness for the truth among the friends of the truth. But the real Bible believer confesses the truth, when occasion calls for it, among the **enemies** of the truth.

The Bible believer is also, when occasion requires, a **defender** of the truth of the Bible. He is not impressed by that old half-truth which says that "the Bible can defend itself." He knows that God works through **people**, and that it is through people's witnessing and confession that God has defended His Word in past times. The Bible believer is therefore ready and willing to stand up and be counted. He is not trying to avoid the reproach of Christ by lying low and saying nothing when the Word of God is being broken or bent.

This is a **hearty** love for the truth of God. This is not the attenuated, anemic "Yes, but. . ." theology which is so common today, as when somebody says "The Bible is the infallible Word of God, but. . .". Instead of this weak-kneed attitude, the Bible believer will say: "The Bible is the infallible Word of God, **period**."

The Bible believer also **adorns** his witness for the Bible by a godly life. He lives a consistently godly life. We are commanded to have deeds, not mere words — to be doers of the Word, not hearers only. This means straightforward honesty, ethical living, love for God and man, separation from iniquity. It means that the teacher who is a Christian will strive to do a better academic job than the one who is not a Christian is doing. It means that the student who is a Christian will do his honest best in using the academic opportunities that God has given him. He or she will be ashamed to come to class unprepared by reason of laziness or neglect. The student who is a Christian and who is adorning his testimony will not only avoid cheating — he or she will regard academic performance as a service to the Lord and will seek by academic excellence to commend the Word of God to others.

Adorning our witness also involves Christian **compassion** toward those who are without Christ or who have stumbled and fallen into sin. We are to be like the Lord Jesus Christ, not like the self-righteous Pharisees, in our attitudes. Realizing that it is only by grace that we differ from others, we will remain humble in ourselves and compassionate toward others.

Dear reader, where do you stand? Are you a Bible breaker, a Bible bender or a Bible believer?

The Mode of Baptism

By J. G. Vos

Historically there have existed three modes of baptism in the Church, namely immersion, sprinkling and pouring. Several questions arise concerning these. Is a particular mode of baptism essential to the validity of the sacrament? Is the mode of baptism a matter of divine appointment in Scripture? Is the mode of baptism significant or symbolic of the meaning of baptism? What is the official position of the Reformed Presbyterian Church on the mode of baptism?

It is well known, of course, that sprinkling has been practically universal as the mode of administering baptism in the Covenanter Church. An outsider might very easily jump to the conclusion that our Church holds that sprinkling is necessarily the divinely appointed mode, and that we regard other modes as irregular if not actually invalid. Yet this would certainly be an unwarranted conclusion. The fact is, rather, that the universal practice of sprinkling in the Covenanter Church and other Presbyterian denominations rests upon convenience and tradition rather than upon theological principle. Sprinkling is the only mode of baptism practiced among us, yet as a church we do not hold that this is the only legitimate mode of baptism.

What might be called the radical anti-immersionist viewpoint has existed among members of the Covenanter Church, but it has never been the official position of the church as set forth in its standards. In the latter part of the 19th century Covenanters in Nova Scotia repeatedly petitioned Synod to declare that immersion does not constitute valid baptism and that therefore those who have been baptized by immersion must, on joining the Reformed Presbyterian Church, be baptized by sprinkling. Synod declared its approval of sprinkling but declined emphatically to rule that immersion is not valid baptism. So the radical anti-immersionist view has remained a privately held minority view, while the Church as a body admits the legitimacy of immersion.

Diametrically opposed to the view just mentioned is the radical immersionist view. This is well known as the view of most Baptists and of various other bodies. It holds that immersion is the only valid mode of baptism, and that therefore sprinkling and pouring do not constitute valid baptism. Baptists who are true to their historic position not only prefer immersion, but they insist that it is the only lawful and proper mode of administration of baptism. Of necessity they must regard those who have not been immersed as unbaptized and therefore as living in sinful disobedience to the command of the Lord. Not all Baptists hold this radical position as their per-

sonal view of the matter, but it is the historic view of the Baptist faith, and by logical necessity, if consistently held, it involves regarding unimmersed Christians as unbaptized and therefore disobedient to the Lord.

Between the radical immersionist view and the radical anti-immersionist view there exists what might be called the common Christian view concerning the question of the mode of baptism. This common view has historically been by far the most widely held, and I shall seek to show that it is the correct view. According to this view the mode of administration of baptism is indifferent, and therefore any one of the three historical modes constitutes valid baptism. This view holds that the use of water is essential but the quantity of water and the manner of contact between the water and the person baptized are not significant. This view is not anti-immersionist nor is it anti-sprinkling, but it is anti-Baptist in the sense that it opposes the claim of the exclusively propriety of immersion which is advanced by strict Baptists; and of course it is also opposed to the claim of radical anti-immersionists that sprinkling is the only proper mode of baptism.

There are several possible approaches to the problem of the mode of baptism. One method of approach is through the history of the Church. This is of considerable interest in itself, and may be very enlightening both to immersionists and to anti-immersionists who imagine that a single mode of baptism was universally used in the earliest centuries of the history of the Church. Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield wrote an informative article on *The Archaeology of the Mode of Baptism* (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, liii, 1896, pp. 601-644; reprinted in *Studies in Theology*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1932, pp. 345-386). This very learned and well-documented article shows, among other things, that in the early Christian centuries immersion was the common mode of baptism, while it was never regarded as the only valid mode of baptism, and it was never the exclusively practiced mode of baptism. Warfield states that insistence upon immersion as the only valid mode of baptism is a quite modern development. It cannot be traced any further back than the English Baptists of the seventeenth century, that is, about three hundred years ago. The early Baptists both on the Continent and in England practiced affusion or pouring rather than immersion.

With regard to the early prevalence of immersion, Warfield states that "should we move back within the first millennium of the Church's life, we should find the whole Christian world

united in the ordinary use of trine immersion" (*Studies in Theology*, p. 351). He adds, however, that it would be necessary to inquire further whether this prevalence of immersion was in harmony with the practice of the apostles, or represented a deviation from apostolic practice. Obviously the study of Church history can never tell us whether anything is Scriptural. We can learn from church history what practices and beliefs were held at a particular time, but whether these beliefs and practices were Scriptural, and therefore correct in the absolute sense, we cannot learn from history, but only from a study of the Scriptures themselves.

Warfield suggests an interesting point when he states that baptism by immersion in the very early period of the Church, like Jewish proselyte baptism, was apparently administered to completely nude recipients. He says that the Jewish rabbis in administering proselyte baptism would not allow even a finger ring to break the contact of the water with the person, and that the available evidence indicates that early Christian immersion was administered with the candidate completely nude. He adds that presumably no one would desire to copy this feature at the present day.

Warfield traces Christian practice to the middle of the second century after Christ. He shows by literary and monumental evidence that at that time triple immersion was the common mode of baptism, but that pouring was freely allowed as an alternative mode when required because of scarcity of water or illness of the person baptized. He adds that it is a fair presumption that this represents the original Christian practice, but that this cannot be regarded as absolutely proved. For a solid and satisfying solution of the problem of the mode of baptism we must turn from archaeology and church history to the Bible itself. (*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. I, p. 447).

Another approach to the problem is by way of John the Baptist and the rite of baptism as administered by him. Related to this is the whole subject of Jewish proselyte baptism. It is often claimed as self-evident that John baptized by immersion. The present-day Baptist who says "I want to be baptized the way Jesus was" is taking for granted that John baptized exclusively by immersion. The scene of Jesus' baptism is often depicted in stained glass church windows, and almost invariably it is depicted as immersion. To state that we should be immersed because Jesus was immersed is really a question-begging method of argument. It is by no means proven that Jesus was immersed. The matter is debatable, to say the least. We shall note some of the evidence later in this study.

But even if it could be conceded as proven that John baptized exclusively by immersion, and that Jesus was immersed, still this would not necessarily settle the question concerning the mode of Christian baptism. For John's baptism was not Christian baptism. Baptists commonly assume that the two were essentially identical, but this assumption is unwarranted. As a matter of fact it can be proved that John's baptism was essentially different from Christian baptism. This is shown by Acts 19:1-5, where Paul at Ephesus finds a dozen "disciples" who state that they have received John's baptism. Paul declares this insufficient, whereupon these men are "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." If John's baptism and Christian baptism were essentially identical, it is inconceivable that those who had already received the one would be required to receive the other in addition.

There are other approaches which may place us on solid ground. One of these is to approach the problem by way of the meaning of the terminology of baptism used in the Bible. Another is by way of examination of the descriptions of the actual circumstances and procedures of baptism as found in the historical narratives of the New Testament. We shall first inquire into the meaning of the terminology of baptism in the Bible, after which we shall consider the data of the administration of baptism in the historical narratives of the New Testament; and finally we shall consider the further question of whether the mode of baptism is symbolically significant of the essential meaning of baptism.

With regard to the terminology of baptism in the Bible, I am indebted for most of what I shall say to the chapter on **The Mode of Baptism** in the book entitled **Christian Baptism** by Professor John Murray (Philadelphia, 1952; reprinted from **The Westminster Theological Journal**, May and November, 1951).

Professor Murray states that "The Baptist argument rests mainly upon two contentions: (1) that **baptizo** means to immerse and (2) that passages like Romans 6:3-6 and Colossians 2:11, 12 plainly imply that the death and resurrection of Christ provide us with the pattern for immersion in, and emergence from, the water" (**Christian Baptism**, p. 9).

He takes up these two Baptist arguments in turn, first dealing with the meaning of the verb **baptizo**. He traces this verb first in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, stating that it is of infrequent occurrence in the LXX. One instance of its use is in 2 Kings 5:14, where Naaman the Syrian is said to have baptized himself seven times in the Jordan. This does not prove that Naaman immersed himself in the Jordan. All that can be regarded as certain is that he bathed seven times in the river. Whether this involved immersion is not clear from either the original Hebrew or the Greek translation.

This instance of the use of **baptizo** therefore proves nothing.

The word **bapto** occurs more frequently in the LXX of the Old Testament, and may sometimes refer to immersion, but the verb **bapto** does not actually mean immersion. Murray points out very acutely that the real question is not whether **bapto** and **baptizo** are used for acts which involved immersion, but whether these words necessarily mean immersion, that is, whether they can be equated with immersion. He states emphatically that neither **bapto** nor **baptizo** means immersion, as is proved by the fact that in some cases these terms are used for acts which did not involve immersion. An example of this is found in the LXX of Leviticus 14:6, 51, where the ritual concerning leprosy involved the use of two birds. One bird was killed, and the other bird was dipped in the blood of the bird that had been killed. The word used in the LXX of this passage is **bapto**. It is clear that no bird has enough blood for the immersion of another bird of the same kind. Murray states that the living bird could be dipped in the blood of the slain bird, but could not be immersed, because there would not be enough blood for immersion. Therefore **bapto** does not mean immersion, for here it is used of an act where immersion was not involved. To the assertion that the living bird might be immersed in water in which the blood of the slain bird had been mixed, Murray replies that the passage, Levit. 14:51, 52 distinguishes between dipping in the blood and dipping in the water.

Murray cites other instances of usage of **bapto** and **baptizo** in the LXX of the Old Testament. Among the most striking are Daniel 4:33 and 5:21, where the Greek **Bapto** occurs as the translation of an Aramaic verb. The connection is Nebuchadnezzar's insanity. The King James Version renders the clause in question by "his body was wet with the dew of heaven." The Greek is **kai apo tes drosou tou ouranou to soma autou ebaphe** (Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 14). Nebuchadnezzar may indeed have been very wet with the dew of heaven, but it is surely clear that he could not have been immersed in the dew of heaven. Therefore here again the Greek **bapto** does not mean immersion.

Turning to the New Testament, Murray discusses several passages in which **baptizo** or related words occur, and shows how these fail to substantiate the Baptist contention, and in some cases prove exactly the opposite.

The first New Testament passage which Murray discusses is Luke 11:38, with Matthew 15:2 and Mark 7:2-5. The connection of Luke 11:38 is Jesus dining in the home of a Pharisee, who "marveled that he had not first washed before dinner". The Greek here is **ou proton ebaptiste pro tou aristou**. What the English version renders as "washed", therefore, in the

Greek is actually "was baptized" or "baptized himself." This "baptized" is evidently equivalent to the word **nipsontai** in Matt. 15:2 and Mark 7:3. It is not clear that even the hands were actually immersed in water; the act was apparently the pouring of water, or having it poured, over the hands. In Luke 11:38 there is no mention of the hands; the Pharisee simply is said to have marveled that Jesus "was not baptized" before the dinner. Murray concludes that here **baptizo** is used of an action which did not involve the person being immersed, but only the washing of the hands (*op. cit.*, p. 17).

In Mark 7:4 there is a textual question, some manuscripts having the word **baptizo** while others have **hrantizo**. The latter verb means "sprinkle." This word cannot be used to denote an act of immersion; **baptizo** can denote an act of immersion but does not mean immersion. Hence, Murray says, "to adduce cases in which 'baptize' or 'baptism' is used to denote an act performed by immersion does not prove that they mean immersion" (p. 20). He adds that there is no proof that **baptizo**, even if this reading is the genuine one in Mark 7:4a, is used in the sense of "immerse."

It should be added that there is a textual question as to the genuineness of the word **klinon** in Mark 7:4 ("couches"). Several MSS and Nestle's critical text omit this word. Therefore we should avoid using it as the basis for a point of argument, as has often been done. The argument has been that couches could not very well be immersed. But it is quite possible that couches could be taken apart and immersed. The couches might be specially constructed with this very thing in view. Besides this it is doubtful that the word "couches" is genuine at all.

Murray next takes up Hebrews 9:10-23, where the expression **diaphorois baptismois** ("diverse baptisms"; "diverse washings") is used to describe certain Old Testament rites. The phrase occurs in Heb. 9:10. In the context, verse 13, "sprinkling" is mentioned as one of the Old Testament rites under discussion. Hence it would seem that a rite consisting of sprinkling is listed as included under the category of "diverse baptisms". Clearly, then, **baptismois** here cannot mean immersions. Moreover, we may inquire what immersions there were in the Old Testament system that would fit the **baptismois** of Heb. 9:10. While there were many rites of sprinkling, it is difficult to see what immersions prescribed in the Old Testament would fit Hebrews 9:10.

Next Murray takes up the Baptism of the Spirit, in such passages as Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, with reference also to Acts 1:5 and 11:16. The question is whether the baptism of the Holy Spirit can be called immersion or not. Jesus said that His disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Can this mean immersed in the Holy Spirit?

John the Baptist predicted that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. If baptism necessarily means immersion, then this statement must mean that Jesus would immerse in the Holy Spirit and fire. But such an idea is quite contrary to the actual phenomena of the fulfilment of the prediction. The terms used of the coming of the Holy Spirit are "pour forth", "shed forth" (Acts 2:33), "come upon", none of which suggests the idea of immersion in the Spirit as one might be immersed in water.

In Acts 1:8 Jesus said to the assembled disciples, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Here the verb is **ep-erchomai**. In Acts 2:17, 33, the Spirit is said to be "poured out" or "shed forth", and the Greek verb is **ekcheo**. In Acts 10:44 and 11:15 the Holy Spirit is said to "fall" on the believers, and the Greek verb is **epipipto**. Mention may also be made of Titus 3:6 where the Holy Spirit is "shed" or "poured" on Christians, and the Greek verb is **ekcheo**. It is worthy of note that in all these cases in Acts and the Epistles the language used of the coming of the Holy Spirit to believers has affinities with sprinkling or pouring rather than with immersion. Again, at the Day of Pentecost, in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit became visibly present as tongues of flame which "sat" upon each of the Christians; the Greek is **ekathisen**. Baptism with fire had been predicted. Here at Pentecost is baptism with fire, but certainly not immersion in fire.

Another New Testament passage discussed by Murray is 1 Cor. 10:2, "All were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Murray states that if the Baptist argument is sound, this text must allude to the **mode** of baptism. It must therefore mean that the ancient Israelites were immersed in the cloud and in the Red Sea. But that is exactly what did not happen to them. It has been aptly observed by another writer that the Israelites were baptized without being immersed, while the Egyptians were immersed without being baptized! The Old Testament record explicitly states that the Israelites got across without getting wet — on dry ground (Ex. 14:22). Against this it has been argued by Baptists that the Israelites were actually below the level of the water, which was piled high to the right and left of them, so they were virtually immersed even though they remained perfectly dry. Murray answers this by saying that this is not what Baptists ordinarily mean by immersion — an immersion which leaves one perfectly dry has little in common with the rite of baptism as performed by Baptists.

As for the pillar of cloud, Paul says that the Israelites were baptized in the cloud. But according to the record in Exodus (Ex. 13:21), the cloud was before them. It did not surround them nor did they enter into it. It was to lead the way before them, and on one occasion it served as

an impenetrable barrier between them and the Egyptians. Yet the Israelites were baptized in the cloud. It is hard to see how this can possibly mean immersion. In what sense could it be said that the Israelites were immersed in the cloud?

In dealing with the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip (Acts 8:26-40), Murray states that this incident proves nothing about the mode of baptism one way or the other. It has been used both by immersionists to prove immersion and by anti-immersionists to prove non-immersion. The immersionist have stressed the words "went down into the water" as proving immersion, while anti-immersionists have argued that in such a desert region there could not have been deep enough water for immersion. Murray points out that it is a mere surmise that there could not have been enough water for immersion. Even in desert country there are ponds and reservoirs in places. On the other hand, the words "went down into the water," if they prove anything, prove too much, for it is explicitly stated that **both** Philip and the Eunuch "went down into the water." Therefore if this means that the eunuch was immersed it means that Philip was immersed also. But even Baptists do not suppose that Philip as the administrator of the baptism was himself completely immersed under the water. It is entirely possible that Philip **did** immerse the eunuch, but the passage does not prove that he did. All that it proves is that they descended to the water level and stood at the edge or in the shallow water near the edge. Hence this passage proves nothing about the mode of baptism.

In dealing with the baptism administered by John the Baptist, Murray demonstrates that it need not have been immersion. The fact that John at one time baptized at Aenon near Salim "because there was much water there" (John 3:23) and on another occasion baptized "in the Jordan" (Matt. 3:6) have been appealed to as proving that the mode was immersion. It may very likely have been immersion, but there is no real proof that it was. Even for baptism by pouring "much water" would be needed, because great multitudes flocked to the baptism of John. And apart from the water actually used in the rite of baptism, so many people, many of whom had travelled long distances, would need considerable quantities of water for drinking, washing and for their animals. The water supply of an ordinary Palestinian community would have been quite disrupted by such unusual demands upon its resources. The statement that John baptized "in the river Jordan" is no more than a designation of the location where he was working, and carries no implication as to the mode of administration of the rite itself.

Murray's general conclusion with regard to the terminology of Baptism in the Bible is as follows:

"On the basis of such considerations as these,

derived from both Old and New Testaments, we are led to the conclusion that though the word **baptizo** and its cognates can be used to denote an action performed by immersion yet they may also be used to denote an action that can be performed by a variety of modes. Consequently the word **baptizo** itself cannot be pleaded as an argument for the necessity of immersion as the mode of baptism" (*op. cit.*, p. 29).

Turning to the actual instances of the administration of baptism in the New Testament, it should be noted first of all that these are extremely scanty. We have only a few recorded baptisms, and what is said about them is told in a very few words in each case. There are statements about groups of people being baptized, and even of three thousand on a single occasion (Acts 2:41). But in no case are we told just how the rite was performed. It is hardly even possible to say whether baptism was performed indoors or out of doors. The three thousand baptized at Pentecost presumably received the rite in the open air, but this cannot be proved. The Philippian jailer was baptized with his household at midnight (Acts 16:33), but the location is not stated. Nor do we know the place and circumstances of the baptism of Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:47, 48). In Acts 8:12 we read of a group of people in Samaria being baptized, and in verse 13 Simon the Sorcerer was baptized. Again, in Acts 9:18 Saul of Tarsus was baptized at Damascus, and in Acts 16:15 we read of the baptism of Lydia of Philippi. In none of these cases is there any real evidence as to the mode of administration of baptism. As it was by a river side that Lydia heard Paul preach, we may suppose that she was baptized in that same river, but again there is no evidence that it was by immersion. These instances of baptism in the book of Acts prove nothing one way or the other about the mode of baptism. At most they may suggest possibilities or what may seem to some to be probabilities, but no certainties. It is a mistake to use these cases in argument against immersionists, for nothing is proved, and the impression is given that our case must be very weak if we have to resort to such inconclusive data to prove our point. The case for immersion remains unproved. Neither the terminology of Baptism in the Bible nor the recorded instances of the administration in the New Testament prove the immersionists' claim.

Another main line of immersionist argument is built upon the idea that the essential meaning of baptism is burial and resurrection with Christ, which, it is claimed, is dramatized or portrayed by immersion and emergence from the water, but which cannot be portrayed by either sprinkling or pouring. This argument is often presented with a great show of plausibility, and is perhaps regarded by many immersionists as their main proof for the necessity of immersion.

The starting point for this argument is the passage in Romans 6:2-6, together with a partial parallel in Colossians 2:12. The passage in Romans states that Christians are baptized into Christ's death and that "we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3, 4); that in Colossians speaks of Christians as buried with Christ in baptism. On the basis of these two passages it is claimed by immersionists that the primary or basic meaning of baptism is burial, and that only immersion can portray burial. Therefore, it is claimed, these two passages in Paul's Epistles absolutely require that immersion be regarded as the only valid mode of baptism.

Several things may be said in answer to this immersionist claim. In the first place, it is not correct to say that the basic meaning of baptism is burial and resurrection. It would be more nearly correct to say that the basic meaning of baptism is cleansing or washing. But even this would not be exactly correct, either. The basic meaning of baptism is union with the Triune God, hence participation in the benefits of God's plan of redemption through the mediatorial work of Christ. It is not necessary to take time in this lecture to give the proof of this proposition in detail. It is given convincingly by Murray in the book already cited, and has been given by other authors. Something may be said about it, however. The Great Commission of our Lord includes the command to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Literally it is *into* the name — the Greek preposition *eis* followed by the accusative case (Matt. 28:19). If it were only *into* the name of the Son, we might think that cleansing or purification must be the basic meaning of baptism — that as water cleanses away dirt, so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses away sin. But baptism is *into* the name of the divine Trinity, not simply *into* the name of Jesus Christ. It signifies a relationship to God the Father and the Holy Spirit as well as a relationship to Christ. Hence cleansing by Christ's atoning blood cannot be its sole import. The Israelites were baptized "into Moses" or "unto Moses" (1 Cor. 10:2), meaning that they came to participate in a relationship to Moses, by virtue of which they received special benefits. But they were not cleansed from sin by the blood of Moses. The basic idea is therefore not simply cleansing. Nor is the basic idea burial and resurrection, which would not at all fit the idea of the Israelites being baptized "into Moses". The basic and inclusive meaning of baptism, therefore, is union with the Triune God.

However the benefits of this union come primarily through Christ, the atoning Mediator, and Christianity is pre-eminently the religion of redemption through the shed blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin. Therefore it is correct to say that subordinately to the basic

meaning of union with the Triune God, baptism signifies cleansing from the guilt of sin. It is not correct to say that the basic meaning of baptism is burial and resurrection. In controversy with immersionists, it is necessary to insist upon this point. For if we allow the claim that baptism basically signifies burial, it will prove futile to argue further as to the precise import of the passages in Romans and Colossians.

In the second place, burial today in Europe and America is very different from burial in ancient Israel. We dig a grave or sink a shaft several feet deep into the ground, and the body is covered with many feet of earth. In ancient Israel burial was often in natural or artificial caves. The burial of Jesus Himself affords an example. He was buried in a cave — not a natural cave but an artificial one which Joseph of Arimathea had hewn out of a rocky cliff (Mark 15:46). To this artificial cavern there was a narrow entrance which could be sealed off by placing a large boulder against the opening. This burial was not underground at all in the ordinary sense of the term. And it is rather difficult to see what it had in common with baptism as practiced by immersionists. The body of Jesus was not lowered below the surface of the ground, but carried horizontally into the cave and there laid to rest.

Paul was writing to the Roman Christians. We have all read descriptions of the catacombs of Rome where the mortal remains of thousands of the early Christian dead were laid to rest. These again were not “buried” as we would understand the term today. The body was placed in a niche hollowed out of the catacomb wall. If the Christians who first read Paul’s Epistle to the Romans thought of this kind of burial, how could this call to their minds the idea of baptism by immersion beneath the surface of a body of water? Would they think in terms of such imagery as they read Romans chapter 6? We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, certainly, as the Scripture says. But this means that by baptism we are united or connected with Christ so as to receive the benefits of His death. It is not proven that any reference to the mode of baptism is intended.

Moreover, both in Romans 6 and in Colossians 2 the subject under discussion is not baptism and how to administer it, but sanctification. The apostle is discussing how Christians ought to live, in view of the fact that they have been united with Christ so as to receive the benefits of His death. They are to live a new life of moral uprightness and holiness. If the subject being discussed in these two passages were baptism, there might be some color to the claim that the passages teach that baptism is intended to portray burial and resurrection. But as a matter of fact, baptism is mentioned only incidentally in both passages. It is introduced as one part of the apostle’s argument as to how Christians ought to live. To press the reference to burial so as

to regard it as implying that baptism is a dramatization of burial is not sound exegesis. We might as well argue that because the Church is called “the city of God”, Christians ought not to live in the suburbs or in rural districts; or that because Christians are called Christ’s sheep, they ought always to wear clothes made of wool. The true conclusion to be drawn from Romans 6:4 is not that we should be baptized by immersion, but that we should “walk in newness of life”; the true inference to be drawn from Col. 2:12 is “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:2).

Again, burial is only one of the figures used to denote the believer’s union with Christ. The New Testament abounds in others. For instance, Christians are branches of the true vine, namely, of Christ. Christ is the head, and Christians are His members, as arms and legs are members of a human body. Christ is the door, and through Him we enter into the house of salvation. Christ is the tree, and Christians are grafted into vital union with Him. Christ is the passover Lamb, and we partake of His flesh and His blood. This kind of figurative language is common in Scripture, and many more examples could be cited. But even in the immediate context of Romans 6:4 the apostle uses other figures than that of burial and resurrection. In verse 5 he speaks of Christians being “planted” together with Christ, and in verse 6 of their being “crucified” with Christ. No one asserts that crucifixion is dramatized or portrayed by the mode of baptism. Yet sound exegesis would require that if baptism essentially portrays burial, it must also essentially portray crucifixion. But it obviously does not portray crucifixion. We are warranted in concluding, therefore, that Paul is not in this passage implying anything concerning the mode of baptism; he is only setting forth some of the redemptive facts and spiritual realities which benefit the believer through his union with Christ, of which baptism is the sign and seal.

The various counts of the immersionist position are thus shown to be not proven. The terminology of baptism may be used of acts which involve immersion but it may also be used of acts which do not involve immersion, therefore the terminology does not essentially mean immersion. The recorded instances of baptism of individuals or groups in the New Testament prove nothing one way or the other as to the mode of administration employed. The passages appealed to in support of the idea that the essential meaning of baptism is burial and resurrection, when examined by sound exegetical methods, are found to contain no such teaching. Thus we are left with assumptions and alleged probabilities, but no proven certainties, as to the mode of administration of baptism in the apostolic age.

Warfield says: “It would hardly appear probable that the mode of applying the water in bap-

tism can enter into the very essence of the sacrament, when it is so difficult to obtain certainty as to what the mode was in the hands of the apostles" (*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. I, pp. 449, 450). He also says, "No mode of applying the water is prescribed in the New Testament. In the record the New Testament gives of acts of baptism, the mode in which the water was applied is never described. It is never even implied with a clearness which would render differences of interpretation impossible. . . . Candor would seem to compel the admission that not only is there no stress laid in the New Testament on the mode of applying the water in baptism, but that all the allusions to baptism in the New Testament can find ready explanation on the assumption of any of the modes of administration which have been widely practised in the Churches" (*ibid.*, pp. 447, 448).

We may well conclude, therefore, by reaffirming the historic position of the Presbyterian family of Churches that immersion in water is not necessary, but that baptism is rightly performed either by sprinkling or by pouring (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, XXVIII. 3. *Reformed Presbyterian Testimony*, XXV, Error 5, "That over-

whelming with water is essential to Christian baptism.") Our Church in common with the vast majority of Christians of all ages holds that any one of the three historical modes constitutes a valid and Scriptural administration of baptism. **The Directory for Worship** of our denomination sets forth this position (III. 3, in **Constitution of the R. P. Church**, page 313), by its statement that "The water is applied by sprinkling or pouring, though the Church accepts baptism by immersion". Incidentally, the **Directory** does not specify sprinkling in preference to pouring, as in the actual instructions for baptism it merely states that the minister "shall place the water on the head" of the person to be baptized. How it is to be placed there — whether by sprinkling or by pouring — is not specified. (**Constitution**, page 315).

Our disagreement with our Baptist brethren, therefore, is not because of their practice of immersion, but rather because of their unjustifiable and unscriptural claim that immersion alone constitutes Christian baptism. The Scriptural data do not substantiate this claim, and our verdict must be that their case is not proven. We are fully warranted, therefore, in continuing our customary practice of baptism by sprinkling.

T U L I P

A Study of the Five Points of Calvinism

(Continued from last issue)

By the Rev. Robert M. More, Jr.

TULIP is no obscurantist's theological quirk. It is either heretical or Scriptural. There seems to be no middle position. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to examine it conscientiously and decide which is the case.

Bulb "T" stands for Total Depravity, or to use different words, moral inability. But what does total depravity mean? Do the expressive words of Sir (also "saint" since 1935 in Roman Catholic parlance) Thomas More about William Tyndale describe the doctrine? More wrote that he was a "beast pouring out a filthy foam of blasphemies from his brutish, beastly mouth. . . a shameful, shameless, unreasonable, railing ribald. . . one of the hellhounds that the devil hath in his kennel" (Gulston, *No Greater Heritage*, p. 178).

On the other hand, is not the *Westminster Confession of Faith* far superior? "By this sin they (our first parents) fell from (1) their original righteousness and communion with God, and so (2) became dead in sin, and (3) wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body" (Chap. VI, Sec. II). It says that total depravity

consists of three things: first, a loss of Adamic righteousness; second, an earned death; third, a retained filthiness in thought, word and deed. The *Testimony* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church reiterates this: "Man . . . is nevertheless sinful in his disposition, criminal in every part of his conduct, incapable of ascertaining. . . the extent of his own guilt and depravity (Chap. II, Sec. 3). Luther and the Augsburg Confession said the same thing: "Since the fall of Adam. . . All men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers' wombs. . ." (Tappart, p. 29). The Synod of Dort gives an outstanding declaration. Under its third head of doctrine these words appear: "but, revolting from God by the instigation of the devil and by his own free will, he (man) forfeited these excellent gifts; and in the place thereof became involved in blindness of mind, horrible darkness, vanity, and perverseness of judgment, became wicked, rebellious, and obdurate in heart and will, and impure in his affections."

The Scripture is replete with statements concerning man's nature. The Old Testament has

many passages; the New Testament speaks numerous times of the doctrine of man's depravity. So what does it say?

Psalm 14 reads, "there is none that doeth good. . . They are all gone aside, they are together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Paul, as is immediately recognized, quotes this passage in Romans chapter three to document this truth. David adds, after his heinous crime against Bathsheba, in Psalm 51:5, "behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." This does not prove that procreation is a sinful act; it only says that even an embryo child is considered by God to be sinful in nature. Psalm 5:9 reminds us that "there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre." Proverbs 21:4 mentions that "an high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin." And why should this action be sinful? Verse 27 explains, "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" Jeremiah 17:9 proclaims, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately (or, incurably) wicked: who can know it?" And if this is not clear enough, let us hear God's evaluation. In Genesis 6:5 He says, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Then again note Gen. 8:21, "for the imagination (or, desire) of man's heart is evil from his youth." Man is surely depraved.

Jesus also focused His message upon this truth. "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost (ruined)", He says in Luke 19:10. Mark adds, "the Son of man. . . came. . . to give his life a ransom for many" (10:45). Jesus said, "I came not to call righteous ones, but sinners" (Matt. 9:13). In Matt. 7:11 the probably correct translation is: "if ye therefore being (of) the evil one. . .". And let us not forget the Lord's prayer in Matt. 6:13, "but rescue us from the evil one" (again the same word). Finally, Christ is very clear in Matt. 23:23-33 about this doctrine. Verse 33 climaxes the passage: "Snakes, the generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of Gehenna?"

Paul systematizes this doctrine, especially in the book of Romans. The conclusion is stated in 3:23, "for all sinned and lack (fall short of) the glory of God" All have "missed the mark" as the Hebrew word *khatta* (translated "sin" in the Old Testament) signifies. Paul also states that sin dominates the person, since he is in this condition — "ye were the slaves of sin" (Rom. 6:17). Assuredly, therefore, total depravity is taught in the Scripture. But in what condition does this leave the sinner?

This doctrine only states that man is sinful

in his every part — body and soul. His thoughts, his actions, his emotions, his desires, his attitudes, his mind, his passions — all of these have received the death-knell of sin. They are tainted with the blight of sin. There is nothing left about him that is not subject to sin's command. This however does not mean that he is as evil as possible, for in an admittedly mysteriously way, God does restrain the total evil of sinners in this world (note Psalm 76:10). The depraved sinner can ever find more room to expand and intensify his evil. Thus total depravity means, not that the sinner is as bad as he could become, but rather that he is ruled by sin in all parts of his existence.

This doctrine also confesses that the sinner is dead. This is disregarded by the Arminian who urges the sinner, virtually, to raise himself from the dead by his free will, as if this were in his power apart from the Holy Spirit's regeneration.

The **Testimony** of the Reformed Presbyterian Church has defined this extremely well. "Every one of God's elect, is, in the time appointed in the council of peace, apprehended of Christ by his Spirit, as one of his redeemed children; is regenerated, and thereby enabled to embrace the Saviour" (XIV. 2). First of all Christ apprehends or arrests the sinner's plunge. He is then regenerated or given life, which results in the sinner being able then, and only then, to "embrace the Saviour." This is indeed Scriptural in order.

But surely Revelation 3:20 militates against this? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter to him and I will dine with him and he with me." Unfortunately we study pictures (with Christ at a door which doesn't have a door-knob) more than we do the context of the passage. John writes, in verse 14, to "the messenger of the church in Laodicea." Here "messenger" is generally taken as referring to the pastor. In any case, **the whole passage is written to a Christian church.** Even as now, membership in the Christian church is reserved only for those who are Christians. Therefore, from the first word, Rev. 3:20 cannot be a call to "take" Christ into your heart's home and so become saved. Then what does it mean? The church of Laodicea had declined from its spiritual foundation, had grown slovenly obese in materialism, but yet, perhaps, there is still a growing child of God within her. Therefore Christ pleads with that son: Open the church's door of spiritual purity, and again I will magnify her as my chosen bride. This verse therefore says nothing in favor of the idea that the unregenerate sinner can raise himself to spiritual life.

John 5:40 is also mentioned at times: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." This passage, we are told, predicates to man the ability to come. But such need not be the case.

It can also be a mere statement of the fact that men do not come. Just a few verses previously, Jesus had said, "ye have not my word remaining in you." To this they were contrary. They had witnessed miracles; to this they were blind. They had heard Christ's teaching; to this they were deaf. They had the Scripture: this they denied. In a word, "ye wish not to come to me," simply because you cannot even wish. They were too dead. But supposing that this passage did predicate ability to the sinner, then (we must observe), John blandly "contradicts" this in 6:44, where he says, "No one is able to come to me except the Father, the one having sent me, should draw him." The truth is, the Pharisees did not

come by their will since they could not come by their will.

It should be clear, in conclusion, that total depravity describes the condition of all mankind. Bulb "T" is not founded upon the idle speculations of some philosophical theologian; it is not woven out of theological whole cloth; it is Scriptural. Every person is therefore a condemned sinner, worthy of God's wrathful, but perfectly correct, justice. Surely then it is magnanimous grace, on God's part, that He gave bulb "U" — unconditional election — to despicable and doomed sinners.

(To be continued)

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

IV.

ARGUMENT FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN STANDARDS (CONTINUED)

To this it must be added that this particular provision of the Confession is to be interpreted in conformity with its catholic teaching and that of its sister standards. Both represent the singing of psalms as prescribed. Both are silent about the prescription of instrumental music. Now if it could be proved that the latter is necessary to the former, the prescription of one would logically imply the prescription of the other. But we have seen that there is no such necessity. We are obliged therefore to exclude instrumental music as illegitimate, in view of the express declaration of the Confession and other standards that we are forbidden to introduce anything into the worship of God which is not prescribed. Here is a circumstance which is neither necessary nor prescribed. It cannot, therefore, be among the circumstances legitimated by the Confession.

We have now seen that the action of singing praise in the worship of God is one peculiar to the church and not common to it with all other societies, and that instrumental music is a circumstance concerning this peculiar ecclesiastical action which, therefore, cannot be common to human actions and societies. Consequently, it is not one of those circumstances which are in the discretionary power of the church, precisely as they are in the discretionary power of all societies. No circumstance peculiar to and distinctive of the church, as such, can be one of the circumstances mentioned by the Confession of Faith.

The question then returns: What are the circumstances concerning the worship of God which

the church has the right to order according to the light of nature and Christian prudence? Their proper definition is, that **they are CONDITIONS upon which the actions of all human societies are performed, — conditions without which the actions of any society either cannot be performed at all, or cannot be performed decently and in order.**

First, They are conditions which are not peculiar to the acts of any particular society, but common to the acts of all societies. They cannot, consequently, be peculiar to the acts of the church as a particular society. But instrumental music is a condition peculiar to the act of singing praise in **some** particular churches. The conclusion is obvious. Let us take, for example, the circumstances of time and place. They condition the meeting and therefore the acts of every society. None could meet and act without the appointment of a time and a place for the assembly. This is true alike of the church and an infidel club. In this respect they are dependent upon the same conditions. Neither could meet and act without complying with this condition. This is a specimen of the Confession's circumstances which are common to human actions and societies. It is ridiculous to say that instrumental music is in such a category.

It cannot be overlooked, as has just been intimated, that instrumental music is a circumstance which is not common to even particular churches. Some have it, and some do not. How can it be common to all societies, when it is not common to churches themselves? How can the conclusion be avoided, that it is not one of the circumstances designated by the Confession of Faith?

Secondly, The circumstances indicated by the Confession are not parts of the acts of societies: they simply condition the performance of the acts. They are in no sense qualities or modes of the acts. If the proof of this position is required, it is found in the simple consideration that some at least of the acts of various societies are different acts — they are not common between them. It is therefore obvious that the parts of those act fall into the category of the acts of which they are parts. But these circumstances are common to the acts of all societies. To recur to the example of time and place. These, it is needless to say, while necessary conditions of the acts of all societies, are, from the nature of the case, parts of the acts of none. The resolutions adopted by any society surely do not embrace in them time and place as integral elements, or qualities or modes. But instrumental music, although sometimes employed in churches by itself as a distinct act — in which case it stands confessed as not prescribed and forbidden — is generally used along with singing as a part of the act of church-worship. In these cases it certainly qualifies or modifies the act. As, therefore, it enters as an element into the acts of the church, as a distinctive society, and does not into the acts of all societies, it is ruled out by that fact from the class of circumstances indicated by the Confession.

Thirdly, These circumstances are conditions of actions as they are actions, and not as they are these or those particular kinds of actions. They condition all sorts of actions of all sorts of societies. The debates and votes of a secular deliberative body are as much conditioned by them as the prayers and praises of the church. It will scarcely be contended that instrumental music is a circumstance which conditions the debates and votes of a legislature or of a political meeting. But if not, it is conceded to be excluded from those circumstances which are pronounced by the Confession common to human actions and societies.

Fourthly, These circumstances are conditions **necessary** to the actions of all societies, — necessary either to the performance of the actions, or to their decorous performance. Let it be observed, that they are necessary not to the performance or the decorous performance of some peculiar actions of particular societies, but to all the actions of all societies. To take the ground that instrumental music is a circumstance in some way a necessary condition of the singing of praise in church-worship is to go outside of those circumstances which the Confession of Faith contemplates. A condition of this peculiar action of the church, however necessary to the performance of the action its employers may deem it, cannot possibly be a common condition of human actions and societies. It lies outside of that class, and therefore outside of the circumstances which the Confession has in view. Instrumental music is palpably such a condition, and cannot be justi-

fied by an appeal to this section of the Confession.

Fifthly, These circumstances, as conditions upon which the acts of societies are to be done, cannot be **religious** in their character. The reason is perfectly plain: they condition the acts of all secular societies, and it would be out of the question to say that they proceed upon religious conditions. But instrumental music when employed in the worship of God's house is religious. Hence the plea for organs, that they have a solemn sound, and are on that account peculiarly adapted to accompany the singing of praise as a religious act. If it be said that they are a secular accompaniment of religious worship, it may well be asked, By what right is such an accompaniment to the worship of God employed, without a distinct warrant from him? And when the organ is played without the accompaniment of the singing of praise, is it then secular or religious? If secular, will it be justified on the ground that secular music may, by itself, be allowed in God's house, and that he may be worshipped in a worldly manner? If religious, the question is given up; and then we are compelled to return to the assertion that the church has no discretion in appointing religious elements: they are not among the circumstances which are common to human actions and societies.

The foregoing argument has shown that instrumental music cannot, on any supposable ground, be regarded as a circumstance common to human actions and societies, and that it is therefore excluded by the Confession of Faith from the discretionary control of the church. Unless, then, it can be proved to be one of the things commanded by Christ and his apostles, it cannot be lawfully employed in connection with the worship of God's house. In order to meet the criticism which may be passed upon the argument that it springs from a singular and contracted conception of the doctrine as to circumstances stated in the Confession of Faith, the views of a few eminent theologians will be cited in its support.

Dr. John Owen, in arguing against a liturgy, enunciates the principles contended for in these remarks. "Circumstances," he says, (*Works*, Vol. xv., pp. 35, 36, Gould's Ed.) "are either such as follow actions as actions, or such as are arbitrarily superadded and adjoined by command unto actions, which do not of their own accord, nor naturally nor necessarily attend them. Now religious actions in the worship of God are actions still. Their religious relation doth not destroy their natural being. Those circumstances, then, which do attend such actions as actions not determined by divine institution, may be ordered, disposed of, and regulated by the prudence of men. For instance, prayer is a part of God's worship. Public prayer is so, as appointed by him. This, as it is an action to be performed by man, cannot be done without the assignment of

time, and place, and sundry other things, if order and conveniency be attended to. These are circumstances that attend all actions of that nature, to be performed by a community, whether they relate to the worship of God or no. These men may, according as they see good, regulate and change as there is occasion; I mean, they may do so who are acknowledged to have power in such things. As the action cannot be without them, so their regulation is arbitrary, if they come not under some divine disposition and order, as that of time in general doth. There are also some things, which some men call circumstances also, that no way belong of themselves to the actions whereof they are said to be the circumstances, nor do attend them, but are imposed on them, or annexed unto them, by the arbitrary authority of those who take upon them to give order and rules in such cases; such as to pray before an image or towards the east, or to use this or that form of prayer in such gospel administrations, and no other. These are not circumstances attending the nature of the thing itself, but are arbitrarily superadded to the things that they are appointed to accompany. Whatever men may call such additions, they are no less parts of the whole wherein they serve than the things themselves whereunto they are adjoined." He then goes on to prove from Scripture that "such additions to or in the worship of God, besides or beyond his own institution and appointment" are not "allowable, or lawful to be practised."

In another place the same great theologian says: (*Works*, Vol. xv., pp. 469, 471, Gould's ed.) "Whatever is of circumstance in the manner of its performance (worship), not capable of especial determination, as emerging or arising only **occasionally**, upon the doing of that which is appointed at this or that time, in this or that place, and the like, is left unto the rule of **moral prudence**, in whose observation their order doth consist. But the superaddition of ceremonies necessarily belonging neither to the institutions of worship nor unto those circumstances whose disposal falls under the rule of moral prudence, neither doth nor can add any thing unto the due order of gospel worship; so that they are altogether needless and useless in the worship of God. Neither is this the whole of the inconvenience wherewith their observance is attended; for although they are not in particular and expressly in the Scripture forbidden — for it was simply impossible that all instances wherein the wit of man might exercise its invention in such things should be reckoned up and condemned — yet they fall directly under those severe prohibitions which God hath recorded to secure his worship from all such additions unto it of what sort soever. . . . The Papists say, indeed, that all **additions corrupting** the worship of God are forbidden, but such as further adorn and preserve it are not so, which implies a contradiction, for whereas every **addition** is principally

a **corruption** because it is an addition, under which notion it is forbidden (and that in the worship of God which is forbidden is a corruption of it), there can be no such preserving, adorning addition, unless we allow a preserving and adorning corruption. Neither is it of more force, which is pleaded by them, that the additions which they make belong not unto the **substance** of the worship of God, but unto the **circumstances** of it; for every circumstance observed religiously, or to be observed in the worship of God, is of the substance of it, as were all those ceremonious observances of the law, which had the same respect in the prohibitions of adding, with the most weighty things whatsoever."

"There is nothing," says George Gillespie, (*Works*, in *Presbyterian's Armoury*, Vol. i., Pref. p. xii.) "which any way pertaineth to the worship of God left to the determination of human laws beside the mere circumstances, which neither have any holiness in them, forasmuch as they have no other use and praise in sacred than they have in civil things, nor yet were particularly determinable in Scripture, because they are infinite; but sacred, significant ceremonies, such as (the) cross, kneeling, surplice, holidays, bishopping, etc., which have no use and praise except in religion only, and which, also, were most easily determinable (yet not determined) within those bounds which the wisdom of God did set to his written Word, are such things as God never left to the determination of any human law."

He speaks more explicitly to the same effect in the following words: (*Works*, in *Presbyterian's Armoury*, Vol. i., p. 130.) "I direct my course straight to the dissecting of the true limits within which the church's power of enacting laws about things pertaining to the worship of God is bounded and confined, and which it may not overleap nor transgress. Three conditions I find necessarily requisite in such a thing as the church has power to prescribe by her laws:

"1. It must be only a circumstance of divine worship; no substantial part of it; no sacred, significant, and efficacious ceremony. For the order and decency left to the definition of the church, as concerning the particulars of it, comprehendeth no more but mere circumstances. . . . Though circumstances be left to the determination of the church, yet ceremonies, if we speak properly, are not . . . circumstances which have place in all moral actions, and that to the same end and purpose for which they serve in religious actions — namely, for beautifying them with that decent demeanor which the very light and law of natural reason requireth as a thing befitting all human actions. For the church of Christ, being a society of men and women, must either observe order and decency in all the circumstances of their holy actions, time, place, person, form, etc., or else be deformed with that disorder and confusion which common reason and civility abhorreth.

"2. That which the church may lawfully prescribe by her laws and ordinances, as a thing left to her determination, must be one of such things as were not determinable by Scripture on that reason which Camero hath given us, namely, because *individua* are *infinita*. . . . We say truly of those several and changeable circumstances which are left to the determination of the church, that, being almost infinite, they were not particularly determinable in Scripture. . . . But as for other things pertaining to God's worship, which are not to be reckoned among the circumstances of it, they being in number neither many nor in change various, were most easily and conveniently determinable in Scripture. Now, since God would have his Word (which is our rule in the works of his service) not to be delivered by tradition, but to be written and sealed unto us, that by this means, for obviating satanical subtilty and succoring human imbecility, we might have a more certain way for conservation of true religion, and for the instauration of it when it faileth among men, — how can we but assure ourselves that every such acceptable thing pertaining any way to religion, which was particularly and conveniently determinable in Scripture, is indeed determined in it; and consequently, that no such thing as is not a mere alterable circumstance is left to the determination of the church?"

"3. If the church prescribe anything lawfully, so that she prescribe no more than she hath power given her to prescribe, her ordinance must be accompanied with some good reason and warrant given for the satisfaction of tender consciences."

"As a positive institution, with a written charter," remarks Dr. Thornwell, (*Coll. Writings*, Vol. iv., p. 244, ff.) "she (the church) is confined to the express or implied teachings of the Word of God, the standard of her authority and rights, . . . as in the sphere of doctrine she has no opinions, but a faith, so, in the sphere of practice, she has no expedients, but a law. Her power is solely ministerial and declarative. Her whole duty is to believe and obey. Whatever is not commanded, expressly or implicitly, is unlawful. . . . According to our view, the law of the church is the positive one of conformity with Scripture; according to the view which we condemned, it is the negative one of non-contradiction to Scripture. According to us, the church, before she can move, must not only show that she is not prohibited, she must also show that she is actually commanded, she must produce a warrant. Hence we absolutely denied that she has any discretion in relation to things not commanded. She can proclaim no laws that Christ has not ordained, institute no ceremonies which he has not appointed, create no offices which he has not prescribed, and exact no obedience which he has not enjoined. She does not enter the wide domain which he has left indifferent, and by her authority bind the conscience where he has left it free.

"But does it follow from this that she has absolutely no discretion at all? On the contrary, we distinctly and repeatedly asserted, that in the sphere of commanded things she has a discretion — a discretion determined by the nature of the actions, and by the divine principle that all things be done decently and in order. . . . We only limited and defined it. We never denied that the church has the right to **fix** the hours of public worship, the times and places of the meetings of her courts, the numbers of which they shall be composed, and the territories which each shall embrace. Our doctrine was precisely that of the Westminster standards, of John Calvin, of John Owen, of the Free Church of Scotland, and of the noble army of Puritan martyrs and confessors."

After quoting the statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith on the subject, he goes on to say: "Here the discretion is limited to **some circumstances**, and those **common to human actions and societies**. Now, the question arises, What is the nature of these circumstances? A glance at the proof-texts on which the doctrine relies enables us to answer. Circumstances are those concomitants of an action without which it either cannot be done at all, or cannot be done with decency and decorum. Public worship, for example, requires public assemblies, and in public assemblies people must appear in some costume, and assume some posture. Whether they shall shock common sentiment in their attire, or conform to common practice; whether they shall stand, sit or lie, or whether each shall be at liberty to determine his own attitude — these are circumstances; they are the necessary concomitants of the action, and the church is at liberty to regulate them. Public assemblies, moreover, cannot be held without fixing the time and place of meeting; these, too, are circumstances which the church is at liberty to regulate. Parliamentary assemblies cannot transact their business with efficiency and despatch — indeed, cannot transact it decently at all — without committees. Committees, therefore, are circumstances common to parliamentary societies, which the church, in her parliaments, is at liberty to appoint. All the details of our government in relation to the distribution of courts, the number necessary to constitute a quorum, the times of their meetings, the manner in which they shall be opened, — all these, and such like, are circumstances, which, therefore, the church has a perfect right to arrange. We must carefully distinguish between those circumstances which attend actions **as actions** — that is, without which the actions could not be, and those circumstances which, though not essential, are added as appendages. These last do not fall within the jurisdiction of the church. She has no right to appoint them. They are circumstances in the sense that they do not belong to the substance of the act. They are not circumstances in the sense that they so surround it that they cannot be separated

from it. A liturgy is a circumstance of this kind, as also the sign of the cross in baptism, and bowing at the name of Jesus. Owen notes the distinction."

These great men concur in showing that the circumstances of which the Confession of Faith speaks as falling under the discretionary control of the church in the sphere of worship are not superadded appendages to the acts of worship, which may or may not accompany them as the church may determine, but are simply **conditions** necessary either to the performance of the acts or to their decent and orderly performance — conditions not peculiar to these acts of the church as a distinctive society, but common to the acts of all societies. Particular attention is challenged to the views cited from Gillespie, for the reason that he was a member of the Westminster Assembly, and of course accurately knew and expounded the doctrine of that body on this subject. He draws a clear distinction between what was determinable by Scripture and what was not. What was not so determinable was left to be determined by the church; what was so determinable was excluded from her discretion. Now it is

certain that instrumental music was, under the Jewish dispensation, actually determined by the revealed will of God as an element in the temple worship. Need it be said that it was, therefore, not indeterminate? It might have pleased God to determine it as an element in the worship of the synagogue, and in like manner it might have pleased him to determine it as an appendage to that of the christian church. He did not, and consequently it is prohibited. This conclusively settles the doctrine of the Westminster Assembly. It intended to teach that instrumental music was not one of the circumstances indeterminate by Scripture and committed to the discretion of the church. As the question here is in regard to the meaning of the circumstances of which the Confession of Faith treats, this consideration is absolutely decisive. Instrumental music cannot, without violence to the Confession, be placed in the category of circumstances determinable by the church. As, then, it is not commanded it is forbidden; and they who justify its employment in public worship are liable to the serious charge of adding to "the counsel of God" which is "set down" in his Word.

(To be continued)

The Law of God for the Modern World

(Continued from last issue)

Note: This series of lessons is an introduction to the Moral Law of God, including its source, nature, functions and relevance for the present day. It follows the order of treatment in **The Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly, beginning with Question 91.

LESSON 11

Responsibility for our Neighbor's Moral Welfare

Q. 99 (Continued). What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments these rules are to be observed:
7. That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavor that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places.
8. That in what is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them; and to take heed of partaking with others in what is forbidden them.

Scripture References:

Exodus 20:10. Lev. 19:17. Gen. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. Deut. 6:6, 7. It is our duty to encourage righteousness and discourage sin on the part of others.

2 Cor. 1:24. We are under obligation to try to help others do right.

1 Tim. 5:22. Eph. 5:11. It is our duty to keep ourselves clear of participation in the sins of others.

Questions:

1. What is the general scope of the last two rules for the right understanding of the Ten Commandments?

The general scope of the last two rules is **responsibility for the moral welfare of our neighbor**. Those two rules remind us that righteousness, or obedience to God's will, is not merely an individual matter, but involves a concern for others too. While it is of course true that in the end each individual must give his own account to God, we must remember that part of that accounting will deal with the effect of our lives on the moral well-being of other people.

2. Why does the Catechism include the phrase "according to our places" in the seventh rule?

Because in determining the degree and nature of our responsibility for the moral character and life of others, our own position in human society, and our relationship to others, must be taken into account. Thus, for example, the responsibility of a parent for a child is far greater than that of a child for a parent; yet even a child has a responsibility to endeavor, **according to his place**, that his parents practice right and avoid wrong. Similarly a minister or elder has a greater responsibility for influencing the members of the church, by reason of his position of authority, than the members have for influencing their minister and elders toward what is right; yet in each case a certain responsibility exists.

3. Is it right to arrange for someone else to do something that we will not do ourselves because we believe it to be wrong?

Certainly not. If a matter is wrong, we must neither do it ourselves, nor arrange for anyone else to do it. Yet this principle is frequently violated in practice. A Christian business man should not keep his store or office open for business on the sabbath day, and he should also not employ someone else to keep it open for him. If a book or magazine is not fit to read, we ought not only to refrain from reading it ourselves, but also from giving or selling it to others for them to read. It makes no difference whether these other persons are Christians or not. God's moral law is the same for all people; it does not provide one standard of life for Christians and another for non-Christians. God requires absolute moral perfection of everybody, Christian or non-Christian. It is very perverse to say that a Christian, who would not do certain things himself, may engage or employ someone that is not a Christian to do them for him.

4. How are we to endeavor that others practice righteousness and avoid sin?

We should endeavor to accomplish this result (a) by showing a good example ourselves; (b) by witnessing to others, or seeking to persuade them, as we have opportunity and as occasion may require; (c) by the exercise of whatever measure of authority God has committed to us. The first two methods may and should be practiced by every Christian; the third is limited to those persons to whom God has committed authority in family, Church and State. Thus any Christian should set a good example of sabbath observance,

for example, and on occasion should seek to persuade others to keep the fourth commandment; but in addition to these ways, a parent has the authority to **forbid** his children to violate the sabbath. A civil official should promote honesty by his example and his testimony, but it may also be his duty to exercise his authority by **prosecuting** those who are guilty of theft. In each case the exercise of authority must be limited by the measure of authority granted by God and the nature of the relation to the persons involved.

5. How should we try to be helpful to others in doing their duty?

There are of course many ways of being helpful to others, which change with changing circumstances. We can always be helpful by trying to understand the difficulties and temptations that others must cope with, and maintaining a sympathetic attitude toward them. We should avoid an unduly critical spirit, and even when it is our duty to reprove someone for wrongdoing, we should do it with kindness and Christian love, not in a bitter, harsh or self-righteous spirit. If someone is facing a hard battle against sin, temptation and discouragement, we should do what we can, in word and deed, to encourage and help such a person. We should never rejoice in iniquity, or take a secret delight in some other person's wrongdoing. And avoidance of petty gossip about the sins and failures of others will go a long way toward healing the sore spots in the Visible Church.

6. Why should we "take heed of partaking with others in what is forbidden them"?

To participate with others in what is forbidden them is to encourage them in wrongdoing, and thus to incur a share in their guilt, even though the matter in question may be something not forbidden to ourselves. It is wrong, for example, to accept a ride in a stolen automobile if we know that the car is stolen; to accept a ride in a car is not wrong, but in this case we would be participating in the wrongdoing of another person. If a child has been forbidden by his parents to leave home and go to a ball game at a particular time, but disobeys his parents and goes to the game, it is wrong for another child, knowing the circumstances, to accompany him, for this would encourage him in his disobedience to parental authority.

LESSON 12

Moral Obligation Grounded in God's Sovereignty and Redemption

Q. 100. What special things are we to consider in the ten commandments?

A. We are to consider, in the ten commandments, the preface, the substance of the ten commandments themselves, and several reasons an-

nexed to some of them, the more to enforce them.

Q. 101. What is the preface to the ten commandments?

A. The preface to the ten commandments is

contained in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Wherein God manifesteth his sovereignty, as being JEHOVAH, the eternal, immutable, and Almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivereth us from our spiritual thralldom; and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.

Scripture References:

Exodus 20:2; Deut. 5:6. The preface to the Ten Commandments.

Isaiah 44:6. The absolute sovereignty of God.

Exodus 3:14. The self-existence of God.

Exodus 6:3. The revelation of the name JEHOVAH.

Acts 17:24, 28. God the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

Genesis 17:7 compared with Romans 3:29. God in covenant not only with Israel of old, but with believers from the Gentiles also.

Luke 1:74, 75. God redeems his people from spiritual bondage, as well as from human tyranny.

I Peter 1:15-18. Lev. 18:30; 19:37. God's sovereignty and his work of redemption require us to render him total allegiance and absolute obedience.

Questions:

1. Why is the preface to the Ten Commandments important?

The preface to the Ten Commandments is important because it is an integral part of the Ten Commandments, and constitutes the foundation of the specific commandments which follow. The preface states the reasons why we are under obligation to obey the commandments; it lays the foundation for moral responsibility in the two facts of (a) God's absolute sovereignty; (b) God's work of redemption. It is a tragedy that children are often taught the Ten Commandments with the preface omitted, as if it were unimportant. It is deplorable that Sabbath School rooms often have attractively printed wall charts of the Ten Commandments, with the preface omitted. This widespread tendency to disregard the preface to the Ten Commandments is a symptom of the religious declension of our time. The tendency today is to regard morality as grounded in human considerations, such as the welfare of the human race, the safety of society, and similar utilitarian concepts. People whose religious thinking is of this type will consider the preface

to the Ten Commandments more or less irrelevant; they will think that we can retain the "values" of the Ten Commandments even if they are detached from the foundation of divine sovereignty and redemption. We should resist this modern tendency, and insist on the God-centered emphasis of the moral law. The preface states the authority back of the moral law; to disregard the preface is to overlook the importance of the source of the law's authority, and inevitably to misunderstand the Ten Commandments.

2. What is meant by the sovereignty of God?

By the sovereignty of God is meant the absolute, supreme and unchallengeable authority and dominion of God over the entire universe. Because God is sovereign he is supreme over all creatures, "and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth" (Confession of Faith, II. 2). No creature may question the righteousness of any act of God; to do so is the height of impiety and irreverence. The sovereignty of God also implies that God is ultimate; there is no principle or law above or beyond God to which God himself is responsible. God is responsible only to himself; his own nature is his only law. There is nothing above or beyond him. God's sovereignty is manifested in a special way in his work of redemption. Redemption from sin is wholly God's work, and its benefits are bestowed wholly according to God's sovereign good pleasure. He saves exactly whom he purposes to save, and does it by his absolute, almighty power.

3. What is the origin of the name JEHOVAH?

This divine name, which is usually represented in the Authorized Version by LORD (printed in capital letters), is based on the Hebrew consonants JHVH. The Hebrew alphabet consists of consonants only, and the early Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament had only consonants. In reading, the correct vowel sounds were supplied by the reader. At a later period a system of writing the vowels was devised, by means of "points" written above, beneath or between the consonants. Just what vowel sounds originally belonged to the divine name JHVH is uncertain. The pronunciation "JAHVEH" is thought by many scholars to be correct, but this has not been proved, and it is only a matter of opinion. The Jews considered the divine name JHVH too sacred even to be pronounced, so in reading, whenever they came to JHVH they substituted another word, Adonai, meaning "Lord". Then when the vowel "points" were added to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the vowels of "Adonai" were inserted with the consonants JHVH, resulting in a hybrid word which is commonly pronounced "Jehovah" in English and European languages. The important thing, of course, is not the pronunciation of the name, but its meaning.

4. What is the meaning of the name JEHOVAH?

This name of God was specially revealed in the time of Moses (Ex. 6:2, 3). The key to its basic meaning is found in Exodus 3:14, 15 and Exodus 33:19. God said to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM", and instructed Moses to tell the people of Israel, "I AM hath sent me unto you". In the next verse the verb "I AM" is changed to the third person, meaning "HE IS", written by the Hebrew letters JHVH, and translated LORD in the Authorized Version. Thus the expression "I AM THAT I AM" gives a key to the meaning of JEHOVAH. It signifies that God is sovereign and self-determined, not limited or influenced by anything outside of himself. Exodus 33:19 further explains the name as signifying **God's sovereignty in bestowing salvation upon men**: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (American Standard Version). Accordingly, we may say that the name JEHOVAH describes God as the God who in his absolute sovereignty and freedom bestows his covenant mercies upon his people, redeeming them from sin by almighty power and drawing them into fellowship with himself.

5. Why does the preface to the Ten Commandments mention God's delivering Israel out of Egypt?

Because we must understand that salvation comes first, and keeping God's commandments comes afterwards. We cannot really even begin to keep God's holy law until we have been

redeemed from Satan's kingdom, just as the people of Israel could not really keep God's law until they were set free from Egyptian bondage. We are not saved because of obedience; we are saved **unto** obedience. Since Adam fell, redemption is the basis of obedience. Also God's work of redemption places upon us **an added obligation** to obey God's law. All men are under obligation to obey God's law, by reason of their relation to him as their Creator; but God's own people are under an added obligation to obey, by reason of their relation to him as their Redeemer.

6. Why did God refer to the land of Egypt as "the house of bondage"?

Because the land of Egypt was not only a literal place of bondage to the people of Israel, but also **symbolizes the spiritual slavery of sin**. Every child of God has been redeemed from a "house of bondage" vastly more powerful, cruel and tyrannical than the physical bondage of ancient Egypt. This statement in the preface to the Ten Commandments causes us to realize (a) that as Christians, we have been delivered from bitter slavery; and (b) that this deliverance was not our own achievement, but was accomplished by the sovereign, almighty power of God.

7. What two obligations does God's work of redemption place upon us?

(a) The obligation of **allegiance**, "to take him for our God alone"; (b) The obligation of **obedience**, "to keep all his commandments." We are to realize that we are not our own, we are bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ, and therefore we must render absolute allegiance and obedience to the God who has redeemed us to himself at infinite cost.

LESSON 13

Recognition of God our Supreme Obligation

Q. 102. What is the sum of the four commandments which contain our duty to God?

A. The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God, is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.

Q. 103. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Q. 104. What are the duties required in the first commandment?

A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteemed, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting,

hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in any thing he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Scripture References:

Luke 10:27. Christ's summary of the moral law, showing that **love to God** is the sum of the first four commandments.

Exodus 20:3. Deut. 5:7. The first commandment.

1 Chron. 28:9. Deut. 26:17. Isa. 43:10. Jer. 14:22. Knowing and acknowledging God to be the only true God, and our God.

Psalms 95:6, 7. Matt. 4:10. Psalm 29:2. Worshipping and glorifying God as the only true God, and our God.

Mal. 2:16. Eccles. 12:1. We must think about God, and remember him.

Psalm 71:19. We must have a high idea of God.

Mal. 1:6. The duty of honoring God.

Isa. 45:23. The obligation to adore God.

Josh. 24:15, 22. The duty of choosing God as our God.

Deut. 6:5. Psalm 73:25. Isa. 8:13. We must love, desire and fear God.

Exod. 14:31. The duty of believing God.

Isa. 26:4. Psalm 130:7. Psalm 37:4; 32:11. We must trust, hope, delight and rejoice in God.

Rom. 12:11 compared with Num. 25:11. The duty of being zealous for God.

Phil. 4:6. We are to call upon God with thanksgiving.

Jer. 7:23. The obligation of total obedience to God.

James 4:7. The duty of submission to God.

1 John 3:22. We are to be careful to please God.

Jer. 31:18. Psalm 119:136. We are to be sad when we have offended God.

Micah 6:8. The duty of walking humbly with God.

Questions:

1. What does it mean to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind?

This means not merely an emotional attitude toward God, but an all-inclusive practical devotion to God that leads us to honor and obey him in every element, sphere and relationship of our life. Everything in our life must be determined by our love to God. Thus there can be nothing in our life separate from our religion. We may not draw a boundary line and mark off any sphere or area of life and say that in that area our relation to God does not count. Whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God. The man who thinks he can carry on his business life, or his political life, or his social life, without God, is to that extent an **irreligious person**. The teacher who thinks that his relation to God does not affect his teaching of chemistry, or his interpretation of European history, is to that extent an **irreligious person**. The consistent Christian will realize that **his religion is the ruling principle of all his life**, and that there is nothing in life which can be isolated from his relation to God.

2. Why is the first commandment placed first in the Ten Commandments?

Because this commandment is the foundation upon which the others depend. Our obliga-

tion to God is the source and basis of all other obligations. It is the primary and fundamental obligation of our life.

3. Why are we obliged to acknowledge God as the true God, and our God?

Because God is our Creator. It is he that made us, and not we ourselves. Also God is the Redeemer of his people from sin and hell. Therefore every thought of being independent of God is rebellious, irreligious and wicked.

4. Shall we be dependent on God for ever?

Yes. To all eternity, the relation between Creator and creature will remain. It can never be changed or pass away. **The distinction between Creator and creature is the most fundamental distinction of the Bible. It is assumed or implied in every verse of the whole Bible.**

5. How are we to express our dependence upon God?

We are to express our dependence on God (a) By a right attitude toward him; (b) by right thoughts about him; (c) by right responses to his revealed will, the Holy Bible.

6. What is a right attitude toward God?

A right attitude toward God is a **reverent** attitude, which realizes and acknowledges the relation between Creator and creature and the **infinite** difference and distance between the two, and which recognizes that God is an **infinite** being whom we can never comprehend, but who will always remain mysterious and wonderful to us.

7. What do we mean by right thoughts concerning God?

By right thoughts concerning God, we mean thoughts about God which are **according to the truth of his revelation of himself in his Word**, and which therefore do not come from our own imaginations or desires, but from God's own revelation of himself. Thoughts about God which arise from the opinions, speculations or philosophy of sin-darkened human minds cannot be right thoughts about God. The only right thoughts about God, on the part of sinful human beings, are those derived from the Bible.

8. What do we mean by right responses to God's revealed will?

By right responses to God's revealed will, we mean a conscientious and wholehearted willing obedience to all that he has commanded, and avoidance of all that he has forbidden, in his Word, so that the Bible is the real guide of our life.

9. What are some of the great truths **assumed** in this answer of the Catechism?

(a) The **existence** of God. (b) The doctrine of **creation**. (c) The **personality** of God. (d) Man's **moral responsibility** to God.

10. How may the duties required in the first commandment be summarized?

We may summarize these duties by saying that this commandment requires a devotion to God which shall be supreme, total and all-

inclusive, so that our relation to God is the supreme and all-important fact of our lives. If we regard our relation to God as a side-issue or minor detail of our lives, we have not even begun to take the first commandment seriously.

LESSON 14

The Sin of Wrong Thinking about God

Q. 105. What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, Atheism, in denying or not having a God; Idolatry, in having or worshipping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of anything due him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; . . .

(Note: because of the length of the answer to Q. 105, it will be divided into several lessons instead of attempting to deal with it in a single lesson).

Scripture References:

Psalm 14:1. The sin of atheism.

Eph. 2:12. Those who are without God have no hope.

Jer. 2:27, 28 compared with 1 Thess. 1:9. The sin of idolatry contrasted with serving the true God.

Psalm 81:11. The sin of rejecting God as the object of our supreme devotion.

Isa. 43:22-24. The sin of neglecting God and the worship he requires.

Jer. 4:22. Hos. 4:1, 6. The sin of ignorance concerning God and his will.

Acts 17:23, 29. The sin of misapprehending the nature of God and his will.

Isa. 40:18. The sin of false opinions concerning God.

Psalm 50:21. The sin of unworthy and wicked thoughts about God.

Questions:

1. What is the literal meaning of the word "atheism"?

"Atheism" literally means **no-God-ism**; it designates the teaching or belief that there is no God; hence it signifies **the denial of God's existence**.

2. What three kinds of atheism are there?

(a) Theoretical atheism. (b) Virtual atheism. (c) Practical atheism.

3. What is theoretical atheism?

Theoretical atheism is the absolute denial,

as a matter of opinion or belief, of the existence of any God or gods.

4. What is virtual atheism?

Virtual atheism, which is very common and popular in America today, is **the denial of the existence of the God of the Bible**, the God who is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth, in whom there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit the **same** in substance, equal in power and glory. Since this God of the Bible is the only living and true God, he is the only God that really exists. Therefore to deny the existence of the God of the Bible is **virtual atheism**. The virtual atheist believes in a God, but not in **the** God. His "God" is a finite, limited being, who is regarded as a necessary implication of the human mind. This "God" is usually regarded as having no absolute, independent existence apart from man and the universe. Just as "husband" and "wife" are correlative terms, which imply each other and depend on each other for their meaning, so the virtual atheist regards "God" and "man", or "God" and "the universe", as correlative terms which imply each other and depend on each other for their meaning. Such a belief differs from bald theoretical atheism in that it is more subtle, and does not seem to be so wicked. The virtual atheist may be a very religious person, in his own way. But at bottom his belief is no better than plain theoretical atheism.

5. What is practical atheism?

Practical atheism is conducting our lives as if there were no God, even though as a matter of belief we may admit that there is a God.

6. Which form of atheism is most common?

Downright theoretical atheism is comparatively rare, and does comparatively little harm because it is honestly and frankly labelled and it is quite easy to recognize as false. Virtual atheism is common among ministers, professors of theology, college and university professors, and especially philosophers. It is held especially by those who pride themselves on being "intellectuals". It is extremely dangerous because it is so subtle and often appears to be very religious. Practical atheism is by far the most common of all forms of atheism. It is the position of plain people who are simply indifferent to God.

7. What is the literal meaning of the word "idolatry"?

"Idolatry" literally means **the worshipping of images**, or of a god or gods by means of images.

8. In what sense does the Catechism use the word "idolatry"?

This answer of the Catechism uses the term "idolatry" in a broad, inclusive sense, making the term include **polytheism** (belief in more than one God).

9. Why is atheism, in any form, a terrible sin?

Because God is the Creator of all men, and the atheist refuses to recognize or worship his Creator. The relation between Creator and creature is the most fundamental relationship in the Bible, and in human life. The person who denies this most fundamental of all relations is a thoroughly perverse and wicked person, for he has gone to the limit in denying the God who gave him life.

10. Why is it a terrible sin to have more gods than one, or to have any other god with or instead of the True God?

Because the nature of man's relation to his Creator is such that the true God demands his total, undivided devotion and allegiance. To divide our religious devotion, and give part of it to the true God who created us, and part to some other person or object of worship, is highly insulting to God. God will have all or nothing. To offer him a **part** of our loyalty and service is to dishonor and offend him.

11. Why is ignorance concerning the true God a great sin?

(a) Because only as we have a true knowledge of him can we worship, love and serve him aright. (b) Because abundant provision has been made, not only in Scripture, but also in the book of nature, for mankind to have a true knowledge of God. The person who is **ignorant** concerning God has already sinfully disregarded or misused God's revelation of himself, and shows that he does not really **want** to have a true knowledge of God (Romans 1:28).

12. Why is forgetfulness of God a great sin?

Because our forgetfulness of God indicates that our hearts are hardened by sin and that we do not really **care** very much about God. We remember what we are really interested in and concerned about. Our forgetfulness of God is a product of our sin-hardened **hearts**.

13. Why is it sinful to have misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts about God?

Because our mistakes, errors, and false ideas about God do not spring merely from lack of intelligence, but from the fall of the human race into sin, which has not only hardened our hearts and inclined us to all kinds of wickedness, but has also darkened and clouded our minds so that we fail to discern the truth, and fall victims to all kinds of errors. **Every false idea or unworthy thought about God arises from sin** — not only from our own personal sin, but also from the fall of the human race into sin by Adam's transgression against God.

14. Does not every person have a right to his own opinion about God?

When we speak of "rights" we must distinguish between **civil** rights and **moral** rights. As to moral rights, the answer to the above question is No. No person has any moral right to believe anything false about God, or to believe otherwise about God than as he is revealed in the Scriptures. As to civil rights, the person who has false ideas about God has a civil right to hold his false beliefs without interference by his fellow-citizens or the State; that is, the civil government does not properly have any jurisdiction over people's thoughts and beliefs, and may not persecute or punish any person for his false beliefs or opinions, or even for being an atheist; but such a person will have to give answer to God at the Judgment Day. We believe, however, that the civil magistrate may rightly, **for civil reasons**, prohibit **the public propagation** of atheism and of the denial of man's moral responsibility to God. For a civil court to refuse to grant a charter of incorporation to an association the purpose of which is publicly to propagate atheism, is no real infringement of civil or religious liberty. The **success** of such a corporation would result in the destruction of the moral foundations of human society and of the State itself. Civil and religious liberty do not include even the civil right to attempt to destroy the very basis of human civilization.

LESSON 15

Sins which Involve Wrong Attitudes Toward God

Q. 105 (Continued). What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are . . . **bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-**

love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair; . . .

Scripture References:

Deut. 29:29. Bold and curious searching into God's secrets.

Tit. 1:16. Heb. 12:16. The sin of profaneness.

Rom. 1:30. The sin of hating God.

2 Tim. 3:2. The sin of inordinate self-love.

Phil. 2:21. The sin of immoderate self-seeking.

1 John 2:15, 16. The sin of setting our hearts on created things rather than on God.

1 Sam. 2:29. Col. 3:2, 5. Love of the world and earthly things more than God.

1 John 4:1. The sin of vain credulity.

Heb. 3:12. The sin of unbelief.

Gal. 5:20. Tit. 3:10. The sin of heresy.

Acts 26:9. The sin of misbelief, or sincere belief of what is false.

Psalm 78:22. The sin of distrust.

Gen. 4:13. The sin of despair.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "bold and curious searching into God's secrets"?

This statement, which might easily be misunderstood, does not mean that it is wrong for us to search into the mysteries of God's revelation, whether in nature or in Scripture. What is forbidden is not searching, but **bold and curious** searching into God's secrets; that is, searching **with a wrong attitude** (boldness or irreverence), or **with a wrong motive** (curiosity, rather than a desire to glorify God and benefit mankind). The person who searches into God's secrets with a reverent attitude and a right motive will always realize that he must come to a stopping place where he can proceed no further but is **faced with baffling and impenetrable mystery**. His aim will be to think God's thoughts after him, that is, to understand what God has revealed for men to understand, not **to comprehend God with his human intellect**.

2. What is the meaning of "profaneness"?

"Profaneness" is not the same as **profanity**, which means taking God's name in vain. Profanity is a sin of speech, whereas **profaneness** is a sin of character, a sin of the whole life. A profane person is one who regards sacred and holy things as if they were ordinary or commonplace. Esau was a profane person because he regarded his birthright as worth no more than an ordinary dinner. Cannibals are profane people because they regard the human body, which is inherently sacred, as having only the value of common food. The heathen who will tear a Bible up and use the paper to make cigarettes or to line shoes are profane people because they have no comprehension of the sacredness of the Word of God, and

they treat it as having only the value of the paper it is printed on.

3. How can we explain the fact that unregenerate people really hate God?

This fact, which cannot be denied (Romans 1:30), can only be explained on the basis of the Bible doctrine of original sin and total depravity. The fact that there are people who even boast that they hate God, shows the abysmal depths of moral evil to which the human race has sunk through the fall of Adam.

4. Is self-love a sin?

Self-love is not a sin unless it is **inordinate** self-love. The command "Thou shalt love thy neighbor **as thyself**" implies that **self-love is a duty**. As self-preservation is the basic instinct of our nature, to love one's self cannot be a sin, but must be a divinely implanted impulse in the human soul. But when self-love gets out of balance, so that a person loves himself more than his neighbor, and especially more than God, then it is **inordinate** self-love, and therefore sinful. The same is true in the matter of "self-seeking".

5. What is the real nature of the sin of **worldliness**?

Christian people often have very mechanical and superficial ideas of what worldliness is. Worldliness is commonly identified with three or four of its ordinary external manifestations, such as dancing, gambling, card playing, and the like. But worldliness, in its essence, is really **loving and seeking the things of the world more than we love and seek God**. It is a matter of "setting our mind, will or affections upon other things" rather than upon God. A person can be a very worldly person without ever indulging in the common forms of worldliness such as dancing or gambling. For example, a great musician who loves his musical art more than he loves God is a **worldly** person. A famous scientist who is absorbed in his scientific researches more than he is in knowing and honoring God, is a **worldly** person.

6. What is the meaning of "vain credulity"?

This means a readiness to believe or accept that which is really unworthy of belief or acceptance because it lacks evidence of truth. The common word for it is **gullibility**. The gullible person is ready to believe anything he hears. He is unable to discriminate between what is worthy of belief and what is not. In the religious sphere, the gullible person is greatly influenced by any preacher who presents a message with enthusiasm and eloquence and tells some interesting stories as illustrations. The gullible hearer does not weigh the preacher's statements and compare them with the Scriptures; he just swallows them whole without any accurate or careful thinking. Such people are greatly influenced by the last book or article they have read; soon they will read another book or article, and will change

their views accordingly. They follow every changing fad in the realm of religion, and lack discernment and stability.

7. Why is unbelief a dreadful sin?

Unbelief is a dreadful sin because **we are saved by means of faith**, and since unbelief is the opposite of faith, it cuts off the possibility of a person's salvation as long as he continues in his unbelief. Of course there are degrees of unbelief, and even the best Christian has some degree of unbelief. It is only when the person is **dominated** by unbelief that salvation is out of the question. This condition the Bible describes as having an **evil heart of unbelief** (Heb. 3:12).

8. What is the meaning of heresy?

In the Bible the word "heresy" means carrying on propaganda for false doctrine, for example by forming a sect or party in the Church to teach and propagate false doctrines, contrary to what God has revealed in his Word. In modern usage the term "heresy" has come to mean **false doctrines**, and especially **believing and holding false doctrines which are contrary to the essential truths of Christianity**. While heresy in this

modern sense is certainly sinful, still in the Bible the word includes the idea of **forming a party or faction** to carry on propaganda for false doctrines.

9. What is misbelief?

The term "misbelief" means **religious delusion**, that is, a firm confident faith in something which is false or wrong. Paul thought he was doing the will of God in persecuting Christian people. This was **misbelief** on his part.

10. What is meant by distrust and despair?

These two terms are related to each other. **Despair** is simply **total distrust**. **Distrust** means doubting or disbelieving God's promises, love and goodness. **Despair** means disbelieving God's promises, love and goodness totally, to the limit. Cain gave way to despair, because he said that his punishment was greater than he could bear. He had no faith to ask God to forgive his sin of murdering his brother. Judas gave way to despair when, instead of praying to God for forgiveness, he went and hanged himself. Despair is a common motive for suicide; when a person has come to think that there is no more hope of God's help he may, in his desperate unbelief, seek to "end it all" by taking his own life.

LESSON 16

Sins which Involve Wrong Attitudes Toward God (Continued)

Q. 150 (Continued). What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are . . . **incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments, hardness of heart, pride, presumption, carnal security, tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means, carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; . . .**

Scripture References:

- Jer. 5:3. The sin of being incorrigible.
 Isa. 42:25. Insensibleness under divine judgments.
 Rom. 2:5. The sin of hardness of heart.
 Jer. 13:15. Prov. 16:5. Psalm 138:6. 1 Tim. 6:4. The sin of pride.
 Psalm 19:13. 2 Pet. 2:10. The sin of presumption.
 Zeph. 1:12. Rev. 18:8. Isa. 28:15. Carnal security a sin.
 Matt. 4:7. Tempting God a sin.
 Rom. 3:8. The sin of using unlawful means.
 Jer. 17:5. The sin of trusting in lawful means.
 2 Tim. 3:4. Loving pleasure more than we love God is wicked.

Gal. 4:17. John 16:2. Rom. 10:2. Luke 9:54, 55. Misguided zeal is sinful.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of incorrigibleness?

This word literally means **being incapable of being corrected**. Both God's goodness and his judgments ought to bring men to repentance, but unless accompanied by the special work of the Holy Spirit, they do not lead to true repentance. There are many people who in time of welfare and prosperity simply ignore or forget God, and then in time of trouble or calamity they become stubborn and defy God in their persistent unbelief. This is the state of incorrigibleness.

2. What is meant by insensibleness under judgments?

This means failure to recognize God's hand in the troubles and calamities that come upon a person or a nation. Those who attribute all their troubles to "fate" or "chance" or "bad luck", or to the mere operation of natural laws, never see God's hand in what happens to them. They fail to realize that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and that all things are under God's providential government and all work together in God's moral government of the world. While people are in such a state of mind, no judgments that God might send will make any impression on them. A person who is totally blind will not see the brightest light, nor will a person who is totally deaf hear the loudest sound.

3. What do we mean by the expression **hardness of heart**?

"Hardness of heart" is an expression used to describe a state of character in which spiritual sensitivity has been largely or entirely lost. When a person is in this condition his conscience functions very little, or not at all. He is indifferent to God, spiritual things, and the eternal salvation of his soul. Both the law and the gospel fail to impress or influence him. Unless God in his special grace and mercy gives such a person a **new heart**, he cannot be saved.

4. Give a Bible example of a person whose spiritual condition was "hardness of heart."

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, in the days of Moses, when in spite of repeated warnings and judgments he would not let God's people go, and even after he had let them go, he changed his mind and pursued after them to the Red Sea.

5. What is **pride**, and why is it condemned in the Bible as a great sin?

Pride is an unjustifiable and falsely high opinion of ourselves, our character or achievements. It is the perversion of **self-respect**, which is legitimate and not sinful. Pride is wicked for two reasons: (a) it is contrary to our position before God as **dependent creatures**; and (b) it is contrary to our position before God as **guilty and helpless sinners**. The things people pride themselves on, if they are real, are after all **only gifts of God**, and therefore they are nothing to be proud of. Thus the apostle Paul in Romans 4:2 informs us that even if Abraham had been justified by works, he would have no ground of glorifying before God. Read 1 Cor. 4:7 and note the three questions which are asked in this verse, which are calculated to puncture the balloon of human pride. In essence pride amounts to a **declaration of independence of God**; it rests upon an assumption that we can do something, or be something, or accomplish something good and worth-while, of ourselves, apart from God and his foreordination and gifts of nature and grace. Therefore pride is based on a lie, which is very offensive to God.

6 What is **carnal security**, and why is it wrong?

Carnal security means an easy-going confidence that everything is going to be all right, when we have no legitimate grounds for such confidence. It is carnal security that leads people to say "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Carnal security involves a complacent attitude toward sin and a lukewarm, indifferent attitude toward God. This is wicked because it dishonors God, whom we ought to seek earnestly and serve faithfully, and it deceives our own selves instead of knowing and facing the real truth about our condition.

7. What is meant by **tempting of God**?

The Gospel record of the temptation of our Saviour gives the key to the meaning of this expression. It means deliberately or carelessly acting in a wicked or foolish manner and counting on God's goodness and power to keep us out of the trouble that would come upon us because of our actions. For Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the Temple, trusting in God to send angels to protect him from bodily injury, would have been to tempt God, which is forbidden in Scripture. For a person to neglect ordinary care and precautions to prevent sickness or accident, and then claim to be trusting in God to keep him safe and in good health, amounts to tempting God, and therefore is wicked.

8. What is meant by **using unlawful means**?

This expression means "doing evil that good may come", that is, trying to accomplish a good purpose by doing something that is wrong and sinful. There have always been people who have advocated such a course of conduct.

9. What do we mean by **trusting in lawful means**?

By affirming that trusting in lawful means is a sin forbidden in the first commandment, the Catechism means that even when we are using means that are lawful and right, we must put our real trust and confidence in God, not in our own methods. It is right to consult a physician and take medicine if we are sick, but we must put our real trust in God, not in the physician or the remedies he may prescribe.

10. What is the meaning of the phrase **carnal delights and joys**?

The word **carnal** is derived from a Latin word meaning **flesh**, from which our English word **carnival** is also derived. **Carnal** is an adjective and means **pertaining to the flesh**. In this statement of the Catechism the word **carnal** does not necessarily refer to **the body**; rather, it refers to "the flesh" as used by the apostle Paul to mean **our sinful nature**, which he describes by such expressions as "the old man," "the law of sin in our members", "the mind of the flesh", etc. 2 Tim. 3:4 shows that it is characteristic of our sinful nature **to love pleasure more than we love God**. "Carnal delights and joys", therefore, are those delights and joys which appeal especially to our old, sinful nature, but which are far from delightful or joyful to our new nature which we receive when we are born again of the Holy Spirit.

11. What is **corrupt, blind, and indiciet zeal**, and why is it sinful?

The word **zeal** means enthusiasm for something, which leads to vigorous activity for that cause or idea. The Chinese word for zeal is literally a **hot heart**, which gives a good idea of the meaning. To have zeal, or to be zealous

for God, is good and right. But there are also wrong kinds of zeal, which the Catechism describes as "corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal." This means that even when we are zealous **for the true God and his service**, still our zeal may be sinful. **Corrupt zeal** is zeal that proceeds from our own sinful heart and its desires and impulses, rather than from our new nature and the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. When a Christian, in arguing with some person about the truth of the Bible, in his zeal to defend God's Word loses his temper and becomes angry, instead of having a meek and patient spirit, that is an example of **corrupt zeal**. **Blind zeal** is a zeal which is not founded on true knowledge. When Paul, before his conversion, persecuted Christian people, that was an example of **blind zeal**, as he came to recognize later. The Jews of Paul's day had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; therefore it was a **blind zeal**. Another sinful kind of zeal is **indiscreet zeal**; this

means zeal for something that is true and right, but zeal lacking in wisdom or common sense. For example, to urge Christian people to attend prayer meetings regularly is zeal for something that is right. But if someone insists on having prayer meetings for several hours every day, and tries to persuade his fellow Christians that all their free time must be spent in prayer meetings and nothing else, that is **indiscreet zeal**, because it is not according to wisdom or common sense. A case was reported in a newspaper of a zealous Christian spoiling the finish of a newly painted automobile which was some other person's property, by writing on it with hard chalk, in large letters, the words "JESUS SAVES"; that was **indiscreet zeal**, because lacking in wisdom or common sense. All corrupt, blind or indiscreet zeal is sinful because it proceeds from our own **wickedness, ignorance or foolishness**, instead of from the **holiness, knowledge and wisdom** which the Holy Spirit imparts to us by his work in our hearts and lives.

LESSON 17

Spiritual Laziness a Sin against God

Q. 105 Continued). What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are . . . lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; . . .

Scripture References:

Rev. 3:16. The sin of lukewarmness.

Rev. 3:1. Deadness in the things of God.

Ezek. 14:5. Isa. 1:4, 5. Estranging ourselves from God.

Rom. 10:13, 14. Hos. 4:12. Acts 10:25, 26. Rev. 19:10. Matt. 4:10. Col. 2:18. Rom. 1:25. Religious worship is to be paid to God only and not to any created being.

Lev. 20:6. 1 Sam. 28:7, 11 compared with 1 Chron. 10:13, 14. God has forbidden all attempts to communicate with the dead, or to consult with the devil or evil spirits.

Acts 5:3. It is wrong to pay heed to the suggestions of Satan.

Questions:

1. What is meant by **spiritual lukewarmness**?

Spiritual lukewarmness is a condition of sluggish indifference or complacency about the things of God and the salvation of our souls, that leads a person to be satisfied with things

as they are and to have no earnest desire to make progress in the Christian life. God's Word teaches us that a condition of spiritual lukewarmness is even more displeasing to God than for a person to be **cold** in the things of God (Rev. 3:15).

2. Is spiritual lukewarmness a common condition at the present day?

No doubt spiritual lukewarmness has always been a common condition and it is something that every Christian has to fight against continually. However it may be that spiritual lukewarmness is more prevalent among Christian people in our own day than in former times.

3. What is the remedy for spiritual lukewarmness?

Although all kinds of programs and methods have been advocated for dealing with the spiritual and religious lukewarmness of the present day, we may be sure that there is no shortcut by which this condition can be easily or quickly changed. The only remedy is more of the grace of God in Christian people's lives — more heed paid to the teachings of the Bible, more repentance and sorrow for sin, more love to God and man — that is, more of the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christian people.

4. What is meant by **deadness in the things of God**?

We understand lukewarmness to be a sin of Christian people who really are born again of the Holy Spirit, whereas **spiritual deadness** is **the total lack of spiritual life**, which is the condition of those who have never been born again of the Holy Spirit. Such people are "dead in

trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). This is the condition of all infidels or unbelievers, and of the non-Christian or heathen world as a whole. But there are also **professing Christians** who really lack all spiritual life. These have only the form of godliness, but lack the power thereof. They may go through the outward forms and motions of the Christian life, attend Church services, and the like, but they do not have the new life and the power of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. It was such people that constituted the membership of the Church in Sardis, of which Christ said, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev. 3:1).

5. What is the remedy for spiritual deadness?

The only remedy for spiritual deadness, whether in an individual person's life, or in a church or a nation, is the old Gospel of Jesus Christ, accompanied by the life-giving renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Where the Gospel message is faithfully proclaimed, the Holy Spirit will be at work and there will be those who will pass out of death into life, and become "new creatures in Christ Jesus."

6. What does the Catechism mean by "estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God"?

This means what is sometimes called "backsliding" or "falling away from God". It is what happens when a professing Christian loses interest in the things of God and gives up **even the formal profession** of Christianity. Such a person is **hardened**; he is not concerned about spiritual things; he fails to make any use of the means of grace (the Bible, the sacraments, prayer). Ordinarily he will not attend Church services or engage in even the forms of the worship of God. We should realize that a Christian who has been born again of the Holy Spirit will not totally or permanently fall away from God. However even a born-again Christian may fall away from God to a degree, and for a time, as Peter did when he denied Christ three times in one night. Another form of "estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God" is to give up real Christianity and become a member of a false religion or cult. This of course is the height of wickedness.

7. Why is it wrong to give religious worship to saints, angels, or other creatures?

It is wrong to give religious worship to saints, angels, or other creatures because: (a) They did not create us, and therefore have no claim on our religious devotion. (b) They did not redeem us from sin, and therefore our gratitude for salvation is not due to them, but to God alone. (c) They are not mediators between God and us, for there is only one Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore all religious worship given to saints, angels, or other creatures, **inevitably detracts from the worship and honor that is due to God alone**. No person can worship saints or angels, and still give God the devotion that is due to him.

8. What church sanctions and practices praying to saints and angels?

The Roman Catholic Church, which wrongly regards saints and angels as mediators between the worshipper and God.

9. Why is **spiritism**, or the attempt to communicate with the dead by means of **spirit mediums** or persons with "familiar spirits", a great sin?

God has strictly forbidden this practice in his Word. Those who disregard the Scripture warnings against it will become terribly entangled in the snares of Satan, from which it may be impossible for them ever to escape. This wicked practice is common today, but Christian people should maintain the strictest separation from everything connected with it.

10. Why should Christian people avoid "all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions"?

Christian people have been translated from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God. Their only attitude toward Satan should be a negative one. The only word a Christian ever ought to say to any suggestion of Satan is the word **No**. Harkening to Satan's suggestions began when Eve listened to the serpent and thereupon began to doubt the truth of what God had said. Of course, "compacts and consulting with the devil" are wickedly wrong regardless of whether actual contact with Satan is established or not; the mere attempt to do such a thing is giving aid and comfort to God's greatest enemy, and can bring nothing but anguish and woe to human lives.

LESSON 18

We are Forbidden to Submit our Conscience to Men

Q. 105 (Continued). What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are . . . making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensa-

tions, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us, and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.

Scripture References:

2 Cor. 1:24. Matt. 23:9. We are not to make men the lords of our faith and conscience.

Deut. 32:15. 2 Sam. 12:9. Prov. 13:13. The sin of despising God and his commands.

Acts 7:51. Eph. 4:30. The sins of resisting and grieving the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 73:2, 3, 13-15, 22. Job 1:22. The sins of discontent under God's dispensations, and charging God foolishly.

1 Sam. 6:7-9. It is wrong to attribute any event of our lives to chance.

Dan. 5:23. It is wicked to ascribe our success or prosperity to idols or false gods.

Deut. 8:17. Dan. 4:30. We may not take credit to ourselves for anything good that we are, have or can do.

Hab. 1:16. We may not regard any creature as the source of any blessing or success that we may enjoy.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "making men the lords of our faith and conscience"?

This means making mere human beings our authority in religion, so that we believe and do what they tell us to believe and do, not because of the teachings of God's Word, but merely because of the influence or instruction of men.

2. Why is it wrong to make men the lords of our faith and conscience?

Because all merely human authority is **fallible** and therefore we cannot commit ourselves to it implicitly, to believe and obey what it teaches without question. Only God, whose Word is infallible, can be the Lord of our faith and conscience. We are to commit ourselves to God's Word **implicitly**, that is, to believe its teachings and obey its commands without question, just because they are from God. But we may not submit thus to any human authority; we must always inquire whether the instructions and commands presented to us are in accord with God's Word or not.

3. What large and influential institution demands that all men everywhere accept its teachings and obey its commands implicitly?

The Church of Rome, which claims that its utterances are equivalent to the voice of God and therefore to be accepted without question by all men.

4. Is it a sin for a Protestant to join the Roman Catholic Church?

Certainly this is a sin, for the Protestant who does this abandons **God's written Word** as his supreme authority in religion, and accepts instead **the voice of the Roman Church** as his supreme authority. He agrees to accept the teachings and obey the commands of the Roman Church **implicitly**, that is, without raising any questions. This

amounts to making men the lords of our faith and conscience.

5. Are members of Protestant churches ever guilty of this sin?

Yes. Undoubtedly there are multitudes of careless Protestants who can give no better reason or higher authority for their faith and practice than **the customs or teachings of their church, or the statements of their minister**. To accept and obey the customs, teachings and rules of a church, or the statements of a minister, without satisfying ourselves that they are in accordance with the Word of God, is wrong, for it amounts to making churches and ministers the lords of our faith and conscience. It is every Christian's duty to search the Scriptures for himself, to learn whether the statements of his church and minister are true or not.

6. Are there Protestant churches that try to exercise authority over people's faith and conscience?

Yes, there are. It is one of the evil signs of our times that some large and influential denominations which formerly regarded God's Word as the only authority over men's faith and conscience, now are coming, more or less, to regard **the voice of the church** as equivalent to **the voice of God**. Such denominations are coming to demand of their ministers, officers and people an absolute and unquestioning obedience to the decrees of Conferences, General Assemblies, church boards and agencies, and, it would even appear in some cases, to the utterances and orders of individual men who hold high positions in the denomination's organization. A very large and prominent denomination decided a few years ago that to disobey the command of its church courts was a sin of the same nature as if one were to refuse to partake of the Lord's Supper. This whole tendency is thoroughly perverse and wicked. As the voice of the church becomes more and more important, the Word of God is regarded as less and less important. In reality the voice of the church has weight and authority, to be believed and obeyed, **only when it is in accord with the written Word of God**.

7. Why is "slighting and despising God and his commands" wicked?

Because to slight and despise God and his commands involves **contempt for the authority of God**, regarding God and his will as less important than our own selfish human desires, the opinions of our fellowmen, the commands of the government, etc. To ask God to take second or third place in our thinking or devotion or obedience is an insult to the majesty and authority of God.

8. Why are discontent and impatience under God's dispensations sinful?

Because they are the result of **unbelief** or lack of faith in God's love, God's goodness, God's

power, God's promises, etc. The person who gives way to discontent or impatience is no longer willing to take God's Word and God's promises at face value. He feels that God's Word has been contradicted and canceled by God's providential dispensations. As long as we are walking **by faith** we will endure hardships and sufferings patiently and will be willing to wait for God to bring us help and relief in his own appointed time.

9. Why is it wrong to charge God foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us?

Because the person who dares to charge God foolishly, thinks that he can sit in judgment on God and decide whether God is acting rightly or not. This amounts to a claim to be as great and wise as God is, for unless a person is as great and wise as God, how can he decide whether God is doing right or not? All tendencies to charge God foolishly are forbidden by the Word of God. Read Romans 9:19-21.

10. Why is it wrong to ascribe our prosperity or success to "chance" or "fortune"?

This is wrong because there really is no such thing as "chance" or "fortune". What men call "chance" is simply **that which cannot be humanly calculated or predicted**. Every event that men say comes by "chance" really comes by **the decree and providence of God**. If a coin is tossed in the air, whether it comes up "heads" or "tails"

is in every case determined by God. If a man were to find a million dollars in gold and treasure buried on his property, he might regard this discovery as "chance" or "fortune", but in reality it would be the working out of the counsel and providence of God. If we believe that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and that his providence controls all that happens, then there cannot be such a thing as "chance".

11. Why is it wrong to ascribe our success or prosperity to idols, ourselves, or any other creature?

Because the whole created universe, including ourselves, is absolutely dependent on God for its existence and activity. Idols, of course, have no life, nor power to help anyone. But it is equally true that we ourselves, and all other creatures, have no inherent power to accomplish anything. We are totally dependent on God from moment to moment. When we ascribe our success or prosperity to ourselves or to any other creature, we are regarding ourselves as **independent of God**. This is the great delusion that started when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. We must always remember that we are created beings and that God is our Creator, on whom we are dependent for our very life and consciousness. **This Creator-creature relationship is and always will be the main fact of our existence**. To disregard it, even for a moment, is wicked.

LESSON 19

God the Great Background of Human Life

Q. 106. What are we especially taught by these words, "before me", in the first commandment?

A. These words, "before me", or before my face, in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh special notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God: that so it may be an argument to dissuade from it, and to aggravate it as a most impudent provocation: as also to persuade us to do in his sight, whatever we do in his service.

Scripture References:

Ezek. 8:5, 6. Psalm 44:20, 21. God sees, and is greatly displeased with, the sin of having any other God.

1 Chron. 28:9. Since God sees and knows all things, we should remember this, and realize that we are to live and work "in his sight".

1 Kings 18:15. A servant of God who lived and worked as in God's sight.

Heb. 4:13. All things are seen and known by God.

Questions:

1. In the first commandment ("Thou shalt have no other gods before me"), how may the words "before me" be literally translated from the Hebrew Bible?

In the Hebrew the words used mean literally **before my face**.

2. What is the meaning of this expression, "before my face"?

Since God is a Spirit and does not have a body, he does not have a face. In the Bible when we read of God's "face" or "countenance", we should realize that this is a figure of speech. The meaning of it is **in God's presence or in God's sight**.

3. What part of our lives is passed in God's sight?

All of our lives, including all our thoughts, words and deeds, as well as the inward state of our heart, are always **known** and observed by God. Heb. 4:13.

4. Why is it impossible to flee or escape from God's presence?

Because God is everywhere, and knows all things. Therefore it is absolutely impossible that anything could ever be concealed from God.

5. Name some Bible characters who attempted to hide or flee from God's presence.

Adam and Eve, Gen. 3:8. Jonah, Jon. 1:3.

6. Why did Adam and Eve attempt to hide from the presence of God?

Because of their guilty conscience, which was the result of their sin of eating the forbidden fruit.

7. Why did Jonah attempt to flee from the presence of God?

Because of his stubborn and disobedient spirit, which made him unwilling to obey the command which he had received from God.

8. What was the result of Adam, Eve and Jonah trying to escape from the presence of God?

They learned that it is impossible to escape from God's presence, and that where ever people may go, or whatever they may do, God's presence follows them and there is no hiding place from God.

9. How should we answer the person who says that God is too great to care whether we human beings worship him or not, or too great to care whether we worship some other god instead of him?

Scripture teaches that as there is nothing too great for God to control it, so there is nothing too small for God's interest and attention. God is the Creator and Ruler of all things, both great and small. Moreover the importance of

anything, or God's concern about it, does not depend on its size or weight. Human beings are creatures of God, made in his image, subject to his moral law, and the Word of God teaches that every thought, word and deed is subject to God's judgment.

10. When we read the words "before me" in the first commandment, what should our attitude toward this commandment be?

We should pause and consider whether we may in any way, or at any time, be guilty of the sin of having some other god, and realize that this sin is seen and known by the true God; and this should have the effect of persuading us to turn from this sin and repent of it.

11. How does the Catechism describe the sin of having another god in the presence of the true God?

It describes this sin as "a most impudent provocation" of the true God. Yet we are all guilty of this sin in some form or other. Every Christian is guilty, at least at times, of **an idolatrous love of the world**. We should realize that this is a **most impudent provocation** of God our Creator and Redeemer.

12. How should we perform all our service to God, and all the activities of our lives?

We should perform all our service to God and all the activities of our lives, "as in his sight", that is, realizing that God sees and observes every detail of our lives. This thought should serve to make us hate and fear sin, and seek to love and serve God conscientiously, moment by moment and day by day.

13. What great Old Testament prophet stated that he stood "in the presence of God"?

Elijah. 1 Kings 18:15.

LESSON 20

God's Great Jealousy Concerning Religious Worship

Q. 107. Which is the second commandment?

A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Q. 108. What are the duties required in the second commandment?

A. The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his word;

particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: . . .

Scripture References:

Ex. 20:4-6. The second commandment.

Deut. 32:46, 47. Matt. 18:20. Acts 2:42. 1 Tim. 6:13, 14. The duty of receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire the ordinances of religious worship appointed in Scripture.

Phil. 4:6. Eph. 5:20. Prayer and thanksgiving in Christ's name is an ordinance appointed in Scripture.

Deut. 17:18, 19. Acts 15:21. 2 Tim. 4:2.

James 1:21, 22. Acts 10:33. God has appointed the reading, preaching and hearing of his Word as ordinances of worship.

Matt. 28:19. 1 Cor. 11:23-30. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are appointed ordinances of divine worship.

Matt. 18:15-17. Matt. 16:19. 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 12:28. Church government and church discipline are appointed in Scripture as divine ordinances.

Eph. 4:11, 12. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. 1 Cor. 9:7-15. The work of the Gospel ministry, and its support by the members of the Church, are duties appointed by God in his Word.

Joel 2:12, 13. 1 Cor. 7:5. Religious fasting a divine ordinance.

Isa. 19:21. Psalm 76:11. Making and paying vows to God an ordinance of worship appointed in Scripture.

Questions:

1. What is the general subject of the second commandment?

The general subject of the second commandment is **religious worship**. The commandment deals with this on its negative side, forbidding idolatry or false worship. This of course implies the corresponding duty of observing the true worship of God.

2. With respect to the true worship of God, what three duties are imposed on God's people?

(a) to **receive** the true worship, that is, to recognize it as a binding obligation on the conscience and conduct. (b) To **observe** the true worship, that is, not merely to believe in it as an article of faith, but actually to practice it in our life. (c) To **preserve** the true worship, that is, to adhere to it strictly as it is appointed in Scripture, scrupulously avoiding all corruptions or human changes in matters which God has appointed in his Word.

3. Why must we be so careful to receive, observe and preserve the true worship of God?

Because God is **jealous** concerning his worship, that is, he is not willing to allow us to do as we please in matters of worshipping him. God is sovereign; he is supreme over all; therefore we are bound to obey **his will**; and he has revealed in the Scripture that it is his will that he be worshipped **strictly and only according to his own appointed ordinances and in no other way whatever**.

4. How is this obligation commonly disregarded at the present day?

In our day and age, with its tremendous emphasis on the dignity and freedom of man, and its corresponding neglect of the majesty and authority of God, the tendency is to hold that men may

worship God **as they please**, or, as the saying is, "according to the dictates of their own conscience," and that sincerity is more important than truth or divine appointment. It is quite common today for people to hold that even the false worship of the heathen is acceptable to God provided the worshippers are **sincere**. This whole notion is of course directly contrary to the statements of the Bible.

5. How is the obligation to maintain purity of worship nullified by the Roman Catholic Church?

The Roman Catholic Church, as well as some Protestant bodies, holds that the Church is not limited by the Scriptures in matters of worship, but that the Church may make decrees concerning ordinances of worship and even add new ordinances not appointed in the Scriptures. This mistaken attitude concerning worship is the explanation of many corruptions of divine worship which exist in the Church of Rome and those bodies which copy "Catholic" forms of worship.

6. How is the obligation to maintain purity of worship disregarded by many Protestant churches?

Many Protestant bodies, perhaps most Protestant bodies, have come to regard divine worship as more or less a matter of indifference, to be determined according to human preference or convenience. It is common to hold that whatever is not **forbidden** in the Bible is legitimate in worshipping God. This accounts for the introduction of many human corruptions into divine worship.

7. Into what two classifications may the ordinances of divine worship be divided?

Into those intended for **regular** use and those intended for **occasional** use. Prayer, preaching, and the sacraments, for example, are intended for regular use. Fasting, vowing, swearing by God's name, are for occasional use, that is, to be performed not at any recurring stated time, but when some special occasion calls for them.

8. In what four spheres of human life are ordinances of divine worship to be performed?

In the spheres of the individual Christian, the Christian family, the Christian Church, and the Christian State or nation.

9. Is every ordinance of divine worship intended for all four of these spheres of human life?

No. Some ordinances are limited to the Church; others are suitable only for the individual, Church and Family. For example, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are **Church ordinances** and may not be observed privately in families or voluntary associations. Swearing by the name of God, on the other hand, is an ordinance suitable for a Christian State or nation as well as for a Church.

LESSON 21

The Sin of Complacency Concerning Unscriptural Worship

Q. 108 (Continued). What are the duties required in the second commandment?

A. The duties required in the second commandment are . . . (as also) the disapproving detesting, opposing, all false worship; and according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.

Scripture References:

Acts 17:16, 17. Psalm 16:4. The second commandment requires strict separation from and rejection of all forms of worship not appointed in the Scriptures.

Deut. 7:5. Isa. 30:22. Monuments of idolatry are to be removed.

Questions:

1. What is the Christian's duty with reference to false worship?

It is the Christian's duty to disapprove, detest and oppose all false worship.

2. What is meant by "false worship"?

"False worship" means not only worshipping a false god, or practicing the rites of a false religion, but **attempting to worship the true God in any other manner than that appointed in his Word, the Holy Bible.**

3. How must a Christian "disapprove, detest and oppose" false worship?

It is a Christian's duty to "disapprove, detest and oppose" all false worship not merely by a general or theoretical testimony against it, but by a **practical** testimony against it, that is, by **dissenting and abstaining from participation in it as a matter of conscience as he shall give answer to God at the Judgment Day.**

4. Why should a Christian separate from the religious worship of Freemasonry and similar secret "fraternal" orders?

It is clear that Freemasonry is essentially a religious institution, and that its religion is different in kind from the Christianity of the Word of God. This being the case, the religious ordinances and ceremonies of Freemasonry must be regarded as false worship, that is, worshipping otherwise than as appointed in God's Word. For a Christian — indeed for any person — to participate in such worship is to violate the second commandment.

5. What is meant by the expression "monuments of idolatry"?

This expression means the altars, images, temples, etc., of false religions. Scripture teaches that such "monuments of idolatry" ought to be

removed lest they be a temptation to people to use them in religious worship, or a rallying point for a revival and growth of the false religions.

6. How are the "monuments of idolatry" to be removed?

The "monuments of idolatry" are to be removed from any nation or social organism, not by indiscriminate action on the part of the public in general, nor by mob violence such as often took place in the days of the Reformation, but in an orderly manner "according to each one's place and calling". That is to say, the work of removing "monuments of idolatry" is to be left in the hands of those persons in Family, Church and State who have the legitimate authority to carry out such a task. A private citizen who by reason of his Protestant convictions believes that the Roman Catholic mass is idolatrous, does not have the right to walk into a Roman Catholic Church and smash the altar with an axe. The head of a family may remove "monuments of idolatry" from his own house but not from his neighbor's house. In a heathen country, Christian people should hope, pray and work for the removal of all "monuments of idolatry", but they have no right to undertake the removal by direct action, except where the "monuments of idolatry" exist in their own homes or on their own property. On the other hand, where a family is converted from idolatry to Christianity, it is proper that the "monuments of idolatry" in that household be removed, and other Christians may of course be requested to assist in such an undertaking.

7. How are the elements of false worship to be removed from Family, Church and State?

In this matter the Catechism specifies the same principle as is involved in the removal of "monuments of idolatry", namely that such elements of false worship are to be removed "according to each one's place and calling", that is to say, every Christian is bound to undertake the removal of false worship **according to the measure of authority which God has committed to him**, whether in Family, Church or State.

8. Does not the principle of religious liberty imply that every person has the right to worship as he pleases, or according to the dictates of his conscience?

This question cannot be clearly and adequately answered unless we first define what we mean by a "right". The word "right" is ambiguous and its use in this connection leads to confusion and misunderstandings unless it is carefully defined. There is a basic distinction between **civil rights** and **moral rights**. A civil right is a right which has validity within the sphere of human society; a moral right is a right which is valid also within

the sphere of God's moral law. A millionaire has a **civil** right to spend his money, after he has paid his taxes, on worldly pleasures for himself and his family, if he desires to do so. The government may not step in and command him to spend his wealth in an unselfish or philanthropic manner. But he has no **moral** right, before God, to spend his money selfishly. If he does so, the government has no jurisdiction over the matter, but the millionaire will have to give answer to God at the Judgment Day. Similarly in the matter of religious liberty: a person may have a **civil right** to worship as he pleases, or not at all, (provided his manner of worship does not involve gross public blasphemy, nor destroy the rights of other persons, nor endanger the safety of civil society); and the government may neither forbid false worship nor enforce true worship. But no person has a **moral right** to worship as he pleases; and those who worship otherwise than as appointed in God's Word will have to give their answer to God at the Judgment Day. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and all such matters are under God's jurisdiction and will finally be adjudicated according to his moral law.

9. Does not the American ideal of "tolerance" imply that one religion, or manner of worship, is as good as another, and that all are equally pleasing to God?

Undoubtedly this is the popular American ideal of "tolerance", as inculcated by the motion picture industry, the press, the radio and the "liberal" churches. These powerful influences are molding public opinion to the idea that all religions and all forms of worship are equally good and valuable if only the worshipper is sincere. Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism are to be put on a level and all distinctive features of any of them regarded as unimportant in the interests of "Americanism" and "tolerance". **This is one of the most vicious and deplorable tendencies of our day, and we should be awake to its menace. If this emphasis on a false ideal of "tolerance" succeeds, true Bible Christianity will be eliminated as a powerful influence in our country, and the day may even come when orthodox Bible Christians will have to suffer persecution as "enemies of democracy".**

LESSON 22

Worship in Relation to God's Sovereignty

Q. 109. What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and any wise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion . . .

Scripture References:

Num. 15:39. God's commandments concerning worship to be observed without changes or additions "after our own heart".

Deut. 13:6-8. Counselling or urging people to adopt false worship is sin.

Hos. 5:11. Micah 6:16. The sin of commanding religious worship not instituted by God.

1 Kings 11:33, 12:33. The great sin of practicing worship not instituted by God himself.

Deut. 12:30-32. It is sinful to approve in any way of worship not instituted by God.

Deut. 13:6-12. Zech. 13:2, 3. Rev. 2:2, 14, 15, 20; 17:12, 16, 17. It is a sin against God to tolerate a false religion.

Questions:

1. What is the Scriptural principle concerning divine worship?

The Scriptural principle concerning divine worship is that the only right and acceptable way of worshipping God is that appointed by himself, which may not be changed by men.

2. What is the basis of this Scriptural principle concerning divine worship?

The basis of this principle concerning divine worship is **the sovereignty of God in all spheres of life**. By the **sovereignty** of God we mean his supreme and absolute authority, which does not depend on the consent of any created being and cannot be changed or abridged by any created being. God, the almighty Creator, Preserver and End of all things, is supreme over all, and his revealed will is absolute law concerning all things, and especially concerning that which intimately concerns himself, namely the matter of how he is to be worshipped by his people.

3. Is the doctrine of the **sovereignty of God** widely held today?

No. Churches which nominally hold this doctrine have largely abandoned it. Modern philosophy since the time of Immanuel Kant has placed great emphasis on the **autonomy of man**, that is, man's free self-determination. The result of this tendency has been to give up belief in the real sovereignty of God. In some quarters we are hearing today a frank, outspoken demand for a **limited God**. Some scholars have gone so far as to assert that God does not have any **independent** existence, but is only an implication of the human mind. Still others say that when God created the universe **he limited himself**, and is now no longer sovereign, but must adapt himself to the desires and ideas of his creatures. Still others say that God exists for the benefit of the human race, and so they have tried to believe in a "demo-

cratic" God. The old-time Bible truth of the absolute, transcendent sovereignty of God is regarded as an outworn curiosity by the prominent leaders of many of the large bodies of present-day Protestantism. However the real sovereignty of God is still held by many individuals and by many small denominations and a few larger ones.

4. What is the relation between abandonment of belief in the sovereignty of God, and the adoption of all kinds of changes and corruptions in divine worship?

Undoubtedly when people have given up belief in the sovereignty, or absolute authority, of God, they naturally tend to do as they please, or act according to human feelings, desires and preferences, with respect to matters of divine worship. When men forsake the sovereign God of the Bible, and put in his place an imaginary God created in their own image, it is no wonder that they also forsake the pure, simple worship appointed in Scripture, and put in its place all kinds of humanly invented ritual and ceremonies, according to the desires of their own hearts.

5. How can we most effectively oppose and counteract corruptions in the worship of God in churches of which we are members or with which we come in contact?

Of course we should oppose all corruptions in the worship of God to the limit of our ability, as opportunities are afforded and as circumstances may require. But merely to witness against or oppose particular details of false worship will accomplish very little unless we also, and first of all, oppose the false **principle** from which these details of false worship have proceeded, and bear witness to **the true principle of divine worship** which is taught in the Scriptures. Merely to oppose instrumental music in divine worship, for example, will accomplish little unless we bear emphatic witness to the Scriptural principle that **God is to be worshipped only as he has appointed in his Word, and not according to human preferences or desires.** Unless we can succeed in convincing people of the validity of this principle, our opposition to particular details of false worship will seem to them to be merely a stubborn insistence on **our** customs of worship over against **their** customs of worship. To seek reform in particular matters of worship, without gaining acceptance of the underlying principle of worship, is like trying to build a beautiful and substantial house with no foundation under it but sand.

6. How can we most effectively convince people of the validity of this Scriptural principle of divine worship?

To convince people of the validity of the principle that God is to be worshipped only as appointed in his Word, and not according to human preferences or desires, it is absolutely necessary first of all to convince them of two basic principles which underlie this Scriptural principle of

worship. These two basic principles are: (a) **The full inspiration and authority of the Bible;** (b) **The absolute sovereignty of God.** There was a time years ago when these two basic principles could be taken for granted in all denominations of the Reformed or Calvinistic branch of Protestantism, but they can no longer be taken for granted today, for they are no longer accepted, in their plain and true meaning, by the large and popular denominations which once adhered to them, and which still pay lip-service to them in their official creeds. Unless these two basic principles, the authority of the Bible and the sovereignty of God, are accepted, the Scriptural principle of divine worship will be meaningless, and we cannot expect people to accept it. Nothing is more foolish than to expect people **who are not willing to accept the Scriptural principle of worship** to adopt the practical applications of that principle; and nothing could be more futile than attempting to persuade people **who do not believe in the real authority of the Bible and the true sovereignty of God** to accept the Scriptural principle of worship. The foundation must be there or the building will not stand.

7. What is meant by "tolerating a false religion"?

The word "tolerating" means "sanctioning or permitting that which is not wholly approved". The Catechism teaches that it is a violation of the second commandment, and therefore a sin, to tolerate a false religion. This does not mean that it is the duty of the civil government to prohibit false religions by law, nor that Christian people are to destroy the temples and interfere with the meetings of false religions by mob violence. It means, rather, that it is wrong to give a false religion even a limited endorsement by any positive toleration of it, that is, sanctioning or approving of it in any positive way. Simply to let it alone is not necessarily wrong. For a Christian parent to allow his children to attend meetings held by Jehovah's Witnesses is to tolerate a false religion, and therefore wrong. For a Christian church to allow its church building to be used by a Christian Science society for their meetings is to tolerate a false religion, and therefore wrong. For the civil government to enact a law giving legal sanction or recognition to a false religion, or in any way approving of it **as a religion**, is to tolerate a false religion, and therefore wrong. However, for the civil government to issue a **charter of incorporation**, dealing only with matters of property, real estate, inheritance, and the like, to an organization connected with a false religion, does not involve officially **tolerating** a false religion, since such a charter of incorporation deals only with the **civil aspects** of a religious organization and does not involve any sanction of its religious features, which in ordinary cases are outside the jurisdiction of the civil government. For the civil government to issue to a Buddhist temple a certificate showing that the fire prevention reg-

ulations have been complied with does not amount to tolerating a false religion, for such certificate concerns only civil matters; it deals only with those civil aspects of a religious organization which the latter has in common with all other

human institutions; it does not deal with it as a **religious** organization, but merely as an **organization**, regardless of whether it is religious or secular in nature.

LESSON 23

The Sin of Attempting to Visualize God

Q. 109 (Continued). What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are . . . the making of any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshipping of it, or God in it or by it; . . .

Scripture References:

Deut. 4:15-19. Acts 17:29. Rom. 1:21-25. The sin of making any representation of God.

Dan. 3:18. Gal. 4:8. To worship any image or likeness of the deity violates the second commandment.

Ex. 32:5. To worship even the true God by means of any visible representation or image is a violation of the second commandment.

Questions:

1. Why is it wrong to make any representation or picture of God?

Because God is a pure Spirit, without bodily form, and any picture or representation which man can make can only give a false idea of the nature of God. This is true, as the Catechism intimates, regardless of whether an outward image or likeness is made, or only an inward image in a person's mind. In either case, the attempt to visualize God is sinful and can only falsify or distort the revelation of God presented in the Bible.

2. Is it wrong to make paintings or pictures of our Saviour Jesus Christ?

According to the Larger Catechism, this is certainly wrong, for the Catechism interprets the second commandment as forbidding the making of any representation of **any of the three persons of the Trinity**, which would certainly include Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, God the Son. While pictures of Jesus are extremely common at the present day, we should realize that in Calvinistic circles this is a relatively **modern** development, and our forefathers of the Reformation and perhaps three hundred years afterward scrupulously refrained, as a matter of principle, from sanctioning or making use of pictures of Jesus Christ. Such pictures are so common at the present day, and so few people have conscientious objections to them, that it is practically impossible to obtain any Sabbath

School helps or Bible story material for children that is free of such pictures. The American Bible Society is to be commended for its decision that the figure of the Saviour may not appear in Bible motion pictures issued by the Society.

3. What attitude should we adopt in view of the present popularity of pictures of Jesus Christ?

The following considerations may be suggested as bearing on this question: (a) The Bible presents no information whatever about the personal appearance of Jesus Christ, but it does teach that we are not to think of him as he may have appeared "in the days of his flesh", but as he is today in heavenly glory, in his estate of exaltation (2 Cor. 5:16). (b) Inasmuch as the Bible presents no data about the personal appearance of our Saviour, all artists' pictures of him are wholly **imaginary** and constitute only the artists' ideas of his character and appearance. (c) Unquestionably pictures of the Saviour have been very greatly influenced by the theological viewpoint of the artist. The typical modern picture of Jesus is the product of nineteenth century "Liberalism" and presents a "gentle Jesus" who emphasized only the love and Fatherhood of God and said little or nothing about sin, judgment and eternal punishment. (d) Perhaps more people living today have derived their ideas of Jesus Christ from these typically "liberal" pictures of Jesus than have derived their ideas of Jesus from the Bible itself. Such people inevitably think of Jesus as a **human person**, rather than thinking of him according to the Biblical teaching as a **divine Person with a human nature**. The inevitable effect of the popular acceptance of pictures of Jesus is to overemphasize his humanity and to forget or neglect his Deity (which of course no picture can portray). (e) In dealing with an evil so widespread and almost universally accepted, we should bear a clear testimony against what we believe to be wrong, but we should not expect any sudden change in Christian sentiment on this question. It will require many years of education in Scriptural principles before the churches and their members can be brought back to the high position of the Westminster Assembly on this question. Patience will be required.

4. Are not pictures of Jesus legitimate provided they are not worshipped nor used as "aids to worship"?

As interpreted by the Westminster Assembly, the second commandment certainly forbids all representations of any of the persons of the Trin-

ity, and this coupled with the truth taught in the Westminster Standards that Christ is a divine Person with a human nature taken into union with himself, and **not a human person**, would imply that it is wrong to make pictures of Jesus Christ for any purpose whatever. Of course there is a difference between using pictures of Jesus to illustrate children's Bible story books or lessons, and using pictures of Jesus in worship as Roman Catholics use them. Admittedly the former is not an evil in the same class with the latter. In spite of this distinction, however, there

are good reasons for holding that our forefathers of the Reformation were right in opposing all pictorial representation of the Saviour. We realize that the popularity — even the almost unchallenged prevalence — of a particular practice does not prove that it is **right**. To prove that a practice is right we must show that it is in harmony with the commands and principles revealed in the Word of God. **Merely showing that a practice is common, is useful, or seems to have good results, does not prove it is right.**

(To be continued)

Some Noteworthy Quotations

IF YOU WANT HEALTH FOR YOUR SOULS, and if you want to be the instruments of bringing health to others, do not turn your gaze forever within, as though you could find Christ there. Nay, turn your gaze away from your own miserable experiences, away from your own sin, to the Lord Jesus Christ as He is offered to us in the gospel. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Only when we turn away from ourselves to that uplifted Saviour shall we have healing for our deadly hurt.

— J. Gresham Machen

Oh, that men would turn for salvation from their own experience to the Cross of Christ; oh, that they would turn from the phenomena of religion to the living God! That is not found in a study of the psychology of religion; it is not found in "religious education"; it is not found in an analysis of one's own spiritual states. Oh, no. It is found only in the blessed written Word. There are the words of life. There God speaks. Let us attend to His voice. Let us above all things know the Word. Let us study it with all our minds, let us cherish it with all our hearts. Then let us try, very humbly, to bring it to the unsaved. Let us pray that God may honor not the messengers but the message, that despite our unworthiness He may make His Word upon our unworthy lips to be a message of life.

— J. Gresham Machen

Certainly a Christianity that avoids argument is not the Christianity of the New Testament. The New Testament is full of argument in defence of the faith.

— J. Gresham Machen

Charles Spurgeon and D. L. Moody, in the latter years of the nineteenth century, were facing a situation entirely different from that which faces evangelists of today. They were facing a world in which people in their youth had been imbued with Christian convictions, and in which public opinion, to a very considerable extent, was in favor of the Christian faith. Today, on the other hand, public opinion, even in England and

America, is predominantly opposed to the Christian faith, and the people from their youth are imbued with the notion that Christian convictions are antiquated and absurd. Never was there a stronger call of God than there is today for a vigorous and scholarly defence of the faith.

— J. Gresham Machen

I would rather die tonight and be sure of sharing the bliss of the purified in yon world of light than live for centuries with the wealth of this world at my feet, and miss the marriage supper of the Lamb. I have missed many appointments in my life, but by the grace of God I mean to make sure of that one. Why, the blessed privilege of sitting down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, so see the King in His beauty, to be forever with the Lord — who would miss it?

— D. L. Moody

Love must be active, as light must shine. As someone has said: "A man may hoard up his money; he may bury his talents in a napkin; but there is one thing he cannot hoard up, and that is love." You cannot bury it. It **must** flow out. It cannot feed upon itself; it must have an object.

— D. L. Moody

I have traveled a good deal, but I never found a happy backslider in my life.

— D. L. Moody

If a person repudiates the Scriptural account of the origin of the human race, it becomes necessary of course to give some other account of it. Man exists, and no one can escape asking the question where he came from. If he does not owe his origin to the creative omnipotence of God, he owes it to something else. And then no solution remains except to say that man gradually developed himself out of the antecedent lower beings . . . to his present high position . . . **Evolution** is, therefore, the magic word which in our times must somehow solve all problems about the origin and essence of creatures.

— Herman Bavinck

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.

SALVATION. This term is used in the general sense of preservation or deliverance from any kind of trouble or danger (as I Sam. 19:5); but more particularly, it is used to describe that work of God, through the mediation of Christ and the application of the Holy Spirit, by which His people are delivered from sin, wrath and hell, and brought into union and communion with Himself.

SANCTIFICATION. "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness" (S.C. 35).

SANHEDRIN (also spelled Sanhedrim). The highest Jewish governmental assembly in the time when Jesus Christ was on earth. In the King James Version the word "council" is used.

SATAN. Literally, "adversary." Satan is that spiritual being who is the chief adversary of God and His people. He is called in Scripture Apollyon (Destroyer), the devil (slanderer), the prince of this world, the father of lies, the old serpent, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, the god of this world. Scripture teaches that Satan is real, personal, intelligent, desperately wicked, utterly contrary to God, and of great but strictly limited power.

SAVIOUR. One who saves. In the general sense a saviour is anyone who saves from any evil or danger (I Kings 13:5; Neh. 9:27). In the general sense, God is called "the Saviour of all men" (I Tim. 4:10). Specifically, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world (I John 4:14). The New Testament, as well as the Old, often speaks of God as our Saviour. Of course God is our Saviour **from sin and wrath** only through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

SCEPTIC. One whose religious attitude is that of doubt rather than that of faith; in particular, one who doubts the existence of God, the

truth of the Bible, the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, etc.

SCHISM. An unjustifiable division in the Visible Church. (In every case of denominational division, at least one party is guilty of the sin of schism. The guilt does not necessarily rest upon the minority or separating party; it may rest upon the party separated from, which by defection from the truth may have made the separation necessary. (See **R. P. Testimony**, XXI. 5).

SCORNER. "One who treats any person or thing with contempt" (Buck's **Theological Dictionary**). A common form of religious scorning is the contemptuous rejection of some doctrine or principle which the scorner does not understand, and will not take the trouble to study. Those who say that, no matter what the Bible teaches, they will not believe in the doctrine of predestination, are religious scorners.

SELF-EXAMINATION. The Christian duty of calling ourselves strictly to account, in the light of God's Word, for our attitudes, thoughts, actions and neglects. It is a Scriptural duty (2 Cor. 13:5), and to be specially exercised in connection with the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28).

SEPTUAGINT. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, made in Egypt about 285-150 B. C. It is called the "Septuagint" from the Latin word for "seventy" because of a tradition that the work of translation was done by 70 scholars (more precisely, 72, but 70 was preferred as a round number). This version of the Old Testament is often designated by the abbreviation LXX.

SIMONY. The sin of obtaining, or attempting to obtain, any church office by bribery or other corrupt practices. The name "simony" is derived from Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24), who attempted to purchase the gift of the Holy Spirit with money. Simony is a violation of the Second Commandment; see **Westminster Larger Catechism**, 109.

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.

THE FOUR MAJOR CULTS by Anthony Hoekema. W. B. Eerdmans Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. pp. 447, 1963. \$5.95.

The four major cults are: Mormonism, Seventh-Day Adventism, Christian Science, and Jehovah's Witnesses. The discussion of each cult

follows an outline which makes it easy to compare the cults on major Christian doctrines. The outline is: **History** of the cult; **Source of Authority** for the cult; and the **Doctrines** of the cult.

Three chapters of the book (1, 6, 7) consider the cults in general. Chapter 6 discusses the distinctive traits of the cult. Hoekema gives five such traits which are:

1. An Extra-Scriptural Source of Authority.

"As the first of these distinctive traits of the cult, I instance the presence of an extra-Scriptural source of authority. . . . Their attitude toward the Scripture is therefore always an ambivalent one: a mixture of apparent subjection to its authority and of arbitrary manipulation of its teachings." (page 378)

2. The Denial of Justification by Grace Alone. (379)

3. The Group as the Exclusive Community of the Saved. (384)

4. The Devaluation of Christ. (382)

5. The Group's Central Role in Eschatology. (385)

Hoekema's work shows how each cult is distinguished from New Testament Christianity by the above traits.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are now gaining an air of authority for their teachings through an elaborate scholastical defense. Hoekema's work on this cult is valuable because it shows where and how they are in error despite the subterfuge of words and reference works.

The terminology peculiar to each cult is discussed in such a way that a non-cultist can understand the fine distinctions maintained by the cultist in their vocabulary.

The work is extensively documented by footnotes from original sources, and contains a comprehensive bibliography; the index is also very effectively compiled.

At the end of the discussion of each cult except Christian Science, Hoekema gives an appendix which deals with a special and crucial aspect of the cult. Appended to the discussion of the Witnesses is a consideration of their Arian teachings concerning Christ, and "A Critique of Watchtower Exegesis."

The cults are filled with dedicated but deceived people. Deception is a most dreadful weapon of Satan. We who profess the Reformed faith would do well to pray often that we be not deceived. The manner in which the cults are growing indicates that people are about us, and that they need something. If we who possess the truth are not making headway in this warfare for the souls of men, it may well be

that we too are deceived by Satan. The book is highly recommended.

— Edward A. Robson

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE, by Avin Harry Johnston. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1963, pp. 209. \$2.95.

Ethan, son of Shobek, King Solomon's Builder, was not content to follow in his father's footsteps. He wanted, rather, to study the ancient writings of his people, Israel, and travel to far away lands in order to discover for himself the real meaning of Life. His father, disgusted as he was at his son's ambitions, agreed to send Ethan on a journey to the East with a caravan.

Early in his journey, he met Godar — a friendly, giant-like caravaner who became his loyal companion. He also met Anna, the beautiful daughter of a wily, crafty thief. The book tells of the strange adventures of these three, the foreign ports they visit and dangers they encounter. All during the journey Ethan's elusive goal slipped by him, and finally he and Anna, whom he has married, return to Jerusalem at the time of the dedication of the Temple. There, in the quiet, early hours of that famous day they find the Answer Ethan has been searching for in the great Temple itself.

Wonderful reading for both teenagers and adults.

— Margaret Robb

THE THIRD CROSS, by Avin Harry Johnston. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1961, pp. 346. \$3.50.

The Third Cross is the story of two very different people in Jerusalem at the time of Christ and relates how their lives became entwined with one another's and with the Savior's.

Fabius was a Roman soldier stationed in the Holy City at the time of Christ's crucifixion. His father, a talented goldsmith, had once been a favorite of Augustus Caesar, but had been banished from the court because of a petty complaint laid against him by one of the Emperor's ladies. Thus Fabius came to grow up in the dirty, smelly streets of Rome until his uncle, a farmer from Tuscany, took him to the country and taught him the skills of a farmer. In the fresh air and sunshine Fabius grew to be a strong, handsome man despite his golden hair, which he inherited from his northern born mother. At the age of twenty he enlisted with the Roman Army and was eventually sent to Jerusalem.

Ruth was a lovely, dark Jewess raised near the northern borders of Judea. After her father's tragic death, she and her mother, Lois, went to Jerusalem to live with a cousin and help him run his inn. Ruth and her relatives hated all Romans fiercely because of their occupation of Jerusalem and cruelty to their people, the Jews.

This book relates the lives and adventures of Fabius and Ruth, the way they met, and the influence Jesus had on them. Both were puzzled over this Teacher and were seeking an answer to their problems, an answer they finally discovered on Calvary.

This is a wonderful book; a combination of adventure, romance and history that would interest both adults and young people.

— Margaret Robb

CHAMPION OF LIBERTY, by Norman E. Nygaard. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1964, pp. 159. \$2.50.

This is a story of Roger Williams, American pioneer in the field of religious and civil liberties, founder of the Baptist movement in the Colonies. Although much historical and personal fact is included this is primarily a book of fiction. It is interesting reading although I'm not sure how much new or valuable information one may gain from it. Perhaps Williams' determination to stand for what he felt to be the truth, in spite of any personal hardship or difficulty which might come to him, is the fact impressed most upon the reader.

— Mrs. Willard Hemphill

MEN TWICE BORN by David R. Enlow. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1963, pp. 147. \$2.95.

This book is composed of personal testimonies of twenty-six men whose lives have been transformed and changed through the power of Jesus Christ. They are simple, sincere and inspirational. It is very readable and should be interesting to young people particularly.

— Mrs. Willard Hemphill

THE MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE, by John Flavel. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78B Chiltern St., London, W. 1, England. 1963, reprint of 1678. Paper cover, 221 pages. 4 shillings sixpence.

The author of this book is one of the old Puritan divines coming near the close of a long line of distinguished Puritan leaders. Mr. Flavel died in 1691. The Puritans were noted for a great sense of the sovereignty of God and perhaps it is out of that depth of feeling that Flavel writes this book on the providence of God. He takes as his proposition this doctrine, "It is the duty of the saints, especially in times of straits, to reflect upon the performance of providence for them in all the states and through all the stages of their lives." The book following is divided into three categories. Part one concerns the evidence of providence and is filled with many, many illustrations of the providence of God in the lives of his people. Part two concerns meditation on the providence of God. This part speaks of the duty of meditation on the how of meditation and the advantages of meditation on God's providence. Part three concerns the application of the doctrine of providence in the lives of God's saints

including a chapter on the advantages of recording our experiences of God's providence. This book is highly recommended as a means of encouraging our hearts and lives in the overruling providence of God.

— James D. Carson

PRECIOUS REMEDIES WITH THE COVENANT OF GRACE, by Thomas Brooks. Sovereign Grace Publishers, Box 2211, Wilmington, Delaware. 1960, reprint of 1676. 316 pages. \$3.95.

This volume contains two earlier separate works. The first is entitled "Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices", and the second "The Covenant of Grace".

The first part of the book assumes that Satan's power is great against the life of the Christian. And the author presents many devices of Satan used to draw souls into sin, to keep souls from holy duties and religious services, to keep souls in a sad, doubting and questioning condition, and the several devices of Satan to destroy all sorts and ranks of men in the world. There are given at least thirty-three devices of Satan with no less than three remedies and as many as twelve remedies given to counteract each of these devices. This part of the book is extremely valuable in our day when Satan's power is so largely minimized and ignored.

The second half of the volume concerns a discussion of the covenant of grace. The author presents Biblical background material for the covenant and discusses thoroughly both aspects of the covenant of grace, namely, that part between the Father and the Son and that which concerns Jesus Christ and his people. And the latter part of this book concerns the effects of the covenant of grace in the world and the use that Christians ought to make of it. This, too, is an important contribution to our understanding of God's grace as revealed in his covenant relationship with his people.

The entire volume is heartily recommended.

— James D. Carson

IF THOU SHALT CONFESS, by J. K. Van Baalen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1962, pp. 65. \$1.50.

This small volume is designed as a gift for the young Christian entering upon the Christian way for the first time. The author issued the first edition of this book forty years ago, and it has now been revised and brought up-to-date to meet modern conditions. This reviewer found this booklet to be extremely helpful and valuable. In the chapter under "Recreation", this reviewer would have been happy to see a stronger statement for abstinence with respect to alcoholic beverages and tobacco. Also in the chapter on the "Lord's Day", the consistent use of the term "Lord's Day" would have been preferable.

With discretion this book could be used very helpfully among our young people as they consider their responsibilities as Christian youth.

— James D. Carson

ALL THE PROMISES OF THE BIBLE, by Herbert Lockyer. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1962, pp. 610. \$6.95.

We speak frequently about the many promises of God's word. And the author in this book has given a valuable service in collecting the promises of God's word under various headings. All of us would do well to ponder more and more the precious promises of the Bible.

This reviewer feels that one weakness of this volume is the lack of an index which would make the entire volume much more useful as a reference work. For example, the table of contents list 170 pages of promises relative to the Christian in the spiritual realm with no further breakdown of the categories listed in the table of contents. Other categories are not as long but still an index would be a valuable addition for this book.

The author is a dispensational premillennialist, and this view colors the categorizing of the promises as, for example, in the promises relating to the Jews as distinct from the Gentiles and the Church of God; in the promises relating to the Church, for the author states that "Israel is **not** the Church"; and in the promises concerning the millennium, which the author views as the period of a thousand years upon the earth under the reign of Jesus Christ and His saints.

— James D. Carson

THE SECRET OF CASTLE WHITENBURG, by Trolli Wulff. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1963, pp. 150. \$2.50.

This novel for boys and girls has been adapted from Mrs. Wulff's original German story by J. Theodore Mueller. When a poor girl, a foster child, earns a vacation in the country, she finds an exciting new life. She is enchanted by the mysterious legend of Castle Whitenburg and is delighted to learn the secrets the castle had been hiding. Through the inhabitants of the castle, she is led to accept Jesus Christ as her Saviour; she learns of her own parents; and she is able to share her new-found happiness with her foster family.

— Mrs. W. F. McBurney

YEAR OF DECISION, by Anna Schroeder. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1962, pp. 214. \$2.95.

A carefree architecture student loves a student nurse who is a dedicated Christian. Because he rejects Christ, she refuses to marry him and takes a job in another town. When he seriously injures a dear friend in an automobile accident, he realizes his sinfulness and accepts Christ. His new faith is severely tested, but he

remains strong. Ultimately, he is reunited with the girl he loves. Woven through this novel for young people is an interesting picture of the culture of the Canadian Mennonites.

— Mrs. W. F. McBurney

IN THE STILLNESS OF THE STORM, by Elsie Gesner. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1963, pp. 114. \$1.95.

A high school girl finds Christ while at boarding school on the mainland. During a vacation, she returns to her home, an island off the coast of Maine, determined to witness to her unbelieving family. A family feud and a storm at sea add excitement to her testimony. Before she returns to school, she is able to see some results of her witness for her Saviour. This book is written for young teens.

— Mrs. W. F. McBurney

UNLIKELY SAINTS OF THE BIBLE, by William C. Fletcher. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1961, pp. 144. \$2.95.

To many persons **UNLIKELY SAINTS OF THE BIBLE** would be just another book of Bible Character Studies, but as I read through this book I found it to be a very enjoyable and thoroughly readable book. The author seems to have been able to capture a style which permits these characters of old to live again in our minds.

Mr. Fletcher is not trying to give us the theological answer to the reasons behind the actions of some of these persons, but rather to simply make the lives of these men and women real to us. This he does very well in revealing Abraham to us as "The Merchant", or when he shows us Jonah as "The Patriot" and Peter, perhaps surprisingly to some, as "The Betrayer". In all there are eleven of these interesting sketches.

This is a good book for devotional type reading and perhaps as a Bible Story Book for children.

— Jerrold S. Milroy

ORIGINS OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS, by Ned B. Stonehouse. Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 1963, pp. 261. \$4.50.

Dr. Stonehouse presents in his study of some basic questions on the synoptics much valuable information; however, the material will be of most value to those on a more advanced plane of study. In the preface Dr. Stonehouse says that the data with which we are working is not sufficient to answer many of our questions, and he encourages "more reserve and caution" in this area of study.

In chapter I Dr. Stonehouse examines information found in Irenaeus, Tertullian, Papias, and the superscriptions of the Gospels with respect to authorship. The footnotes in chapter I and throughout are valuable because they cite

other works by Dr. Stonehouse, his articles and reviews in the WTJ, and other prominent writers on the subject. Chapter I concludes, "The testimony of tradition regarding authorship appears to be marked by clarity and consistency. . . , however, such testimony cannot. . . be accorded a place of absolute authority." (p. 18).

Chapter II examines the witness in Matthew's Gospel to its own author. Dr. Stonehouse summarizes his arguments by saying, ". . . my position is that the tradition concerning the apostolic authorship of Matthew is strong, clear, and consistent. . . as strongly attested as any fact of ancient church history." (p. 46, 47).

Chapter V deals at length with the accounts concerning the rich young ruler (Mk. 10:18, Mt. 19:17). On the question of the interdependence of Matthew and Mark Dr. Stonehouse says, ". . . I have come to the judgment that Mark is evidently earlier than Matthew and has been utilized by Matthew." (p. 111).

Chapter IX deals with the self-revelation of Jesus. The conclusion drawn here is really one of the most crucial points on the subject of the validity of the Gospel. Dr. Stonehouse says, "Only if the witness of the Gospel to Jesus and that of Jesus' self-revelation are taken at face value, therefore, will one be able to establish genuine continuity between Jesus and the Gospel tradition." (p. 192).

The work is recommended as a supplement to one's library on N. T. studies.

— Edward A. Robson

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNITY, by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1963, pp. 64. paper cover. 50 cents.

Christian unity is a much discussed subject in our day. Two passages frequently quoted on this unity are John 17:21 and Ephesians 4:13. Lloyd-Jones gives in his work an exposition of these passages which I judge to be correct and worthy of being read.

Lloyd-Jones says of the Lord's prayer for the unity of his people in John 17:21, "We notice at once that the essential character of the unity about which our Lord is speaking is that it is comparable to the unity that exists between the Father and the Son Themselves." (page 12) ". . . that unity is essentially spiritual, is produced by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the act of regeneration, and shows itself in a common belief and reception of the teaching concerning our Lord's Person and Work." (p. 15).

His exposition of Ephesians 4 is more lengthy than that of John 17, but his arguments are to show that the oneness involved in this passage is produced by the new birth and not by ecumenical agreement.

Lloyd-Jones says a great deal about the

visible and the invisible church which is emphatically worthy of consideration. His statements are rather dangerous by implication, yet I still think he is correct. Concerning doctrine which the church desires to hold he says, "The N. T. everywhere insists upon true doctrine. . . the whole tendency today is to discourage talk about doctrine. . . Doctrine is being discounted in the interest of supposed unity." (p. 50). ". . . the N. T. itself . . . maintains that truth can be so defined that you can say that a man has departed from it." (p. 51).

Concerning the church herself Lloyd Jones says, "We must never start with the visible church or with an institution, but rather with the truth which alone creates unity." (p. 59). "The invisible Church is more important than the visible church, and loyalty to the former may involve either expulsion or separation from the latter, and the formation of a new visible church." (p. 60). "Nothing so surely drives the world away from the truth as uncertainty or confusion in the Church with respect to the content of her message." (p. 61). "The greatest need of the hour is a new baptism and outpouring of the Holy Spirit. . . Nothing else . . . has ever given the Church true authority and made her, and her message, mighty. . . He is the 'Spirit of Truth', and He will honour nothing but the truth." (p. 64).

In my humble judgment the Reformed Presbyterian Church is struggling with the question of the nature of the visible church and her authority, and she will find counsel in this work.

— Edward A. Robson

THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN CONFESIONS, by Vermon H. Neufeld. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1963, pp. 166. \$4.00.

AN EARLY CHRISTIAN CONFESSIOn, by R. P. Martin. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1960, pp. 69. Paper, five shillings.

Both of these works grow out of the Form-Critical or Form-History school of approach to Biblical studies. This school examines the text in the light of its assumed origin in the worship of Israel, for the Old Testament, and of the Church, for the New Testament. Thus the Scripture does not describe the actual events, but the Church's understanding, or use of these events. To use Mr. Neufeld's words, the interpreter has "the problem of discerning those elements in the accounts which represent the historical situation itself and those which reflect the situation at the time of writing" (N. p. 108). Similarly, Mr. Martin says after surveying considerable contemporary literature on Phil. 2:5-11, "It is marked out (by these interpreters) as a fragment of liturgy by the unusual style and the employment of expressions which are more in keeping with the style of poetry and worship

than . . . of a letter to a factious and local community of Christ's people at Philippi." and he adds, significantly for us, "We find that this conclusion is now generally accepted as part of the wider concern to find in the Epistles of the New Testament fragments of hymnic and liturgical compositions which are incorporated into the writings of the apostles and the apostolic men" (M. p. 11).

Mr. Neufeld's book is the fifth volume in "New Testament Tools and Studies", a series edited by Professor Bruce M. Metzger of Princeton. The author is president of Bethel College, Newton, Kansas. The substance of this work was submitted as a doctoral thesis at Princeton Seminary in 1960.

The opening paragraph reveals the author's theological bias and desire: to contribute to the "valuable studies of the primitive Christian" life that have resulted from the application of this method of research (p. 1). Definitive studies of the preaching, teaching, catechising, liturgy have made such Greek words as kerygma, didache, catechesis, leitourgia, paradosis a part of the common theological vocabulary of our day. A number of studies of individual "confessions" have appeared, such as the works surveyed by Mr. Martin, but this is the first "thorough investigation . . . devoted exclusively to the primitive Christian **homologia** (confession)" (p. 1).

After a brief survey of the studies of the creeds of the church and of form-critical studies of the New Testament, the author proceeds to examine the New Testament by lexical and form-critical techniques to determine what it has to say about the confession the primitive church made of Christ and what place this confession had in the life of the church.

He first examines lexically the nature of the confession by studying the word **homologia**, its cognates, antonyms and synonyms. This is a very valuable section of the book as it shows the significance of the matter of confessing Christ in the New Testament, both as to frequency and content. The content is clarified by comparison of the confession of the church with the preaching, teaching, witness and faith.

The New Testament material is then divided into the following groups for examination: the Letters of Paul, the Gospel and Letters of John, the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, Other Books. There is also a brief chapter on "The Homologia and Judaism" and a concluding chapter drawing together the significant aspects of the homologia in the primitive church.

The conclusion is that the early church received and handed on, first orally and then in written form, the basic elements of her faith (tradition — paradosis: 1 Cor. 11:23, 2 Tim. 2:2, etc.); and that an important form in this tradition was the "confession" (homologia). This be-

gan in the ministry of Jesus as evil spirits, men, and He Himself confessed who He was (Mk. 1:24; 8:29; 14:61, 62). This earliest form was "Jesus is the Christ", and to it were added details of his death, resurrection, lordship (Acts 4:10; Rom. 4:24, 25; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Phil. 2:5-11).

The homologia served the function of a personal declaration of faith by those entering the church (1 Jn. 5:1, 5), the heart of evangelism (Jn. 20:35), promoting, preserving faithfulness in a time of difficulty (Heb. 4:15), the basis of teaching (Col. 2:6, 7), confession at baptism (Acts 8:37), acclamation in worship (Phil. 2:5-11), the thrust of polemic (1 Cor. 8:5, 6), and the substance of corporate and individual apology (1 Cor. 12:3).

Whereas previous studies have been seen to be too definitive, as though the kerygma and the didache of the church were almost totally distinct from one another, this study concludes that the confession of the church is one in substance with the evangelical preaching to Jew and Gentile, the teaching of believers and the instruction of catechumens.

Another contribution of this work to modern Biblical studies is that it manifests that the homologia emphasizes two elements, "the mention of Jesus who lived and died in the course of history, and the predication of a more than ordinary nature and function expressed by the titles ascribed to Him" (pp. 140-141). The conclusion has not been drawn that the early church's confession was established upon a "mythologized" Jesus. This is an important step forward.

The minister will find here valuable assistance to his own concordance and lexical study of what the early church believed and confessed before men, and the circumstances in which confession was made.

Mr. Martin in the second work listed above, gives us a careful exegesis of one of the "confessions" of the New Testament, Phil. 2:5-11, and a survey of recent interpretation of it. The extensiveness of the literature and the thoroughness of Mr. Martin's work is evidenced in that there are 31 pages of footnotes for 38 pages of text. This is also an indication of the value of this work to the man who hasn't either the means or the time to keep abreast with modern Biblical studies on individual passages. A. B. Bruce could write in 1876 (**Humiliation of Christ**, p. 8) "the diversity of opinion concerning it (Phil. 2:5-11) is enough to fill the student with despair, and to afflict him with intellectual paralysis" (p. 7). What would he say now?

Mr. Martin admits that the denial of apostolic authorship of this "Christological Song" is not "merely a subjective guess" (p. 13) as he submits the arguments given chiefly by E. Lohmeyer "whose monograph remains the outstanding single contribution in recent times" (p. 8). But he

shows that "the evidence is . . . not all on one side", for Paul is capable of exalted poetic style, cf. 1 Cor. 13; Rom. 8:31ff; 11:33ff which are "as far removed from that of epistolary prose as is Philippians 2" (p. 15); the vocabulary, for all its unusualness, is perfectly suited to the theme and the apostle's ability; and the theme fits into the accepted Pauline theology; nor is it valid to argue that certain elements of Paul's theology are lacking, e.g. the resurrection is not mentioned, from this passage. Mr. Martin concludes that we need not look further than Paul himself for the author of this poetic interlude in his prose letter.

The exegesis is clear and stimulating, for all its inclusion of conflicting views. Clarity is maintained by placing much of the comparative analysis in footnotes. Two examples of enlightening exegesis: The figure of Christ as the second Adam (cf. Rom. 5:12-21) is brought into the Christology, so that the image of God in Adam and his temptation to be "like God" throws light on Christ's being "in the form of God" yet considering that it was "not robbery to be equal with God". And, in examining the "form of a servant" which Christ assumed, the author traces it linguistically to the Suffering Servant of Isa. 52:13-53:12.

Mr. Martin's conclusion: "We have traced the course of one of the earliest Christian creeds with its high doctrine of the Person and work of the Church's Lord. Such a study leads naturally not only to an enhanced appreciation of who He is and what He did, but also to a desire to worship Him. It may indeed be said that this is the acid test of a true Christology. Does it lead the enquirer to bow down and confess, "My Lord and my God? James Denney reminds us that 'the Church's confession of faith should be sung, not signed' (p. 38).

Such a critical survey, in the reviewer's opinion, is indispensable in the minister's library. This one has the positive value over many such recent works that the conclusions of the author in exegesis are in agreement with conservative theology.

One significant point for Reformed Presbyterians in particular is raised by these studies: Does the existence of poetic bits of highly exalted theme and style in the midst of the prose of the New Testament indicate that these were used either earlier or later as parts of Christian "hymns"? We have always insisted that Paul is using "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs" from their setting in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Psalter. This exegesis needs to be re-examined in the light of recent Biblical research to strengthen our apologetic of one of our cardinal doctrines. In examining this question, we may be able to contribute to the total picture of Biblical studies as well as to our own need for fresh apologetic. The fact that the Scripture is formative for the church rather than descriptive of it needs to be supported by fresh studies. Mr.

Neufeld has ably shown that the primitive church confessed that the historical Jesus of Nazareth is Christ the Lord, her Lord. Now we need a correlation of the kerygma and homologia that will demonstrate that both derive from the Lord Jesus Christ sending forth His word and Spirit through His apostles, and that the New Testament demands this confession, and is not merely the record that the Church made this confession.

— E. C. Copeland

FACING THE FACTS: THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE, by W. F. Batt. Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1964. pp. 96, paper.

For the man on the street the most powerful apology for the Christian faith is the life of those who profes it. Does it work? he asks. Mr. Batt lets 19 English professional men and women — a bank clerk, a buyer in a London store, a physics teacher, an army chaplain, a woman doctor, a chartered accountant, a government scientist, a law professor, consultant psychiatrist, etc. — tell of their life and walk with Christ. One is not "impressed" at first; but the facts become impressive as one after another in simple language and modest spirit shows how God in many and various ways made Himself known to and in him. God does have meaning for men and women "come of age" in this atomic age!

— E. C. Copeland

THE STORY OF THEOLOGY, by R. A. Finlayson. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square. London, W.C. 1, England. 1963, pp. 55. paper.

Professor Finlayson (Edinburgh) has told the story of the development of six cardinal doctrines of the Christian Church "for those who are not theologically trained in the strict sense" (cover). The doctrines of the Trinity, the Person of Christ, man, the atonement, justification by faith alone, and the authority of the Scripture need to be clearly understood in every generation of the church. Why should they have been developed in this order in the history of the church? This too is significant and is told in language the young layman can understand and appreciate. Recommended for personal and church libraries and as a study guide.

— E. C. Copeland

MINISTERS OF GOD, by Leon Morris. Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1964. pp. 128, paper.

This book appears in a series "Great Doctrines of the Bible" of which Principal Morris is the general editor. The aim of this volume is to set forth the essentials of New Testament teaching on the ministry from the standpoint of an evangelical approach to the Scriptures. The author recognizes that within the limitations of so modest a work it is not possible to meet all the need even of Evangelicals in the present ecumen-

ical movement. He "has not been concerned to forward any particular denominational point of view, but to draw attention to the kind of teaching to which we should hold fast within our various denominations" (p. 8).

The first two chapters examine Christ and His own ministry as related to the ministry of men. The basic concept of ministry in the New Testament is shown to be that "there is but one essential ministry, the ministry of Christ. All valid human ministry is a reflection of that" (p. 25). "None may exercise a ministry save in accordance with His care for the flock, His chief pastorate" (p. 27). "The Church is a priestly body ministering constantly in Christ's name on the basis of what Christ has done" (p. 32). According to 1 Cor. 12:7 "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man" so that all church members have a "ministry" of some sort (p. 63). Yet the New Testament singles out some with gifts for special purposes (1 Cor. 12 & Eph. 4).

Chapters 3-6 give us provocative study of the apostles and their ministry and significance, the 'gifts' of ministry — prophecy and teaching, and positions of ministry — presbyters and its descriptive term, bishop, and deacons.

Chapter 7 briefly examines the three forms of church government and ministry in the modern church — Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism — after which there is a short concluding chapter in which the following are pointed out: 1. "None of the modern systems of church government can claim to have sole scriptural justification." "The New Testament evidence is not full enough for us to know exactly the position of the early church" (p. 111). "The N. T. ministry is characterized by fluidity" (p. 112). 2. The N. T. "gives no hint that the system in vogue, whatever it was, was meant to be the permanent system of the Church of Jesus Christ as a whole" (p. 111). 3. Lacking the call and equipment of Christ no man can be said to be a true minister.

Dr. Morris has fulfilled his purpose not to forward any particular denominational point of view, as is shown in his discussion of the meaning of "bishop" and "presbyter" and in the appendix B discussion of the Apostolic Succession. He has indeed spoken with Scripture in both these areas and against many, at least, in his own denomination. We are sure that the conclusions given in the paragraph above were drawn in the same desire for unbiased Biblical teaching "to which we should hold fast within our various denominations" (p. 8). However we are not satisfied that conclusions 1 and 2 are correct. It has been admitted that there is some kind of a ministry in operation in the N. T. Church, that there is no authority for an episcopal system with apostolic authority. Does not the doctrine of the unity of the church as the one Body of Christ require some kind of relation within the visible body? And,

we would ask, Is not the apostolic example authoritative where the actual word of Christ or the apostles has not been spoken?

It is the reviewer's conviction that this booklet has real value in the studies of terms related to the ministry and that it speaks to matters that are causing concern in the church today over the failure of young men to come forward for the ministry, and to the neglect of the ministry by some who have accepted ordination vows. It is worthy of study by both laymen and ministers and in particular by prospective students for the ministry.

— E. C. Copeland

DEMONISM, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1757, Waco, Texas. 12 pages, paper cover. Free gratis.

This is a biblically oriented and documented sermon. It deserves several good readings by those concerned about the devil (and who isn't?). There are several outstanding points, as well as a few with which some would disagree. The tripartite division of man (body, soul and spirit) would be one. The identification of Lucifer (in Isaiah 14:12) with Satan is opposed by Robert Young (of Young's Analytical Concordance fame) under the name "Lucifer." The observation about Cain and will-worship is quite acceptable.

— Robert More, Jr.

SING THE WONDROUS STORY, by Ernest K. Emurian. W. A. Wilde Co., 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1963, pp. 148. \$2.50.

This book contains personality sketches of hymn writers. The composer of "Whispering Hope" also composed "Listen to the Mockingbird" and earned only \$5.00 for the latter! There are other interesting facts. Yet we must disagree with the author's apparent implication when he says: "God did not stop singing when David died." It is of course universally recognized by those who believe in the exclusive singing of the Psalms in divine worship, that part of the Psalms come from later than the time of David. There is however a distinction in kind between the Biblical Psalter and the hymns whose writers author Emurian describes.

— Robert More, Jr.

MY SERMON NOTES ON PARABLES AND METAPHORS, by William P. Van Wyk. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1962, reprint of 1947. Pp. 110. \$1.95.

Pastor Van Wyk has left a notable book on interpreting the New Testament parables. There are several spots where keen insight is shown (as in the house on the rock where the strength of the house is not obscured by its relation to the rock), and most of the exposition proceeds from a Reformed standpoint. However the exposition of the parable of the Prodigal Son shows him as an unconverted sinner, resolving to return to his

Father, getting up, and heading back home. This is not Reformed in theological viewpoint. To this reviewer this series of parables in Luke 15 deals with the relation of the Visible Church to the Lord (where the ninety-nine sheep are the faithful, the lost coin probably meaning church finances, and the prodigal being the open church profligate, with the elder brother being the sullen though outwardly moral person within the body). One thing is sure: if the prodigal is unregenerate — spiritually dead — then his consciousness, will and return must square with such passages as John 6:44, Romans 9:16 and 2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

— Robert J. More, Jr.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN PLAIN ENGLISH, by Charles K. Williams. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. 1963, pp. 545 and 27. \$3.95.

This translation should not be confused with **The New Testament in the Language of the People**, by Charles B. Williams and published by Moody Press in 1958. Charles K. Williams is an English Methodist. His translation is based upon the Souter Greek text which formed the basis of the English Revised Version of the New Testament at the end of the last century. It uses a small vocabulary and so can be readily understood. In limiting the words, though, truth has at times been dealt a mortal blow. Romans 3:24 reads "they are delivered without price" while the Greek reads (and Williams admits it in the notes), "being justified freely by his grace." In the new version Romans 3:30 states, "he will deliver the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised BECAUSE OF faith" (emphasis mine). The Greek text is much more articulate, for it says, "he will justify the circumcised out of faith and the uncircumcised through the faith." Then the hyssop of John 19:29 is translated "spear". Admittedly there is some difficulty in choosing what word should be used, yet the manuscripts presently demand "hyssop." In John 9:7 the blind man "went home" seeing, though the Greek is simply "he came seeing."

Furthermore, Mark 16:9-20 is included, even though the eminent conservative scholar A. T. Robertson once quoted Gregory who said that this passage had "no right to a place in the text of the New Testament." Also, Williams includes John 7:53 to 8:11, which Robertson says "has evidence against it (which) is overwhelming. The oldest extensive Greek text of John (Bodmer papyrus II) with its rejection of this passage can now be added to the available evidence in this matter.

Williams translates Acts 15:29 as "keep yourselves. . . from meat with the blood in it" — a doubtful interpretation of the word "strangled" in the Greek. In the case of 1 Peter 2:2 and Romans 12:1 the translation is actually slipshod.

Romans 12:1 correctly translated reads: "your reasonable service". The verse in First Peter should be translated, "You must yearn (for) the reasonable (or rational), sincere milk, in order that in him you may be grown to salvation." Williams makes 1 John 5:16 say, "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that is not deadly sin . . . There is sin that is deadly sin." This is a mistranslation which would appear to lend support to the Roman Catholic distinction between mortal and venial sins.

In a Glossary, Williams defines a miracle as a "wonderful event **thought** to be the special action of God." Resurrection is only "rising from the dead." Sin comes when we "break God's law." And to be sober is only to be "moderate."

While the reviewer has said little to commend this new translation, this is not without good reason. Evil lives on, and this is especially heinous as it is produced under the guise of a translation of the New Testament.

—Robert More, Jr.

THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT, by A. J. Gordon, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1964, reprint of 1894, pp. 225. \$2.95.

This book is most instructive. The chapter on the inspiration of the Scripture by the Spirit is worth the price of the book. But there are nine other chapters too.

Gordon was a Baptist who founded Gordon College and Seminary about a half-century ago. This book first appeared in 1894 and is now reprinted. In it are several great statements, such as the defence of Bengel's translation of John 3.8, "the Spirit breatheth where he wills, and thou hearest his voice." The author also gives some reasons why 2 Tim. 3:16 should read, "all Scripture is God-breathed (or inspired of God)". Several other excellent features could be cited.

There are, however, some weaknesses. The most notable is an Arminian tendency. The second (but it is not unduly objectionable) is the author's emphasis upon (almost) the necessity of the Spirit's gifts and fulness today. Then his statement that the Church began at Pentecost is fraught with difficulties. While he may mean that worship must be Spirit-indited, he seems to imply that it is, in some sense, inspired.

The worst objection is to the author's belief that the New Testament was written in a "Holy Ghost Greek." He approvingly quotes Richard Rothe, who in 1863 postulated that the New Testament Greek was so different from classical Greek that it had to be a "spirit-language" removed in essence from the earth. Rothe can be excused, for he wrote before the discovery of the many papyri (koine) manuscripts. But Gordon wrote after the finds and so should have rejected this view. Then he also says, in one place, that we should not consider the Greek words as

the pagans or secular literature recorded them; instead, he says, we use the words only as they appear in the Bible. This attitude is incorrect.

This book is scholarly but readily compre-

hended. The author was an interesting writer, but one with a few points which need to be rejected.

— Robert More, Jr.

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 progress in sanctification require work, effort, striving on the part of the believer? Or, does it come simply through submission of the believer's will to that of Christ and reliance upon His victory?

Answer:

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2: 13). Note that this text does not command us to work FOR our own salvation (as if we could earn it or pay for it), but to **work it out**, that is, to realize its implications in our daily life and conduct. Having received salvation by divine grace, we are commanded to work it out with fear and trembling. Certainly this implies the most earnest effort and constant watchfulness and striving. The reason it requires such strenuous effort is that the believer's sinful nature, which remains in him after regeneration, fights against progress in holiness every step of the way, as is very vividly brought out by the apostle Paul in Romans chapter 7.

The notion that the Christian can reach the sanctification which God requires without moral effort is called in theology **Quietism**. This is a heretical tendency and has had very bad results in the lives of many people. One of the more recent spiritual movements which has affinities with Quietism is the Victorious Life Testimony. The roots, theological connections and end results of both Quietism and the Victorious Life movements are very thoroughly investigated and discussed by Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield in this second volume on Perfectionism (Oxford University Press, now out of print). Much of this same material appears in **Perfectionism** (one volume) by B. B. Warfield, published at \$4.95 by The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley, New Jersey).

The person who says that sanctification comes without striving or moral effort, simply "through submission of the believer's will to that of Christ", is really dealing in mere words without grasping the realities of the matter. **For it is precisely this submission of our own will to the**

Lord's will that requires effort. It is precisely this that our "flesh" (remaining sinful nature) rebels and fights against. It is precisely this that requires self-denial, self-humbling, earnest prayer and constant striving and watchfulness. Of course the Christian is absolutely dependent on the gracious, powerful work of the Holy Spirit for even the slightest progress in sanctification. But it requires an earnest moral battle to turn from our own sinful lusts and desires and seek that the Lord's will be realized in our lives. The person who thinks that this can be done without effort does not realize the powerful pulling tendency of his own sinful heart.

When we say that sanctification requires earnest striving and moral effort on the part of the believer, we do not mean that he is seek to become holy by sheer will power in attempting to "be good" and do his duty. Christianity is not moralism, and sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, not a work of the believer acting independently of the Holy Spirit. The striving and moral effort are directed precisely toward self-surrender to the will of the Lord. This is much more difficult than the moral effort of the Pharisees to keep the law of God by human will-power. The Christian's "flesh" must be subdued again every day. Anyone who thinks that this is peaceful or easy simply does not know the experience.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

In **TIME Magazine** for July 10, 1964, under "Religion" there appeared an article on "Linguistic Analysis: A Way for Some to Affirm their Faith." What should be thought of this new theological development?

Answer:

The item in **TIME** concerns a book called **The Secular Meaning of the Gospel**, by Paul van Buren (The Macmillan Company, \$4.95). Dr. van Buren is a professor in the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, Texas. His book merely presents one more form of rationalistic unbelief. Van Buren in trying to "translate" Christian truth into terms which "the modern mind" can understand, has betrayed Christianity and all that

remains is the husk. For example, van Buren changes "Jesus was both man and the divine Son of God" into: Jesus is a "remarkably free man." "He who says, 'Jesus is Lord,' says that Jesus' freedom has been contagious and has become the criterion for his life, public and private." Van Buren claims that Christianity must be stripped of all supernatural elements if it is to be acceptable to modern people. This is just another way of saying that all the Christianity must be removed from Christianity if modern man is to accept it. It is truly shocking that a professor in a supposedly Christian theological seminary can publish such man-centered rationalism as an improved form of Christian theology. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). "No one will doubt that Christians of to-day must state their Christian belief in terms of modern thought. Every age has a language of its own and can speak no other. Mischief comes only when, instead of stating Christian belief in terms of modern thought, an effort is made, rather, to state modern thought in terms of Christian belief" (*Princeton Theological Review*, xi, 1913, pp. 526ff.; reprinted in *Critical Reviews* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1932), p. 322. (Warfield).

If the modern mind cannot accept Christianity as it is presented in the Word of God, the remedy is not to denature Christianity, but to proclaim to modern men their need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, that they may see that the "foolishness" of God is indeed wiser than men. Paul van Buren claims that he can see better than other men, but in reality he is just another blind leader of the blind, and what he offers the world is just the old outworn rationalism of the past in a new dress.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Does partaking of the Lord's Supper in the Reformed Presbyterian Church involve an absolute and total acceptance of every proposition contained in the official standards of the denomination? Does communicant membership involve such a requirement?

Answer:

The principle of "close communion" and church membership held by the Reformed Presbyterian Church does not require complete or absolute agreement with every detail of the church's entire creed or system. Such a requirement would prove impossible to enforce in practice, and moreover it would amount to claiming **infallibility** for the Church. Our First Term of Communion states that **the Bible** is the **only** infallible rule of faith and life. Therefore our entire system is held subordinately to this

concept that only Scripture is infallible. Therefore the Church has no right to, and in fact does not, require an absolute acceptance, point by point, of every detail. General agreement is of course required and it is expected that there will be honest acceptance of major issues, but the Church cannot require absolute conformity. The idea that it should is held by some people but is not the true position of the Church, and is not sanctioned by the actions of the Church's courts, including the Synod. The only people who never question anything at all are people who do not think.

The **Confession of Faith**, Chapter XX, Section 2, states that: "The requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also." The **Form of Church Government**, Chap. II, Sec. 3 (**Constitution of the R.P. Church**, page 230) states: "No one should be admitted. . . who assumes an attitude antagonistic to the principles set forth in the standards of the church." That is, the church cannot tolerate within its membership a **contrary propaganda**, any more than a Republican Club could allow its members to make speeches in favor of the Democratic Party. But there is a wide divergence between "an antagonistic attitude" and mere doubts or scruples. The person who has doubts or scruples about some point or points in the Church's system can be admitted as a member and can partake of the Lord's Supper, so long as he is not trying to attack the Church's position from within her membership.

If a person's dissent ("doubts or scruples") concerns some very minor point, such as the omission or inclusion of "perpetual" in Q. 20 of the Larger Catechism, nothing need be said about it. If it concerns something of greater importance — say Psalmody, or Secret Societies, or Baptism, or acceptance of Presbyterian church government as divinely appointed — it would be the applicant's duty to state his doubts or scruples frankly to the session of the congregation. If the session decides to admit him to membership, then he is a member in good standing with all the rights and privileges of one, but of course he does NOT have a right to carry on agitation for his points which may diverge from the Church's official faith.

— J. G. Vos

None other Lamb, none other Name,
None other Hope in heaven or earth or sea,
None other Hiding-place from guilt and shame,
None beside Thee.

— Christina G. Rossetti

Acknowledgments and Announcements

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The generous contributions from friends which are listed above indicate serious concern on the part of the donors that **Blue Banner Faith and Life** shall continue publication. These gifts are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is received from subscriptions and

sales of back issues. 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

1300 copies of this issue were printed. Of these 1273 were immediately mailed to readers, leaving 27 copies for sale as back issues. The distribution by countries was as follows:

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GRIGG, C. M.

PSALM 78

Joseph Grigg

36. But His own peo-ple forth like sheep He brought with guid-ing hand,
 And led His peo-ple like a flock A - cross the des - ert land.

37. He led them safely on the way;
 No fear could them confound;
 But in the overwhelming sea
 Their enemies were drowned.

38. He brought them to the sacred place,
 The border of His land,

The holy mountain which for them
 Was gotten by His hand.

39. For them He drove the nations out;
 The tribes of Israel
 Received inheritance by lot
 In Canaan's tents to dwell.

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