Unsearchable Riches

A Bi-Monthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

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PRAYER OF PRAISE

Glory to our Father God;
Glory to our Saviour Lord;
Glory to the Spirit's pow'r,
Who doth keep us ev'ry hour.

Our prayers and praise to Thee ascend;
The saint and sinner's only friend,
Who on the cross for us did'st die
That we might live with Thee on high.

Amazing love, transcendent grace
That Thou to us shouldst give a place
So far beyond this world of care,
That we the Father's love might share.

That Thou for us before our birth
Shouldst place us in Thy purpose first!
What blest effulgence Thou didst show
To Thy church Thou didst foreknow!

Chosen ere the world began—
Before earth knew the face of man;
In Thy purpose Thou didst see
Us in Christ as one in Thee.

For ever be Thy name adored;
We praise Thee for Thy grace and love!
Help us exalt Thy name, while here,
Till in Thy presence we appear.

—T. M. MacDonald

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY, 1958
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

WHEN THIS VOLUME is finished (if we are still *waiting* for, and not *with* our Lord), this little expositor of present truth will have completed half a century of witnessing to the Word of God, concordantly translated and correctly partitioned. Although still among the weakest of the many movements in Christendom, it has far exceeded our early expectations, so that we invite our subscribers and friends to unite with us in heartfelt thanksgiving for the many tokens of God's favor in this the last and lowest phase of the ecclesia which is Christ's body while still on the earth.

Despite the opposition of false friends and foes and the great bulk of organized Christianity, our Lord has opened the way to prepare and publish a concordant version of the Greek Scriptures in two of the leading languages of the earth, which we hope will be used as the tools for many more, as well as provide the basis for the recovery of the truth, especially that which concerns the present glorious grace, which is almost totally eclipsed elsewhere.

In this volume we hope to come close to rounding out our studies of the *Untraceable Riches* of Christ, with which we began a half century ago, especially as set forth in the epistles to the Ephesians and Hebrews, in contrast to previous revelation, and to clearly distinguish the two bodies which were joined to form the body of Christ today.

The series on Genesis will be continued, and deal largely with that part of the life of Abraham which is the basis of our life of faith today.

The series on *Material Mirrors of Spiritual Truth* will continue to deal with the readjustment of the chaos in the week's work, to prepare it for the advent of humanity.

REASON FOR PETER'S CENSURE

QUESTION: Just what was Peter censured for in Galatians when he withdrew from eating with the nations (Ga. 2:11)?

ANSWER: Peter had acknowledged publicly that the Circumcision were not strong enough to bear the yoke of the law, and they would be saved through the *grace* of the Lord Jesus, even as the nations (Ac. 15:10-11). So, when he went to Antioch, he ate together with the nations. But when emissaries came from James, the Lord's brother, he and others shrank back and played the hypocrite. *He repudiated the grace of God* by so doing. This was a fearful thing for one in his position. Today this sin is very common. Whenever we teach or act on the supposition that something of our own has given us a superior place in God's favor, we repudiate God's *grace*.

THE GERMAN WORK

Our friends are invited to join us in thanksgiving for the blessing which has attended the German work during the last year. Nearly a thousand copies of the Concordant Version were spread over central Europe, many local conferences have beeen held, and the circulation of the magazine and the literature showed an increase in these districts, which, in the past, have been the prinicipal source of new light. A German missionary in Agentina is active in spreading concordant truth in that country. Even in Hungary the authorities are giving our friends a certain amount of religious freedom, as they do not oppose the government and seek no profit like the churches. One of them writes that he can now do more than when the Catholics ruled.

MRS. ESSEX

The Beeston (England) class has lost one of its oldest members in the death of Sister Essex, who at the age of 89, passed away December 9th. She will be greatly missed also by the Mansfield and Kirkby friends, who always enjoyed her genial company at their meetings. She always delighted to attend, despite her age, and with a very alert mind took her part in their activities. Our sympathy extends to her husband and son, our brothers in the Lord, and we hope soon to meet her again. H.W.J.

THE SEVERANCES IN ACTS

THE HOLY SPIRIT is the immanent Actor in the book of Acts, Who operates in and through the human performers. In the beginning, the disciples were endued with power from on high (Lu. 24:49), by the baptism in holy spirit (Ac. 1:5), on the day of Pentecost. It filled (2:4) or fell on them, as well as on Cornelius, who was of the nations (10:44, 11:15), so that it *seemed* to be the great *uniting* force for drawing all believers together. Indeed, the usual interpretation of the book implies that it is a record of the union of Jews and Gentiles by the power of the holy spirit. But this was *not* the case. Not only unbelieving Israel, but even those *disciples* who had the spirit refused to fellowship with the saints among the nations. And it was the *spirit* that introduced the severances.

One of the principal delusions of Christendom is that the present administration began at Pentecost and has continued ever since along the same lines. Many practically found their whole church teaching on this book, and pay no attention to the deep differences between the circumcision and uncircumcision and the fact that, even when they *were* united, as at Antioch, some were *severed* from the rest. The succeeding narrative follows the *separated* ones, *not* the pentecostalists. Even Paul and Barnabas, who received the evangel for today, *severed themselves* one from the other.

The "structure" or skeleton of the book of Acts, as given in the Companion Bible, shows that it is composed

of two main, corresponding parts. The first concerns the *kingdom* and its *rejection* by unbelieving Israel. This closes with the *imprisonment* of *Peter* (12:3, 4). The second *severs* Barnabas and Saul or Paul, and ends with *Paul's imprisonment* and the *rejection* of Israel. The last half begins with the *dis*junctive *Yet* (12:24). Although the kingdom had not come, as the disciples had hoped, yet the *word* of God grew and was multiplied (12:24). This gives us the broad foundation for the second section, which ends with the *rejection* of Israel, and sends God's salvation to the *nations*.

The *severance* of two literal human bodies, Barnabas and Saul, from the previous apostles, commences the second section of Acts, and characterizes the narrative to the very end. This seems to be ignored by almost all interpreters. Barnabas and Saul, the two men most closely connected with the beginning of present truth, were *severed* from the rest for this new operation. The spirit of God was about to *close* the kingdom proclamation, and *commence* forming the two bodies which would eventually form the joint body of today.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of these severances. The fact that Christendom, including some of the most spiritual factions, almost universally ignores them, has kept nearly all from accepting the real truth for today, which was not made known until *after* these severances took place. This had led them to concoct a conglomeration called "*Christian* theology", composed mostly of *Circumcision* truth, taken from the so-called "gospels," the beginning of the book of Acts, and the writings of our Lord's Circumcision apostles. Hence the many conflicting doctrines and sects, all "founded on the Bible," but based on matters from which we have been *severed*.

The spirit of God had acted to *unify* all believers, by actually falling upon the household of Cornelius (10:44). But the Jews objected strenuously. And even when

convinced, "they spoke to no one except to *Jews only*" (11:19). So God, by His spirit, *reversed* His operations thenceforth, and *severed* both Barnabas and Saul in order to prepare for His gracious plans for the present administration. As, at first, there were *two* different bodies in view, He severed *two* men, Barnabas and Saul, from the prophets and teachers in Antioch. Barnabas was to be especially for the Hebrews, but Saul was soon changed to Paul, a gentile name, denoting the *interval* during which the evangel of God's grace goes to all nations.

SAUL-PAUL, THE SEVERED

If we do not *sever* the action in the second part of Acts from the first, we will fail to understand both. And if we do not *sever* Paul from all the rest (except Barnabas) we will miss his message. Saul-Paul was *severed* more than any other character in the Scriptures. To begin with, Saul was *severed* by God from his very birth (Ga. 1:15). His epistles commence with the announcement of his *severance* for the evangel of God (Ro. 1:1). Along with Barnabas, he was *severed* by God's spirit for the special work which they accomplished in the second half of Acts (Ac. 13:2). Moreover, when the Jews rejected his message, Paul *severed* the *disciples,* and brought a message for both Jews and Greeks (Ac. 19:9).

JOSEPH—BARNABAS—BAR-NAHUM

Three names distinguish Barnabas, who was also *severed* from the rest of the apostles, and suggest three different phases in his career. These are Joseph, Barnabas and 'Bar-nahum.' Like Joseph (Add-er), he brought salvation to his people in foreign lands, for he was the special evangelist to the *Hebrews* in the dispersion. The Circumcision apostles, however, surnamed him Bar-*nabas*, that is, SON-OF-PROPHECY, possibly because he relied on the prophecies so practically that he sold his levitical inheritance and gave them the money,

thinking that he would be richly rewarded in the coming kingdom (Ac. 4:36).

BAR-NAHUM

But the name Bar Nabas (SON-of-PROPHECY) was later construed to denote Bar *Nahum* (SON-of-*consolation*). The kingdom did not come, so prophecy was not then fulfilled, and, as a result, the ministry of the apostles and those with them did not succeed. Only Barnabas, as *severed,* was *consoled.* Humanly speaking, their ministry was a sore disappointment. Not so the service of Barnabas. He, along with Saul, was *severed* from the others, and brought far higher blessings to some among the Hebrew dispersion than those which they lost by the failure of the kingdom proclamation. He certainly deserved the new name, Bar Nahum, Son of *Consolation*!

Like Saul, Barnabas came from a foreign land. Cyprus, though nearer to Israel than Tarsus, was outside the sphere of promise. Being a Levite, he had a right to serve in the temple at Jerusalem, and to be supported by the tithe. He forfeited all these privileges in order to bring the evangel to his fellow Hebrews in other lands. *He was the leader in this ministry,* but does *not seem to have taken an active part with Paul in preaching Christ to the other nations.* It seems possible that he not only *spoke* to the Hebrews, but also *wrote* the epistle of that name to them, as Paul wrote his pre-prison letters to the nations. But his exemplary character may have unfitted him for this, and transferred that honor to his failing servant, Mark.

In contrast with Saul of Tarsus, Barnabas was a most commendable character, even before he was *severed* with him for work outside the land of Israel. He was the leader when they first went to announce the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews of Salamis (Ac. 13:1-5). But, when they went to Paphos and were called by Sergius Paul, he left the gentiles to Saul-Paul. He does

not seem to have taken any part, either in speaking to the proconsul, or in blinding Elymas, the Jew. However, he does not seem to have actually opposed Paul, nor did he leave him, as John Mark did. Here we begin to see the differences between their ministries. His was to his people, the Hebrews. Paul also spoke to them, but, when they rejected his message, he *severed* the disciples from them (Ac. 19:9).

CORNELIUS—DISJOINED

Earlier already, Cornelius, even before Peter preached Christ to him, had been a just and God-fearing man, a proselyte, and, when Peter spoke the word, the holy spirit fell on all his who heard it. (Ac. 11:15). Yet, notwithstanding the two visions of Peter and Cornelius, and their reception of the holy spirit, and the gift of languages, and their magnifying God—even then the believing Jews would not have fellowship with them, and they blamed Peter severely for even eating with them (Ac. 11:3). At this time the Jews would not descend to such a degradation (as they thought), so there was the very *reverse* of a joint body of believers in the first part of Acts. Cornelius was not *joined,* but rather *dis*joined.

In contrast to this, when Sergius Paul, another "gentile," was called, nothing is said of his merits, as Paul's was a message of grace. The Jews, in the person of Elymas, the magician, did their best to prevent the proconsul from accepting the faith, but without success. Barnabas, who had been severed by holy spirit along with Paul, *did not take any part in speaking to him.* Yet he did not actually object to Paul's action, as the Jews had done when Peter went to Cornelius. He was sympathetic to Paul's ministry to the aliens. Here, it seems almost as if the addition of Sergius Paul would form a *joint* body with the believers in Israel, but *severed* from the Jerusalem Jews. But this could not occur until

Israel actually, as a nation, was blinded, as at the end of Acts.

MARK SEVERS HIMSELF

But John (*Will*-be-GRACE), whose name *postpones* grace to the *future* kingdom, otherwise called Mark (Timid), could not accept this new revelation of a grace for the other nations, apart from Israel, at that time, so he *severed* himself from them, thus forming the initial nucleus of *another* body composed of Hebrew believers *alone*. Paul, whose spiritual insight far surpassed that of all his contemporaries, saw this mistake, and would not encourage it. So, when John wished to rejoin Barnabas later under the name of Mark (Timid), Paul *severed* himself from them, leaving them a distinctly Hebrew body to which the book of Hebrews was written, while Paul, taking along Silas, formed another body, composed of predominantly gentile ecclesias to whom he wrote his pre-prison epistles. And to these two bodies, after they were joined together, he revealed the last and highest truths in the letters he wrote when in bondage.

John Mark is a remarkable character, especially when considered in connection with the fluctuating times in which he lived. He is supposed to have written the account of our Lord's *service,* which bears his name. He was as changeable as those times. His very name was changed from John (Will-be-GRACious) to Mark (Timid). First he accompanied Barnabas and Paul when they were severed from the rest. As Ieue would *not* be gracious to Israel in the flesh at that time, his name, John, was changed accordingly. As he left them on account of the call of Sergius Paul, Paul would not have him along. But he went with Barnabas to the Hebrews. Supposedly a writer, could he have written to those of the Hebrews who believed, as Paul had written his early epistles to those of the nations who accepted his message? Perhaps both had a part in it, as they had in their oral ministry.

Paul's *boldness* is brought to our attention more than

a dozen times in the Scriptures. Right at the commencement, he was *bold* in Damascus (Ac. 9:27). He spoke *boldly* in the synagogues (Ac. 13:46, 18:26, 19:8). He was *bold* when dealing with the nations (2 Co. 3:12). But he was especially *emboldened* by the final revelation concerning the secret of the evangel (Eph. 6:19). Cephas, who should have controlled the Circumcision, *feared* them (Ga. 2:12). Yet even Paul was *dominated* by James, so that he distributed the decrees which he later denounced (Eph. 2:15). Mark was not only timid himself, but represented the mass of the Circumcision believers who accepted Barnabas' teaching.

At the end of the first half of the book of Acts the outlook for the kingdom became very dark. Although Peter had proved to his Jewish disciples, by the case of Cornelius, and they had acknowledged that God gives repentance to life to the nations (Ac. 11:18), nevertheless they spoke the word to no one except to *Jews only* (Ac. 11:19). Then came the great *famine* (11:28). Then Herod *assassinated James,* the brother of John (12:1), one of the apostles. This pleased the Jews, so practically closed the kingdom heralding. Then even Peter was jailed. Being released by a messenger of the Lord, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who is surnamed *Mark* (12:12). Then Peter disappears. In Babylon he has a son named *Mark* (1 Pt. 5:13).

The term surname is rather loosely used in English, so we will seek to fix the sense by considering its usage in the Scriptures. The best example is Cephas or *Peter.* His real name was Simon, from the Hebrew *shmo* HEAR. As nine men with this name are mentioned in the Scriptures, it is not very distinctive. Indeed, as all who hear God could be distinguished from the mass of men by this term, another was needed to distinguish this one to whom Jesus was revealed as the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mt. 16:16), for on this *rock* Jesus would build His kingdom ecclesia (Mt. 16:18). This surname

was descriptive of *Peter's* place in the kingdom ecclesia.

When we are first introduced to Mark, he is named John, who is *surnamed* Mark. These two names are used very precisely, with great discrimination, to agree with the *meaning* of the term and the special class of believers with whom he is classed. We never hear of Mark before Peter is near his last act, about to leave the stage. His name had occurred over fifty times before this, for he was the rock on which the Pentecostal ecclesia was founded. His final appearance was when he sought to keep the apostles and elders of the circumcision from placing a yoke on the neck of the uncircumcision which the Circumcisionists themselves were unable to bear. But he was overruled by James, the Lord's brother according to the flesh (Ac. 15:10). Exit Peter!

As the surname Peter (ROCK) fits his part in the first half of Acts, so the surname Paul (INTERVAL) agrees with his part in the second half, and so also with Mark (TENDER, Timid). He is introduced under very fearful circumstances, when the nation had not merely failed to accept the kingdom message and refused to go to the other nations, but the civil authorities were actively engaged in opposing it, and were assassinating their leaders. This came very close to him when Peter came to his mother's house, and then vanished from the scene in a "different place."

Again we are informed by the use of his surname that John was *timid.* Can we blame him after James was assassinated and Peter had disappeared? He seems to have been in the very vortex of events, for not only Peter came to his house, but Barnabas and Saul, the central figures in the second part of Acts, took him along with them when they were severed from the rest. As *he* had not been separated from these by the power of holy spirit, he was far too timid to be able to bear the double tragedy implied by the call of Sergius Paul, a *goim,* and the blinding of the Jew Elymas. Surely it could not be

that his beloved Israel would be blinded, yet the despised gentile be enlightened!

But it was as *John* (Will-be-GRACious) that he departed from them. He, along with most of the believers in Israel, tenaciously held that God would show grace to the favored nation at *that time,* and that the others could only be blessed through Israel's blessing, for so it was written in their sacred scrolls. And this will be true in due time. But God had a much greater grace and love more lavish than that heretofore revealed, which could be displayed only by their temporary blindness and the enlightenment of the other undeserving nations.

Mark personally was not to blame here, for he represented a whole group of Hebrew believers who found Paul hard to follow. Even Barnabas, who was severed with Paul, and did continue with him, seems to have taken no active part in reaching the pro-consul in this case. As a matter of fact, Paul was the only one who was granted the grace of bringing the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the *nations* (Eph. 3:8). Barnabas, with Mark, brought it to believing Hebrews.

After the gathering of the apostles and elders, in which Peter took sides with Paul, in his work of evangelizing the alien nations, James, our Lord's brother, who had set himself up even above Peter, decided that they were not to *harass* the nations who were turning back to God (which they evidently had been doing), but he made decrees for them to keep, so giving them a standing among the Jews (Ac. 15:13-29). Consequently, when Paul invited Barnabas to go with him to revisit the brethren where they had been together, Barnabas wanted to take along John, "who is called Mark." But Paul would not have him, even if the new attitude of the leaders toward the nations had changed Mark's attitude toward them.

Here we are at another half-way point, or crisis, in

Paul's ministry. Instead of the two believing bodies under Barnabas and Paul *uniting,* along with their leaders, Paul had probably already realized that there could be no union of believers until after Israel is out of the way, and all based on the flesh is set aside. In place of two men of the circumcision, he took along one, Silas, an undoubted gentile.

After Paul had enlightened *all* as to the present administration of the secret (Eph. 3:9), in which the Circumcision and Uncircumcision bodies with a celestial calling were joined, Paul told Timothy to lead Mark back to him, as he would be useful to him for service (2 Tim. 4:11). This he evidently did, for Paul later lists Mark among his fellow workers (Phn. 24). We might have expected Barnabas to join Paul in service after he had made known the administration of the secret, but he seems to have disappeared meanwhile, so that Mark took his place. Barnabas was severed along with Saul (Paul), yet took no part in reaching Sergius Paul. But he did not sever from Paul as Mark did, and as the Circumcisionists generally did.

The presence of Mark and Luke near the end of Paul's ministry seems to suggest that their accounts of our Lord's life are broad enough for all saints. Matthew and John are clearly limited to Israel's kingdom and priesthood, but the Servant, of Mark, and the Human, of Luke, are not so constricted. Of course, these are distinctly terrestrial also, but not confined to the one nation. They are usually linked with Matthew, as "synoptic gospels," as distinct from John. But this is a superficial likeness. The skeletons show that all four of the accounts of our Lord's life have a similar literary structure, but each has its distinct viewpoint.

Some suppose that Peter's son, in Babylon (1 Pt. 5:13) was the same one as we have been considering, in his relationship with Paul. But does it not seem impossible that this relationship should be withheld from us hither-

to, especially when Peter, after his escape from jail, "came to the house of Mary, the mother of John who is surnamed Mark," if this Mary was his wife and Mark his son?

These severances in the book of Acts should clear up the prevailing error that "the church began at pentecost." In that case there could be no severances at all.

In the *oral* revelation of the secret of Christ, *Barnabas,* as well as Paul, was severed for this ministry (Ac. 13:2). Indeed, Barnabas was the leader. Nevertheless, he took no part in the case of Sergius Paul, and does *not* seem to have gone to the *nations,* but rather to the Hebrews. In contrast to this Paul seems soon to have confined his oral ministry largely to the nations, to whom he wrote his epistles, as will be seen in Ac. 15:41, 16:6, 22:21, Ro. 11:15, Eph. 3:1, 1 Ti. 2:7, 2 Ti. 1:11). But, *after* his imprisonment, when he wrote Ephesians, he makes it clear that he wrote to *both,* that is to *all* the saints in Christ Jesus, including those Hebrews who had received the celestial calling (Heb. 3:1).

Mark was called a deputy of both Barnabas and Paul (Ac. 13:5). Paul himself was a deputy of Christ (1 Cor. 4:1). As such he carried out His orders. But Mark could not serve two masters at the same time, so he chose to go with Barnabas. If Mark wrote the account which bears his name, he was a writer, so if Barnabas is the composer of Hebrews, then it may be that Mark literally *wrote* this epistle or made copies of it to send to them, during the period when Paul wrote the pre-prison epistles.

After Paul's prison epistles appeared, Mark returned to the service of Paul, who wrote to Timothy, "Taking Mark, lead him back with you, for he is useful to me for service" (2 Ti. 4:11). Paul had a special problem, how to make known the new revelations concerning the joint-body. He sent Tychicus to Ephesus and Colossae (Eph. 6:21-22, Col. 4:7). Only Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus

(Justus), of the Circumcision were a solace to Paul. How did he manage to get the truth of the joint body to the Hebrews? Of Mark, he says, "he is useful to me for *service.*" Was he not by far the best medium to reach the Hebrew section of the joint body? If he, when he was a deputy of Barnabas, had distributed the epistle to the Hebrews, he would be most helpful to Paul if he spread the truth of the joint body among them, for he it was who had caused the division.

As Hebrews was inspired, the real "Author" was the holy spirit, and the instruments are not important. That Paul did "write" to the dispersion is clearly intimated by Peter (2 Pt. 3:15). That his name is not mentioned is also understandable, for there was a strong prejudice against him among the Circumcision (Ac. 15). But it is most significant that Paul, referring to the "secret of Christ" (Eph. 3:5), speaks of it as "now revealed to His holy *apostles* and *prophets.*" But of the latest *untraceable* riches of Christ to the *nations,* he was to enlighten *all* (Eph. 3:8), including the Hebrews. This suggests that another may have written this epistle to them, while Paul confined his early ministry to the nations, but wrote his prison epistles to *both.*

Paul did not literally *write* Romans. That was done by Tertius (Ro. 16:22). The same may be true of other epistles also, for, First Corinthians (16:21), Colossians (4:18), and Second Thessalonians (3:17) end with a note that Paul himself wrote the *salutation,* so, presumably not the rest. This was a common practice in Palestine in those days, and, indeed, was still common three decades ago, connected with the post offices. I myself received a letter from one of these scribes. So, it may be that Barnabas *dictated,* but Mark *wrote* Hebrews. That gives Barnabas his place as a son of *prophecy,* and Mark his work as a *deputy.* Timothy, the only one actually named, being a joint body, points forward to Ephesians.

A.E.K.

SCRIPTURAL CHAOS

THE "PRIMEVAL CHAOS" of the scientist, out of which he seeks to gradually evolve the heavens and the earth, is not only unscriptural, but contrary to the evidence in nature, hence is utterly unscientific. As it ascribes the most marvelous creations to a blind, unthinking force, it is utterly irrational. An examination of the earth clearly reveals a measure of chaos *now* in its physical formation, especially in the strata of its upper layers. Yet this very chaos clearly indicates a previous symmetry and order that was the very *reverse of chaotic.*

Our so-called "science" is largely responsible for the popular unbelief concerning the record of creation as revealed on the opening page of divine revelation. We hope that it will be helpful, therefore, if we examine the inspired original carefully, and see if it is in harmony with the physical facts which are in evidence today, so that the Genesis account, when concordantly rendered, will be found fully in harmony with the evidence of our senses, and, therefore, truly and genuinely "scientific."

TWO CREATIONS

As the future new creation is more fully described than that in the beginning, and these two correspond in their physical features to a considerable extent, it will be helpful to compare them. The principal difference lies in the agents used to *destroy* the first creation and those used to *perpetuate* the last. The *original* earth cohered out of *water* and through *water*, and was destroyed by *water* (2 Pt. 3:5-6). This was a *physical*

change which produced *chaos.* The *final* earth has *no sea* at all. The only water we read of is *living water* (Rev. 21:6,22:1). Instead of being *destroyed* by water, a physical change, it was *created* by *fire,* a *chemical* transformation (2 Pt. 3:7) which will be permanent, immutable, and sinless.

In order to fully understand the beginning of anything we must comprehend the end. Otherwise we may be misled. A sky-scraper is usually commenced by digging a deep hole in the ground. This is especially needed in considering God's creations. *The simple fact that He intends to burn all up and create it anew,* implies a lack in the present, old creation. We must not look at it as God's final and finished achievement, but only as a temporal, eonian, intermediate stage, in which there must be definite, cataclysmic changes. We have examples of this in all forms of life, especially in animals. A human is not born fully formed, with all the powers and functions of maturity. Indeed, the reproductive function does not develop for years, and is then confined to a limited period. So the present heavens and earth are readjusted twice, once in the past, and once again in the future, in order to fit them for the functions which God's purpose prescribes.

THE FIRST EARTH

The first earth was created destructible. The last will be *in*destructible. In the first the land cohered out of water and through water (2 Pt. 3:5), by which it was destroyed. This is the message of the opening lines of revelation: "Created by God were the heavens and the earth. [a]Yet the earth became..." Here the theologians, especially those who read the Hebrew, are even greater stumbling blocks to faith than the scientists. We will never understand God's ways if we imagine that the six days that followed were devoted to the *creation* of the heavens and the earth. The A.V. rendering, *was,* is

admissible only when there is *no* verb in Hebrew. If *is, was,* etc., *were* in the Hebrew, it would be spelled *e,* not *eie.* The causative verb adds *e* and *i* to *e* (*eie*), which means *cause-be,* become, not *is* or *was,* etc. This is used innumerable times in this sense in the Hebrew text, especially in the rest of this chapter.

As it was the principal part of God's loving purpose to reveal Himself as a *Saviour* and *Reconciler,* He included, in the first creation, the element of its destruction. Peter puts it this way: "an earth cohering out of *water* and through *water,* by the word of God; through which the then world, being deluged by *water,* was *destroyed*" (2 Pt. 3:5-6). With this, Genesis agrees: "the earth became a chaos and vacant, and darkness is on the *surface* of the *submerged* chaos. Yet the spirit of the Alueim vibrated over the surface of the *water.*" Here is the great difference between this and the future new creation. Here it becomes *all* sea, which speaks of instability and change, but then there will be *no* sea, and all will be permanent and unchangeable (Rev. 21:1).

CHAOS

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and earth (Gn. 1:1), nothing is said of its state, although our popular versions go on to say that it *was* "without form and void," Isaiah (45:18) declares that it was *not created* thus. This evil condition was introduced *after* creation. This principle seems to be present in all of God's eonian operations. The commencement and the conclusion correspond and complement each other, yet with a great advance due to the injection of evil. The first creation was formed to be inhabited, but there is no indication that it ever was. The new creation will not only be formed for habitation, but those who live on it will *appreciate* its blessings, and *worship* the Creator, *because* the former earth became a chaos and the scene of evil and alienation. In the corresponding spiritual

sphere, *Adam,* also, was ruined soon *after* his creation.

The earth became a *chaos* (*theu*) and vacant, and darkness was on the surface of the *submerged* chaos (*theu m*). Yet the spirit of God vibrated over the surface of the *water* (Gen. 1:2). If all of the substances which composed the earth were completely mixed up together, land and water, then the solid rocks and the earth would soon sink and leave the whole covered with water. *All* would be *below* the water level until later on, when the water flowed together and the dry land appeared (Gen. 1:9). So that, before this, it was a *submerged* chaos. This gives us the true meaning of the Greek *abyss* and the Hebrew *theu-m* (CHAOS-SEA, or -water).

THE "ABYSS" AND CHAOSES

Abyss comes from the Greek *A-buss-os* (SIMULTANEOUSLY-SUBMERGE). It is defined in the Concordant concordance as that which is below the water level. Without the prefix *a-* it is used of a *swamp* (1 Ti. 6:9, Lu. 5:7, 2 Cor. 11:25) or *marsh.* As the English derivative, *abyss* has lost the main idea of *submergence under water,* the A.V. renders it *deep* and *bottomless* as well as bottomless *pit.* It now is generally supposed to be a deep cavity. This "bottomless" pit was once explained to me thus: "The pit goes clear through the earth, so that anyone thrust into it would fall to the center, and be held there by gravitation, so it literally has no bottom!" Once we rid ourselves of such false conceptions, and accept the true sense of *submergence,* it may open the way to a clearer understanding of many passages of Scripture.

WATER AND LAND

The Greek version of the Hebrew translates *theu* by ten different expressions, much like our Authorized Version. For *theu m* they use only seven. Yet one word, *abyss,* they use 29 times. In Greek this word denotes that which is beneath the *water* level. This accords with the fact that it accompanies such words as

springs (Gen. 7:11), *waterspout,* Ps. 42:7 (8), *drink* (78:15), and *seas* (Ps. 135:6). This suggests that the *—m* at the end of the word is an abbreviation for *im* SEA, and that this chaos is below the earth's water line, which was later lowered when the dry land emerged (Gen. 1:9). The shorter form, *theu,* is associated with such terms as *wilderness* (Dt. 32:10), *wander in* (Ps. 107:40), *city* (Is. 24:10), and *molten images* (Is. 41:29), etc.

THE TWO KINDS OF CHAOS

The fact that the A.V. translates *thu m* by *deep* or *depth* suggests that it is used prinicipally for the chaos *below* the water level, while *theu* applies preferably to that *on* or *above* it, and is often so used in a figurative sense. It is evident, then, that the earth was not completely restored to its primeval condition, but only partially and superficially, so that it *still* has a *solid* chaos beneath its surface. And does not geology clearly show that the strata of earth's crust is in a mess? There seems to have been regular layers laid one upon another in the earliest earth, but now they are tumbled about as if by a tremendous collision, and the various parts, even of the surface, with its heights and depths, can best be characterized as *chaotic.*

The Greek usage of these terms is itself chaotic, and they yield a confused, yet correct idea of its meaning, for it signifies an incoherent mixture, a *mess.* Such the earth became at the disruption of the one which was originally created. Our popular version tells us that it *was without form and void.* The internal evidence in the strata of the earth today, supports the Hebrew text here, and shows that the earth *was not* so at first, but was violently disrupted later.

THE SUBMERGENCE

But how can the addition of an *—m* indicate SUBMERGE in Hebrew? In that language the letters *im* denote SEA (Gn. 1:10. CHAOS-SEA would be spelled *theu-im.*

But *-im* also indicates the plural, CHAOS-es. As three vowels (*eui*) coming together are difficult to pronounce fluently, one *i* is omitted. So *theu-m* is literally CHAOS-SEA. And, as sea is used of any body of water, not only salt seas, like the Dead sea, but also the sea of Galilee, in Hebrew, the term is applied to any place which is submerged by water. This may be seen at any time from the shores of lake Galilee (Mt. 8:28-32), where the demonized pigs rushed down into the submerged chaos.

This word is used when Israel crossed the Terminal (Red) sea. Here the meaning of chaos is very simply shown. The idea of great depth is absent entirely, for the descent into it was not very great. Nothing was said of climbing down or up. It certainly was *not* "bottomless." So we will discard this idea unless it is specifically mentioned. The passing of Israel probably stirred up a lot of mud, so that the water which covered the Egyptians was "shadowy" or soiled or turbid, such as was the case in the original chaos before the soil settled.

In Isaiah's apostrophe to Ieue (Is. 51:10) he exclaims:

> Art not Thou He, the Drainer of the sea:
> The waters of the submerged chaos?
> The Maker, in the depths of the sea,
> Of a way for the passing of the redeemed?

Here the *sea* is parallel to the *submerged chaos.*

As the usual versions fail to bring out the close connection of the "abyss" with water, it will be helpful to consider some further texts which clearly reveal the thought of *submergence,* and contradict the idea of *depth.* When the sons of Israel left Egypt under Moses, they crossed through the terminal (or "Red") sea. This is described in the song of Moses as follows (Ex. 15:4-5):

The chariots of Pharaoh and his army He shoots into the sea.
And his choice adjutants are sunk in the terminal sea.
The submerged chaoses are covering them.
They descend into the shadowy depths as a stone.

This is recalled in Ps. 106:9 as follows:

And rebuking is He [1] the terminal sea, and it is draining,
And He is causing them to go in the submerged chaos as in [a wilderness.

BLESSINGS OF THE SUBMERGED CHAOS

The submerged chaos is not an unmixed evil by any means. When Joseph was blessed by Jacob he was compared to a fruitful bough by a *well.* When trees can send down their roots to the water table, they are usually very thrifty and loaded with fruit (Jn. 49:22-25). Furthermore, Joseph was to be blessed, not only with blessings from above, such as rain, but also from the submerged chaos that lies under the earth. Natural sub-irrigation is very desirable in a land like Palestine, which has a very long dry season.

THE ABYSS

As the Greek word *a buss os* is almost always used to translate the Hebrew *theu-m,* submerged-CHAOS, they must mean much the same thing. This seems to be borne out by the petition of the demons who entreated our Lord not to enjoin them to go into the *abyss,* or *submerged chaos.* Yet when the demons did enter the hogs, these rushed down into the lake, and were smothered (Lu. 8:28-33). With this agree the expressions, "*well* of the abyss" or the submerged chaos (Rev. 9:1, 2). A star from heaven will have the key to the abyss, and, when he opens it, fumes and locusts ascend and torment mankind five months. They have a king, Abaddon or Apollyon (Destroyer). The wild beast of the end time will also come up from it (Rev. 11:7, 17:8). The dragon, the ancient serpent, the Adversary and Satan will be bound there for a thousand years (Rev. 20:3). This is one of the greatest boons granted to that eon. This shows us how closely evil is associated with the *theum,* the submerged chaos.

The continual change from day to night, and the

yearly variations in the length of the days and the temperature, the extremes of climate from torrid heat to unbearable cold, the variations in moisture from desert drought to excessive humidity, the tempest and lightning, all show that our atmosphere also is abnormal, and is the cause of much evil.

The water of the earth is entirely lacking in some regions, yet the cause of destructive floods in others. Much of it is impure, due to contact with the earth. Indeed, most of it, in the oceans, is deadly for humanity.

The land surface is sometimes too high for human habitation, and is full of "faults", the cause of terrible earthquakes, a permanent chaos, bearing mute witness to the great cataclysm by which God prepared the earth for the current evil eons.

VACANCY

The immediate effects of chaos were vacancy and darkness. Judging by the coal beds and the oil deposits, the first earth was covered with vegetation, and, probably, other forms of life. But after the catastrophe which caused the chaos and killed all that occupied its surface, it became *vacant* (Gen. 1:2). This was the first result of chaos. It not only destroyed inanimate forms, but those which were dependent on them. Instead of a beautiful earth, filled with appropriate objects, like the future new creation, it became one vast expanse without an organic creature to vary its monotony.

WATER

The first correction of the chaos seems to have been produced by gravity. The heavy, solid materials sank, and the lighter fluid, especially water, rose above it and formed a swamp or *submerged chaos* (*theu m*) in which the fluid would be water, comparatively free of mixture. This seems to have taken place before the spirit of God is associated with the changes. It may be applied spiritiually to unbelievers who lack the divine spirit.

Human society is still a chaos. Yet humans are not all alike. There is a low, criminal level, and a high ethical plane, with strata in between, who are not enlightened by the spirit of God. What follows in Genesis, after the spirit of God vibrates, is a physical illustration of the holy spirit's operations in a believer, in whom the spirit partially removes the evil.

WATER-BEARING LAND

Moses told the Israelites, as they were about to enter the land, that, "Ieue, your Alueim, will bring you into a land good [7]and wide,[0] a land of watercourses with water, of springs and submerged chaoses, coming forth in valley and in mountain..." (Dt. 8:7 C.V.). This comes first, and is the basis of their blessings. Only one who has lived in a land like Palestine can fully appreciate the indispensability of underground water to supplement the winter rains, for there is no rainfall in summer. Villages, as a rule, are situated near a spring, for there are no rivers, except the Jordan. Its upper reaches are swampy and its lower contortions are so muddy that the water is hardly drinkable. The watercourses are dry in summer. That is why the women congregate at the village spring in the evening, to fetch a supply for the next day. The water comes from the Dead Sea, rises and floats to the northern mountains, forming snow, which melts, and fills the subterranean chaoses with a fresh supply each summer. What a fine water system!

It is a significant fact that, although God, Alueim, the Subjector, is specifically said to be the Creator of evil, this is not noted in connection with this chaos. He *created* the first earth, and His spirit later *readjusted* the chaos, so that light, atmosphere and land make it habitable. But He is not said to create or make the chaoses. The reason is simple. This is His strange work. It is only the background against which He can

display His power. He wants no credit for it. None of His divine qualities were needed to create the chaos. Anyone can make a mess, but not everyone can transform it into a splendid achievement. Yet when *light* comes on the scene, that is the effect of His spirit, and we are doubly assured that it was His work.

That there was an ideal creation which was later ruined is practically proven by the fact that this undoubtedly occured in the case of humanity, its spiritual counterpart. Adam in Eden corresponds with the earth as created. Yet this creation also *became* a chaos, when the first humans hearkened to the voice of the adversary, and ate the fruit of the death-dealing tree. Ever since there have been readjustments, ending in a final period of cessation. As this is set forth in the booklet, The Divine Calendar, we need not enlarge upon it here. But let us rejoice that all this cruel chaos is the essential ingredient to bring about perpetual perfection and reveal the depths of divine affection. A.E.K.

CHARLES J. RICHARDSON

Charles J. Richardson, of Roanoke, Virginia, was put to repose on July 26, 1957 in his ninetieth year. He did not suffer and was up and around the day before.

Bro. Richardson was untiring in his efforts to spread the knowledge of the concordant truths he learned and loved so well. During the past thirty years he had spent many hundred hours studying the Scriptures; and led others into a knowledge of rightly dividing the Word of Truth. The Word of God was the only creed he had. His devoted consecration and circumspect daily living was reflected in the spirituality that shone from his face.

He is at rest for the night. We shall look forward to seeing him again in the morning. S.A.C.

THE DIVINE NAME AND TITLES

In order to familiarize our readers with the correct transliterations of the divine Name and titles, the forms *Ieue* for Jehovah, *Al*, *Alue*, and *Alueim* (according to their usage in the Hebrew Scriptures) for God, are sometimes used in Unsearchable Riches. These are explained in a free leaflet, " The Divine Names and Titles" and also a series of articles in volume XLV of the magazine (price: $1.00), obtainable from the publishers.

THE TWO SEEDS

ISHMAEL AND ISAAC

Two sons were given to both Abraham and Isaac. In each case one was of the *flesh* and one in the line of *faith.* In both cases the fleshly one was the firstborn, superficially superior to his brother, and the forefather of a nation outside the people of promise. To conform with this Abram's name was changed from Abram (*Ab rm* Father-high) to Abra*ham*, (*Ab r*[*m*] *em* Father-high-*throng*) because he was to be the ancestor of two other national lines, Ishmael and Edom, outside the sphere of spirit, which would be antagonistic to the nation of promise. As Adam's seed was divided into the lines of Cain and Seth, so Abram's seed was later divided into the lines of Isaac and Ishmael, and Isaac's into Jacob and Esau.

This is an exceedingly important departure. In the preceding eon it seems that the firstborn according to the flesh were always recognized. Even in the beginning of this eon, from Noah to Abram, the firstborn of the flesh were reckoned in the genealogy of Christ. But by this time it is evident that the flesh is not benefiting any (Jn. 6:63). Life comes only by spirit. So now we have a double witness, Ishmael and Esau, to the fact that the flesh has lost its priority. This lesson is repeated later in a different way in the line of the kings. Three kings, at the end of every ten, were apostate. From David on seven kings are reckoned, from David to Joram, then three, Ahaziah, Jehoash and Amaziah are omitted because of their apostasy. So with the next ten, the last three, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim and Jechoniah do not appear in the genealogy of the Anointed, the coming King (Mt. 1:2-16).

Sarai, despairing of ever performing her part in the

promise, determined to carry it out through another. Her act is very helpful to show the character of Abram's faith. This was *not* his plan, even though he fell in with it, which he might not have done, had he been more enlightened. The immediate effect of the expedient was trouble, symptomatic of much more to come. It prefigured that long conflict between the physical and the spiritual seed, those enslaved under the law of Moses, and those free in Christ, the unbelievers and those of faith, those generated by the will of man and those springing out of the promise of the Subjector.

Paul's allegory, in which Hagar and Sarai are compared to two covenants, that of the flesh and the law, and that of the spirit and the promise, is the key to the inner meaning of this episode in Abram's life. He was already eighty-six years old, and his wife, Sarai, seventy-six, so there *seemed* to be little likelihood that the promise of Ieue could be fulfilled. Sarai seems to have given up all hope, so she proposed to have her maid, a slave girl, take her place. She was quite correct when she said that *Ieue* had *restrained* her from bearing, but she did not understand that this was intentional, as, indeed, was her choice of Hagar, for the seed must be of two kinds, the flesh acting as a foil for the spirit (Ga. 4:21-31).

Abram was justified by his *faith, not* by his acts. He still believed *what* Ieue had said concerning his seed. But he had not been told *how* this was to be brought about. As Sarai, his wife, bore him no son, he once thought the seed might come through his adopted heir, Eliezer of Damascus. Now, when Sarai, his wife, whose barrenness seemed to be an insurmountable obstacle to the fulfillment of the promise, suggested that her Egyptian slave girl take her part, he supposed that this was Ieue's way of fulfilling the promise, for he did not yet understand God's ways, especially the great distinction between flesh and spirit. So Ieue used this very

action to teach him and his seed this essential lesson. By this method the Subjector *justified* Abram's apparent mistake of relying on Egyptian flesh to fulfill the promise.

Sarai and Abram had faith, but they lacked *patience.* As time wore on, and they approached the period of life when the fulfillment of the promise would no longer be possible in the ordinary course of nature, they lost patience, and sought to forward it by a device of their own. It is one thing to *believe* a promise, yet quite another to *patiently* wait for its fulfillment. The Hebrews are exhorted to imitate those who, through faith *and patience,* are enjoying the allotment of the promise (Hb. 6:12). But Abraham was justified, in this case, because the fruit of this impatience, Hagar and Ishmael, were absolutely essential as a background or foil for God's way of making true His word. Yet, when it turned out contrary to Sarai's wishes, she had to take the blame. Faith believes God's promise. Expectation longs for its fulfillment. Patience waits quietly for it.

Here we have a good example of how Ieue uses human failure in order to carry out His intention, and guides it into the channel that not only fulfills its purpose, but *justifies* the sinner. When Sarai's harsh treatment of Hagar drove the slave girl away, and she fled into the wilderness, He sent her back to be *subservient,* for *that is the proper place of her seed,* Ishmael, and the nation which sprang from him. The chief function of this error, however, was to demonstrate, by an example, that the promise could *not* be fulfilled by the *flesh,* but must come through *faith* and the *spirit.* Ishmael, the firstborn, superior according to the flesh, must be displaced by Isaac, the seed of the promise, according to the spirit.

In the Orient it is a terrible trial for a woman not to be able to bear a son for her lord. In this case it was far more trying than usual, for the grand and glorious

promises to Abram could never find fulfillment if there was no heir to carry on the line. Where would the innumerable descendants come from if he could not generate even a single son? He would soon be too old. Indeed, Sarai seemed already far beyond the possiblity of doing her part. By taking her place and seemingly supplanting her as the wife of Abram, the slave girl greatly increased Sarai's trial by her contempt. But, Sarai, as mistress, could do as she wished, and she so mistreated Hagar that she ran away. Ordinarily, this must be condemned. But, in this case, it served the high purpose of God, so must be *justified.*

"My wrong *be* upon thee." is the reading of the A.V. This is emphasized in the latest Revision, which has: "May the wrong done to me be upon you!" But the original simply reads MY-WRONG ON-YOU I I-GIVE. The MY before WRONG shows that *she* did it, and the doubled I before GIVE shows that *she* gave it to him, so that now the *results* rest on him. The wrong was not done *to* her, but *by* her. She gave the maid to him. In English, "my wrong *be*" amounts to "*May* my wrong be." The Hebrew has no word for *be,* so simply states the fact that her wrongdoing came to rest on Abraham.

Abram, moreover, did not do the wrong that Sarai did to her maid at this time. Yet Sarai was justified in her wrong-doing by the messenger of Ieue, for Hagar had to return and humble herself under Sarai's hands. The right and wrong, however, must not be judged from the standard of human morality, but by the Subjector's revelation. The great conflict between flesh and spirit must be displayed in action. Abram must have two sons. Fleshly Ishmael must come first. And so Ieue used and *justified* Sarai's recurrent wrong-doing. These repeated records of manifest sinning, which was essentially correct in the purpose of God, are given us as examples of God's method of justifying the sins of his saints, and, indeed, all sin, by using it to fulfill His loving purpose.

Later, after Isaac was born, Sarah once more mistreated Hagar, or, rather her son Ishmael, and had him driven away. She said, "Drive out this maidservant and her son, for *not* he is to enjoy the tenancy ... with my son, with Isaac." (Gn. 21:10). As Paul tells us in Galatians (4:29), "the one generated according to the flesh persecuted the one according to the spirit," so must be cast out. So again, Sarah's ungracious conduct was fully justified.

When Hagar fled, being an Egyptian, she naturally took the road toward her homeland. From this we are able to see her attitude toward the promises. She evidently had no faith in them whatever. Her transient happiness was all that concerned her. But she must have heard of the promises, for these were the underlying reason why she had been given to Abram. But she knew well that the son she might bear would not be her own, but reckoned as Sarah's. So she had no incentive to endure the trial. But this is now given to her. She also is to have an innumerable progeny, and be the ancestress of a nation. So she returns and is subordinate to Sarai, even as the nation she bore was to be subject to the nation of the promise.

The appearance to Hagar gives us the first occurrence of the phrase, "*messenger* of Ieue." Indeed, it is the first time that the word "messenger" is used in the Scriptures (16:7). Before this, Ieue *seems* to have spoken directly to those whom He addressed, with the implication that they were *near* Him, within the range of His voice. So He spoke to Abram when He made the promises (12:7, 15:1, 4, 7, 9, 18). But Hagar was *not near* in spirit, and her seed, in contrast to the seed of promise, is at a distance from Ieue. So He deals with them by means of an intermediary, a worker, or messenger. Yet it was Ieue Himself Who heard of her humiliation. This was implied in the name of her son Ishma-el (HEARer-is-SUBJECTor). Hagar named Ieue "Thou-SUB-

JECTOR-seest-me." *Ieue* is the Subjector of Israel, but *not* of the Ishmaelites or Edomites or of Hagar, the slave girl. So the messenger is interposed between Him and them.

Ieue, the *time* name, Will-be-ing-was, is the name of *promise.* But Hagar did not live in the future, but only in the present, so she changed His name to correspond with her immediate experience, "Thou-SUBJECTOR-*seest*-me." (16:13). Her idea of the Deity was that the sight of Him would blind her, as indeed it would, had He appeared Himself, in His glory. So to her and her seed He speaks through an emissary. She made up the name *Ath-Al-rai,* Thou-SUBJECTOR-SEE-me. The well, also, she named, *Bar-l-chi-rai,* WELL-TO-LIVE?-SEE-me. The Ishmaelites were circumcised and acknowledged an unseen Subjector, but were not given any means of spiritual perception such as was Israel's special prerogative.

The hundredth year of Abram's life is the turning point in his career, for in it the promise begins to have its initial fulfillment. In it Isaac, the first of the promised seed, is begotten and born. In it Abram's name is changed to include the nations which sprang from him. By this time the bodies of both Abram and Sarai were practically dead, so far as the generation of the seed is concerned (Ro. 4:17-22). To commemorate this he is given the *sign* of circumcision, in the flesh. The significance of this sign is so little known that the circumstances surrounding its introduction should be carefully considered.

Ieue is about to commence carrying out the promises He had made. Abram was so old that he could no longer help, so the way was clear for Ieue to display *His* power. In accord with this, He assumes a special title, *Al-sh-di,* SUBJECTOR-Who-SUFFICES. Hitherto, Abram seems to have been quite concerned to assist Him fulfill His promises, especially in the case of Ishmael. Now Abram was quite helpless, as well as Sarai. What follows, in

this connection, is proof that the Subjector *needs no assistance.* He is self-sufficient. In fact, all the human aid He needs is helplessness, so that His sufficiency may not only be exhibited, but also *appreciated.*

"Walk before Me and become flawless." Viewed from the human standpoint, this command demands the impossible. Expositors are almost unanimous that even Abram's walk had its flaws. They fail to see that his *faith justified all his acts.* This narrative is given us to show how his *apparent* flaws were *justified by his faith.* From the human standpoint, it is generally agreed that Abram failed when he generated Ishmael. Yet *Ishmael is an essential part of the divine plan,* and Ieue used Abram's apparent failure in order to carry it out. This justifies Abram. And so, in general, evil is essential to God's purpose. So He can justify those who commit it, who have faith in the sacrifice of Christ, which transforms all temporary evil into eternal good. Abraham's experiences show us this grand doctrine in actual operation.

A covenant, or contract, is generally made between *two* parties, *each* of which must perform his part. But Abram had come to a point where all he could do was to signify his assent. So the Hebrew here does not read *making* a covenant (as in the A.V.), but *giving.* Ieue alone increased his offspring exceedingly exceedingly, and was their Subjector, and assured them of the land of Canaan. All that Abraham did was to *believe.* This would hardly be called a covenant among men. In fact it would not be legal in some lands, where even a "deed of *gift*" must include a small sum or other valuable consideration. But, in the administration of the promise, Ieue concludes a *gift* covenant with believers *without a single valuable consideration on their part whatever.*

The *meaning* of the *sign* of circumcision should be easier to understand when considered in the context where it is first given, than elsewhere. Hitherto Abram

had been promised a seed, due to the vivifying power of *faith,* which could not come till Abram's physical power had died. Now, however, he *had* begotten a *fleshly* seed. So this must be marked with a sign that signifies the *cutting off of the flesh.* Alueim is *spirit,* and cannot make a covenant with decadent flesh unless it has at least some indication of its excision. The *time* is significant. It was given after *Ishmael* was born, not after the birth of Isaac. *It cuts off the flesh, to make way for the spirit.*

Very few of the so-called "Circumcision" seem to have grasped the sinister significance of the sign. They glory in it, and considered it a mark of distinction, which gives them a privileged and superior position before the Subjector. Too often it is the seal of a faith that does not exist. It signified the *cutting-off* of the flesh, while they made it a sign of physical *superiority.* Today, our circumcision is in *spirit,* not in letter. Not merely a *part* of the flesh is removed, but we, as a *whole, died with Christ,* yet are also risen with Him (Col. 2:11, Ph. 3:3). With us the physical rite would be *maim*cision. It might indicate a partial, instead of the complete, removal of the flesh (Ph. 3:3).

To conform with her new station, and the change in Abram's name to Abra*ham*, Sarai (*Shr-i* REGARD-MY) My-regarded-[one], expressing her personal relation to her husband, is changed to Sarah (*Shr-e* REGARD-ESS) Chiefess. Other explanations may be given, but this one seems to conform to the context most closely. Her new name, Sarah, or Chiefess, is immediately followed by the revelation that nations and kings of peoples are to come from her through her son. She had shown her unbelief in the promise in connection with Ishmael, so this added dignity seems to be wholly undeserved. But so is all that comes in the sphere of promise (Gn. 17:15). Then she was highly regarded by her husband, now, like him, she is highly regarded by the Ishmaelites and Esau-ites as well as the sons of Israel.

Quite a little laughter is connected with Isaac, whose name (*I tzchq*) means Laugh-causer. Both Abraham (17:17) and Sarah laughed (18:13). Ishmael laughed (21:9) later on. To Isaac's parents his birth seems so improbable, that it bordered on the ridiculous. So it is with most of God's promises, for they are impossible to be fulfilled in the physical sphere, and need divine spirit power to bring them about. Nevertheless, Abraham considered his body, already deadened, and the deadening of Sarah (so far as reproduction was concerned), yet the promise of God was not doubted in unbelief. He was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also that, what He had promised, He is able to do also. *Therefore, also, it was reckoned to him for righteousness* (Ro. 4:22).

Ishmael differs greatly from the seed of promise, for he was not given a land or settled abode, but was like the wild ass, so fully described in the book of Job (39:5). His descendants were like the bedouin, roaming about, with no settled dwellings, with their hand against all, and all against them. He inherited his mother's charactor of *in*subjection, which she had before the messenger spoke to her (16:12).

Abram seems to have grasped the fact that even Ishmael has his place in the Subjector's plans, though it be a negative one. He seems to have been quite fond of his first son, for he evidently was a fine specimen of the flesh, apart from faith. He played a necessary and helpful part in acting as a foil for Isaac, the seed of promise.

Two special examples of the beginning of circumcision are presented, one in which the sign was in accord with the facts, and the other a mere outward "maimcision" (Phil. 3:2), in which the flesh is mutilated without any corresponding spiritual significance. Apart from the sign itself, Abram's flesh had been cut off so far as the promise was concerned. He could never gen-

erate a single son, let alone a numberless seed. But just the opposite was true of Ishmael. He was just beginning a long life in which he was to beget twelve princes and a great nation. So, ever since, the sign has lost its real meaning among the fleshly seed of Abraham.

Abraham was circumcised when ninety-nine years old. For him the sign had a fullness of meaning as for no one else. We read in Romans that his body was already deadened at this time. Now only vivification by God could fulfill the promise. He had come to the end of the flesh, and looked alone to Ieue. As a result, he is ready for fuller fellowship with Him. He is given the privilege of *entertaining* Him (18:1-8), and of *receiving* the promise of the fulfillment of his fondest wish, an heir to his allotment, and he acts as *intercessor* for the wicked cities of the basin.

The whole account of Abraham's entertainment of his visitors gives us a perfect picture of the hospitality shown to strangers in the East, from ancient times to the present day. The visitors do not even need to make their presence known by some sound or action, as with us, but simply stand a short distance away in an attitude of expectancy. When they are noticed, the host runs to meet them, and humbly begs them to accept his hospitality. His first duty is to wash their feet and make them comfortable. Then a meal is prepared for them. Not till then is the object of the visit discussed. But guests must never be asked whence they come or whither they are going.

By many modes, through messengers, God spoke to the fathers (Heb. 1). Usually we are not told just how Ieue made His word known to Abraham, but, when announcing the birth of Isaac and the doom of Sodom, He associates two others with Himself as *mortals* (18:2, 16, 22, 19:5, 10, 12) and *messengers* (19:1, 15). There is no special description of their appearance, so they probably looked like men. Not only Abraham, but the

citizens of Sodom treated them as if they were like themselves. At first it may seem impossible that there should be a mortal to represent Him in those days, but we know that Melchizedek, who lived at this time, was a priest of the supreme Al. So there may have been others, similar to these. The name *messengers* or *workers,* tells us their occupation, but tells us nothing as to their status.

The A.V. tells us that three "men," visited Abraham. The Companion Bible explains this as, "Elohim and two angels called men (Heb. *'ish,* pl.)." This confusion arises from the fact that the A.V. translates seven Hebrew words by the English term *man,* which the C.V. differentiates as *man, human, mortal, possessor, master, male,* and *soul.* Here the word should be *mortal,* not *man.* They render this stem much better elsewhere, as *incurable, desperate, woeful, very* or *grievously sick.* These agree with our rendering *mortal.* Later on, two of them are called *messengers,* or "angels," who went to Sodom (19:1). It is evident, from this expression, that it could not have been Al, the Subjector, or Alue, the To-Subjector, for these were neither dying nor subject to death at that time, but must have been Alueim, or Subjectors, associated with the Supreme Subjector.

The birth of the promised seed had been foretold from the time of Abram's call (12:1-2). Abram had been concerned about it ever since. Now he was too old to do his part. Just before this he had laughed at the idea (17:17). The very name of the son, Isaac (LAUGH-causer) was given (17:19). Nevertheless Sarah, when she heard it, repeated by the messengers, scouts the idea and is laughing (Heb. *th tzchq*) within herself. When she is accused of it, she denies and dissimulates. Yet He insists that she did laugh (18:11-15). Why is so much made of this? On the human side it seemed silly, but, on the divine, it was the basis of much rejoicing and blessing, for Isaac is not only the first of the

promised seed, but the first and foremost type of that greater Son of Abraham through whom *all* the promises will be fulfilled.

Apart from the spiritual vitality imparted by Ieue, Sarah could not have a son, so the account is so worded that this alone was necessary. Only then we read that she is bearing a son for Abraham (Gen. 21:2). Only thus could she have done it at this age, so the son was clearly characterized a spiritual, as well as a physical, product. This is further emphasized in the record by his circumcision, the way God had instructed Abraham.

The laughing, and the exultant joy which it expresses, is only an outward indication of the blessedness which comes through the spirit and its operations. Its greatness and spontaneity is enhanced by the previous disappointment and impatience and distress. Had Sarah borne Abram a son seventy years before, their exultation could not have reached the height that it did. So will it be with us, also, when we enter into the promised glory, for which our present tribulation is but a preparatory multiplicand. Alas! How many of us prefer to laugh now, rather than, by temporary suffering, enhance our future endless exultation!

Evidently the joy inaugurated by the birth of Isaac was permanent, for it found expression again in the great feast when he was weaned. And so will be the hilarious rejoicing of all who, like him, are the product of God's gracious vivifying spirit, through the grace that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Saviour. A.E.K.

RADIO MINISTRY IN MICHIGAN

Our readers in Michigan are invited to listen to two radio programs, where Bro. Raymond Van Dyke, of Grand Rapids, is broadcasting the truth of reconciliation and talks on related subjects. One program is aired over WGHN, in Grand Haven at 12:45 p.m. on Sundays, and the other is broadcast over WHAK, in Rogers City at 9:15 a.m. on Saturdays. We are quite sure those of you who live near enough to receive these stations on your radio will get a real blessing from Bro. Van Dyke's messages.

RELIGIOUS LEAVEN

LEAVEN is a ferment which spoils whatever it touches, until it is stopped by heat. It is a symbol of evil and wickedness (1 Cor. 5:8), and, among religious zealots like the Pharisees, hypocrisy (Lu. 12:1). It takes very little of it to swell a vast amount of dough, and a tiny measure of evil will spoil a whole group of saints. When there was a serious moral lapse among the Corinthians, and they were puffed up over it, Paul called for the most energetic action. He does not seem to have had any very definite proof, so only says that he had heard of it, nevertheless he calls for very drastic remedies, and even insisted that they give up such a one to Satan for the extermination of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

CLEAN OUT THE LEAVEN

From this case Paul goes on to charge them not to be commingling with such people. By the figure of leaven we are able to see why we should act thus, even though it may seem to be cruel to deny them fellowship. *Such evil is infectious.* It should not be tolerated among the saints. It is mistaken kindness not to clean it out. Lest we should use this wholesome but drastic preventive too freely, and apply it to anyone whose conduct does not come up to the standard (which might include us all!), definite instruction is given, and the sins are named which call for such excision. Besides the case among the Corinthians they include the greedy, idolators, revilers, drunkards and extortioners. With such we are not even to be eating. They are to be expelled (1 Cor. 5). I have great sympathy for those who reject this severe

discipline, and have failed myself in applying it, but am convinced that God's severity is far better than my mistaken "graciousness."

CELEBRATION OF UNLEAVENED

When Israel prepared for the passover in the land of Egypt they had to cleanse their houses of all leaven. None could be present at the passover festival. For seven days they kept the celebration of the unleavened bread. They will resume it in the future, when the type will find its fulfillment in the millennium. Then the law will be written on their hearts and they will be enabled to rid themselves of the evil and wickedness and the holy hypocrisy which characterized their past. So we, who are far beyond even that glad day in spirit, we should clean out the old leaven, and celebrate continually with unleavened sincerity and truth (Ex. 12:15, 19, 20, 34, 39, 1 Cor. 5:7-8).

NO LEAVEN

As the great Antitype of all the sacrifices was absolutely free of all evil or wickedness, all the types of Him must be absolutely lacking in leaven. Only when typical of others may there be leaven (Lev. 7:13). And, as all our approach and worship is tainted, it must be brought in His name, which is entirely lacking of leaven, to be acceptable to Him.

KINDS OF LEAVEN

There are many kinds of leaven spoken of in the Scriptures, only one of which is literal. It is sometimes called yeast, or barm, and is any ferment which "raises" or expands the dough of bread, or similar substances. The disciples mistakenly supposed that our Lord warned them against literal leaven, but there is little objection to this in the Scriptures. Israel was allowed to have it in their houses the year round, except during the Passover and the week that followed (Ex. 12:15-20). It

would not help us spiritually to know all the different fermenting mediums. But it may be of much profit to inquire carefully as to the exact nature of all the different kinds of figurative leaven, so that we may guard against it in our own efforts to recover the Word of God and to avoid the introduction of all corrupting elements.

The principal kinds of figurative leaven mentioned in the Scriptures, apart from its spiritual implications in the Hebrew, are the *religious teaching* (of the Pharisees and Sadducees), the lust for *political power* (of the Herods), *hypocrisy, evil* and *wickedness.* Paul seems to refer to all of these when he speaks of the "old" leaven, and he goes into details as to the evil and wickedness in our efforts to avoid it, or to "clean out" the leaven which may be present among us (1 Cor. 5:7). For we, unlike Israel, are to keep the festival of unleavened bread the whole year, not merely a single week. We should never allow any figurative leaven in our abodes or in the ecclesia.

LEAVEN IN GALATIANS

Not only among the unbelievers of the nations was leaven prevalent, but also among those who received Christ under Paul's ministry. Almost the whole of the epistle to the Galatians is concerned with it. They tried to drag the believers among the nations down from their high platform of unadulterated grace by forcing them to keep the law and observe Jewish traditions. Even their greatest apostle was guilty of this. His was the same sin as that of the Pharisees. He played the hypocrite. How has this spread among the nations today! Myriads of true believers are in bondage to the law and the traditions of men introduced among them first of all by Jews from Jerusalem who, later, tried to assassinate Paul (Ga. 2:11-13).

UNBELIEVERS

Among unbelievers of the nations the Jews have also introduced much evil. Inherently conscious that they

are the chosen people, to whom earthly dominion belongs, they seek to dominate the world by many immoral means, apart from Christ, and by unrighteous methods. Whether the so-called "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" which set forth an elaborate plan in which they propose to debase and enslave all of the gentile peoples, are genuine or not, the spirit of it is theirs, and they are doing all they can to put the nations beneath their feet, in many spheres of business and education. By means of their wealth they will actually make the nations subservient to them in the era of the end.

A LITTLE LEAVEN

The vital lesson to be learned from the figure of the leaven is the *small amount* needed to affect the whole. Practically every phase of life has been altogether spoiled because, at some time, a very small deviation from the divine order has been introduced. This was often done with good intent and seemed on the surface to be a success. Great things can be accomplished by a tiny touch of seemingly innocent yeast.

A little leaven is leavening the whole kneading (1 Cor. 5:6). It takes much more salt to preserve than leaven to corrupt. Like some diseases, evil and wickedness are catching, but health is not infectious. This distressing fact is not a secret hidden in divine revelation but is clearly evident on all hands in our daily experience. And nowhere is it more evident than in the realm of religion. Error spreads like wildfire, but truth plods along a weary, solitary way.

CORRUPTION SPREADS

I still remember what a powerful impression was made upon my mind by a homely illustration used by a fellow student in school. I had not had any experience along such lines, so I was astonished to learn that a single rotten apple in a sackful would soon ruin them all. But a single good one in a bag of rotten ones would not

preserve any. I knew something about the rapid spread of leaven in bread, but never realized that it would soon spoil if not baked with fire, to stop the process of decomposition. Even in such homely household matters God is showing us how little it takes to introduce corruption, and how hard it is to stop it.

THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

At the passover, the destroying messenger skipped over the firstborn in Israel who were sheltered by the blood of the lamb. On the other hand the Israelites were strictly charged to eradicate all leaven from their houses, under penalty of being cut off from their people. Moreover, for seven days, no yeast was allowed (Ex. 12:15). And this celebration has been continued ever since (Ex. 13:3, Dt. 16:3). Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for our sakes, so that we should also keep this festival. We do not need to clean out the yeast in our dwellings as they did, but get rid of all *spiritual* corruption, all evil and wickedness. The Jews observe the celebration for two weeks. We should keep it always, using only unleavened sincerity and truth.

NO LEAVEN IN SACRIFICES

Leaven was always debarred from the sacrifices which represented Christ, our Saviour, for there was no corrupting influence in Him (Ex. 23:18, 34:25). No approach present (meat offering, A.V.), Lv. 6:17 (10) could have leaven. But with the peace approach leaven is added to some of it (Lv. 7:13), and with the wave approach of firstfruits (Lv. 23:17), for in these the offerer is represented, who is mortal, and not only corrupting, but a spreader of corruption.

There is not a great deal said about leaven (*chmutz*) in the Hebrew Scriptures, but we often read of *un*leavened (food) (*mtztze*). The first occurrence is very striking. Lot, even though he dwelt in the midst of immoral Sodom, fed the messengers with *un*leavened

bread. This suggests to the spiritual reader that he was not involved in the wickedness about him. As Peter says, their dissolute behaviour harried his just soul (2 Pt. 2:6-8).

LEAVEN IN LATER REVELATION

The lesson of leaven taught by Moses, is used by our Lord and His apostles to illustrate the rapid spread of corrupting evil. In the political sphere He likens it to the kingdom (Mt. 13:33, Lu. 13:21) and connects it with Herod (Mk. 8:15). In the religious area He warns against the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Mt. 16:6, Mk. 8:15, Lu. 12:1). Paul also adverts to it in regard to moral delinquency (1 Cor. 5:2-13) and to false doctrine. Very little heed has been given to Paul's teaching, so that, in both conduct and doctrine, almost the whole body of believers, not to speak of nominal church members, is thoroughly leavened. Hence it is of great practical value to each one of us to know what to do about it. Indeed, those who do act scripturally are often severely criticized because few understand how corruption must be dealt with, according to God's Word.

THE KINGDOM GOES TO CORRUPTION

Our Lord likened the kingdom to a sower (Mt. 13:3-23), to darnel, or "tares" (24-30), to a mustard seed (31-32), and, in closing, to leaven (33). The sower reaped a very poor crop. The seed sown beside the road was picked up by the birds. Many did not understand and the wicked one snatched the seed. The rocky place hearers did not strike root, and withered when affliction and persecution came. That sown among thorns was smothered by worry and wealth. Even that which fell on fertile soil and grew up produced a varied crop. All of these fulfill Isaiah's prophecy concerning them. Except the roadside hearers, fleshly frailty delays the coming of the kingdom.

THE DARNEL, OR "TARES"

Here we have a good example of political tactics still used today. Infiltration is not a recent invention. It seems to have originated with the enemy of Christ's kingdom, and was very effective. So long as the false disciples looked like the real wheat, the genuine ones could not properly deal with them. They will continue to the end time, when the messengers will get them to organize their own groups and separate from the true disciples. Then they will be judged, and the genuine gathered into the kingdom. This has often been applied to the present ecclesia. No doubt we have many more name-Christians (to borrow a term from another language) than the kingdom had, but *we* should be able to detect them and deal with them in this era of spirit. They increased in number in Israel, especially at the close of the book of Acts.

THE MUSTARD SEED

This has a lesson similar to that of the leaven. A minute quantity of faith, small as a mustard kernel, can move mountains. From a very small beginning the kingdom disciples increased in numbers greatly. On the day of Pentecost alone three thousand were added. Later, there were tens of thousands (Ac. 21:20) in Jerusalem alone. But, alas, they were activated by the spirit of the adversary and would have liked to assassinate Paul.

When Christ comes in glory to the mount of Olives, He will rid the earth of evil and wickedness and reign in righteousness, sincerity and truth. From Israel will go forth the word of the Lord, and they will be a *blessing* to all nations. Because the law will be written in their *hearts,* they will not again apostatize. They will be the salt to preserve the other nations from decay. When this does not suffice, the fire of divine judgment will consume the wicked. So it will be when Gog and Magog rise against them during and at the conclusion of the

thousand years. This is the kingdom for which the disciples and apostles of our Lord longed, and which they expected to commence soon after Christ heralded it in the first half of His ministry.

THE SECRET PHASE

The parable of the leaven is just the *opposite* of this. A little leaven, literally evil and wickedness, was introduced into the three measures by the woman, religious Israel, in the parable, and it is gradually permeating the whole. That has been the course of the apostate nation from our Lord's day to the present. They should have been the *salt* of the earth to *preserve* it from corruption. Instead, they are the *leaven,* to spread *corruption* among the other nations. We can see this commencing in the lifetime of our Lord, spread in the period of His apostles, and expand over the whole earth in the time of the end.

(To be continued)

BLANK BACK TRACTS

The tracts, "Is Everlasting Punishment a Truth of Scripture" and "The Old Time Religion" are to be had with space for stamping advertisments of local meetings, instead of our own advertisement. These are available without cost in any quantity you can use. Samples furnished on request.

INTEREST AROUSED IN THE PHILIPPINES

Our office has received a very encouraging report from the Philippine Islands, where our missionary brother W. L. Rodriguez tells us of a strong spark of interest which has been kindled near the town of Alica, Zamboanga del Sur, which shows such promise that Bro. Rodriguez has moved to this town from Pagadian, in order to establish this new group of believers in the truth. Bro. Rodriguez's son, Carlito, was largely responsible for creating this new interest, which is the result of a number of debates he held with leaders of the local church, in which the truth of universal reconciliation received enthusiastic approval from the large crowds in attendance. Your prayers for this work in the Philippine Islands are requested, and those who also wish to help the cause in a material way may do so through our business office in Saugus, which will see to it that your gifts are forwarded promptly.

NEWNESS OF LIFE

"Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." These are sorrowful words, my brothers and my sisters—they are words of a man whose labors were to apprehend the fruits of life and in so doing, found himself swallowed up by life, and he hated it because life was found to be but a rudimentary consciousness, and all its fruits a passing thing—a burgeoning and a wilting. Ecc 2:17

Also, "in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." What knowledge, what wisdom leads to grief and sorrow? Why, a realization that all is vanity, worthless; your knowledge, your wisdom, your joys, your sorrows, your achievements, your fame. Of course there's grief and sorrow—real anguish—in finding everything in your world and your life to be a valueless passing thing; even the world is a panorama of burgeoning and wilting; the earth itself a momentary blossom, although many a man will sing, "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen." Ecc 1:18 Rev 21:1 "Gloria Patri"

Yet today, for us, an aria to replace the lament—a cantata of exultant thanksgiving and joy to God the merciful Who gives up His own Son that we might have *life*—a life diametrically opposed to the rudimentary consciousness which man calls "life", yet is no more than a thing which teeters back and forth until the day it falls into that state called death. A perfect and holy sacrifice brings a new covenant and a new administration between God and man, a newness of life with the setting aside of the law and its infirmity in the imposition of hands; the setting aside of priests and heifers; the setting aside of the old humanity, our former behavior which was in accord with the rudimentary life—the glorious revelation of an expectation of tomorrow and a realization for today with a promise of magnificence so that the declaration is no longer "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity" but rather "your toil is not for naught in the Lord" and "the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints". No longer Ph 4:4 Rom 6 Jn 3:16 1 C 11:25 2 C 3:6 Heb 9:15 Ro 6:4 Heb 6:2 Eph 4:22 Ecc 1:2 1 C 15:58 Eph 1:18

is it "he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow" but "for in everything are you enriched in Him, in all expression and all knowledge"; so that it becomes apparent that in Christ all is being made new and that the salvation wrought in His blood is an ascension into a more perfect life *for us who believe.* To believe that our Lord Jesus has died and been roused for our salvation, that in His death was the carrying away of our sins so that we were freed from the lamenting and law works which were necessary when we were of an infirm "life", that in His rousing was unveiled a newness of life—one apart from the world, slaving for the law of precepts and decrees, directions and teachings of man with willful ritual; apart from all of these. It is the Life in Christ, in Whom our sufferings, joys, achievements and failings are not for naught but for a grander realization of God, the Creator of all, and for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, and for the laud of God's glory.

Ecc 1:18
1 C 1:5
Hb 8:13
Hb 9:15
Ro 6:4
Ro 10:9
Col 2:14
Heb 6:12
Rom 8
Col 2
Ro 11:36
1 C 11:32

We are in the "most acceptable era", "a day of salvation" in which the longing to be at home with the Lord is answered with an earnest of the spirit so that we may be finding ourselves swallowed up by Life—delighting to be away from "home" out of the body and to be at home with the Lord.

2 C 6:2
2 C 5:5
2 C 5:8

Let's join hands in prayer for one another as the apostle prayed that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing. God reckons us to be dead to the world and sins and law-works and opens up before us, with Christ, Life in accord with the earnest of the spirit. It is not as if a man had given us a position with Christ, for that provision would be vain indeed. Be aware that it is the Creator Who is the great Subjector and King of the Eons Who is giving us this eonian enjoyment—let us get hold of Life really. And be rejoicing in it and superabounding in it and pursuing the goal in it, for nothing in the Lord is in vain but, in fact, fruitful today and with a promise of indescribable magnificence at His glorious advent—when we shall meet Him in the air.

Eph 1:17
2 C 5:14
Eph 2:5
Col 2:13
Ro 8:11
Rev 4:11
Eph 1:22
1 Ti 1:17
1 Ti 6:19
Ph 3:14
1 Th 4:16

Oh, Beloved in the Lord, be superabounding in the tender mercies of our Father Who not only gives us a longing for, but an enjoyment of Life with His own Son, to all who love Him. —CONTRIBUTED

Eph 2:4

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH, 1958
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

GOD'S LOVE

ITS RELATION TO SIN

SIN, in the languages of inspiration, is a faded figure. It presents a picture to our eyes of a man aiming at a target, yet *missing* the *mark*. In the Hebrew it actually means MISS. In Greek, it denotes UN-MARK. This very illustration is used when we are told that there were left-handed men in Benjamin who could fling stones and not *miss*, or *sin* (Jd. 20:16) The picture is further elaborated if we add the *law*, which denotes AIM. Yet those who seek to keep the law are poor shots, for they usually do *miss*, or *sin*. Even as no one can hit the bull's-eye every time, so no one can avoid sinning.

Our English word *sin* is the nearest we have to represent these terms, so a translator is obliged to use it in a version. Yet the closer and more illuminating terms can be used in a sublinear. There it should be a valuable aid to the earnest student and even the casual reader. A single picture may convey a clearer impression than many words, and this is true even if it is only a word picture. That is why we use MISS for the Hebrew *chta*, and UN-MARK for the Greek *a-martia*, in the Concordant sublinears, but *sin* for both in the idomatic version.

In my early years, in Sunday school and elsewhere, I received the firm impression that temptation is sin, so, in some measure, I sought to avoid it. But, later on, I read in my Bible, "He Himself hath suffered, being *tempted*" (Heb. 2:18), and that He "was in all points *tempted* as we are, *yet without sin*" (Heb. 4:15, A.V.). This led to doubts and difficulties that I did not overcome until I used a concordant version. Of one thing I was certain. It was absolutely vital that Christ, my Saviour,

should be *without* sin. So I came to the conclusion that there must be something wrong with my Sunday school lessons. But I did not wish to minimize the evil of "temptation." The word has become so closely connected with sin in the theology of Christendom that I am glad to be able to get along without it in the Concordant Version. It should be *trial,* or *test.* It is trying, and may lead to sin, but in itself, may be beneficial.

The relation between trial and desire and sin and death is pictured for us under the figure of generation. James (1:15) reads, "Now each one is undergoing *trial* when he is drawn away and lured by his own *desire.* Thereafter, the desire, *conceiving,* is *bringing forth sin.* Now sin, fully consummated, is *teeming forth death.*" Sin is reproduced in much the same way as the race, in which a woman desires, then conceives and then bears.

The word *through* is used thrice in Paul's explanation why all humans sin. It was *through* one *human,* Adam, and *through* his *sin,* and *through death*—on which all sinned. Sin was not transmitted through a single channel. A man does not keep on missing the mark because he did so once. If some outward influence caused him to do so the first time, and the conditions are all perfect, he may never miss again. But if the first mistake lowered his vitality so that he trembles, he may never be able to hit the bull's-eye until he is cured of his infirmity.

God purposely constituted Adam so that, if he made a mistake, in his case if he should eat the wrong thing, he would disintegrate, and return to the soil of which he was composed. This *process* is called *dying,* and the resultant *state* He called *death.* He distinguished between these two in His threat (Gen. 2:17) by saying to *die* (the state) shall you be *dying* (the process). He again defined them in His judgment by a life under this curse, till he returned to the ground (Gen. 3:17-19). Henceforth Adam began to return to the ground and continued to do so, until his heart ceased to beat and his body decayed.

The slow decay during life makes it impossible for us to always hit the center of the target. "Death passed through to all mankind, *on which* all sinned." (Ro. 5:12).

When Adam finally literally died, his soul lost all connection with the world. He could no longer see or hear, or taste or smell. Not only did his body decay and return to the soil, but his sensations vanished, and his spirit returned to God, as it was before he was created. This is literal *death.* The death that came to him on the day he sinned was *like* this, but in the sphere of *spirit. He lost communion with God.* He was still in touch with the world of *sensation,* but not with the higher realm of *spirit.* He showed it by hiding from God. The spirit imparts life. It continued to do so as long as Adam was in touch with the Source of life. When he was cut off from this, like a fallen leaf, his body gradually decayed and returned to the soil.

In his inspired analysis of sin's operation in the world, Paul ignores the *temptation* of Eve, and traces it all back to *one* human, Adam. As we have seen, Eve's *yearning* and *coveting* did not open her eyes. It was only when they *ate* that the effects were evident. Eve's disposition is not reckoned as the first sin, and her eating is not counted in the transmission of sin. Moreover, Adam was not deluded as Eve was (1 Ti. 2:14). She ate first, and he ate, not because he expected to get any benefits, but *because she ate.* Search as we will, we cannot find any sin in his heart before actual eating. How could there be? Human nature is not sinful. The serpent did not delude him. There was no motive within, and none without, except Eve's act. Did Sin come in because of his love for Eve?

Sin's entrance is a silhouette of its exit. Adam's love for Eve gives us a clear intimation of Christ's love for those who were created in Him, as Eve was in Adam (Col. 1:16). He was not seduced or deluded, so as to be in the transgression (1 Ti. 2:14). But, when Eve

transgressed, his love for her led him to do likewise. He did not sin until he took the fruit and *ate.* So it was with our Saviour. He did not sin, nor was He deluded by it, nevertheless, *for the love of us,* He was made Sin, or a Sin Offering. This was done by crucifixion, for the curse of God was upon all who were hanged on a pole. He did not do this of Himself, but suffered it to be done because of His love for us.

Although Eve was the first human to sin in her heart, and with her hand when she *plucked* the forbidden fruit, she was not the *channel* of sin to the rest of the race. So Paul rightly makes it only *one* human, not two. Humanity was not *created* in Eve, but in Adam, and the vital link which unites all humans is the *seed of the man.* It imparts *life* to the ovum, and so *generation* is always reckoned in the line of the male in the Scriptures. It transmits some of the *spirit* which made Adam a living soul, while the ovum is related rather to the physical form which was given Adam at his creation. But spirit, severed from the Source of life, is gradually used up. So living tapers off into dying, and ends in death.

Our Saviour did not have a man for a father, but He did have a woman for a mother. So He is spoken of as the seed of Eve. In judging the serpent, Ieue Alueim said: "And enmity am I setting between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt your head, and you shall hurt His heel (Gen. 3:15). As Christ was born of God, He did not inherit the death sentence of Adam, nevertheless He came of a woman, so is figuratively called the "seed" of Eve and of Mary.

So the story of sin is really the greatest *love* story ever told. Adam sinned for love of Eve, and Christ was made sin for love of mankind. Yet both sins were planned by God in order to *reveal His love* to all His creatures, not only the sinners themselves, on the earth, but all His erring creatures, from the north star to the southern cross. All must learn *through sin* that *God is love!*

PROGRESS

THE VIEW that humanity must progress is one which is accepted on all hands. Human energy bends itself to that end, for retrogression would be wholly deplorable. Into what can this controlling idea issue? It is only when we take the Deity into our consideration that we are at all likely to get an understanding which puts the question into its true perspective. But it must be a perspective indicated by the Scriptures which are His revelation. The human mind will not welcome the restraining of what is usually deemed its approved prerogative.

The foregoing thoughts will serve to preface some reflections upon the modern idea termed "space travel." This notion is primarily the outcome of present day science, especially that branch which propounds cosmology. Over the centuries, experiment has become the accepted method upon which knowledge must be based. Investigation became the dominant outlook, and gradually it gave the laws of physics. These, in turn, built up and supplied a knowledge of mechanics. Extrapolation, aided by geometry and other branches of mathematics, produced concepts which became formulated into a disposition of the universe, outlined by astronomy. Now human mentality feels fully capable of exploring space, entirely outside the range of geography. Time has supposedly been conquered by the concept of relativity.

All this is sanctioned in the name of *progress.* Yet it may be well to remember the words of Ieue in those early days following His making of the nations. Then did the nations resist the direction and institutions of the Supreme. Ieue spake thus: "Now nothing will be defended from them of all that they will plan to do." How

applicable these words appear in the light of present developments! It would not seem that we would have to limit their reference, for surrounding the above sequence of activity, there has ever been the will to resist and to reject the Deity and His ways. To the limits of the universe will man investigate! While doing this, he is rejecting or ignoring God's revelation of Himself and His ways.

Humans do not seem to be aware that they were allotted the earth. That was to be the field for their swaying and subduing. Matters outside the earth are not within the sphere of their subjecting. The Lord Jesus, in His exaltation, has been accorded the Headship of the celestials, and His body, the ecclesia, complements Him for the service in this realm.

Space travel implies that it is both unnecessary and out-of-date to believe the evangel of the glory accorded to God's Son. Scripturally, space travel is a forsaking of humanity's proper habitation. It is not in keeping with the sovereignty to which the Deity directed their activity. This is not a light matter, even if humans view it as an adventure. Were it possible, it would put aside entirely the ordering of the universe by the Deity. It would promote the invading of the celestials by beings (human) who were quite unfitted to instruct them in spiritual matters. A true knowledge of the Deity, as He intends to be known, that is the crux both for the earth and among the celestials. Space travel has no relation whatever to the multifarious wisdom of God. The eons were not made with such a prospect in view, except for those called out by the evangel concerning God's Son. Such will be changed to accord with their new environment. This will ensue in the twinkle of an eye! And the service into which they enter will lead forward in God's purpose of the eons. This will, indeed, be *progress.* Whereas mankind's misguided mission into space is really *regress.* E.H.C.

THE PLACE OF HEBREWS

HEBREW BELIEVERS formed a distinct body during the latter part of the book of Acts, before the two bodies were united to form the *joint* body, the secret of the present administration (Eph. 3:1-13). During their immaturity, the believers out of the nations received the early Pauline epistles in order to prepare them for the transcendent truths of the perfection epistles. Corresponding to this the Hebrew body was sent the epistle to the Hebrews, which paved the way for the spiritual, celestial blessings of the joint body, in place of their former material, terrestrial expectation and destiny.

ABRAM, THE HEBREW

The title, Hebrews (*Obrim* PASSERS), takes us back to Abram, their forefather, *before* his name was changed to Abra*ham* (Gn. 17:5). He was still a pilgrim *passing through* the land, tabernacling in tents. Then it was that Abram (FATHER-HIGH) was asked to number the stars, and was told, "*thus* shall your seed become" (Gn. 15:5). At that time the number of his offspring was not compared with the soil or with the seaside sand, as it was afterward, when his name was changed to Abra*ham* (FATHER-HIGH-throng, Gn. 22:17, 28:14). Hence "Hebrews" is used here of those of his descendants who have no heritage in the land, on *earth*, like Peter and the apostles, but have part in a *celestial* calling (Hb. 3:1), along with believers among the nations (Eph. 1:3) in this present secret administration.

The first occurrence of "Hebrew" in connection with Abram is suggestive. Lot, in contrast to Abram, was *dwelling* in Sodom in a seemingly *permanent* abode, but Abram *tabernacled* among the oaks of Mamre in a *temporary* tent (Gen. 13:18). He was only a *tenant*—not an owner. Perhaps our "pilgrim," would be the most appropriate term. The Hebrews at the end of Acts also were only *passing* through the land to their celestial home, and claimed no possession in it. Indeed, Barnabas, their leader, had sold his.

HEBREWS IN EPHESIANS

Paul, although the apostle of the nations, claimed to be a Hebrew of Hebrews (Phil. 3:5). He repeatedly refers to his fellow Hebrews in the first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians when he speaks of *us* and *our,* in contrast to *you* and *your,* when addressing the saints of non-Jewish ancestry.

Paul defined his own position as follows: "To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the *untraceable* riches of Christ to the *nations, and* to enlighten *all* as to what is the administration of the *secret* which has been concealed from the eons in God ..." (Eph. 3:8-9). The contrast he draws here between *nations* and *all* clearly indicates that he was *not exclusively used* in reaching the Hebrews. Barnabas (who took Mark) was also severed for this purpose with him (Ac. 13:2). Barnabas, a Levite, took the leading part in reaching Hebrews, while Paul specialized in going to the aliens. Barnabas, rather than Paul, may have written to these Hebrews.

THE WRITER OF HEBREWS

As Peter recorded the fact that Paul *had* written to the *dispersion* (2 Pt. 3:15), there can be no question that he did enlighten *all* as to *the present secret administration* (Eph. 3:8), for this is done *only* in his prison

epistles. But for his *previous* ministry, which concerned the *untraceable riches of Christ,* he made no such claim. He brought this only to the *nations.* This seems to imply that he had *not* made it known to his fellow Hebrews, except to those of repute, as James, Cephas and John (Gal. 2:2, 9-10). These tried to insist that Barnabas and Paul should be for the nations, and leave the Circumcision to them. *This Paul endeavored to do.* Yet it would not hinder Barnabas or Mark from writing to the Hebrew brethren.

UNTRACEABLE TRUTH

Paul's pre-prison epistles to the nations reveal much concerning the hitherto unknown glories of Christ, yet they were transitional and immature, and pointed forward to perfection (1 Co. 13:9-12). Hebrews is in the same class, but views it on a different background, that of God's previous revelation to the seed of Abram. To use Paul's expression, they *both* reveal *untraceable* riches of Christ, which were not explained in previous revelation. This is clearly indicated by their exclusive use of the term "celestial," a realm which is referred to frequently in Hebrews as well as Paul's epistles in locating the scene of future blessing, but nowhere else, except with a negative.

HEBREWS AND EPHESIANS

The argument of the first part of Ephesians and that of the epistle to the Hebrews are strikingly similar, although the background is so different. In both cases *spiritual, celestial blessing* (Eph. 1:3, Hb. 3:1), is compared with previous dispensations of a lower grade. In Ephesians, the background is the low place given to the nations in the past. But in Hebrews it consists of the whole former revelation given to them in the Hebrew Scriptures. God's ceasing on the seventh day of readjustment (Gen. 2:2-3), and the exodus, and the priesthood—these form the special background used. These

terrestrial blessings are found far inferior to the *celestial* gratuity in Christ Jesus, which can *not be traced* in their holy books.

Paul's connection with the Hebrews seems to have been foreshadowed by his visits with them *in the flesh.* He argued with the *Hebrews* in the *synagogue.* Later he *left* the synagogue and spoke for two years in the *school* of Tyrannus in Ephesus, so that those in the whole province of Asia heard the word, *both Jews and Greeks.* When *he sailed past* the city on his next journey, he called the elders to meet him at Miletus, and *closed* his *itinerant* ministry in his farewell address to them. There were both Jews and Greeks present (Ac. 18:19-21, 19:8-10, 20:13-38). Therefore he directed a part of his *Ephesian* epistle to each group separately. *Hebrews* was not God's last word to them. It prepares them for the final and finishing truths of Paul's prison epistles.

JEWS FIRST

Even in the epistle to the Ephesians, which we usually read as if directly addressed to us, *Paul takes the place of a Hebrew.* He acts as he did when he went there in person. First he argued with the Jews (Ac. 18:19). Later, he spoke in the school of Tyrannus (Ac. 19:9). In the opening chapter of Ephesians, if we note carefully, we will see that Paul distinguishes between his fellow Hebrews and the nations by using the *first* personal pronouns (*our, us,* etc.) when referring to Hebrews (verses 3-10) but the *second* person (*you, your,* etc. verse 13) when addressing the aliens. Later, he includes *both,* by adding the *all* to the first person, for *this union into a joint body is the burden of the Ephesian epistle.*

The expectation of the Hebrew believers was much *bettered,* both in *kind* and *degree.* What they expected to be in the *terrestrial* sphere will be theirs among the *celestials.* Their elevation in space also implies superiority in power and glory. The believers of other nations

had no such background, and had far less claim on any such a destiny. Herein lies the superior richness of the *grace* which comes to them in Christ Jesus. Notwithstanding this dark background, believers among the nations receive the *same* seal as the Hebrews. They receive an earnest of the *same* allotment, hence will enjoy the *same* blessings as the erstwhile Hebrews.

PLACE OF HEBREWS

When I first began to study the book of Hebrews seriously, I was among the so-called "Plymouth Brethren," from whom the fundamentalists seem to have taken most of their teaching later on. They laid great emphasis on "the eternal security of the believer," which I very much wished to accept. But I did not desire to learn it from them, but from the Scriptures direct. So I searched my Bible, and found considerable basis for the doctrine, but not in the same words that they used. Nevertheless there were also some powerful passages that seemed to deny it, especially in the book of Hebrews. The fact that they were in a book written to the Hebrews did not impress me, for one of our mottoes was "All the Word of God for all the people of God." This sounds very good, yet may be most misleading when it is used to oppose the correct cutting of the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).

Of the passages in Hebrews which distressed me, one was in the third chapter, sixth verse: "Christ . . . whose house we are, that is, *if* we should be retaining the boldness and the glorying of the expectation confirmed unto the consummation . . ." Another was, "Beware, brethren, lest at some time there shall be in anyone of you a wicked heart of unbelief, in withdrawing from the living God," (3:12). According to these, the "security of the believer" depended largely on his own boldness and glorying and expecting, and, I am thankful to say, I lacked confidence in my own ability to do this. So, frankly, I

was not too sure that some others, who believed in "eternal security," could stand this test.

But the worst passage, it seemed to me, was in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, verses four to six: "For it is *impossible* for those once enlightened, besides tasting the celestial gratuity and becoming partakers of holy spirit, and tasting the ideal declaration of God, besides the powerful deeds of the impending eon, and *falling aside, to be renewing them again to repentance*..." In our creed—beg pardon, we claimed that we had no creed!—repentance was the very first essential to salvation, so there seemed to be no hope for such a case. How could there be any certainty, not to say eternal security, for *any* believer? But I felt and hoped that this could be "explained" in some way.

The position of a Hebrew at that time was very different from ours today. Many had gone through a pentecostal experience, and had tasted the powerful deeds of the impending eon. These had led them to repent. But I had been saved by grace and faith alone (though I did not realize it then), so could not fall aside or renew an experience I had not had. We should always remember that this epistle was written to those who had not yet fully entered into the grace of Paul's epistles. They had not left the word dealing with the rudiments of Christ, or gone on to maturity. They had not disrupted their foundation of repentance from dead works (Hb. 6:1).

BORN AGAIN

As I was becoming acquainted with the Greek, I looked up our pet passages to see how they read in the original. One of their special quotations was, "Ye must be born again" (Jn. 3:7). I was struck by the fact that *Ye,* in Greek as in English, was *plural,* so could not be confined to Nicodemus, but included all Israel. I mentioned this to a brother, but he vehemently insisted that *Ye* in *English,* is singular! What could I say? So I replied,

"*That,* certainly, is *very* singular!" But it marked me as a heretic, and I was no longer allowed to preach or teach, or to sit in the "circle," with the saints, but had to sit back and hold my tongue, with the sinners.

CIRCUMCISION WRITING

Further study showed me that the "gospel" of John was for Israel, not for us, and that led me to differentiate between all of the Circumcision writings and Paul's epistles, so that these passages no longer disturbed me. All except Hebrews. So I felt compelled to group it with the Circumcision writings even if it differed from them, especially with James, radically, yet had much in common with Pauline truth. Where could I place it? I could not include it in Paul's epistles, for his name was not on it, and many passages seemed to disagree. Yet it clashed even more with James, especially on the vital subject of *faith.* It seemed at odds with all the other epistles. But its title, Hebrews, seemed to associate it with the Circumcision writings.

WHO ARE HEBREWS

Hebrews *seems* to have been written to the descendants of Abram, the *Hebrew,* according to the *flesh,* to whose physical fathers the prophets had spoken, who had a divine background. They were the custodians of the sacred oracles. It differs radically from Paul's early letters, which were *not* written to all the members of the other nations, but only to the *saints* among them (Ro. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:2, 2 Co. 1:1). In Israel, however, in a sense, all were holy, or saints, due to their special relation to Ieue, Who was their exclusive Alueim, and this position was not taken from them until the very end of the book of Acts. This must be kept in mind in studying Hebrews, for it solves many difficulties.

What place shall we give Hebrews in the Divine library, now that we know that it was first penned for

the Hebrew section of the *un*-joined body? Paul wrote Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans for the non-Hebrew, or national section of the unjoined body. These not only bring us the truth by instalments, but need adjustments and changes to accord with the final revelation in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, and Paul's personal epistles sent from Rome. So it is with Hebrews also. For the star seed of Abram in *Israel* it contains much revolutionary teaching in contrast with their ancient revelation, which will help them to bridge the gap between it and present truth.

In the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians we are clearly told that the period before Paul's imprisonment was one of *im*maturity and *change*. Much of that which they had was to be discarded when maturity should arrive. We may place Hebrews in the corresponding class for Hebrew believers. There is much in Paul's earlier epistles which cannot be applied directly to Hebrews, even as there are things in Hebrews which the nations could not apply to themselves. Both have to do with the *dis*jointed sections of the body. Now, however, that they have been joined, the final revelation in the perfection epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, and Paul's personal letters apply equally to both.

INTIMIDATION

The Jewish believers in the latter part of the Acts period, both those called by severed Barnabas, and Saul (who became Paul), who evangelized the nations, were dominated by James, the fleshly brother of Jesus, and his followers in Jerusalem. This is especially clear in Paul's epistle to the Galatians, who had been enslaved by the emissaries of James. Even *Cephas,* the leading apostle of them all, was *intimidated.* More than that, *Barnabas* was *led away* (Gal. 2:12-13). Why, Paul himself was sufficiently intimidated to distribute the very decrees that he later denounced (Ac. 15:29, Eph. 2:15).

Mark was so timid that he *left* Paul right after Sergius Paul, the first gentile in the present ecclesia, was called.

WITH-HAVERS

Before the *joint* body was revealed, we find a preliminary form of the same idea in Hebrews and Corinthians. In 1 Co. 10:17 we read, "we, who are many, are one bread, one *body,* for all are *partaking* of the one bread." In Hebrews we read that they had become *partakers* of holy spirit (6:4), and *partners* of Christ (3:14), Who, however, was anointed with the oil of exultation beyond His *partners* of a *celestial* calling (1:9, 3:1). Here is a spiritual union with Christ among the celestials which goes far beyond anything found in the other Circumcision epistles, and which fully prepares them for the final revelation in Ephesians and the joint body of the secret. It corresponds closely with what believers of the nations have in Corinthians.

CELESTIAL PARTNERS

The first section of Hebrews is concerned with the glories of God's Son, the second with those of His brethren who are *partners* of a *celestial* calling. This identifies them with that Hebrew company which later was united with the believers among the nations to form the "joint body" of today. The word *partner,* or *partaker,* indicates an association that is not nearly so vital as the unity of the members of a human body. It is used of the messengers (1:9), of the seed of Abraham (2:14), and of a tribe (7:13), and of their reception of the holy spirit (6:4). So long as they had a standing in the flesh, which united them with the physical seed of Abraham, they could not be joined by God's spirit to Christ and to the saints among the nations so as to form the body of Christ.

FOUR BODIES IN ACTS

During the ministry of Christ in Israel He divided the

one nation into *two* different, antagonistic bodies, those who did not accept Him and His teaching, and those who believed in His name and came together in one place on the day of pentecost (Ac. 2:44). These two bodies continued until Barnabas and Saul (Paul) were *severed,* from them by the spirit for a special work (Ac. 13:2), then there were *three.* But, when Paul preached the evangel to Sergius Paul, an uncircumcised alien, John Mark left him, and, with Barnabas, formed a separate *Hebrew* body with a celestial destiny, thus making *four.* These continued until the close of Acts.

THREE BODIES DISAPPEAR

At about the end of Acts *three* of the four bodies disappeared. The Hebrew *nation* (Hb. *gui* BODY) was dispersed by the Romans, so vanished as such in the *dispersion* among the other nations (Ja. 1:1). Then there were *three.* When the chosen expatriates, believers who looked for the kingdom, were dispersed, they disappeared as a body (1 Pt. 1:1). Then there were *two.* In Ephesians the Hebrew body which was severed from the kingdom believers under the ministry of Barnabas and Mark, which received the "better, celestial" truth set forth in the epistle to the Hebrews, was *joined* with the body gathered under Paul's ministry. So now there is only *one.*

HEBREWS IN EPHESIANS

The book of Hebrews raises a number of important questions. Shall believing Hebrews today *confine* themselves to the book of Hebrews, seeing that it was written to and for them as such? Paul's epistles which were written before Ephesians contain much truth for us today, but they also speak of some things that belong to their state of minority, which cannot be applied now. So also, there are passages in Hebrews which no longer fit. The most important change is due to the fact that it was written to members of the chosen nation, so that

those of other nations can hardly place themselves in their position. God had spoken to *their* forefathers in the flesh, so that a large part of the epistle consists of quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. The nations to whom Paul wrote his earlier letters had no such background.

THE SCOPE OF ACTS

One of the main keys to the book of Acts is the fact that it is a continuation of Luke's account of our Lord's ministry, and therefore the pardon of sins in Christ's name was to be heralded to *all* the *nations* (Lu. 24:47). In the same way it seems clear that, in the second half, when John Mark comes upon the stage as a servant, or deputy, the scope is enlarged to include the *entire creation,* as in his account (Mk. 16:15). His real name was John (Will-be-GRACious), but he is given the stage name of Mark (Timid) to correspond to the character that he represents, that is, the believers among the Circumcision who were called through Barnabas and Paul, of which he may have been the first and the foremost.

THE JOINT BODY

At first *both* Barnabas and Saul were severed *together* from the apostles of the Kingdom (Ac. 13:1-5). They formed, as it were, the nucleus of a new body. In the synagogue at Salamis began the formation of a special body of believers composed of Barnabas, John Mark, Saul of Tarsus, and other Hebrews. Yet, soon after, when Saul's name was changed to Paul, and the heathen proconsul Sergius Paul, the first one among the nations, was added to this body, making it *temporarily a joint body,* then Israel was set aside in the person of Elymas, and Mark not only broke the joint (Ac. 13:13), but Barnabas also split from Paul on account of it (Ac. 15:39). Then began the *two dis*joined bodies which later were brought together again.

The particular part that the epistle to the Hebrews

plays in the divine library may be summed up as follows: Corresponding to Paul's pre-prison epistles for the saints among the nations, which prepared them for the spiritual, celestial place and portion in the present secret administration, it was written to those saints in Israel who believed in Christ Jesus, and prepared them for a celestial place and portion, so that, as a body which no longer claims the physical prerogatives of Israel, it can be joined to the one joint body of Christ, which is the highest expression of God's grace and glory in the eonian times.

BARNABAS

We hear comparatively little of Barnabas after this, but Paul's five references to him in his epistles are most instructive in this connection. When defending his "rights" to the Corinthians, he associates himself with Barnabas in a special way. He boasted because he had brought the evangel to them *without expense,* even though the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas, along with their wives, were evidently supported. He makes an exception of himself *and Barnabas,* who evidently held with him in this matter, and worked for a living. Barnabas differed from and exceeded the Circumcision in preaching a consolatory evangel, and in *practicing* the *grace* that he preached (1 Co. 9:4-7), even as the message that he had was more gracious than theirs.

When Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem in order to submit the evangel for the nations to the apostles, Paul took along Titus, who was a Greek, but Barnabas did not take anyone of his converts with him, for they were Hebrews, against whom the circumcision apostles could have no objection (Ga. 2:1). It is evident from this that the believers among the nations to whom Paul wrote were hardly tolerated, while those with Barnabas, being fellow Hebrews, did not arouse opposition, although they, like Barnabas himself, were *severed* from the king-

dom believers. So there were two bodies of believers, though separated by their *physical* standing, who enjoyed a faith and future distinct from that of the kingdom believers in Israel (Ga. 2:11-16).

BARNABAS THE LEVITE

As Barnabas was a Levite, his case helps to clarify the question of clerical support, though, of course, the clerics of today are not under law, and are not always supported by the government, as in Israel. Those who are announcing the evangel are to be living of the evangel. If we leave out the possibility that they are *not* announcing the true evangel, or do *not* even know it, then *they have a right* to their salary. But it is not *ideal,* and they have the *privilege* of placing the evangel without expense, so as not to use up their authority in the evangel. But, alas! It seems impossible to retain the true grace of the evangel if it is sold for a price, as it is today (1 Cor. 9:13-18).

MARK

The last mention of Barnabas' name is most suggestive and helpful (Col. 4:10). It is associated with Mark, the one who started the *severance* into two bodies by deserting Paul when Sergius Paul, the first member of the body of Christ among the nations, was called. Mark is now with Paul and sends greetings to the Colossians, who had received directions that if he should come to them, to receive him. But why was this necessary? Is it not clear that, up to this time, Mark, along with Barnabas, had *not* been received by them? *But now the two bodies are joined!* Probably, Jerusalem had been destroyed, and with it all the Circumcision believers except those like Mark, who had been associated with Barnabas. After Ephesians was written to *both* bodies, there is only *one joint* body.

The Circumcision apostles, James, Cephas and John,

did not act in good faith when they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, for they were afraid of James, or Jacob, the Lord's brother according to the flesh. *Even Barnabas severed* himself from the saints of the nations, and the rest of the Jews in Antioch were carried along with him, so that Paul had to correct Cephas in front of them all (Gal. 2:13). This shows clearly that Barnabas and his friends were still so concerned with their fleshly position as Hebrews that there were *two* distinct bodies, based on this alone, although both were severed from the Circumcision apostles by much higher revelations.

BARNABAS DISAPPEARS

At the last, where is Barnabas? Why did he not send greetings? Why is he not with Mark? They seemed so inseparable in the past that, if he were still alive, Mark would be with him, especially as he would be well along in years by this time, and needing his help. Now, however, that the two bodies are joined, his ministry is no longer needed. Indeed, he might be a hindrance. Mark, however, was one of the few fellow workers of the Circumcision who became a solace to Paul. The two bodies are joined! The fleshly circumcision section has disappeared, for flesh no longer is recognized. Only a few, in number, of the Hebrews seem to have been reached by Paul's evangel. And so it is today. The great body of Jews are not only unbelievers, but antagonistic to an evangel that takes in all nations and ignores their fleshly superiority. A.E.K.

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LOT AND ABRAHAM

ABRAHAM, who lived at some distance from Sodom, was consulted as to its doom. Lot, who lived within its confines, was unaware of its impending destruction. So it is today. We, who have been enlightened by fellowship with God through His Word, are well aware of the divine indignation which may destroy the world at any time. We will not need to leave, like Lot, however, for we must be caught away before His wrath arrives. But others, like Lot, who live in its midst, do not realize the depth of its degradation, or dread its descending doom, except at the hand of man himself and his inventions. Lot chose to dwell within the walls of the Sodomites, descendants of the cursed Canaan, who occupied the land promised to Abram.

It is worthwhile to trace the life of Lot before he came to live in Sodom, and mark its contrasts with that of Abram. Lot had a good start. His father was Abram's brother, Haran. Although Abram was told to go *from* his kindred and *from* his father's house, when he went to the land of promise, nevertheless Lot, his brother's son, took it upon himself to go along (Gn. 12:1-4). But, when they were in the land, their two herds increased so much that there came to be contention between their graziers. Abram gave Lot his choice, and he selected the garden-like district of the basin of Sodom and Gomorrah (13:8-11), and dwelt in one of their cities. While there, he was captured by the confederate kings,

yet Abram rescued him. Although he was tormented by the lawless acts of the people, he took his place in the gate as one of their elders. So, step by step, Lot had gratified the desires of his soul, and stifled the struggles of his spirit. As a result, he lost all, and became involved in a serious sin like that of the Sodomites, and sired nations which opposed the seed of Abraham.

From the tenor of Abraham's intercession, we can see how like it was to modern ideas, and how far short of the Subjector's purpose. Since Adam sinned, *none* are really righteous, and since Christ died, *all* will become just. Abraham's theology was fractional. If there were fifty righteous, he thought their comparative righteousness would outweigh the wickedness of the rest. It was a good opportunity to teach Abraham the great truth that Ieue's ways are not as man's ways. In a city like Sodom, the judges should deal with the worst criminals against their laws, but they could not deal with all, even if they were guilty. So Ieue agrees that He will bear with all if there are fifty so-called righteous.

We, who live in the last days of this administration, find ourselves in a position in regard to the world about us much like Abraham in regard to Sodom and Gomorrah. As these cities were doomed to destruction, so with the world in which we live. Thus it may be exceedingly instructive and helpful to consider the whole event, especially the discussion Abraham had with Ieue. From the human side, his intercession is quite commendable, even if it shows his lack of insight into God's plans and operations, and should help us to a closer appreciation of them than Abraham possessed. Then as now, the believers were saved by being *called out*. We cannot keep the judgment from overtaking the world, no matter how hard we persevere in prayer, but we ourselves will be saved because we believe, and will respond to His call to come out, at His advent.

Abraham realized that there might not be as many

righteous ones as he supposed. So he kept on lowering the number by fives and tens, from fifty to forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty to ten—one-fifth of the fifty with which he started. Evidently Abraham thought that there must be at least ten, and that any less than this would have to suffer the fate of the rest—which would certainly not be just. As a matter of fact, there were only *four,* Lot with his wife and daughters. Because of their comparative righteousness Ieue *spared* them (19:16). But *they did not save the city. Yet Ieue saved them.* Even they were not saved by their *own* righteousness, but by *believing* the messengers of doom, and leaving the city. This is the divine method of salvation during the eons. *After* that *all* will be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).

First, however, let us look at the whole occurrence from the divine standpoint, uninfluenced by human feelings and historical facts. How can we do this? By simply noting what occurred *in the light of the consummation.* Whatever Ieue Alueim does is in perfect accord with all of His other perfections, His love, His justice, His truth, as well as the welfare of His creatures. Yet these attributes are in perfect balance. He does not display His love at the expense of His justice, for both are essential, one to the other, especially to their display. In the end they lead to, and prepare for, His grand goal, when the final fruit of his operations will be perfect and perpetual happiness.

FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

Viewed in this light, we are assured that the destruction of all the cities in the basin, with the deliverance of Lot and his two daughters, was the only wise, just and loving thing to do at that juncture. Abraham did not know of God's ultimate, nor the path leading up to it, so he erred in thinking a righteous minority could save all the rest, and that the size of this group mattered. He did not realize that "*all* sinned and are wanting of the

glory of God'' (Ro. 3:23). Lot's comparative righteousness was powerless to deal with the corruption of Sodom. It was his faith that constituted his righteousness, even as it did Abram's, and does ours today. Those of his daughters who had married, along with their husbands did not believe, so were not saved.

ALL SAVED

The lesson taught by Sodom and Gomorrah was especially intended for the nation of Israel, so that it would keep the way of Ieue, to do judgment and justice (18:19). There always was a comparatively righteous remnant in it, even in the days of Elijah, who thought himself the only one left, when there were still seven thousand (1 Ki. 19:14, 18). But salvation is not by minorities or majorities, but by God and His Anointed. Many in Israel followed our Lord when He was on earth, and his apostles, when He was roused, yet that did not save the *nation.* It was set aside. In the coming kingdom *all* Israel will be saved (Ro. 11:26). And, in the consummation, *all* humanity will be delivered and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Even Sodom and Gomorrah shall return to their former estate (Ez. 16:55).

Had Abraham known all this, he probably would not have executed judgment (18:25). There are doubtless many since then who secretly agree with him. Good people (like themselves!) should not be judged at all! But the Judge of all did not merely have in mind the fate of these cities but used their doom for the welfare of innumerable others. Sodom and Gomorrah are, in His course of instruction, intended as an *example.* By their ultra-prostitution and coming away after other flesh, they are lying before us, a *specimen,* experiencing the *justice* of fire eonian (Jd. 7). Again and again was Israel pointed back to them, for they even exceeded their iniquities (Dt. 29:23, 32:32, etc.)

Moses threatened the sons of Israel with a fate like

that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, if they turn away from Ieue, their Alueim, and served the alueim of the nations (Dt. 29:18-29). Isaiah commences his long prophecy by comparing Israel with these cities, thus:

9 Unless Ieue of hosts reserves for us as a few survivors,
As Sodom were we become, And to Gomorrah were we like.
10 Hear the word of Ieue, captains of [F]Sodom!
[C]Give [A]ear to the law of our Alueim, people of [F]Gomorrah!
(Is. 1:9-10)

In his denunciation of Babylon he says:

19 And it [B]comes that Babylon, the stateliest of kingdoms,
The beauty, the pomp of the Chaldeans,
Is as the over-turning by the Alueim of Sodom and Gomorrah.
(Is. 13:19)

Jeremiah compares the prophets in Jerusalem to these adulterous cities, as follows:

They become to Me, all of them like Sodom,
And its dwellers as Gomorrah. (Jr. 23:14)

Jeremiah also threatens Babylon with a fate similar to these cities (Jr. 50:40). And so it has been for many centuries already.

Ezekiel, however, not only compares Jerusalem with Samaria and Sodom, but predicts the reversal of their captivity and the return to their former state (Ez. 16: 53-56).

In Amos Ieue complains that He had overturned some as Alueim had overturned Sodom and Gomorrah, yet they do not return to Him (Am. 4:11).

In Zephaniah Moab is said to be becoming as Sodom, and the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah (Zeph. 2:9).

In later revelation, also, it is used as a well-known example. Our Lord, when He sent out His apostles, told them that, "whosoever should not be receiving you, nor yet be hearing your words, coming outside of that house or city, or village, shake off the dust from your feet. Verily, I am saying to you, More tolerable will it be for the land of Sodom and the land of Gomorrah in the day of

judging, than for that city'' (Mt. 10:14-15. See Mk. 6:11).

In Romans Paul quotes Isaiah's words concerning the sons of Israel, showing that, as in the case of Lot, a residue will be saved out of Israel (Rom. 9:29).

Peter, also, refers to Sodom and Gomorrah as an example for those about to be irreverent, as well as to the rescue of Lot (2 Pt. 2:6-7).

Thus we see how large a place is given to the fate of these cities in the Scriptures. Almost as much as to Noah and the deluge.

MERCY ON ALL

Some, reading the popular versions, suppose that Sodom and Gomorrah are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jd. 7). If that were the case, then all lovers of justice should agree that the Judge of the entire earth is Himself utterly unjust. First of all He locked *all* up in stubbornness (Ro. 11:32). Then He laid a special curse on Canaan and the Canaanites, to whom these cities belonged. As a result of this, and the urge of their flesh through indwelling sin, they indulged in abominable excesses. With such a background and environment, who could escape pollution? Thank God, even the inhabitants of these cities are included in His great purpose to have mercy on *all* (Ro. 11:32).

JUST LOT

Although Ieue said, ''Descend will *I* and see'' (Gn. 18:21), He remained behind with Abraham, while the two messengers went on to Lot in Sodom. Lot was a *just* man, and was ''harried by the behaviour of the dissolute in their wantonness, (for the *just* man dwelling among them, in observing and hearing from day to day, tormented his just soul by their lawless acts)'' (2 Pt. 2:7-8). So he was saved, but he was not in fellowship with Ieue, as Abraham was. Instead of coming Himself to Lot, Ieue sent His messengers. Lot, instead of being an intercessor for Sodom, like Abraham, fails to save even his

sons-in-law, and loses all his own property and becomes the incestuous progenitor of idolatrous nations which were at enmity with the people of promise.

WALLS

Abraham lived in a tent, without any defenses to insure his security. In contrast, Lot lived in a city with walls and a gateway, built to insure the safety of those within. Yet Abraham was safe in Ieue's keeping, and Lot was in direst danger from His wrath. Moreover, the city gateway, which is first mentioned here, was the place of fellowship and of judgment. It was a spacious room with vaulted entrances and seats where the elders sat and discussed the affairs of the city and dealt out justice. Abraham had fellowship with Ieue, which was a source of joy and satisfaction. Lot, however, was disturbed and vexed by his contacts with the Sodomites, and in place of justice there was wrong and riot.

The reception given by Lot to the two messengers was much like that which Abram gave the three. Yet Lot had risen in the world, so that he sat in the gate of Sodom, the place of honor. But the messengers were not impressed by this. They had responded cheerfully to Abram's invitation, but now they refuse Lot's hospitality. They did not wish to have fellowship with him. Indeed, it was not on his account that they had come to warn him. We read that, as Ieue Alueim wrecks all the cities of the basin, remembering also is Alueim *Abraham,* and sending Lot from the midst (19:29). It was due to Abraham's intercession that Lot was warned. Lot did not have nearly as high a place in Ieue's regard as he had in Sodom's. When a believer accepts the honors of men, he thereby forfeits those which come from God alone.

CALLING

As we also are among those who have been *called,* a special interest for us lies in the *call* of Lot. First of

all, let us note that none were saved except those called by the messengers. Lot tried to call his sons-in-law, but it was not what old theologians called an "effectual" call. But those of us who have tried to save some of our relatives will understand how he was received. If God does not call, no one else can. The very earnestness and urgency of Lot made him appear ridiculous. Just imagine, they had lived in this place all their lives, and not even a meteor had fallen. Now, without any cause, fire and sulphur were to utterly destroy them! They thought that Lot was insane, so they took it as a joke.

The contrast between the response of the messengers to Abraham's invitation to partake of his hospitality, and their reluctance to enter the house of Lot, is very suggestive. They gladly accepted Abraham's proposal to refresh themselves, and brought him the glad news that the long-promised heir would shortly be born. What rejoicing they must have left behind! At last a definite date had been fixed for the greatest event in Abram's life!

LOT ENTERTAINS

When the messengers entered Sodom they had a very different message to deliver, a most unwelcome and fearful threat of disaster and doom, which would be the very reverse of repayment for any favors they might receive. So they determined to lodge in the square. It took excessive urging to get them into Lot's house. Yet they finally consented to go, for in the East, it might be construed as an unforgivable insult to refuse such hospitality. So Lot had the high privilege of entertaining them, and he made a feast in their honor. But they could get no rest in a city so far gone in wickedness and immorality.

Before they could lie down, the Sodomites fully exposed the extent and depth of their depravity. Abraham felt sure that there would at least be ten righteous. Now it turns out that young and old, from the outmost

parts come together to do one of the most immoral and degraded deeds that a human can commit, and this against strangers who were their guests. Even Lot tried to shelter those under his roof by counter concessions which are shocking in the extreme. His morals had been contaminated by contact with this sinful city also. Only the superhuman craft of the messenger was able to shield them from the lust of the Sodomites.

THE MOB

But Lot's pride must have received a severe shock. He had a seat in the gateway as a judge, possibly because of the size of his flocks, not because of his character and mature wisdom. Now that he seeks to act as a judge, and condemns their iniquitous proposals, they remind him that he is only a sojourner, and has no right to rule over them. Then they even threaten him with the fate they had intended for his guests, so that the messengers had to intervene and bring Lot back into the house. Then they disabled the mob by means of dazzlings. One who has this cannot see anything but flashes of light, which make it impossible to recognize objects. It is very disconcerting and tiring, and they finally gave up trying to enter Lot's house.

Lot seems to have struck deep roots in Sodom, for some of his daughters had married men of the city. The messengers sent him to bring these forth, and so save them from impending ruin. But Lot had evidently lost even the respect of his sons-in-law, for they did not take his fearful warning seriously. He does not seem to have had any son, so that all his posterity was cut off except the later incestuous sons by his own daughters. He may have hoped to help the Sodomites by his presence among them. But, alas, it worked in reverse. His daughters had evidently sunk very low morally, by contact with the Sodomites, before they could make him drunk enough to father their sons. Such is the fate of

faith when it is divorced from practice. The honors of the world may lead to disaster.

ZOAR, INFERIOR

In the morning, when the rain of fire and sulphur was due, Lot himself dallied so long that the mortals took the four to be rescued by their hands and brought them outside of the city. Even then, though warned to flee to higher ground, outside the basin, on the mountain which was on its edge, and reach a place above the sphere of destruction, and depend on Ieue alone for protection, Lot begs to enter another city, inferior to Sodom, so not as good a shelter even as it might have been.

Lot's previous conduct had shown that his faith was by no means pure, but sadly mixed with his own devices. He had, indeed, come out with Abram, but he had no promise on which to base it, as Abram had. Then, when he had to part with Abram, he did not insist that Abram have the best, as was fitting, and depend on Ieue's blessing, but chose his portion by sight. This mixture of sight with faith continued even in his salvation, which was not a gracious one, by faith alone, but depended on his leaving the city and walking toward the mountains, and not looking back. It seems as if the messengers almost had to drag them forth at the very last.

LOT'S WIFE

Once more, in the future, there will be a salvation similar to this when the Son of Mankind will be unveiled (Lu. 17:28-33). Not only a small basin near the Dead Sea will be destroyed for its wickedness, but the whole earth will be judged by sore judgments when the Son of Mankind is unveiled. Then, also, salvation will not depend on faith alone (as it is today) but upon *prompt* obedience. Lot was warned not to look back, but his wife did so, and was turned into a monument of salt

(Gen. 19:26). Then they are warned not to delay an instant, not even to glance back at the destruction. Yet we must note that Lot's wife was not destroyed with the city, and was not turned into a pillar of stone, but a *monument* of *salt.* She was to be *remembered,* for such monuments were erected in memory of the dead, as Rachel's monument (Gn. 35:20). And, being of salt, it was a preservative, for although her faith faltered, she did believe.

MOAB AND AMMON

Although Lot had sought security in Zoar, he soon feared to dwell there, and went up into the mountain where he had been told to go at first (Gn. 19:30). In Zoar his daughters might have found husbands, but when they dwelt in a cave, far from other habitations, the daughters carried with them some of the immoral thinking of the Sodomites. Lot, doubtless, also was affected by their decadent habits and allowed his daughters to make him drunk. And so, from merely being *separated* from Abram on account of his greed for gain and glory, he fathers two breeds of peoples, Moab and Ammon, who were *thorns* in the side of Abram's descendants when they lived in their land.

Moab (*M u ab* FROM-'OUR'-FATHER), as a people inhabited the country east of the Dead Sea. Unlike Lot and Abram, both Moab and Ammon were enemies of the people of promise, and were not to be received into Israel (Dt. 23:3). They were subjugated by David (1 Chr. 18:2), but they broke loose after the death of Ahab. They were always a thorn in the side of Israel. Their idolatry led many astray.

Ammon (*Om m un* People-FROM-er'), the son of the younger daughter of Lot, founded a nation northeast of Moab, his brother, and east of the tribe of Reuben, between the Arnon and the Jabbok, displacing a race of giants (Dt. 2:19, 20, 37). None of them could be received into the congregation of Israel up to the tenth

generation (Dt. 23:3). There was recurrent conflict with Israel. David subjected them, but it was not permanent.

The story of Lot and his incestuous sons is given us in order to show the bitter fruit of a selfish motive. We are not told what prompted him at first, but can discern it in his actions. At first it is hardly apparent. Abram is told to *leave* his relatives, so could not have invited Lot to go along. Lot, unlike Abram, had not leading from the Lord, but, of his own will, imposed his presence on Abram, and prospered. But, when it came to the test, he got the best of Abram and chose to cast his lot with Sodom. This selfish choice clearly revealed his false incentive, and was emphasized by his insubjection to Abram and the Subjector, and by his reliance on earthly possessions rather than on Ieue. These traits were intensified by his double paternity and emerged in the actual enmity of his progeny to the seed of Abram. This should help us to see the importance of a pure motive (2 Tim. 3:10). Like a faulty compass on a ship, a false motive may lead one far astray, and even lead to shipwreck. A.E.K.

ROBERT H. JOHNSON

An earnest follower of deeper truths for over 30 years, Bro. Johnson of Allentown, Pa., passed away at the age of 87, on January 28, 1958. We understand that he had formerly been associated with Pastor Russell. Perhaps it may not be long before we shall all be greeting this dear brother whom we have never met in the flesh, at Christ's appearing. E.O.K.

CHINESE WORK

Our Brother and Sister Abraham Heidal, for many years missionaries to China, and now living in Tacoma, Washington, are able to carry on the work through native missionaries in Formosa, and have two broadcasts in the Chinese language, which, we understand, can be heard on the mainland. Please pray for this work. E.O.K.

HAVE YOU RENEWED YET FOR 1958?

Have you renewed your subscription to Unsearchable Riches yet? Perhaps you can think of others who would benefit from its helpful message. Remember, whenever you are sending in subscriptions, to *indicate* whether they are a *new subscription*, or a *renewal.*

WATER

WATER covered the whole surface of the submerged chaos. Its spiritual import is often brought to our attention in later revelation. Our Lord used it freely in His conversation with the Samaritan woman (Jn. 4:7-15). The water of Jacob's well was absolutely essential to those who drank it to keep on living a little longer. That which it represents, however, was living in the sense that it was life-giving, and vital enough to keep the drinker alive for the eons. That is why it is called the "water of life." (Un. 7:17, 21:6, 22:1, 17).

Water is composed principally of *oxygen,* with about one-eighth as much hydrogen. As will be seen more fully when we consider the "breath of life," oxygen by itself is life-giving, but hydrogen is not. The vital principle in it is modified by another. This also is the case with those who receive only a portion of the spirit of God. When we have the fullness of the spirit, with a celestial body, our life will no longer be diluted with death, and mortality will be swallowed up by life.

THREE FORMS OF WATER

We should have a common name for all the forms of what chemists call H_2O, that is, ice, water and steam, for they are composed of the same elements, at different *temperatures.* When frozen, water is lighter in weight. As ice it floats. When heated, it is lighter still, lighter even than nitrogen and oxygen, or what we call the "air." This can be seen when water boils, and steam *rises.* Even now much of this "water" rises above the

lower atmosphere and floats about as clouds. In the beginning the difference may have been much greater, for vast amounts of the water were probably superheated, like steam, and rose to form a permanent layer above the air. Later this seems to have cooled, for it descended at the deluge.

At present water is most unstable in the atmosphere and on the surface of the earth. This is not only evidenced by refreshing showers, but destructive storms and disastrous cyclones or typhoons. These changes do not all reach the surface. The day before this was written there was a rainfall in the atmosphere many feet above us, while we were sweltering and sweating on the surface of the earth.

WATER'S SPIRITUAL LESSON

Moisture is a marvelous teacher of the interplay of good and evil. Without it we would all shrivel to dust and be blown away. With too much we would all be drowned like the ante-diluvians. In controlled measure it makes life flourish. Its main lesson is clear. It is altogether in the hand of God. We have very little control over it, and must depend on Him. And its blessings are fully appreciated only by contrast with its curses.

THE WATER OF LIFE

We have various kinds of water today, but hardly any which might be called water of *life,* or life-giving water. There is a superabundance of *death*-dealing water. Salt water, either in the vast expanse of the oceans, or in the stagnant pools in the desert, will kill. Even some city water, drugged with chemicals for medication, or to keep it from stagnation, is harmful to some constitutions. Such must buy spring water for drinking, as the city water is drugged. Many would be glad to buy "living" water, if such were on sale. When we come to consider the atmosphere, we will find that, in the earth

before the deluge, when men lived about ten times as long, they may have been able to breath ozonized, vitalized air, and it may be that then, *like carbonated water,* they had ozonized water, for the atmosphere of that day may have carried ozone, or something similar.

WATER AND SPIRITS

Spirits do not seem able to operate in water. In a parable speaking of the spiritual state of Israel, our Lord described them as having an unclean spirit, which, when coming out, passes through *waterless* places, seeking rest, and not finding it (Mt. 12:43-45). They have an aversion to water.

Satan himself will be imprisoned in the submerged chaos, or "abyss," during the thousand years. Spirit beings belong to the heavens, and are able to operate in the atmosphere of the earth. But they are *not* at liberty in water. Our Lord imprisoned a legion of demons by allowing them to enter hogs, whom they could not control, and He sent these headlong into lake Galilee, the last place they wanted to go, for it became their prison.

WATER—IMPURE

What can equal a draught of pure spring water? It is both soul-satisfying and vitalizing. But, alas! Comparatively little of the enormous amount of water on the surface of the earth is fit to drink. The vast oceans contain more water than we can comprehend, yet sailors who are surrounded with it may die of thirst. Most of the earth's surface reminds us of the Ancient Mariner, who cried:

"Water, water everywhere,
But not a drop to drink!"

On land, also, there are regions where men have died, not only for lack of *water,* but because they *did* drink of alkaline water in the desert. Water must be pure to be vitalizing. What a marvelous method God uses! He

purifies it by means of heat, or evaporation. Untold quantities of the purest H_2O ascend to the sky from the sea every minute, and are wafted to the mountains and the high land, to float down the streams and impart its life-giving essence to the plants and animals of the earth. So God brings good out of evil.

WATER—IMPURITIES

In southern California, where this is written, water is far too scarce to support the population, so it is brought from great distances by means of aqueducts. It originates mostly from the snows of the Sierra Nevada (Snow Range) and the Rocky mountains, so is as pure as can be at first, and reaches the city in good condition. But, alas! Then it is doctored by the addition of chemicals, so that many people cannot drink it without damage, but must buy spring water for human consumption. This is a good parable for the water of the Word. It is also delicious and life-giving—*unless* it has been contaminated by the doctors of theology. Concordant research is an effort to preserve its purity by bringing it to all directly from the dews of heaven.

EVIL WATERS

The extraordinary fact that the waters were located *above,* as well as under, the atmosphere, can only be understood in view of the later deluge. Water, in itself, is good, very good, but as a floating menace *above* the atmosphere, it must be reckoned as evil. Even now, when it floats *in* the atmosphere, its dark clouds may pour forth sore and sudden destruction. The best of things, in this eon, may be used as agents of deterioration and death.

THE DELUGE AND BABEL

Why was there a deluge? We have seen some of the physical evils in the period before it. As a result "every

form of the devices of" the human "heart is but evil all its days" (Gen. 6:5) The general idea is that the flood was sent as a *punishment* for this evil. But how unjust would that have been! Only a fraction of the ante-diluvians were still alive. Some of them were very old, but most of them were young. No such judgment could possibly be just. No, indeed! The deluge was a *preparation* or *readjustment* for this, the following eon. So this great evil was sent for our good! Men's lives are much shorter. They soon sought to unite in opposition to God, so He sent more evil, by confusing their language, so that they have been misunderstanding one another ever since.

BEFORE THE DELUGE

It seems evident that the vitalizing power of one or several of the life-sustaining elements, in the atmosphere was much greater before the flood than after it, for the lives of the successors of Adam were about ten times as long as later. The greatest changes were in the water and the air. Part of the water was stored *above* the atmosphere. Could it be that the density of the air, or its oxygen content was greater at that time? We may be sure that there was a difference of some kind in the atmosphere and its moisture contents, for there was as yet no rainbow.

The deluge of Noah's day has brought an excess of *water* on the surface of the earth. It is generally supposed that all this water came from above by rain out of the heavens, during the forty days' rainfall (Gn. 7:11, 12). But that was by no means enough. In the adjustments recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, the atmosphere was placed between two bodies of water, one above, and one below it, even before there was dry land. This water is not only in seas, but is still stored beneath the surface of the soil to a considerable degree. Sometimes, as in artesian wells, it is under sufficient pressure

to force it to the surface. Much of the water for the deluge came from the *springs of the submerged chaos* (A.V. fountains of the great deep). This makes the matter very simple. The crevices in the earth are filled with various fluids such as crude oil, but mostly, with water. The writer once helped to bore down into the submerged chaos. One day, being too tired to pull the drill pipe up, we left it in the earth all night. Next morning water from beneath was flowing out of it! We had reached the submerged chaos!

In the eons to come there will be no impure, death-dealing water, just as there will be no more sea (Rev. 21:1). The springs will be bubbling with life-giving water, free to all (Un. 21:6). Indeed, there will be a whole river of vitalizing water issuing out of the throne of the Lambkin (Un. 22:1). The land will no longer be disintegrating as it is today, and thus pollute the water of the streams. The "Colorado" river is so named because of its *red*dish color, due to the vast amount of soil which it carries from the sides of the Rocky mountains. This must be "settled" out of it before it is pumped to the cities of southern California. Due largely to water, the present earth is a *distintegration,* as it is called in the inspired original. But, in the future, it will be a principle source of life and blessing.

A.E.K.

MRS. ROSILLA DINSDALE

Mrs. Rosilla Dinsdale, widow of William Dinsdale of Brockville, Ontario, Canada, passed away on September 17, 1957 in her ninety-third year, after a two weeks illness. She was a devout student of the Scriptures all her life and for a number of years was actively associated with the International Bible Students Association, but more recently came to know and rejoice greatly in the knowledge of Universal Reconciliation.

Mrs. Dinsdale was the grandaughter of David Fife who introduced the famous "Red Fife Wheat" that became so popular in Western Canada years ago. She was born on the homestead where this wheat was developed, at Peterborough, Ontario.

Besides myself she is survived by another son and daughter who both live in Brockville, Ontario. —SPENCER DINSDALE

RELIGIOUS LEAVEN
(CONTINUED)

The woman hid the leaven in *three* seahs of meal. These can only indicate three distinct spheres of operation. And, as a matter of fact, we find it working in Israel and in the nations and in the saints. It will be clearer if we consider these separately, for the effect varies in each case. This is best seen when we consider their culmination, when the leaven has finished its work. Even the saints have been thoroughly corrupted by it in these last days. God will burn it out with fire in the great affliction which will come upon Israel before the advent of their Messiah. He will pour out His indignation on the nations to destroy it among these also.

DISCIPLES—ISRAEL—NATIONS

We have all three of these represented at the trial of our Lord, and can see how the leaven worked in each class. First of all Judas, a disciple, gives Him up for gain. How many there are like him in these days who betray God's truth for material advantage! The term *traitor,* used of Judas (Lu. 6:16) is applied to some of the men of the last days (2 Tim. 3:4). It seems incredible, but there are Judases among us today. Then we have Peter, who first boldly *de*fends his Lord, but, through lack of faith, rather *of*fends. Such were the disciples. Then we have the chief priests and elders and the Sanhedrin, hypocritically charging Him with their own crime in destroying the Temple of God, and refusing to use the money with which they had bribed Judas.

The nation has sought to prove their innocence ever since. Then there was Pilate, representing the nations. He also hypocritically washes his hands in order to cleanse himself from his great guilt. Both Pilate and his wife were convinced that Christ was a just man, yet the *Jews* persuaded him to commit the most wicked deed of his career in consenting to their demands.

THE SOLDIERS

The soldiers, indeed, treated Him most shamefully, but there was no hypocrisy about them. They openly derided His claims and mocked His pretentions, clothing Him in royal robes and a thorny crown, and a fragile scepter. But the centurion, when he perceived the earthquake and other portents, brave as they were supposed to be, was tremendously afraid, and acknowledged that He was God's Son. Religious hypocrisy is, perhaps, the most deadly leaven there is. There is more hope for the worldly man than the religionist.

A LITTLE LEAVEN

Only a few of the Jews were present at the trial and crucifixion of our Lord, and a less number from among the nations, with only a handful of disciples, and the time was very short. Yet the greatest crisis in human history had come, the touchstone of the eons. Each participant was representative of a class, and all were compelled to expose their hearts in the presence of Him Who was their Sacrificial Saviour. Little did the Jews realize that they, as priest, were doomed to bring the great Sacrifice for all mankind, and that they were also chosen to introduce the hidden leaven into the hearts of all to corrupt them.

THE TRIAL OF JESUS—JUDAS

The wickedness of the woman, Israel, was clearly manifested at the trial of our Lord. It was in the days of unleavened bread, when they had put away all leaven

out of their houses. How horrible is the hypocrisy of the whole proceeding! It begins within the circle of His own disciples, with the fond kiss of Judas. This has become a symbol of the height of hypocrisy. That casual caress, that simple show of affection, so proper and appropriate outwardly, was utterly transformed into one of the most dastardly deeds ever committed. Our Lord's enemies had sought to flatter Him before destroying Him. Yet hitherto His disciples had been true. But since then how many have sold Him for the price of a slave!

JEWS WILL NOT REPENT

The trial of our Lord was so unjust that there has been an insistent demand ever since, that it be reviewed and reversed. Some years ago a Jew roused considerable interest in the matter. Later, several other Jews tried to get the new nation to reopen the trial, but without success. Almost everyone who has read the record is convinced, like Pilate, of its injustice. Only the apostate nation of Israel has hardened its heart, and will not repent. If they did, they would have no excuse for rejecting Him as their Messiah. Only the great affliction which is rapidly approaching, will soften their hearts.

ZIONISM

At first glance Zionism is a most commendable and scriptural movement on the part of the Jews to forward their destiny as predicted in their prophets. In fact, their great future is not only written in the sacred scrolls, but inherent in their very being. Moreover it is God's intention that they once more try their hand at ruling apart from the presence and power of His Christ, and that they should enjoy a temporary and apparent success, for this is the needed background for the time of the end, when their schemes will all be wrecked and they will be finally and fully convinced of their own impotence and arrogance, in supposing that they can

manage without the Messiah Whom Ieue has provided for them.

They have already committed an unpardonable sin, in recognizing and joining the United Nations. Israel is to be *separate* from the other nations and should be their *head.* Their true King is in heaven, and they repudiate Him by their action. Little do they realize that the time is not far distant when these nations will all hate them and seek to destroy them.

BABYLON

The culmination of the parable of the leaven is found at the end of the eon in another secret, the "mystery" of Babylon. Here we have the woman again, and her relation to the nations shows that the leaven has fulfilled its mission, for the golden cup in her hands is brimming with the abominations and uncleanness of the prostitutions of her and the earth (Rev. 17:4). Not only has she corrupted the nations, but she is drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES

The Pharisees were a small, but influential sect in Israel, which seems to have had a very good beginning, soon after the return from exile, in an effort to cling to the exactitude of law. The name probably came from the Hebrew *phrsh,* SPREAD, expound, and is translated "distinctly" in the A.V. of Neh. 8:8: "they read in the book of the law *distinctly.*" But the word does not refer to the enunciation, or sound, but to the *sense.* In the C.V. we have it thus: "And they are reading in the scroll of the law of God, *expounding* it, and making it *intelligible,* and the people *understood* the reading." The people who came back from the deportation no longer spoke Hebrew, but Chaldee, or Aramaic, a different dialect, and the reader had to translate the Hebrew of the law into the Aramaic which they understood. Such readers were the first "pharisees," or expounders.

The Pharisees deemed themselves the champions of the law, the *orthodox* of that day, in contrast to the Sadducees, who reasoned away the resurrection and other truths. Like the orthodox of today, the Pharisees believed largely in themselves instead of God's revelation, and prided themselves in keeping the traditions with which they had incrusted the law, rather than the divine directions themselves. Indeed, they invalidated the word of God because of their traditions (Mt. 15:6). Pretending to be the custodians of God's revelation, they made it void by their additions. But their special sin was their inordinate self-righteousness, which actually did away with all the sacrifices for sin and guilt, so that they needed no Saviour. Seven times our Lord pronounced a woe upon them, calling them hypocrites (Mt. 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29, Lu. 11:44). They strained out a gnat, yet swallowed a camel.

But, like many a modern movement, the leaven of unscriptural *tradition* and self adulation gradually corrupted their expositions, so that, in our Lord's day, they *transgressed* and *repudiated* the precept of God because of these (Mt. 15:3, Mk. 7:9). Israel had a written revelation which needed no human additions, especially when these tended to make men proud instead of revealing their impotence and sinfulness.

The name of the Saducees is Hebrew, and comes from the stem *tzdq*, JUST. They probably were as self-righteous as the Pharisees, but their special leaven lay in their *false teaching,* refusing to believe in spirits and the resurrection (Ac. 23:8). John, the baptist, called both of them a "progeny of vipers" (Mt. 3:7). Our Lord, also, when they asked for a sign, characterized them as "wicked and adulterous," and warned them against their *leaven.* When they did not understand the figure of speech, He explained that He referred to their *teaching* (Mt. 16:1-12).

The Sadducees, thinking that they could show Him

up, asked Him about the woman who had been married to seven brothers in succession, according to the law of Moses (Dt. 25:5), which one would be her husband in the resurrection? He charged them with being deceived, and ignorant of the Scriptures and the power of God, for there is no marriage in the resurrection (Mk. 12:18, Lu. 20:27).

The question of the resurrection was a very sore point with the Sadducees, especially after the Lord Himself had risen, and the apostles heralded His resurrection to the people. They were exasperated, and joined with the priests and officers of the sanctuary in placing them in custody, yet could do nothing worse than to threaten them in case they continued. But they themselves were afraid of the populace, so accomplished nothing (Ac. 4:1-22). Later, when the chief priest and those with him were Sadducees, they jailed the apostles again, but the Lord opened the doors, and sent them to the sanctuary itself to speak to the people. They received a lashing, but rejoiced for the privilege (Ac. 5:17-42). When Paul stood before the Sanhedrin and was gravely mishandled by the chief priest, he skillfully turned their wrath against each other, by claiming to be a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee! They were so vicious that the Roman captain had to rescue him. What a hateful thing religion is, when well leavened!

Religious, political and all other kinds of leaven have so permeated Christendom that, to a spiritual believer it is most unpalatable, and gives us a longing for an unleavened diet. To expose all the leaven that has spoiled the church today would take many volumes, which no one would be able to purchase or to read. Perhaps none of us is entirely free of this evil. Even in Corinth it crept in so that Paul exhorted them to clean out the leaven of evil and wickedness, and keep a perpetual passover with unleavened sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:6-8). A.E.K.

TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS

(Philippians 2:19-30)

Since Paul was bound and could not go to the Philippians himself, in this section of Scripture we find him sending Epaphroditus and he also plans to send Timothy. These are living examples of the love, service and suffering of the present economy. He plans to send Timothy because he has no one else equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of their concerns, for all are seeking their own and not that which concerns Christ Jesus. Timothy was not selfish and thought first of others, putting the service of his Lord first in his life.

Timothy began his service quite young (1 Tim. 4:12), but he won the approval of the brethren in Lystra and Iconium where he lived (Acts 16:2). Paul wrote to him, "Let no one be despising your youth, but become a model for the believers, in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12).

He was weak physically and seems to have been sick often (1 Tim. 5:23). In the earlier part of Paul's career, when he was heralding the kingdom, he would have healed Timothy's infirmities, yet now the kingdom has been set aside and is inactive during this administration. In this economy God uses the weakness of man to accomplish His work. Our blessings now are spiritual, not physical.

Timothy was with Paul from the time Paul was separated from Barnabas, the Levite (Acts 15:36-39, 16:1-3). Paul chose Timothy to work with him and had him circumcised because of the Jews in those places. Timothy represents the weakness of the flesh and the power of the spirit. He, in spirit, begins with this administration, though in flesh he is linked with the earthly people and the kingdom heralding.

Timothy's very name, "Honor God," speaks of service. He probably believed through Paul's teaching and was with Paul on many of his missionary journeys. Later Timothy was sent alone while Paul was bound in Rome.

Although the son of a believing Jewish woman and a Greek father, as to the flesh, in spirit he was the son of Paul (1 Tim. 1:2, 2 Tim. 1:2). In this we should try to fully follow him. Be truly a son of Paul and do not mix his teaching with those of Peter or John or any other of the circumcision apostles or teachers.

Paul wrote to Timothy, "Now you fully follow *me* in my *teaching*, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance,

persecutions, sufferings." Ponder these words! Even their *order* is important. "My *teaching*" comes first. Oh, if the saints of today would only follow Paul's teaching, then they would grasp his motive and purpose. Our faith would be founded securely on the truth for today. Patience, love and endurance would be developed, and, of course, persecution and suffering would follow, but we could rejoice in that suffering, knowing that we have a part in the work of the present economy and that only thus can we render acceptable service to our Lord.

In this same chapter (2 Tim. 3:14), Paul's injunction to Timothy is, "Now you be remaining in what you learned and verified, being aware from whom you learned it." Even during Paul's lifetime, many were turning away from him (2 Tim. 1:15). How much more is this true of the churches of today. Most of their teaching is from the circumcision truth. They follow Peter and ignore God's separation of Paul to the work of teaching the gentiles (Acts 13:1-4, Gal. 2:7-10).

Again Paul writes of Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17), "Therefore I send you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will be reminding you *of my ways, which are in Christ Jesus.*" Paul writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:10-11), "Now if Timothy should be coming, look to it that he should be with you without fear, for he is working at the work of the Lord, as I also. Let no one be scorning him." Timothy was timid. Perhaps his timidity was caused in part by his physical condition. Paul writes to him, "For God gives us not a spirit of timidity but of power and love and sanity." Surely nothing could give a spirit of power and love and sanity as Paul's message that God is reconciling the universe to Himself (Col. 1:20), and that He is working all things according to the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11).

Paul says again of Timothy, "As a child with a father he slaves with me for the evangel." Child—father, slave—master, how clearly these words give us the relation that should exist between us and Paul. We should follow his teaching and his ways which are in Christ Jesus.

EPAPHRODITUS—CHARMING

How charming indeed is this story of the tender love of Paul, Epaphroditus, and the Philippians. Epaphroditus was commissioned by the Philippians to carry their present to Paul. A seemingly common, everyday sort of task, but by his devotion and love he transformed it into a labor truly worthy of a servant of God. He risked his health and his very life. He knew that the time of healing was past and that whatever suffering he met must be borne.

Epaphroditus is given five titles. These are brother, worker, soldier, apostle and minister (Phil. 2:25). The number five denotes weakness so it is very appropriate to Epaphroditus' service. Brother—He belonged to the same "family" as Paul. This is very necessary in this present economy to give accept-

able service. Worker—Epaphroditus did nothing spectacular, he was given a common everyday sort of task, yet by risking his soul and accomplishing his job even though beset by suffering, it becomes a service that is worthy of emulation. Soldier—We often associate the term soldier with the glamour of a uniform, but the boys who have been in the recent wars know that a soldier's career is made up of devotion to duty, obedience, and suffering. Rain, freezing weather, scarcity of food and clothing and lack of all normal comforts make up the soldier's life. This is the side that pictures the work of the Lord: devotion and suffering (2 Tim. 2:3). Apostle—This word really means commissioner. Epaphroditus was an apostle to the Philippians. As such he was carrying out the work assigned to him but he had no authority over their doctrine or conduct as Paul or Timothy might have. He was commissioned to take their offering to Paul. This he did with complete devotion and the tenderest love. Minister—He was Paul's minister. He ministered to Paul's need in conveying the offering. That does not mean that Paul attended his church or listened to his preaching. But he did minister to Paul. Ministering is a public office; something committed to an individual to accomplish. The priests ministered in the temple (Luke 1:3, Heb. 10:11). Public officials are God's ministers (Rom. 13:6). We should study carefully the meaning of words as used in God's Word and distinguish between such meanings and modern use of such terms.

The charm of Epaphroditus' character is revealed in his concern for his fellow workers. He is depressed, not because of his own suffering but because they had heard of that suffering and danger he had gone through and were sorrowing. So Paul is sending him back to them that they may be rejoicing and bids them have him in honor because he had risked his soul for the work of the Lord.

So the study of Timothy and Epaphroditus confirms the great truth that in this administration, God's power is perfected in weakness. Paul, himself, after healing others, endured his splinter in the flesh that God would not remove because it was necessary to accomplish God's great purpose for the present (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Timothy had his infirmity (1 Tim. 5:23), and his timidity. Epaphroditus has his sickness, being near to death.

Let us take these lessons into our hearts and our lives. Suffering evil is a part of God's plan for us. So let us learn patience and faith through the suffering that comes into our lives. Let us commit all things into His hands and trust Him *completely.* L.N.G.

NEW SWEDISH PAMPHLET

A booklet entitled "Wisdom in God's Words" has been published in Swedish. Further information may be had from Ebba Lundborg, Hagagatan 17, Örebro, Sweden. E.O.K.

OVERLAPPING LINKS

The two great divisions of Genesis, as well as the eleven genealogical annals are connected by *overlapping links*. It has been suggested that these are "colophons" or notations put at the *end* of a piece of writing to identify it. This is partly true, but, as we pointed out elsewhere, Hebrew has a special form which *connects* what has been written with what is to follow. This varies greatly, but the first example, which joins the creation section with the following annals, is the clearest example; and reads as follows: "These are the genealogical annals of the heavens and the earth when they were created."

This clearly refers to *both* the preceding account of creation and the following annals, so joins the end of one to the beginning of the other. *Literally*, it refers to the previous creation, which it *figuratively* compares with the following annals. The two things have a likeness as well as a difference. The first section is not confined to the initial act of creation, but includes a further gradual development which may be likened to generation. In this way the two parts are linked together. Similar links occur between the following sections, which vary according to circumstances.

ALMETA N. ROBISON

Death came during the month of January, 1958, in San Fernando, California, to our sister in the Lord, Mrs. F. H. Robison, wife of the late Fredrick H. Robison, one time Editor of The Watch Tower magazine, and author of our book, now out of print, "Are Bride and Body Identical." There was also published by Mrs. Robison, a compilation of some of his other writings, but these, also, are out of print. We shall miss our sister, who had of recent years lived in or near Los Angeles and attended the meetings there. There were no children surviving. We shall look forward to greeting our dear Sister at our Lord's appearing!

E.O.K.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY, 1958
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

CELESTIAL IN HEBREWS

FOREWORD

AS ITS NAME INDICATES, the special mission of our little magazine is to publish the truth concerning this secret administration, especially that of the joint body, in which believers out of both Israel and the nations who are blessed with the same spiritual blessings among the celestials, become a joint body. We already had "the truth of the *one* body," that is, that *many members* constitute the figurative body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13). But we did not fully grasp the Ephesian revelation, that is, that *both bodies* (not many members), those near and those far, are now united, creating the *two* into one *new humanity,* reconciling *both* in one body through the *cross* (Eph. 2:13-16).

Later, when we came to study the terms *heaven* and *celestial* (ON-heavens) more carefully, we were impressed by the fact that the latter concerned only the bodies (1 Cor. 15:40) and blessings (Eph. 1:3) of those in this secret administration. The only exceptions were the negative reference in John 3:12, and those in *Hebrews. There the word occurs more often than in Ephesians!* This led to a closer consideration of its occurrences, as set forth in the following study. We also found that this epistle contained twelve occurrences of the word *better,* far more than any other. These will be presented in a future article.

These studies led to the conviction that the epistle to the Hebrews, while not in the same rank as Paul's perfection epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians,

belongs in the same class as the preparatory epistles, especially first Corinthians, which also deals with celestial blessings, yet in a period of immaturity (1 Cor. 13) or minority, when many, especially physical blessings, were not yet discarded. The fact that the title "Hebrews" recognizes a physical distinction confirms this. Yet the prevalence of the term "celestial" prepares these two epistles for the Ephesian revelation, where all blessing is spiritual and celestial.

I freely acknowledge my former error, and wish to remedy it as much as possible, by means of articles on these themes. I ask the forgiveness and forbearance of my fellow members of the body of Christ, and will not hold it against them if they cannot follow, and hope that the matter will not be magnified. Probably we all are agreed that the joint body is composed of Hebrews as well as others, for physical distinctions are done away with. But the preparatory epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Thessalonians were written by Paul, the apostle to the nations. Could it not be that those Hebrews who are now in the joint body were prepared for it by the epistle addressed to them?

This position has been quite a relief to some of us, who could not harmonize its teaching with either Paul or James. Now we realize that it, not only, like Paul's preparatory epistles, which he wrote to the nations, applies to a period of minority, but was *not* written to the nations but to the *Hebrews*. Consequently the whole background is different, and the approach to the present varies from ours. And now we can see more clearly the argument of Paul in Ephesians, where he unites the body mentioned in Corinthians with the Hebrew saints, for both had a celestial calling.

CELESTIAL IN HEBREWS

The celestials or ON-heavens were not included in the words of Christ to Israel on the earth (Jn. 3:12). His

THE UNIVERSE IN SPACE

BEFORE	SECRET	AFTER
Terrestrial Jn3[12] Concealed Eph3[9] Minority Gal4[3]		Celestial Manifest Col1[26] Maturity 1Cor 13[10]
	CELESTIAL stars Mk 13[25] HEAVEN Greek ☾ ★ ●	1Cor15[40 40 40 48 48 49] Eph1[3 20] 2[6] 3[10] 6[12] Hb3[1] 6[4] 8[5] 9[23] 10[34] 11[16] 12[22] over . . . heavens Eph4[10] higher than. .hvns. Hb7[26] through. .heavens Hb4[14]
	TERRESTRIAL	3
	HEAVENS	
3 heavens	Hebrew ☆	2
	HEAVEN	
Atmosphere	☾ Greek ○	1
	SEE-UP	
	EARTH	
	SUBTERRANEAN Phil 2[10]	

HEAVEN AND HEAVENS

The usage of Hebrew and Greek differs thus: Hebrew always uses the *plural, shm im* PLACES, but it is confined to the *terrestrial* sphere. This was carried over into the Greek by Hebrews, so it was necessary to explain the "celestial" sphere to them by various additions, as the Greek SEE-UP included this sphere, for it is used of the stars as well as the birds. So also in English.

For the heavens in time see the "Divine Calendar."

ministry was restricted to that which they could perceive with their senses, that is, the *terrestrial,* but they had not believed it. So they were not prepared to believe, if He should tell them of that which their physical perceptions could not grasp, that is, the *celestial.* This was the case with his apostles also, for they never alluded to it in their writings. It is found only in Paul's epistles and the book of Hebrews.

All such words, which are absent from divine revela-

tion until after the rejection of Israel, and are used only of the present grace, are of special interest to us, and deserve our best efforts to gain a clear comprehension of their message. So we will go back to the inspired originals and seek to comprehend the meaning and scope of the words *heaven* and *celestial* from their usage in divine revelation, for the latter is literally ON-heaven, so is derived from the former.

In beginning a habitation for humanity, Alueim created, broadly speaking, two conditions of material substance, which are called heaven(s) (Hb. *shm im* PLACES, Gk. *our an os* SEE-UP), and earth (Hb. *artz* EARTH, Gk. *gê*). What is outside of these we call space. As heavens is in the plural, it was formed of layers of gases, while the earth was solid matter. Mankind needs both of these, so lives on the surface of the earth and partakes of its substance for a body of *flesh,* and breathes the air to sustain its *life.* As human languages are disintegrated, since Babel (Gn. 11:7), except Hebrew, we will base our studies on the significance and meaning of heavens and celestial on the one given to Adam at the beginning.

Any ordinary human who looked up into the space above the earth and saw the sun and the moon and the stars would locate them in heaven. But in Genesis (1:15) we do not read of these *bodies* themselves, but of their *light,* which is limited to the *atmospheric* heaven, for they themselves are not visible to humans elsewhere. We cannot see so-called "dark stars" because they do not shine or reflect any light.

In Hebrew, the word heavens is *always* found in the plural, corresponding with its material representation, the tabernacle. The facts discovered by recent research agree with this, for there are *three* distinct layers of gas surrounding the earth, which, like the atmosphere, are held to it by gravity. This should show us how really "scientific" God's revelation is, for popular English

has no such exact usage. These three heavens are held fast to the earth, and are included in the term *terrestrial.* The court and the two holy places entered by the chief priest were "examples" and "representations" of the heavens (Hb. 9:18-26).

Literally, we cannot see anything except by means of the *vibrations* of the *atmosphere,* the lowest heaven (PLACE). We cannot actually see or feel anything outside of that. Even the heat of the sun would be imperceptible without the atmosphere. That is why the divine account speaks of these as *luminaries* in the *atmosphere,* and not as sun or moon or stars in "heaven," as short-sighted men might have done (Gn. 1:15). As the vibrations of sound are slower than those of light, we do not hear a whistle blow until some time after we have seen the steam. This should show us that we cannot really see the celestial bodies themselves, but only their light, long after its vibrations left them, when it has reached the sphere of human sight.

Human languages are based upon the bodily senses, especially sight and sound. They are largely determined by what we can see or hear. This shows that neither Adam nor Moses were the authors of the account of creation in the Scriptures. They could *not see* a plurality of heavens. But the Greek translators, following their own perceptions, could *see* only *one* heaven, so they altered it to the singular (*our an on*). Both of these forms are used in the inspired Greek of later revelation, according to the viewpoint. To agree with God's highest spiritual revelation, dealing with that which the eye did not perceive and the ear did not hear (1 Cor. 2:9), we are introduced to the ON-heavens or celestials, beyond the reach of sight and sounds. This may account for the differing idioms of Hebrew and Greek.

The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Septuagint, or "LXX") is not inspired, yet it may be

very useful in helping us apprehend their differences in the *idiom* of the two languages. This strikes us at the very beginning, for it reads "Makes (does) the Placer the *heaven*" (singular), where the Hebrew has the plural (heaven*s*). But it does use the plural twice, once for *shdi* field or Sufficer (Ps. 68:14), and once in one of the manuscripts of Daniel (4:23A) of a sentinel from the ON-heaven*s*. These two out of so many occurrences only confirm the fact that Greek *idiom,* even when used by Hebrew translators, knew *no plural,* heavens.

HEAVENS OF HEAVENS

Solomon was reckoned as the wisest character in the Hebrew Scriptures, especially as to knowledge of nature (1 Ki. 4:33). When speaking of God's universal immanence, he found no single term in Hebrew to express His presence in the celestial realm, so he sought to give the proper impression by piling the words for the highest heights that he knew on top of each other. Speaking of the temple as too small for the divine presence, he said, "the heavens, *and the heavens of the heavens,* do not contain Him" (2 Chron. 2:6). This, it seems, is the nearest to the idea of a celestial realm, beyond the heavens, that can be found in Hebrew revelation.

INTIMATIONS OF CELESTIAL TRUTH

Celestial truth is not brought before us clearly in God's early revelation. His terrestrial operations seem to monopolize the early Scriptures. To begin with, we read that He created the heavens and the earth. Almost everyone, as we ourselves did, receives the impression that this includes the universe. But later, the *luminaries* are mentioned *as such* only as they *appear in* the heavens, not *above* them (Gn. 1:14). This *illumination* was *made* later, not *created* on the fourth day. The stars are added later, so they apparently were not *created* at that time (Gn. 1:14-16).

The book of Hebrews was not written in Hebrew, but in Greek, yet often refers to the heavens in this restricted way. This is clear from some of the phrases used to remove this restriction. It speaks of the region above them as being reached *through* the heavens (4:14). Christ, as Chief Priest, is *higher* than the heavens (7:26). As a material representation was given to Israel to help them to understand this, we will use it to see if there is any visible hint of that which may be intended by these words.

THROUGH THE HEAVENS

"Having, then, a great Chief Priest, Who has passed *through* the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, we may be holding to the avowal" (Hb. 4:14). No earthly chief priest, serving in the tabernacle or temple, could ever go beyond the holy of holies, which represented the third heaven, the farthest boundary of the terrestrial sphere. None of their priests could go *through* to the cloud above the tabernacle which prefigured the celestial realm. For a Hebrew, this meant a complete severance from the terrestrial sphere for a higher, spiritual realm, *above* God's symbolic habitation on the earth.

HIGHER THAN THE HEAVENS

"For such a chief priest also became *us,* benign, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and coming to be *higher* than the heavens..." (Hb. 7:26). This confirms the previous expression, *through* the heavens, and shows us its *direction.* If the tabernacle represents the heavens, the only thing that was *higher,* was the column of *cloud* by day and *fire* by night (Ex. 13:22). This had a different function than the tabernacle ritual, for the action was all divine, and determined the *course* of the nation as a whole. None of the levitical priesthood could go there, as there was no opening in the tabernacle covering.

As the tabernacle itself represented the three heavens,

what could more aptly suggest the celestial sphere than the pillar of fire by night, or the cloud by day, which was *on* or *above* them? The heavens themselves, which the tabernacle represented, were *on* the earth, so it is perfectly fitting that the celestial regions should be suggested by a luminary above the symbolic heavens. Accordingly, even as Abram's spiritual seed could be shown to him as represented by the stars, so those Hebrews with the celestial calling may now see an early intimation of it in the fiery pillar *above* the tabernacle. But this was beyond their apprehension.

HEAVEN IN GREEK

In the Hebrew Scriptures there is no occurrence of heaven (*shm*) in the singular. To put it in material terms, even the chief priest went through two hallowed places to reach God. But the Greek language was not based on this, so they called heaven *our an os* SEE-UP-, and designated *all* that was visible above them by this simple expression. We read of the flying creatures of heaven (Mt. 6:26), and the stars of heaven (Un. 6:13), even in the Scriptures. So that, as a rule, the word heaven is used in its literal sense of all that we can *see* by looking up. The Greek version reads heaven, not heavens, in Gen. 1:1, 8, 14, etc. The singular form is also used in the inspired Greek text a third of the time.

HEAVENS IN GREEK

But the plural form is often used when the background is Hebrew. Thus we often read of "the kingdom of the heavens" and similar phrases in the Circumcision writings, but comparatively seldom in Paul's epistles to the nations. But when necessary, for the sake of exactness, even Paul finds himself obliged to speak of the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2), in referring to *time.*

This brings us to the idiomatic conclusion that, in Greek (and other human languages), the singular, heaven (SEE-UP), is *un*limited in scope, so is *not confined* to the

three heavens, and that these three are *limited* to the terrestrial sphere about the earth. This may solve many a problem for the reader not acquainted with Greek idiom, or familiar with more than one language. Since Babel they are *disintegrating* (Gn. 11:9).

THE FORCE OF ON-

When the inspired Scriptures need to distinguish that which is *on* the solid *earth,* such as our bodies, from the land itself, it forms a special word by prefixing *epi-* ON-. It is called *epi-geion,* ON-LAND, terrestrial. Likewise, when that which is *on* the heavens is in view, it forms the word *ep-our an i on* ON-heavenly, *celestial.* On page 31 of the Greek Word Elements, the idiomatic usages are given as *at, against, besides, by, in, inasmuch, over, to,* and *upon.*

The expression *celestial,* ON-heavens, is practically confined to the present interval, after Paul and Barnabas had been *severed* from the rest, to Paul's epistles and Hebrews, if we except the single instance when our Lord questions Nicodemus, "If I tell you of the *terrestrial* and you are not believing, how shall you be believing if I should tell you of the *celestial?*" (Jn. 3:12). It seems clear from this question that celestial matters were beyond the range of Ieue's terrestrial people at that time. But it also implies that there would be Hebrews, later, to whom matters celestial could be explained. This is done in the epistle addressed to them.

All of this prepares us to grasp the full significance of the expression, celestial (ON-heavens). Though Greek, it is based on the Hebrew plural "heavens," which is illustrated by the tabernacle. This represents the terrestrial sphere, with which the Hebrew revelation commences and to which it had been confined. It has the same meaning as the phrases *through,* or *higher than* the heavens, and is used only of the saints of this secret administration of transcendent grace.

As the *celestial* calling is especially revealed in Paul's

epistle to the Ephesians as well as in Hebrews, and both *also* speak of the *heavens,* let us see if we can fix the scope of SEE-UPS (heavens) in relation to celestial in Ephesians. May it include *all* that is up, or only the three lower heavens? In 1:10 Christ is to head up *all,* both that *in the heavens* and that on the earth. But it could not be *all* without the ON-SEE-UPS (John 3:12). *Every* kindred in the heavens and on the earth, must also include the celestials. Likewise in 4:10 Christ ascended up *over all of* the heavens, that He should be completing *all.* And 6:9, "in the heavens," speaking of our Master, surely cannot be limited in scope. It must include the ON-heavens, or celestial spheres. So also in Hebrews when the word heaven is used (9:24, 10:34, 12:23, 25, 26). We illustrate this usage by means of the chart on page 99. Modern languages disagree on this point. French uses the plural, like Hebrew, in Genesis 1:1.

THE TERRESTRIAL CALLING

As intimated by our Lord to Nicodemus, Israel had a *terrestrial* calling. Their land and kingdom is associated with the earth and the heavens above it, and that is where they will enjoy the future, after the King has come in glory. The term *terrestrial* is not confined to the solid land with its waters, on whose surface humanity has its home, but includes the gaseous envelopes which surround it, which furnish it with the breath of the living. Hebrew idiom calls these "heavens," especially the lower atmosphere, in which animals live and fly. These are all earth-bound by the force of gravity. This is the "heavens and earth," which were created in a beginning (Gen. 1:1). These are the limits of divine revelation before the present secret administration, as a rule.

ISRAEL'S TERRESTRIAL PLACE

Unlike the non-Israelite part of the joint body, the Hebrews, as a nation, had a definite calling with a glorious *terrestrial* prospect. They not only had been

promised the choicest *physical blessings* in the best *land* in the center of the earth, but also the highest *spiritual* blessings, the worship of Ieue Alueim, Who dwelt in their midst and revealed Himself through the Sacred Scriptures. Besides, they were *promised* the highest political honors, as rulers over the whole earth, under their Messiah, in the future kingdom.

THE TIME

But, though they had been promised the leading earthly place in the *future*, in Christ's day they were as far from it as they could get. They had lost their sovereignty and were ruled by an alien world dominion. Not only that, but they were driven out of their land, and became fugitives among the other nations. It is altogether contrary to God's glorious grace to *sell* the celestial calling, or use it as *compensation* for previous success. Israelites will not be called above at the end of the kingdom era, after they have reigned successfully over the other nations. Only a chosen body of Hebrews are called during their worst failure, when they are not only without a king, but driven from their heritage, persecuted aliens among the hated gentiles.

THE NAME HEBREW

As the name Hebrew denotes a PASSer, or pilgrim, it was most appropriate when applied to Abraham, who tented in Palestine, but never settled permanently in the land. But it is seldom applied to the nation after it had conquered Palestine, except as a name for their language. It was used very much as we use the word "orthodox," in the Greek Scriptures, but none of the kingdom apostles claimed it. Only Paul was very insistent on being one of them (2 Cor. 11:22, Phil. 3:5, 5), so this title joins him, rather than any other apostle, to this book. He associates himself with them by his references to *us, our,* etc., in his epistle to the Ephesians, in

which he joins them, as a *body*, to the *body* of Christ among the nations, making the joint *body*.

In accord with the revealing phrase "*through* the heavens," the epistle to the Hebrews refers repeatedly to that which is ON, or *above* the heavens, the *celestial* sphere. They are partners of a celestial *calling* (3:1). They, like us, tasted a celestial *gratuity* (6:4). No longer were they connected with the *examples* of that in the heavens, but with celestial *things themselves* (9:23). They are strangers and expatriates on the earth, seeking for a *country* of their own, a better, that is, a *celestial* (11:16). They have *not* come to mount *Sinai* on *earth,* but to the *celestial Jerusalem* (12:22). They have exchanged practically all their *terrestrial* advantages for higher, *spiritual, celestial* possessions.

CELESTIAL CALLING

The most revealing of these passages is the phrase *partakers* of a *celestial calling* (3:1). The usual rendering, "a *heavenly* calling," has been a great stumbling block, for it fails to distinguish between Israel in the flesh, in the *terrestrial* heavens-and-earth sphere, in the past, from God's higher, more spiritual, present dealings with believers in Christ, from both Israel and the nations, whose destiny is *on,* or *above* the heavens and the earth. In this regard we should group the Hebrews with the saints among the nations, for, in *spirit,* we are much closer to them than the terrestrial saints of their own nation are to them.

The function of the celestial calling is to subject the *rest* of the universe to God, and in this the star-seed of Abram can use its special qualifications in reaching and reigning over the sovereignties and authorities of this realm, just as their brethren on the earth will subject the other nations to Him in the kingdom of the heavens. The Subjector's plan is to use the bitter lessons of insubordination in the past in the subjection of the nations

of the future, and their fearful failures on the earth to reconcile the rest of the universe. In this the Hebrew seed of Abram, as well as the soil seed of Abra*ham*, have the most prominent place.

A striking feature of Hebrews is the prevalence of the words *partake* and *partner*, from the stem WITH-HAVE. Out of fourteen occurrences in all, eight are in this epistle. The first (1:9) speaks of the Son's anointing with the oil of exaltation *above* His *partners* in the previous Hebrew revelation, although He participated in their blood and flesh (2:14). The Hebrews ought, of course, to be teachers of the saints among the nations, but are hindered by their fleshly advantage, so *partake* of milk (5:13). If they have *partaken* of holy spirit, they should not fall aside (6:4). Christ *partook* of the tribe of Judah, so could not be a levitical priest (7:13). All *partake* of discipline (12:8). In the body they are *joint partakers* with the other saints among the nations (Eph. 3:6).

THE CELESTIAL CALLING

The question arises: *Why* should some of the Hebrew saints be diverted from their terrestrial calling to a celestial one? Or, to begin with: Why will the seed of Abra*ham* be raised to reign over the earth? Because *God's* revelation and glory depends, not merely on blessing *them,* but on blessing all the earth *through* them. They, as a people, have a much longer and more intimate experience of the Subjector, than the rest. This has been enshrined and immortalized in their sacred scrolls. Even their own *in*subjection in the past may be a great help to aid them in subjecting the nations to Him in the future.

CELESTIAL PARTNERS

The word "partners" presents a very striking *contrast* to the superior place given to Israel on the earth. There they are to be the head and not the tail, above and not below (Dt. 28:13). If they were merely partners of the

nations in the kingdom, that would be contrary to the patriarchal promises and their history. To be sure, the day is coming when both Egypt and Assyria, their ancient foes, will be their friends (Is. 19:24), but they will by no means share their place as head of the nations. Those in the celestial regions will not be alone or superior. Christ Himself will be the Head and they will be associated with believers among the nations as *fellow* members of a *joint* body (Eph. 3:6).

The Hebrews are now *partners* of a celestial *calling* (Hb. 3:1), that is, they are called along with the saints of the nations, with the *same expectation* under one *Lord,* with one *faith,* one *baptism,* one *God* and *Father* of all, Who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:4-6). In the terrestrial calling, believers among the nations had had no definite dealings with the Deity. They were apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and merely guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world (Eph. 2:12). But now the believers in *both* classes are included in the celestial calling and are vitally united in this one joint body.

The Hebrew *nation* as a whole was indicated by the figure of a body, for they were all vitally and physically joined by the blood of a common ancestor, Israel. Therefore this figure is avoided in Hebrews, and the word *partner* is used of their spiritual union to the saints among the nations in this administration. Later, when Paul writes to all believers, he uses this familiar figure in order to indicate the vital *spiritual* union of both, for the figure of a human body no longer fitted the disunited, dispersed Jewish remnant among the nations, for, until lately, its members were scattered abroad, without cohesion or head. The joint body is one in Christ even when its Head is in heaven, and its members all over the earth. A.E.K.

LIGHT AND LUMINARIES

A READJUSTMENT of the earth and the heavens was absolutely necessary after they became a chaos and vacant and dark, for they were uninhabitable for such creatures as live on earth today. There was no light, no atmosphere, not even land on which to stage the great tragedy of humanity. Were it intended to be the ideal, the consummation of God's purpose, it would have been like the new earth we read of in prophecy, on which there will be *no sea,* and *no darkness* at all (Un. 21). But now, not even *half measures* are used! There is more sea than land! There is night as well as day! There is evil as well as good! In the spiritual experience of the believer, he is treated in the same way. He receives light, but there is still much darkness. He receives only an earnest of the spirit, which leaves him far from the ideal which will be his in resurrection. He must still suffer much evil.

Six days were needed for the readjustment of the chaotic earth. Darkness was on the submerged chaos, so the first essential was light. There was no atmosphere by means of which the sun and moon could illuminate the scene, so there could be no daylight. On the new earth, the holy city, Jerusalem, will be luminous, so will have no need of the sun or the moon, for the glory of God will illuminate it (Un. 21:11, 23). The beams of the sun or the moon are not essential or eternal, but are needed only in the three central eons. Before and after them there is light at all times, uninterrupted by

the interposition of darkness, which characterizes and symbolizes the three evil eons (Gen. 1:3).

Our tendency is to think of darkness as the natural or immanent and inherent condition of creation, and that light was introduced only to drive it away. This is erroneous. Darkness was introduced along with chaos and vacancy. The heavens and the earth were not chaotic, vacant, or dark to begin with (Is. 45:18). All three of these are symbolic of evil. Just as humanity was *created* without flaw, but *became* spiritually chaotic and vacant and dark, or sinful and helpless and blind, so it was with the creation of the heavens and the earth before the six days of readjustment.

The chaos that followed creation will not be fully abolished until there is a new creation, and all things are made new (2 Cor. 5:17, Un. 21:5). This is evident in the geological faults beneath our feet, and in the uninhabitable wastes on the surface of the earth and in the recurrent darkness after each day. In Hebrew the habitation of humanity is called a *th bl* DISINTEGRATION, which the Concordant Version renders by "disintegrating (habitance)." Nothing is perfect or permanent. The earth quakes, the water washes the soil into the sea. The ignorance of mankind blinds it to the spiritual significance of these evils.

SPIRIT READJUSTMENT

Yet humanity is not left in complete chaos or ignorance. The *spirit* that a believer receives readjusts him to this mortal condition, in view of God's dealings with him in his present humiliating body of sin. So it was that the Alueim dealt with the heavens and the earth in the six days in which He prepared the earth for human habitation. Nothing new was *created* except the living creatures on the earth and in its waters and atmosphere, after the elements, solid, fluid, and gaseous, had been rearranged by the vibrations of light or heat, and gravity.

Not only was there the initial readjustment in the beginning, during the six days, but there were further readjustments at the commencement of each eon. The *deluge* adjusted the location of the *waters* for the present eon. The corresponding *judgments* at the end of this eon will alter the *land,* and the last eon will be ushered in by a complete and final conflagration. God's purpose to reveal Himself demands a radical readjustment in preparation for each of the central eons, from Adam to Noah, from the flood to the judgments introducing the kingdom. Thereafter, there are no more readjustments of the old, but a *new* earth will be *created* in a crucible of fire.

The idea of the scoffers in these, the last days of this eon, that "all is continuing thus from the beginning of creation," is very harmful (2 Pt. 3:3-4). If God created the world as it now is, what hope is there that it will ever be better? No wonder they pay no heed to the declarations of the prophets, and go according to their own desires! Indeed, this world is not a perfect sample of His skill in creation, or else what can be expected of the new earth? The present eonian world is repeatedly disrupted in order to provide a medium by which mankind may have the experience of evil. In the physical sphere it corresponds to the intrusion of death by means of the forbidden fruit. God Him*self* planted the death-dealing tree, and drowned humanity in the deluge and will destroy many in the impending judgments.

VIBRATION

"The God Who says that out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts" (2 Cor. 4:6). This inspired parable helps us to see that the darkness of the first earth has its counterpart in the heart of every human. This spiritual operation in each of the saints is illustrated by the physical readjustment of the chaos of the early earth. In the physical realm vibration

produces light, and light heat, so that, first of all, earth's fluids were separated from the solids, and came to the surface. In contrast to earth's solids, water is transparent, and conducts light.

DARKNESS

In the western world there is so much artificial light, and it is so easily turned on, especially since electricity has been used, that we do not dread the darkness as easterners do. In the orient, especially in the middle east, where they have few such conveniences, they dread the very thought of sleeping without a lamp-light In the Scriptures, if you are told that a man's light has been extinguished it implies that he is dead. Solomon says (Prov. 13:9, 20:20, 24:20):

The light of the righteous shall rejoice.
The lamp of the wicked shall be extinguished.

Bildad, whose theology was wrong, but his Hebrew idiomatic, says (Job 18:6):

"The light is dark in his tent,
And his lamp over him shall be extinguished."

LIGHT GIVES LIFE

The apostle John wrote in his first epistle (1:5): "God is light, and darkness in Him there is none." This light is the source of all action and life. After the earth became a dark and vacant chaos, the first thing used in its readjustment was *light*. Indeed, *all* that followed was the effect of this, being due to its vibrations, and the heat it produced. Not only the inanimate substance of the terrestrial creation was put in order by it, but the ground was turned into plant-producing soil. All animals depend upon it directly or indirectly as well as mankind for their very life.

The advent of light brought a measure of order to the outer layers of the earth. But it could not penetrate

very deep into its lower mass, so this still remains much as it was, and is used as a dungeon of wicked spirits, even in the impending kingdom eon, until the much fiercer fire of the future, in the day of the Lord, when the very elements will be melted by combustion, when the heavens will be dissolved, and the elements decomposed (2 Pt. 3:10-13). Thenceforward, we look for a new earth, no longer chaotic and disintegrating, but perfectly adjusted to humanity by a new *creation.* Meanwhile the still existing chaos is accountable for much of the evil in the world today, just as sin, its spiritual counterpart, corrupts humanity.

DAY AND NIGHT

Had God intended to form a perfect environment for mankind in the beginning, when the vibrations of His spirit brought the day, *why did He not do away with the night,* as will be the case in the new earth (Un. 21:25)? He *intends* that men shall live in primeval darkness, until His spirit enlightens them. Even then the illumination will not be complete until they enter, in spirit, into the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). Even the most spiritual still suffer much evil because of the darkness in others, as well as in themselves.

SUN AND MOON

It is a notable fact that neither sun nor moon is mentioned by name in connection with the creation of the heavens and the earth. These are *celestial* bodies, outside the terrestrial sphere. When they are introduced, they are called *luminaries* and placed in the atmosphere, in which alone they can be seen by human eyes. This is illustrated by the electric current, which does not turn into light until its comes into contact with the carbon filament or other impediment to its current.

THE LUMINARIES AS RULERS

In Joseph's dream, foreshadowing his own *rule* over

his father and mother and brothers, he compared them to the sun and the moon and the stars. This is another important allusion to the luminaries, giving us their spiritual significance, for here again they are represented as *rulers,* Jacob as the sun, and Joseph's mother as the moon. This is clearly a parable, as Rachel, the mother, had died long before, and we read of none of Jacob's other wives being still alive, when he went to Egypt. But it suggests the headship of the man over the woman, which is to be an illustration of that great and marvellous secret, Christ and the ecclesia, hidden before the eons in God.

The relation between the sun and the moon is strikingly pictured by the representation of Israel by a woman *clothed* with the sun, and the moon *underneath her feet* (Un. 12:1-2). In the coming kingdom Christ will clothe Israel with His righteousness, but Satan will be bound and locked and sealed in the submerged chaos until the thousand years should be finished (Un. 20:2-3). In the spiritual language of the Scriptures the sun represents *righteousness* (Mal. 4:2, Mat. 13:43). When Paul was called on the Damascus road the light of the Lord's presence was *above* the brightness of the sun, and it blinded him and felled him to the earth (Ac. 26:12-14), because of his *un*righteousness.

SATAN AS A MESSENGER OF LIGHT

The Scriptures agree fully with the scientific facts about the moon. Although a luminary, it is not a light producer, like the sun, but merely a poor reflector, with a very rough surface, so that its beams are cold and lifeless. So it is with God's revelation of Satan in His Word. He has transfigured *himself* into a messenger of light, like the moon (2 Cor. 11:14). This period of Christ's absence is spiritually dark on earth. It is as if all that humanity has is moonshine, except those who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous

light (1 Pt. 2:9), or when *we,* in Christ, are actually appearing, not merely as lights, but as *luminaries* in the world (Phil. 2:15).

MESSENGERS OF LIGHT

Christ, like the sun, is the Light of the world. He is the Sun of righteousness with healing in His rays (Mal. 4:2). Yet Satan, also, is being transfigured into a messenger of light. In this he is like the moon. It *seems* to be light-giving, but it merely reflects the sun's vibrations, which do not become luminous until they reach the atmosphere of the earth. So it is with Satan. He is not like the sun, the source of illumination and warmth, but like the moon, which reflects a small measure of the sun's light, so that there is a little illumination, with less warmth. Since the deeds of men are evil, they prefer the slavery of Satan to the service of God.

MOON—SPIRIT

In the babbling since Babel, especially in those modern languages which are a conglomeration composed of many tongues, the relation of words to each other and to their stem may have little significance. So the name of the *moon* is not only used for words which measure *time,* as *month,* but digs deeper. The stem *rch* denotes WIND and *ruch* spirit, and *i-rch,* moon, means cause-spirit. So it may be worth while to search and see if there is not some important spiritual association implied. In the spiritual world, what place is given to the moon?

THE RULER OF THE NIGHT

The lesser luminary, the moon, is the *ruler* of the night (Gn. 1:16). Our Lord was crucified under the jurisdiction of darkness (Lu. 22:53). Paul speaks of the world mights of this darkness (Ep. 6:12) and the *authority* of darkness, out of which we have been rescued (Col. 1:13). From these references, it should be clear

that the moon is a material mirror of spiritual truth, and that it represents the powers of evil, especially Satan.

When we receive our spiritual bodies at the coming of Christ to the air, then, and *not till then* will humans be able to visit the celestial realms. Even then, I doubt if we will pay much attention to the moon, for it has a very poor reputation in divine revelation. Nevertheless, just as Satan is very close to all mankind, so that we have an experience of his presence, so the moon is the nearest of the celestial spheres, and we can see it quite clearly, with very little artificial aid when it is "full," or reflects much of the light of the sun.

Not being able to afford a large telescope, I had to confine my eager interest in the celestial sphere largely to the moon. There I found a most discouraging sight. If that is a sample of "heaven" I did not care to have any of it. It is far more desolate than the surface of the earth. On it are higher mountains and greater craters than any down here, but nowhere is there a sign of life or conditions which would sustain it. Evidently, there is no air or water, so that no form of life such as we know it could exist on it. Not even plants.

NO ATMOSPHERE

The terrestrial sphere in which we live, was created at the beginning for human habitation, consisting of two parts, the heavens as well as the earth. The moon, however, has no heavens, so is not adapted to humanity. After the earth became a chaos, it took the six days' readjustment, especially the first three, to fit it for us to live on. But on the moon there is no air for human lungs to breathe, or to make it possible for our eyes to see. In fact, we can see the moon much better from the earth than from its own surface. Of what value would it be to mankind to go there unless to show their *in*subjection to the Subjector Supreme?

Some suppose that the primordial chaos which destroyed

the first earth was caused by a collision with the moon, which not only disrupted the earth but also destroyed the surface of the moon and robbed it of all its lighter substances, the fluids and the gases, and left only the heavy solids. Much of its surface seems to be marred as the result of internal upheavals, also, like our volcanos. Be that as it may, the spiritual counterpart seems to support it. It stands for the powers of darkness, and these collided with Adam's world soon after he was created, and left him a chaos, disintegrating in death, like the world in which he lived.

Although mankind has by no means fully discovered or developed the earth on which it lives, which was specially created and repeatedly adjusted for this, its leaders have been obsessed with a satanic desire to extend their power over the stellar creation, first of all the lunar sphere, as it is the nearest to the earth. Much has been learned about it by means of telescopes, none of which would suggest any advantage to be gained by going there and far less by trying to reach other spheres.

Humanity is not alone among God's creatures in its desire to leave their own habitation. Jude tells us that "messengers who keep not their sovereignty, but leave their own habitation, He has kept in imperceptible bonds, under gloom, for the judging of the great day" (Ju. 1:6). Even if it should be possible for humans to reach the moon without dying, it would become their prison until the judgment day. No prison bars would be needed to hold them. The inhuman conditions alone would be enough, not only to fetter their feet, but to blind their eyes and destroy their souls. The earth alone was made for human habitation in mortal frames, and terrestrial bodies, so long as these are not changed to celestial by Christ Himself.

Why, we may well ask, do the nations spend such

enormous sums and exert such a tremendous effort to reach the celestial realms? Do they wish to *benefit* them in any way? Such a consideration seems to be far from their thoughts. They wish to parade their own prowess. This was clearly evidenced when one nation claimed to have sent a small satellite around the earth. This made another very jealous. The only notable effect was to increase the strained relations between them. Even if the earth's dwellers should communicate with those of other spheres, it will benefit none of them, in the present state of affairs, and would probably lead to further difficulties.

THE TERRESTRIAL BODY

Our terrestrial body is *made* of the earth and that upon it. It is *composed* of soil from the ground and of the water in, and on, the earth. It is momentarily *dependent* on the atmosphere upon it for its vital functioning. It is subject to a lingering death from lack of food or water, and a speedy demise without sufficient air. Such a body cannot live for any length of time at a distance from the earth's surface. These may possibly be supplied artificially for a short period, but by no means long enough to reach the celestial spheres.

OUR CELESTIAL BODIES

What is needed, in order to reach any of the orbs of space is an incorruptible, death-defying, powerful, *spiritual* body, in place of man's present dying, decaying, infirm, soulish, physical frame. No repairing or tinkering or inflating will enable any earthly human to invade the realms above. The human body must first be radically *changed*, so that death cannot touch it. And this is just what may happen at any time. Believers in Christ who read these lines may not finish this paragraph before their bodies are changed from decaying, dying, terrestrial, flesh and *blood*, to incorruptible, im-

mortal, celestial, glorious, *spiritual* bodies, at Christ's presence.

ASCENSION BODIES CHANGED

One Man, Christ Jesus, has already ascended to the celestial realms, so there can be no doubt that a human *can* do this (Jn. 20:17). Moreover, we who are members of His body, will also ascend to the celestial realms when He returns to the air and calls us above. In both cases, however, the *bodies* are *changed* from terrestrial to celestial (1 Cor. 15:49). Our terrestrial bodies have limitations even on earth. We cannot leave its surface and live in the air above very long, or in the water below, like fish. Those who try it even for a short time often perish.

BEARERS OF BLESSING

Let us be jubilant that, when we come to take our place among the celestials, we will be the bearers of incalculable blessing to *them,* and *this* will be the chief ingredient of our own bliss. Even as Christ, our Lord, with His apostles, will regenerate the earth, so will He, through us, spread the blessing of the knowledge of God's wisdom, power and love throughout the stellar universe. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

May this marvelous message, which gives us a celestial expectation, help our hearts to listen longingly for the shout that will call us to Him, so that He may share His celestial honors with us! A.E.K.

PERCY B. TRAVERS

A subscriber to UNSEARCHABLE RICHES since 1927, and a regular attendant at the Los Angeles ecclesia for many years, Bro. Travers passed away at the age of 91, on March 18, 1958. Surviving are his widow, Marie, a daughter, and a grandson. Services were conducted by David Knoch at Edwards Brothers Colonial Mortuary in Los Angeles, with interment at Forest Lawn. Bro. Travers always evinced a lively interest in the Scriptures, and a longing for his Lord's appearing. Perhaps it may not be long before we shall be greeting him again in that glad morning! E.O.K.

SCRIPTURAL SONGS

Some years ago, it became necessary for us to drop the publication of our concordantly revised hymns and spiritual songs, known as "Scriptural Songs." The book issued in England (words only) is now also out of print, so we were left without books of any kind for the use of the various ecclesias. The way is now being opened for issuing a new book, with music, which we hope to revise and enlarge. We would welcome any suggestions for added songs, etc., subject of course, to our editorial survey as to suitability and to be checked to see if permission to use can be had from the copyright owners. Groups writing could also advise now as to the number of copies they can use so that we can more accurately determine the quantity to be printed. E.O.K.

REVISION OF GREEK SCRIPTURES AND CONCORDANCE

As we have almost exhausted our supply of the present edition of the English International Edition of the Concordant Version, which was published in 1944-46, we are now in the midst of work on a revised edition, which will probably be printed overseas in the next year or two. Those who have discovered errors or misprints, either in the Version or the Concordance, especially in the Scripture references in the Concordance, are requested to call these to the attention of our co-worker who is doing the preliminary checking on this work. Time will be saved by mailing direct to Pfc. Albert Knoch, RA19588815, HQ and HQ Co., 1st Bn., U.S.A.E.C.R., Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. Naturally, most of the major misprints have already been discovered, but there is always the chance that our checkers have missed some, so we call on all our friends to co-operate, in order that the new edition may be as nearly correct as humanly possible.

MEANING AND PRONUNCIATION OF DIVINE NAME

In order to familiarize our readers with the *correct* transliterations of the divine Name and titles, the forms *Ieue* (pronounced *Yehweh*) for Jehovah, and *Al*, *Alue*, or *Alueim* (pronounced *Al-oo-eh-eem*) for God, are usually substituted in Unsearchable Riches, according to their usage in the Hebrew Scriptures. These are explained in a free leaflet, "The Divine Names and Titles" and also a series of articles in volume XLV of the magazine (price: $1.00), obtainable from the publishers.

UNITED GATHERING IN ENGLAND

About 80 friends gathered on April 20 for the first United Gathering for this year, at Labour Hall, East Kirkby, Notts, England. The morning address on "Meditation in Philippians" was given by Bro. R. Edgington of Birmingham, while Bro. Clayton of Sheffield was the chairman in the afternoon when "Justification" was discussed. Bro. Essex of Beeston took as the evening subject "Let nothing be worrying you," and reminded those present that, since all is of God, we should avoid worrying. The next United Gathering is at Manchester on May 18, followed by one at Shieffield on June 15. H.W.J.

ABRAM'S JUSTIFICATION

ABRAM BELIEVED IN IEUE, and it was accounted to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6). He had been complaining that Ieue had not given him the promised seed, so he was told to look heavenward and count the stars, if he was able. Then Ieue said, "*Thus is becoming your seed.*" *The belief of this statement constituted Abram's righteousness.* No *act* of any kind was necessary. He probably did *look*, but he certainly did *not count* them. He did not exert himself in any way. Rather, he was passive, he assented, acquiesced, acknowledged, was assured, persuaded, convinced, had confidence, trusted, in brief, he *believed,* without any positive action on his part. On Ieue's side there were to be innumerable generations, a task, in its way, more incomprehensible than the enumeration of the stars.

SISTER AND WIFE

Sarah was misrepresented by Abram on two separate occasions, when he said that she was his sister, which was true, but *implied* that she was not his wife (Gn. 12:10-13, 20:1-18). Such misleading statements of fact may be worse than open prevarication. These two events had much in common, although in some ways there is a contrast, so it may be helpful to consider them together. In both cases Abram was *afraid.* He had lost the sense of divine protection. It seems that, in those days, a beautiful wife was a perilous possession, apt to excite the cupidity of kings. Lacking faith in his Subjector, and

too conscientious to tell an open lie, he decided to protect *himself* (*not* his wife!) by telling a half-truth, for Sarah actually was the daughter of his father, though not of his mother, and so really was both sister and wife. Such a union was quite correct according to the customs current in that day.

THE ADVERSARY

As Abram is the foremost example of faith, which he afterward fully exhibited in the offering of Isaac, it is very helpful to see how God strengthened his faith when it faltered, as in these cases. Behind the scenes we can see, in these two examples, an attempt of the adversary to spoil Sarah for the conception of the seed in her old age. Abraham seems to have fallen into this trap, and helped Satan to accomplish it, but God interfered, and saved her for her special mission.

THE OUTCOME JUSTIFIES

As Abram was such a wealthy man, any alliance with him, especially by marriage, would be most welcome, while, on the other hand, if he was out of the way, they could not only take his wife, but all his possessions as well. Yet, on the divine side, how could the promises of Ieue be fulfilled if he died before his heir had been begotten? God used Abram's faltering to confirm his faith. In both cases his subterfuge was brought to light, yet the one whom he feared was made mortally afraid of him, and insisted on enriching and honoring him, so that the outcome actually *justified* Abram's defection!

DOWN TO EGYPT

Soon after Ieue had assured Abram that the land was his and his seed's, Abram journeyed toward the south rim, that is, near the southern border of the land. Then a famine came, a heavy one. Abram had no instructions to leave the land, or to go to Egypt. He even told his wife that he does so at the risk of his life. So

he not only goes without orders, but without the conscious protection of Ieue. He deserved to lose his wife and his riches and his life. And, under law, he probably would have received his "just" deserts. Why is Abram "allowed" to do such things with impunity? It is most important to see that Abram *was not righteous in himself, or in his actions,* yet, nevertheless, was justified *by God's* activity on his behalf.

Abimelech, king of Gerar, had received many intimations that the Alueim, the Subjector was with Abraham. When Abraham had deceived him in regard to Sarah, his wife, He had warned the king, and no harm had come to Abraham, but rather gain. And so this prophet, as God had called him, had prospered enormously while sojourning in the king's country. So it was that the ruler of the land actually sought to make a treaty with Abraham, as though he already had a sovereign right to tenant in it!

THE CANAANITES

Abimelech was a Philistine, a people who descended from Ham, like the Egyptians, but not through Canaan, like the Canaanites. The Hebrew lexicons all seem to make them descendants of *Shem,* but give no scriptural evidence. In the tenth of Genesis and the first of Chronicles we have the line of Ham, Mizraim, Cashuhim, after which is the parenthesis: "whence fare forth the *Philistim* and the Caphthorim." They must be distinguished from the Canaanites, who were under a curse. The Philistines stretched along the shore of the Mediterranean, up to Carmel at times. They spread out somewhat in the south, and were often subject to the Egyptians, who were also Hamites.

SELF-RIGHTEOUS ABIMELECH

Self-righteous Abimelech made a good foil for God-righteous Abraham. He evidently realized that God was with Abraham in *all* that he did, good or bad. But, alas!

he only wanted Abraham to be as good as he was! That was easy, so Abraham did not hesitate. But Abimelech was a king, so he was responsible for what his subjects did, and they had committed what was a serious crime under the circumstances. They had snatched a well of water which belonged to Abraham. In such a land water is the most valuable possession. And such a well as this in this location became famous, as it is today, for few travelers to the holy land do not go to see it. But, typically, it is a symbol of the spirit of God, and the life that wells up in the believer for life eonian.

As the land was promised to his seed, he could not swear *never* to eject the Philistines, but, as he knew that his seed would not dwell in it until four hundred years later, he was free to make a conditional agreement with Abimelech. The A.V. suggests that he made it with "my son" or "my son's son," but the Hebrew reads "my propagator and...my progeny," that is, to his whole family. As his name means "My-father-is-king," it is possible that he refers to his father here, whom he represents. So the treaty was well within the limits, and probably lasted only as long as Abraham's son and grandson were in his country, until Jacob went down to Egypt.

All that he stipulated was that Abraham would not be *false* to him and his family! Why this? Because Abraham *had* been false to him in the matter of Sarah. Can we visualize the situation? Here was a Philistine king, who did *not* have Ieue for his Subjector, asking His prophet, to whom He had promised the land, not to deceive him again! Abraham had been afraid of *him.* Yet now *he* was afraid of *Abraham!* Of course Abraham had nothing to say but, "I swear."

Ahuzzath (*Ach th* HOLD-GIVE) was the king's *associate.* He probably held a position similar to the prime minister or secretary of state, so Abraham did not deal with a

person merely, but with a nation. Phicol (MOUTH-ALL) may have dropped out in Gen. 21:22, for here *he*, not Ahuzzath, is called the chief of his host, and Ahuzzath his associate (32). It seems that this man represented the military might of the kingdom. This seems to imply that Abimelech recognized the might of the Subjector, against Whom he did not wish to fight.

BEERSHEBA

In order to make the matter sure, Abraham paid for the well-site with a flock and a herd (21:27), as the basis of a covenant. For the well itself, which he had delved, they entered into a covenant, and Abraham gave seven ewe lambs to Abimelech as testimony to the fact that the well belonged to him. Besides, it was given a name which records that fact, which remains to this day. When in Palestine, I made a special point of visiting the spot. There seem to have been seven wells later. The stem of the word *swear* and *seven* is the same: *shbo*. This probably kept the name from being changed, as was done with many other sites.

The A.V. says that Abraham "planted a *grove* in Beer-sheba and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God." (Gn. 21:33). This is most misleading, for, in all other places where the word "grove" occurs, they indicate false worship. They were often cut down on that account. Those "groves" are named *ashre* happiness, to express the licentious worship which they concealed. The C.V. calls them "(groves of) happiness." The word here used, *ashl* TAMARISK, looks very much like this, for the *r* and *l* are easily confused in Hebrew. The A.V. renders it "tree" in the only other occurrences (1 Sa. 22:6, 31:13). We may be sure that Abraham would not plant a grove in which idolators could conduct their orgies.

THE WELL

Abraham was encouraged to assert his rights. Doubt-

less he had been afraid to do so before. Besides all the wealth, especially in cattle, which Abraham had amassed, he owned wells of water. Particularly for a herdsman, drinking-water is of inestimable value, and has caused countless clashes, especially in the western plains of the United States, for cattle cannot live long without water. The servants of Abimelech evidently had not learned to fear Abraham's Protector, so they took his well away from him. It was the easiest way that they could keep him out of their preserves. But Abimelech was afraid, and profuse in his excuses.

Neither did Abraham call on the LORD there, but on the name of Ieue (Will-be-ing-was) Al (SUBJECTOR) *eonian*. This was most appropriate. He did not trust the Philistine king or his covenant, for the man might not live another year, nor did he depend upon his army, for it might be destroyed in a day. We know that there is no trace left of them now. But the well is still there and Beer-sheba has been in the hands of his descendants most of the time since then. For four hundred years his descendants, from Jacob to Joshua, lost it, and so for long periods later. So he called on the *eonian* Subjector, Who not only *was* in Abraham's day, but will be throughout the eonian times. In the day of Ieue, and the day of Al, then the promises given to Abraham will find a glorious fulfillment, and his descendents will be refreshed by the water from the Well of the Oath.

Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days, and Beersheba, about as far south of Hebron as that is of Jerusalem, though a little to the west, seems to have been the center of their sojourn until Jacob went down to Egypt at the request of Joseph.

NOT OF ACTS

We read that, "by *faith* Abraham, being called, obeys, *coming out* into the place which he was about to obtain to enjoy as an allotment, and came out, not versed in

where he is coming. By faith he *sojourns* in the land of promise..." (Hb. 11:8-9). Later we have the result, "And he believed Ieue, and it is accounted to him as righteousness." (Gn. 15:6). He was not justified by going to the land of promise, or remaining there, or building an altar there, or interceding for Sodom, or any other *act,* good or bad. Neither was he condemned by any bad *acts,* such as prevaricating as to his wife's status, or by going to Egypt without orders.

TURNING BAD INTO GOOD

Abraham was chosen to give us simple illustrations and public exhibitions of how acts, bad in themselves, are not only justified by Ieue, but actually bring blessing! Even Pharaoh, whom Abram had wronged, did good to Abram, so that he came to have a flock and a very heavy herd of cattle, and asses, and menservants and maids, etc. But poor Pharaoh must suffer, even though he had done no wrong! As a result of his journey the *culprit* is very heavy in cattle and in silver and in gold. Here, put into concrete, tangible, substantial form, we have the results of faith righteousness. The Subjector, by His intervention, turns all Abram's sins into undeserved blessings, simply because he *believed* Him in regard to His plans, even though he did not trust Him at all times.

ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH

How thankful we should be that we are not justified by the *amount,* or the *firmness* of our faith, or the *steadfastness* with which we believe! If it had depended on these things Abraham would *not* have been justified! We can understand and, perhaps, condone his deception when he went down to Egypt and caused so much damage to Pharaoh there, by his conduct. Yet after this had shown Ieue's care and beneficence (Gen. 20:14-15), how could he fall for the same fear again? Yet we should be thankful that it was so, for do we not do

the same? And when we do, does it not tempt us to doubt His grace? How can we expect Him to extend His justification to repeaters, who do not seem to benefit by the lessons of the past?

GERAR

One would think that his experience with Pharaoh, in Egypt, would have cured Abram of misrepresenting his relation to his wife. Even if his words were technically correct, for Sarah *was* his sister, the natural implication was that she was not his wife. Such a relationship was evidently rather rare. Should he not have had enough confidence in Ieue's ability to protect him, so that he could openly confess the truth?

When Abraham sinned the second time (Gen. 20:2), he did not leave the land promised to him and go into an alien country. Gerar may be included in the territory of Israel today. He journeyed toward the *Ngb* ARCH, or (south) rim. Just as *im* SEA is often used to indicate the *west,* so *ngb* is often rendered *south,* or southward, in our versions, although *drum* is the real word for SOUTH. It refers to the border country between Israel and Egypt. The actual border seems to be indicated by *shur* REGARD, which indicates a *barricade.* He does not seem to have made this territory his permanent dwelling place, but was temporarily sojourning in *Gerar.*

PHILISTINES

Abimelech is called the king of Gerar here. But later he is called king of the Philistines (Gn. 26:8), so it may be that this was his capital, or a place of temporary sojourn (*gur*). At any rate, this descendant of Ham was the *supposed* ruler of the land. Yet here he came into touch with Abraham, the *real* title-holder. Abraham, however, made a very poor showing, so the Subjector stepped in and, by means of a dream, did not dethrone him and put Abraham in his place, for that time had

not yet come. Yet He puts Abimelech below him, by making Abraham, not only the possessor of Sarah, who might avenge the kidnapping of his wife, but a prophet of the Subjector, on whose word his very life depended

THE PHILISTINE NATION

The language used by Abimelech is very suggestive. It shows us what the Philistines thought of themselves. The Subjector did not threaten the whole *nation* with death on account of his taking of Sarah, yet the king expostulates, "A *nation,* moreover, unknowing and *just,* will you kill?" Did he, in his inmost consciousness, have an intimation of the fate of the nation, and fear its fulfillment at that time? Abimelech had been sincere, in this transaction, but the *nation* certainly was not *just.* This they afterward showed, when they stopped up the wells which Abraham's servants had dug (Gen. 26:15, 18). In closing, the Subjector broadens His threat to include all of Abimelech's servants.

A PROPHETIC SCENE

Abraham does not make much of a showing in his role as a prophet, but the *scene* which follows certainly is a miniature prophecy of the kingdom of his greater Son, although Abraham makes a poor representation of Him. First, the fear of the Alueim is felt by all Abimelech's servants. Then he not only restores Sarah, but presents him with much money and a flock and a herd, and servants and maids. All that Abraham did was to pray for the king, that God would heal him and his house, for they had not only been threatened, but had actually been given a foretaste of the impending inflictions.

Why is it that these disgraceful stories of Abraham's duplicity are recorded in the Scriptures of truth? To be sure, they are seldom mentioned, and do not seem to have seriously dimmed the luster of his fame. We may be sure that they have a profound lesson for all who

believe. We suggest that the reason is this: They illustrate the righteousness of *faith,* which is *altogether of God,* for it needs a background of Abrahamic *un*-righteousness to properly display and emphasize it. This is so seldom realized that we feel compelled to over-emphasize it, otherwise the great truth of justification by faith can hardly be fully grasped and enjoyed.

The subjects of these episodes in the story of the life of Abraham seem to most of us out of line with the rest of the narrative, for they record a *lack* of faith on the part of the great example of faith. We are prone to base his righteousness largely on his *acts,* rather than his *faith.* This is extremely misleading, when we apply it to ourselves. Are we justified by faith in *the acts of Christ and God* on our behalf in the past, or must we add to these our own faulty actions in the present? None of *us* would justify Abraham's conduct in Egypt or in Philistia. Yet *God did justify both of them, by their outcome!* They brought much material wealth and spiritual prestige to Abraham, as the exponent of that justness which comes from faith in God alone.

EXHORTATION

Let us hope that these two episodes in the life of the father of the faith-filled, will be blessed to the readers of these lines, so that they may enjoy fully the righteousness which is theirs by faith *alone,* not based on any of their faulty acts, and, as a result, enter into perfect peace with God, based *only* on the acts of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Only so may we have access to the grace in which we stand and glory in expectation of the glory of God (Ro. 5:2).

May these acts of Abraham help us to enjoy the great foundation truth of Romans 4:5, "to him who is *not* working, yet is *believing* on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

A.E.K.

LOVING HIS ADVENT

BELIEVERS who love their Saviour from the depths of their hearts, and who wait for Him with joyous longing, may notice that Paul does not exhort them to entreat Christ to come or to pray for His advent. This is especially noteworthy, as the scriptures for the circumcision not only contain such requests, but even quote the calls with which His people will welcome Him. In the parable of the ten virgins the cry arose in the middle of the night: "Lo! the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!" Further, we note that, in the Unveiling, when the Lord announces, "Lo, I am coming swiftly!" (Un. 22:7), then the spirit and the bride respond, "Come!" (17). And at the close of this scroll, when the Lord witnesses again, "Yea, I am coming swiftly!" (20), then the heart of John spontaneously beseeches, "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"

Few are so ardent, in their innermost heart, as to join these requests and shouts. They must first be encouraged to do so with the words, "And let him who is hearing say 'Come!'" (17). So the Lord has given His people the very words with which to greet their rejected King at His return, and give Him an appropriate reception.

The Scriptures record a similar incident in the life of King David. It occurred during his flight from his son Absalom, when the opposition had been quickly overcome, and David could consider the return to his people. Yet at his entrance they stood by unconcerned and unresponsive. But the tribes of Israel soon came to realize the shame of their indifference regarding the king. They even

quarrelled with one another, because they were silent about bringing him back (2 Sam. 19:9-10).

Even Judah, David's own tribe, did not consider going about preparations for the return of their king. This saddened David, and he made an effort to help those nearest to him not to be the last to bring him back. And he succeeded in winning the heart of all the men of Judah who sent him an invitation to return (2 Sam. 19:11-15).

This wise and commendable deed of David is only a weak intimation of God's much greater work in training His people to prepare a worthy reception for the return of His Christ after His long absence. As far back as Zachariah, Ieue exhorts Israel (9:9):

> Exult exceedingly! daughter of Zion.
> Shout! daughter of Jerusalem.
> Behold! your King shall come to you.
> Righteous, and a Saviour is He!

A preview of this restoration of the King to His earthly rights may be seen in His memorable entry into Jerusalem (Jn. 12:15). If the people prepared such a royal welcome for Him even in His humiliation, what will it be when He comes in His glory?

Now we do not read of any such preparations by the body of Christ for the reception of their glorified Head in the Pauline epistles. It seems as if our Lord leaves it to each one how to await Him and receive Him. Altogether without any exhortation or direction Paul speaks simply of "loving His advent." Yet we may discover, in other expressions in his epistles, a much more spiritual welcome than lies in the many preparations and instructions in the circumcision writings.

If we look deeper into these differences we will see in them the reflection of law and grace. Basically it concerns two different principles; the love of God as far as was possible under the law, and this love as it wells up in the hearts of those who enjoy His grace.

The law made its demands on the Israelite as follows: "You shall love Ieue, your Alueim, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your intensity" (Dt. 6:5). According to the witness of Jesus Himself this is the great and foremost precept (Mt. 22:37). In the present administration, also, loving God is the best that we can do. Yet there is a very deep, basic difference between the two. Today it is no longer *demanded.* This greatest of all goals was the aim of the law also, but it was powerless to enable those under it to attain to it. Is it at all possible to produce love by means of commands? The love that God longs for? The love that satisfies His heart can never be generated by law. We are able to love God and His Son only as far as we ourselves have enjoyed God's love. And, as this was not fully revealed before the cross of Christ, it could not be fully grasped under the law. But now it flows forth from God's heart through His Son, and is manifested through His sufferings, being channeled to us through the holy spirit in the believer's heart (Ro. 5:5). Since this love is the power which enables us to love Him, none can generate it of themselves. Yet now, by means of this love-gift of His holy spirit, it is possible to love God and His Son from our hearts.

And now let us look at Paul writing about the love of God and His Son: "Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God..." (Rom. 8:28); "whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him..." (1 Cor. 2:9); "now if anyone is loving God..." (1 Cor. 8:3); "...who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Eph. 6:24); "...all who love His advent..." (2 Tim. 4:8)

With these words Paul emphasizes the glorious fact that we *may* and *can* love God free of every urging by the law. So He makes no demand, and leaves it to each one how they may exercise this supreme function of their

faith. This freedom accords with the present transcendent grace and the sonship into which the spirit of Christ has elevated us. Genuine sons of God need no command in order to love God or His Son and His advent!

Yet now let us assume that the law would step into the present ecclesia, to test if its demand to love God is being practiced. If it came to genuine believers, it would see that they actually do fulfill it, but on a much higher plane. They do not love the Lord because of laws, but because of the operation of *His* love. Satisfied that it is being gloriously fulfilled and complemented (Rom. 13:10), the law would prove itself useless, and find no place at all in this administration of grace.

But how would the law act, coming to fleshly believers who are attached to earthly things, and love them rather than the Lord? Should not His law be placed before them: "You *shall* love . . ."? To such believers the law would say; in effect: If you are not even open to the love of God as revealed on the cross of Christ, and are not conquered by it, so that you love God and His Son from your heart, how can the law, with its demands, have the power to help you? So, in this case also, the law is powerless, unnecessary and superfluous.

The mercy shown to Israel is conditional, that is, the recipients must add their deeds to it. Therefore we find that the grace shown to the Circumcision is combined with the demands, or even the threats, of the law, especially in the Jewish ecclesias of the end time, such as those with which the Lord rebukes the Ephesian ecclesia.

The grace, however, which God, through Paul, pours out on us today, is absolutely free from any legal obligation (Eph. 2:8). In contrast to what was given to Israel at Sinai, it contains a superabundance of grace (Ro. 5:17). Whoever gets a good grasp of this, and fully accepts it, and coöperates intelligently with it, will engender such a love for God and His Christ that it will never leave

him, as those members of the ecclesia in Ephesus leave their first love (Un. 2:4-5). There is no need of any legal exhortation, much less of a threat.

Now, however, we may ask: How may we best reach this summit of love, where the supreme desire of the heart is the advent of Christ? We cannot say that Paul has given no direction or exhortation at all, of how to reach this grand and glorious goal. But notice that he does this in a very different way than the law. He places a wonderful, prophetic picture of Christ's coming before our eyes (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Paul was concerned that the believers should have a correct *knowledge* of the truth. But he realized that even the highest correctness concerning the return of Christ would not necessarily lead to a heartfelt desire or *love* for it. This one-sidedness was the case in Corinth (1 Cor. 8:1). The mere *knowledge* of Christ's coming may puff up, but when the *love* of His advent is added, there is a basis for true, inner edification. Paul seeks to unite knowledge with love.

The beginning of our spiritual instruction in love may be seen in this, that Paul repeatedly places the love of *Christ* and *God* before our eyes, thus: "God is commending this love of His to us" (Ro. 5:8). "God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us" (Ep. 2:4). "God, our, Father, Who loves us" (2Th.2:16). "Nay! in all these we are more than conquerors through Him Who loves us" (Ro. 8:37). "The Son of God, Who loves me..." (Gal. 2:20). "Be walking in love, according as Christ also loves you" (Eph. 5:2).

Perhaps there is a tender urgency apparent in these glad truths to move our hearts. Yet this does not satisfy Paul. It drives him to his knees to pray that God, the Father, may strengthen us to grasp, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height, to know, besides, the knowledge-transcending love of Christ (Eph. 3:18-19).

Paul knows, from his own experience, that a real revelation of the love of God and Christ is the best means to produce a thankful heart which returns their love. It is a vitalizing fruit of His spirit. This love found its highest expression in the death of God's Son on the cross. As the greatness of the love depends on the value of the Offering, God's love for us is beyond our comprehension, for He could not have found anything in the whole creation of more value than this beloved only Son. How infinite is this love! How overpowering!

Notwithstanding Paul's deep insight into the glorious consummation, he was not one-sided, so that he lived solely in the future revelations of God's word. But one thing remained the greatest: God's love as revealed by His Son on Golgotha. One whose heart, like his, is often moved by this event, will, even in the heaviest afflictions, be able to quench every doubt, and come to a continually increasing conviction that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:35, 39).

This deed was not simply the most successful, but practically the only means for awakening real love for Christ in the believers. The glorious prophecy of His coming Paul commences thus: "For, if we are believing that Jesus died and rose" (1 Thes. 4:14). The parallel passage (1 Cor. 15:50-53), also, begins (verse 3) "Christ died for our sins." When a person rescues another from danger of death at the risk of his own life, and loses it, the one who was saved will remember him for his lifetime, with deep gratitude. But now the very Son of God has given His life to save ours, for love of us, and His Father also, in love to us, gave His only begotten Son, and has taken all the accompanying pain upon Himself. Should not such a great deed move our hearts daily, to thankfulness and love responsive?

But alas! In the ecclesia a spirit of indifference to the sacrifice of Christ can often be sensed. We have become

so accustomed to it. We think of it as if it were a matter of course. This has come about partly because Christ has been received only for personal salvation, so that it even has become a matter of boasting. Yes, we are quite sure that we have been saved from future judgment, and that is enough. Yet everyone should ask the question, How much love has Christ's love-deed on the cross created in my heart? And it is just this that God's love-longing heart desires, that is, a hearty response. How much God wishes that His Son should be loved, Christ Himself tells us with the words: "He who is loving Me will be loved by My Father" (Jn. 14:21). God Himself has made the very best preparations for this, in that He gave His Son in order to reveal His love, and then poured it into our hearts. It is the sight of Christ as an Offering on the great altar on Golgotha, that, combined with the revelation of God's love manifested there, which kindles a worthy response in our hearts, like a hallowed fiery flame. And then, out of this love, comes a strong longing for Him, and for His coming.

There are many other causes, also justified, because of which we wish for His coming. They may be trying experiences, strife, illness, and the signs and difficulties of these last days. Yet the highest and noblest is the longing coming from our love for Him. And, as the love of Christ was so strong that it drove Him to His first coming, and most of all, to His crucifixion, how much more must His heart be filled with longing, to be with His beloved, His firstfruits, the members of His spiritual body, to call them to Him, to have them with Him, to share His glory and honor with them! How mightily does this affect His wish to be with those who love His advent!

For the Lord Himself this must be a refreshing joy, for it is the surest sign that He has become the First and the Best to us, and that we have only one wish, to

be united with Him. This longing for His Son also brings great glory to His Father, for it is the sign of their approval of His act in setting Him as the Head over the whole universe and, at the same time, their recognition that He is worthy of this supreme place. And still further, God will see in it a prelude of that great consummation, when not only the chosen, but all knees will bow to Him, and glorify Him as the true Lord, for His glory. It is a confession, by His chosen ones, and a preview of all creation, that His Son, on the basis of His sacrificial death, is able to carry out God's great plan most gloriously.

The consideration of this great divine purpose is another reason for loving His advent. Besides, it keeps us from longing for His advent selfishly, for our own salvation, instead of including its effect on the entire universe. It is well within His will when we are affected by the groaning of creation, so that we long for His coming, that the times of restoration may be brought to the earth (Ac. 3:19-21). Yet we do not wait for Him like Israel, to come back as King to restore their terrestrial kingdom, but as Head of the universe.

Can we not see in these manysided glories of His return the reason why Paul does not give us a set form or prayer in connection with His coming for us? He leaves it to each one to express the love of his heart according to the grace given to him. And we may well say that it is the fondest occupation of His spirit in the hearts of those who love His advent, to coöperate in order to express the grace given to each in the loveliest thoughts and sentences. The variety of these freely formed prayers may be a special honor for the Lord, for they may show to what a gracious position of Sonship and maturity He has elevated His ecclesia. May He by His gracious spirit enable us, more and more, to long for His advent!

M. JAEGLE

WHY IS PAUL OUR EXAMPLE?

A Study of the Third Chapter of Philippians

BEFORE reading this article you should read through Philippians three carefully and prayerfully, and then re-read verses 17 through 21.

How was it that Paul could set himself up as an example for us to follow? How does the man who called himself the "foremost" of sinners, who persecuted the saints and stood by while Stephen was stoned to death (Acts 8:1), dare to say "Become imitators together of *me*."?

To find the answer we will have to look back in the book of Acts to the time when he was still persecuting the ecclesia, and then consider the marvelous transformation that took place when God called and commissioned him (Acts 7:58-8:3).

Before Paul's remarkable "about-face" on the road to Damascus, when he met the risen Christ, he was a perfect example of the product of a religion in which the *flesh* has a real place. Saul had been circumcised the eighth day, was of the race of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. In relation to the law, he was a Pharisee, a sect which prided itself on keeping the letter of the law. In relation to his zeal, he was spending most of his time persecuting the ecclesia. In relation to righteousness which is in law, he was becoming blameless (Phil. 3:4-7).

Yet, right in the midst of all his efforts to destroy all those who believed in the Lord Jesus, he was suddenly arrested by the presence of the Lord and blinded by His glory (Acts 9:1-16). Later, he is separated for a *special* work (Acts 13:1-3). What was it? In Galatians 1:15-17 and 2:6-10 he makes it very clear that he (and he *alone*) has been commissioned as the apostle to the *nations*. Because he was sent to a different group, he brings a different evangel. In his writings alone is the resurrection of Christ interpreted in terms of present living. He teaches of Christ Jesus, not of Jesus Christ. He alone tells us of the out-resurrection from among the dead, and holds out the hope of being called out to meet the Lord in the air (1 Th. 4:14).

Paul casts away all his privileges in the flesh, "Because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (3:7-10). In the third chapter of Ephesians Paul tells us that he was entrusted with the administration of the grace of God, "that

was given to me for *you*." (The believers among the nations). This secret was given to Paul by special revelation and was not revealed to any other prophet or apostle. Paul's ministry was intended to readjust the saints from law to grace, and upbuild the body of Christ, that they should attain to the unity of faith and the realization of the Son of God, to a mature man. That is what we need today—maturity. If we grasp these things which Paul has revealed, then we become complete in Him Whom Paul is revealing—Christ (Eph. 3:17-19; 4:9-14).

Perhaps, as you study these lessons in Philippians, you may think I am over-emphasizing the importance of Paul's teaching for believers today. However, it cannot be over-emphasized at the present time. The great need today is for mature saints, who know what has been revealed to them through Paul.

All of God's Word is intended to reveal the great Creator and Subjector's way with man, but only Paul's writings are addressed to the nations. When Paul says, "my evangel" (Rom. 2:16, 16:25; 2 Tim. 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1:11, 2:2; Eph.3:6) or "our evangel" (2 Cor. 4:3; 2 Thes. 2:14), he is not referring to any part of the Word of God except what was revealed to him, for us, the nations, during the time when the kingdom is in abeyance, and His earthly people are set aside. So let us go on to maturity by assimilating Paul's teachings.

It was because of the special place that he has as the teacher, the dispenser for the present age of grace, that he could say, "Become imitators of me." He says in 2 Tim. 1:10-14, that he was appointed a herald, an apostle and a teacher of the evangel to the nations; so he is not ashamed of the suffering that has come to him because of this evangel. He knows Whom he has believed and is persuaded that His Lord is able to guard the truth that has been committed to him (Paul) for that day.

CURS AND EVIL WORKERS

At the beginning of this chapter (Philippians 3), Paul utters a serious warning. He says, "Beware of *curs*. Beware of *evil workers*. Beware of the *maimcision*." These are harsh words but they are very necessary. They were written for the admonition of the *saints*, not sinners. Beware of curs—who devour the very things Paul calls refuse and had cast from him; who, though outside the chosen nation, seek to appropriate *for themselves*, those fleshly prerogatives that Paul has cast away. Let us not go to Scriptures which were written to Israel to find today's truth, but let us correctly cut the Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Let us go to Paul for the truth for today, as he (and he alone) is the apostle and the teacher of the nations.

Beware of evil workers. Let us not lose sight of the fact that any so-called "Christian" work that seeks to set up the kingdom without the coming of Christ is striving to rob Him of His glory. The work for today should be concerned with perfecting the body of Christ, not with reforming the world. That is His work when He comes again.

Beware of the maimcision. To the nation Israel circumcision had become a badge of honor rather than a symbol of the cutting off of the flesh. We are the circumcision who have died with Christ and are risen with Him; cutting off the flesh completely and glorying only in Christ our Lord.

Justification, conciliation, reconciliation, the joint-body, the ever-present expectation of being called to meet the Lord in the air, the subjection of all things to Al, the Father, and righteousness by faith apart from works; these things are taught by Paul and only Paul. When you find texts that seem to oppose these teachings, such as "Faith without works is dead" (Jas. 2:20-24), just look at the address. James was written to the twelve tribes. Let us properly cut the word and not try to mix law and grace.

Even in Paul's time the saints were turning from him. "For many are walking of whom I often told you, yet now am lamenting also as I tell it, who are enemies of the cross of Christ." (Phil. 3:18). Many are willing to accept Christ but not His cross, the humiliation and the end of all self-righteousness. We wish to hold on to our works and our own righteousness.

If Paul were alive today he would really lament. For the saints of today have almost universally turned from Paul and have gladly accepted the refuse that Paul cast away. Let us return to Paul's teachings, and become imitators of him. He alone has revealed the truth for today. L.N.G.

Does God Choose Us or Do We Choose Him?

So much interest has been shown in the subject of God's choosing that I find I can answer your questions best with a longer article. The questions summed up are these: Does God do the choosing or is man the one who must choose? If God chooses some and rejects others is He not unjust?

Now I ask you to go to God's Word for your answers and then to accept what you find. It is not wise to question God's authority, His wisdom, or His love.

God, Al, the Subjector, is operating all in accord with the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). All through His Word we find the record of His choosing those who are to carry out His will. Before the creation of the earth God chose Christ for the Sacrifice that would ultimately put away sin (Lu. 23:35, 1 Pt. 2:4).

He chose Abram to be the forefather of His earthly people (Gn. 12:1-3). Isaac was God's choice, while Ishmael was rejected because he was of the flesh, Isaac was the spiritual seed. Neither of them had any choice in the matter. God chose His earthly people Israel, to be the channel of blessing to the whole earth. From that nation was to come the Saviour. Many, many times the Scriptures plainly state that God selected that nation. He it was Who did the choosing, His was the plan and He will yet bring it about. Israel, under Christ, will yet

subdue the earth and subject it to the Great Subjector. (Psa. 105:6, 43; 33:12; 89:3, 19; 106:5, 1 Sam. 2:28; Deut. 4:32-37, 7:6-7; 18:5; Isa. 14:1; Neh. 9:7.) Mary, the mother of our Lord, was chosen to bring into the world the Saviour of men (Lu. 1:26-33). As always, that choice meant suffering as well as joy.

When Christ was on earth He chose His disciples. He says, "Not you choose Me but I choose you." (Jn. 15:16; 6:70). He it was Who did the choosing.

Then comes the time when the nation of Israel was set aside for a season; then God chose and separated Saul for the work that God had prepared for him (Gal. 1:15-16; Acts 13:1-3; Gal. 2:7-10). Paul did not do the choosing. God did the planning, the choosing, and caused Paul to do His will (Acts 9:3-9). We are God's creation and none of us can stand against the intention of God. So Saul was chosen and blinded physically so that he might see spiritually. He was chosen that he might suffer and be a choice instrument of God (Acts 9:15-16; 22:14). So you see again God's choosing can result in suffering and responsiblity, not merely exaltation.

God has chosen the saints of today. This is the most glorious choosing of all. We were chosen in Christ before eonian times (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9). The stupid, the weak, the ignoble, the contemptible He has chosen; so that no flesh can be boasting in God's sight (1 Cor. 1:29). We are chosen, not for anything we have done, but for the honor and glory of God. It is pure grace, an undeserved gift, that in the oncoming eons He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7).

So again there is a responsibility for us, as chosen ones. We should present ourselves to God for His service (Rom. 6:13; 12:1).

The ultimate salvation or condition of those who are not chosen has nothing to do with their rejection at the present time. God wills all men to be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4; Rom. 11:32). What God wills He will bring to pass. At the consummation He will reconcile *all* to Himself (Col. 1:20).

Because He chooses some and chastens others, is God unjust? Never! Read Romans 9:9-25. We are *His* creation. He has the right to do with us as He chooses, to use us where He will to accomplish His loving purpose. He is the Lord and there is no other God beside Him (Isa. 45:6). When He has completed His work we will not question His justice but will praise Him for His mercy, wisdom and transcendent grace.

Now, ask yourself this question: "Could *I* have planned more wisely?"

L.N.G.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY, 1958
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

CELESTIAL IN HEBREWS
(CONTINUED)

ISRAEL as a *nation,* in flesh, has a terrestrial calling. A large part of divine revelation concerns their country and its capital, and their place at the head of the nations, with Christ as their King. But His rule will not be confined to the earth. To Him shall bow *every* knee, celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean (Ph. 2:10). Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, will have a part in His celestial kingdom (2 Ti. 4:18), as well as all other Hebrews who also have this calling today (Hb. 3:1).

The great change which this new revelation has brought about, that a company out of Israel will also be chosen as members of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, His complement for the celestial realms, is explained at some length in the epistle to the Hebrews. In it the writer compares the principal advantages of their earthly position with the much higher and better place above, under the following viewpoints. Their new

CALLING 3:1-6:3 etc.
GRATUITY 6:4-
SERVICE 8:5-
CLEANSING 9:23-
COUNTRY 11:4-
JERUSALEM 12:22

But these Hebrews are not alone in this celestial calling, as their nation, Israel, will be on the earth. They are *partners* with others in this high honor (Hb. 3:1). Literally, they will HAVE-WITH the other nations, on the basis of *faith* and *grace.* When they were called out of

Egypt under Moses, in order to enter their promised land, they had no partner. Indeed, they deemed the other nations as their *enemies*. Their failure to enter was due to lack of confidence in God. So they are warned, lest they should follow the example of their forefathers (Hb.3:12).

Under Moses, they failed to enter the land because of unbelief, and wandered in the wilderness for forty years. The antitype of this is found in the book of Acts. Israel as a whole rejected their crucified and risen Messiah and the kingdom could not come. (Since then, the present secret administration intervenes, in which all blessings are spiritual and celestial. This makes no distinctions in the flesh, and includes those of Abram's seed whose blessings are located in the celestial country over which their Messiah already reigns.) Later, the terrestrial land will also become His kingdom, as foretold in His Unveiling.

The future of those whom God chooses and calls to be members of Christ's body is the highest and most blessed and glorious one. We are not saved in order to enjoy physical delights in a mythical "heaven," without reference to the glory of God or the fate of others of His creatures. All of the seed of Abra(ha)m have a mission, not only to their fellow-humans on the earth, but also to the celestials, both now, while they are still hampered by the flesh, as well as in the future, when they have glorified celestial bodies and have their home above with Christ. These Hebrews lose their superior position on the earth, but gain unutterably greater glory among the celestials.

THE CELESTIAL THEATER

In relation to mankind, the members of Christ's body are ambassadors in order to make known the message of conciliation (2 Cor. 5:20), but in relation to the celestial hosts we are examples of His *wisdom*. We go to humans in our heralding of conciliation, because at present we

cannot reach the celestial hosts except in spirit. Yet they, evidently, can come to us and observe us as in a theater (1 Cor. 4:9) and see the rear side of His wisdom, which they need in order to appreciate the future glory.

Their Celestial Calling (3:1-6:3)

The Hebrews, as believers of the nation of Israel, had a glorious future before them on the earth, among the terrestrials, for through them Christ will not only subdue and rule the other nations, but spread the knowledge of His salvation from pole to pole, as predicted in the Scriptures. The change of some of them from terrestrial to celestial, does not make as radical a change in their destiny as is the case with the other members of the joint body. Yet even in their case it is beyond human comprehension.

God's Stopping

Hebrews, because of their close connection with the divine oracles, should have been teachers. Yet, because of the character of that revelation, which laid much stress on *doing,* they failed to grasp the significance of God's *stopping* (Hb. 3:7; 4:3). As all in connection with the celestial calling is of *grace,* there is *no law* demanding *work* for six days as when God finished the readjustment of the heavens and the earth. There is a stopping also with their priesthood. Israel's ritual was never finished. There was no seat in the sanctuary. Now, however, the Son of God is their Chief Priest. He offered Himself *once for all* and is now *seated* at the right hand of the Majesty (1:3). All connected with the celestial calling is *gratuitous* (Hb. 6:4). On the earth, in the future, the priestly service will continue for an eon. But these Hebrews are beyond that in a new creation, in Christ.

God's spirit *finished* the *work* of preparing the earth for humanity's habitation in six days, so He *stopped* on the seventh day (Gn. 2:2). This literal, physical work,

is the pattern by which He operates in the eonian times, as is shown on the Divine Calendar. When He is All in all, His eonian work will be done. The same is true of all His work during the eons, especially in Ieue's dealings with His land and His people. In Hebrews this is illustrated by means of the exodus from Egypt on the physical plane, and applied to them in the spiritual sphere (Hb. 4:1-13).

THE SABBATISM

In connection with this divine stopping, it is in place to point to some of the errors connected with the Sabbath. When Alueim had *finished* the readjustment work which is described in the first chapter of Genesis, we read that He is *ceasing* on the seventh day from all His work (Gen. 2:2). The translation which reads that He *rested* is fatally misleading, and has caused much confusion. It puts a totally false face on the true meaning of the *sabbath,* for the Hebrew word here used is *shbth,* CEASE. The A.V. itself renders it *cease* more than half of its occurrences, and Wigram's Concordance shows that it should be *cease* in many of the others also. Generally speaking, the A.V. alters it to *rest* when connected with the sabbath, to accord with modern theology.

THE WILDERNESS WANDERING

Israel had been promised the land by Ieue. Had they believed Him, they would have marched right in. But, even as they spent forty years in crossing the wilderness, the nation, in the Acts era, kept on going for forty years in unbelief. They did not enter into *His stopping. Near* was the kingdom to *faith.* Yet, even as they did not enter the land under Moses, but had to wait until all the mature men had died when they crossed the Jordan under Joshua (Jesus, Will-be-saviour), the land was near, but the nation did not believe, so had to wait till all who had refused were dead. Even Moses, who saw it from the heights of faith, did not enter. So it was in Acts.

John, the Baptist, and Christ Himself proclaimed, "*Near* is the kingdom!" Yet it has not come even yet! At that time Israel was under the rule of Caesar, even as the nation had been subject to the Pharaoh, in Egypt. After the passover they were, so to speak, only a few days' journey from the promised land. Then, they could have said, *Near* is the land! So, after the true Passover had been slain, the kingdom was very near, but the nation as a whole was stubborn and could not enter because of unbelief (Hb. 3:18). Even when the forty years of wandering were past the twelve tribes of Israel were typically buried in the Jordan. So it was at the end of Acts. They must be recalled to life before the kingdom comes.

THE PLACE OF HIS STOPPING

The literal significance of entering a stopping and its spiritual illustration is not easily grasped, but the physical illustration of it is quite simple. The Israelites stood before the *promised land* after they had crossed the wilderness. Although they had experienced Ieue's power in subduing the mighty land of Egypt, they did not *believe* that *He* could deal with the much weaker nations in the land! So they had to return into the wilderness.

TWO FORTY YEARS

Only two of those who came to the border of the land at the beginning had faith to enter it, and actually did so, after the forty years. These were Joshua (Will-be-SAViour) and Caleb (DOG). These names are suggestive of the two classes, both members of the joint body, *believing Hebrews* as well as *saints* of the *nations,* for both are given a place in the celestial "kingdom." (2 Ti. 4:18). Our Lord Himself called the Cananitish woman a puppy or, in Hebrew, a *klb*.

Caleb seems a strange name to be given to a man of faith. In Israel dogs had a very low place, so they may as well be called "curs." But a Canaanitish woman,

who had no standing in the flesh, yet had great faith, took that place, and received His blessing. Does not this suggest that there was a faint intimation, even at that time, of a class in the land, who took the same low place as the nations?

FEARFUL HEBREWS

"We" in Hebrews, as in Ephesians, restricts this passage to those to whom the *promise* was made. Even then, it was not effective unless it was *believed.* Israel was given many great and precious promises on the earth, conditioned on their *stopping* their *own* deeds. They were based on *faith in Him,* as when Abraham offered Isaac. Israel, as a nation, did not believe the evangel of the terrestrial kingdom. Only those who did will enter it when the King is on the throne, so, now that this is withdrawn, and the evangel of God's transcendent grace was sent to *all* nations (not excluding Hebrews), the promised blessings are spiritual and celestial.

SABBATISM

It gives us a fatally false impression of the Deity to imply that, after six days of work, He needed a rest. No work can ever tire Him. He did make provision for humanity to rest, by making half of the day dark, when, under normal, natural conditions, work cannot be done. Our Lord said, "Coming is the night, *when no one can work"* (Jn. 9:4). If He had needed rest, He could have taken it in the dark of the sixth day. The fact that He ceased to work on the seventh day is full of significance. His work was *done.* Man's work is never fully finished. So it is today. God's readjustment in Christ is a finished work, and needs no further effort.

THE STOPPING OR CEASING

This lesson, which the Hebrews, and others as well, find hard to learn is this: When God finishes His work, He ceases, or stops, and needs no human help to finish it.

So it was in the physical creation, and so it is in the spiritual. As Paul expresses it, "in grace are you saved, through faith, and this is *not out of you;* it is God's *oblation, not* out of *works,* lest anyone should be boasting. For *His* achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus *for* good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph. 2:10-11). No man had a hand in the old, terrestrial readjustment, and no one can help Him in the new. But Adam did enjoy His finished work, and so we enjoy His new creation, of which we are a part.

In Hebrews this is expressed by the phrase "entering into His *stopping*" (Hb. 4:1), and "consequently a sabbatism is left for the people of God. For he who is entering into His stopping, he also stops from his works" (Hb. 4:9-10). This is the real significance of "keeping the sabbath." It is not merely a natural law calling for a *rest* from labor. Every day is followed by a *night* in which men may sleep, and recuperate their bodies. Even the seventh day has such a rest period.

CELESTIAL SABBATISM

The sabbath is a terrestrial institution. There is no basis for believing that there will be any night in the celestial realms. Indeed, even on the third earth, there will be no night, hence no week, which is measured by this change, and no seventh day sabbath. But the truth presented by the sabbath will be true at all times. The Hebrews will not need *rest* in their celestial bodies, for they will *stop* the labor, the grief, and the sweat, which came in with Adam's sin. In this they are like those of the nations who have the same celestial calling.

This great truth is hid from us by the discordant renderings of most versions. At least a dozen Hebrew verbs are translated "rest." This one is always rendered "sabbath" (*shbth*) as a noun, so the spiritual counterpart was called the sabbatism by the Hebrews (Hb. 4:9).

To carry the figure further, those who substitute the works of the law for faith are *working* on the *sabbath* day, and are under the condemnation of the fourth commandment, which should read as follows: "Remember the sabbath day to hallow it. Six days shall you serve and do all your work, yet the seventh day is a sabbath for Ieue, your Alueim. In it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your servant or your maidservant or your bull or your ass or any beast of yours, or your sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days Ieue made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and is stopping on the seventh day. Therefore Ieue blesses the sabbath day and is hallowing it" (Ex. 20:8-11). Here we are given the reason for the sabbath. It is not that all these are *tired* after six days work. It is not based on their condition at the time, but upon God's *finished* work.

The Hebrew section on God's stopping corresponds to the later expression of His transcendent grace in Ephesians 2:4-13. This may be much easier for non-Hebrews to grasp than the "stoppings" in the Hebrew epistle, even though there are several of them.

THEIR CELESTIAL GRATUITY (6:4-8:4)

The A.V. uses the stem GIVE for about a dozen different Greek words, so it is useless to seek for any distinctions in its pages. By itself, GIVE seems to signify little more than to transfer from one to another. With the prefix BESIDE it may even be used in a bad sense, as when the wicked slave was *given up* to the tormentors (Mt. 18:34). With FROM it means *pay,* as "the Lord will be paying him according to his acts" (2 Tim. 4:14). With INSTEAD in front of this, it means *re*pay, as "vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Ro. 12:19). With WITH it means *share,* as "to share with one who has need" (Eph. 4:28).

GRATUITY—GIVE-GUSH

In contrast to the weak or even vicious sense in these

formations, GIVE-GUSH, gratuity, or oblation, suggests a *spontaneous, rushing* outflow of favor, which, significantly, is used only of the gifts of God (Jn. 4:10, Ac. 8:20, 11:17, Ro. 5:15, 2 Cor. 9:15, Eph. 3:7), and especially of His holy spirit (Ac. 2:38, 10:14) or of Christ (Eph. 4:7). It is closely connected with *grace* in these passages, for only unlimited favor, entirely free of human taint, could account for it. And nothing less than unadulterated, unlimited divine favor could be used in dealing with the members of apostate Israel. Their nation had forfeited its claims to terrestrial blessing, so these Hebrews certainly had no claim on celestial gifts. Faith alone in God's grace entitled them to His celestial gratuity.

The basic thought underlying the idea of a gift or present in Hebrew is the stem STOP (*nch*). Usually, to acquire something, we work for it. If we *stop* work, and it comes to us from others, it is a *mnche*. This is the name of an approach present (Gen. 4:3, Lv. 2:1-14). The A.V. translates it gift, meat offering, oblation, offering, present, and sacrifice, besides using the same terms for other Hebrew expressions. It is distinguished from sacrifices in such phrases as "oblations *as well as* sacrifices" (Hb. 5:1, 8:3, 9:9). These approach presents were given to God in their terrestrial worship. Now, however, the table is turned. The temple and its service are destroyed. Now God, besides providing the one great Sacrifice, presents to them *celestial gratuities.*

In some ways the calling of Hebrews to the celestial realm is more gracious than the call of the saints among the nations. Israel had been the recipient of many rich favors. Perhaps the greatest of these was the presence of their Messiah, the Son of God, in their midst, Who brought them many blessings, both physical and spiritual, and promised them a world kingdom to rule the rest of the nations, and Who was the Antitype of their sacrificial system. Yet they not only crucified Him, but rejected Him in resurrection. Had they not sunk even

lower than the other nations? Did they, or any of them who believed, deserve such a supernal promotion as the change from a terrestrial to a celestial gratuity?

THE ACCEPTABLE PRESENT

These two kinds of presents show clearly what is acceptable to Ieue and what is not. Cain's present was the fruit of his work in tilling the accursed ground. Although a present, it was not pleasing to Ieue. But Abel's present was acceptable because it was a living soul, which could suffer and die for him, and so represented the only One whose death actually was a delight to Alueim.

MNCHE A CONFIRMATION

This criticism of our English Bible does not, of course, apply to the Hebrews of Paul's day, nor even to those of today, especially if they use the Original. We are not familiar with their English versions, but we have been encouraged by a German translation by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, which often confirms our findings, as it is based upon similar principles. In their Leviticus it reads: a human of yours, when nearing Him a nearing (Lv. 1:2). (They never use the divine title Ieue, but use a pronoun.)

They call the ascent approach a *high-gift*. The present approach is called a *toward-lead nearing*. The welfare approach is called a *peace-meal nearing*. Sin is translated *mistake*, and guilt, *deceit*. As these Jews are more concordant than other translators, in that they seek to use the same German word for a similar Hebrew expression, we welcome their effort as an entirely independent confirmation of ours.

Even the *mnche*, or *present*-approach, lacks the usual thought of filling a need. In ancient days the favor of the great and the powerful was solicited by means of "presents." For instance, Jacob, when he approached Esau, as he was returning from his sojourn in Meso-

potamia, sent a "present offering," or approach present to Esau his brother. He said, "a *propitiatory shelter* will I make with the present" (Gen. 32:20). So it was with the queen of Sheba. Solomon was probably the richest man of his day, yet those who came to him brought him more, not to fill a need, but to gain his favor.

GRATUITY OF HOLY SPIRIT

To repeat: Our Lord, seated by Jacob's well gives us the best illustration of the meaning of the term gratuity when He compared it to an internal spring of water, leaping up into life eonian. This word had never been used in the Greek Scriptures before and indeed, is never applied to the grace which was given to the Circumcision before. But, after His resurrection it is used of the *holy spirit* by Peter at Pentecost (Ac. 2:38), and at Samaria (Ac. 8:20), and of Cornelius (Ac. 10:45, 11:17), but of naught else.

In describing the higher truth for today, it is applied to God's gift of righteousness (Ro. 5:15-17). In contrast to a single sin of one man, it overflows to include all the offenses of all men.

JUSTIFICATION

Justification by faith, in contrast to works of the law or forgiveness by sacrifice, is the chief foundation for celestial grace. It is seldom referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures after the time of Abram. Neither is it to be found in the Greek Scriptures except in connection with the celestial calling in Hebrews and Paul's epistles. Roughly speaking, Genesis to Abram, Paul's epistles, and Hebrews have truth for the celestial calling. But from Abra*ham* to John's account and from James' epistle to the end all is for the terrestrial calling. The book of Acts is transitional, beginning with Peter and ending with Paul. The Hebrew celestial calling is closely connected with the *faith* of Abram and his promise of a

seed numerous as the stars above as well as the soil of the land, for they are called a constellation (Hb. 11:12).

TASTING, NOT SWALLOWING

Perhaps the most helpful key to the character of this passage is the word *tasting* (Hb. 6:4,5). It denotes to test by contact with the tongue, as when those who crucified Christ gave Him wine mixed with bile to drink, but, after tasting it with His tongue He did *now swallow* it (Mt. 27:34). Like this, there seem to have been those in Israel in the early days, and even now, who consider Christianity, but are not able to *swallow* it, that is, make it a vital part of their lives. It is worthy of note that this word is used repeatedly here. Paul uses it only once, but he warns against it (Col. 2:21).

Hebrews, who were brought up on the rudiments, could only with difficulty leave these elements and go on to maturity. These believers had disrupted their former foundation, consisting of repentance and baptism and other matters. Even if they should fall aside, it would be useless to repent again, for that is not the basis of celestial blessing but belongs to immaturity, which they are to leave. *These* Hebrews had confirmed their faith by their works, so the writer was persuaded that they could not fall so low. If this is "applied" to a non-Hebrew, as it usually is, it seems to deny the truth of salvation by faith. But this was only a tentative case, which the writer himself was persuaded would not occur. This passage is especially difficult to bring into accordance with Paul's message of God's grace, even if we are unfaithful. But we may misunderstand it.

Christendom today is full of professing "Christians" who have merely *tasted* the grace of God, but never swallowed it. If they apostatize, it is useless to repeat the rites through which they first gained access to the church. Repentance and baptism were necessary for entry into the kingdom, but not into the present ecclesia.

If it brought no spiritual life the first time, it is useless to repeat it.

HIGHER THAN THE HEAVENS

The Greek phrase Higher of-the Heavens is idiomatic and occurs only once in the Scriptures (Hb. 7:26), so depends to a large extent on the context for its rendering and interpretation. At first the C.V. translated it idiomatically "highest of the heavens" as the difference between the terrestrial and celestial regions was not then fully apprehended. Now that these matters have been cleared up, it will be conformed to the literal rendering "higher than the heavens." Those who have the 1944 International Edition will kindly change it accordingly. The context shows that Christ's ministry is not on the terrestrial plane, but above it. The C.V. Sublinear gives the literal original.

CELESTIAL DIVINE SERVICE (6:4-8:4)

The divine service of Israel is not only called an *example,* but a *shadow* of the celestial (8:5). Similarly, the law is only a *shadow* but *not* the very *image* of the matters (10:1). Is not the *addition* of the word *shadow* specially significant in this connection? An example or an image has *substance* and *shape,* so impresses our physical senses. These cast the shadow, especially when the sunlight shines upon the examples or the image. Does this not show that divine service and the law are like the shadow cast upon the ground by the material objects used in the divine service of Israel?

The priesthood in Hebrews is not the same as in the rest of the circumcision writings. The Levitical priesthood was really a part of Moses' commission, but he was unable to carry it out. The ideal priesthood had been examplified before, in the days of Abraham. Melchizedek (KING-JUSTIFIER), combined the two functions, and so became a type of Christ, not in the kingdom on earth, to which the other circumcision writings pointed, but com-

ing to be "higher than the heavens" (Hb. 7:26). On earth there will be a temple and a priesthood when Christ is King. Among the celestials He exercises both functions.

On earth, in the flesh, Israel had a monopoly of things divine. They had the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the legislation, the promises, and the *divine service* (Ro. 9:4). The other nations have none of these things, although some try to appropriate them today with imitation holy places and a sanctimonious ritual, none of which, like that of Israel, is in accord with celestial realities. Unspiritual humans crave visible and tangible objects to help their minds to understand the imperceptible realities of the celestial realm. Therefore even now the divine service which Israel had on earth may aid us to grasp the celestial, spiritual realities by means of these contrasts.

Other nations also offer divine service, but it is presented to the creature, rather than the creator (Ro. 1:25). They change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human and even birds and quadrupeds and other animals (Ro. 1:23). Such worship is fearfully degrading, leading to a disqualified mind and many evils and diseases. In these things Israel had a tremendous advantage, even in the flesh, and even when they failed to grasp the spiritual truth of their ritual. In the flesh they are probably the best preserved of all peoples.

Paul, standing before unspiritual Felix, in order to help him understand his differences with the Jews, claimed to offer divine service, for in reality they observed the external *forms,* while he complied with the inward *essence* (Ac. 24:14). Again when he spoke to the mixed company on the doomed ship, he identified his God as the one to Whom he is offering divine service (Ac. 27:23). In writing to Timothy, Paul once more

refers to his literal divine service. As Timothy's ancestors, on one side, were Israelites, he mentions the literal worship as well as the spiritual reality (2 Ti. 1:3).

LOGICAL DIVINE SERVICE

Today, when we draw near to God in spirit, we need not bring a sin approach, upon a literal altar, because *Christ* has given Himself for our sins and offenses. But there are other sacrifices, such as the ascent and present and the welfare approaches (Lev. 1-3) by which we may express our worship, our praise and thankfulness. These need not be limited to special occasions, or by means of dead carcasses, but by presenting our own bodies as a *living* sacrifice. This is the *logical* divine service in this era of unlimited grace (Ro. 12:1).

The mature truth concerning divine service is given the saints among the nations in Paul's epistle to the Philippians. There we are told to beware of the *maim*cision, for we are the *circum*cision who are offering divine service *in the spirit.* We are to be glorying in Christ Jesus, and to have *no confidence in the flesh* (Ph. 3:3). Now we can see that the fleshly rites are only shadows, of which we have the reality. Instead of cutting off a bit of the flesh, we should crucify *all* of it in spirit. Rather than relying on the blood of beasts, we place our faith in the blood of Christ.

EXAMPLE AND SHADOW

Why is the tabernacle service called both an *example* and a *shadow*? The Hebrews could have taken it as an example of Christ's ministration for Israel in the kingdom, but only as a *shadow* of what He is for those among the celestials (Hb. 8:5, 9:23). As an example, the material of the tabernacle was made of solid gold and silver; copper and cloth, and the shape into which each substance was formed was determined by spiritual truth. The actions of those serving in it were guided by spiritual

realities. But the celestial was much more glorious. The light from the celestial realms, like the sun and the stars, made them appear to be but shadows of the reality.

MORE PERFECT TABERNACLE

The tabernacle was not the final form of worship in Israel. In time it gave place to the temple of Solomon, a much more glorious building, with changes to suit varying conditions. So also with the future temple described by Ezekiel. This, to correspond with Ieue's dealing with Israel in the kingdom, will be much greater and more glorious than Solomon's splendid sanctuary. But the celestial service will have a glory as much greater than the terrestrial as the luminaries above exceed that of the shadows the temple objects cast upon the earth.

THEIR CELESTIAL CLEANSING

"It was necessary, then, for the examples, indeed, of that *in* the heavens to be *cleansed* with these, yet the celestial things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Hb. 9:23). Here is a clear contrast between the things in or above the heavens. Those *on* the heavens demand the sacrifice of the Lamb of God Himself. The tabernacle and its service was an example of the *heavens,* not of the on-heavens, or celestials. For Israel He went into heaven itself, but for these Hebrews He entered the higher, celestial realms.

The Hebrews were well acquainted with the divine service of the nation of Israel on the earth. Now this is shown to be but a shadow of that of the celestials (Hb. 8:5). That on earth was cleansed by the blood of the beasts slain in sacrifice. It needed continual repetition. Now these Hebrews are fully and finally cleansed by the one sacrifice of Christ, which needs no repetition (9:25, 26). In this matter they differed radically from the saints among the other nations who had no divine

sacrificial service before. Yet now they are one with them in the celestial service.

Because of the poor character of the sacrifices they had offered for cleansing from sin in the past, nothing on earth was ever permanently purified. The sacrifices were repeated continually, and will be taken up again in the future (Ex. 39-40). These, however, are only shadowgraphs of the celestial, where the sacrifice of Christ has made a full end of all impurity. As a consequence His one offering has satisfactorily settled for sin and needs no repetition.

The difference between the sacrifice of animals and the sacrifice of Christ is much greater than is usually understood. The thought that each animal *suffered* the same as Christ did on the cross is revolting to our sense of justice even though He was infinitely more sensitive than they. The animals did not suffer as He did. The soul, which enables fleshly bodies to feel, is in the blood. A bloodless body cannot feel pain. As the blood was withdrawn from the sacrifices before they were offered, they were free from suffering. The animals simply symbolized the agony experienced by the true Sacrifice.

THE BLOOD

In Gethsemane (TROUGH-of-OIL), where the pressure on His spirit was like that on olives when the oil is extracted by a press, His sweat became as *if* clots of blood (Lu. 22:44). But even after He was crucified, and the nails pierced His hands and feet, the blood had not been drained from His body, as it had been from the sacrifices offered under the law. That was done after He had died. Then it was that one of the soldiers who pierced His side with a lance head, drew forth both blood and water (Jn. 19:34). Blood remained in His body as long as He was alive, so that He suffered to the end. This it was that cleansed the celestial sacrificial system, and all pertaining to it.

Their Celestial Property

Blessing for the Hebrews, after Abram's name was changed to Abra*ham*, that is, for his soil or sand seed, was based on *obedience* and, later, on law observance. Therefore it has been such a failure hitherto that they, as a nation, not only crucified their Messiah, but they still reject Him as such. These Hebrews to whom this letter was written were an exception, and, like Barnabas and Mark and Paul, had been spiritually severed even from the kingdom apostles and their followers. They depended entirely on God's *gratuity* (GIVE-GUSH), and were under *grace*. This alone made it possible for them to receive such an unmerited place along with believers of the nations, such as was not revealed by the circumcision writers, especially James, in his epistle to the twelve tribes, or John, in his Unveiling.

"For you . . . anticipate the pillage of your possessions with joy, knowing you yourselves have a better and *permanent property* in the heavens." First it may be best to consider the *permanence* of the heavens themselves. Nearly everyone in Christendom holds the opinion that heaven is the safest place in the universe. But Christ Himself insisted that heaven and earth shall *be passing by* (Lu. 21:33). Could it be that the *ep-* (on) has dropped out? It looks very much like the *en* (in), in Greek.

Registered in the Heavens

The point of registry was not necessarily the same as the place of habitation, in Israel. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, where His register was kept, but He lived in Nazareth, quite a distance away, and will reign in Jerusalem, which is higher. So we read that the Hebrew firstborn, as to the flesh, are registered in *heaven,* although they will be citizens of the celestial Jerusalem. Moreover, like Paul's Roman citizenship, it would allow them to go anywhere in the kingdom of Christ from the political standpoint, especially as their celestial bodies

will be like His, so that they can visit the heavens and the earth as well. In fact, when, like us, they hear His voice, they will rise to meet Him in the *air* before they rise to their place in the celestial Jerusalem.

A CONSTELLATION

In our earlier expositions of this theme, we failed to distinguish Hebrews, Passers through the land, like Abram, who were figured by a celestial constellation (Hb. 11:12, Gen. 15:5), from the dwellers *in* the land figured by the soil (Gen. 13:15). So we classed this epistle with the Circumcision writings which deal with the terrestrial realm. The body of Christ in Corinth dealt with the unity of *many members* (1 Cor. 12:12-26). But the joint body in Ephesians is concerned with entirely different matters, such as the allotment, or property, which Paul, a Hebrew of Hebrews, refers to as *our* allotment, which was given to the Ephesians when they were sealed with the holy spirit (Eph. 1:13-14).

Their Celestial Country (11:16-12:29)

The entire universe has been allotted to God's Son (Hb. 1:2). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the first Hebrews, were allotted the land of promise (Hb. 11:9). But they all died, not being requited with the promises, avowing that they are strangers and expatriates on the earth (13), and are seeking a *country* of their own (14-16). Now they are craving a better, that is a *celestial.* It is not clear from this that these three, the earliest Hebrews, will be enjoyers of a celestial allotment?

In the very midst of this section we are reminded of Abram's innumerable star seed. It is called a constellation, a special group distinguished from the rest. In this figure of speech, if each star may represent one of those who are justified by faith, as Abram was (Gn. 15:4-6), then the constellations may suggest characteristic groups of believers, of which the Hebrew constellation

is only one. Is not this a marvelous illustration of the joint allotment which is ours in this administration of God's transcendent grace? Does not this show that, in spirit, the nations are to be joint enjoyers with these Hebrews of the celestial allotment by faith (Eph. 3:6)?

From beginning to end, the story of Israel as a nation is centered in a country in the middle of the land surface of the earth. It is the hub of the terrestrial sphere and will be the focus of earthly rule, with Jerusalem in its midst. It will be the glory of all lands. Yet now for nearly two thousand years, the believing Hebrews have been scattered among the nations, some of them thousands of miles from Palestine. Moreover, until recently, the land was largely desolate and deserted, almost the reverse of what was predicted concerning it, and as it will be in the future. Meanwhile, what becomes of Hebrew believers in Christ? They seek and will receive a better, not terrestrial, but celestial country (Hb. 11:16).

Jews, as a rule, are quite clear as to their terrestrial heritage even though they have been exiled from it for so long. There is said to be a map in Jerusalem which gives its eastern border as the river Euphrates. But very few, comparatively, grasp the great truth which was clearly shown to Abram, that he was to have a *star* seed, as well as a soil or sand seed. This was to be based on faith, not on fleshly descent. About the time that Hebrews was written, the star seed of Abraham was driven out of their terrestrial territory and now are craving a better one. These were promised a celestial country (11:16).

HEBREWS ARE PASSERS

There is a vast distinction between a Hebrew, a PASSER, a nomad who passes through the land, dwelling in tents, who waited for a city in the future (Hb. 11:9, 12:22), and those who later settled in the land and were allotted an inheritance among the tribes. This epistle was so

named to distinguish it from those that follow, which deal with the terrestrial kingdom, in which Paul, the Hebrew of Hebrews, will have no place. Barnabas also, who was a prophet, sold his kingdom property (Ac. 4:36, Hb. 10:34).

"BODY" AS A FIGURE

The human "body" is used in Scripture not only to figure a *spiritual* corporation of celestial believers today, but also of a *physical nation* found upon the earth. This would be very clear in the Hebrew language, especially in a sublinear, where the stem *gu* would always be BODY, but the version, in English, would be *nation*. That is why Jews call us *gu im,* nation s. It has been suggested that this is the reason why this figure is avoided in Hebrews. The word for *nation* does not occur in Hebrews, and the word *body* (*sō ma*) is never used figuratively. It might be confusing to Hebrew readers. The spiritual body of Christ is not a nation, even though the same figure is used for both.

Jesus' literal body was present at the so-called "last supper," yet He said that the *bread* which He broke was His *body*. This could not be a fact, but a figure. So it is with the "body" of Christ in Paul's epistles. If it would not give offense, we might use the word "corporation," as we do in our German literature. Yet it expresses a thought which would be very helpful in grasping the meaning of this figure. Two corporations have often been joined, especially if they have one head and are engaged in the same sphere of operations, even if they are of different rank.

IDIOM—TOGETHER

The sublinear gives the literal rendering, TOGETHER-BODY. But what is the force of the prefix? There are three TOGETHERS here, as follows (Eph. 3:6):

TOGETHER-allottees, or tenants
TOGETHER-body
TOGETHER-with-havers, or -partakers

The term with-havers already means partakers, so the prefix TOGETHER- must mean more. The nations on the earth in the kingdom will *partake* of Israel's physical blessings, but by no means as equals, or *joint*-nations. They will be subordinate. Not so in the *joint* body of today.

These facts show that the word TOGETHER *in this context* indicates that the body is composed of members in which these earthly differences do not count. The English idiom seems best expressed by joint- in contrasting their tenancy and partnership. If possible, we should make use of the same prefix here, lest the reader receive the false impression that the relationship in the body differs from the other two. Literally, in a joint-corporation, the members of one have the same standing as those of the other, after they merge.

PARTAKERS OF THE PROMISE

The Hebrews were partners (WITH-HAVERS) in a celestial calling (Hb. 3:1), although the nation of Israel will by no means be incorporated with the others. Our Lord clearly intimated that He did not even tell them about such things (John 3:12). But the Hebrews had a celestial calling in partnership with others. In both cases this is based upon partaking of holy spirit (Hb. 6:4).

Nobody is mentioned in Hebrews but Timothy (Hb. 13:23). He was the son of a believing Jewish woman, yet of a Greek father (Ac. 16:1). Physically, he was of the nation (Hb. BODY) of Israel, through his mother, yet spiritually he belonged to another nation (BODY) by his father. Is this not a lucid, living illustration of the joint body, which was revealed soon thereafter? The fact that he had been imprisoned, but released at this time seems to suggest that the stage was ready for the revelation of the joint body, which was revealed soon thereafter.

The word heaven*ly* is not the name of a *place* but of

anything which is heaven-*like*. The heavenly *host* (Lu. 2:13) and the apparition seen by Paul were not *like* anything belonging to the earth, but *like* that in the heavens. So, also with celestial, ON-heavens-like. Such things may be present anywhere. Things in the lower heavens are called celestial in Hebrews 9:23. The celestial gratuity was "tasted" by some on earth (Hb. 6:4). The tabernacle, although an *example* of the three heavens, was a *shadow* of the service of the celestials (Hb. 8:5).

CELESTIAL BODIES

"Celestial" is not the *proper name* of a place, but a *descriptive* term which the Scriptures apply to our spiritual blessings even while we are located on the earth. But when our Lord comes for us in the air, we will not only be roused and vivified, but receive bodies like unto His glorious body (Phil. 3:21). After His resurrection He had a body of flesh and bones, but no blood (Lu. 24:39) and ascended into heaven before the eyes of His earthly disciples (Acts 1:9). But when He appeared to Saul with the same body, it was even brighter than the sun. When we hear His shout, we will receive bodies like His, which, though celestial in character, will be able to live in all the lower realms of the universe as well (1 Cor. 15:35-57).

A CELESTIAL COUNTRY

Not only Abraham, but Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, considered themselves *strangers* and *expatriates* on the *earth,* and were seeking a country of their own (Hb. 11:13-16). The general impression in Christendom seems to be that, in the resurrection, they will return to their land, for we are told that many will recline with them in the kingdom of the heavens (Mt. 8:11). But where is there a definite *place* assigned to them? Now they crave a *better* land. But is not theirs the most glorious of all on earth? Consequently, they will be given a

celestial country and will dwell in the new Jerusalem.

Their Celestial Jerusalem (12:22)

The glory of Israel's land in the past and in the future is largely concentrated in the capital, the city of Jerusalem, the Tenancy-of-welfare. There was centered the seat of government and the palace of the king. And there was the magnificent temple of Ieue, the most marvelous of earth's dwellings, for it was the terrestrial residence of the Supreme. But when the unbelieving nation crucified their Christ, and even the believers refused to carry His evangel to the other nations, then a selection, who had been chosen in Him long before there was a nation, are now called above to a higher Jerusalem, the center of all celestial rule and glory.

About the time that Hebrews was written, Jerusalem was destroyed. Yet those who had faith could look forward to a higher and greater Tenancy-of-welfare, where all the special features of the earthly city are found in perfection. Even as the future Jerusalem on earth will be the seat and center of all terrestrial power and welfare, inhabited by the soil-seed of Abraham, so his star-sand-seed will have a city in the empyrean. Here those of the celestial calling, including the Hebrew saints of today, will have their allotment along with those from the other nations.

The Two Jerusalems

The terrestrial Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth will *descend out of heaven.* The nation of Israel, as the bride, will inhabit it. It will be the tabernacle of God among mankind (Un. 21:1-4). Then "the kingdom of the *heavens*" will be located on the earth. The Hebrews to whom this epistle was written, however, look forward to a *celestial* Jerusalem with ten thousand messengers, in accord with their calling (Hb. 3:1). Like Abram, they will not have a permanent home down here.

Christ's twelve apostles will rule the tribes on earth, but they will share Christ's rule above.

THE ECCLESIA OF THE FIRSTBORN

Firstborn is a title almost exclusively limited to the Image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), Who was born into the world (Lu. 2:7). It literally means BEFORE-most-BROUGHT-FORTH. Christ was the first One to be brought forth of the entire creation, and was also the first One brought forth from among the dead at His resurrection. He will be worshipped by all the messengers of God when He is again led into the inhabited earth (Hb. 1:6). Now, however, the title is extended to include a whole ecclesia who are elsewhere called the body of Christ, because of their vital, spiritual union with Him.

REGISTERED IN HEAVEN

The Hebrews were well acquainted with the custom of registration, for it was most important to be able to trace one's ancestry back to Israel and one of his sons, in order to be sure of one's place in the nation. No one could be king who was not of the line of David. The account of Christ Himself, Who could prove His right to the throne by His deeds alone, traces the record of this registration back to Abraham even before the account of His birth (Mt. 1:1-16). His registration in Luke, as the Son of *Adam,* goes clear back to the beginning of the race (Lu. 3:23-38). This entitles Him to earthly rule. But He was also the Son of God, the To-Subjector, anointed to rule the whole universe, including the celestial realms.

REGISTRATION

In the Hebrew Scriptures the book of Chronicles is largely devoted to this matter. In fact the verb "register" occurs only in this book and in Ezra and Nehemiah. But in the Greek Scriptures, while Israel was under the yoke of Rome, this matter is not named but rather the regis-

tration of the Romans, their oppressors. At the time of Christ's birth, His parents had to go to their registrar in Bethlehem (Lu. 2:1, 3, 5). The important point with a Hebrew was to prove his right to a part in the promises to Abraham and to Israel, and this depended on the written records. So now, with the change to a higher realm, they are assured that their name is in the register.

CONCLUSION

Like a golden chain on which many different gems are strung together, this article deals with some of the highest and most spiritual truths God has revealed. Figuratively speaking, we were blinded by their brilliance at first, and only gradually were enlightened to grasp the divine viewpoint by faith, so this is a confession and rectification of our former errors as well. We hope our readers will graciously bear with that which they cannot grasp, or which seems to them unscriptural, and join us in fervent thanksgiving for these, the untraceable, spiritual, celestial blessings which we share with the Hebrews, not because of our worthiness, but because they magnify God's grace and love. A.E.K.

QUESTION: Was God an enemy of man before the sacrifice of Christ for sin? Or was it only man who was an enemy of God?

ANSWER: Basically, God never was the enemy of humanity, as such. It was their offenses that turned Him against them *for their sake,* just as He drove Adam out of the garden *for his sake.* But even then He was propitiated to some by sacrifice. Now the sacrifice of Christ for all makes it possible for Him to be propitiated to all, as it suits His eonian plan. In the present administration of transcendent grace He is *conciliated* to all. Yet His future rejection by both Israel and the nations is the fullness of offense, so calls for the direct indignation.

FAITH PERFECTED BY SACRIFICE

JUSTIFICATION, in the contexts in Genesis, has two different, yet interrelated aspects; divine and human. The divine phase is concerned with the *gift* of the innumerable seed (Gn. 15:5), and the human phase with the *sacrifice* of Isaac (Gn. 22:1-18). It is very important to note that, in the divine act, Abram *was not allowed* to perform a single duty toward its attainment (Gn. 21:1-3), but in the human act he *did many things* when his Subjector told him to offer up his son as an ascent offering in obedience (Gn. 22:2). God has graciously given us these two contrasting examples of faith in the annals of the father of the faithful to help us to discriminate between them (Gn. 15, 22).

In examining the divine record, it will be helpful to consider not only the bare statements, but the whole context, and to note carefully those particulars which have a bearing on the theme. Both Paul (Ro. 4:5, 4:20-22), who wrote to the saints among the nations whose blessings are spiritual and among the celestials; and James (2:21, 24, 26), who wrote to the twelve tribes with the physical, terrestrial calling, refer to Abraham's justification. This will give us the inspired background needed to apprehend the difference between these two aspects, and to see that they do not conflict, but are two ways of God's dealing with his own.

DEPENDENCE ON IEUE

We already know that Abram was not righteous in himself or in his actions (Gn. 12:10-13, 16:1-4, 17:17,

20:2). Nevertheless he was justified by God's activity on his behalf (Gn. 12:17, 13:1-4, 16:7-16, 21:17-22, 20:3-18, 21:1-3).

In what might be called the first "world war" of which God gives us any record, an "eastern" confederacy threatened to conquer the "west" (Gn. 14:1-14). This confederacy even captured Lot and carried him off (Gn. 14:12). Abram had not yet become a strong nation, so, humanly speaking, he was no match for them. Regardless of this, he not only chased them out of the promised land, but restored the booty taken from Lot and Sodom. Abram had been given the land, so he was able to defeat those who had no divine title to it. However, he could go no further. All this would give him a tendency to lean on the flesh. Consequently, Melchizedek met him to remind him that Al, the Subjector, is supreme, and the Owner, not only of the land, but of the heavens and the earth. It was Ieue Who awarded the foe into his hands (Gn. 14:18-21). This battle occurred just before Ieue announced the faith covenant to Abram. Referring to Abram's victory, Ieue assures him that he could not have accomplished this unless He had been his Shield and Hire (Gn. 15:1). Abram's power, for the skillful use of which he was richly repaid, was a gift of Ieue to be used exclusively for the reclamation of that which was taken by the foe. This experience, given to Abram and recorded for us just before he was promised the star seed, was an exhibition of Ieue's power and was intended to illustrate to Abram His ability to fulfill His promises, protect His chosen, and reward those who rely on Him at all times.

Up until this time Abram had received only a partial revelation, the promise of a seed countless as the soil of the land (Gn. 13:16). He was well aware of the fact that he was heirless except for Damascus Eliezer (*Aliozr* SUBJECTOR-HELPER), whom he termed "a son of my

household'' (Gn. 15:3), and who had been adopted for the express purpose of filling the vacant place of Abram's heir. It was a feeble attempt of Abram *to help God.*

However, Ieue had other plans. He bids Abram '' 'look, pray, toward the heavens and number the stars, if you can number them. Thus shall your seed become.' And Abram believes in Ieue Alueim and reckoning it is He to him for righteousness.'' (Gn. 15:5-6). Ieue asked Abram to number the stars, thereby taking him far above the sphere of human operations, and promising him that his seed shall be as the stars of heaven. This celestial revelation of divine glory overwhelmed all of Abram's reasoning, showing him the folly of seeking to *help* Ieue.

Later, Sarah, his wife, proposes to *help* Ieue by obtaining an heir by means of Hagar, Sarah's maid (Gn. 16:1-4). Why did Abram try to help his God again? Perhaps it was the realization that the procreative powers of his wife could not produce even one son, let alone an innumerable progeny. At this point he failed to fully apprehend the omnipotence of God, and was unable to realize that Ieue Alueim has no limitations. Yet, as offensive as this action was, and as much as it might have deserved condemnation, it was justified by Ieue! (Gn. 16:7-21).

Once again, after Ieue has established His covenant, Abram doubts His word and scoffs at the suggestion of a son being born to him (Gn. 17:17). Sarah is also in agreement (18:13). But Ieue, as faithful as His word, visits Sarah (Gn. 21:1-3), and Sarah bore for Abraham a son named Isaac. Even though Abram questioned the human or physical possibility, the promise of Ieue was not doubted in unbelief (Ro. 4:20-22).

Abram, who was already practically dead, becomes to us a picture of resurrection. We must recognize the fact that, like Abram, we are dead in ourselves. Our

justification is not based on *acting* righteously, but on *believing* God and resting our *faith* in Him alone (Ro. 1:17). God needs no help and will accept no help. This is what He taught Abraham. Let us pray that His ability, in Christ, will inspire us to increase our dependency on the One Who is able to raise the dead. Faith such as this is not a dead principle, but a *vital force* which leads a believer to act according to God's revelation.

THE HUMAN ASPECT

The second aspect of justification deals with the sacrifice of Isaac. Ieue said to Abraham, "Take, pray, your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and go you to the land of Moriah, and offer him up there for an ascent offering on one of the mountains of which I will apprize you." (Gn. 22:2). Without hesitation, Abraham takes his beloved son to the appointed place on the third day (Gn. 22:4) and, with Isaac carrying the wood, and Abraham himself taking the fire and knife, they both ascend to the place of sacrifice. Abraham does not falter, not even when Isaac asks, "Where is the flockling?" (Gn. 22:8). Nor does he cry aloud as he trusses up his only son (Gn. 22:9). It is only after he stretches out his hand about to slay Isaac that the messenger of Ieue restrains him (Gn. 22:11, 12). This was the *work* which *perfected,* or *matured* his faith.

James tells us "Abraham, our father, was he not justified by works when offering up his son Isaac on the altar? You are observing that faith worked together with his works, and by works was faith perfected. And *fulfilled* was the Scripture which is saying, 'Now Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness, and he was called 'the friend of God.' You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only." (Jas. 2:21-25).

As the basic distinction between Paul and James is that of faith vs. works, let us consider closely the con-

text in each case. At first Abram did nothing but *look. Ieue* even *brought him forth* outside! (Gn. 15:5).

In contrast to this, note the many *acts* of Abraham's which are recorded in connection with the sacrifice of Isaac (Gn. 22:2): *Take..go..offer..*(3) *rising..saddling..rending..rising..going..came..lifting . . seeing..saying..*(5) *saying..sit..go..worship..*(6) *taking..placing..taking..going..*(7) *behold..*(8) *saying* (9) *going..coming..building..arranging..trussing.. placing..*(10) *stretching..taking..slay..*(11) *Behold* (12) *lifting..seeing..behold!..going..taking..offering..*(14) *calling.*

ACTIONS BASED ON FAITH

In summing up, the messenger of Ieue said (v. 16), "you have *done..not kept back.*" This should show that the faith that justified him was "perfected" by action, or deeds, *based* upon the faith which justified him. Apart from faith, he could not have done any of this.

But this theme is viewed from various standpoints in divine revelation, which are indicated by their names and their place in God's plan, and their corresponding acts. We greatly regret that English usage compels us to use "James," in place of Jacob, especially as the title of his epistle to the *twelve tribes* in the dispersion. He writes in the character of a *slave* (Ja. 1:1). His real name, Jacob, means HEEL, which characterized the son of Isaac only until he came face to face with God at Peniel. Then it was changed to Israel, Upright-with-SUBJECTOR (Gn. 32:28). Before this he was far from being upright (Gn. 32:24-32).

JAMES TO TWELVE TRIBES

James did not affirm that *we* of the nations are justified by works, as many seem to suppose. He writes to the *twelve tribes,* as such, before the close of Acts, when the prophecy of the sixth of Isaiah was being fulfilled

(Is. 6:9-10). Now that the twelve tribes are not in view, and there is no distinction between them and the other nations, it has no application to us today.

James' epistle reads, "You are observing that faith worked together with his works, and by works was faith perfected. And fulfilled was the scripture which is saying, Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness,' and he was called 'the friend of God.' You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only." (Ja. 2:22-24). According to this the basic truth that *justification is by faith in God's word* is taught by James also. But he wants to see it *operating* in the believer, as it did in the case of Abraham later on.

James does not assert it, but asks the question, "Abraham, our father, was he not justified by works when offering his son Isaac on the altar?" In contrast to the statement, "Abram ... *believes* ... and *reckoning* is He to him for righteousness." (Gn. 15:6), this sacrifice of Isaac brings blessing and power to him and his physical seed, and will make them a blessing to all the *nations of the earth* (Gn. 22:16-18). They will have physical blessings among the terrestrials.

ABRA[HA]M TYPICALLY

Abram means FATHER-HIGH. This expresses his position in both the physical and spiritual sphere, for his physical progeny will be the highest in terrestrial rule, and his spiritual sons will be supreme over all. This is suggested by using the figures of soil and sand and stars of those who believe, and who will be roused from among the dead, as he figuratively was before generating Isaac.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

But he also represented the Highest Father in the offering up of Isaac on mount Moriah (Bitterness). This goes far beyond mere righteousness. Like Abraham, the

Divine Father had one Son, His Firstborn, and His immanent affection yearned for the love of all the rest. Righteousness would shield them from His indignation, but would not bind them to Him with the fetters of affection. This He accomplishes by the sacrifice of His Son. Abraham and Isaac are used to shadow beforehand the greatest revelation of divine love that can be, by giving a preview of the great Sacrifice on the very mount on which the innumerable types of it were to be slaughtered later, on the brazen altar. And quite near the place where it was perfected "outside of the gate" as the law prescribed for the burnt offering for cleansing.

At the same time Abraham, as the father of those who believe, enacts the part that should be played by every other believer in this administration. They are called upon, not to put to death their only son, whom they love, but to figuratively crucify their *own* flesh as well as the world (Ga. 5:24, 6:14). This is their just deserts. The *just* deserts of all is death. Abraham and Isaac were figuratively dead. Only then can God reveal His vivifying power and glory. This is the real function of death. It gives God an opportunity to reveal to His creatures their impotence apart from Him, and the transcendent power of His spirit.

DEATH AND JUSTIFICATION

Abram was *dead,* as far as the promise of posterity was concerned, yet he believed that God would act according to His word. Later, after the initial promise was fulfilled, and the son was given, he was told to put him to *death.* As he had already learned that God could raise the dead, he *not only believed,* but *acted* on this belief by preparing everything up to the fatal stroke. He not only believed, but, *because* of his faith, he *hearkened* to His voice. In both cases he recognized God as the Resurrection and the Life. A.E.K.

GWYNNE L. LEWIS

We have just received word of the death of Bro. Gwynne L. Lewis, formerly of Happy Valley, near Riverside, California, but recently of Nassau, Bahamas. Bro. Lewis was a warm personal friend, always active as an evangelist, if not actually carrying on meetings, then working just as ardently by mail. He was a strong advocate of the truth, giving short shrift to any who tried to sidestep the Scriptures, and lean on tradition. During his residence in Happy Valley, his faith was literally as well as spiritually founded on a rock, for he lived in a room the walls of which consisted of an enormous boulder, with just enough cement added to fashion it into suitable living quarters.

For many years he taught a Bible Class in the First Baptist Church of Riverside, not without opposition, but with courage which resulted in many learning of truths which they would otherwise not know. He was instrumental in causing the construction of the Concordant Gospel Van, which was pictured in these pages many years ago, and he lived at 2823 E. Sixth Street, Los Angeles, with the Editor and his son during this period, conducting at the same time a series of meetings in downtown Los Angeles. We shall be looking forward to seeing Bro. Lewis again in that morning! E.O.K.

SARAH LA VIER

We have just learned of the death of our Sister in the Lord, Sarah LaVier of Chicago, Illinois. She had taken an active part in the meetings there until this past winter, in spite of her age, which was 86. Her death occurred on April 15th. We understand that she was formerly associated with the "Open Brethren." E.O.K.

JUSTIFICATION—THE ASSURANCE OF IT

There have been a number of calls for a further tract on Justification, so we are reprinting a tract titled as above, written many years ago by our late honorary agent for Western Australia, Kenneth McKay. This was available in limited quantities years ago. It consists largely of quotations from the Scriptures, and these have been brought up to date so as to conform to the International Edition of the Concordant Version. It will be available shortly after you receive this issue of the magazine, and will sell for the same price as our other tracts, 35 cents per hundred, postpaid. How many can you use? (A sample copy of this tract will be mailed to you free of charge, if you will send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope for mailing it to you). E.O.K.

LAND AND LIFE

THE UNIVERSE consists of three grand spheres: the *celestial,* the *terrestrial,* and the *subterranean* (Ph. 2:10). The highest and lowest are an extreme contrast. Mankind cannot actually see the celestial or feel the subterranean, yet it can learn about both of them by means of the central, the terrestrial sphere. This is composed of four concentric spheres, the three heavens and the earth. Mankind *lives* where the lowest heaven, the atmosphere, meets the land, and learns about the lower spheres by physical contact with the *land,* and about the higher ones *through* the lowest heaven, which makes luminous the rays of the celestial sphere (Gn. 1:16).

It will help us to understand mankind's part in God's grand plan if we recognize the *middle* place He has given it in the universe at present, in order to prepare it for its future position of universal rule under the Man, Christ Jesus. Even He condescended to be a Human for this purpose. Adam was formed of soil from beneath, and the breath of the living, atmosphere, from above (Gn. 2:7). When one dies, his body returns to the soil as it was, but his spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ec. 12:7, Job 34:14-15). To indicate this, his feet are on the ground, yet his head is in the lowest part of the lowest heaven.

As God's Anointed, His beloved Son humbled Himself by becoming a Man, and suffered as such, in order to prepare Him for the highest place in the universe. His humiliation should help us to see why God's lesser

sons and the human race must be given such a low place in the universe. Corresponding to this low physical level, mankind must be humiliated, first of all to enable it to appreciate and return God's love itself, but also to prepare a selection to rule in the celestial spheres along with Christ Jesus. The universe was planned to reveal Al, the Subjector, through Alue and the Alueim, the To-subjectors, by means of their double position.

These thoughts should help us to see why, after the light and the atmosphere had been adjusted to meet the needs of mankind, then the *water* was *removed* from the higher surfaces of the earth, and the *dry* (land) appeared (Gn. 1:9-10). A man *can* live under water for a short time, especially when equipped with apparatus to provide him with air, and to protect him from the increasing pressure as he descends. But God has not conditioned him for such a humid and precarious life, so there is nothing to really warrant such a practice, except, perhaps, in salvage operations.

Humanity, as at present constituted, can live only on the land surface of the earth. The water which had submerged it had to be drained from the higher areas to form a dry surface, suitable for human habitation. This, like the separation of the three heavens, and the water from the solids, was accomplished by gravity. Due to the fact that the solid surface was uneven, probably as the result of the catastrophe which had made it a chaos, it drained away from the heights and flowed into the low areas, forming seas, as it is today.

In readjusting the atmosphere, some of the water was drawn *upward,* but, in forming the dry land, it flowed *down,* in order to dry the surface upon which land life can live. The latter brings us much nearer to the object of the material creation: to form surfaces on which to stage the tragedy of the eons. Some of earth's animals can live in the waters of the sea, but the main actors in this tragedy, the sons of humanity, cannot play their

part beneath the waters. Birds can fly in the air, but they cannot abide there. Animals can roam the earth, but they lack the spirit which vitalized Adam, so could not play the vital role. Humanity cannot inhabit either the sea or the air, so they need the "dry" land, where they can not only live in the light of the first day's work, and breathe the air, and drink the water of the second day, but could subsist on the verdure of the land which appeared on the third day (Gen. 1:9-11).

Goodness is a comparative term, depending on time and place. It is like many of the supposed "contradictions" in the Bible, which are limited to the context in their application. In the beginning, at the readjustment of creation for the first eons, we read that Alueim saw all that He had made, and behold, it is *very good* (Gen. 1:31). Yet, of the future new earth, when the old has passed away, which certainly seems to be *much better* than this one, we read, "and the sea is no more" (Rv.21:1). In the beginning, the sea is pronounced *good* (Gn. 1:10). And *so it is, in the present evil eons,* for it accords with God's purpose in them. It will not be good in the last eon, for it will no longer be needed.

The low position of humanity in the material creation is a clear indication of its humble place at present in the ranks of created intelligences. The psalmist realized this when he wrote (Ps. 8:3):

For seeing am I Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which Thou hast established,
What is a mortal, that Thou art mindful of him?
And a son of humanity, that Thou art noting him?

Even the messengers, between man and the heavenly hosts, are greater in strength and power (2 Pt. 2:11). How much mightier must be the celestial sovereignties, who are above all of these (Col. 1:16)!

At the same time the earth seems to be at the center of creation, if we may so speak. And this corresponds with its function as the stage on which the great drama

of redemption and reconciliation is enacted, and the depths of the Father's heart are revealed. Referring to Christ's ascension, our apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians (4:9-10): "Now the 'He *ascended,*' what is it except that He first *de*scended also into the lower parts of the earth? He Who descends is the same who ascends also, up over all the heavens, that He should be completing all." Christ's humiliation and crucifixion, the lowest moral depth attained by God's creatures, must form a fitting background on the lowest spheres in His creation.

In fullest accord with the low place of humanity, it is physically formed of the same substances as the earth on which it lives. It is inextricably dependent on it for the continuance of its life, so that it is bound by vital ties to its surface. These were provided in the original creation, and readjusted in the six days work. Not only the substances, atmosphere, water, and land are needed to form and sustain humanity, as these were present in the submerged chaos, but they must be rearranged to provide a habitation fit for humanity, as was done before Adam was formed.

Verdure was the first form of *life* upon the earth. Physically it is only a *combination* of light, atmosphere, water and soil, that which had been readjusted during the first two and a half days. Now a vital power was added to form it which is beyond our comprehension, although we possess it ourselves, and are dependent on this very verdure in order to maintain it. Here we find that provision is made for mankind's physical needs even before Adam was formed. This should help us to realize and appreciate God's spiritual provision, for this was created for us even before the disruption (Eph. 1:4).

Perhaps the highest spiritual lesson which verdure is intended to teach us is *vivification* (1 Cor. 15:35-39). The seed of a plant must die in order to sprout. Yet it is not limited to producing one or more seeds, but

produces a whole plant. The body is sown in corruption but roused in incorruption, in glory, in power, changed from a soulish into a spiritual body. This is shadowed forth by the verdure of the earth, which is continually dying and receiving a new life. In the spring, especially, we are witnesses of the power of God in resurrection and vivification (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

Although the animals and Adam were *formed* of soil from the ground, with few exceptions they were not adapted to *digest* the soil itself, but were to repair their bodily decay by means of intermediate forms of *life.* It seems that the serpent alone was condemned to go on its torso, and so swallow the soil itself (Gen. 3:14). In order to teach us the great spiritual lesson of sacrifice, of giving life for life, we are continually compelled, not only to kill the vegetation, to provide us with food, but this is mostly used to feed the animals first. This should teach us the spiritual law that the continuation of our life depends on partaking of the life of an Intermediary, of God's provision.

From the beginning, plants and animals were mortal, and limited in number, so it was necessary to provide a means for their propagation. Therefore plants bring forth, not only stems and leaves and fruit for present needs, but also reproduce themselves by means of tiny offspring with the power of indefinite multiplication. When we realize that a single grain of wheat has the inherent possibility of covering the earth with its from-kind, and that there are untold numbers of other plants with like potentialities, then this aspect of God's work alone should bow our heads in wondering worship.

In this passage we are given the true "origin of *species.*" This Hebrew word is very simple and clear. The stem is the letter *m,* which is used again and again for the connective of derivation—FROM. The word is *m i n,* in which the *i* indicates *causation,* and the *n* a descriptive adjective. This could be expressed in Eng-

lish by FROM-causer, but a word more easily understood is FROM-kind, that is the *kind,* or species, which came *from* the seed of the original plant. A man might make a plausable looking imitation, but he could not give it *life,* much less provide a microscopic part which would multiply itself without limit. This is beyond human comprehension. Even the greatest botanist will find it so, although we were taught that it evoluted, or, like Topsy, "jes' growed."

It seems to be generally supposed that animals have *no soul,* and that this is found only in mankind. But, in God's record of creation He calls all animals souls, whether in the air or in the sea (Gn. 1:20-21), or on the land (24, 30). Later, when Adam was formed, he was put in the same class (Gen. 2:7, 19). What distinguishes a soul from a plant? In Leviticus we read, "the *soul* of the flesh is in the *blood*" (Lv. 17:11). It is the seat of *sensation, feeling.* The sap of plants has no feeling. If the blood is excluded from any member of the body it becomes numb. Living souls may *move about* on the earth, either on the surface of the land, or in the waters below, or in the air above, as fishes, beasts or birds, but plants are *rooted* to their source of food supply.

That the previous eon was more salubrious than this one, seems indicated by the size of the skeletons of some of the animals. They were several times as great as the largest elephants today. But many of the so-called "tracks" may be of much more recent origin. In Arizona they used to show some impressions in stone supposed to be many million years old. But they failed to notice the impress of a human foot on the same piece. Such evidence is worthless. I, myself, erred when I dug a cellar in Eden, in the San Jacinto valley, and found an Indian grave with a primitive mortar and pestle. When I told another, earlier settler about it, she said, "Yes! I knew that Indian!" But there is

enough evidence to show that conditions were much more favorable for soul life on the earth in the pre-diluvian eon, than they are today.

What would humanity do without land? Our very bodies are largely composed of soil. Yet here we come into contact with evil more closely than elsewhere. The land may be poisonous in itself, as an alkaline flat. It produces many a poisonous plant and fruit. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil drew its sustenance from the soil. Good is latent in all evil. That this tree was caused to sprout by Ieue Alueim (Will-be-ing-was SUBJECTOR), is distinctly affirmed. No one else could possibly be meant by this name and title.

Mortality did not make its way into humanity directly through the *darkness* of the first day, nor only through *atmosphere* or *waters* of the second day, nor only through the *land* of the third day, but through the *verdure* on the land, for this was a *combination* of all of these, *the fruit* which grew on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Not the light alone, but its product, and juice and the flesh of fruit, which was the ideal food for mankind before mortality came in. The same four elements, water, light, air and land, however, not only *supported* Adam's life, but also *destroyed* it! What made the difference? The physical food provided by God's goodness for our physical frame, supports life when enjoyed in *subjection* with the SUBJECTOR, but destroys it when partaken in insubjection to Him.

In the human body the members are diverse and have many differing functions. They are by no means of the same rank. The head is above the other members. This illustration is given us to help us to understand, not only our subjection to the Lord and spiritual unity, but also His relation to the Father. Each human has *many members,* but only *one spirit.* Literally we are not a duality, or a trinity, but a *multiplicity* in the *flesh,* yet

one in *spirit*. Our literal body consists of millions of parts, but it is all directed and empowered by a single imperceptible, vitalizing, directing force, called spirit. This is given to us so that we may realize what God is, and how He is related to His creatures.

In order to reveal Himself and His eonian operations, the Subjector made humanity in His own image. He is the Spirit which pervades all and controls all. So each human is given a spirit which also pervades his body and controls it. This spirit not only can subject his own body, but also the spirits of other humans, as well as animals. The spirit of one human can sway over many of mankind, uniting them in thought and action. This is an apt illustration of the divine method of subjection. The ultimate object of this arrangement is to illustrate the operation of the divine Spirit. One operates like the other.

Aside from the life imparted by the spirit, no part of a human can carry on its function. When it comes to the performance of a single task, each member of the body is entirely helpless apart from the vitalizing spirit. This design, especially the relation of the spirit to the material organism, was not the result of chance, or determined by necessity, but was fashioned with the express purpose of illustrating and revealing the relation of the Subjector to humanity. They are flesh and He is spirit. At the same time it also explains the close connection of Christ with God. Just as we cannot do anything apart from our spirit, so Christ, Who had God's spirit, could do nothing apart from it.

Great undertakings are carried out by means of subordinates. The plans are all made ahead and they carry them out. Similarly, Al, the Subjector, operated through Alue, the To-subjector, Who was given an unlimited measure of His spirit. Even after He emptied Himself of His primeval glories, and became a Human, He was

begotten by God's spirit, and was anointed by it for His service. This made them one in spirit. Their activity was all directed to the union of all the rest by imparting this spirit to them.

Al is Spirit. When this Spirit acts through or in another being, two are engaged (not three), but the *action* is *one* and demands a singular verb. In creation, Alue*im* (plural) creates (singular). At least two were active, the Subjector and the To-subjector, but the spirit was one. All was done *by* the Spirit, *through* the To-subjector. In Hebrew it is possible to express this in the word Al-ue-*im*.

The fact that the union of believers with one another and with Christ and God, is like that existing between the Father and the Son should aid us greatly in apprehending the place of the spirit. So we will first search and see what it is that makes us one with one another, and with Christ. In fact, this unity does involve three "persons," God, Christ and the saint. Instead of being a "Person," the "spirit" is both the *bond* that unites them and a description of the one "Person," the Deity. He *is* spirit, and He imparts this spirit to Christ and the saint, and He should be in them that which He will be in the rest of mankind at the consummation—in *all*. Let us keep the end in view, for then the unity will include *all* "persons."

In the beginning of the human race Ieue Alueim blew into Adam's nostrils the breath of the living, so he became a living soul. This has been transmitted to his descendants by means of generation. But the last Adam, the Man Christ Jesus, became a vivifying Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). His *life* did not originate, like all others of Adam's sons, as a result of the breath of the living blown into Adam's nostrils, but was due to another and more direct action of God's holy spirit. Indeed, He was inherently in the form of God, so had to *empty* Him-

self in order to be in the likeness of humanity (Phil. 2:6-8). In doing this, He no longer possessed the spiritual power and glory which had been His before the world was (Jn. 17:5).

Not only was the spirit of God imparted to Him when generated, but, when He became of age, and about to start His ministry, the spirit came on Him from the opened heavens, and a voice testified, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom is my delight." (Mt. 4:16-17). This empowered Him for the kingdom ministry. At the crucifixion, He gave up His spirit, committing it to the Father's hands (Lu. 23:46). In resurrection, however, he was not only roused, and made alive, but became a vivifying Spirit (1 Cor. 15:46). As a result, when He descends from heaven with a shout the dead in Christ will respond and will rise to meet Him in the air, and be together with Him always (1 Th. 4:15-18). He will not be a spirit literally, but He will be able to exhale holy spirit (Jn. 20:22).

SPIRITUAL UNITY

The first spiritual unity of believers was formed by the Son after His death and vivification when He had a spiritual body and was about to be glorified. It was composed of those whom the Father had given Him, who had believed on Him. He prayed for them and said, "Mine all are Thine, and Thine Mine... Holy Father, keep them... that, *they may be one, according as We are*... that they may all be *one, according as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee,* that they may be one in Us..." (Jn. 17:5-21) The oneness of the Father and the Son is *like* that which existed among the disciples, and their union with the Father and the Son. This greatly simplifies the matter, for the spirit which came to them was not another "Person," but a power-conveying *blast*, symbolized by tongues of fire which each one received. A.E.K.

CHOICE

We young people in Christ do have a difficult time *believing* the simple statements of God, but primarily because we heap peaked humps of human tradition, "wisdom" and theology on our backs and then try to trot through the eye of a needle. I do not mean to make an erroneous reference to Scripture, but let me say that a camel would undoubtedly precede such a man into the realization of God's Word simply because its humps are not the snare-inducing thoughts of man. If we believe (have faith) in such theories as the progressive evolution of the ape, it will become a most painful feat to believe the God Who neglects to teach us in His own Book anything so (r)evolutionary. However it may be, let man have his theories and we will look to fact—on the matter of *Choice.*

Haven't you heard Christians insist that a man has a free will and has to choose correctly in any of a number of matters? How joyful we should be that God assures us that He is working *all* in accord with the counsel of *His* will—truly, "all is of God" (2 Co. 5:18).

Primarily, the snare that prevents our believing that all is of God lies in the question of "salvation." Churchianity and auxiliary groups confront the mortal (who, by the way, is actually locked up in stubbornness, subjected to vanity and soulishly disposed against God) with the spiritually discerned choice to make: "Will you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?" Despite the evidence that man, per se, is unable to discern a spiritual matter (1 Cor. 2:11, 14), he is expected to choose in favor of the spiritual and basically foreign concept of "life in Christ." The man in his present state is soulish, and the things of God are stupidity to him. Besides, look at the state of mankind outside of His holy spirit (Ro. 3:10-12). Not one is understanding; no one is seeking out God. God locks all up together in stubbornness, so who gives to Him first to be repaid by Him? (Ro. 11:32-36). The question of choice, then, becomes progressively less apropos. Furthermore, when we read that God saves us (2 Tim. 1:9), we also find out that we play no part, have no action in the matter—it is not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own *purpose.* Ephesians 2:8 and 1:3-12 will emphasize the absence of personal volition in the matter. Even concerning repentance (2 Tim. 2:25), God

is on the action end. Where, then, is there a basis for the question of one's *choice*?

Haven't you heard the zealot shout, "Follow Him, follow Him!" Yet Jesus stated, "No one can come to Me if ever the Father Who sends Me should not be drawing him" (Jn. 6:44), and again He is saying, "Therefore, I have declared to you that no one can be coming to Me if it should not be given him of the Father" (Jn. 6:65). And note the result—many disciples left Him; a choice had not been offered them. This thought should not be strange to him who reads his Bible—Scripture continues to emphasize that He is doing it. Not you choose Me, but I choose you (Jn. 15:16). And aside from the twelve apostles, the whole throng before Jesus were subject to God's intention so that Isaiah 6:9-10 might come to pass: "He has blinded their eyes and callouses their heart, lest they may be perceiving with their eyes, and should be apprehending with their heart..." (Jn. 12:39-40). Once again, no question of choice is before the people although the resulting effect on their lives is momentous.

When decisions are made beforehand in the divine counsel of His will, man is not offered a choice in the matter—all will be effected as *He chooses*, as it is written concerning Jacob and Esau: "For not as yet being born, nor yet putting into practice anything good or bad, that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling" (Ro. 9:11). "I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying. Consequently, then, it is *not* of him who is willing nor of him who is racing but of God the Merciful." (Ro. 9:15-16).

Let's look further. Pharaoh for one (Ro. 9:17-18) had no choice in the matter. Exodus 10:1 explicitly states that God had hardened Pharaoh's heart. Once again, no question of choice. Here again, however, is the matter of *purpose*: Pharaoh was hardened so that God could display His power and so that His name should be published in the entire earth. We know the tradtional practice is to point the finger at *you* and say, "You choose; you decide." So far, however, we find the situation is quite the reverse. Let us turn to John 9:3. Here is a case of one who was blind from birth, not because of some choice, but all in accord with His *purpose*. And Lazarus: A matter of chance, choice, sin? Again no. It was for the glory of God, that the Son of God should be glorified through it (Jn. 11:4).

The same situation exists as we look at the national scene. See Romans 11:7—"Now the rest [of Israel] were calloused, even as it is written, God gives them a spirit of stupor, eyes not to be observing, and ears not to be hearing till this very day." "Callousness, in part, on Israel, has come, *until* the complement of the nations may be entering"—here again, we see *purpose* in God's dealings (Ro. 11:25), in accord with the divine counsel of His will, not our own.

It now remains for us to see His deciding on the grandest

level—creation-wide. Turn to Romans 8:19-21. "For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God." And again He says: "For God locks all up together in stubbornness that He should be merciful to all." (Ro. 11:32).

Have any a choice? Did Esau or Jacob? Did Pharaoh have any choosing to do? Did the blind man or Lazarus have a choice? Did the nation of Israel choose to be hardened or were they hardened so as not to perceive? (Jn. 12:40). Did the twelve apostles choose Jesus or did He choose them? And again, did the creation choose to be subjected to vanity and stubbornness? In Joshua 11:20, who does the hardening?

Apparently, in many a matter, man has no choice to make; God has made it for him. Even in the matter of one's salvation, it is interesting to note that God's apostles never asked the weak mortal to make *the* decision "once and for all." Jesus said, whosoever will may come, but also, only those drawn by the Father will come (Jn. 6:65). So that even in the matter of salvation it is apparently not ours to say yes or no. He is the Potter; we are the clay.

> "God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Ti. 1:9).
>
> "The stupid of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weak of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble of the world, and the contemptible God chooses, and that which is not that He should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight." (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

To say that a man chose to believe in Christ is as valid as to say that a five month old child chose to go to sleep after two hours of crying. In the latter case the child passed out from exhaustion, and in the former the man recognized what had become undeniable, that Christ was real and had died from him. However delightful it is for man to believe that he, too, is sovereign and omnipotent, God's Word stands, especially explicit concerning His own: "Faithful is He Who is calling you, Who will be doing it also" (1 Thess. 5:24). Apart from God's gift of His holy spirit, man is fleshly and soulish and correspondently disposed to all matters; his fleshly state lusts against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17). How, then, can man by his own worldly insight see clearly enough to choose anything concerned with God's divine operations, or anything so spiritually discerned as one's "acceptance of Christ"?

Young people, let's beware of the reasoning and directions

man gives us. If it is contrary to the revelation of Christ, avoid it; if it denies the words of God, refuse it, but pursue the realization of Him by prayer and study. Here is a suggestion I'd like to share with you. "The first requisite to studying the Bible profitably, is to believe it. You are not required to believe what man says about it, but only what God says in it." And, in a nutshell, "It is not a question of our understanding what God may mean, but of believing what He says!"

It is really quite normal for "Me-centered" men to look to themselves and believe they have to do part of the deciding or choosing, but in actuality, they should subject their wills to His. How apt, "Not as I will, but as Thou!" Our will cannot supercede His will. We should joyfully conform ours to His, which does the deciding and is working all together for the good of those who love Him. Let us pray that we might obediently bow to the wise counsel of God's will in every matter as did our Lord. Our part is not to choose, but to conform; our part is not volition, but realization. Aside from all of us, He remains the God of all, Who is also operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will. —CONTRIBUTED

WEEK OF FELLOWSHIP

The believers of the Baldwin Ecclesia are planning a week of fellowship for August 10 through August 17. All are welcome from the age of 14 and older. Rooms and meals will be provided and they are looking forward to a spiritual feast.

This is a continuation of the Young People's Fellowship, held in former years at Almont, and the theme will be Ephesians 1, with emphasis also on the foundation truths of Romans and Corinthians. Speakers already promised are Bros. Raymond Van Dyke of Grand Rapids, and Howard Hough of Almont.

All are cordially invited to attend, and we pray that these meetings will result in the upbuilding of the Body of Christ, and for progress in joy and faith on the part of those attending.

If you plan to attend, please write to Miss Dorothy Johnson, Route 1, Box 470, Baldwin, Michigan, telling her how many will be coming, and the dates you plan to be in attendance.

POSTAL ZONE NUMBERS

The post office has requested us to add the zone number to all addresses on our list, so if you live in a city using postal zone numbers, and your number does not appear on the envelope in which this magazine came, please let us have this information so we can add it, and save delay in delivery of your copy of the magazine. E.O.K.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER, '58
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

OUR CELESTIAL BODIES

THE GLORY of the celestial bodies that we see above us far excels any terrestrial glory (1 Cor. 15:40). The body of Christ when He appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road (Ac. 26:13) gleamed with a glory *above* the brightness of the sun. This is the illustration God gives us in the book of Creation to reveal the glory of His Christ above, as well as ours when the bodies of our humiliation are transfigured to conform to the body of His glory (Phil. 3:21) .

For us, who are eagerly listening for the trumpet which will transfigure our frail frames into celestial bodies, the trend of the times seems most significant. Great bodies (*Hb. goim* BODIES or nations) of people are planning to spend untold time and treasure in order to extend their dominion, not only over all the earth, but over interstellar space, and all in vain, for they have no one who is able to adapt their human, earth-bound bodies to this environment. *But we have!* He is already seated at God's right hand among the celestials, up over every authority and power, and lordship, and every name that is named [See Eph. 1:20-23]. And when our Lord comes for us, then *we will receive celestial bodies* which will enable us to reign with Him in any part of the universe (Phil. 3:20-21).

In Corinth, however, some were saying that there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:12), notwithstanding Paul's testimony to them that he had already seen Christ and had heard His voice. Even after he

had explained the great truths concerning Christ as the Firstfruits, and the *resurrection* and *vivification* as well as the *subjection* of *all* (1 Cor. 15:20-26), still some were protesting, "*How* are the dead being roused? Now, with what *body* are they coming?" (v. 35).

TERRESTRIAL BODIES

With this as his background, Paul appeals to the illustrations in God's material creation, and points out the answers to these questions, which are clearly presented there. By means of the *plants* and the *animals* and the *celestial bodies* above, God has given us a continuous exhibition which should teach us that He gives *life* through *death* in vegetation, and that He *varies* the *bodies* of animals to accord with their environment, and that even the celestial orbs *vary* in their *glory* in accord with their function in God's eonian creation (1 Cor. 15: 35-44).

VIVIFICATION OF PLANTS

"Verily, verily, I am saying to you, if a kernel of grain, falling into the earth, should not be *dying,* it is remaining alone; yet if it should be *dying,* it is bringing forth much fruit." (Jn. 12:24). As Paul rebukes the one who does not recognize this, it must be true. We are told that a *dead* seed will not grow. But a dy*ing* seed is not dead. If it keeps on living it will not produce a plant. It is only when dying that it does this.

RESURRECTION OF VEGETATION

As the vital point is concerned with life after death, Paul points us to the earliest and lowest form of *life* on the earth, *vegetation* (Gen. 1:12), and reveals the fact, not generally recognized, that "what you are sowing is not vivify*ing* if it should not be dy*ing*" (1 Cor. 15:36). This is usually misunderstood to declare that only a dead seed can produce a live plant. But this is not what Paul said. On the contrary, the seed must have life. But the

process of dy*ing* is essential to the *process* of giv*ing* life to the plant which it produces.

A naked *kernel,* when dying, does not simply produce another like it, but a whole *plant*, which may have roots, a stem, branches, leaves, blossoms, and more kernels. The oldest and greatest trees on earth, the Sequoia Gigantea, spring from a tiny seed. The point of all this is: In *vivification, God gives* each one a body as *He wills.* No seed provides enough *life* to its plant to produce it. We are not plants, but the principle remains. *God gives* not only the life, but determines the *kind* of body in resurrection. In our case it will be a celestial body, as will be elaborated later on (1 Cor. 15:37).

God's vivifying power was displayed, at the very beginning of life on the earth, by starting with herbage seeding seed (Gen. 1:11-12). The original plants have died. The earth would be a vast, lifeless desolation now, if God had not *given* the dying *seeds* much greater and better bodies than they possessed at first. He changed them to whole plants, reproducing their kind. In this way God gives us a pre-view of the course of the eons, with each new year, when the seeds sprout. Each human is like a dying seed, yet will be given a better body in resurrection.

THE TWO BODIES

It is not a question of a seed *generating* other bodies like itself, as in animal generation, but parting with its *life* to start a *plant,* with a much greater body. Moreover, the resurrection *body,* which will be given to all humans, is not usually given while their mortal bodies are still living. If they are, as will be the case with some who are not put to repose, then they will be *changed,* for this corruptible body cannot *put on* incorruption, or this mortal *put on* immortality (1 Cor. 15:53).

FLESH BODIES

In His terrestrial creation, God made *four main*

classes of animals, with bodies to suit their functions and environment: *humanity, beasts, flyers* and *fishes.* Generally speaking, mankind and the beasts were adapted to the *surface* of the *land,* the birds to soar in the *atmosphere,* and the fishes to roam in the *waters.* So, also, will God do in resurrection. The bodies of those whose place is on the millennial earth will not be changed in such a way as those whose future is in the celestial realm. But the bodies of mankind must be *changed* before they can live in another environment.

ANIMAL BODIES VARIED

Earth's living creatures are given bodies suited to their special part of God's plan, and to the place in which they live and move and dwell, outside of which they cannot survive very long. Human beings as well as the animals subordinate to them depend on the soil of the ground to produce food for their bodies, and on air to breathe for vitality, so cannot live long away from the land and the atmosphere. In fact, many lose their lives for lack of sufficient nourishment or oxygen.

Although the four forms of animal life have bodies especially adapted to the element in which they live, the line is not distinctly drawn. There are fishes which can fly for a short distance, and birds which can plunge into the water. But in no case can they make a permanent change. A fish needs only to be kept out of the water or a bird out of the air in order to end its life. So it is with humanity. But God has given it over to a disqualified mind, to invent evil things (Ro. 1:28), by which men seek to break the bonds of nature that confine them to their terrestrial habitat.

OUR HUMILIATING CHANGE

Before the serpent lured Eve, and Adam sinned, their bodies were not dying and degraded, as they now are. The serpent, also, did not glide along on its torso, as

at present. The vitality of the human pair probably provided them with luminescent coverings like our Lord's at the transfiguration. After sinning, their bodies began to disintegrate. They had been formed of soil from the ground, but now they began to gradually return to it by dying even while they were living (Gen. 3:1-19). That is why Paul describes them as the bodies of our humiliation (Ph. 3:21).

TWO TERRESTRIAL CHANGES

It is well to remember that the highest and the lowest of the living souls, man and the serpent, have already suffered a *mortal change* in their bodies, so that the present course of soul life on the earth is abnormal and transitory. It will be quite different in the coming Kingdom. When Christ Himself was transfigured before His three principal apostles, the main change was the emanation of *light,* which suggests celestial glory (Mt. 17:2, Mk. 9:2). And those in the resurrection at the commencement of the Kingdom eon will no longer be mortal, being sons of the resurrection (Lu. 20:36). This, however, is in the terrestrial sphere.

TERRESTRIAL BODIES

In the future there are three distinct resurrections, including that of the present ecclesia, which was a secret until it was revealed to Paul (1 Cor. 15:51). The other two occur at the beginning and close of the millennium. The first is called the *former* (not the *first*) resurrection. The rest of the dead do not live until after the thousand years (Rv. 20:5). (The resurrection at the commencement of the millennium is called the "*first* resurrection" in the A.V., which may be misleading, for ours occurs some time before). The kingdom saints will receive terrestrial bodies, for their blessings will be on the earth.

Besides these examples of terrestrial bodies, to which ours also belong at present, and with which we are in

close touch by means of our soulish senses, there are celestial bodies, of which we are aware only by sight. Apart from their emanation or reflection of rays of heat or light we would not know of them. As they are located in the realm in which our spiritual bodies will operate, as the members of Christ, and we cannot see any other objects there at present, they are used to help us to apprehend a little of the various *glories* of our future resurrection bodies.

CELESTIAL BODIES

As our present knowledge of bodies celestial is limited to their light, their different glories are dependent on that, and the effect it has on our spirits. Figuratively, darkness symbolizes *evil,* and light *good.* So that the sun is symbolic of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), yet the moon (which is really dark, and merely reflects some small amount of the sunlight), is a symbol of evil. No light emanates from it, so the light it sheds exposes its own darkness and death.

What a tremendous contrast there is between God's prolonged preparations for the coming kingdom on the earth, and our instantaneous introduction to celestial rule! Are there any other world-wide events in God's plan which will so impress the hearts of His creatures with the greatness of His grace and the fury of His wrath as these two imminent occurrences? We seem to be at or near the very crisis of the eons.

SOULISH—SPIRITUAL

As our revered A.V. has translated the word *soulish* by *natural* and *sensual,* and *soul* itself by *life* nearly half of the time, it is not easy for most of us to see the difference between a soulish and a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). The adjective *sens*ual contains the right thought in its stem, for the present human body has organs of *sens*ation and a nerve system by which it learns of the

world about it. It can feel or smell or taste or hear or see what is within the range of the proper organs, because its has blood in its arteries, and a nerve system which carries these sensations to the brain. This is the kind of equipment needed for humanity's place on the earth, and is shared to some extent with all other animal bodies.

But this range is comparatively limited. If the temperature varies much below or above normal, a soulish body freezes or burns to death. Even a sound may reverberate so violently as to rupture the ear drums. The smell of a noxious gas, or even an *excess* of oxygen has been known to cause blindness. Paul himself was blinded for a time by the celestial glory of Christ, when He first appeared to him on the Damascus Road. It would kill any terrestrial body which might leave its own habitation.

After the *soil*ish, *soul*ish body of Adam had been formed, Alueim blew into its nostrils the breath of the living (Gen. 2:7). Then it became a *living soul* (1 Cor. 15:44). That is what all mankind may be called as long as it breathes the air above the soil from which it was formed. Life leaves it otherwise. Thousands die, even upon the surface of the earth, from lack of it, or from a mere stoppage in the throat.

CORRUPTION—INCORRUPTION

Like the *seed* of a plant when it is sown in the ground, the human body dissolves in death, and *returns* to the *soil,* of which it is composed (Gen. 3:19). And *like* the *plant* which the seed sprouted, the resulting body has *life,* far more than the single seed from which it came. Its vitality is often so much greater that it will result in thousands of seeds like the first. But this is not implied in the figure. Corruption comes from death. Incorruption is the result of superabundant life.

DISHONOR—GLORY

What a contrast there is between a beautiful flower and the seed from which it sprang! Outside the window where this is written is a glorious group of scarlet flowers on a background of green foliage. It is a beautiful tribute to the taste of the Creator, in the physical world. But it is only an intimation of the beauty and the glory which He will create by means of death and resurrection and vivification in the spiritual sphere. It should be a continual reminder of His glorious designs for us in the resurrection.

INFIRMITY—POWER

The strongest human frame is weak indeed, when compared with some of the other animals. But the point here seems to indicate the weakness which comes from mortality, from the dying process, as culminating in death. Even the strongest man becomes infirm because of this. In resurrection this is reversed, not by means of a gradual process, but by the infinite power of God's spirit. Now, mankind cannot even break the bonds that chain it to the earth. In resurrection our bodies will enjoy the freedom of the universe.

FLESH AND BLOOD

Adam, the first of the race, was out of the earth, *soil*ish. But the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. In resurrection we will no longer wear the image of the soilish but the image of the celestial (1 Cor. 15:47-49). Flesh and blood bodies, such as humanity has derived from Adam by generation, are NOT ABLE to enjoy an allotment in the Kingdom of God.

When Adam was formed of soil from the ground he became a *soul* without life. But when Alueim blew into his nostrils the breath of the living, he became a *living* soul (Gen. 2:7). When an animal dies, it becomes a

dead soul (Lev. 21:11). Alive or dead, an animal's *body* has the necessary organs or apparatus to *sense* its terrestrial surroundings, hence is a soul. Indeed, its life is limited to such an environment, for the simple reason that the human body has a sensitive skin and ears and a nose and a tongue and eyes adapted to register a terrestrial range of sensations.

In a soulish body the seat of sensation is in the blood. It belongs to the earth and is dependent on its soil. Now it is a mortal, or dying body, which gradually deteriorates and dies. Flesh and blood would be entirely inadequate for a celestial life. Christ once had a body such as ours, though apart from sin. But when He was sacrificed, He lost His blood. When He was vivified this was not restored, and His resurrection body was quite different from His former soulish frame, so that He could go anywhere, through locked doors and ascend into the empyrean. Such is the body that we shall have among the celestials! A.E.K.

(To be continued)

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

While the regular Manager of the Concern (my father) is away from the home office on a leave-of-absence, it seems an appropriate time to tell our readers of the many small ways in which they could make his task considerably easier when he returns. As most of you know, our office staff is very small, consisting principally of the Manager, and part-time help from the rest of the family when the work-load gets too heavy.

As the amount of record-keeping and governmental report-making continues to "snow-ball," the amount of time left for the ordinary tasks of letter-writing, order filling, filing, and keeping the magazine subscription list up-to-date has become increasingly smaller. And, at the same time, the amount of correspondence and orders for literature has been getting heavier. This, together with the increasingly difficult task of keeping operating expenses at a bare minimum, buying paper and printing supplies at the best possible prices, etc., has made the load on the Manager much more burdensome.

Therefore, in his absence, I am taking this opportunity to make the following suggestions to all of our friends, who, I know, are very anxious and "concerned" to aid us in spreading the glorious truths with which God has so graciously entrusted us. We know that you, as well as we, are anticipating eagerly the publication of the forthcoming volumes of the *Concordant Library*, including a better-bound edition of the "New Testament," The Compiler's Notes

in a special volume, as well as those portions of the Hebrew Scriptures that are ready for publication. But the planning of such projects takes much time and preparation. These important tasks have to be postponed, oftentimes because there is not enough time left for the Manager, after his bookkeeping work, order filling, and correspondence, to take them up. Thus, because publication of these much-needed books must be postponed, the work suffers, and God's saints are deprived as well.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

1. Please PRINT or write legibly your name and entire address *on* your letter *and order*, as well as the outside envelope. Envelopes are often discarded before an order is filled, and then extra time is required to locate your address. Be sure your name is printed plainly somewhere on the letter, because many mistakes in record-keeping and filing have been due to an amost completely illegible signature.

2. Please always use your *zone* number on all correspondence. This will speed our reply and order to you, getting it there usually a day or two sooner.

3. Do not write to inquire about an order until you have allowed a reasonable time for its receipt. If you write an extra letter, this requires an extra reply. Saugus is in a rural area and mail deliveries are rather slow. If we receive your order in the 10 A.M. mail one day, your order will not be picked up at our mail box until 10 A.M. the following morning and will not leave the Saugus post office until 6 P.M. From there it is usually routed to the Terminal Annex post office in Los Angeles for re-routing to your state. Parcel post delivery usually takes a minimum of six days to cross the country and sometimes much longer. So please allow three weeks, at least, before writing to inquire.

Other reasons for a delay in filling your order may be (1) mailing it to our Editorial Office in Los Angeles. Mail is picked up there only twice a week, and orders sent there will be delayed at least one week extra. Mail all orders to Saugus! (2) Failing to make the order plain and clear, or failing to make the name and address plain.

4. When ordering literature, use one of our price lists, if possible. (Unless the order is very small). We will supply them free in any quantity. Our literature is arranged in the racks in the same order as it appears on the price list, so if you do not use a price list, try and arrange the order in the same order as it appears on the price list. If you write your order, use *both* the code number of the item *and* the name, to avoid mistakes. This gives us a double check.

5. If no reply is required, please *say so!* If you do not indicate this, my father always presumes that you wish a personal acknowledgement.

6. Before writing long and involved questions on doctrinal matters which puzzle you, obtain a set of Indexes to back numbers of the *Unsearchable Riches* magazine (we will supply them free), and use them to find out which issues contain articles on the subject. We have a complete file of back issues, paperbound, which goes back to volume 20 and many single numbers even back to volume one. Individual back numbers are 25 cents each, or $1.00 for all the issues in one volume. We will supply you with a complete library of paper-bound back numbers, from volume 20 to date for $15.00, plus $2.00 postage. After you have read the articles in the back

numbers you will be in a much better position to phrase your questions aptly, if any still remain.

7. Do everything you can to create interest in scriptural Scripture study in your community. If literature is needed, we offer considerable discounts when you order in quantity. Inquire and see if your local Bible book store might be interested in stocking the Concordant Version. Explain its unique features. Supply your local library with a copy (or copies), as many will become acquainted with the truth in this way.

Perhaps an advertisement in the classified section of your newspaper will be the means God uses to lead others who are searching for the truth to you. Some have created interest by writing searching questions based on the Scriptures to those who conduct religious radio broadcasts in their area.

Be sure to keep a supply of appropriate tracts on hand to enclose with your letters. Give a gift subscription to Unsearchable Riches to those you think will read it. (Subscriptions begun in September will run until January, 1960).

8. If you wish to help us pay our ever-increasing postage bill (one of our largest expenses), you can save for us the cancelled postage stamps that you receive on your mail (if you are not already saving them for someone). This request applies especially to *our friends overseas*, but we also have use for any United States stamps over the four cent denomination, and also *all* large size U.S. and Canadian stamps (called "commemoratives" by stamp collectors, because they are issued for a limited time to commemorate a significant event). Use these large size stamps on your mail to us, too, if you can get them at your post office. If you send us stamps, do *not* peel them off the envelopes, as this usually mutilates them so that they cannot be sold. Leave a quarter inch of paper around their edges and we will soak them off the paper by a safe process ourselves. In this connection, you may be glad to note that we have just sold our first batch of stamps to a local dealer, and the proceeds will be used to further the work. Save the stamps that we use on parcels to you, as we are careful to use those which are particulary wanted by stamp collectors. If you are a collector yourself, or have a friend who is, you must feel under no obligation to return them. If you would be interested in purchasing some of the stamps we obtain from our friends at very reasonable prices, please contact us. In this unusual way the work is furthered by obtaining funds from items which most of us just throw away anyway.

9. Pray "unceasingly" for the work and for the workers! This is actually the one way that *all* who are interested can really contribute to the spread of the truth. We beseech you for your prayers. Pray for all the saints and for mankind in general. But pray especially and continually that we shall have the Lord's leading in *all* of our activities and that He will make *His* will known to those who He has placed in a position for making the decisions for the Concern. Remember, we count you *all* as members of the Concern, if you are *concerned* for spreading the truth of the glorious gospel of God's grace—the conciliation. God has given us, in His goodness, great and glorious gifts—an evangel to proclaim which really *is good* news! Let us herald His Word—Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching. (2 Timothy 4:2).

D.E.K.

UNITED GATHERINGS IN ENGLAND

The second United Gathering of the year took place at Manchester on May 18, when a goodly company of believers met in Rusholme Hall. Brother Clayton of Sheffield gave an address on "The Deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" in the morning, shewing our Lord as the One Who, by His sacrifice, completely delivers all in God's purpose. In the afternoon, Bro. Bellman, of Stoke, took "Suffering" for his subject, shewing scripturally how God uses suffering and its attendant evils in preparing us for the grand future, when all evils will be absent. The evening address by Bro. T. Harris of Tamworth was on "Beloved of the Lord—This is your life," and traced the believer's course as foreknown, called, directed, and eventually glorified. Much interest was shewn in the truth of Universal Reconciliation in this district, which gives promise of much spiritual fruit.

On June 15 the third United Gathering was held at Sheffield, where Bro. Orton of Nottingham gave a morning address on "The Love of God in Christ Jesus," a vast subject, but what he had time to deal with was much enjoyed. In the afternoon, Bro. Hunt of Manchester spoke on the subject of "Truth," and reminded us of the great privilege we have in God's revealed Word regarding Himself, His Son, and His purpose. In the evening address, Bro. Davies of Sheffield spoke on "Faith," shewing its supreme value to us as members of Christ's Body. All agreed that this day of rich fellowship was one of value in edification and joy in the wonderful truths opened to us in these last days.

The fourth United Gathering this year was held in the Bible Hall, Blackheath, Birmingham on July 13, when about 100 believers had a time of happy fellowship is the things of the spirit. In the morning, under the chairmanship of Bro. Edgar Jones, of Mansfield, a discussion on the standing of Circumcision believers in relation to justification by faith, aroused considerable interest, and the subject is to be continued at the Beeston meeting on September 14. In the afternoon, Bro. Harris of Tamworth gave an address on "Priority in Purpose and Grace," shewing from the Scriptures the many superiorities in God's purpose of grace. Bro. J. Essex of Beeston, gave a delightful address in the evening, on "Christ my Saviour." It was another very memorable day, which all enjoyed. H.W.J.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

GOD'S HEARTFELT DESIRE to make known His innate love for the creatures of His hand and heart poses the profoundest of all problems. He planted a garden with every tree coveted by the sight and good for food, and one tree that assured life, but, in His infinite wisdom, He knew that this alone would not secure Him the affection that He craved, unless all beings were endowed with the power to *perceive* the goodness of the gifts that He gave and not accept them as a matter of course. How could they be empowered to appreciate His presents, and learn to love the Giver? (Gen. 2:9).

CONTRAST

By His innate wisdom He knew that He could reveal Himself to them, and win their heartfelt loving gratitude only by means of *contrasts.* They could not realize or appreciate His goodness, even if they had much of it, unless it could be viewed on a background of evil. For a limited period they would need *both* good and evil in order to realize their essence, and be able to give Him the thanksgiving and worship for which they were created. Eventual deliverance from all evil alone would transform them into the adoring worshippers who would satisfy the craving of His love.

THE TREE OF EVIL

The settled fact that the Subjector Himself introduced evil into the eons is confirmed beyond contradiction by the tree of the knowledge of good *and evil.* No inter-

mediaries had part in its planting. Even the spirit world was not employed. It was introduced into the garden before Adam was placed there. And, indeed, it was the most indispensable plant in Eden, for all the rest together, luxurious as they were, could not impart to Adam any knowledge of the goodness of their Giver.

GOOD AND EVIL

The fact that both good and evil were the fruit of a single tree, so that it was essential for the knowledge of one to experience the other, should make clear to us its double duty. Indeed, the knowledge of *good* was its first and foremost function. The *evil* was only secondary, and is temporary, for it will disappear in the new earth, and be displaced by the log of life, which symbolizes it, for the dead log bears fruit that gives life as well as leaves that heal (Rv. 22:2).

GOD ALONE PLANTED THE TREE

To *begin* with, Ieue Alueim Himself, supreme in eonian time and space, planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Eden's luxuriant garden. This must have been some time before Adam was created, as it grew from a "*sprout*" into a tree bearing fruit (Gn. 2:9). In doing this God used no intermediary, as was the case later, when inducing Adam to eat of its fruit. No one else could plant such a tree, for its fruit combined two contrasting functions. It was a marvelous illustration, given before their commencement, of the interrelation between good and evil. The two were combined, in the same tree, and the fruit imparted an acquaintance with *both*. In Adam we all have eaten of it, and tasted, to some extent, of the evil which prepares us to appreciate the goodness of God's grace.

THE BLAME

Ieue Alueim, as the only Actor in the planting of the

tree, must bear all the "blame" resulting from the eating of its fruit, *if there was any.* True, He warned Adam of the mortality that would result. But He had made the knowledge of *good* contingent on eating, not on refraining. *Adam would never have known good if he had not eaten of the "forbidden" fruit.* He evidently was eating the fruit of the other trees in the garden, but did not realize that they were good, for *goodness cannot be apprehended or enjoyed apart from the knowledge of badness.*

EVIL LIMITED IN TIME

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not planted by "the eternal deity," but by Ieue Alueim, the name and title which is limited to the eonian times. At their consummation His Son will have subjected all to Him, and will Himself be subjected (1 Cor. 15:24-28). The evil of the eonian times is a temporary measure, to make good known, once for all. Yet its effects will be eternal, for its record will be engraved in the hearts of God's creatures, but its presence will no longer be needed.

NO KNOWLEDGE OF EVIL

What if mankind had never become acquainted with evil? Then we would have been neutrals, unable to really enjoy anything. All of God's goodness and grace and love would be wasted on us. Not only the present, but the future also would be a monotonous apathy, without pleasure or affection, with no appreciation, for this depends on contrasts. But when we rejoice in Christ Jesus as Saviour from *sin,* and as Redeemer from *enmity,* then our hearts overflow in the knowledge of His goodness and His grace.

DIVINE CONTRADICTIONS

Before Ieue Alueim planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, He had already made all provisions for the entrance of evil and for dealing with

it, when it should come, by means of the sacrifice of His Son (1 Pt. 1:20), yet He strictly warned Adam *not* to be eating from it (Gen. 2:9, 17). How shall we understand this apparent contradiction? This is the first example we are given of a most important principle in divine dealing, which only those with a measure of maturity can fully grasp. It is quite a stumbling block for the immature, for they reason in ignorance of God's plan and its consummation.

WILL AND INTENTION

Ieue Alueim had made known His *will* to Adam, that he should *not* eat of the forbidden fruit, although it was His *intention* that he should do so. He could not very well force him to do this *personally,* for it would have given a very false impression. Adam was far too immature to understand the absolute necessity of an evil background for the knowledge of good and the appreciation of the grace of God. So it was needful for Him, to begin with, to hide Himself behind a number of intermediaries. Even today, when God's love is fully revealed and vindicated, the immature are stumbled by this transcendent truth.

MATURE EXPLANATION

Not until the beginning of the present administration of maturity are we given a frank explanation of God's dealings with Adam and the race during its minority. Then we are plainly told that "God's locks all up together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Ro. 11:32). In Adam's case we can see it clearly. He could not have been stubborn apart from God's previous prohibition. And he could not have been tempted directly without serious misunderstanding. So Adam's temptation was introduced through a series of intermediaries, Eve and the serpent and Satan.

THE LAW

We have the same apparent contradiction in connection with the giving of the law of Moses. Again and again it repeats "You shall not," so that it gave the immature the impression that it was *God's intention* that they should not sin. Indeed, all who are immature, and that includes the great mass of believers today, not only imagine that Ieue intended Israel to keep the law, but that they also are obligated to do so, although it was never given to them.

PROHIBITIONS

This tree in Eden is the best material illustration of these two principles. The mere planting of the tree in Eden is evidence enough that God's purpose and plan included the knowledge of evil. Why, then, did He *warn* the human, saying, "You are *not* to be eating from it" (Gen. 2:17)? So it was with the law. In it the lesson of the tree was repeated. It was not given to keep them from law-breaking, but for the *recognition of sin* (Ro. 3:19-20), and that the *offense* should *increase* (Ro. 5:20). God's *intention* was to introduce the evils of sin and death. But His revealed *will* was a warning against it.

INTERMEDIARIES

God uses evil only as an eonian, or temporary, means of eternal good. This is difficult to understand for the immature, so is veiled in the earlier stages of revelation by the use of *intermediaries,* spirit beings, through Satan, the serpent, the soulish woman, and her fleshly consort—these are the channels He uses to prepare His creatures to appreciate abiding bliss. Otherwise, like Eve in Eden, they will take all for granted, so cannot love and adore their Creator as a Saviour and Lover.

ADAM

Adam, having been made a subjector, in the image

and likeness of Alueim (Gen. 1:26), was to sway over the lower creation. He alone had been charged not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). It is not likely that he would have listened to the serpent or followed its advice. But the serpent was very crafty, so did not approach him directly. But it knew that the flesh was his weakest point, and so dealt with him indirectly, through his wife who was one flesh with him. Adam himself was not seduced (1 Ti. 2:13-14), and acted only after his wife had eaten and was under condemnation.

The fact that Adam did not eat the forbidden fruit until after Eve had partaken and had involved him and all their progeny in the transgression, makes him a type of the One Man, Jesus Christ (Ro. 5:15). Christ did not sin Himself, but bore the sin of others by voluntarily involving Himself in their offense on the accursed cross. So Adam did not pluck the forbidden fruit himself, but only ate that which his wife had given him after she had eaten.

EVE

Eve blamed the serpent, which, indeed, was more "responsible" than she. It was the craftiest of the field life, while she was not only the latest creature to appear on the scene, but most credulous, and without experience. Evidently Adam had told Eve concerning the forbidden fruit, for she was able to inform the serpent. But she already had an idea that Ieue was unnecessarily strict, for she added that they were *not even to touch it,* (Gen. 3:3). This led her to consider the matter, and test the truth of God's assertion.

We do not know how Eve could tell that the tree was good for food, and that it would make one intelligent, without even touching or tasting it, but almost anything which is forbidden is likely to bring a yearning to the eyes of a human. So she lost what little faith she may have had in the word of Alueim, the Subjector, and

what little confidence she may have had in His care, and took of the fruit and ate it. Her great sin was *unbelief*. To be sure, she believed the serpent, but, by her action, sinned against and offended Ieue Alueim, and, by giving to her husband, involved the whole race in condemnation and death.

EVE'S SELFISHNESS

Eve's threefold line of research into the desirability of the fruit covered all three aspects of her humanity, her flesh, her soul, and her spirit. She found it good for food, attractive to the sight, and desirable to improve her mind. All she was concerned about was her*self*. As the serpent had phrased it, she wanted to be like the Subjectors. Instead of being thankful for the luxury they enjoyed, or, perhaps, endured, she yearned for more. Some of her descendents have had a similar experience. Luxury does not satisfy.

The only sure source of satisfaction lies in obedience to God's word. Since Eve's day millions of her descendents have blamed her for her act—yet have pursued the same course. They hardly consider conforming to God's revealed will concerning themselves.

THE SERPENT

The serpent, in later Scripture, is a poisonous snake, such as bit the Israelites in the wilderness (Nu. 21:6-9). The one in Eden does not seem to have been endued with poisonous fangs, but with a venomous tongue. The fact that this "ancient serpent" is also called the great dragon and Adversary and Satan, who is deceiving the whole inhabited earth (Un. 12:9), shows that, right at the beginning, God used the same spirit-being which will be the chief Adversary of God to the end of the eons.

This first attempt of the Adversary to turn humanity against their Subjector by slurs against His motives is characteristic of his whole course. He commences with a question, put in the form of a statement, as if that is

just what is to be expected of the Subjector. So that is the way He is treating us! This should have been sufficient to warn Eve, not to believe anything the serpent had to say. But she is infected by the false spirit, and so adds her own little slur. The Subjector had *not* said, "Not *touch* it shall you." This opens the door to the first great falsehood, "Not to die shall you be dying," and led to the entrance of sin, suffering and death.

THE EXCUSES—ADAM

None of the intermediary sinners can well be burdened with all the blame. Each one has an excuse. Let us see what they have to say. The man, the first Adam, or human, seems to have been intended for a type of the Second Man, so he has far the best excuse. He did not pluck the fruit himself, but accepted it from the hand of his wife, after she had eaten. If he had not, then she would have borne the penalty alone. She was his helper and complement (Gen. 2:20). So it was that the second Son of Mankind emptied Himself, and suffered even the death of the cross. Adam seems to have had the best excuse.

ADAM THE LOVER

It is not difficult to imagine Adam turning upon Eve after she had eaten of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of evil, and upbraiding her for her disobedience to His command, and reminding her of the awful penalty she had incurred by her transgression. As he knew all this, the question arises, why did he himself follow her example? As we have elsewhere shown, Adam loved Eve, as a part of himself, and here was his first real opportunity to display it. He could not bear to think of his wife bearing the penalty of her offense alone. So the firstfruit of evil among mankind was the exhibition of Adam's love for his wife, a beautiful intimation of the love of Christ for His body, the ecclesia, which led Him to suffer death and estrangement for its sake.

EVE'S EXCUSE

Eve's artless simplicity and lack of experience made her no match for the serpent, the craftiest creature with which she could come into contact. Not having eaten of the forbidden fruit she knew no evil, so could not understand the meaning of dying. Her excuse was that the serpent had "lured" her. After all, the serpent had only emphasized what the name of the tree already implied. They now knew both good and evil.

SERPENT WITHOUT EXCUSE

Why did Ieue Alueim use an animal as the medium through which to introduce evil into the human race? The adversary often uses other means of turning mankind against God elsewhere. Is it not that He wished to make a material mirror to remind them of this important spiritual truth? What other animal is so degraded and repulsive and dangerous as the serpent? Let us always remember that this was not its original form or mode of life, but the result of opposing the word of God. Now it poisons people with its teeth, then it killed Adam and Eve with its tongue.

The serpent was not asked, so made no excuse. So the "responsibility" for the first sin, and the source of all evil on the earth is traced back to one of the lowest creatures on the earth. We know, from later revelation, that this was not the original source of sin. The ancient serpent is identified with the Adversary and Satan who not only deceived Eve, but is still deceiving the whole habitance along with his messengers (Un. 12:9). Thus we have traced sin back to *spirit* messengers, who have continued their evil work ever since.

The role of the serpent, as the Adversary and Satan, has continued ever since, but will be interrupted in the millennium, and finally finished thereafter, for there will be no more need for a deceiver (Rv. 12:9, 20:1-10).

At the consummation, when the love of God has been fully revealed by the sacrifice of Christ, Who annulled the work of the Adversary (1 Jn. 3:8), all enemies are reconciled (Col. 1:20). The serpent, by questioning God's motives, prepared mankind for the work of Christ, which was revealed to them fully on a background prepared by the serpent.

None of these intermediary *creatures*, through whom sin entered the world, could carry *all* the "responsibility", as was the case with the *planting* of the tree, in the first place by the *Creator*. The serpent was a tool of Satan, who, as well as mankind, was a *creature*. The man and the woman were *formed* by Alueim. None of these was entirely to "blame," for each one was only a link in a chain which commenced with the Creator Himself. All was out of Him. Do we *blame* Him for the result? No, indeed, for He had an object in view, His own glory and the revelation of His inmost affection, which *demanded* and *justified* and *transformed* every part of the procedure from a temporary evil into a basis for eternal bliss.

TEMPORARY

The temporary tree of the knowledge of good and evil will be replaced by the log of life in the new earth (Rv. 21:1, 22:2). The present estrangement between God and humanity will prepare for everlasting reconciliation at the conclusion of the eons.

ALL OF GOD—NOT OF GOD

In the conclusion of Paul's marvelous chapter on conciliation (Rom. 11), our attention is called to the *depth* of the riches and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God, to His *inscrutable* judgments and *untraceable* ways. Who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who became His advisor? Or who gives to Him first and will be repaid by Him? The answer is clear: *No one!*

Why? Because *all* is *out* of Him and *through* Him, and for Him. He is the original Cause of *all* and the Channel of *all,* and the Object of *all.* This glory is His for the eons. Let us not give it to another! (Ro. 11:33-36).

This knowledge is very deep, and can be comprehended only by faith, in maturity. His glorious adoration follows, and is based upon the statement that *God* locks *all* up together in *stubbornness* (Ro. 11:32). It takes more than ordinary faith to believe this. Does not an *evil* spirit operate in the sons of stubbornness (Eph. 2:2)? Is not God's *indignation* coming on them? (Eph. 5:6)? Here we have two apparently conflicting statements which would not be true of a human, ordinarily. But it is stupid to reject what we do not understand. Once we realize that He is not a man, but the Creator and Subjector of all, it is not at all difficult to understand it and glorious to believe it.

THAT HE MAY BE MERCIFUL

To speak like a human, God is the embodiment of love as well as wisdom. He was not satisfied with conditions in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve lived in Luxury, for this is the meaning of Eden (*Odn*). Without any background of evil this was taken as a matter of course, which generated no feeling of thankfulness, no response of love in their hearts, for this could not be produced directly. There had to be a counter-irritant. This He had already implanted in them at their creation. They were *stubborn.* To give them occasion, He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and warned them *not* to eat, even though He *intended* that they should do so.

Now we have a procedure which is worthy of our earnest study and deepest meditation. First God introduced love-life into humanity by the formation of Eve, through whom He planned to make Adam stubborn. Next, He used the craftiest of the animals to awaken a

feeling of disaffection in Eve. And she, in turn, gave the forbidden fruit to her husband. Not till then did he sin and offend. Thus the seed of stubbornness was planted in humanity at its beginning, and it has reached *all* of the race. None are excepted. Why did the Subjector do this? Because this prepared a way for Him to be *merciful* to *all,* and so reveal His *love* for them through the gift of a Saviour.

MINORITY VS. MATURITY

There are many examples of temporary evils which lead to permanent good. Take the chastisement of a son by his father. The son may deem it a sore evil at the time, but may remember it as a great good when he is mature. In *minority* it may even seem to be harmful, in *maturity* the evil is recognized as a bringer of blessing. This very example is used in the Scriptures to explain the difference between our position and that of previous administrations. We should understand the benefits of apparent evil and recognize its true character.

In a superficial sense, all opposition to God's word and will is "not of God," *temporarily,* but, at the same time, viewed in the light of final purpose, it also is out of Him. It originates in Him as Creator, yet finally fulfills His intention as Subjector and Reconciler. Even Paul could speak of a time when his knowledge was based on an instalment, yet later he was able to recognize the facts. Even while writing this epistle he could say: "At present we are observing by means of a mirror, in an enigma, yet then, face to face. At present I know out of an instalment, yet then I shall recognize as I am recognized also" (1 Cor. 13:12). But now maturity has come (Eph. 4:13).

Probably the worst that is done, is the popular tendency today to go into reverse, that is, when two scriptures contradict each other, the mature message for

today is cancelled by the immature instruction for the past. Instead of revelling in the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus, many prefer the curses of the law (Ga. 3:10-14). Instead of being *severed* for every celestial blessing with Paul, in Ephesians (1:3), they fall back to terrestrial signs with Peter at Pentecost (Ac. 2:1-3).

Thus we see that, *basically,* evil is out of God, but, instrumentally and temporarily, it comes through His agents, and *is usually ascribed to them during immaturity,* in the Scriptures. But, when maturity arrived, then the Subjector came out openly and declared that *He* locks *all* up together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to *all* (Ro. 11:32). Yet, long before this, at the very beginning He planted the tree of the *knowledge* of evil, and later, in His relations with Israel He used much evil, and even averred that He had created it (Is. 45:7). But this blunt statement does not seem to be conclusive to the immature.

Not only are the blessings of the early Scriptures limited to the earth, but their viewpoint is usually terrestrial. This is especially true when referring to spirit beings, such as Satan and his messengers. It is very indirect. Indeed, in the beginning, that ancient serpent, the Adversary and Satan (Rv. 20:2), is completely hidden behind a representative animal (Gen. 3:1). Only occasionally are we brought behind the scenes, as in Job, where the Adversary is directly commissioned to afflict him (1:12). Yet Job was not deceived, for he says, "*Ieue* gives and *Ieue takes*..." (1:21), even though the latter was not true of Ieue *directly,* in his case. It was done through intermediaries.

Many contradictions will be found in the Bible if we do not correctly partition the word of truth. What was true of Israel is not true of the nations. Scripture came by instalments, and the last instalment had not yet come when Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Previous instalments were abrogated with the advent of maturity

(1 Cor. 13:8-12). This did not fully arrive until Paul's imprisonment. Then, however, it was granted to him to *complete* the Word of God (Col. 1:25). Paul's prison epistles alone give us full maturity. Only they contain no immature enigmas. All previous interpretation must be adjusted to them.

Even our Lord, when He was on earth, could not speak boldly, or openly, to His disciples because of their unbelief (Jn. 3:10, 16:25), yet how many imagine that He revealed Himself *fully* to John, the beloved! But John views all from the terrestrial standpoint, not the celestial. He referred to the higher realms only once to repeat the Lord's word: "How shall you be believing if I should be telling you of the celestial?" (Jn. 3:12). Our blessings, among the celestials, are never even mentioned in John's writings.

From these two instances may be seen the way Ieue works: He operates *through* His creatures with their eventual, eternal blessing in view, He sends them evil *through intermediaries.* In the case of Adam, two are mentioned, the serpent and the woman, although back of them was Satan. But back of him was God.

Why did the Subjector use all these intermediaries when introducing eonian sin and offense into the world when His *ultimate intention* was eternal righteousness and reconciliation? Because His immature creatures would misunderstand and misjudge Him. Until they could grasp His purpose and appreciate His intention, and realize the beneficial effect of temporal evil and estrangement, it was much wiser to keep His distance. *Mankind judges by immediate outward appearances, not by the ultimate reality* (1 Sa. 16:7, 2 Cor. 10:7) . It is only when He imparts faith in His Word, that we are mature enough to judge all by the outcome, and are able to revel in the love that He lavishes on His creatures, even when He subjects them to temporary evil. A.E.K.

THE LINE OF ISAAC

THE NAME REBECCA (*Rbq e*) as it now stands in the Hebrew Scriptures, may mean "Enthraller." The stem, with an *m-* prefixed, is used for *stall* (1 Sa. 28:24, Jer. 46:21, Am. 6:4, Mal. 4:2 [3:20]), so Halter or Fetter have been proposed, but these do not suggest any helpful connection with the woman herself or her history. It is remarkable that the Septuagint spells the name with *two k*'s (*q*'s in Hebrew). The letter *q* denotes STRETCH-TOWARD. Especially when doubled, *qq*, it is used for a *confluence.* Then the name might signify MUCH- or *grand-confluence.* In that case its connection with the two seeds is quite concordant. The spiritual line, represented by Isaac, and the physical line by Rebecca, were united when she became his wife. As a result, the two lines flow together, and produce such deviates as Jacob and Esau. In Rebecca there was a very important confluence, and this may be the vital point in her name and in this passage. (Gn. 22:23).

NAHOR'S SONS

The sons of Nahor's concubine are also recorded, so may have some significance. Taken as a whole, they are suggestive of the brutality of the flesh. As the Hebrew form and the significance of these and other names are given in the margin of the Concordant Version, it will not be necessary to repeat them in this review.

THE WIFE OF ISAAC

Abraham was, doubtless, aquainted with the curse of

Canaan (Gn. 9:25) and believed that that seed would be wiped off the land which God had now given to *him* and *his* seed. So he was most emphatically against any physical corruption through union with the Canaanites. At the same time he knew of the blessing of Shem, and desired to keep within the family to which he belonged. To this day the sand seed of Abraham is very proud of their physical heritage. As he himself, however, had been called *away* from his former home, and from his *relatives* there, he also insisted that Isaac remain in the land of promise. Hence it was that he sent his servant to his relatives, to select a wife for his son. All this is evidence of Abraham's faith in Ieue Alueim.

As his mission was concerned with generation, his chief servant was sworn with his hand on Abraham's thigh, that section of the human body whence the seed comes, and where the child is borne. Ordinarily, Abraham would have gone back himself, with his son, but he believed only what God had said, and he had no divine call to return, especially as Isaac, also, had no instruction to go. As his seed was called in Isaac, there could be no doubt that Ieue Alueim would provide a wife for him in the way of faith. It has been pointed out that, though all this concerned Rebecca more than anyone else, she knew nothing about it. So it is with all whom God calls. They are the subject of God's prevision long before He calls them and prepares them for their part in His plan (Gn. 24:2).

CALLING

The servant evidently did not share Abraham's faith, so he interposed with an objection. What if the woman is unwilling? From the human side this is a very reasonable reflection. How could anyone demand that a maiden should leave her parents and family and acquaintances, to whom she is bound by many a tender tie, and desert them all for an unknown man, even if he is wealthy? If he wanted her, let him come and woo

and win her! Humanly speaking, Rebecca's might be a very risky course of action, dependent on the capricious emotions of an impulsive maiden. But the Subjector controls even these, so that what seems unwise and hazardous is sane and safe in His all-embracing providence (Gn. 24:8).

SYRIA OF THE TWO STREAMS

Syria (*Arm* Most-HIGH) of the two streams, usually called Mesopotamia (Mid-streams), seems to be the height between the *upper* reaches of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, although this expression applies equally well, and is loosely used of the lower plains in Babylonia also. *Arm-nerim* (HEIGHT-streams) must be a region *north*-east of Palestine. I once received the impression from the name Mesopotamia that the servant went due east, over the desert. But, when I crossed it, from Damascus to Baghdad, we found only one place to get water, Rutba Wells. So it seems likely that the north-eastern route was generally taken, even to Babylon. Later this region is called Padan (*Phd-n* RANSOMed) also. (Gen. 25:20).

THE EUPHRATES

It may help the student of the Hebrew Scriptures to have a clear impression of the course of the Euphrates river, which is the principal one of the two streams. The other river, the Tigris, is probably the same as the Hiddekel (LIGHT [fleet]-ONE Gn. 2:14). This stream is *east* of Assyria. The Euphrates is *west* of it, so forms the north-eastern, angular boundary of the land promised to Abram. This stretches from the river of Egypt, which is small and in the south, to the great stream, the stream Euphrates (Gn. 15:18). Thus Israel's holding will be bounded almost entirely by water, for the sea is in the west. By far its longest boundary is the Euphrates (*Phrth* FRUITful), a fit name, for the land along this

stream is famous for its fruitfulness. It forms the greater part of the "Fertile Crescent."

ARARAT

The route of the head servant, therefore, was mostly northward, avoiding the arid eastern desert, which leads to the lower reaches of these rivers. A flowing stream must descend, and one as long as the Euphrates, from the mountains of Ararat, cannot descend very swiftly unless it ends far below sea level, like the Jordan (DESCENDER). So Eliezer *ascended* to reach Syria (*Arm* MOST-HIGH). Perhaps we should take this as an indication that the sand seed came from a source higher than the sea shore, to which it later descended, and may figure the mass of the physical seed of Abraham. As to the flesh they had a high start in the maid of Aram.

WOMEN AT THE WELL

Women at the well in the evening are one of the most striking scenes in the orient. We observed them at Ain Karim, a spring southwest of Jerusalem, and also at Siloam, to which came the women of the village across the wady of the Kidron, who climbed up the ridge and went down the stairs to the pool, as the approach in the wady was closed. They carried the water in earthen jars or five gallon tin cans, balanced on their heads. This compels them to walk very erectly, for they could not balance the jars or bear their weight otherwise. This is an excellent exercise, for it gives them an upright carriage. They never seem to spill any water, except on purpose. I was staring at the women ascending the stone steps at Siloam, when, all of a sudden, one of them, above where I was standing, seemed to trip, and I thought her jar was going to fall. But she quickly balanced it again, and the water went just where she intended—in my face. The women enjoyed my plight even more than I did!

Eliezer, standing by such a well, hardly had the faith of Abraham, so he did not appeal to *his* God but to Ieue Alueim, the Subjector of Abraham. He not only asked for a sign, but proposed one himself. No doubt he and his camels were very thirsty and needed the water to prolong their life. So they represented, in a way, the need of Abraham, who required a wife for his son to promote his life-line. And the one who was eager to serve the servant with water would be likely to serve the son in propagating his progeny. As the whole affair was of God and according to His revelation hitherto, it was an immediate success.

The Masoretic text and the A.V. omit some phrases in this narrative, which are supplied by the Septuagint. In verse fourteen it adds "till they should finish drinking." Camels can drink a lot of water, and, in a case like this, where a single spring must serve a city, it may have been scarce. So we get the impression that Rebecca ('Grand-confluence') would supply the thirst of Abraham and Isaac *fully*. In the next sentence, after "ere he finished speaking," "in his heart" is added by the Septuagint. This gives it the touch of truth. It was not a mere outward sound, uttered with his lips, but the inmost desire of his heart, which only God could hear and answer. Rebecca certainly did not hear him, for she came forth even *before* he finished his prayer.

Here we have a good illustration of how things "happen." For a man of faith, nothing is a mere matter of chance. Indeed, so it is even with unbelievers, though they have no faculties to perceive it. In fact, even all their physical perceptions are very limited in scope. Some of the lower animals can see and hear and smell objects and sounds and odors imperceptible to a human eye or ear or nose. But God not only *perceives* all, but *controls* all. So it is that events conform to our prayers and wishes only so far as these are in harmony with

God's grand and gracious specifications, which He made before the eons, and which will be correctly carried out to the minutest detail, when these are consummated.

THE CALLER

Some very spiritual teachers have taught that the servant was a type of the holy spirit in this "Church" period, seeking a bride, or wife, for Christ. But now that we differentiate between the bride and the body of Christ, it seems more fitting to confine the servant's antitype to the terrestrial calling. The call of the present ecclesia, or *body* of Christ, was a *secret* in Abraham's day, and also when Christ was on earth. The servant's mission prefigures the call of Israel, the *physical* line.

THE ENRICHMENT

In full accord with the promises to the physical seed, Abraham's servant presents Rebecca with the evidences of his master's wealth. These promissory presents are tokens of the terrestrial treasures which are the portion of Abraham's seed, which have already come to them in the past, before they enjoy the fullest measure of His wealth, after the marriage, in Christ's kingdom. They were given the land itself and its produce, and rose to great riches in the days of Solomon. In eastern lands, it is customary for a woman to display her wealth by means of rich ornaments and coins worn as part of her headdress. These were not given to enhance her beauty, which was quite unnecessary, and, indeed, has the opposite effect on a female of "exceedingly good appearance," like Rebecca.

DIVINE LEADING

As servants of Christ, we can learn much, even from Eliezer. He did not put his own feelings first at the happy outcome of his mission so far, and *thank* Ieue for it, but *worshipped* Him, and said: "*Blest* be *Ieue.*" Only then he mentions himself and his mission, saying,

"*Ieue* has guided *me* to the house of my lord's brothers." Being an old and experienced traveller, no doubt he knew very well how to find his way about. But to travel all that distance, and meet the object of his search immediately in such an auspicious manner, could hardly be hoped for by a mortal. The divine leading was very evident.

LABAN

As the story of Dinah, Jacob's daughter, shows, the brothers of a maid were responsible for her in those days (Gn. 34). In this case, especially, *we* would expect her father, Bethuel, to take the prinicipal part. Her father, indeed, joins Laban when the question of her departure comes up (24:50). But, at first, Laban (WHITE) ran out to meet the servant of Abraham (v. 30), and, first of all, he saw the pendant, and the bracelets on his sister's hands. This first glimpse of Laban shows his avaricious character, for it implied that there was more to come in which he might share. But, later on, the son of his sister, Jacob, who doubtless inherited this trait from Rebecca, was more than a match for him, relieving him of not only two daughters and their maids, but flocks and herds as well.

THE INHERITANCE

It is instructive to see how much greater was the heritage of the spiritual than the physical seed. Isaac was given a flock and a herd and silver and gold and servants and maids and camels and asses (24:35). Even after Abraham married Keturah, and had six more sons, we read, "And giving is Abraham *all* which is his to his son Isaac." (Gn. 25:5). Those who belonged to the physical seed only were sent away during his lifetime, with gifts. They were sent to the land of the East, where Isaac was not allowed to go. But Jacob, the fleshly heel, did go, and was not counted as spiritual seed until he returned and had his name changed to

Israel (Upright-with-SUBJECTOR). At the same time, these easterners, like Jacob, probably prospered in their earthly inheritance, but Israel's seed went into the bondage of Egypt, to be trained for their greater spiritual heritage.

DELAYING TACTICS

After the faithful servant had explained his mission and given due credit to Abraham's Subjector for its success up to this point, he first leaves the decision to Rebecca's father, Bethuel, and Laban, her brother, who decide in his favor, even before asking the maid whether she was willing. This was not only in line with the customs of the time and country, but in accord with the spiritual lesson that the woman should be subject to the man, and the flesh to the spirit. But then the flesh interferes and tries to delay matters. Alas! This is too often the case. But Alueim can control even the flesh. In this case He has settled this for her when she was born and given the name Rebecca ('Great-Confluence'). For in her, as in all humans, He had implanted the desire for a union, and this is not inclined to delay.

THE BLESSING OF REBECCA

Rebecca's brothers were not spiritual. Laban's character comes out very clearly later in his dealings with Jacob. So they have no blessing like Abraham's seed, although they have an intimation of it, as is shown by their words to their sister: "May you become thousands of myriads, and may your seed tenant the gate of those who hate them" (Gn. 24:60). But the last clause is not at all in line with the star seed. Neither are the attendants of Rebecca, her wet-nurse and her maids.

REBECCA'S WET NURSE

Deborah, Rebecca's wet-nurse, is worthy of special notice. It seems to have been a custom in those days that the wet-nurse remain with a well-to-do maiden for

life. The spiritual lesson lies in the fact that, not only did Rebecca receive life from her mother, but she had a different and later source of life from another woman. This may give a hint of the two seeds, for the soil seed, the physical life, comes first, and the spiritual later. In line with this is the fact that Deborah was a very close and dear friend of the family, so that, after Jacob was changed to Israel, when she died, she was buried with special honors under an oak in Bethel, and it was named Allon-bachuth, Oak-of-Lamentations (Gn. 35:8).

ABRAHAM'S LATER WIFE AND SONS

Corresponding to the sons of Nahor, Abram's brother, and Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel (father of Laban), we have the sons of Abraham himself, by Keturah (25: 1-4). This is somewhat premature historically, as the death of Sarah and the marriage of Isaac intervene. But, spiritually, it belongs to the soil seed, the fruit of the flesh, for the spiritual seed are called only in Isaac (Ro. 9:7).

Keturah is called Abraham's *concubine* in 1 Chr. 1:32, not *wife* as in Genesis. At any rate, she cannot be in the same rank as Sarah, the mother of the promised seed.

ISAAC

From this point onwards Abraham fades from the scene. Isaac is found by himself, having fared forth to worship in the field. Moreover, he is at a well called Lehi-rai (*L chi-rai*, To-LIVE-mirror). His mother had died. He is by himself, and is worshiping in the wilderness, in which, however, he has a hidden source of refreshment. Is this not a marvelous miniature of this solitary link in the spiritual star seed? Are not we also in a wilderness, away from all earthly exuberance, alone in our worship of our Subjector, with His Word at hand, in which we may not only see a clear reflection of ourselves,

but enjoy the refreshment of living, life-giving water? And have we not a loving expectation of meeting One Whom, having not seen, nevertheless we love with our whole heart?

THE MEETING

Isaac, having worshiped with bowed head, may have unburdened his heart concerning the great crisis in his life, with sweet submission in regard to the wife whom Ieue Alueim would provide for him. He lifts his eyes, and lo! Camels are coming! We do not read of any such spiritual attitude or meditation or worship on the part of Rebecca, who is to supply the earthly seed. She is high upon a camel's back, and tossed to and fro with the restless undulation of the beast of burden's broken gait. Is not this in quavering contrast to Isaac's silent saunter? Is it not another animated picture of the terrestrial seed? The unbeliever is like the surging sea, for quiet it cannot be (Is. 57:20). And a ship of the desert is even more disturbing than one that is wafted over the waves.

ISAAC MARRIES

We can easily imagine what a mother's boy Isaac must have been, and how she must have poured out her love upon him, the single son of her extreme old age. And, no doubt, Isaac reciprocated her affection, and he keenly felt the loss of his mother when she was taken away by death. Her tent was now empty. Therefore Rebecca was doubly welcome, not only for her own sake, but as filling the vacant place left in Isaac's heart by the loss of his mother. And her tent was ready for her. So it is when one responds to the call of God. We do not enter a strange, unfurnished habitation. All was prepared beforehand. So it was also with the terrestrial seed. The land was not empty and uncultivated when Israel entered it, but ready for their reception. And so it will be in the future. The star seed is even better prepared than this, so that they receive resurrection bodies.

KETURAH'S SONS

Abraham's sons by Keturah, added to Ishmael and Isaac, makes eight sons in all for Abraham. But these were not included in the promise, which was confined to Isaac. The line of Jacob, with his twelve sons, were given names which were prophetic of the future, whereas the names of the sons of Keturah seem to have been given later in life, as descriptive of the character or accomplishment. They are better called appellations. Jacob, the Heel, had both kinds of names. He exposed his character even at birth, when he took hold of Esau's heel. But he was given a star-seed name at Peniel, when it was changed to Israel.

KETURAH'S GRANDSONS

The firstborn of Keturah, Zimran, does not seem to have carried on the line, for no sons of his are on record here. The second son, however, Jokshan, had three. Of Medan none are given. Midian had three. Sheba was his firstborn. The Hebrew gives only one more, but the Septuagint inserts Thumun. Both of these are dropped and the line is continued through Dedan, the third son. The great grandsons of Keturah were five. The first two of them are supplied by the Septuagint and Syriac versions. The first is Raguel and the second, Nabdeel. The third great grandson, Ashurim, varies little from that of the second son of Shem (Gen. 10:22), who probably was the ancestor of the Assyrians. He seems to have been the forefather of an Arabian tribe. Dedan's fourth and fifth sons were named Letushim and Leumim. Being in the plural, it may apply to an Arab tribe, the Beni Lam.

Midian, the fourth son of Keturah, also had five sons, whose names are important enough to have a place in divine revelation. The firstborn was Ephah, the second Apher, the third Enoch, almost the same as the son of

Cain (Gen. 4:17) and the father of Methuselah (Gen. 5:18). The fourth was named Abida, and the fifth and last, Eldaah. These, we are told, are *sons* of *Keturah* (25:4). Sonship has a much higher meaning in the Orient, than with us. This is exemplified in what follows. Abraham gave gifts to these sons of a concubine, and sent them away, so that, at his death, Isaac was his sole heir, not only of his possessions, but especially of the much more precious promises of the land and the kingdom. The others went eastward, where some of them developed Arab tribes, so that, in large measure, the Arabs claim descent from Abraham, although he so clearly disowned them. This has caused constant strife between the two, as it does to this day.

ABRAHAM'S DEATH

And these are the days of the years of the lives of Abraham—so reads the literal Hebrew. In his case, at least, this idiom may suggest a great deal. His life was nearly all bright, with hardly any darkness, and he enjoyed two lives, so to speak, one of a hundred years until his bodily powers decayed. Then they were rejuvenated, given a new life for seventy-five years more. This was more than twice as long as most men live today, so he was satisfied. This is a physical, literal illustration of the vitalizing, invigorating power of justification. It brings peace and contentment, and, in his case, earthly blessings and great wealth. We who are justified today should enjoy all this, but in a higher, spiritual sphere. Yet the contentment of *faith* furnishes a powerful rejuvenator, so that, even today, it vitalized the frames of the infirm, so they can even glory in them, as in the case of Paul and of Timothy (2 Cor. 12:9, 1 Tim. 5:23).

ANNALS OF ISHMAEL

As far as the physical seed is concerned, Ishmael is the first-born. Compared with Isaac, he had a numerous

progeny, for he begat twelve princes, each of which became a clan, whereas Isaac had only two, Esau and Jacob, and neither of them were in the line of faith until Jacob became Israel. Moreover, neither Isaac nor Jacob settled any part of the land at that time, whereas the clans of Ishmael seem to have occupied quite a little of the sandy stretches in what was later called Arabia, not far from the shores of what was later called the gulf of Suez, or the Red sea, and the Arabian gulf—the southern rim of the Arabian desert. But they seem to have lost their identity in the course of time. Along with the descendants of Ketura, the inhabitants of this region claim Abraham as their forefather.

As we are given the names of Ishmael's sons, these may be significant. Those who are interested will find their Hebrew names and probable significance in the margin of the Concordant Version of Genesis.

ISHMAEL

We are told very little of Ishmael's history, as he was not in the line of promise. Indeed, besides the length of his life, 137 years, all that is related is concerned with his *death.* As it stands, the territory taken over by him and his sons is rather indefinite. The fact that they *tabernacled* seems to show that they were nomads. "Havilah unto Shur," according to the latest maps seems to indicate the whole western coast line of what we call Arabia, opposite Egypt, with Shur in the north and Havilah in the south. But it seems to have gone as far to the east as Assyria. Before his birth Ishmael was described as a wild ass, his hand against all and all to be against him. Ever since, Israel, representing the promised seed, has been subject to inroads from these desert marauders, who portray the enmity of the flesh and its fight against the spirit. A.E.K.

QUALIFYING CONTEXTS

THE CONTEXT is vital in qualifying the meaning of words. In these days of chain references and concordances there is a strong tendency to ignore the *setting* of words. This is quite as essential to a true interpretation as to grasp their *meaning*. Moreover, the lack of close scrutiny of the context leads to apparent contradictions and obliterates vital distinctions. Those who do not use microscopic care in consulting the context will often be able to find passages which seem to deny some of the great and glorious truths for which we stand. We will consider a few of these. We hope that the examples given will lead all to canvass the context at all times, before coming to any conclusion.

JUSTIFICATION AND CONDEMNATION

We have taught, and will continue to teach the great doctrine of justification by faith. We deplore the fact that the preciousness of this grand truth has been destroyed by mixing it with pardon or forgiveness. We insist that a pardoned criminal *cannot be justified.* We further assert that the rendering of the A.V., that, "all the world may become *guilty* before God" is incorrect, and subversive of the truth. It should read, "*subject to the just verdict* of God" (Ro. 3:19). Justification is acquittal. It is vindication. It pronounces the defendant *not guilty*. One who has been pronounced not guilty by a judge cannot be pardoned by an executive. "Conse-

quently, nothing is condemnation now to them that are in Christ Jesus'' (Ro. 8:1).

But do we not read that *all mankind* are condemned? It was for all mankind for condemnation (Ro. 5:18). Here, in the same epistles, we have two utterly contradictory statements. We may put them thus:

There is no condemnation
All mankind are condemned

Both are true. But both are utterly false outside their own context. One is in Romans five. The other is in Romans eight, verse one. One is in Christ Jesus. The other is in Adam. One deals with the individual sins of believers. The other is the penalty of Adam's one transgression. One fends from future indignation. The other has brought upon us suffering and death. In Adam we are now serving our sentence. In Christ we have been acquitted.

The scope of the fifth of Romans has been almost universally ignored. In the third chapter, while sentence is not passed on the unbeliever, there is no question but that he will be condemned in the judgment. He is not justified as to his *own* sins, and will not be at that time. He will suffer fury and affliction (Ro. 2:9) suited to his sins and will enter the second death. But, in the fifth chapter, the whole race is constituted just with reference to Adam's offense. The condemnation came from one man, at the beginning of the race's history. The justification will also come from One, but at the close of the eons. In between these two, men are sinning and will be acquitted or condemned with reference to their own deeds.

JUSTIFICATION AND PARDON

Another disturbing context is imported from Colossians. We have said that justification obviates the possibility of pardon or forgiveness. But some one turns to a concordance and finds the same Greek word in the prison epistles, and immediately concludes that we are

mistaken. How we wish that we could burn it into the hearts of students of the Scriptures that, while the *meaning* of words may be determined by the occurrences, *the resultant interpretation must include all of the context and accord with the scope.* In Romans we are in the courtroom. The decision is handed down by a Judge. The language is legal. In Colossians we are in a kingdom, the subjects of a Sovereign. The language is governmental, and is the same as that used of the kingdom for Israel.

Colossians is the corrective of Ephesians. There also we read of forgiveness (Eph. 1:7). But, lest we confuse this with the pardon proposed by the evangel of the circumcision, the word is immediately guarded and glorified by the added phrase "in accord with the riches of His grace." The previous kingdom pardon was temporary and terminable. It was so probational that many who were once enlightened fell aside (Heb. 6:4-6). It had little grace. We have much. It could be lost. We cannot lose ours. There is an unutterable gulf between a probational pardon and the wealth of favor which is ours in Ephesians. We have no right to ignore the qualifying phrase.

But why use the royal figure of pardon, or forgiveness, in the perfection epistles, rather than the legal figure of acquittal, as in Romans? At the time that Romans was written, the nations had no standing in the only kingdom then in view. All is either individual or racial. The King had been rejected. After the revelation of the secret there was a great change. Christ is acknowledged as the Head of the universe (Eph. 1:10). The heavens are included in His sway. Not only that, but Colossians introduces us to a new kingdom, quite unlike that spoken of by the prophets, and by our Lord and His twelve apostles.

The coming kingdom will displace the kingdoms of this world. Not so that of Colossians. The Father *already* has rescued us out of the authority of darkness and has transported us into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col. 1:13). It is by this spiritual Sovereign, Who op-

poses the wicked spirits (rather than their earthly dupes), Who has already rescued us out of their clutches, though we are still subject to earthly sovereignties, it is with Him as spiritually regnant that we have the *deliverance,* the pardon of sins (Col. 1:14). We have not only sinned against the Deity, but, we once walked in accord with the chief of the aerial jurisdiction, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness (Eph. 2:2). As the subjects of Satan, we opposed the spiritual sovereignty of God's Son. This is a political crime, and calls for pardon, not adjudication.

In the Circumcision evangel, pardon is by no means deliverance. Those who have studied this word concordantly have seen that it means much more than redemption. It is its fulfillment. We are as independent of the powers of darkness now as Israel will be of the governments of earth in the millennium. Here again we may make two contradictory statements:

The kingdom is future.
The kingdom is present.

Both are true. Ordinarily we would object to the second, because it is usually associated with much Scripture which is for the future. The kingdom of Christ, of the Son of David, of the Son of Man, of the nation of Israel, is future. Then earth's present governments will go. These are not disturbed now. Only the spirit powers, who really rule, have lost our allegiance. We are in the kingdom of the Son of His love.

LIFE AND VIVIFICATION

Emphasis is attained by repetition. The statement of an obvious fact not only stresses its force, but may specialize its meaning. If a man tells you his occupation, knowing that you are perfectly aware of it, he expects to impress you with his standing in his profession. Our Lord used a notable phrase when speaking of the two resurrections. He called one a resurrection *of life,* the other a resurrec-

tion *of judgment.* If we will turn to the description of the latter in the Unveiling, we will find that its subjects do not *live* until after the thousand years (Un. 20.5). Indeed, how can there be a resurrection *without* life? So there seems a surface contradiction. The resurrection of judgment *seems* to be called a resurrection of life.

The same distinction is made by the apostle Paul in the fifteenth of first Corinthians. *In Christ* a resurrection or rousing becomes a *vivification.* A resurrection outside of Christ is not "of life." In the Unveiling this is further enforced by the statement that the *dead* were seen standing before the throne (Un. 20:12). It will only lead to confusion to ignore the context in Corinthians, and argue that those before the great white throne are alive. They are not alive *in Christ.* Paul speaks only of vivification *in Christ.* "As in Adam all are dying, so in Christ shall all be vivified," cannot refer to those out of Christ. They will not be in Christ until long after this judgment.

WORKING OUT SALVATION

Many who have seen that Paul's perfection epistles are for us have never clearly differentiated between them. Philippians, especially, should be contextually expounded. It was not written by Paul the *apostle.* The word apostle does not occur in it except when applied to Epaphroditus, the apostle of the Philippians (2:25). It was written by two *slaves,* Paul and Timothy. It is concerned with the *service,* the *experience,* which follows the teaching of Ephesians. It does not deviate from the doctrine there developed. Unfortunately the phrase "work out" has the idea of solving, accomplishing, and leads to a false idea in Philippians (2:12). The C.V. rendering is much better: "Be carrying your own salvation into effect." Yet even the A.V. would lead no one utterly astray if they would only confer with the context: "*for* it is God that worketh in you." The context often corrects discordant translations.

Another section of Philippians has suffered greatly from dislocation (3:4-16). The subject is *the example of Paul.* It is followed by the exhortation, "Become imitators together of me." (3:17). Paul forfeited all his fleshly advantages, in order to

know Him
the participation of His sufferings
the power of His resurrection
to attain to the resurrection
out from among the dead
not that he already obtained
or had already been perfected

The possiblity of having attained to the "out resurrection," at the time he wrote the epistle is admitted, but the fact is denied. He is not speaking of actual resurrection, but its *present power* to affect his conduct. The sufferings of Christ are past, yet we may participate in them in our experience. The out-resurrection is future, yet we may walk in its power now. This is a present attainment, not a future reward. No doubt it will be rewarded, but literal resurrection is a part of the gracious salvation which is a part of that which is ours in Christ, not in ourselves. A.E.K.

1958 BALDWIN FELLOWSHIP REPORT

While rejoicing in the spiritual blessings of Ephesians 1, those who attended the 1958 Fellowship at Baldwin, Michigan, August 10-17, were continually reminded of the practical truths for everyday living with which all of the Apostle Paul's letters are so beautifully balanced; ideal acts which God makes ready beforehand that we should be walking in them.

Speakers included Howard and Dean Hough of Almont, and Raymond Van Dyke and B. A. Baker of Grand Rapids. Subjects included "The Glories of our Great God," the life of Daniel, the use of the Concordant Version, "The Day of God," and discussions were held on "Prayer," "The Secrets of the Greek Scriptures," and "Peace." Sweet fellowship was enjoyed by all those who were privileged to attend, and a spirit of joy and loving kindness prevailed. D.M.J.

FEAR

The emotion of fear is one that every normal human seems to experience. An infant that has never known hurt or pain has an instinctive fear of falling, fear of a sudden noise or a harsh voice.

When Alueim created man and the other animals, there seemed to be no fear between the animals and man. Neither man nor the other animals killed for food or clothing (Gn. 1:29-30). So there was no reason to fear each other. Neither did man fear Ieue Alueim. It would appear from Genesis 3:8 that Ieue Alueim was accustomed to visit with man in the garden and they did not fear Him until Adam disobeyed, bringing death upon the race and with the death penalty came fear.

The serpent, the craftiest of all field life, approached Eve. There was communication between man and the animals then. Eve was not surprised as we would be if an animal spoke to us. Man was to subdue and rule the animals (Gen. 3:1). But Eve failed to subdue the animal and instead listened to his insinuations that Ieue Alueim was not treating man as He should. She yielded to his temptation, disobeyed Ieue Alueim's command and came under the death sentence. Adam, seeing that his wife was under this sentence, deliberately accepted the fruit, knowing the penalty; thus becoming a type of Christ, the Second Adam, Who took upon Himself the sin of the race. Then when Ieue Alueim came to the garden in the cool of the day to communicate with Adam and Eve, for the first time they knew fear, and hid themselves in the garden. Man is afraid because of sin and tries to hide from his Maker.

Sin brought death to the animals also, and with death comes fear. With all creation to choose from, Ieue Alueim chose to kill an animal to provide clothing for Adam and Eve. That was to impress upon man's consciousness the seriousness of sin. Only a slain animal could provide a covering for sin; just as only the shed blood of Christ could redeem man from the thraldom or the penalty of sin.

After the deluge Alueim put the fear of man upon every living thing. He also gave man the animals for food. Animals also became meat eaters, whereas before the flood only fruit and vegetation was food for man and animals (Gn. 1:29-30,

9:2-3), so fear fills the whole earth. The animals fear each other and man. Man fears many of the animals and his Creator.

The so-called "Old Testament" has much to say of fear. Men are admonished to fear God. Nations fear each other. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10). But when we come to the accounts which deal with our Lord's earthly life, there is less mention of fear and more rejoicing. Paul seldom mentions fear and often tells the ecclesias to rejoice.

Today fear is rampant in the world. Nations fear each other, men fear insecurity, taxes, high prices, war, poverty, famine, sickness, death, drought and insects. The even fear their own children, and the future. What is to be done about all this fear?

There is only *one* answer—*know God!* He alone can cast out fear and there is only one way to know Him. Study His precious Word. If we learn His plans for today and for the future, then there will be no room for fear.

FEAR NOT

Have you ever noticed how many times God has told someone to "Fear *not!*"? To Abram Ieue said, "You must *not* fear, Abram! I am your Shield, your exceedingly increased Hire." (Gen. 15:1). This was after Abram had rescued Lot from Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

When Hagar became discouraged and left her son alone to die in the desert, the messenger of the Alueim called from heaven, "What is the matter with you, Hagar? You must *not* fear for the Alueim hears the voice of your lad." When she hearkened and believed, her eyes were opened and she saw a well of living water.

To Isaac God says, "You must *not* fear", after he had been driven from two of his own wells by the herdsmen of Gerar. Then Abimelech goes to Isaac for a covenant of friendship because he sees that Isaac has a powerful God. So Isaac obtains peace in the land.

These examples are repeated over and over. These words are spoken to Jacob (Gn. 46:3), to Joseph's brothers (Gn. 50: 19-21), the children of Israel (Ex. 14:13), to Moses (Num. 21: 34), the widow of Zarephath (1 Ki. 17:8-16), by the messengers to the women at the tomb (Mt. 28:5), and in the Unveiling (1:17).

God does not want us to fear what we must meet from day to day; He wants us to *trust* Him for whatever lies ahead. When we believe Him He gives us His peace, just as He did to those whose examples of faith are recorded in His Word.

John, whos writings were intended for the Circumcision in the time of judgment, says, "Perfect love casteth out fear." 1 Jn. 4:8. Paul, who writes for the body of Christ, whose writings are especially applicable today, says, "For God gives us not a spirit of timidity but of power and of love and of

sanity." (2 Tim. 1:7). To the Romans he writes (8:15), "For you did not get slavery's spirit again to fear, but you got the spirit of sonship in which we are crying, Abba, Father."

When we realize what a wonderful God we have, then we no longer fear. As children we turn to our Father when fear assails us. "Abba, Father!" It is a cry of confidence and love. So we face the future without fear, filled with joy in our hearts. Fear has only been the black background on which His glorious grace now shines out, to eventually bring joy and peace to all His creation. L.N.G.

MRS. JESSIE MARSH

Mrs. Jessie Marsh passed away unexpectedly at her home in Howard City, Michigan, on May 29, 1958, at the age of 62. Mrs. Marsh loved her Lord and as a faithful member of the Body of Christ was a true ambassador of the dispensation of the conciliation. She loved to read and present to others the Concordant Version of the Sacred Scriptures. She made use of every opportunity to teach the truths that were so precious to her.

Pastor B. A. Baker brought the message to her many friends and loved ones present at the funeral. Soon her body of humiliation will be transfigured to conform to the body of His glory. B.A.B.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES"

We are happy to announce publication of a book by this name written by Warren Y. Kimball, of Dedham, Mass. Attractively bound, and containing 106 pages, this very readable book gives an illuminating study of many Scriptural terms. Although it is intended primarily for young people, it will be found interesting and profitable by all. It would be a help to those who are interested in studying the Greek language of inspiration. It may be ordered from the author, Warren Y. Kimball, 302 Mt. Vernon Street, Dedham, Mass., for $2.75 postpaid.

CHRISTIANIKON SUMPOSION

The above is the title of an 82 page booklet by our brother Iōannou Kopnelê, of Athens, Greece. As is evident, even to the English reader, it is a Symposium of Christian teaching. We hope that its attractive two colored cover, showing a group of young men listening to a teacher who expounds the Scriptures, will draw many more to join them in considering the gracious and glorious truths which were first made known by Paul, in their ancient mother tongue. For this and other literature in Modern Greek apply to Kounelên Bas, Amalias 25, Amarousion, Athens, Greece.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER, 1958
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME FORTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

AS THIS NUMBER is the last one of the forty-ninth year of the publication of UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, it leads us up to the fiftieth year. In Israel this was called the *iubl*, or jubilee, in which liberty was proclaimed throughout the land, when all returned to their own freehold, and slaves were set free. It was introduced by the sound of the trumpet (Lv. 25). Is this not suggestive of our present position, and, indeed, of all who have a celestial calling?

Not only are the perilous periods of the last days present among the nations, but Israel is recognized as a nation once more, with a remnant restored to their promised land. Never before has mankind so proudly ignored its terrestrial bonds and sought to invade the realms of space by its own devices. Never before have the powers of nature in human hands threatened to destroy the race as at present. The "united nations" has prepared the way for the false messiah of the time of the end.

Let us look up and listen for our *shofar*, our *jubilee!* When we hear the shout of command, the trump of God, our bodies will be *changed*, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, to celestial, spiritual bodies, with power and glories and honor far beyond the vain dreams of godless "scientists."

But, if He should tarry, and we are still here, we hope to conclude the series we are now running. *Studies in*

Genesis will be concerned mostly with the careers of Jacob and Joseph. The series, *Untraceable Riches,* will seek to further develop the special truth for the joint body of this administration. Other subjects of special interest at this time will receive attention.

We also hope to have ready, D.V., a new edition of the Concordant Version of the New Testament, "International Edition," which is presently being revised and readied for publication in Europe. We hope to have the Book of Isaiah ready, also, in the same style and format as the Concordant Version of Genesis.

Work is in progress on a complete subject and reference Index for the first fifty volumes of UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, which we hope to have ready for publication with the final number of volume fifty, a year from now.

Work has also been started on another volume of the *Concordant Library,* which will include the Compiler's Notes, newly revised and improved, but similar in content to those found in the Complete Edition of the Concordant Version, now out of print. We hope to have this helpful volume in print sometime next year, if the Lord wills.

Later on, we also plan to begin typesetting the completely revised edition of the Mystery of the Gospel, for which we have received so many requests, and which we have been unable to reprint for many years.

Your prayers for the work and for the workers will continue to be greatly appreciated, as we endeavor to use the forthcoming "jubilee" year to spread the transcendent truths of God's glorious grace as revealed by our beloved apostle Paul—which alone are able to set at liberty the hearts and minds of those in bondage to ignorance and misinformation. May God guide and grace these efforts to give out *His* truth, that it may indeed make men *free!* THE EDITORS

Have you renewed your subscription for 1959 yet? Do it now!

FAITH PERFECTED

THE UNFOLDING FAITH of Abram went through many phases before it was perfected by the offering of his only son, Isaac (Ja. 2:22). Each of these had a special quality and has been characterized by giving it a name. We will copy these, and seek to improve on them if possible. The *obedience* of faith brought him to the promised land (Gn. 12:4). The *humility* of faith gave Lot the first choice (Gn. 13:8). By the *strength* of his faith he conquered the kings (Gn. 14:15). The *firmness* of faith enabled him to believe when all hope of an heir seemed futile (Gn. 15:6). The *boldness* of faith led him to intercede for Sodom (Gn. 18:23). In the *joyfulness* of faith he named the son of promise (Gn. 21:3). By the *loyalty* of faith he submitted to Sarah, and expelled Hagar and Ishmael (Gn. 21:14). In the *gratitude* of faith he planted a tamarisk (Gn. 21:33). In its *perfection* he offered up his only son (Gn. 22:2).

It is said that the Canaanites, among whom Abraham dwelt, made a practice of propitiating their deities by sacrificing their dearest possessions, even their children (2 Ki. 3:27). But, in his case, it seemed to be directly contrary to all of Ieue's previous promises, besides being an *only* son, the fruit and fulfillment of faith. Yet many tests had shown him that God could even bring back from death. He himself had been deadened before he generated Isaac. Abraham was quite prepared to actually slay his son, for he reckoned that, even so, God was able to rouse him from among the dead

(Hb. 11:19). Thus we are given a parabolic representation of the important fact that the chosen nation is the fruit of *faith*, and the resurrection power of God, but *not* of the *flesh*.

PROBE, NOT TEMPT

The A.V. reading, that "God did *tempt* Abraham," may have been allowable when it was first translated, but, like, "lead us not into *temptation*" (Mt. 6:13), it throws a dark shadow on the divine character. Alueim was not inducing Abraham to act contrary to His will, but was probing him to *prove* to all concerned that he would obey Him, even when it was contrary to his own desires. His reaction to this test entitled him to his high place among those who are famed for their faith (Hb. 11:17).

MOUNT MORIAH

Mount Moriah was the eminence on which the temple of Solomon was later built, where millions of sacrifices were offered, which prefigured the supreme sacrifice of God's Son. It *may* have included Golgotha, the place of a skull (Mt. 27:33, Mk. 15:22, Lu. 23:33, Jn. 19:17), which is north of the highway which borders the temple area. Otherwise, it is not clear why it was necessary to travel the long way from Beersheba, perhaps a two days' journey northward, to where Jerusalem now is. Ordinarily an altar could be built in any location. Doubtless Abraham had one near his tent, and offered flocklings upon it, for Isaac knew of this (Gn. 22:7). The distance is given as fifty-four miles. But, as it is measured by days, a time period, each of them may represent an eon, for the Lamb of God was sacrificed in the middle of the third of the five eons, that is, in the symmetrical center of the eonian times.

THE ASCENT APPROACH

The character of the offering is of prime importance

here, for Abraham possessed God's righteousness, and had no need of a sin-, or a trespass-, or even a present-approach. Being justified by faith, there was no necessity for one of these. He had access into the divine presence, so required no approach gift. The only one he could offer was an *ascent* approach. It is remarkable, and most significant, that the ascent approach comes before us in Genesis only when Noah (who also was a just man) brings it after the deluge, and in this passage, when Abraham offers Isaac and the ram (Gn. 8:20, 22:2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 13). It *all ascended* to God as an act of pure *worship,* and may be brought only when there is no need for minor sacrifices, or when they have already been offered.

Today, such an ascent approach can be brought only by those believers who know that, in Christ, all the other sacrifices have been offered for them, and there is *nothing* to *hinder* them from worshiping God, not even their shortcomings and failures. These His divine alchemy transmutes into His own righteousness, for He uses them as a foil to reveal the opposite in Himself.

WORSHIP

Abraham's faith assured him that, even though he should offer up Isaac as an ascent approach, his son *must* later be alive to fulfill Ieue's promises concerning the seed, seeing that "In Isaac shall your seed be called." "He reckoned that God is able to rouse him from among the dead, also, whence he recovers him in a parable ..." (Hb. 11:18-19). This is evident from his words to the two lads who were left behind: "*We* will *worship* and *return* to you." (5). Usually, Abraham is represented as terribly distressed, his heart sorrowing in anticipation of the loss of his son, and shuddering at the thought of shedding little "Laughter's" blood. But that is not the reaction of faith. That is the fruit of unbelief. No, he seems to have given no sign of unbelieving trepida-

tion, because he had the assurance that, whatever he did, Isaac must live to fulfill God's promise.

ALUEIM WILL SEE

They went together, Isaac carrying the load of wood, while his father had the fire and the knife. Isaac evidently realized that they were about to offer a sacrifice, so was perplexed as to the victim, for that prime essential seemed to have been forgotten. Very diffidently, he asks permission to speak. When his father assents, he points out that they have the wood and the fire for an ascent approach, but no flockling. His father's reply was such as no one without perfect confidence in the Subjector could have expressed: "*Alueim will see for Himself...*" (8). He knew that this must be so, but how it would be done he could not say, and he did not venture to express a conjecture. It was doubly fulfilled, once at the time, by a divinely provided ram, but not fully till the death and resurrection of the great Antitype, God's beloved Son, our Saviour.

The usual reading, "God will provide himself a lamb" is not warranted by the text. Isaac did not *see* any sacrifice. Abraham did not say that Alueim will *provide* one (Isaac), but that He is seeing, or will see, this apparent lack, and implies that they must leave that to Him. He saw the ram (and He saw the Lamb), but they could not.

It is hard to imagine how Abraham could help being purturbed while making the actual preparations; building the altar, arranging the wood, trussing LAUGH-causer, stretching out his hand, taking the knife, and—but he is not allowed to raise it, for a voice calls out his name repeatedly: "Abraham! Abraham!" Thus, at the last instant, the Subjector, having attained His object, reverses His previous command: "You *must not* stretch out your hand on the lad, and you *must not* do aught to him..."

FEARING GOD

Even in this day of transcendent grace, we are exhorted to carry our salvation into effect with *fear* and *trembling* (Phil. 2:12). So long as we are in our mortal flesh we cannot help having a holy awe in view of the fact that, apart from faith in Christ, and reliance on God's grace, we are not able to do a single thing or speak one word, with absolute confidence that it measures up to the divine ideal, and is perfectly acceptable to our Creator and Subjector. To do that which we ourselves would doubly dread to do, in fact would not dare to do, at the divine behest, must have a powerful motive. No *man* could have persuaded Abraham to sacrifice his son. Only the fear of Alueim could cause him to commit such a murderous deed as this.

GOD PROVIDES

As Abraham had told Isaac, Alueim saw the need of the sacrificial victim, but it was not a flockling, as Isaac proposed. There were different grades of ascent offerings, which correspond to the faith of the offerer. The highest was taken from the herd, the second from the flock, the third from the flyer. Alueim's opinion of Abraham's faith, and the value He put upon His offering is shown by the *ram* which He Himself had foreseen. This was the highest, for it closely foreshadowed the supreme sacrifice of His Own Son on Golgotha (Lv. 1:2, 10, 14).

EVIL

This transaction has a close bearing on the so-called problem of evil. Was it good or evil for Alueim to charge Abraham to do this? Was it not an evil merely to truss up his son and then act as if he were about to murder him? But this was only a typical preview of that future scene in this very vicinity, in which Alueim's own Son was not merely trussed up, but cruelly crucified,

not only menaced with a knife, but pierced with a lance head, and not simply threatened with death, but actually forsaken by His Father and left to die. This, the greatest evil ever committed, was due to the deliberate decision of Alueim, so that it could actually be rehearsed here long before it took place. Yet, out of this, the greatest of all evils, will come the greatest and grandest good.

Such a memorable place as the scene of Isaac's sacrifice deserved a name, so Abraham calls it *Ieue-irae* (Ieue-is-See-er) which implies, not that He merely *observed* Abraham's offering of Isaac, but that He saw the ram which Abraham saw and sacrificed later, and He also "saw" the future Antitype, His only begotten Son, which was to be seen later in this mount. This led to the proverb "In the mount of Ieue it will be seen." (Gn. 22:14). It can hardly be interpreted as Ieue *sees,* or *is seen,* or *appears.* He was not Himself present, but sent a messenger. Even the following promise, perhaps the most memorable and magnificent that Abraham received, was relayed to him through a mediating messenger. In the great Antitype, Christ Jesus, He already saw the sufficient Sacrifice, fore-ordained before the eons, ample for all.

At Beersheba (WELL-SATISFY, or -oath) Abraham had sworn *by* Alueim. Now, however, that *Ieue* swears *to* Abraham, *by* whom can He swear? Men swear by a greater, but there is no greater one than He, to swear by, so He swears by Himself (Hb. 6:13). No assurance can be more certain than that. And no list of Abrahamic blessings can be greater than that incorporated in this oath. Being based on faith, it includes all who believe, not only his physical seed on the earth, but also Abram's innumerable celestial star-seed as well.

THE STAR SEED

Abram was assured of a seed as numerous as the stars

on two occasions. After the conquest of the kings and the blessing of Melchizedek, and after the refusal to take any of the goods of Sodom, when Abram feared that he would have no heir, then he is told of a numberless star seed (Gen. 15:5). Then it was that he was justified by *faith.* Later, once again, after the severest test of his *faith,* in the offering of his son, the promise is renewed (Gen. 22:17). It seems clear from this that the star seed is connected with his *faith,* and consists of that great and glorious company who *believe* God during the eons, as Abram had done, not merely those of His physcial progeny, many of whom did not believe. As was most fitting, this promise was renewed to Isaac, when he was about to go down to Egypt (Gen. 26:4).

THE SAND SEED

On this occasion Abraham is also assured of a sea shore seed (Gen. 22:17, 18). This is most appropriate, for it was not a question of the *faith* of *Isaac,* but of his *physical* life. No doubt he did believe, and may belong to the star seed. Yet it is as sand seed that Israel will rule over their enemies in the kingdom. But it is principally as believers that they will *bless all the nations* (Gen. 22:18) in the day of Ieue. Later this promise is repeated to Jacob, when he feared the wrath of Esau, as he was returning to the land, as he recalls this promise (Gen. 32:12).

CELESTIAL

The secret of a celestial seed (1 Cor. 15:51) was not made known to Abraham. The soil of the land and the sand of the sea may suggest their presence on the earth. Abraham's name is brought in nearly twenty times when justification by faith is taught and enforced in Paul's preparatory epistles. This grand theme is illustrated in the fourth chapter of Romans by seven references to the patriarch (1, 2, 3, 9, 12, 13, 16). To sum up, we are

told that the *righteousness* which was *reckoned* to him will be *reckoned* to us also, who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus, our Lord, from among the dead. But nothing is said of any further blessing, beyond this, among the celestials. It is only after the celestial calling is revealed by Paul, that we see the aptness of this illustration when referring to the saints in this secret administration.

In Galatians we may see the same truth, when in conflict with the flesh. Circumcision *signified* the *cutting off* of the flesh. They were trying to make it the *completion* of the flesh (3:6, 7, 9). Here, again, the blessing is confiined to the *justification* of *believers* of the nations. This is the blessing of Abraham which comes to the nations by faith. The law, which came later, and the present celestial blessings do not subtract or add to the justification by faith that we have in common with Abraham (14, 16, 18, 22, 29).

THE GATE OF ENEMIES

Israel according to the flesh, the soil and sand seed, did not always tenant the gateway of its enemies (Gen. 22:17). This picturesque phrase is based upon the fact that the elders, the rulers of a city, sat in the gateway. They held court there and ruled the city from its entrance. Literally, *faithful* Israel is to govern its foes, and thus be at peace. The reason they have not always done so is that this promise is limited to those who had inherited Abram's faith as well as his flesh. In the days of David and Solomon, who had this faith, this was the case. And it will be so in the future when Israel, as a nation, will accept its Messiah. Even today we can see the plight of the Jews in unbelief. Even though they are the sand seed, they are threatened by their enemies because they refuse to put their faith in the Messiah Ieue has given them.

Beersheba (*Bar-shbo* WELL-oath) was the southernmost city of consequence in the land of Israel. Indeed, "from Dan to Beersheba" is the common phrase for the whole length of the land (1 Sam. 3:20). It lies in the center of the Negeb, or south rim, on the regular road through central southern Palestine to Egypt. It remained the headquarters of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, until the latter went to Egypt. Now it seems to be once more within the boundaries of the nation of promise. Dan is also inside the northern boundary, so they may speak of having the land from Dan *around* to Beersheba, though much of that lying between, including ancient Jerusalem, is in the hands of their bitter enemies.

DEATH OF SARAH

Sarah, like Abraham, must have been rejuvenated when she bore Isaac, for she was beyond the normal age for childbearing. So she lived on to the age of a hundred and twenty-seven years. It seems that Abraham no longer lived in Beersheba, but somewhat northeast of it at Arba (*Arbo* FOUR), sometimes called Kirjath (*Krith* CALL, town) of Arba, or Arba-town. It is here identified with Hebron (*Chbr-un* JOINED), in the foothills that lead up along the road to Jerusalem. It was in the land of Canaan (*Knon* SUBMITTER), given to the grandson of Noah (Gn. 9:25). The inhabitants were descended from Heth (*Chth* Dismay) whose name seems to indicate that they were daring and defiant men, who would be difficult to deal with.

ABRAHAM BUYS A TOMB

Abraham calls himself a *sojourner* and a *settler*, not a "stranger," as the A.V. has it. The word sojourn comes from STIR, to move about. But he was not continually moving either, and seems to have remained in

some locations for a long time. This would give him the right to ask for a tomb, for he could hardly carry a corpse with him. But he wanted a *permanent possession* for a tomb, so he asks for a *holding*. Land tenure in the Scriptures is of various kinds. The prinicipal methods were *tenancy* and *holding*. Israel as a nation never acquired, or bought, or owned, or held, or possessed, the land, for it *belongs* to Ieue Alueim, and they were only *tenants* at His pleasure, and were evicted when they did not serve Him, and will never be safe as long as they refuse their Messiah.

A tomb should not be a transient abode. It should last until the resurrection. Abraham did not get a temporary tenancy, but *acquired* (23:17) a *holding* (23:4, 9) and weighed out four hundred shekels (250 ounces') of silver (15), which *confirmed* it (17) as his. It included the field of Ephron (*Ophr un* SOIL-er), in which is the doublet cave which is adjoining Mamre (*Mmra* CHANGE or 'Bitterness') with all the trees in its boundary by acquisition, before the eyes of the sons of Heth to all entering the gates of the city. Is there any other transaction of this kind in the Scriptures in which such extraordinary emphasis is laid on its permanence? What a contrast to the rest of the land, which had been promised to him, of which he did not own enough to place one of his feet? And several hundred years had to elapse before his seed could take over its tenancy.

In conclusion, may we look beyond the picture presented by Abraham and Isaac, to the *Inaugurator and Perfecter* of faith Who, for the joy lying before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God (Hb. 12:2). Isaac was only a type, a dim shadow of the One Whose faith led Him to descend from the highest heights of glory to the deepest depths of shame, and has called us to share the fruits of His faith with Him, by blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (Eph. 1:3). A.E.K.

"BETTER" IN HEBREWS

BETTER is the lot of the Hebrew members of the body of Christ, than that of other believing Israelites, not only as it was in the past, but also of those to whom the later Circumcision epistles apply, written by James, Peter, John and Jude, as well as John's Unveiling. In general, the others will enjoy superior *physical* blessings among the *terrestrials*, while the Hebrews who are members of the joint body of Christ, will share every *spiritual* blessing among the *celestials* (Eph. 1:3, Hb. 3:1, 6:4, 8:5, 9:23, 11:16, 12:22).

The comparative, *better,* occurs in the epistle to the Hebrews more often than in all the rest of the Greek Scriptures put together. Even Paul in his epistles, which reveal the same glorious grace to the nations, uses it only four times (1 Cor. 7:9, 38, 11:17, Ph. 1:23), and only in connection with their *conduct.* The other circumcision writers use it only twice (1 Pt. 3:17, 2 Pt. 2:21), and these also refer to the *individual walk* of the saints. In Hebrews, however, it is confined to their place in God's plan, which joins them with the other members of the body of Christ in their superior *spiritual* blessings among the celestials. The reason is that these Hebrews, as members of the most favored nation, already had a better place than the others in the terrestrial sphere, yet now were elevated to the celestial, which was still better.

TWELVE BETTER BLESSINGS

1:4 The Son is much better than the *messengers.*
6:9 Better things having to do with *salvation.*
7:7 The Blesser (Abraham) was *blessed* by the better
7:19 A better *expectation* than under law. [(Melchi-
7:22 A better *covenant* sponsored by Jesus. [zedek).
8:6 It is instituted on better *promises.*
9:23 Celestial things cleansed with better *sacrifices.*
10:34 Better and permanent *property* above.
11:16 Craving a better, that is, a celestial *country.*
11:36 Happening upon a better *resurrection.*
11:40 Some better *promise.*
12:24 Speaking better than Abel's *blood.*

GOOD BETTERED

Better is it for believing Israelites today than it ever was in the past, or even than it will be in the future kingdom. Even as Paul, in the opening of his epistle to the Ephesians, mentions about a dozen ways in which the present grace transcends all previous revelations to Israel, so the writer of Hebrews points out twelve definite particulars which are *better* than those promised to them before Israel was set aside, ere the present grace had been revealed. This book is especially for those Hebrews who formed the *Israelitish* body which, later, was united with the one among the *nations* (1 Cor. 12:27) to form the *joint* body of today (Eph. 3:6).

Before the Son came to reveal His Father, God made known His will through inferior intermediaries, especially those who wrote the Hebrew Scriptures, or were mentioned in its pages. The Son eclipses them all, for they will worship Him when He again appears upon the inhabited earth. His function is far higher than that of a messenger, for He Himself will *rule* until all of God's enemies are beneath His feet.

As all blessing comes from God through an inter-

mediary, much depends on the *rank* of the channel chosen to convey it. The Scriptures know nothing of so-called "angels," as a distinct kind of creatures, for the Hebrew *m lak e* denotes a WORKer of any kind, and the Greek *aggel os* a messenger. These describe their chief duty in God's dealings with humanity. But men may also be used for this service. Moses and the prophets (not angels) were the main messengers to Israel. Now, however, the believing Hebrews get their messages through God's *Son,* Who is *far better* than any mere messenger, As a result, all the blessings which they were to enjoy, among the terrestrials, are theirs in a fuller measure and higher sphere among the celestials.

GOD IMPERCEPTIBLE

Although humanity was made more like Al, the Subjector, than any other of His earthly creatures, and so was named *a dam* (Most-LIKE), and had sensitive faculties to perceive the physical features of his surroundings, yet none of these enables a human to perceive the Supreme Himself. Until His Son became a Man with a human form and attributes, there was no Image of Him allowed among His earthly people, for He is spirit, and no mere material form could represent Him. That is why the wild beast of the end time will give *spirit* (not life, A.V.) to his material image (Un. 13:15).

MESSENGERS—"ANGELS"

There are many messengers, usually called "angels," of various ranks, but two of them are distinguished by their special functions and their name. Michael (*Mi k-Al* WHO-AS-SUBJECTOR) revealed the secret of the seventy heptads to Daniel (Dn. 10:13, 20, 21, 12:1), and is called the chief messenger or archangel (Jd. 9). He will head the battle when the dragon and his messengers are cast out of heaven to the earth (Un. 12:7). Gabriel (*Gbr i-Al* MASTER-SUBJECTOR) was given the special hon-

or of announcing the birth of both John the Baptist and of Jesus, our Lord (Lu. 1:19, 26). These two seem to be the highest of the heavenly host, with the most honorable names. Yet even they are never connected with the region above the heavens.

MESSENGERS LIMITED TO HEAVENS

In the Greek Scriptures the messengers are mentioned nearly two hundred times, yet only about seven per cent of these are in Paul's epistles, and about six per cent in Hebrews. In these two epistles, however, they have a much lower place than elsewhere, for they are not used to bring the truth that these epistles contain, as this is done by a much *better* Mediator, the *Son* of God, Who has passed *through* the heavens (Hb. 4:14) to the celestial realms. His body is celestial, yet this does not limit Him to that sphere. So will it be with us when He returns to the air. We will meet Him there, but, having bodies like His, it will enable us to go everywhere in the universe. (So we, also, will be better than angels!)

SPIRIT MESSENGERS

Al, the Supreme Subjector, is spirit (Jn. 4:24), so He communicates only by means of spirit, or through those who have His spirit, as Alue, the To-subjector, and Alueim, the To-subjectors. That is why the messengers are spirits, and the prophets received His spirit, and the spirit descended on the Messiah at His baptism (Jn. 1:32).

In the past *ministering* spirits were able to receive messages direct from the Deity and pass them on to humans. Stephen said that Israel got the law through a mandate of messengers (Ac. 7:53). Now, however, God communicates with the Hebrews through One Who is *much better* than these *messengers*, even as He has a name that is more excellent than theirs (Hb. 1:1-4).

Nowhere do we read of messengers in connection with

the celestial regions or realms. The name itself suggests an intermediate function, between God and humanity. In accord with this, the heavens occupy the sphere *between* the earth and the stellar realms. In a much higher sense, the Son is the *Mediator* between them (1 Ti. 2:5), and takes their place in bringing our celestial, spiritual blessings to us in this administration.

THE FUNCTION OF "ANGELS"

Christian theology, being mostly based on terrestrial, rather than celestial, truth, has given the "angels" a very prominent but misleading place in this secret administration. In order to help our readers to see their proper position in present truth, we may devote a separate article to this theme, and consider the references made to them by Paul, our apostle. Let us note carefully what a different impression these references give than that usually conveyed by the word "*angel.*" As this is vital to our understanding and enjoyment of present truth, we will consider most of them, and seek to leave the "angels" in their true place, in order that we may appreciate our much greater grace in God's Son.

The very name given to "angels" in the original languages is in contrast to the titles given to celestial creatures, such as "sovereignties" and "authorities" (Eph. 3:10). These suggest political *office* and *power*. But even "archangel" does not elevate its holder above the "working-class." As we have seen, Gabriel was a courier who carried the messages announcing the advent of John the Baptist and Jesus (Lu. 1:19, 26). Michael seems to be the highest of them. He is called their chief (Jude 9). He will lead them against the messengers of the Adversary, who seek to destroy Israel (Dn. 12:1, Un. 12:7).

SONSHIP

The relation of a son to a father is much more honorable and intimate than that of a mere messenger. This

is true in the highest degree of the only-begotten Son and His Father. Indeed, the messengers were ordered to *worship* the Son at His very birth, when He was assigned the throne of the To-Subjector for the eon of the eon. It was He Who founded the earth and made the heavens. Even they will age and change, but He will not. All His enemies will be subjected to Him. Messengers are merely servants of those whom He saves (Heb. 1:4).

Yet the Son of God, though much better than the messengers, was also, for a time, a Son of Adam, and so, for a while, was *inferior* to them. But now, having tasted death for humanity, He is wreathed with glory and honor. As the Inaugurator of their salvation, He calls them His brethren, and He becomes their Propitiatory Shelter and Chief Priest, for He is the Substance of all the shadows of their religious ritual (Hb. 2:6-7).

MOSES

Moses was greatly glorified as he *attended* to the affairs of the house of Israel during their *removal* to the promised land. Christ, as Son over His own house, is worthy of *more glory* than the great REMOVER. This is especially true now that the Son calls them, not from one country to another on *earth,* as Moses did, but from a *terrestrial* to a *celestial* heritage. Moses, moreover, *failed* to bring the nation as a whole into the promised land. Indeed, he *himself* was not allowed to enter. But Jesus, as the Apostle and Chief Priest, will not fail. Under Moses, the people failed for lack of *faith.* Now unbelieving Israel is repeating their failure. Here their descendants are warned. This shows clearly that this epistle cannot be "applied" directly to believers among the nations, but is limited to Hebrews at that time. Today it should prepare them for the untraceable riches in Paul's prison epistles.

After the severance of Barnabas, his evangel, like

Paul's, took on a much higher aspect. It changed from a terrestrial to a celestial calling (3:1). In harmony with this, their worship and priesthood took on a correspondent elevation. The tabernacle and the temple were types of things in the *heavens*, but not of the higher sphere above them. The chief priest in Israel could go *into* the holy of holies, a type of the third heaven, but their new Chief Priest, Jesus, the Son of God, passed *through* the heavens into the celestial realms. Perhaps this also was indicated by the cloud column which was over the tabernacle but it did not form part of their ritual (Hb. 4:14, Ex. 40:36).

The chief priest was the only one who was allowed to pass through the holy place into the holy of holies. But even he could not pass *through* this, for there was no further opening (Hb. 4:14). The tabernacle was a shadow of things *in* the heavens. But now that these Hebrews have a *celestial* calling (3:1), it is evident that their Chief Priest must pass *through* the heavens themselves, which not one of Aaron's descendents was able to do. Therefore He is not of Aaron's line, but of the order of Melchizedek, who united the functions of the priesthood with those of a king.

A BETTER SALVATION

These Hebrews had left the rudiments of their religion, and had a taste of celestial gratuities, so that they were not in the same danger of falling aside as their forefathers. Even if the writer warned them, he was persuaded *better* things of them, which are connected with their *salvation*. It is not likely that any of them fell aside, even if they were warned. This can hardly be understood by those of us who are not Hebrews, and are established in grace, for they had been under the law and its curse before they believed (Hb. 6:9).

A BETTER EXPECTATION

The law was given to Israel, and under it the priest-

hood. In themselves, these institutions were not a success. The nation could not fulfill the law, nor did the priesthood draw them near to God. But they led the way to a *better expectation*, through which they could now draw near to God (Hb. 7:19). As the *Levitical* priesthood failed to bring them into intimate fellowship with God, they are now transferred to the *Melchizedek* line, which pictured the Son of God, whose priesthood is final (Hb. 7:3, 19). He was a Justifier, not a law-giver.

The fact that the Levitical priesthood, under the law, is to be superseded by the Melchizedek order, shows that it could never bring in perfection. The law cannot perfect anything, even in the millennium. But the priesthood of the Son of God, Who offered Himself, has brought in a *better expectation*, through which to draw nigh to God (Hb. 7:19).

A BETTER COVENANT

Inauguration into the Levitical priesthood depended upon physical generation, without any special emphasis on personal qualifications. Under the Melchizedek priesthood, the priest himself, that is, Jesus, is the Sponsor of a *better covenant*. He alone is responsible for carrying it out, Who saves to the uttermost those coming to God through Him (Hb. 7:25).

The Hebrews in Moses' day took on themselves the responsibilty of fulfilling the law covenant. They said, "All that Ieue speaks will we do and hearken" (Ex. 24:7). But now the responsibility does not rest on the people, but on the High Priest, Jesus, for His name means Will-be-ing-*Saviour*. The new covenant is a better one because He is its Sponsor, for He has made all provisions for its fulfillment (Hb. 7:22). Not only is He the Sponsor, but also the Mediator of this covenant (Hb. 8:6).

This better covenant for Israel is based on *better*

promises (Hb. 8:6). In the past the fulfillment of the promises depended largely on their behaviour and resulted in sins and lawlessness, which called for severe judgments. It brought about, not only dire disasters in the promised land, but led to deportations and dispersion among the alien nations. Even in the kingdom of heaven, during the thousand years on earth, there will be a new covenant (Jr. 31:31), because the old was unsatisfactory, and led to a curse, rather than blessing.

LAW IN JAMES

Not only does Hebrews *agree* in its sphere with later Pauline teaching, but it *differs* radically from that of the Circumcision epistles, especially from James, on the emphasis given to *faith*. In Hebrews faith is the *basis* of works pleasing to God (Hb. 11), while James declares that faith *without* works is dead (Ja. 2:17). Hebrews, like Paul, goes back to the divine dealings *before* the nation of Israel was called, *ere* the law was given, but James is strong on law-keeping, and almost seems to contradict the higher truths connected with Abraham in Hebrews, which takes its place beside Paul's expositions for the nations.

If the old Sinaitic covenant had been a success, why seek for a new one? The old depended on promises of obedience, which the people did not, and *could not*, fulfill. The new covenant is based on *better promises*, in which God's laws will be inscribed in their comprehension and on their hearts. Moreover, He will be propitious to their injustices, and never be reminded of their lawlessnesses (Hb. 8:6-12). This, for the Hebrews, is what Paul wrote to the nations in his early epistles, especially Romans and Galatians, for they had a strong tendency to Judaize and try to keep the law, even though the Hebrew believers themselves were delivered from it, as here shown.

In the flesh, Israel has a "worldly" holy place, where-

as Christ Himself will be the coming Chief Priest of the impending good things, and will officiate through a *greater* and *more perfect tabernacle*, not made by hands, that is, not of this creation. This is the *reality*, of which the tabernacle and its ritual were only shadowgraphs (Hb. 9:11). In the beginning spoken of in their Scriptures, only the heavens and the earth were created, that is, the terrestrial sphere. The tabernacle here spoken of is above this creation, in the celestial sphere. There Christ has gone with His own blood, and thus has become the Author of redemption for the eons, beyond which none will be needed.

The sacrifices offered by Israel could not bring anything to perfection but were temporary measures in view of a future reformation. But Christ, coming along as a Chief Priest of the impending good, did not offer the blood of beasts, but His *own* blood, which formed the basis for *eonian* redemption. He did not go into the temple at Jerusalem where only a Levite could go, but entered into the presence of God Himself, above the holy of holies of which the earthly shrine was only a representation. There He brought the value of His own sacrifice, which was unspeakably *better* than all the rest put together (Hb. 9:23).

The examples of that in the heavens had to be cleansed by means of the various sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, but these would never suffice for the celestial things that they mirrored. The *better sacrifice* of Christ does not merely *shelter* the sinner, but leads to the *repudiation* of sin at the conclusion of the eons. Sin has a place only in the eons. It is an essential part of God's revelation of Himself to His creatures. Apart from it, His wisdom, grace, and love could never be fully revealed. The sacrifice of Christ, the sin of sins, justifies all human sin, so that sin itself is repudiated. This *repudiation* of sin corresponds to its *justification* in Paul's epistles to the other nations.

BETTER PROPERTY

The Hebrews had the promise of a land, the glory of all lands, but, because of their disobedience, the ten tribes were deported far from it. Even the two tribes had been captives outside their land for seventy years, and were under the heel of Rome, and were pillaged of their earthly possessions. The apostles and those with them looked forward to the kingdom on earth, but the Hebrews here addressed joyfully suffered their losses, knowing that they have a *better* and a *permanent property* in [or, *on?*] the heavens (or, celestials). The fact that Barnabas sold his holding is suggestive of his future celestial possessions.

Hebrews, such as the circumcision apostles, who lost their property in the turbulous times of Roman occupation, could look forward in faith to the kingdom, when their allotment in the land would probably be returned to them. Not so with Hebrew believers today. The land of Israel was never permanently possessed by them, and, at present, is only partly restored to them. Those of faith, along with believers among the nations, look forward to permanent, and *better* property.

BETTER COUNTRY

Israel occupied a land gushing with milk and honey (Ex. 3:8, etc.), the glory of all lands, yet how troublous has been their occupation of it! The word "famine" is used in connection with it about seventy times in their Scriptures, and they were deported from it for seventy years because they refused to let it lie fallow one year in seven. However, it will be restored to more than pristine preciousness when Christ is present and rules it for a thousand years. But these Hebrews have a higher ideal than even that, for they crave a *better*, that is, a *celestial* country (Hb. 11:16).

Quite a problem presents itself if Abraham and all his progeny who have died in faith should be raised from

the dead in *soulish bodies* such as they had before they died. Abram and Lot were compelled to separate even in their day, for lack of space. How many have lived since that time, including the vast number in this administration, we do not know, but surely they will be a multitude far too great to find a living in the promised land. This difficulty is solved for us in this passage. Believing Hebrews in this administration will not be confined to the area of Palestine, or even all that country between the Euphrates and the river of Egypt, but have their place along with the believers among the nations, above the heavens, among the celestials.

A BETTER RESURRECTION

All the dead will be roused, either for eonian life or for judgment. Those raised for judgment lacked faith in God, so have no further life until all are made alive at the consummation (1 Cor. 15:24). The better resurrection provides for a spiritual body, like our Lord's, for the rest of the eons. It is for those who are associated with Christ in the subjection and reconciliation of all to God.

A BETTER PROMISE

So far the Hebrew heroes have not been requited for their faithful deeds and distresses. Nor will they be until after their vivification. Much has been said of the promised *land*, and, indeed, Israel as a nation will certainly occupy it, and it will be very *good*. But for those who have faith in God there is a much greater and *better promise*, which comes to all Hebrews who believe, in the present administration while the nation as such, is still in unbelief.

BETTER BLOOD

Abel's blood called for vengeance, and led to Cain's being driven out of God's presence. The blood of Jesus has the opposite effect. The tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry were sprinkled with blood. And

almost all was cleansed by blood according to the law. Apart from blood-shedding came no pardon. But the blood which cleanses the celestials, came from a willing Sacrifice, which cleanses completely all on which it is sprinkled.

OUTSIDE THE CAMP

As once in the wilderness, when Israel made the golden calf and Moses set up the tabernacle outside the camp, so it was in our Lord's day and in the Acts period (Ex. 33:7). Christ, the true Tabernacle, had lived in their midst, but He had been rejected, so He left them, and was now *outside* the *camp*. So the Hebrews who had faith in Him are exhorted to follow Him *outside* the *nation* (Hb. 13:13). Indeed, at the end of the Acts period, the nation itself was rejected and the salvation of God was sent to the other nations (Acts 28:28).

Does it not seem incredible, after this full exposure of Israel's *inferior* blessings, that not only unbelieving "Jews," as we call them, but even saints among the nations, in fact large and influential denominations, *reject* these *better* blessings, brought to them graciously by Christ, Who fulfilled the law and offered Himself on the cross! Alas! So it is with the camp of Christendom.

A.E.K.

GRACE AND TRUTH

During our recent visit in New York, we were impressed with the sincerity of the work being done there, both locally and through the magazine *Grace and Truth*. For those desiring to help their friends with somewhat simpler articles on the truth than those usually appearing in *Unsearchable Riches*, we suggest that they write *Grace and Truth*, 160 West 127th St., New York 27, N.Y. Subscription is $1.50 per year. E.O.K.

THE DIVINE CALENDAR

This basic booklet, which was for a time out of print, has been reissued with a revised and redrawn chart and set in larger, more readable type. Still priced at fifteen cents, it is an excellent primer for those just learning of God's glorious plan and purpose. E.O.K.

ADELAIDE HILLER HOLZAPFEL

Adelaide Hiller Holzapfel, widow of Ernst Holzapfel, entered into rest at the age of eighty-one after a lingering illness, September 24, on the anniversary of her father's death nineteen years before.

Her father, Gustave E. Hiller, Editor of *The Promise* which was later combined with *Unsearchable Riches*, and author of "The Great Question," subtitled "Will God Redeem His Own Creation," led all of his six children into the knowledge and love of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. All six, with their children, are strong believers in God's eonion plan.

At an early age, Adelaide began the study of the Scriptures which she followed with avidity all of her life, using every available help, such as the *Concordant Version*, and other translations in English and German. In her early ministry she began forming Bible classes in both languages, imparting to her hearers the knowledge of the truth. She not only taught them, but pastored them and their families and took a vital interest in all that concerned them.

Her body lies in Crown Hill cemetery, Indianapolis, until she shall hear the shout, the voice of the Chief Messenger and the trump of God. MINNE L. HILLER

MRS. PERCY L. (JULIA) OWEN

The death of Sister Percy L. Owen of Comox. B.C., Canada, occurred after an illness of more than three years. We (her husband and others who were witnesses of her sufferings), praise God that she is now free from pain, and waiting (unconscious of the passage of time) His call to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

Sister Owen's introduction to reconciliation truth came through a meeting with Bro. David Mann in Cranbrook, B.C. The account of this meeting and its result was covered in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume XLV, number 5, page 87. After the Owens moved from Cranbrook and the Manns moved to Los Angeles, this fellowship was continued by correspondence.

Funeral services for Sister Owen were conducted in Courtenay by Bro. Burge of Merville, B.C., who is also a believer in the blessed truth of universal reconciliation. Commencing with a prayer and the singing of the hymn, "O What a Glorious Salvation", Bro. Burge made some personal comments regarding Sister Owen, and then the following passages of Scripture were read: Jn. 11:25, 1 Cor. 15:20-28, 42-44, 1 Thess. 4:13-18, Col. 1:16-20, Phil:5-20, 21. Following some remarks about these blessed truths, the hymn "And I Shall see Him Face to Face" was sung, with a prayer concluding the service. All members of the family were present, together with many of Sister Owen's friends.

So we say "Goodbye dear sister, until when He calls us to be with Himself" (1 Thess. 4:16-18). P.L.O.

THE SOIL, SAND AND STAR SEEDS

THE ABRAHAMIC PROMISE

AFTER THE PREVIEW of the course of the other nations, which were already on the scene in Abram's day (10-14), we now turn to the nation of promise, of which Abram alone was present at that time. God had already foretold that he would become a great nation (12:1), but the difference between it and the others is made manifest at its very beginning. It must be shown that it really *is* a nation of *promise,* and entirely based on the Promiser, Ieue Alueim, and not on the efforts of any of mankind. Therefore Abram and Sarah were not given even a single descendant until, humanly speaking, it was too late. Only a divine rejuvenation enabled them to have a son in the line of promise.

A good grasp of the beginning of the one nation through which Ieue Alueim will subject and bless all the rest, will help much in understanding its course and the consummation to which the Subjector is leading all of them. The most important and prominent point is that it is all due to the direct determination of Ieue Himself. Indeed, He not only began this chosen nation, but continued with it, training it for its mission, and, in the person of the Messiah, will finish the subjection of *all* the nations of the earth by its instrumentality. If, at any time, we fail to see Him in the background of its history, it is because we fail to fully grasp the point and purpose of it all.

Abram was depending on *himself* and the natural vitality of the *flesh.* This is much clearer in the Hebrew than in the usual versions. The pronoun *I* is emphatic. Ieue had just said, "*I* am your Shield, your exceedingly increased Hire." Yet Abram responds, "What art Thou giving to me when *I* am going heirless?" (Gen. 15:1, 2). It is evident that he wished to start the new nation as soon as possible, lest he would no longer be able to do his part. So long as he had this impression, it was necessary to wait until his whole faith rested on Ieue *alone,* and *not* on his flesh.

ELIEZER

Abram seems to have prudently provided for the emergency, in case he had no son of his own. In such a case, if some outsider were chosen, he was called a "son of the *house,*" who was recognized by all as the heir. He would probably be the household pet, running about as if he were the real successor. In this case his name may help us to read Abram's thoughts. Eliezer (*Al-i-ozr*) means SUBJECTOR-HELPer, that is, the heir would come through his *helping* the Subjector. This was a bad mistake. So he was withheld until Abram came to the conclusion that *he* could not provide any help, and must depend on *Al alone* to do it. It was not till he laughed at the idea of having a son that the Subjector finally gave him Isaac (Gen. 17:17).

THE STAR SEED

Abram had already been assured that his seed would become as numerous as the *soil* of the land (13:16). Now we have a higher thought, suited to the occasion. As he went up and down the country-side, he could *feel* the soil beneath his *feet,* even though he could not count it. Now he is asked to look *up* to that which is far *beyond* his reach. A clear Palestine night is so studded with stars that this simile is far more impressive

than in more northerly latitudes. I once lay on my back on the rooftop of the Johanniter Hospice in the center of Jerusalem, and gazed at the brilliant galaxies in the empyrean. Not only was their number beyond computation, like the soil, but they were far outside the scope of my activity. They should have suggested to Abram that his seed was far beyond the sphere of his ability. The One Who created the stars is the only One able to produce the promised seed.

THE TWO SEEDS

Two contrasting spheres, *spirit* and *flesh, faith* and *works, celestial* and *terrestrial,* operate in the life of Abram-Abraham. When applied to his descendants in figurative language, one is likened to the scintillating stars, high above our heads, the other to the soil and seaside sand, found beneath our feet. These should help us to realize the vast advantage of faith over flesh. Stars shed light into the prevailing darkness, but soil and sand make heavy walking for our feet. In general, the stars are Abram's sons by *faith* as we read, "these of *faith, these* are," not only the *seed,* but "the *sons* of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7).

Abra[ha]m's seed is not confined to the physical offspring of Israel. These are the soil and sand seed. All *believers* today are his *sons,* who can claim him as their spiritual father. In our case the figure of the stars is especially apt, for we are blessed with every *spiritual* blessing among the *celestials.* Here we have one of the early intimations of the present secret administration, and the celestial destiny of a selection out of mankind, not based upon a physical relationship, but on a spiritual bond.

The number of Abra[ha]m's seed is as *uncountable* as the *soil* of the *land* (Gen. 13:16, 28:14), the *sand* of the *sea* (22:17, 26:4), and as the *stars* of the *heavens* (15:5, 22:17). Each of these suggests a multitude

beyond our comprehension. We should be intensely impressed by the countless throng who will call him father. But why use three different illustrations, one derived from the stars, one from the sand, and another from the soil? Each one is countless by itself. Do these stand for distinctive seeds, which are indicated by these differing locations?

INFINITUDES OF CREATION

What an overwhelming sense of God's greatness is suggested by the number of Abram's seed! It is beyond human computation. Even the soil seed of the promised land, which suggests untold billions of human bodies on the *earth*, is beyond our imagination. But these seem to be limited to Abraham's *physical* descendants, whether believers or not. Those who came into contact with the nations are like the sand by the seashore, for the sea seems to indicate the nations, while those who are his *spiritual* sons by faith are to be like the stars, not only in number, but in ultimate destination.

WHY FIGURES ARE USED

The *secret* of spiritual, *celestial* blessings, which was not to be revealed until after Abraham's soil seed had been set aside, could not be made known to him in his day, so, in the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, it was simply suggested by the character and location of the figures used to indicate the various classes of Abraham's descendants. Any one of these figures would have sufficed to indicate the simple idea of countlessness. Now that these secrets have been revealed, we are enabled to perceive the wonderful wisdom and foreknowledge of God in using such varied and significant illustrations of the future children and sons of Abra[ha]m.

THE UNIVERSE (ALL)

It may help to clarify our thoughts if we consider the

location of the stars, in contrast to the soil, in the universe, as indicated by the divine vocabulary. The physical universe is divided into three concentric spheres, *celestial, terrestrial* and *subterranean.* The light-bearers in the celestial are the STARS. The terrestrial is composed of the heavens and the *earth.* The earth is covered with the sea and the *land.* The surface of the earth is the *ground.* The granulated ground is SAND. The pulverized, fertile ground is SOIL. The *stars* are the *highest* and *greatest and brightest sights* in human experience. The *soil* is the *lowest* and *minutest* we can *feel.* The following list may help to show this vast contrast.

STARS, celestial, constellations (spiritual)
HEAVENS
EARTH
LAND water
GROUND surface
SAND (sea, nations)
SOIL, Israel (physical)

From the human point of view, the stars, grouped in constellations, present the most glorious exhibition of light and power and order imaginable. In contrast, the surface of the earth, the habitation of man, is called a *disintegration,* a decadence, in the language of inspiration, and the soil is the lowest and most disorderly and decadent of all. It is composed largely of rotted vegetation.

It makes us marvel to see how faithfully these figures foretell the future. They are particularly pertinent in the present administration, where *all who believe* are sons of Abra[ha]m, figured by the stars, or constellations, including even some of his sand seed, like Saul (flesh) -Paul (faith) and those to whom the epistle to the Hebrews was written.

The very name, Hebrew (PASSER), suggests that the land was not the permanent portion of Abram himself

or of some of his seed, who are also his sons by faith alone.

THE FUNCTION OF THE SOIL

The A.V. uses the word *soil* only once (Ez. 17:8), and there it should be *field* (*shde*), so it may be helpful to consider its usage in the inspired text at some length. Its first occurrence is most significant: "And forming is Ieue Alueim the human of *soil* (*ophr*) from the ground" (Gn. 2:7). The A.V. has *dust* here and in most other passages. But we may be sure that no man is quite as dry as that! Indeed, the human body is composed largely of fluids. Not only were the original bodies of all animals formed of soil, but the food which sustains them comes from it. Indeed, the serpent was doomed to eat soil all the days of its life (Gn. 3:14). This important word occurs about fifty times, and is always translated *soil* in the Concordant Version.

THE LESSON OF SOIL

Not only Adam and the animals are formed from the soil, but *all physical* life on earth is derived from its disintegrated substance. Plants cannot grow without soil, and the best way to enrich it is to mix into it the *decomposing* elements of previous life. Indeed, a kernel of grain must itself be dying before it brings forth fruit (Jn. 12:24). In this way humanity is continually reminded of the truth that physical life and fruitfulness is based upon death. This is the lesson conveyed by the soil on the earth. It teaches us the source of real, spiritual life. It comes through the death of the Sustainer of life.

THE FORMATION OF SOIL

Why was it that the location that Lot chose, the basin of the Jordan, was so fertile? Because it was the lowest and best watered spot in the whole land. All over the earth the deltas of the rivers are apt to be very fertile, because the water has carried down *soil* from their banks

and deposited it at their mouths. The Mississippi has lengthened its course about a hundred miles in this manner. The Nile has formed a vast delta at its mouths, which is noted for its fertility. The stream which irrigated Eden seems to have formed such a delta (Gn. 2:10).

ISRAEL'S RIVERS

The land of Israel has only one great river, the Jordan. In contrast to Egypt, which has hardly any rain, so depends on the Nile for its water, Israel received hardly any water from its main watercourse, but depended on Ieue to send rain from heaven. Today, the Jews are seeking to get by without the divine supply by putting in great irrigation canals from the upper reaches of the Jordan. Even its tributaries on the east have cut deep gorges for themselves, so that their water also flows down into the Dead sea, and cannot well be used to moisten the soil.

THE BASIN OF THE JORDAN

The mouth of the Jordan also formed a small delta before it entered the Dead sea. But it is surrounded by mountains, so it filled up a circular lowland shaped like a DISK (*kkr*), which the C.V. renders *basin*. The same word is often rendered *talent* elsewhere, because this coin was circular in shape. The Jordan delta was irrigated, like Egypt, so did not depend on rain from heaven for its fertility. In this way the people were apparently independent of God. Later, when Israel entered the land, the rainfall was used by Ieue as a reward for their obedience (Lv. 26:4). Lot was seeking a position of blessing independent of the Blesser.

Is it not significant that this, the deepest spot on the earth's surface, should provide the setting for the lowest example of human degradation? The *soil* feeds the *flesh*, and so suggests Abraham's *physical* relations, like Lot, who lusted for the satisfaction of the *soul*. Abram's

pasture was on much higher ground. Speaking generally, he must have camped on the heights, not far from the present location of Jerusalem, while Lot had his home somewhere near the Dead Sea.

LOT NOT PROMISED THE LAND

Ieue had said to Abram: "Go *you from* . . . your land and *from* your *kindred* and *from* your father's house to the *land* which I shall show you" (Gen. 12:1). This clearly proves that none of his *fleshly* relatives were included. Nevertheless Lot went with him (v. 4). Abram does not seem to have objected, for we read, "taking is Abram Lot, his brother's son, and all their goods which they got, and every soul which they make their own" (*v.* 5). This seems clearly contrary to God's expressed command, yet Abram was not corrected or condemned. Why was this? Evidently it was in line with God's *intention*, for it led to some very helpful experiences, both for Abram himself and all of his sons in faith.

THE SOIL SEED

The soil seed was limited to the *land* (Gn. 13:15), so suggests those who lived on it and were formed from it, Abram's soilish, soulish, physical descendants. Paul calls them "Israel according to the flesh" (1 Cor. 10:18). This special figure of speech is not used of them in later revelation, for its literal fulfillment made it unnecessary.

THE SAND SEED

If the number of the sons of Israel should be as the *sand* of the sea, [only] a *residue* shall be saved, for a conclusive and concise accounting the Lord will be doing in the earth (Ro. 9:27). The figure of the sand suggests contact with the nations. Israel was not called primarily to enjoy soilish blessings in the land, but to be a spiritual blessing by contact with the other nations. But only a *residue, believers* among them, performed this function.

James opposed it. So Paul and Barnabas were severed from them to bring spiritual blessings to the other nations, especially those bordering on the sea.

Based upon the offering of Isaac, the seed of Abraham is compared to *both* the *stars* of the heavens and the *sand* which is on the sea shore, and *they* are to become a blessing to *all the other nations* (Gn. 22:15-18). Similarly, there is only one occurrence where these are combined in later revelation (Hb. 11:12). The Hebrew believers are compared with the *constellations* of heaven and the *sand* beside the sea shore.

CONSTELLATIONS—JOINT-BODY

A constellation is a group of stars joined together to form the outlines of a familiar figure, such as Andromeda, the Chained Lady. As a figure it suggests celestial unity, corresponding to the figure of the human body in Paul's preparatory epistles, which represents spiritual unity. The figure of the "body" was not a new one, but had been used of the *nation* of Israel (*goi*) in the flesh, so could not figure the spiritual bond of believing Hebrews.

THE JOINT BODY

When the severance was made (Acts 13), Barnabas and Saul were *together*. Had Mark not interfered, humanly speaking, there might not have been a *separate* Hebrew constellation, or body, when Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians, in which he re-unites them into a *joint* body, for then they received the same spiritual and celestial blessings. A.E.K.

TRAVERSE CITY TALKS

Two talks, one on "The Sacred Scriptures or the Creeds", the other on "Prayer, the Privilege of the Christian", given by R. Graham Keevil before the Adult Bible Group in Traverse City, Michigan recently, have been published in pamphlet form, and are available from Bro. Keevil, 129 E. State Street, Traverse City, Michigan. We understand the pamphlets are twenty-five cents each.

UNITED GATHERINGS IN ENGLAND

The final of five gatherings this year was held at Beeston, Notts., on September 14, when about 80 saints from various parts of England gathered for a day of fellowship. The morning session was a continuation of the study on "Justification" originally taken at the Blackheath Gathering. Much ground was covered, and several aspects considered, and from the scriptural viewpoint, it was decided that although all are eventually to be justified, only the members of the Body of Christ, the New Creation, are at present justified by faith. In the afternoon, Bro. Struthers of Manchester gave an address entitled "What a Saviour", which all enjoyed, and the evening session was taken by Bro. Harris of Tamworth. His subject was "A Type of Him Who is About to be." He shewed the acts of Adam and their results, and on the other hand the work of Christ and the glorious results which flow in benefit to all therefrom. The day of rich fellowship was a very fitting ending to the successful series of Gatherings during 1958. The dates of next year's meetings have been fixed as follows: East Kirkby, April 12; Manchester, May 10; Sheffield, June 14; Blackheath, July 12; and Beeston, September 13. H.W.J.

THE CONCERN

As a non-profit educational association, we are required to file form 990-A, an information type of income tax return, although we pay no income tax. This form is made available to the public by the Director of Internal Revenue. Any of our friends desiring to see a copy may request one from the Saugus office. Also available are copies of the "Aims, Purposes and Rules", under which the Concordant Publishing Concern operates in order to maintain its non-profit status, thus assuring you of the use to which funds are put, as well as allowing you to deduct your contributions on your own income tax return.

RENEWAL TIME

Since all our subscriptions run with the calendar year, in order to minimize the time required to keep track of them, yours is now due unless you have paid in advance. It is still one dollar per year, or simply notify us that you desire it, and we will see that you receive one of our paid-up subscriptions, donated by other friends of the work. Sending your renewal now will save us the labor and expense of sending you a notice later. If you paid for gift subscriptions this year, please remember to indicate whether you wish to continue these subscriptions as well. E.O.K.

"Yet now are remaining faith, expectation, love—these three. Yet the greatest of these is love. Be pursuing love."

I Corinthians 13:13-14:1

GOD AND SATAN

GOD ALONE IS SELF-EXISTENT. He was First of all things. This being a Bible truth, all else must have come into being by Him.

Satan who was first called the Serpent, is a product of God's own hand. Genesis 3:1 tells us that the serpent became the craftiest of all field life which was made by Ieue Alueim. This is the same serpent that talked to the woman in the garden of Eden.

"Travailed has His hand with the fugitive serpent" (Job 26:13). "And I, I created the ruiner to harm" (Isa. 54:16).

It is important that we give this matter of God making the serpent some serious thought, for in it lies the whole cause of sin's entrance into the world. God is a God of purpose, and He says, "All my counsel will be confirmed, and all My desire will I do" (Isa. 46:10).

Did God make this serpent (Satan or the devil) just as an experiment? Or did He know, being an all-wise God, just what would be the result?

Yes, He knew what the outcome would be, and it was. just as He had planned it. God did not create a world and then turn it loose as a boy does his balloon and stand off to see what the world would do. No, He worketh all things after the council of His will. Yes, He watches each one of His creatures so closely, that even the hairs of their head are numbered. There is nothing that occurs without His fore-knowledge, and God knew it would occur from the beginning of time, just as though

it had already occurred. His knowledge is unlimited, knowing the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:10).

God in His wisdom saw He needed an adversary, someone to work counter to His plans and purpose, and undertake to overthrow His ultimate plan of the salvation and praise of all of the human family. So we see that Satan and sin was in God's plan. Without opposition God could never have shown His superiority. This fact is simple when we think of it. God needed sin and wickedness in order to have an opportunity to show to the world His mighty power over Satan and his satellites. If King Pharaoh had not been motivated by a satanic spirit he would not have held the children of Israel in bondage for more than four hundred years, but it all occured that God might show to the world His power over Satan. Paul says Pharaoh was raised up for this very purpose. There are many events recorded in Scripture, where God used Satan in carrying our His purpose.

Evidently Judas of himself would not have been strong enough to have betrayed our Saviour, but he was fortified by the entrance of Satan. Then he was able to betray Him, and God's plan was completed, in that particular case.

We would never appreciate the good, if it were not contrasted with the bad. Had we not known darkness, we would not appreicate the light. We must first be hungry to enjoy a good meal.

God could never have worked out His great purpose without contrast, which is sin and wickedness. A physician would not receive any praise in his profession if he found no one sick. Neither would God be praised for the deliverance from sin if no one had been lost in sin. Nothing can be accomplished without contrast. But the comforting thought is that God, by whom *all* things exist, is not only able but *will* transmute all evil, wickedness and sin into good. No wonder the Scriptures tell us,

He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him (Ps. 76:10).

Christendom would have us believe that Satan was first created an angel and fell and lost his first estate. John says that he sinned from the beginning. If he was created an angel, and then fell without God's knowledge or attention, an independent act of his own, I ask with all sincerity. would the inhabitants of heaven ever be safe at any time, not knowing when another one of the angels might of his own authority decide to become a devil, and thus destroy the whole of God's plan and purpose?

We are told in the Scriptures to let God be true, and every man a liar.

Let's believe that God is working all things in accord with the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). *All things?* That is what it says. Then God is operating the whole universe, and is in full control, and is directing each occurrence.

Why try to shield God's associating Himself with evil, when He says, "All is contrived by Ieue for His response, And even the wicked one is being kept for the day of evil." (Pro. 16:4). "Maker of welfare and Creator of evil, I, Ieue Alueim, make all of these things" (Isa. 45:7).

Satan, who is cunning and crafty, would deceive the very elect if possible. He will never succeed in undoing anything that God has purposed to do. "His are the erring and the causer of error" (Job 12:16).

Satan is like a chained dog. He can only go the length of his chain. In the case of Job's afflictions, God told Satan just how far he could go, and Satan could not go any farther. In each instance where God told him what to do, he obeyed. He is a subject of God and is absolutely under His control.

Dear reader, let us keep in mind that Satan is a product of God's hand, and his career is only temporary, and will end at the consummation. —W. D. THOMPSON

THE "INTERMEDIATE" STATE

QUESTION: What is your stand on the so-called "intermediate state"?

ANSWER: We stand on the Word of God alone, and, as He has not even mentioned such a "state", we cannot base anything on it. Our faith on this subject is found in Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians (4:13-18). There we are clearly told that we, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, will *by no means outstrip* those who have been put to repose. We once taught the opposite, that they have long since outstripped us. But this scripture convinced us of our mistake.

Now we are expecting the Lord Himself to descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the *dead in Christ* shall be rising *first.* Thereupon we, the living, who are surviving, shall at the *same time* be snatched away *together with them* in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And *thus* shall we always be together with the Lord (1 Thes. 4:15-17). So they will, indeed, *rise* before we are snatched away together, but only to reach the surface of the earth, not to "go to heaven." We will reach "heaven" just as soon as they will.

The only possible "intermediate" state between the dead in Christ and the living, when He comes (*Come! Lord! Come!*), will be the time it takes those reposing to rise and join those surviving, so that they may be snatched away *together,* at the *same time.*

In a later revelation of Paul, our apostle, to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15:51), he reveals further particulars, especially as to *time*. The trumpet will blow a flourish or fanfare, but the change in both the dead and the living will not take place until the last trump. Then the dead will be roused from their sleep and we will be changed. This operation, marvelous as it will be, will take place in an instant (Greek, *atom,* UN-CUT) or the twinkle of an eye, so will not leave time for any intermediate state worthy of mention. In fact there is no "state," or stable condition at all between them.

ROUSING AND RISING

By the continual recurrence of *daylight* and *darkness,* God gives His saints a repeated reminder of their *rousing* and *rising* when Christ calls them to Himself. When a sound *wakes* us after a night's *sleep,* this should remind us of His *call* which will *rouse* the dead. And when we *rise* from our couch at the call of daily duty, it should be in anticipation of that trumpet blast which will *raise* the bodies of the dead in Christ to meet Him in the air. Thus it is that He rehearses in His world what He reveals in His Word—His power and His plan to *rouse* and *raise* the dead.

A CONFESSION

Before God taught us the folly of applying everything in the Bible to ourselves, rather than those to whom He wrote it, there were many traditions which seemed to be Bible truth simply because they were mentioned in it, or we thought they were. We "believed" everything in the "Gospels," and especially the parables. But now we know that Christ was *not* sent to the nations at that time (Mt. 10:6), but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And some of His parables were not spoken even to believers in Israel, but to *un*believers, seeing that, though observing, they were not observing, and hearing, they were not hearing, neither were they understanding

..."*Lest*... He shall be healing them" (Mt. 13:10-15).

On the contrary, however, when He told *His own disciples* that "Lazarus, our friend, has found *repose,* but I am going that I should be *awakening* him out of *sleep*", and they took it literally, then He spoke boldly, "Lazarus *died.*" (Jn. 11:1-44). Should we not discriminate between that which our Lord spoke to His enemies in order *not* to heal them, and that which He explained to His own disciples in order to *correct* their misapprehension as to the figure of repose in sleep? He had a special right to use it, for *His* power in resurrection and vivification alone can transform the terrors of death and dissolution into a life that is unutterably grand and glorious.

In this as in all else, let us keep the truth for today separate from that for Israel or unbelievers. Much less, in their case, can there be an "intermediate" condition, like the traditional "heaven." Daniel predicted that "many of those *sleeping* in the soil of the ground shall *awake*..." (Dn. 12:2, C.V.).

This truth has been a great relief to those of us who were deceived by the teaching of demons, who brought messages from the dead, or impersonated them, and thus opened the door to their own deceptions, hence we may be overzealous in our desire to help others (1 Ti. 4:1). So we beg our readers to kindly bear with us, if we, unwittingly give anyone offense. A.E.K.

PRINTING RELIGIOUS TRACTS

From time to time we are asked if we will print religious tracts for an author who wishes to distribute them himself. We regret that we have neither the time or facilities necessary to do this type of work. However, we are very happy to recommend to those who desire to have tracts published, the *Bible Truth Press,* 160 West 127th Street, New York City 27, N.Y., who specialize in this type of work, and who also publish the *Grace and Truth* magazine, which we heartily recommend to those who desire a publication with simplified articles on universal reconciliation, correct partitioning, etc. If you haven't seen a copy, be sure to request a free sample.

THE POLL-TAX DILEMMA

Our Lord was the real King, not only of Israel, but ruler of the world. How could they take a tax from Him, or how could He pay it without denying His true station? Rome, at that time, demanded tribute from her conquered territories, but not from her citizens. In fact, part of the time the inhabitants of the capital lived largely on free grain from her foreign subjects. They *received* the tax. They did not *pay* it. So it should have been in Israel, and so it will be in the future. Of the new Jerusalem we read that the kings of the earth shall be carrying the glory and honor of the nations into it (Rev. 21:26). But, in our Lord's day He was accounted a foreigner whose duty it was to pay the poll-tax to Caesar (Mt. 17:24).

This explains our Lord's question, when He asked Simon, "The kings of the earth, from whom are they getting tribute or poll tax? From their sons, or from aliens?" As Peter was a son of the kingdom which our Lord proclaimed, he was free from these payments. If, however, they had refused to pay on that ground, it would have amounted to treason or insurrection, and would have substantiated the charge against Him that He did not pay the poll tax. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were quite logical in their assumption that, if He were the King of Israel, He and His disciples would refuse to pay the tax, for it was a sign of submission and subjection, quite contrary to His claims. They did all they could to bring Him into conflict with the authorities.

But this poll tax was not demanded by Herod, whose authority was contrary to the Scriptures, but by the greatest ruler of the nations, and it was still the era of the nations. God had transferred earthly sovereignty

into their hands since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and it must remain there until Israel *accepts* their Messiah, when He comes in glory. So, from one aspect, our Lord should *not* pay the tax, but from another, He *should.* So He *did,* and He did *not!* Since mankind and His own people treated Him so shamefully, He turned to another, lower realm in His dominions, which was subject to Him, when His own kind were not. A *fish* paid the tax for both Him and Simon!

On another occasion, it was not the legal representative of the government, who had a right to ask, but His enemies, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who sent their disciples with the Herodians to ask if it is allowed an Israelite to give poll tax to Caesar. By baiting it with profuse flattery they hoped to get Him into a trap. They thought, since He claimed to be the King of Israel, that He would say that it was *not,* and so make Himself liable to arrest and death. But He saw through their wickedness and hypocrisy, and refused to answer their leading question by a yes or no, either of which they would use against Him. Even if He said yes, they would use it to prove that He was not the Messiah, and turn the people against Him.

Our Lord recognized the God-given right of the nations to rule during Israel's apostacy, and, as a consequence, to exact tribute from the chosen nation. This they also had acknowledged when they accepted the Roman currency. So He spoke the memorable words, "Be paying, then, Caesar's to Caesar, and God's to God." By their own sins and transgressions they had forfeited the right to rule the other nations and God had set up these nations over them. So Caesar had a divine right to take the tax, and they were obliged to pay. But, if they had given God the subjection and worship that belonged to Him, they would never have been put under the heel of Caesar. And the very One Who could and would deliver them they were persecuting! A.E.K.

WHO IS CHRIST?

The other day while two of us were studying in God's Word, we began to wonder just Who is Christ? Is He a man? We know that He walked the earth as a man, yet He seems to be something more than a man. Is He God? Most theologians and Bible scholars seem to think that God and Christ are one and the same (John 10:30), yet we found it hard to understand that thought too—would Christ pray to Himself? Let us look into the Scriptures and see if it will clear up this matter for us.

John 15:1-2 quotes Jesus Himself as saying that "I am the true Grapevine, and My Father is the Farmer. Every branch in Me bringing forth no fruit, He is taking it away and every one bringing forth fruit, He is cleansing it, that it may be bringing forth much fruit. . ." The believers are the branches of the Grapevine, which is Christ. Note that the branches are a part of the grapevine, yet in reality the Farmer (God) is not part of the plant, but is the One Who is pruning the grapevine. Can you see that Jesus does not try to make Himself equal with God? (John 3:38, 10:29, 14:28).

If then Christ is not God, nor yet a man, Who is He?

Again in John 10:36 we find Jesus talking and saying, "Are you saying to Him Whom the Father hallows and dispatches into the world that 'You are blaspheming', seeing that I said, '*Son of God* am I'?", and in John 14:10, "The declarations which I am speaking to you I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father remaining in Me, *He* is doing *His works*." Also 2 Corinthians 4:4 speaks of "Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God." (Col. 1:15).

It seems very evident just Who Christ is, doesn't it? *Yet*, we also are *sons of God* (Rom. 8:14), God also *works* in us (Phil. 2:13, 1 Thes. 5:24), and we also were made in the

Image of God (Gn. 1:26). Then how is Christ different from us?

Jesus said, in Matthew 28:18, that "Given to Me was all authority in heaven and on the earth." And in Ephesians 1:19-23 we read that "... the transcendent greatness of His (God's) power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him (Christ) at His (God's) right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His (Christ's) feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement by which all in all is being completed." We see that although Christ is not the same as God, nor equal with God, He still "deems it not pillaging to be equal with God." (Phil. 2:6). Why? (John 17:2, 5:22). Because Christ has been given, by God, all power and authority "not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending." Moreover, "All is created through Him (Christ) and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him." (Col. 1:16-20). There is quite a difference between Christ and us, isn't there?

But (and here is the most wonderful part!) "Whenever all may be subjected to Him (Christ), then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him (God) Who subjects all to Him, that *God may be All in all.*" Take note that the Son Himself shall be subjected to God, so that God becomes *All* in all. This One Who came in the likeness of man (Phil. 2:7) is the One to Whom all is subjected so that all may be completely God's and God complete in *all* His creatures—this is that glorious conclusion of the ages when Christ and all creation will be truly one—in the only and wise God to Whom be glory and honor! (Rom. 16:27, 1 Tim. 1:17) Amen. L.J.

THE STORY OF THE VERSION

This small booklet explains the story of how the Concordant Version was made, from the comparison of the ancient manuscripts, to the finished book. You should be sure to see that all of your friends have a copy of this interesting description, because it explains very clearly many of the unique features found only in this version. Available free from the publisher.

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