



Volume 102, Number 1

AUSTRALIA

January / March 2019

A Perspective on the New Year

“And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of slumber: for now is [our] salvation nearer to us than when we first believed” (Romans 13:11, RVIC).

“May you live in interesting times” was first attributed as a Chinese curse in 1936, when Sir Austen Chamberlain addressed the annual meeting of the Birmingham Unionist Association. He spoke of the “grave injury” done to collective security through Germany’s violation of the Treaty of Locarno. He went on to say, “There is no doubt that the curse has fallen on us. We move from one crisis to another. We suffer one disturbance and shock after another.”

Chamberlain’s statement was directed at the approaching danger of Nazi Germany. We could repeat the phrase while describing our world today, which seems to move from one crisis to another. Consider some issues of 2018 which have wreaked havoc in the four elements of world society.

Political

- In Turkey, the lira (TRY) plunged in value — 40% compared to the benchmark U.S. dollar. This decline was accompanied by high inflation and an ongoing economic crisis driven by excessive government borrowing. Adding to this were stiff tariffs imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump on Turkish imports such as steel and aluminum
- Venezuela faced the biggest economic crisis in its modern history driven by a collapse in oil revenues. The country was racked by rebellion, internal protests, and isolation from neighbors.

In April, Brazil closed its border to the daily flow of 5,000 Venezuelan refugees. “There is no historical parallel for this,” a Brazilian spokesman said as military personnel cleaned up a stadium that had been taken over by Venezuelan refugees. “We’re coming up with solutions as we go.”

- Illegal immigrants from Bosnia and Croatia attempted to break into the EU, resulting in clashes with police. Hundreds of refugees camped at the border shouting “open border, open border,” while mobs of

young men charged at police, armed with knives and stones.

- In Australia, ten ministers resigned from Malcolm Turnbull’s government, albeit eight of those resignations were rejected. The past decade has been marked by a series of leadership coups, with three sitting prime ministers deposed by party rivals and no leader serving a full three-year term as changes in parliament disrupted each new government.
- In Britain, neither major political party can find a Brexit (exit from the European Union) position that reflects citizens’ desires. Prime Minister Theresa May was jeered in the House of Commons when she commented on the resignations of the foreign secretary and the Brexit minister. New estimates on the costs of Brexit caused business firms such as Nissan, Airbus, and Jaguar Land Rover to consider pulling out of the United Kingdom as Britain abandons half a billion middle-class consumers.

Social

- In the Democratic Republic of Congo, over 4.5 million people have been displaced and 700,000 have fled to neighboring countries. The country is overrun with violence fueled by ethnic rivalries, malnutrition and disease.
- The South Sudan civil war is now in its fifth year and half the 13 million population now relies on

IN THIS ISSUE

A Perspective on the New Year	1
Ulrich Zwingli	5
A Teachable Spirit	7
What Does the Future Hold?	9
The Date of Memorial	12

foreign aid to merely survive. One-third of the people have left their homes and fled to Uganda, Sudan, and Ethiopia. Famine is rampant.

- Nearby, the Central African Republic faces constant conflict between the Christian anti-Balaka militia and the Seleka, a Muslim coalition. Nearly 700,000 citizens have been displaced.

- Burundi lost over 400,000 residents over the past three years due to political unrest and humanitarian crises. Most of those citizens fled to Tanzania.

- More than a million Ethiopians fled their homes in 2017 and 2018 because of conflict and drought.

- Escalated conflict in the state of Rakhine, Myanmar has driven out more than a million people, most of whom have taken refuge in Bangladesh.

- Yemen battles a three-year war displacing more than three million people. Compounding the social conflict is the largest outbreak of cholera in human history and eight million people at risk of starvation.

- Nigeria remains a bloodbath, with the terrorist group Boko Haram accelerating attacks randomly. The country has seen the collapse of public services and the destruction of nearly half a million homes, schools, health posts and water facilities.

Financial

- Although the global financial crisis of 2008/2009 has faded into history, fast growing debt in rich countries has raised new concern amongst economists. In America, for example, borrowing by students has risen to \$1.5 trillion, more than doubling since the 2008 debt crisis. Many of those borrowing mistakenly believed President Obama would erase student debt.

- Low interest rates dictated by the U.S. Federal Reserve in order to spur economic growth resulted in many companies adding significant low-cost debt. Debt issued by non-financial companies is now near its highest levels as a share of Gross Domestic Product since World War II. In China, corporate debt has risen to one-and-a-half times Gross Domestic Product (Source: Bank for International Settlements).

- Global companies now rate Cyber-attacks as their greatest risk. Successful breaches per company each year has risen more than 27 percent, from an average of 102 to 130. Ransomware attacks alone have doubled in frequency, from 13 percent to 27 percent. Costs range from \$5 million annually to over \$21 million annually according to a study by Accenture, a consulting group.

Religion

- The Ukrainian element of the Orthodox Church is near breaking away from its Russian overseer — a move that would undermine Moscow's central role in eastern Christianity. For several centuries since the fall of the Byzantine Empire, Moscow has pretended to the role of a "Third Rome" — a political and religious capital that would unite the Orthodox world.

- The U.S. Department of Justice is launching a federal grand jury investigation into Roman Catholic dioceses in Pennsylvania just months after a state-level investigation unearthed decades of allegations of widespread child sexual abuse by hundreds of priests that impacted more than 1,000 children over several decades.

- Chinese President Xi Jinping made it clear there would be a crackdown on foreign religions. He said that religions could operate only if they were "Chinese in orientation" and that Beijing "must provide active guidance to religions so that they can adapt themselves to socialist society."

- The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom cited more than two dozen countries as main contributors to an "ongoing downward trend" in religious liberty worldwide.

The Changing Middle East

Students of the Bible have great interest in developments in the Middle East, driven by expectations that it will be the site of the last great battle of this age before the ushering in of the Kingdom of God (Joel 1-3; Ezekiel 37-40). Most expect Israel to be at the forefront of this battle, surrounded by enemies who are only crushed when Jehovah intervenes. 2018 witnessed significant changes in the structure of many of the countries surrounding Israel.

Seven years ago in 2011, the Arab world took to the streets in rebellion. Uprising began in Tunisia when a protesting priest set himself afire. Conflict spread across the Middle East all the way to Cairo, aimed at bringing democratic reforms to countries with entrenched demagogues. The old order of things seemed doomed.

But things quickly fell apart — states collapsed, civil war broke out, and in 2018, the Middle East was more of a muddle than when the rebellions began. Traditional great powers such as Egypt, Iraq and Syria are barely functional while repressive regimes such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are wealthy and thriving.

- The Syrian civil war has become one of the greatest human catastrophes in history, with over 500,000 civilians dead and 10 million displaced.

- Although Iraq appears to have defeated ISIS, the cost was significant and corruption rampant. The country faces an annual deficit of 13 trillion dinars (1 dinar = .0012 Australian dollar)

- Egyptians are suffering the consequences of a 2013 military coup when President el-Sisi rose to power on promises of reform and democracy. Tourism has since dwindled and insurgency is rampant.

- Bruised from the Syrian civil war where thousands of fighters were killed or wounded, Hezbollah is rising again in Lebanon. The terrorist group represents more of a threat now to Israel, as four years of fighting has honed military capabilities. Ability to

maneuver forces into enemy territory and draft large forces at rapid speed poses significant problems for Israel. Hezbollah was recently described by a senior officer in Israel's Northern Command as "the strongest army in the Middle East after the IDF (Israeli Defense Force)."

Israel's Changing Posture

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has proclaimed that Israel remains an "isle of stability" but that "everything is shaking." From Israel's perspective, the changes in the surrounding Arab nations over the past seven years, accompanied by a rise in political Islam, increases the volatility of the region.

Jehovah promised Abraham in Genesis 12:3 that he would bless those nations that were favorable toward Israel, but would curse (the Hebrew word is stronger than a mere curse) those who turned against it. He also promised that Isaac, Abraham's son through Sarah, that would inherit the promises of the covenant that He had made with Abraham. Because of Abraham's faith, Isaac's descendants — the Jewish people — would receive the promise of blessing all the families of the earth (Genesis 17:19).

Moses records that Ishmael, Abraham's son through Hagar, settled in Paran, where his descendants became the Midianites, Edomites, and the Egyptians (Genesis 25). They were desert people — nomads. When Moses brought the people out of Egypt, he encountered these tribal descendants of Ishmael (see Numbers 20) and sent messengers to the King of Edom seeking permission to enter and pass through the land. He even reminded the king of their family ties. However, the King refused, and thereafter animosity grew between the children of Isaac and the descendants of Ishmael. It continues to this day and its resolution provides a clue as to the timing of the end of this age.

Psalms 83 is recognized by many Bible Students as a prophecy of this ongoing conflict. Verse 4 reads, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel be no more in remembrance." This verse was likely fulfilled when Israel returned as a nation in 1948.

British rule over Palestine ended formally at midnight on May 14, 1948, the Jewish Sabbath. David Ben-Gurion, head of the provisional government of Israel, read a Declaration of Independence aloud on a live radio broadcast two hours prior to the beginning of Sabbath. Shortly after, the new nation was surrounded by armies of the newly formed Arab League — Egypt, Iraq, (Trans) Jordan and Yemen.

In his book *1948*, author Benny Morris describes how Israel, possessing only three tanks and without air force fighters or bombers, held off 74 Arab fighters and bombers. Jewish soldiers halted Egyptian tanks



Tel Aviv

moving up from the South and pushed back the Syrian army attacking from the North. Over a short time, they carved out by hand a three-mile stretch of road through rock and steep hillsides, resulting in the "Burma Road." This provided an avenue for convoys to stock Jerusalem with food, water, and supplies.

Six thousand Israelis — one percent of the population — were killed in the Independence war. A 1966 film, *Cast a Giant Shadow*, dramatizes the

career of Mickey Marcus, who had a major part in the construction of the Burma Road. A 2006 film, *O'Jerusalem*, includes scenes in which food and supplies were brought into Jerusalem on the Burma Road. In *The Six Day War*, authors Randolph and Winston Churchill wrote, "By a feat of arms unparalleled in modern times, the Israelis, surrounded by enemies superior in quantity and quality of equipment and overwhelming superiority in numbers, had fought a war on three fronts and not only survived, but had won a resounding victory" (page 191).

Although Israel is well established as a nation today, two simple truths still exist: First, if the Arab nations laid down their arms, there would be no more fighting; second, if Israel laid down its arms, there would be no more Israel. According to prophecy, this situation will continue until the time of "Jacob's Trouble," just prior to the final conflict of this age at Armageddon.

Consider these verses from Jeremiah 30: "(3) For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it ... (7) Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. (8) For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him.'"

Compare this from Joel 3:1-12: "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat ... let the weak say, I am strong ... come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together ... and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about."

Israel has been brought again to "captivity" — restored in the land promised to Abraham — according to the picture given by Ezekiel in his vision of the dry bones (Ezekiel 37). At its 70th anniversary in May, 2018, Israel contained 6.6 million Jews, 43 percent of world Jewry, along with another 2.2 million non-Jews.

Zechariah predicted "Though I scatter them among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me. They and their children will survive, and ... return.

I will bring them back from Egypt (100,000 Jews emigrated from there in 1948) and gather them from Assyria (Iran, 100,000 emigrated in 1979) I will bring them to Gilead (NW Jordan) and Lebanon, and there will not be room enough for them ... I will strengthen them in Jehovah and in his name they will live securely," declares Jehovah" (10:9-12). This prophecy indicates a broadening of the nation to include parts of Jordan and Lebanon. Will this land come as a result of "Jacob's Trouble?" Prophetically, it appears so.

At some point, Israel's hostile neighbors will once again attack. Might this be over the status of the city of Jerusalem? Rather than defeating their enemies through military means, this attack is resolved through the intervention of a higher power. "And this manner shall be the peace, When the Assyrian shall come into our land and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds [a picture of the completed church] and eight princes of men [a picture of the Ancient Worthies]" (Micah 5:5).

The resolution of this ancient conflict will result in a different looking Middle East. It is then that the final conflict of this world takes place — the attack of Gog and his hosts: "And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates (Ezekiel: 38:11). Note that at this point the children of Abraham are dwelling in "unwalled villages" and "are at rest." This must indicate an end to the hostilities that have plagued the country since its founding in 1948.

Hezekiah's battle against Sennacherib king of Assyria is recorded in 2 Kings 18. Although Hezekiah was faithful, he emptied the temple treasury in order to pay tribute to Sennacherib and deter him from attacking Jerusalem. Sennacherib took the tribute, but still attacked Jerusalem. The fear of losing what he had drove Hezekiah to forsake the protection of God. As long as he was making reforms, Jehovah permitted Hezekiah to be undisturbed. But the fear of loss led Hezekiah to make concessions whether than to rely on the promises of God.

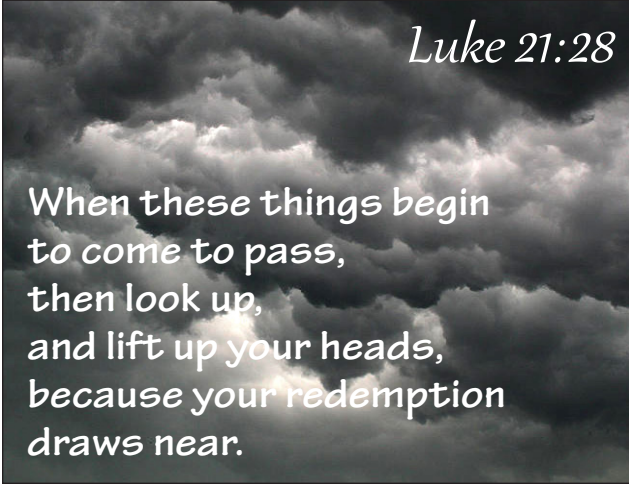
This is a lesson that Israel today must learn. Concessions of land for peace are not part of God's plan (Exodus 23:31-33). God allowed Sennacherib to attack and plunder all the cities and lands. Then he intervened. Sennacherib did not even shoot an arrow. So it will be at the end of the age. God will intervene and the world will watch in disbelief. "For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold all of these were dead" (Isaiah 37:35-36). This miraculous deliverance foreshadowed Jehovah's deliverance of Israel from the hosts of Gog. "Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle [against Sennacherib?]" (Zechariah 14:3).

Ezekiel follows the end-of-age attack on Israel and the subsequent victory by Jehovah over its enemies with the vision of what is known as The Third Temple, showing the establishment of the Kingdom of God and Christ (Ezekiel 40-48). Christ's kingdom will be the first real opportunity for Israel to bless all people of the world. The scattering of the past three thousand years has uniquely allowed Jews to know the culture and climate of almost every nation on earth. However, Israel must first pass through this final testing which will redeem their hearts and point them to Jesus as their Messiah and redeemer.

Lessons for Us at the End of the Age

Author of *1984* and *Animal Farm*, George Orwell, said, "The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those that speak it." This fits us who represent Jehovah at a time when few want to hear of Him and His coming Kingdom. We must remember that the battle for the Kingdom is the Lord's, not ours. We are volunteers in His service to whatever extent he chooses to use us. One person enlisted in the Lord's service can make a huge difference when set on the side of truth. David had no armor, no experience, no equipment, he was not battle tested, nor was he trained. But he had one thing over Goliath — his confidence was not in his own strength but in His God. When Jehovah fights for His people, the enemy is always outnumbered.

The task that the Lord sets in front of us is never bigger than the power behind us. "The Lord can break any trap that you find yourself in. He can set you free from whatever ensnares you. He did it for Judah, he does it for his church, and he will do it for his human family" ("Like a Caged Bird," *Herald of Christ's Kingdom*, 2001). As we enter 2019, let us go forth with confidence that the Lord is in control. No matter how much we see the world around us deteriorating, we know the outcome. The phrase "do not be afraid" appears 365 times in the Bible. It should be a daily reminder to us that every day should be lived without fear. The transformed life we aspire to is a continuous process; all the power it entails comes from Jehovah God. To God be the glory, forever and ever!



Luke 21:28

When these things begin
to come to pass,
then look up,
and lift up your heads,
because your redemption
draws near.

Ulrich Zwingli

1 January 1484 — 11 October 1531

ULRICH ZWINGLI is not well known by many Christians/Bible Students today, however he played a very important role in the Protestant Reformation. He was born in the South East of Switzerland, in the village of Wildhaus on the first of January 1484, seven weeks after the birth of Luther (Born 10th November 1483). At a very early age he was taught the scriptures by his grandmother, a God-fearing woman. At bedtime she would relate to him stories from the bible. This as well as the grand aspects of nature around him in the mountains and valleys near where he lived, doubtless, contributed to the formation of this future Reformer.

His biographer "Oswald Myconius" thought so when he wrote about Zwingli, "I have often thought in my simplicity, that from these sublime heights, which stretch towards heaven, he has taken something heavenly and sublime. When the thunder rolls through the gorges of the mountains and leaps from crag to crag with crashing roar, then it is as if we hear anew the voice of the Lord God proclaiming, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect".

At the age of nine he was sent to his Uncle, The Dean of Wesen, where he was schooled, until he outgrew his teachers. It was then decided to send him to the Rhine region, to a town called Basle, where he was placed in the care of Gregory Binzli the Master of St. Theodores school, a man of mild temper and a warm heart. Again, young Ulrich surpassed his school mates and teacher, so the question was asked "Where shall we find someone qualified to teach him?" The most distinguished school in Switzerland, at that time, was located in Bern where Henry Woelflin taught. During his time there he came to the attention of the Dominican Monks who tried to enrol him into their ranks at their Convent. Fortunately, his Father learned of the snare the Dominicans were laying for his son and sent word for him to return to his home in the Tockenurg Valley, thus Zwingli was spared!

He was next sent to Vienna for two years, where he studied the Roman Classics, once again he returned (1502) to his home in the Village of Wildhaus, this was now his 18th year. He again, wanting to Increase his learning, returned to Basle where he studied philosophy. He found no peace of mind, the more he tried to study the more futile and wasteful it became. While at Basle he was introduced to Thomas Wittembach, a scholar, who was skilled in the sacred tongues (Languages) and had developed a strong desire for the Scriptures, it was at his feet that the young Zwingli also acquired a thirst for God's word.

The message that Thomas Wittembach was spreading was "The death of Christ is the only ransom for our souls". When these words were uttered to

Zwingli the seeds of the kingdom had been cast into his heart.

At the age of 22 he was invited by the people of Glarus (Switzerland) to become their pastor. Not long after this Pope Julius II was at war with France (King Louis XII) and the Swiss crossed the alps to fight for the Holy Roman Church, after being summoned by their warlike Pontiff, and their newly appointed priest (Zwingli) was compelled to join them. This experience began to open young Zwingli's eyes to see that the miseries being inflicted on his countrymen were being caused by the corrupt Papal system of the Roman church.

On his return from the carnage of the battlefield he returned to his studies of the Divine Word. Not since the time of Wycliffe had someone so diligently strived to understand the scriptures. He accepted the bible as the sole and infallible Word of God! This was the starting Point of Ulrich Zwingli's reformation, he said; 'The scriptures come from God ... cannot fail; it is bright, it teaches, it discloses itself, it illuminates the soul with all salvation and grace.' This light that he was seeing came from above, not from any man, at this time he had not even heard of Luther and Calvin was only a young boy just ready to start school. At this time there was no other light coming from any other man, all was in spiritual darkness.

In 1518 Zwingli was appointed to the College of Cannons (established by Charlemagne) in Zurich. His first appearance at the pulpit of the Cathedral at Zurich was on the 1st January 1519, he was 35 years old, his main subjects were 'The Word of God, the one Infallible authority and the death of Christ the one complete satisfaction'.

After this Sermon, it was as if a fountain of new life had opened at the heart of Switzerland. Zwingli had become the spiritual regenerator of the nation. In August of that year the black death, the great plague, came to Switzerland and struck with savage fury. Zwingli was affected and lay at the point of death. It was during this sickness that he penned this little hymn, his faith so strong and firm.

I hear Death's knock!
Shield me, O Lord,
My strength and rock
"The hand once nailed
Upon the tree,
Jesus, uplift —
And shelter me,
"Willest Thou, then,
Death conquer me
In my noon-day? ...
So let it be!

“Oh! May I die,
Since I am Thine
Thy home is made
For faith like mine

Thus, he examined at that awful moment the foundations of his faith, he returned from death's door to preach the word of God with more fervour than ever before. From the year 1523 he decided to REFORM the Church in Switzerland and root out all the false teachings of the Roman Church, a council was set up and the clergy, far and near, were summoned to attend. This decree was to take effect on the 29th January 1523. In preparation for this Zwingli prepared his famous “Sixty-Seven Articles of Doctrine” to defend the Word of God in Switzerland.

His first article struck right at the heart of the false Roman Church's claim that “Holy Scripture has no authority unless it is sanctioned by the church”. He firmly held that the divine word was infallible, not the church, that Christ is our only teacher and mediator, only he is the head of his church; all who are united to him are members of his body, children of God, and from Christ and only Christ (not the pope or clergy) is our salvation, the claim of transubstantiation was false, food could be eaten on any day, not to be substituted on special days, and Monastic life, with all its rituals, clothing, tonsures (special shaving of the head) and the forbidding of marriage, were not in line with the Holy Scriptures.

Some of the other things he preached were that God alone can Pardon sin, the selling of indulgences could not purchase an exemption from punishment for some types of sins, Simony and the act of selling church officers and roles were wrong. That there is no place called Purgatory after death. Prayers to the saints were wrong and had no biblical backing. All brethren in the church are equal and should not be addressed by Father or any other title.

600 priests, scholars, strangers attended along with many of the citizens of Zurich. In the middle of the assembly Zwingli sat alone at a table with Bibles in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. All eyes were focused on him. He was there to defend the Gospel. After lunch the Conference re-assembled and the lords of Zurich proclaimed that the traditions of men should be laid



aside, only the word of God was (as proven from the Scriptures) to be preached from the pulpit. From this time on reform after reform enacted in Zurich, with Zwingli at the helm.

The Monasteries and their Orders were dissolved, idols were removed from the church and burnt. Thus, step by step, the movement advanced. That changes so great in a country where the Government was so Liberal and the expression of public opinion so unrestrained were accomplished, without popular protest or dissent, is truly marvellous. The next milestone was the mass being abolished. What a blow to the Papacy and the Pope! It laid to dust the towering fabric of the Roman Church and its hierarchy.

In 1529 a meeting was held at Marburg Castle, Germany between Martin Luther and Zwingli to try and solve the major difference between the two on the subject of the Eucharist (Transubstantiation). This meeting was arranged by Philip the 1st of Hessen, Germany, who wanted it to be a symbol of Protestant unity, but he was disappointed as both Luther and Zwingli could not agree over the sacrament of the Eucharist. Luther believed that the wine actually turned into the blood of Christ and that the bread turned into his flesh, Zwingli did not.

Luther Initially refused to acknowledge Zwingli and his followers as Christians. At the death of Zwingli on the battlefield near Kappel on the 11 October 1531 (he was 47), Luther said, “They said that Zwingli recently died thus, if his error had prevailed, we would have perished and our church with us. It was a judgment of God”. Thus, the father of the reformation in Switzerland died, not fighting for Christ but for his own countrymen in Zurich!

Our confidence in Christ does not make us lazy, negligent, or careless, but on the contrary it awakens us, urges us on, and makes us active in living righteous lives and doing good. There is no self-confidence to compare with this. — Ulrich Zwingli

A Teachable Spirit

"Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days"
(Proverbs 19:20 NASB).

Brethren need a "soft heart", one that has a desire and ability to be "teachable". Unfortunately, amongst Brethren there are some who take the Apostle John's statement "You need NOT that any man teach you" and use it out of context. They use this verse to justify why they no longer need to attend meetings or to read any of the material written by Pastor Russell and others who have thrown light on the scriptures in these last days. The Psalmist speaks of Jehovah "And thou givest them their food in due season (Psalms 145:15 ASV). In the due season the Bible was translated into the many languages of the nations. Older manuscripts were discovered that showed the errors in the translation of some of the earlier Bibles. The claim of only needing the Bible and the Holy Spirit nullifies the rest of the scriptures that shows that "God has set **teachers**" in the church.

No one has yet come to an understanding of the word of God, or come to Christ, without first either reading it or hearing it from someone else. The Bible itself was written by men under the inspiration of God "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for **teaching**, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16 NASB).

The thought that there were people qualified to teach the word of God is not confined just to the New Testament. When the Law was given to Moses the work of the Levites was also set out, including the moral requirements they needed to display "so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses" (Leviticus 10:11 NASB). On the return from exile in Babylon the Levites once more were commissioned to teach the people. "And the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. And they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading" (Nehemiah 8:7-8 ASV).

After Jesus had commenced his earthly ministry, teaching the disciples about the word of God, he sent the twelve out to preach to the lost sheep of Israel "And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. And he sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, And they departed, and went throughout the villages, **preaching** the gospel, and healing everywhere" (Luke 9:1-6 ASV).

Towards the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, he sends 70 disciples out to teach the people. "Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers

are few; therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:1-2 NASB). They are to go in advance into places where Jesus might follow. Their message was "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

These disciples were not to focus on teaching in synagogues, (the place of the scribes and Pharisees; the religious teachers at that time). Jesus told them to go to people's homes. They were to enter the house and if made welcome they were to stay in that house to "heal those in it who are sick," and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

After Christ's Resurrection

After Christ's resurrection and before his ascension he gave this commandment to the disciples "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching** them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20 NASB). At His ascension he again spoke of this commission, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the **remotest part** of the earth" (Acts 1:8 NASB).

The Apostle Peter had denied Christ three times before his crucifixion. After his resurrection Christ spoke to Peter, challenging him with the question "lovest thou me more than these?" Three times he instructed Peter "Feed my Lambs", "Tend my sheep" and "Feed my sheep". Peter was to feed, i.e. teach the younger, more tender of the flock, those that maybe were weak in faith and belief. Teach them the milk of the word. He was to tend the sheep, both the lost sheep of the house of Israel, plus those that would come in from the Gentiles. He was to teach them from the bread and water of life. The third command was to "Feed my sheep". These were the more mature brethren who although possibly capable of looking after themselves still needed guidance as Satan was there waiting to snare any who may have wandered away from the main flock.

The Holy Spirit

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you (John 14:26 NASB).

The Apostles had humble beginnings, listening to the words of Christ, but often not understanding the deeper meanings of his words. Christ knew that once he had left the earth they would need the assistance

of the Holy Spirit to guide them. With the coming of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles the effect was striking. Peter's speech stirred the people as he set out the prophesies in the Old Testament and how Christ had fulfilled them. "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41 NASB).

Even after being brought before the council, jailed and flogged, they were not discouraged, after their release it is stated "And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on **teaching and preaching** Jesus as the Christ (Acts 5:42 NASB).

Teaching in the Churches

The Corinthian Church was an example of why continual teaching is important. They were introduced to the Gospel by the Apostle Paul, but they had started to go astray and needed to be taught again. The Apostle Paul had spent eighteen months in Corinth, staying with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:11), preaching to the Brethren. He wrote two letters reminding them of what he had preached and correcting the errors that had infiltrated the Church. Paul realizing that they needed more instruction tells them "For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17 NASB).

Paul in his letters to Timothy writes that those in the position of overseers must be "able to **teach**" (1 Timothy 3:2). Timothy is also told "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to **faithful** men who will be able to **teach** others also" (2 Timothy 2:2 NASB).

They were not only to be faithful to the true message but also "The Lord's bond-servant must not be **quarrelsome**, but be kind to all, able to **teach**, patient when wronged" (2 Timothy 2:24 NASB).

Paul stressed the importance of teaching the flock and in 1 Corinthians 12:28 states "And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, **third teachers**, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues" (NASB).

A Teachable Attitude

The account of the Ethiopian eunuch illustrates the attitude that Bible students need. He was highly qualified in a high position "a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship" (Acts 8:27 NASB). He was a devout man and was reading the book

of Isaiah. When Philip joined him and asked the question "Do you understand what you are reading?" He answered "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" Then Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35 NASB).

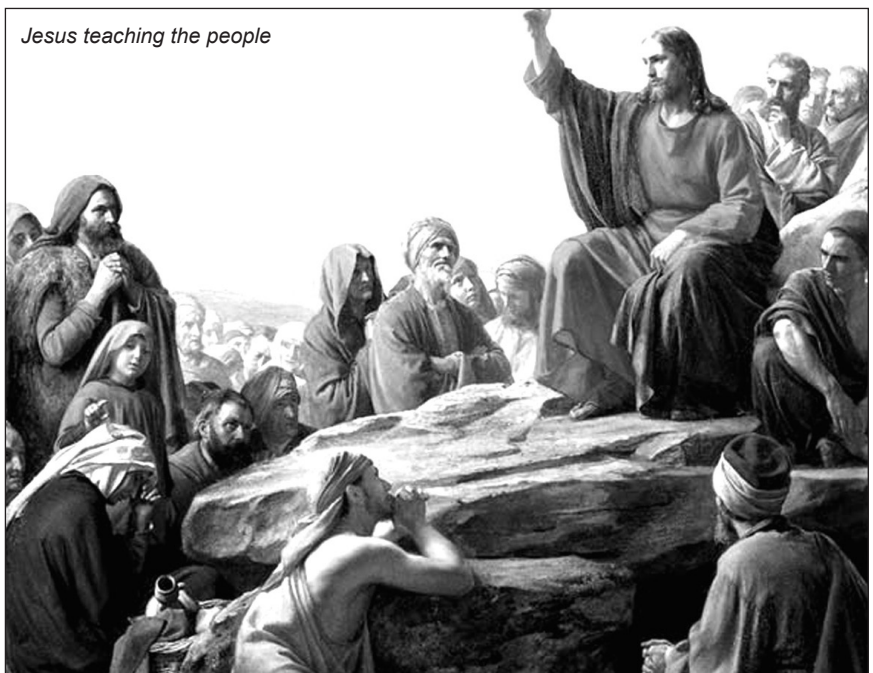
Throughout the New Testament, Jehovah continually emphasizes the need to provide spiritual food to the church. Jesus says that His servants will be providing "**food** in due season" to His people (Matthew 24:45). "**Feed** My sheep" is one of the last things Jesus tells Peter (John 21:17). Paul writes to Timothy stating, "**Preach** the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and **teaching**" (2 Timothy 4:2).

The Apostle John was old, and lovingly referred to the Brethren as "My little (beloved) children" He reminds them that they have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ and of the love they should have for each other. They are not to love the things of this world as they will pass away. He then goes on to warn them of the coming of the antichrist and that there were many antichrists around them. The problem was that the philosophies of man were starting to mingle with the true teachings of Christ. Timothy was warned "Turn away from the irreverent babble and godless chatter, with the vain and empty and worldly phrases, and the subtleties and the contradictions in what is falsely called knowledge and spiritual illumination" (1 Timothy 6:20 AMP).

John reminds them to remain steadfast in the teaching of Christ and not to be swayed by worldly knowledge that throws doubt on the Gospel message.

"As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has **taught** you, you **abide** in Him" (1 John 2:27 NASB).

Jesus teaching the people



What Does the Future Hold?

*"He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways."
(Psalms 91:11)*

This past year has been tumultuous to say the least. Governments world-wide are losing the confidence of their citizens. Trust has gone and faith is on the wane. Even with the advent of modern medicine, mankind is still suffering the ills of disease and aging is still taking its toll on the human family!

Politics has become a game of who gets crushed first. And yes, the possibility of a nuclear threat is still very real. The average person walking the streets of any major metropolitan city is clueless as to what could correct these major problems.

Since time began mankind has been plagued with sadness, death and sorrow. In the beginning father Adam suffered the loss of a son due to him being murdered by another son. The Jewish nation, from its very beginning, has been embroiled in one war after another. Nation against nation has been the rule. Why? These are questions which beg for an answer.

Beginning with the garden of Eden, Genesis chapter one: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." In subsequent verses we find the statements of the creation of the expanses of water, land and the various animals as well as man. In the last verse of this chapter we read and quote, "And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day."

We see in the beginning all was good! As man began to fill the earth, at God's command, the troubles began to multiply. Then Satan and his minions began to inject themselves into the society of man.

All forms of evil were witnessed from half-man half-angels to evil spells and all forms of witchcraft! We assume the people at that time would have felt all was lost, and destruction was on the horizon. Today our society feels very similar to the chaos that occurred at that time. The difference today is that modernisation and greater population dominate. Is the heart of man any different today than back then? We don't think so. Loose morals, jealousy, and greed still prevail! We read in the book of Jude how we should conduct ourselves in relation to those around us.

Jude 17:22, "But you beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts. These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded devoid of the spirit. But you beloved, building yourselves on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit: keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some who are doubting."

Today there is more wealth in the world than there ever has been, yet mankind is no happier than he was 500 years ago, Why? We answer that the society of man has slowly removed any vestige of religion and spirituality from everyday life. As you travel through Europe today, the magnificent cathedrals are empty! They have become museums where tourists pay to appreciate the architecture.

Man has become secular for the most part. Yes, there are small groups of the faithful, however their numbers are so small as to not have any meaningful effect. The society in which we are living today closely resembles the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in many respects! We ask the question, "Is all lost?" We answer no. The future of mankind rests in the hands of our beloved Heavenly Father. Jehovah has allowed man to suffer the effects of evil all these thousands of years in order for him to come to a realisation of the sinfulness of sin.

This present evil world is still under the control of Satan, but that is all about to change. God has allowed sin to run its course in order for man to experience the terrible separation from His love and care. When you were a child you were protected by your parents. You were loved by them, you were nurtured by them, when you became an adult all of that changed. The love and care of your parents never changed, but you became separated from it as you made your way in the world. As in the case of father Adam, after he sinned, he became separated from his father. The protection and love he had previously experienced was withheld from him, such is mankind today.

Hope for the Future

When we go to God's word in the scriptures, we begin to realise the loving care our Father has in store for us in the future. The thoughts and expressions that David has recorded for us in his Psalms are words and revelations of great comfort! One Psalm in particular expresses our thoughts at this time, that is Psalm 91. It is quite lengthy; therefore, we will use selected verses to show the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father.

These verses reflect our present life as well as the life eternal that is to come. Psalm 91:1-5, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust! For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper, and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the

arrow that flies by day.” Here we find in these words the love and protection our Father wants to give to His children! We continue. Verses 11, 12. “For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”

Here we see the loving care our Father affords us. finally, we conclude this Psalm with verses 14-16. “Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him, and honor him. With a long life I will satisfy him, and let him behold my salvation.”

In 1 Timothy 2:1-6 we read, “First of all, then I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity, This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, For there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time.”

So dear friends, not all is lost. We must have hope and faith in the promises our Father has given to those who love Him. Remember without faith it is impossible to please him, Hebrews 11:6. So how can we be reassured of the promises set forth in scripture that declares an end to all evil and death? Ref: Revelation 21:4. The scriptures declare that we are to be watchmen, that is watchmen concerning the events in the world as it relates to prophesy. There is an expression in scripture that states, “God turned His face away from Israel so to speak.” Isaiah 59:1-2, we quote, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.” This expression reflects the thought that God’s blessings and protection were withdrawn from Israel because of their great sinfulness and loss of faith in Him!

Jesus, God’s Emissary

There you have the first great clue as to how the Father will begin to interface with man, especially the Jew. When Jesus presented Himself to the Jew first, they were given the opportunity first to repent and believe on Him, God’s emissary! But alas this did not happen, instead they crucified him upon the cross. But His mission was successful, as He fulfilled all that was required of Him by the Heavenly Father.

At this point the way was opened to the Gentiles, Cornelius being the first. In essence, Jesus purchased the entire human race, which is to be brought back in harmony with the Father in His due time. The subtle key we mentioned earlier as to how we would



The Prophet Amos

recognise this happening is found in the nation of Israel. God had spoken earlier in the Old Testament of Israel: of all the families of the earth I have known you, Amos 3:2. “Even tho His face was turned away from them, He has not forgotten them, but is waiting for the proper time to shed His grace once, again on them.”

In the eleventh chapter of Romans, the Apostle Paul makes it quite clear that God has not forgotten Israel. Romans 11:8-15, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day. And David says let their table become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution to them. Let their eye be darkened to see not, and bend their backs forever. I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgressions be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles, inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen, and save some of them. For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead!”

We have it quite clear from the apostle that at a prescribed time God will again act on their behalf, and once again turn His face of favour back to His people! We read in Zachariah 14 that when Israel is besieged by all the nations, God will go before them as in the days of old, Chapter 14:1-3, “Behold a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city

will be captured, their houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.” Again, we read in verse nine to summarise, “And the Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one.”

There we have the outcome, but how do we get there from all of the world’s confusion and evil today? Our barometer, brethren, is Israel. That tiny little nation of only 8,019 square miles. We are living in the days when the Lord’s face (mercy) is slowly beginning to turn back to His people.

Let us examine this barometer and the events that should have wiped Israel off the face of the Earth! Today the nation of Israel is completely surrounded by hostile nations that are plotting for their demise, countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria, just to name a few. These countries are highly militarised, some with nuclear capabilities! The following are just a few examples of unexplained events from a human viewpoint that occurred during many of the wars Israel has faced since 1948.

During the six-day war, a strange occurrence happened. Israeli soldiers came into the Straits of Trina prepared to do battle with the enemy, an Egyptian half-track was approaching them, filled with armed soldiers, with mounted machine guns on both sides. The Israelis only had small hand weapons with bullets that in no way could stop the approaching half-track. They waited for the first shot that never came! The half-track came to a halt and the Israelis approached cautiously. Inside of the half-track they found 18 armed soldiers sitting with guns in their hands having a petrified look on their faces! Ordering the men out of the vehicle they began to march the men. One of the Israeli officers asked the Egyptian sergeant why they didn’t shoot at them?

He answered, “I don’t know. My arms froze- they became paralysed. The Israeli soldier then commented, ‘how can you say that God didn’t help us?’ ” Another account regarding the Israeli air force; IDF Director of operations Maj. General Weizmann was asked by Mr. Levanon, the father of a fallen pilot, how he explains the fact that for 3 straight hours, Israeli

air force planes flew from one Egyptian airstrip to another destroying the enemy planes, yet the Egyptians did not radio ahead to inform their own forces of the oncoming Israeli attack?

Ezer Weizmann, who later served as President of the state of Israel, was silent. He then lifted his head and explained, “The finger of God.”

The secular newspaper Haaretz summed up the 6-day war with the admission; “Even a non-religious person must admit this war was fought with help from heaven.”

And finally, German journalists (who are by nature skeptical) summarised: “Nothing like this has happened in history. A force including 1000 tanks, hundreds of artillery cannons, many rockets and fighter jets, and a hundred thousand soldiers armed from head to toe was destroyed in two days in an area covering hundreds of kilometers filled with reinforced outposts and installations, and this victory was carried out by a force that lost many soldiers and much equipment, positions and vehicles. No military logic or natural cause can explain this monumental occurrence!”

The world, per say, cannot see or understand the workings of God. Only those guided by faith can see the old order winding down making ready for the kingdom, for which for so long we have prayed; “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

Why this “barometer”? Israel is so important to the world because when the last trumpet is blown at the last sounding, and God begins to take over the control of the earth, the first place for the restoration of mankind is to begin with the nation of Israel.

We read in Zechariah 8:23, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, “In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”

So, all of the sin, crime, death and corruption will ultimately come to its final close. The evil that is presently in the world will be transformed into a condition of trust and faith for all of the human family. We will close our thoughts with the familiar quotation found in Revelation chapter 21. This will be the ultimate outcome for the human family.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

Abide always in His mercy and Love — Amen



Ezerwizman, former president of Israel: “The Finger of God”

The Bible Teachings

On the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin Offering and Atonement.

This book was published by the Berean Bible Institute during the 1970's and set out the teachings from the Bible on topics which so eluded many in the Christian world. The insert in this edition of the Peoples Paper covers the next part of this 274-page book. For Brethren who would like to read more of the content it is available through the Berean Bible Institute's official webpage.

www.australianbiblestudents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Bible-Teachings-on-the-Covenants2.pdf

Conventions

Berean Bible Students Convention

January 25-28, 2019 • Camp Wilkin
57 Noble Street, Anglesea, Victoria
Enquirybbi@gmail.com, Richard +614 6603 8225

Sydney Convention

March 8-10, 2019 • Wesley Vision Valley
7 Vision Valley Road, Arcadia, NSW
Enquirybbi@gmail.com, Richard +614 6603 8225

Convention Streaming Online

Anglesea, January 26-28, 2019 — www.australianbiblestudents.org/events/conventions/
Scroll down to Convention Streaming Online

Contacts

Berean Bible Institute, Inc.

is the contact for the following organizations:

Dawn Bible Students Association

Publisher of "The Dawn" Magazine
<http://dawnbible.com/content.htm>

Pastoral Bible Institute

Publisher of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom"
<https://herald-magazine.com/>

Bible Fellowship Union

Publisher of the "Bible Study Monthly"
<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk>

Dawn Pilgrim Visit 2019

The Dawn Bible Students Association will send two elders for a pilgrim visit to Australia in 2019 — Br Byron and Sr Margie Keith, with Br Michael and Sr Vicky Balko. A draft itinerary follows. Enquirybbi@gmail.com • Ray +61429172606

- Jan 7 Arrive at Sydney
- Jan 8-10 Travel to Gympie to meet Brethren
- Jan 11-13 Brisbane meetings Saturday, Sunday
- Jan 14 Gold Coast
- Jan 15-17 Travel down East Coast
- Jan 18 Morrisett NSW meeting
- Jan 19-20 Meetings, fellowship in Sydney
- Jan 21-23 Travel south to Pakenham
- Jan 24 Overnight Melbourne
- Jan 25-28 Australian Bible Students Convention
- Jan 28-31 Personal Time
- Feb 1-4 Meet with Polish Brethren, Melbourne
- Feb 5 Return Home

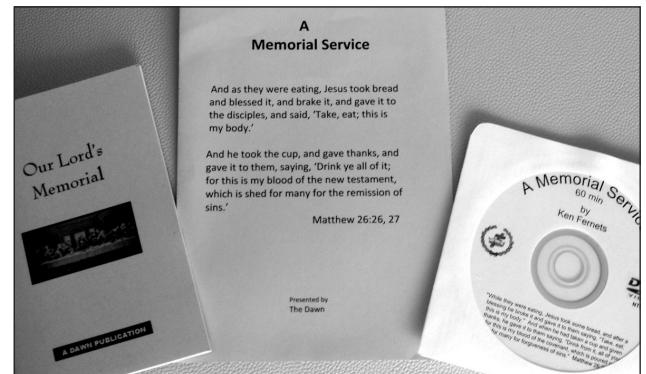
The Date of Memorial

Thursday, 18 April, 2019 (14 Nisan) after 6 pm

For details on locations where the memorial will be held in Australia, email enquirybbi@gmail.com

For Isolated Brethren

If you are isolated or unable to attend, please contact the Berean Bible Institute for a Memorial Kit that will be provided free of charge.



Post: Berean Bible Institute, Inc., PO Box 402
Rosanna, Vic 3084, Australia • enquirybbi@gmail.com

Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom

(ABN 23 734 654 922, Reg. No. A0022186J)

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria, Australia 3084
www.australianbiblestudents.org
Enquirybbi@gmail.com

Editorial Committee

Ray Charlton, Adam Kopczyk, Richard Tazzyman

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the discourses reported.

**Subscription payments are due
and can be made payable to:**

Berean Bible Institute Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna 3084

The Bible Teachings (Part Two)

On the Covenants — Mediator — Ransom — Sin Offering — Atonement
Berean Series of Bible Studies • Berean Bible Institute • PO Box 402, Rosanna, Australia 3094
www.australianbiblestudents.org • enquirybbi@gmail.com

The Three Great Covenants

What Is a Covenant?

A covenant is a ratified, unalterable agreement. God has made many covenants with men. (Genesis 6:18, Jeremiah 33:20, etc.) Three, however, stand out very prominently, as in them have been bound up all the best interests of mankind.

The Abrahamic Covenant

First: The Covenant of God to Abraham. This covenant seems to comprehend and include a blessing on the natural fleshly descendants, as well as upon the higher, spiritual Seed, “which Seed is Christ; and if ye be Christ’s (body), then are ye Abraham’s Seed and heirs according to (this) promise.” If this thought be borne in mind, it will assist us in grasping the full meaning of this Covenant.

Seed as Stars of Heaven

The spiritual seed is called the “blessing seed” and “stars of heaven.” It is prophesied that “They that turn many to righteousness shall, shine as the stars forever.” (Dan.12:3.) And Jesus calls Himself “the bright and morning star.” This thought seems to have had more weight and meaning with the ancients, who looked up to the stars with superstitious reverence, believing that they controlled the destinies both of nations and of men. So probably this portion of the covenant represented by stars signified heavenly rulers — Christ and His Bride. The natural descendants are probably meant when mention is made of “a great nation” possessing “this land” — Canaan — said to be as the “sand of the sea.” This represents an earthly people as plainly as the stars do the heavenly. Let us read the covenant and see that it contains these two elements and recognises both natural and spiritual Israel. (Genesis 12:2,3, 13:14-16, 15:18, and 22:16-18.) Paul assures us that “the seed” referred to in this covenant is Christ. (Galatians 3:16).

Fleshly Israel lost this, the cream or choicest part of the covenant — the spiritual. As Paul says (Romans 11:7): “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it.” But the loosing of this better part does not cut them off entirely from having a part in that covenant. “For brethren, that you may not be conceited with yourselves” (thinking that all of God’s favour and covenant are taken from them and given to you), “I wish you not to be ignorant of this secret; that hardness in some measure has happened to Israel till the fulness of the Gentiles may come in” (i.e., until the Bride selected from the Gentiles has been completed). “And then all Israel will be saved, as it has been written, The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and

shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” and “This is the Covenant with them from me, when I shall take away their sins” (Romans 11:25, Diaglott).

Earthly Blessings Sure

Though for centuries they have been counted as enemies and blinded to the gospel, yet they are still beloved for the fathers’ sake; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (verse 29); i.e., these earthly blessings are just as sure to them as our spiritual ones are to us, because God has promised or covenanted, and never changes. — Thus, we see the breadth and grandeur of God’s plan and arrangement — how the natural seed was cast aside for the time that the spiritual might be developed, who, in their turn, are to be made the instruments for blessing the natural; when they shall obtain mercy through your mercy; when “The Deliverer shall come out of Zion (spiritual Israel — the Church) and turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (fleshly Israel).

When we see this, we see the fulness of this covenant to Abraham. It shows us what God meant when He promised that Abraham’s seed should be mighty, possessing the gates of their enemies (the place of power and control), and be so far above others as to be able to “bless all the families of the earth.” “O, the depth of the riches, of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways; for who hath known the mind of the Lord?”

The Covenant of the Law

Is the second covenant we wish to consider. It was unlike the Abrahamic, in that it was conditional and two-sided, i.e., it was made between God and Israel and by its arrangements God was bound to do certain things, if Israel did certain things. The one with Abraham was unconditional. God said: “I will,” etc.; and although that was the Abrahamic covenant, Abraham was in no way obligated. (Circumcision was instituted after the covenant. — Romans 4:10).

It was not Abraham’s covenant, but God’s entirely; and for this reason, it had no mediator. (A mediator is one who stands between the parties to an agreement or contract, whose duty it is to see that both parties fulfil their parts of the covenant.) Instead, God swore by Himself that He would keep His covenant. (See form of oath Genesis 15:8-18 and Jeremiah 34:18-20.) “The Law,” is called a covenant. (Compare Galatians 3:17 and 4:24.) It was ordained in the hands of a mediator (Moses, Deuteronomy 5:5), which proves that it contained conditions for its fulfilment: for “a mediator

is not of one" (Galatians 3:20), or, not necessary where there was only one party contracting, as in the case of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Law Covenant Made with Israel Only

This (the Law) was not part of the first covenant, nor was it made with the people of the world, but only with fleshly Israel — "And Moses called all Israel and said unto them: Hear O Israel ... The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us here this day" (Deuteronomy 5:1-5).

The Ten Commandments

That the Ten Commandments, particularly, and the ceremonial law, incidentally, constituted this covenant, is clear from the reading of the remainder of this chapter. A difference between moral and ceremonial law is now recognised, but it is of men. God called them one "The Law." This Law Covenant was seemingly designed as a blessing to Israel, yet really by coming under it they condemned themselves; for it is written "cursed (condemned) is everyone that continueth not in all the words of the Law to do them." God never intended, therefore, that they should be benefited by this covenant since, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." What then was the object of this covenant? It had two objects: first, it demonstrated that the natural man as a fallen creature, could not live in harmony with God, could not do right or be righteous. And finally, it was proved and illustrated that a perfect man could keep God's perfect law, when Jesus did keep it and thereby became heir legally as well as by grace to all the provisions of both covenants.

Secondly: The Law "was appointed on account of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise related." (Galatians 3:19.) God knew the best time, and "in due time sent forth His Son." The law was introduced because the proper time had not come for the development of "the seed" referred to in the covenant to Abraham, and was intended to prevent Israel's becoming degraded like other nations, and to act as a restraint on their fleshly nature, and an educator of self-control, etc. It thus was a "schoolmaster, which, by showing them their own weakness, prepared them to receive Jesus Christ as their justifier from the things which the law condemned. (Galatians 3:24.) And it did this very work. By the time the seed was due, it had prepared some to receive Jesus.

Thirdly: It was used as a type, not of the Abrahamic, but of the new covenant, to illustrate the operations and conditions of that covenant, as we shall soon see.

New Covenant Not Made with the Church

Is repeatedly mentioned in Scripture. It should not be misconstrued as being God's covenant with us — "the seed"; no, that was part of the Abrahamic covenant, and, although in harmony with each other, they are not the same, nor is the "new covenant" made with the Church at all. It does not come into operation until the spiritual seed as well as the fleshly children, have come into possession of what was promised them under the Abrahamic Covenant.

New Covenant Conditional Requiring a Mediator

It, like the law which was its shadow or type, is between God and fleshly men — the world. If, therefore, this covenant is between two parties (God and the world), there must be conditions binding upon both; hence there must be a mediator (as in the type) to stand responsible for the fulfilment of the conditions of both. Who, then, is to act as mediator of the new covenant? Let Paul answer: "Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant." (Hebrews 12:24.) Yes, Jesus our Head, is the one, and the only one, who can stand uncondemned before God's righteous law. In Him God recognises His holy Son, separate from sinners, and in Him humanity may, and soon will, recognise their Lord, now highly exalted, but once "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every men"; and "who is a faithful. High Priest," able to sympathise).

Only through Him can the world ever be made at-one with God — His great work is at-one-ment, He will associate with Him in this work His tried and faithful Bride. Now, what are the conditions of this new covenant? They are, as in its type, the law, do and live. God can never be a party to any covenant recognising sin. Perfect righteousness ("Be ye perfect") has always been the condition on which God recognises or communes with any of His children. Christians in the present age, although not individually perfect, are reckoned so, being hid in Christ, and as members of His Body are covered by His robes of righteousness. But in the coming time, the imputed righteousness of another will not avail, but "every man shall die for his own sin" (not for sin of Adam), or vice versa, live by his own righteousness (perfect obedience).

New Age Vs. Jewish Age

It may be asked, then: In what way will the new age under the new covenant differ from the Jewish age under the law covenant? If the conditions of life are obedience to God's perfect law, will it not result, as the law covenant did, in condemning all under it to death? We answer no, the difficulty then was, not with the law, but with man. Man, in his fallen, imperfect condition, could not keep "the law ordained to life." But the conditions of this new covenant on God's part are, that man shall be brought to a condition in which he can obey the perfect law, and always keep it in his heart, as it is written,

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. ... This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put say law in their inward part, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "In those days they shall no more say, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge, but everyone shall die for his own iniquity" (Jeremiah 31:31).

Proof of New Covenant Being Future

"And in that day, I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field and with the fowl of heaven

and with the creeping things of the ground and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle, out of the earth.” (Hosea 2:18. See also Jeremiah 32:37-41, Ezekiel 37:26.) We see clearly that the new covenant is yet future and also that a great change will be effected in the condition of Israel, who, under the Law previously, were unable to keep it. The trouble then was, “the fathers (Adam and his successors) had eaten the sour grape of sin, and the children’s teeth were set on edge” so that they could not keep the Law of God; so the Day of Atonement is brought in (the Gospel Age) and during it, they, and all men are redeemed from sin and the curse, through Jesus Christ, who, by the grace of God tasted death for every man. The man Christ Jesus, holy, harmless, separate from sinners was made a curse for us, made sin (i.e., dealt with as the sinner) for us, (He) who knew no sin. And it is consequently after the Gospel Age when they are pardoned freely for Christ’s sake, and restored to the condition of sinless manhood that the New covenant comes into force. And to this thought agrees the words of Paul (Romans 11:27) “This is my (new) covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.”

All Nations to Be Blessed

The nations are to be blessed also under this new covenant, by becoming “daughters” to Israel. “I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy (old) covenant” (Ezekiel 16:61).

A Covenant with Obligations Requires a Mediator

We have seen that to every covenant to which there are obligations of two parties, there is a mediator, or one who stands between guaranteeing the fulfilment of its conditions.

As under the covenant of the law, Moses was the mediator, so is “Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant” And to Him God looks for the fulfilment of the Law, and to Him Israel and the world look for ability to comply with its conditions. Remember that we, the gospel church, do not come to Christ under the new covenant, neither under the “old” or Law covenant, but under a covenant older than either of these (Galatians 3:17), the Abrahamic covenant; as part of “The Seed.” “If ye be Christ’s (body), then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to (that) promise” (Galatians 3:29).

Covenants Sealed with Blood

As the typical or Law covenant (or “testament” same Greek word) was ratified by Moses its Mediator — sealed, with the blood of a bull and a goat annually — so the “new Covenant” is sealed with the blood of “better sacrifices” (plural) which these represented, viz.: Christ — Head and Body.

Moses took a bunch of hyssop and scarlet wool and therewith sprinkled of the ratifying blood mixed with water, both the book (type of the Law) and all the people. (See Hebrews 9 19.) So with the New Covenant it must also be ratified with blood; and the mediator of the “new,” gives His own blood (life,) both head and body, during this gospel day of sacrifice. And soon when the better sacrifices are complete, the people will be sprinkled with this cleansing blood and with the

pure water of truth. It will sprinkle both book (law) and people, bringing the people into harmony with God and therefore into harmony with His Law. Their teeth will no longer be set on edge; no longer will they, when they would do good find evil present with them; for “All shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest,” and “The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.”

Sprinkling After the Better Sacrifices

Who will do the sprinkling after the sacrifices are complete? It was Moses in the type; it will be the Great Prophet and Mediator in the antitype — “A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” (Acts 3:22.) This prophecy belongs to the “Times of restitution of all things,” and is quoted by Peter as applicable there.

Antitypical Prophet Now being Raised Up

That prophet or teacher — “The Christ” — Head and body in new being “raised up” (to power) and soon the work of sprinkling and cleansing humanity begins; and the soul (person) who will not then obey and be cleansed shall be destroyed. In that age, the sinner a hundred years old will be cut off, though at that age he would be but “a child” (Isaiah 65 20).

Sarah — Hagar

Let us briefly review these covenants as they are illustrated in a type or allegory. (Galatians 4:22-31.) Paul explained that Abraham’s wife, Sarah, was a type of the covenant made with Abraham, referring to “The Seed.” As years rolled by, and no child came, they began to look for a fulfilment in some other way, and Hagar takes the place of a wife and bears a son, who apparently is to be the heir. So the original promise of God meant Christ, but He was not born until “due time,” and in the meantime “The Law” was given from Sinai, apparently taking the place of the covenant, and under the law covenant a fleshly seed was developed — fleshly Israel. But the Abrahamic covenant had not failed, and after the Hagar covenant had borne fleshly Israel (typified by Ishmael), the true seed of Abraham and heir is born, under the first (or Sarah) covenant; i.e., Christ Jesus and the members of His body — spiritual Israel.

Paul Spoke of Only Two Seeds

This is as far as Paul carries the type, because speaking only of the two seeds, natural and spiritual, and the two covenants under which they come into existence. But as we find that God is to make “a new Covenant,” “after those days,” we naturally inquire: Why was not this new covenant typified by a wife as well as the other two? And upon examination we find it was so illustrated. Turning to Genesis 24:67, we read how Isaac receives Rebecca into Sarah’s tent, and she becomes his married wife, etc., illustrating how our heavenly bridegroom will receive His Bride at the end of her journey, and bring her into, and associate her with Himself in the enjoyment of all things promised in the first (or Sarah) covenant. Then we read: “Then, again,

Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah,” illustrating, as plainly as a type can, the new covenant.

Children Born of Abraham’s Wives

Each of the first two covenants bore one offspring: The first, the “heir of all things” (Isaac, spiritual Israel), and the second, fleshly Israel, beloved for the fathers’ sake. But the New Covenant (Keturah) bears six sons, which, taken with the one of Hagar would be seven, a complete number, representing that all the fleshly children would be developed under the Hagar and Keturah or “Law” and “New” Covenants. The name Sarah means Princess, Hagar means flight or cast out, Keturah means incense or sweet; all of which are significant.

Oh, how our covenant — the Royal — looms up above all the others! Let us not forget that we must die with Jesus, if we would live and share in the glorious work of sprinkling and cleansing the world in the next age. “That by means of death they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (Hebrews 9:15). (Z1909-108).

THE THREE GREAT COVENANTS

Christendom in general recognises only two Covenants, the Old or Law Covenant, with Moses as its mediator, and the New Covenant, with Christ as its Mediator. Christendom may be said to know nothing whatever about the Abrahamic Covenant. When rarely they recognise the Abrahamic Covenant at all, or enter it into their calculations, they identify it with the New Covenant. We all inherited this general line of thought through Sunday-School sermons, commentaries, etc. It is not strange, therefore, that we all had this confused conception of this subject. Gradually, as a part of the light due to the Church in the end of this age, we got to see that there are three Covenants, instead of two, as we first supposed. We got to see that the Abrahamic or Sarah Covenant, the original one, is the grandest and best of the three, and that from it the other two proceeded. This light upon the Divine purposes is elaborated in the “Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.” In this is set forth that these Covenants are represented in the garments of the High Priest, in the ephod of two parts, with its shoulder-clasps and jewelled breast plate. However, we did not discern so sharply as we now do the clear-cut distinctions between those three Covenants. And is not this in full accord with the Lord’s general dealing with us and with all people throughout the age? Is it not His proposition that the “Path of the just shall shine more and more unto the perfect day”? We believe that it is.

Growth in Grace and Knowledge of the Covenants

What we now see still more distinctly it is our duty and privilege to lay before the Household of Faith. We remind you, however, that as it took some of us quite a while to get a proper focus upon the Abrahamic Covenant, it may now take some of us a considerable time to still further differentiate between the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant. Remember also that a clear understanding of every detail of God’s Plan, while desirable, is not necessarily essential to our blessing thereunder. For instance, we believed in the

precious blood of Christ and were justified thereby freely from all things, when we did not at all understand the philosophy of the Atonement — even as the majority of Christian people do not understand it now. The increasing knowledge did not bring increasing justification, but it did bring increased appreciation and love and devotion and opportunity for greater harmony with the Divine purposes better understood.

The Sarah Covenant One-sided, Unconditional, no Mediator

St. Paul tells us that the Law Covenant was “added” to the Abrahamic Covenant in God’s dealing with the nation of Israel. It is called a Law Covenant because of the benefits that Covenant offered were only to those who could keep the Law in all its requirements — inviolate. He calls it the Hagar Covenant, because it was a bondage and because its offspring, the Jewish nation could not inherit the promised blessings and privileges. He tells us that it made nothing perfect, brought nothing to perfection. Although faith had a place and the grace of God had some manifestation towards Israel, yet neither faith nor grace affected their Covenant, which was hard and fast and demanded obedience to the works of the Law — “He that doeth these things shall live by them.” Since none could do perfectly, that Covenant of works brought only condemnation of their imperfect works. It had a mediator, Moses, but he was unable to accomplish anything for the people, because of their imperfection through heredity. We properly call this the Law Covenant.

Children of the Covenant

The Apostle states that as Hagar’s child was born before Isaac who represented The Christ, Head and Body, “The New Creation,” so the nation of Israel, Moses and all the people baptised into him in the sea and in the cloud, “The house of servants,” would be developed before Spiritual Israel, the New Creation — Christ and all the members of the house of sons of spirit-begetting.

Sarah Covenant Before and After Law Covenant

As the Covenant of Grace (Sarah) existed before the Law Covenant was added to it, so it continued to exist after the Law Covenant was set aside as a Covenant, its prize of life eternal having been won by “the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all.” So, then, the Covenant of Grace (Sarah), which preceded the Law Covenant (Hagar) four hundred and thirty years, continued alive during the whole period of the Law Covenant, but without children, and then brought forth the Head of the Seed, Jesus. The Law Covenant was then cast aside — “Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman” — The Christ, the Heir of the original promise, now being developed. From the Scriptural standpoint the Resurrection is the birth; as, for instance, our Lord is the “First-Born from the dead, the First-Born amongst many brethren,” and “His brethren,” “His members,” “His Bride” (three different names for the “elect” Church), must all be brought forth from the dead, all be “changed” to spirit condition before the Seed of Abraham will be complete.

Br. Ernest Martin, President BBI, 1929 to 1988.



Volume 102, Number 3

AUSTRALIA

July / September 2019

Victory Through Faith

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcome the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4, KJV is used unless otherwise stated).

As we begin our lesson, we should note that the definition of faith is given to us in Hebrews 11:1 “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” This shows us that it takes faith to believe in God, and that he is pleased with those who exercise it. This is faith in the simplest form. But true Christian faith goes beyond this to a much deeper faith. We are to have faith in the rightness of the Divine plan as it pertains to ourselves individually, and to his people collectively. We must then progress to the certainty of absolute faith in God, and in his integrity, justice, love, wisdom, and power. This will lead us to becoming a mature Christian, and one with unwavering faith.

Reading Romans 1:17 from Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott, “For the righteousness of God by faith is revealed therein in order to faith.” We see from this that he reveals his righteousness to us so that we will have faith in Him. So then, those justified by faith must continue to live by faith in the sure promises of God (Hebrews 10:38). We are to then walk not as the world does — only by sight — but by our “most holy faith” (Jude 20).

The Facets of Our Faith

There are certain facets of our faith that we would like to discuss in our lesson, these are: Assurance, Perseverance, Endurance, Gratitude, and Mutual Love. Gemstones commonly have facets cut into them in order to improve their appearance by allowing them to reflect light. “Let your light so shine amongst men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). 1 John 1:5 tells us that “God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness.” Light stands for truth, and for righteousness. Since in God there is no darkness at all, he has promised to guide us continually by his Spirit through his Word. To the child of God, there is expressed, “But ye are a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). It is their desire to show forth a faith and a trust in Him. Since he has “called us with a holy calling” (2 Timothy 1:9), we are the LORD’s gemstones, and if faithful will develop a complete and perfect character likeness to him.

Faith is Assurance

Let us go back to the verse that was quoted earlier in our discussion as taken from Hebrews 11:1, concerning faith. Faith is a real substance, a mental substance so to speak, that stimulates and clarifies the mind. The essence of faith consists of receiving what God has revealed unto us and evolves as that trust in the God of the Scriptures, and in Jesus Christ whom he has sent deepens. It compels us to obedience and good works (John 1:12, James 2:14-26). Faith is also personal trust, apart from the good works in the Lord Jesus Christ, “Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:5,23-25).

Faith is evidenced in prayer, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.” Faith acts as

IN THIS ISSUE

Victory Through Faith	1
“To Us There is One God”	5
John Sigismund Zápolya	7
Courage for the Task Ahead	8
Water of Life	10
Jehovah	11
Free Book Offers	12

a working principle in life, and the uses of faith are illustrated in Paul's words in Hebrews. A wonderful key point to our salvation is shown in the words, "For it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). We have much to be thankful for as shown in the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). Also, "If God be for us who can be against us" (Romans 8:31).

To help guard our faith, the Lord has given us "exceeding great and precious promises" in his word. (2 Peter 1:4) One of the most precious of these is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). Another wonderful promise of our salvation is shown in the words, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard ... To whom God would make known what is the riches of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:23,27).

The members of the true Church are presently being selected, chiseled, and polished without the sound of a hammer-unknown to the world (1 Kings 6:7). Peter says, "Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). This implies willing service and obedience, praise, and whatever is done to the glory of God. Therefore, with the substance and evidence of God's word let us walk in the "full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22).

Faith Calls for Perseverance

As we advance as Christians, we should recall life's experiences, including its joys and sorrows. We should then become stronger in the Lord, and in the power of his might by communion with our Lord Jesus, desiring to serve and "worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Paul wrote in Hebrews 10:23, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: (for he is faithful that promised)." He was energized by the message of God's word, and by a relationship to God through Christ. We have the same favors of God, the same promises of God, and the same inspiring hopes that Jesus and the apostles had. Paul's inward man had the assurance of the LORD that the glories of the future would be proportionate to the trials faithfully endured. We should then hold "our confidence (in him) steadfast to the end" (Hebrews 3:14).

Our desire should be to serve him with our whole heart, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walketh about ... Whom resist steadfast in the faith. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Peter 5:7-10). Those in the school of Christ can appreciate that the trials that are and will be upon them, are manifestations of divine favor. For this

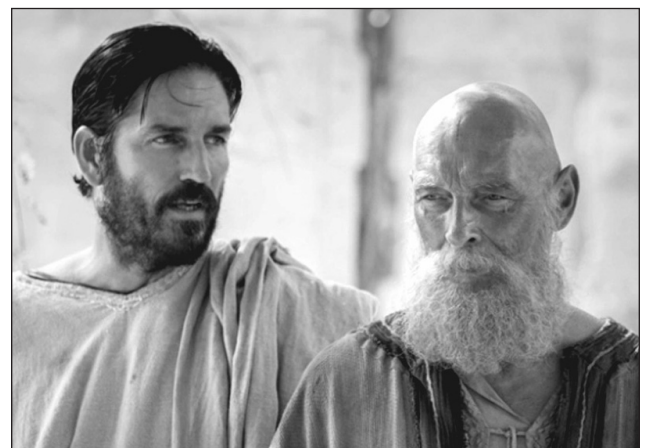
reason, the things of this world and its temptations are not for those who strive to walk in the Lord's footsteps (1 Corinthians 1:27,28, Luke 16:13). We should then be thankful that he has preserved us each day and has kept us from falling so far. "For without me, ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). We should continue to trust in the promises made to the "more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37).

An important part of our perseverance has to do with having a proper attitude as we see expressed in, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13,14). This has to do with the realization that we must focus our energy upon the things that would draw us closer to God. This includes striving to keep our hearts and minds full of the precious gems found in God's holy word. "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of a good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8,9).

Any consideration of the importance of perseverance would not be complete without mentioning the role of the wonderful privilege of prayer. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:18).

Faith is Endurance

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to look at the experiences of the "Heroes of Faith," as recorded for us in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, verses 4-29. We are to consider what they endured and how faithful and loyal they were to God. Even so we are told that "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:40). However, we should through faith be inspired by their example to go on to the greatest amount of faithfulness in running our race. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace



Paul the Apostle, who emphasized faith (together with Luke)

might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For our light affliction, which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:14-15,17). We are also to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1,2).

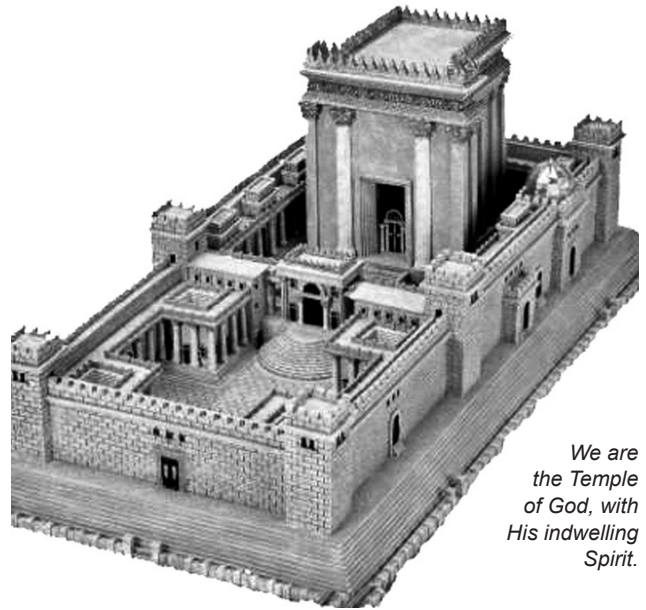
As the church will be the temple of my God, perfect on the heavenly plane, so each member be-gotten of the Holy Spirit as a new creature must realize that God is dwelling with them. He has promised, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God" (Revelation 3:12). Let us have the Holy Spirit ruling in our mortal bodies, and we will then also have "the peace of God" ruling there (Philippians 4:7). We are told of the importance of patiently enduring all the experiences in life that come our way (Hebrews 6:15, James 1:2-4).

We should always remember the example of our Lord Jesus, "For consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself unless ye become faint and weary in your minds" (Hebrews 12:3). Our mind can be a special battleground for each of us, due to the resistance of our flesh to sacrifice, and the old man that is in conflict with the new man or new mind. We should rejoice that our Lord Jesus has invited us to walk in his footsteps, and to endure the same experiences. To symbolically drink whatever the Father shall pour for us in our cup. When you have persecutions and hard experiences remember the words, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you ... Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:11,12).

Faith Inspires Gratitude

We should be ever thankful to our Heavenly Father for we owe our all to him through his only begotten son (1 Corinthians 8:6). Remember the words, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought and paid for with a price, therefore glorify your God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19,20). Our understanding of this shows us that our time, talent, influence, money, and all that we would consider precious, or in any degree valuable property belongs to the Lord, even our life itself.

Our Father cares for us, and he loves us dearly. Remember that the pure, lovely, and true things originated from the Father and came to us through the Lord Jesus. Our faith and trust in him should cause us to be ever mindful that we have our Lord there for help and encouragement, for comfort, consolation, guidance, and rest. "Come unto me all ye that labour



*We are
the Temple
of God, with
His indwelling
Spirit.*

and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Jesus is our heavenly friend, and our comforter. His character was so well represented to us in the Bible that he is referred to as "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). What we know of our Lord has been revealed to us through our faith in him and through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. Our depth of faith compels us as it did the Apostle Paul, "Be ye followers (imitators) of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Our gratitude to God should also show each day that we know we are privileged, as shown in the words as expressed in Psalm 116:12-14, "What shall I render unto the LORD for all of his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people."

As faithful children of God, the true Church is ever thankful to their father for his providential care and overruling in all aspects of their lives. They also realize through their eyes of faith that he has everything under control in full accord with his wonderful plan. We are reminded in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." This should inspire each of us to strive to fulfill the vow that we have made concerning faithfulness unto death (Luke 9:23), seeing that we are to receive glory, honour and immortality after having faithfully trusted in him through his grace, we can then truly say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Faith Requires Mutual Love

Continuing our lesson, we note that faith progresses from its starting point to higher and higher levels. We have this expressed in 1 Corinthians 13:13, "And now abideth faith hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." We are reminded of

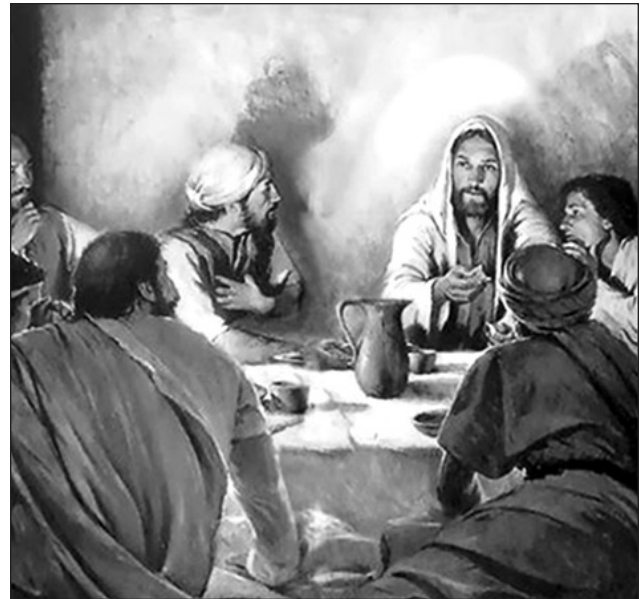
the scripture in which the Apostle Paul put forth a beautiful discourse on the subject of love. "Charity (love) suffereth long, and is kind; charity (love) envieth not; charity (love) vaunteth not itself (doing things for others and not for self), is not puffed up" (1 Corinthians 13:4). He further pointed out to us that love "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things. Charity (love) never faileth" (1 Corinthians 13:6-8).

How important is charity/love? We are told in Romans 10:13, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Also, in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "God loveth a cheerful giver." This shows to us what our disposition should be like each day, and how careful we should be by "Bringing into captivity every thought" (2 Corinthians 2:10). We should strive as much as possible to keep our hearts full of love, and if we do this there will be no room for evil thinking toward others. Paul tells us that heart loyalty to God requires effort, "Be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Titus 3:8). So we see that love is our first duty, and continual duty, and that it will be the culmination of our duty. We must then in our hearts and minds come to the realization to "Let brotherly love continue" (Hebrews 13:1).

If we have faith in God, we will want to conform to his desire and his will for us that our hearts may become rich in hope, faith, and love. When we are enriched in these things it leads us to the realization that we should be loving, kind, and considerate towards all, especially to those of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10). Knowing that "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). "I have loved thee with everlasting love: and therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee (or I have extended my loving kindness unto you)" (Jeremiah 31:3). It is the love of God, and the love of Christ which will then bind us together with his word of truth, and with each other. We should then desire to put into practice Proverbs 17:17, "A friend loveth at all times."

We recall the words from Ephesians 4:5, There is one body, one hope, one faith, and one baptism." Our verse from 1 Corinthians 13:13 also follows this order, beginning with faith and ending with charity or love. This shows us that every aspect of being pleasing to God must involve love.

This development of a loving heart based upon our faith in God, and in his dear son, is shown in the words of our Lord and Master, Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39). "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34,35).



Jesus exhorting his disciples to "love one another"

Obtaining the Prize

In 1 Corinthians 3:24 we are told "So run that you may obtain (the prize)." Brethren remember that this is made possible by the conquering power of God. It involves a faith that in all conditions can look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that eventually "all things will work together for good" to us. (Romans 8:28) We can then through faith, declare, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

We then need to continue to be submissive to the Master and strive to faithfully continue to put our faith and trust in him. "Gather my saints together unto me" (Psalm 50:5), (my covenant keeping sacrificers who endured, and as diamonds when tried they have been found to be firm). Through patient endurance they have developed the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, the qualities (facets) of faith and character necessary to be set in gold as the true Israel, the saints of God (Ephesians 5:9,10). Who having faithfully passed the tests, gain the prize of glory, honour, and immortality, having reached the mark of perfect love (Mark 12:30).

Only those who suffer with the Lord (do all things) sacrificially as members of his body will be granted a share with him in glory as his "joint-heirs" as members of the great prophet, priest, king, mediator, and judge of the world (Romans 8:17). The members of his body will all soon be raised up and become sharers in his resurrection following their advocate who; when he ascended on high, appeared for the church the household of faith as their high priest. The Lord brings them to himself to become partakers in his glories, having been faithful unto death they will be heirs to the heavenly inheritance, having been more than overcomers (Revelation 3:21), and will help to fulfill the petition of our Lord's prayer. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

“To Us There is One God”

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him”
(1 Corinthians 8:5-6 RVIC).

How clearly the Apostle Paul sets out the position of Jehovah as the **“one God, the Father, of whom are all things.”** Throughout history there have been many who proclaimed, or were proclaimed as gods, but the Heavenly Father was the mighty one over all other mighty ones, the one God over all. None others are mighty or great, save as they receive their greatness, as well as their existence, from Him.

In the Prayer of Moses, the man of God brings out the position of Jehovah. “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God” (Psalms 90:1-2 NASB). Moses was instructed to tell the Israelites to fear (reverence) Jehovah. “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 ASV).

The name for God is first introduced in the bible in Genesis. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1 ASV). The word translated God is the Hebrew word elohiym meaning “gods” in the ordinary sense but also of the supreme “God.” It often highlights God as the creator throughout the first three chapters of Genesis.

Yahweh (Ye’HOVAH)

The second name that is used for God in the scripture is the word Yahweh/Ye’HOVAH (Jehovah in English) and is found 6521 times in the Bible. It has the meaning of “the existing One” and is the proper name of the one true God. It is first recorded

in Genesis 2:4, “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven” (ASV). In Genesis alone it is recorded 165 times in 143 verses. The phrase “Jehovah God” is used 532 times in the Old Testament so as to distinguish it from the other gods or mighty men.

Almighty

It is interesting that the first time the word Almighty (Hebrew shadday) is used by Jehovah was when speaking to Abram when he was ninety years old. He instructs Abram to walk with Him and to be perfect and he would make a covenant with him. “As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee” (Genesis 17:4-7 ASV).

The next time that Almighty is used to describe God was when Isaac, after instructing Jacob not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan gave him the following message “And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham” (Genesis 28:3-4 ASV). Again Jehovah used this term when he blessed Jacob and changed his name to Israel.

There is an interesting verse in Exodus chapter six “And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah I was not known to them” (Exodus 6:2-3 ASV). This seems a strange statement as Abraham certainly knew the name Jehovah and he used it often. There are more than twenty times the word is used just in the 24th Chapter. The thought here seems to be that He would now reveal Himself as Jehovah in a new and powerful way. The Israelites had been in Egypt for over 400 years. The ways of the Egyptians had influenced their religious thoughts, they had been slaves and treated badly. Many no doubt thought that Jehovah had abandon them.



Moses, Leader of Israel

We are given a clue to the state of their understanding back in chapter three. “And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations” (Exodus 3:13-15 ASV). Jehovah was now going to demonstrate His power to them by bringing them out of the land of Egypt. He had made a covenant and was about to fulfil it by freeing the Israelites from Egypt and bringing them into the Promised Land.

In Exodus chapter six Jehovah uses the personal pronoun “I” twenty-five times to explain to Moses who He is, what He has done and what He will accomplish. “I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments” (Exodus 6:5-6 ASV). The Israelites were going to see first-hand the awesome power of Jehovah as He proved that He was the God Almighty and that Pharaoh and all of his priests could not prevail.

Jehovah had Moses and Aaron lead the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, a journey that would take forty years. During the journey they would not only see the awesome power of Jehovah, but Moses would give them the law from Jehovah, the were to build the Tabernacle as the centre piece to their worship and to learn more about Jehovah that their patriarchs had worshipped. Their food and water were miraculously provided along with the fact that their clothes did not wear out and yet on reaching the promised land all but two of the spies slandered the land resulting in all the men save Joshua and Caleb dying while wandering the desert before they were allowed to enter the promised land.

Throughout the Old Testament, the prophets and writers gave glimpses into the character and purpose of Jehovah, but it was not until the coming of Christ that His nature and plans were revealed through His only begotten Son. Previously the Jews had seen Him through many miracles that He had shown them through the centuries, but in many ways, He was still a mystery to them. However, they were influenced by the nations around them who had idols so that they had something that they could touch and see. On many occasions Jehovah had demonstrated that these inanimate objects had no actual power. One



Elijah at the cave in Horeb, after confronting the priests of Baal

example is with Baal, “Then they took the ox which was given them, and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made. It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.” So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them” They could not get Baal to respond, Elijah then asked them to totally wet the altar that he had made to Jehovah “Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God” (1 Kings 18:26-28, 38-39 ASV).

With the coming of Christ, the believers were able to get a much greater understanding of the Jehovah that they worshipped. They were being shown a Heavenly Father that had such an intimate knowledge of each of the human family that “the very hairs on your head are numbered” (Matt 10:29 NASB). Christ spoke of the relationship that he had with the Father “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him” (Matthew 11:27 NASB). Christ taught His disciples to pray “Our Father hallowed be your name.” Apostle Paul in both Romans and Galatians shows that those who accept Christ as their redeemer are no longer under the bondage of fear but have been adopted as children, giving them the privilege of calling Jehovah “Abba Father.”

Christ also demonstrated the attributes of his Heavenly Father through his actions and words. Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I

been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" (John 14:8-9 NASB). The beginning of the book to the Hebrews makes the following statement "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

And he is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature and upholds all things by the word of his power. When he had made purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3 NASB),

What a privilege we have of not only knowing God's name, "Jehovah," but because of Christ's sacrifice becoming adopted by God and allowed to address Him as "Abba Father." (Please see "Jehovah," bottom, page 11)

John Sigismund Zápolya

History's only Anti-Trinitarian King, 1540-1571

JOHN SIGISMUND was the King of Hungary from 1556-1570. He always seemed to have a deep interest in God and instigated many theological debates during his early reign, due to the emerging reformation. Because of what he was learning he converted to Lutheranism in 1562, leaving behind the Catholic Church.

In 1564 he embraced Calvinism; however, about 5 years later he accepted the Arian views of his court Physician, Giorgio Biandrata, and became the only monarch to deny the false doctrine of the Trinity.

It was during these Theological debates on the Trinity between the Lutherans and Calvinists that he denied the Trinity. Some of the credit also goes to a preacher called Francis David who taught in Transylvania, his oratory against the Trinity at one of these debates organised by King John Sigismund influenced him to issue the Edict of Torda. According to this edict, any religious congregation in his domain "shall be permitted to keep a preacher whose teaching they approve. Therefore none of the superintendents or others shall abuse the preachers, no one shall be reviled for his religion by anyone." The King also went on to proclaim religious freedom in his realm, saying that "faith is the gift of God and this comes from hearing, which hearing is by the word of God."

This policy ensured that Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinists, eastern Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish, and Muslims could practice their faith openly and freely.

This King was way before his time, this edict (policy) was the first example in modern times of an explicit Government policy of religious Toleration. When you think of what was happening to other countries under the control of the Catholic Church!

However, as you can imagine, the Catholic church would not have been very happy with this freedom. Unfortunately John Sigismund died at the very early age of 31 (1571), he died without any heirs. His successor was

Stephen Ba'thory (a Roman Catholic), under his rule the realm soon descended into religious strife and the persecution of dissenters against the Catholic Church started again.

But the rule of John Sigismund was not in vain, it opened in the very near future (Late 1600s) the "Age of Reason." Yes, the attitude towards religious tolerance, stemming from his rule, spread beyond Hungary and Transylvania into Poland and beyond. It also came to the attention of many members of the educated class of Britain who were uncomfortable with strict religious creeds. Many prominent Britons adopted this anti-creedal attitude (including Isaac Newton), but they had to keep these views to themselves since Britain officially adhered to a creedal faith system.

These ideas passed over to the American colonies in the 1700s and played a major role in the refusal of the American founding fathers to adopt any official religious creed for the New American Nation. This in turn led to the new Truths (Light getting brighter) movement of the 1800s, preparing the way for the Seventh Messenger to the Churches as described in the book of Revelation.



John Sigismund Zápolya

Courage for the Task Ahead

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9 NASB).

Joshua had a mammoth task ahead, he had to lead the Jews into the promised land. In Numbers 26:51 it is recorded, “These are those who were numbered of the sons of Israel, 601,730” (NASB). Numbers 1:46 and Numbers 2:32 show that this number refers to the men only, meaning that there would have been approximately two and half million people counting women and children.

The report from the spies may have still been in the minds of some of the people, even after 40 years in the wilderness. “We went into the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak (men of great size) there” (Numbers 13:27-28 NASB). It is not hard to imagine that those who were about to enter the promised land would have experienced fear or anxiety for the task ahead, while others would have had courage to face the task at hand.

Fear is the response to a danger that is currently detected in the immediate, present moment of time.

Anxiety refers to the anticipation of some potential threat that may, or may not, happen in the future.

Courage is the mental or moral strength to venture, to persevere, to withstand danger, fear or difficulties.

Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote “Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear.”

Joshua was appointed by Jehovah to become Moses’ right-hand man and through his mentoring to become the leader of Israel at his death. The appointment is recorded in Numbers “So the LORD said to Moses,

“Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; and have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and commission him in their sight. You shall put some of your authority on him, in order that all the congregation of the sons of Israel may obey him” (Numbers 27:18-20 NASB). The thought of replacing Moses and taking responsibility for this rebellious and unbelieving people must have at times filled him with trepidation.

Joshua was one of the two spies that came back with a good report of the promised land along with Caleb, he still knew that the enemy territory was full of well-fortified cities with well-armed soldiers and chariots, while he had a nation that had no battle experience and no chariots.

Joshua knew there was only one way that they could succeed and that was by following through with their statement at the time of their return “The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. “If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them” (Numbers 14:6-9 NASB).

Although these obstacles seemed insurmountable, Joshua remembered how, when it appeared that Pharaoh’s army had them trapped and with nowhere to go, God fought for His people by parting the water for them to cross on dry land, while burying the Egyptians and their chariots in the depths of the sea.

The Source of Courage

The source of Joshua’s courage was his faith in Jehovah’s promises “No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you” (Joshua 1:5 NASB). But with the promise also come responsibilities on Joshua’s part. “Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go” (Joshua 1:7 NASB).

It is interesting that Jehovah did not give Joshua instructions of how this victory over the enemies that were entrenched in the promised land would be achieved. Success depended on Joshua’s continual trust in the LORD and by following the commandments in His word. There was no way that Joshua could rely



Joshua, successor to Moses

in his own strength to win the battle, only his reliance on and obedience to Jehovah.

Joshua is Warned

Jehovah forcefully spelt out what Joshua must do to successfully bring the Israelites into the land that so long ago had been promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success” (Joshua 1:8 NASB). This required Joshua to not only become familiar with the law, but also to understand the law. He then had to carry out both the moral and the sacrificial requirement of the laws, only then would he be successful.

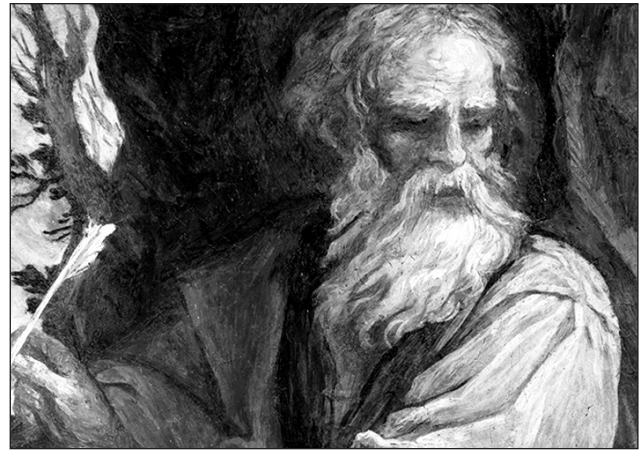
Strange Instructions

Many of the conquests would have seemed to be straight forward. They had already seen the hand of Jehovah in the battle with Pharaoh and their victory against overwhelming odds. However, the battle to overcome the well-fortified city of Jericho, the first city they had to subdue in the promised land, must have seemed quite perplexing to both Joshua and the Israelites. The instructions were “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors. You shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. Also, seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead” (Joshua 6:2-5 NASB).

To be successful Joshua and the Israelites had to follow precisely Jehovah’s instructions. Success was theirs “So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword” (Joshua 6:20-21 NASB).

Lessons for Today

The account of Joshua’s courage under very difficult circumstance should inspire the followers of Christ. Paul writing to Timothy states “For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7 ASV). Our Heavenly Father has not given us a spirit of fear but one of power and that of a sound mind. The Apostle John reminds us



John the Apostle

“There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love (1 John 4:18 ASV).

Believers have the same outline for victory that Joshua received. They must read the words of life, come to an understanding of what their Heavenly Father’s plan is and then make the decision to carry it out to His glory. It is essential that they meditate on God’s word daily. There are five steps required to gain the knowledge to have courage and faith in Jehovah’s word.

(1) Reading the words that can bring life through Christ

(2) Believing the words that come through the faith; that they are the inspired words of Jehovah

(3) Coming to an understanding of what the words are telling us, this can only be achieved through the gift of the Holy Spirit. This includes proving the words of the teachers that the risen Christ has provided to feed his sheep.

(4) From this understand; the words should provide direction in our lives to bring us closer to Christ and our Heavenly Father

(5) Obedience, not perfect obedience as we are still in the flesh, but of our new creature, our spiritual life should constantly be aiming for improvement in our obedience to Jehovah’s commandments.

Paul, writing to the Romans, states: “we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28 NASB). What a wonderful promise that God causes all things to work together for good. There is the requirement that we meditate on His words, acknowledging that we need His help to direct our lives in accordance with his will.

In Conclusion

The words of Isaiah should encourage each of Christ’s followers on the Narrow Way. “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10 NASB).

Water of Life

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Revelation 21:6 ASV).

The term "water of life" is used in the Bible to describe the Word of God. It is a very good description, because everywhere we can see how much pure water is appreciated. We have only to look around us today to see how mankind depends on water for progress and life. Here in Australia, as well as in all other countries, the problem of supplying pure water is becoming more difficult. Wherever man lives he must have water. While life is capable of being sustained without food for some considerable time, it is not possible without water. A few days at the most without water and death will result.

Water, then becomes a symbol of life. Thirst is another symbol indicating a desire — a craving. Physical thirst is said to be very painful; it continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water satisfies the demand of nature, and there is also a soul that thirsts, and the water of life alone can quench it, satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. In our everyday language we would say that an ambitious person thirsts after knowledge. Those who are drawn to Jesus by the Heavenly Father thirst after knowledge also, but it is a knowledge that will lead to everlasting life. All knowledge of this world's arrangements that one can store up in their mind will not lead to everlasting life. However, a greater understanding of and obedience to the Word of God and His will for His people during this present time will bring everlasting life.

The Truths in the Word of God

It seems that the water of life of which Jesus spoke was the truths mentioned in the Word of God. By the Word of God, however, we are not to understand the paper and ink with which the Bible is printed, but the thoughts and purposes of God conveyed to our minds by these means. The printed page may perish, but God's thoughts will never perish, nor will His purposes fail.

At first the Gospel was preached by word of mouth only, but it was none the less the power of God unto salvation to all who believed it. It was then the water of life to thirsty souls, just as much the Word of God when later it came to be expressed in printed form. When we speak of the Word of God and remember that our Lord described it as the "water of life," we have in mind the Gospel of Christ wherein is revealed God's purposes and plans not only for our salvation now, but also for all mankind in due time.

This message of salvation is based on the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus, and it is the partak-

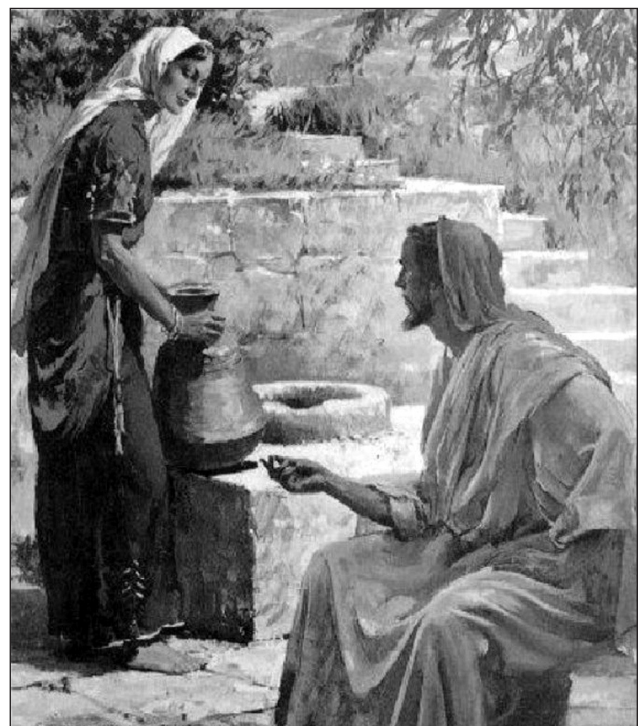
ing or embracing of this message that gives one the desire for greater understanding of the Plan of God.

How wonderful the words of our Lord must have appeared to the woman at the well. Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14 NASB). How wonderful also these words appear to us, especially after we have learned their real meaning. We are continually learning more and more from this water of life, appreciating it more each day we live, finding still greater refreshment in it as we continue to partake of it.

Consecration and Eternal Life

Those who have truly found Jesus and have made a full consecration of their hearts to God have found the happiness which the world is seeking in vain that pulls in other directions. They have found a heart satisfaction which is able to offset trials, sorrows, difficulties and disappointments, and are able to glory in the realization that their experiences are working to their advantage, proving them and preparing them for still greater riches by and by.

To gain eternal life, one must embrace in this life the teachings of God's Word respecting His plans and purposes: "This is eternal life, that they may know



Jesus with the Woman at the Well

You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3 NASB). Other Scriptures also refer to the value of the Word of God, such as John 6:67-69, “So Jesus said to the twelve, ‘You do not want to go away also, do you?’ Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God’ ” (NASB). Again in 1 Peter 1:23-25, the Apostle Peter speaks of believers, “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER. And this is the word which was preached to you” (1 Peter 1:23-25 NASB). This passage indicates the great power behind the Word of God — so great that it is like the water of life — it can and does lead one to the position where he becomes begotten of the Spirit.

In Philippians 2:15,16 the statement of “holding forth the word of life” is spoken of those who have partaken of the water of life, the truths revealed in the Word of God, and have consecrated their lives to God. The noticeable thing about these words is the exhortation to pass this good news of the Word of God on to others, by “holding forth the word of life.”

The water of life is always refreshing to the Lord’s people. No matter how often we turn to the Word of God, it is always the same — it does not lose its refreshing taste. For instance, Psalms 23:2 is appropriate, “He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters” (Psalms 23:2 NASB). And again, “Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path” (Psalms 119:105). We can always turn to appropriate Scriptures to suit the occasion of our needs, for the Word of God is indeed the water of life to the Christian today, as in the past.

A River in the Kingdom Also

At the beginning of the Gospel Age our Lord gave out enough truth to satisfy the needs of His followers at that time. He told them that He had many things to



In the Kingdom, a River of Life will flow to the whole world.

tell them, but they could not bear them then. Now, at the end of the age, God’s Word has been revealed to us, giving us a knowledge of His plans and purposes, not only for the Church during the present time, but also for the world of mankind in the Millennial Age.

It is interesting to note that in the Millennial Age God’s Word is also spoken of as the water of life. “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1 ESV). “Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:1-2 NASB). What a privilege it is for those who make their election sure, as shown later the same chapter, “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost” (Revelation 22:17 NASB).

So, whether it is now or in the age to come, salvation can come only through partaking of the water of life, of which Jehovah Himself is the fountain.

Jehovah

Sadly, most of the translations of the Bible do not use the word Jehovah, the proper name, the distinctive personal name of the Almighty. In the Old Testament the translators have used LORD instead of the proper name Jehovah. This has led to confusion amongst readers of the Bible and more especially to those hearing the words who cannot distinguish between LORD and lord. This confusion is best demonstrated by the verse in Psalms 110, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (KJV). If God’s proper name is used, its meaning becomes much clearer: “Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (ASV).

Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom

(ABN 23 734 654 922, Reg. No. A0022186J)

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria, Australia 3084
www.australianbiblestudents.org
Enquirybbi@gmail.com

Editorial Committee

Ray Charlton, Adam Kopczyk, Richard Tazzyman

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the discourses reported.

**Subscription payment
can be made payable to:**

Berean Bible Institute Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna 3084

Contacts

Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
is the contact for the following organizations:

Dawn Bible Students Association
Publisher of "The Dawn" Magazine
<http://dawnbible.com/content.htm>

Pastoral Bible Institute
Publisher of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom"
<https://herald-magazine.com/>

Bible Fellowship Union
Publisher of the "Bible Study Monthly"
<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk>

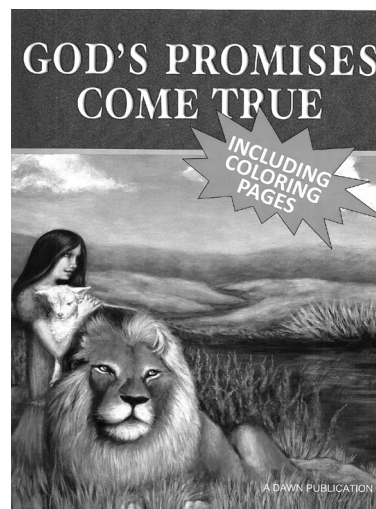
The Bible Teachings

On the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin Offering and Atonement.

This book was published by the Berean Bible Institute during the 1970's and set out the teachings from the Bible on topics which so eluded many in the Christian world. The insert in this edition of the Peoples Paper covers the next part of this 274-page book. For Brethren who would like to read more of the content it is available through the Berean Bible Institute's official webpage.

www.australianbiblestudents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Bible-Teachings-on-the-Covenants2.pdf

Free Book Offers



God's Promises Come True

The latest edition of Bible stories for children.

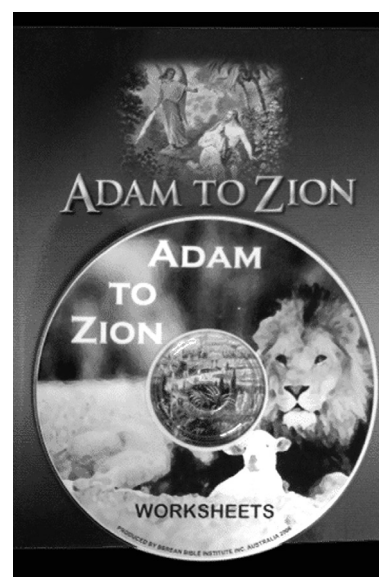
This 182-page issue includes colouring pages throughout the entire publication.

Adam to Zion

An ideal book for children with lessons from the beginning of creation through to the Millennial Age.

Email:
enquirybbi@gmail.com

Write to:
Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
PO Box 402
Rosanna 3084
Victoria, Australia



Report of Memorial Services 2019

Our Lord's death was remembered by brethren throughout Australia on 18th April 2019. Brethren came together in Nambour, Brisbane, Morrissett, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth. For those brethren that were unable to attend in person, provision was made for them to join online from across Australia as well as from the Philippines.

Several isolated brethren, both in Australia and overseas, took advantage of the free offer of the book "The Lord's Supper" and the Memorial DVD giving them a choice of 12 different services which they could use in their own homes.

The date for the Memorial in 2020 will be after 6:00 pm on Tuesday, the 7th April (14th Nisan).

The Bible Teachings (Part Four)

On the Covenants — Mediator — Ransom — Sin Offering — Atonement
Berean Series of Bible Studies • Berean Bible Institute • PO Box 402, Rosanna, Australia 3094
www.australianbiblestudents.org • enquirybbi@gmail.com

Scriptures Which Mention New Covenant

Let us now briefly refer to all the Scriptures which mention the New Covenant that we may note their full harmony with the foregoing.¹ We have already examined the one statement connected with our text and see that it applies to the closing of this age — a shaking of the nations and everything out of harmony with God, preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom, as the foundation of the New Covenant blessings to the world during the Millennium. There are just eight other texts in the New Testament which refer to the New Covenant:

Mediator of a Better Covenant

(1) “For this cause he is made Mediator of a better Covenant (not better than the Grace or Sarah Covenant, but better than the law Covenant), which was established upon better promises” (Hebrews 8:6). Our lord Jesus had already begun the work necessary to His fulfilling this office of Mediator of the New Covenant. He had laid the foundation, but He had not yet accepted to Himself all the members the Father intended and foreknew and predestinated. We notice from the context that the contrast still is between the law Covenant and its Mediator Moses, and the New Covenant, superior because of its better Mediator, the Messiah. Moses could offer imperfect sacrifices, but Christ, by antitypical sacrifices of the bullock and goat (Himself and His Body), makes satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and prepares to mediate the New Covenant, which God has promised shall be His channel for blessing Israel and the world.

New Covenant with Natural Israel Only

(2) In the succeeding verse (8) the Apostle supports his argument by a quotation from the Old Testament promise to Israel of a New Covenant, saying, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Clearly this does not refer to Spiritual Israel.

New Covenant Not for Spiritual Israel

(3) Neither does the next reference to the New Covenant, which is a part of the same quotation from Jeremiah 31:31, refer to Spiritual Israel — “Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers ... For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds and write them in

their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Hebrews 8:8-10).

New Covenant Operative Later

The days referred to in the above are “after” the days of this Gospel Age. The Apostle goes on to say, “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, and I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” This is a description of what will take place during the Millennium, and not a description of what we see about us today. God has not yet put His laws into the hearts of the house of Israel, and they are not His people, as He states they will be at the proper time in the end of this age when the New Covenant becomes operative. Compare Acts 15:15.

Paul Taught Law Covenant Would Perish

(4) “In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” Notice that the Apostle is not saying one word about the New Covenant being for the Church of Christ. His readers understood very well that they came in under the Sarah Covenant. But certain Judaizing teachers insisted that they must be under the Hagar Covenant, as well as under the Sarah Covenant. And this is what the Apostle is disputing; he is making clear that the (Hagar) law Covenant would not continue, but perish, and that, in God’s due time, He would provide a New Covenant to take its place with Israel.

Jews Must Be Redeemed from Dead Works of Old Law Covenant

(5) It was necessary that Jews be redeemed from the “dead works” of the Old Law Covenant and that a New one be made for them by Christ — Head and members. The Old one was sealed by the blood of bulls and goats, but the New one by “better sacrifices.” Antitypically the blood of the bullock has been offered, and soon that of the goat will be presented (Hebrews 9:14-25).

Better Sacrifices Require No Repetition

(6) “This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin” (Hebrews 10:16-18). The Apostle is arguing along

(1) Refer to “The Bible Teachings” Part 3.

general lines. He would have his hearers understand that when an acceptable sacrifice has been offered to God for sins, the transaction, is a closed one, and the sacrifice needs no repetition. He shows that this will be so in the future for the world. When the “better sacrifices,” sealing the New Covenant, shall have been offered to God by our Redeemer, and accepted by Him, it will mean the cancellation of all condemnation. On the strength of this work for the future the Apostle urges that we, the Body of Christ, whose sins have been atoned for by our Lord, the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement (in the type the bullock), may count that our sins are completely cancelled, and will be remembered against us no more. “For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified”: all justified by faith, who proceed to full consecration and sanctification. If numbered amongst the sanctified, we may know that our sins are completely obliterated from the Divine record, so far as justice is concerned, and that we have entered upon a new record as New Creatures and will be held accountable only for trespasses against our covenant to the Lord, our vow — by which we became members of the Christ, the Seed of Abraham, and heirs of the great (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

Paul Applies New Covenant to Israel

(7) “For this is my Covenant to them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the elect, they are beloved for the fathers’ sake.” (Romans 11:27, 28). There is no room to doubt that the Apostle here is referring to Israel’s Covenant, the New Covenant, which God will make with them after this Gospel Day. The Apostle says the Covenant will be made when, or at the time that the Lord will “take away their sins.” That time has not yet come. Israel is still under divine condemnation, though we are now privileged to speak: comfortably unto them, and to assure them that the time for their deliverance is nigh, the time when the Mediator of the New Covenant will have taken on the last members of the spirit Body, the Gospel Church, “changed” by the power of the First Resurrection; the time when He will mediate that New Covenant, satisfy the demands of Divine justice on behalf of the world, as He already satisfied it on behalf of the Church.

Then He will become, as previously intended and declared, the great Mediator of the New Covenant between God and mankind in general — the Church being the exception, under the Covenant of Grace. Then will He begin His Millennial Kingdom: “For he must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Then all who drank of His “cup” the blood (sacrifice) of the New Covenant, as members of the Spiritual Seed, will reign with Him (Galatians 3:29).

Church Approaching Mount Zion

(8) “But ye are approached unto Mt. Zion ... to the New Jerusalem — and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant and to the blood of sprinkling” (Hebrews 12:24). Here spiritual Israel is pictured as

an army marching and the things at the farther end are seen and to be reached. Jesus reached the end of the way long ago, but the Church of Firstborns is not there yet. Jesus is the Mediator, but He has accepted the Church as His Bride, His Body, and awaits for her arrival. The picture shows that the New Law Covenant will be established as the old Law Covenant was, only on a higher plane and through a greater Mediator and by better sacrifices (Acts 3:23).

Work of Gospel Age Higher than New Covenant

Not one of these references to the New Covenant makes the slightest suggestion that it is applicable to the Church. A reference to the original prophecy from which the Apostle, quotes, shows that it could not apply to the Church, for we there read that the Lord “will take away their stony hearts out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh.” This is exactly the Restitution Work which will begin with Israel and extend to all the families of the earth, but it is not at all the work of this Gospel Age, which is far higher. The Lord does not give the “little flock” hearts of flesh, but, justified by faith, allows them to sacrifice the flesh and begets them to a new nature, the glorious Seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed, by the inauguration of the New Covenant, sealed, made operative by the merit of the blood of Christ. (Z. 1909-27.)

ABRAHAM’S THREE WIVES

A correspondent objects to our suggestion that Keturah, Abraham’s third wife, represented the New Covenant, as his secondary wife, Hagar, represented the Law Covenant, and his primary wife, Sarah, represented the Covenant of Grace, “the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all,” the mother of the promised seed, Isaac, typical of Christ Jesus the Head and the Church His Body, as the Apostle declares in Galatians 3:29, 4:28.

Keturah a Wife of Abraham

The objection is that Keturah was not a wife, but a concubine or secondary wife, and that Abraham had several of these, according to Genesis 25:5,6, where we read, “Abraham gave gifts to the sons of his concubines.” The claim further is that Abraham was already old at the time of Isaac’s birth, and that the probabilities are that he had several concubines while Sarah was still living.

Keturah Typical, Though Paul Does Not Mention Her

The Scripture record is clear to the effect that Abraham’s companion, fully recognised as his wife and joint-heir, was Sarah and that her son was specially recognised as Abraham’s heir. As for Hagar and Keturah, the record is similarly explicit — that they bore children to Abraham — the former with Sarah’s consent and as her special representative, the latter after Sarah’s death. Whether these two women be termed secondary wives or concubines matters nothing and we need not quibble over a point of no consequence. Evidently concubine is the name which preferably describes the relationship of these two

women to Abraham. And this was eminently proper, since it was evidently the Divine intention, as declared by the Apostle, that Abraham should be a type of the Almighty, Sarah a type of the Abrahamic Covenant, and her son Isaac a type of The Christ, the Messiah, the Prophet, Priest, Mediator, King, Judge, through whom the blessing of the Almighty should ultimately proceed to all the families of the earth. The Apostle carries out this figure by showing that Hagar, the bondwoman or concubine, represented the Law Covenant, and that her child Ishmael represented the Jewish people, born under that Law Covenant. The Apostle shows that they could not be both children of the bondwoman and children of the free woman. He shows that the Jews, in order to become united to Christ and members of the spiritual Isaac, the heir of all, must become dead to the Law Covenant and be married to Christ, begotten of the holy spirit; otherwise they could have neither part nor lot in the spiritual Seed of Abraham. The Apostle does not carry the figure on and declare that Keturah typified the New (Law) Covenant. We believe that this omission was of Divine intention, because the time for this particular feature of the Divine program to be clearly understood was not yet due.

Isaac and Church Do Not Have Two Mothers

One thing, however, can be clearly seen by all who have the eyes of their understanding open and their spiritual minds exercised, and that is that Isaac did not have two mothers. It was the same Sarah who from the first was recognised by Abraham as his mate and only full and proper wife, who for so long was barren, but who finally bore Isaac, the seed of promise. Similarly, the Sarah Covenant, which was barren for centuries, at our Lord's First Advent bore Him as the Antitypical Seed of Abraham.

Then also the Hagar or Law Covenant and her child, the Jewish nation, were "cast out." In the Apostle's figure of Gal.4:28 he represents the spirit-begotten, faithful overcomers of the Church, as newborn of the Antitypical Isaac, the Spiritual Seed of the Sarah Covenant. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." In the picture he gives us in Gal.3:29 the Apostle presents the Church as the Bride of Isaac and his joint-heir — now betrothed and in the end of the age to be married to him, and to enter into his mother's tent — to enter into all the blessings and privileges that belong specially to this great Covenant which God made with Abraham and which He confirmed with an oath.

Hagar and Keturah, Like Old and New Covenants, Were Additions

The record in Gen.24:67 and 25:1 shows that after Sarah's death Abraham took Keturah as his wife — not, however, as taking the full place of Sarah as his joint-heir, as the word wife in olden times evidently signified. She was accepted as his companion in a secondary sense without disparagement to the first wife Sarah and her son Isaac, to whom Abraham "gave all that he had." We submit that Keturah to a very proper figure of the New (law) Covenant, as Hagar was of the old Law Covenant.

It is not the Oath-bound Covenant, which relates to the Spiritual Seed, which becomes heir of all. As the Law Covenant was no part of the original one, but merely an addition to it — so likewise the New Covenant In an addition to the Oath-bound Sarah Covenant. As the children of Keturah did not inherit the original promise, so neither will those who inherit the New Covenant be fellow heirs with those who inherit as members of Isaac or as his bride and joint-heir.

New Law Covenant Supersedes Old Law Covenant, Not Abrahamic

We therefore deny that it is possible for anybody to be logically, truthfully or Scripturally a child of two Covenants or two mothers at the same time. And on the other hand, we urge the reasonableness of the proposition that if the Law Covenant was represented as a mother and a concubine wife the New (Law) Covenant, to take its place, should also logically appear as a concubine wife. We also urge upon the attention of all that the word "New" implies, as the Apostle suggests, that another had become old and ready to vanish away. It was not the original Oath-bound Covenant which vanished away, but the Law Covenant. Hence the Law Covenant did not take the place of the original or Sarah Covenant, but is to take the place of the Old Law Covenant as a New (Law) Covenant under a new Mediator, superior to Moses (Acts 3:22, 23).

Jesus re Two Covenants or Mothers

The query is raised, was not our Lord the child or seed of two Covenants or two mothers, since we read that He was "born under the Law (Hagar) Covenant" and the Apostle teaches that He was the Seed of the original or Sarah Covenant?

We answer, No! If our Lord Jesus had kept the Law Covenant merely and had not consecrated His life, had not sacrificed it, He might thus have had eternal life as an earthly being. Then truly He might have claimed to be Abraham's seed and heir of all earthly things. But, then, He could not have been the promised seed; for the promised seed was to "bless all the families of the earth" — implying the resurrection of the dead. This blessing ability could be our Lord's not by keeping the law and becoming Hagar's wonderful son, but by sacrificing all of the earthly blessings proffered by the Hagar Covenant, accepting instead the spiritual privileges of the Sarah Covenant. Let us get clearly in mind that it was not the "man Jesus," but the "new creature" Jesus who became Heir of all and who liveth to bless Israel and all nations. Similarly, only such believers as have become New Creatures, begotten of the holy spirit, are members of the great Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator and Judge which God is now raising up as the Seed of Abraham to bless the world (Z. 1909-222).

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM AND ITS WORK

Faith in Divine Foreknowledge an Important Lesson

Divine foreknowledge is one of the great lessons which God will impress. God would have us know that every feature of His plan was premeditated, fore

arranged from before the foundation of the world. He would have us recognise the fact that He is working all things according to the counsel of His own will, according to fixed rules, and principles which are unchangeable. This lesson is one of the principal objects served by a Divine revelation; a secondary object is the blessing of a certain class in sympathetic accord with God by giving them in advance such information respecting Divine purposes as would enable them to rejoice therein and to co-operate therewith.

The Scroll in the Divine Hand

A beautiful word-picture of this Divine foreknowledge and prearrangement is given us in the fifth chapter of Revelation. There Jehovah, the Emperor of the Universe, is pictured upon the throne, and in His hand a written scroll, sealed with seven seals. That sealed scroll represents the Divine plan which God purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world, but which He had revealed to no one, no, not to the angels, neither to the Son (Matthew 24:36). In a word, all that has occurred since creation — the permission of sin, the fall, the Covenant with Abraham, the law Covenant with Israel, the coming of Jesus, the Pentecostal blessing, the gathering of members of the Church — all these things were foreknown to the Father and provided for. Additionally, that scroll contains a record of all that is happening now, and all that will occur throughout the Millennial Age, down to its very close — down to the time when every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall ascribe, praise, honour, glory and dominion to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever (Revelation 5:13).

Lion of Judah the Worthy One

In the picture John notes a proclamation made throughout heaven and earth, inquiring for anyone worthy of the great honour of having this scroll of the Divine purpose committed to his care — to be opened, to be executed in harmony with the Divine purpose. He looked to see who the worthy one might be, but none was found worthy. Then he wept. It seemed to John too bad that God should have some great, wonderful purposes which might come to naught because no one was worthy to be the Divine executor in respect of the plan. But his tears were checked by the angel, who said, “Weep not: Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loosen the seven seals thereof.” And John said, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne ... stood a Lamb, as it had been slain.” And to the Lamb was given the scroll. Then all the angels of God worshipped the Lamb, saying, Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and dominion, and might, and power, etc.

JESUS REVEALS THE FATHER’S PLANS IN DUE SEASON

Applying the picture, we see the signification. Until our Lord was slain, until He had given His life as Man’s

redemption price, there was no being in all the universe worthy to be the executor of the Divine purposes. By our Lord’s loving obedience to the Father’s will — even unto death, even the death of the cross — He proved Himself loyal to the last degree. Him the Father raised from the dead, and when He had ascended up on high the proclamation went forth, Let all the angels of God worship Him. He is the Lamb of God who was slain, and by His death redeemed a condemned world of mankind and merited the Father’s confidence that to Him might be entrusted every feature of the Divine program. “He is worthy.”

From that time on every feature of the program would be under His supervision and He would open the seals and see to the execution of every feature of God’s gracious purposes. He had promised His Church that whatsoever thing the Father would reveal to Him, He, in turn, through the holy spirit and by His providences, would reveal to his faithful ones, to those walking in His footsteps of fall consecration

The Gospel Beforehand

St. Paul speaks of the Gospel’s having been preached beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Here was a vague statement of the Divine purpose, relating to the blessing itself as an acorn would be related to an oak tree. Similarly, seed thoughts respecting coming blessings had previously been given, though with much less definiteness. Directly after the fall God had declared that the Seed of the woman should yet bruise the Serpent’s head. In other words, He foretold that evil should not always triumph. Again, through the Prophet Enoch a seed-thought had been given in his prophecy, “Behold, the Lord cometh with His holy myriads, to execute judgment.” But to Abraham the message was so much *more explicit as to make it worthy to be termed a part of the Gospel*, a part of the good tidings now more fully made known unto us who are in Christ Jesus.

God Reaffirms Promise

Abraham no doubt expected that Isaac, the son of promise, would be “the Seed,” or the offspring, through whom the blessings would come; but when Isaac was grown and nothing wonderful was accomplished through him, God confirmed to him and subsequently to Jacob, his son, the same Abrahamic promise, assuring them that “the Seed” was still future, and implied that the promise meant a nation instead of an individual — a nation of Abraham’s Seed, Abraham’s children. And this feature of the Divine arrangement was made manifest at Jacob’s death, when the blessing was passed on from him, not to only one of his children, but to all of them collectively. There He pronounced them a nation of twelve tribes and indicated that to them as a whole descended this Abrahamic promise — that they, as the Seed of Abraham, inherited the promise, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”



Volume 102, Number 4

AUSTRALIA

October / December 2019

Behold the Lamb of God

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

John the Baptist was privileged to announce not only the coming of Messiah to the Jews of his day, but also to understand that Jesus’ ministry would go beyond the nation of Israel to include the entire world of mankind.

Why did John refer to Jesus as a lamb? We normally think of a lamb in connection with the Passover, which, on the 14th day of Nisan, was slaughtered in preparation for the feast that would follow that night. Was John recognizing Jesus as the fulfillment of the Passover lamb? Not likely, given that when John identified Jesus in this way, it was late September or early October, shortly after Jesus had been baptized and returned from 40 days in the wilderness.

The Passover lamb, sacrificed to commemorate deliverance of Israel’s firstborn in Egypt, had nothing to do with removing sin. This reference to the sin of the world must be Adam’s sin — disobedience that led to his death and cursed his posterity with the same penalty. Jesus released the human race from that penalty through his death on the cross. As a sinless member of the human race, Jesus could die as a ransom for Adam. “So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:18, 19 NAS).

In the normal Atonement Day sacrifices of the Tabernacle and the Temple, the high priest offered a bull to atone for sin (Leviticus 16:3). Yet John referred to Jesus as a lamb, not a bull.

Lambs in the Jewish Testament Were Associated with Death

(1) **Jeremiah 11:18-19.** In a plot against Jeremiah, he is likened to a “gentle lamb led to the

slaughter.” Matthew identifies this as a prophecy of Jesus’ demeanor before the Roman soldiers in the Praetorium who stripped away his clothes. There he was mocked, crowned with thorns, and then led away to be crucified (Matthew 27:27-31).

(2) **Isaiah 53:7.** Isaiah echoes the prophecy from Jeremiah, saying, he was “led as a lamb to the slaughter ... he opened not his mouth.” When Jesus first appeared before Pilate, he said nothing. “When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you? But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge — to the great amazement of the governor” (Matthew 27:11-12).

(3) **Genesis 22:7-13.** Jehovah asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac as a test of faith. Despite intense love for Isaac, Abraham was willing to obey. When Jehovah verified his intent, He interrupted Abraham before he plunged the sacrificial blade into his son, “Do not lay a hand on the boy.” Abraham looked and saw “a ram caught by its horns” in a thicket. He “sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.”

This substitute of a ram — a male lamb — for a human gives us a clue as to John’s reason for

IN THIS ISSUE

Behold the Lamb of God	1
Keeping Our Hearts	4
The Tree of Life	7
The Story of John Biddle	10
Update, Dawn Bible Students	11
Free Book Offers	12

proclaiming Jesus as the lamb who substitutes for a man, Adam.

(4) Exodus 21:1-7. On the night before they left Egypt, the children of Israel were instructed to kill a male lamb without blemish, to paint the doorposts with the lamb's blood, and to consume the entire lamb. Although this Passover lamb in antitype pictured Jesus, it had no association with sin. It did, however, provide an escape from death for the firstborn of Israel, through the blood painted on the outside of their dwelling. This escape from death is important in considering Jesus as a lamb — sacrifice. "Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

What Lamb Was Sacrificed for Sin?

In the Tabernacle first and then when the Temple in Jerusalem was built, lambs were offered as a daily sacrifice twice a day: first, at the third hour (9 AM) and then at the ninth hour (3 PM). "Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one-year old lambs each day, continuously. The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight ... It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of the meeting before the LORD" (Exodus 29:38-42).

Commenting on this sacrifice, Pastor Russell says, "This would serve to typify a thankful prayer to Jehovah — an acknowledgement of his mercy, wisdom and love as manifested in the broken body of the Christ — their ransom" (*Tabernacle Shadows*, page 98). Paul states in Hebrews 10:4 that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." Thus, the picture of a sacrificial lamb as a ransom is an appropriate picture of the ransom paid by Jesus and is likely the thought behind John's identification of Jesus as a lamb taking away the sin of Adam.

As suggested by the daily sacrifices — the first in the morning and the second at evening — Jesus' death experience on the cross began at the time of the early sacrifice (Mark 15: 25) and concluded with his death at the time of the evening sacrifice (Mark 15:34). Jesus' death as a substitute for Adam provided the first step in man's justification before Jehovah. It guaranteed to all a resurrection from death. Under the supervision of the glorified and returned Jesus, resurrected mankind will have an opportunity to have all the effects of Adamic sin removed. That will bring full justification and restoration. Then a test of obedience of each of those attaining a full restoration will provide the entry into eternal life. Those who fail will be cut off (Matthew 25:31-46).

Seven Principles of the Ransom

(1) Jesus was Adam's exact nature but did not share in his curse. The death sentence fell upon Adam and his heirs — the entire human race. In order to remove this sentence, it was necessary that Jesus be fully human. However, Jesus must be a unique human — one not affected by the curse upon Adam's

progeny. "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

(2) Jesus became the sole owner of the human race upon his resurrection. Jesus purchased the human race by being a substitute for Adam. Just as Adam "sold" the race into sin and death, Jesus released it from death through his own death as a sinless human being. When resurrected to divine nature, Jesus became the "second" Adam. All humans that have gone into the grave become the seed of Christ in the resurrection process. Isaiah identifies Jesus as the "Father of Futurity" (Isaiah 9:6, Rotherham). "The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural. Then the spiritual" (1 Corinthians 15:45-48).

(3) Although without sin, Jesus suffered the full penalty that man suffers on account of Adam. The principle of substitution has become distorted by two beliefs: the immortality of the soul and the concept that Jesus is part of a Godhead. These beliefs led to the false concept of "infinite atonement" — Jesus dies for the sins of each individual human. Adam's penalty for disobedience was death. However, his death did not remove the curse of death as all of his progeny followed him into the grave. Man would stay dead if not for the redemption brought through the death of Jesus, which turns death into sleep. However, to earn everlasting life one must show repentance and choose to walk the Highway of Holiness in the millennial kingdom. "There will be a path and a road there; it will be called 'the Road of Holiness' and no impure person will traverse it. It will be for them; the wayfarer, even ignorant ones, will not go astray there" (Isaiah 35:8 TENACH).



A Highway of Holiness

(4) The ransom is not a pardon. To pardon is to remit a penalty and let one go. Forgiveness is a release from punishment. Jesus paid the price of release with his death. In ancient times, slaves were freed through a process known as Manumission. In this process, the slave owner brought the slave to the temple. There, the price of freedom was paid to the temple treasury by the one seeking the slave's freedom. The priest then gave the money to the slave owner. The slave was considered sold to the gods. No one could make that person a slave again. Archaeologists have found evidence of such transactions, which included the slave's name, the names of witnesses, and included words such as "ransom," "redeem," and "bought." At the end of such transactions appeared the phrase "for freedom." For "you have been bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20a).

(5) The shedding of blood points to restitution rather than redemption. Upon resurrection, all people will need repentance, rehabilitation, and growth into moral perfection. Each must see forgiveness and be made right with God; or justified. Although the ransom removes the curse of death through Adam and brings one back to life, it does not guarantee an individual will attain everlasting life. One will be required to learn and practice righteousness. Mistakes will be made, but forgiven as long as one continues to progress toward perfection of character. The shed blood of Jesus through the three and one half years of willingly following his Father's will and laying down his life, a complete sacrifice, secured his right to actively work with the human race, bring them to perfection and reconcile them to Jehovah. The ransom takes away the penalty of death, but this sacrificial offering of Jesus provided the opportunity and time to bring mankind to a state of righteousness. "And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22).

(6) The Benefit of the ransom is universal raising to life, not universal salvation. Restitution will not be instantaneous for those raised during the Millennium. If it were so, there would be instant obedience and moral perfection required. The 1000-year period of restitution will grant opportunity for learning. Though at first none will be allowed to do evil, eventually each person must put out evil tendencies inherited through Adam and replace them with a genuine love for Jehovah and true love for their fellow man. This will be the final test for all who are raised from their graves.

Those who do not show this in due time will be cut off mercifully in the second death. "In those days they will not say again, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge.' But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge' (Jeremiah 31:29-30); "For evildoers will be cut off, But those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the



Jesus' life was given as a Ransom for all.

land" (Psalm 37:9); "And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23).

(7) The resurrection of all does not provide a second chance. The redemption of mankind came at a cost. The experience of dying is harsh. Many die without hope, and most have no idea as to the purpose of life under sin. Jesus, through his sacrificial and physical death, purchased them because of Jehovah's desire to have a human family on earth (John 3:16). When the strings are changed on a musical instrument, the string twists and turns as it is taken from the package and placed on the instrument. Only when it is stretched and tightened through tension does it produce proper sound. With each turn of the peg, the sound gets closer to the proper pitch. Once tightened, and found to hold its own without tightening, is it free to make a sweet sound.

The permission of evil has been a lesson in loose strings. Mankind today is free to do anything they desire — except to be the creation God intended. Only when it has experienced the twists and turns of sin, and in the resurrection, has been tightened by accepting the merit of Jesus' sacrifice and gone up the Highway of Holiness to moral and physical perfection, will it be free to play the beautiful tune of perfect humanity. Helen Keller, who experienced a life of blindness and deafness until her teacher Anne Sullivan connected with her, said, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

"If a man were purchasing a building, had entered into negotiations for it, had signed a contract and were making arrangements to secure the money to apply it in payment for the building, it would be very appropriate as soon as he had signed the contract, to say, 'This is the owner of the building.' In the strict sense of the word, however, he would not be the owner until he had paid the price and all the receipts were properly given, and instead of the contract,

he had the deed ... our Lord Jesus entered into (the contract) with his Father; and in view of his having given the ransom price, he already has a claim to being Lord of all in a prospective sense ... (but) there are many on earth today of whom he is not Lord ... But his work is progressing ... 1 Thessalonians 4:14 says that the world is asleep in Jesus. They sleep in Jesus the same way that Abraham and all Israel sleep and all the kings and prophets sleep” (Reprint 4632). Someday, they will sleep no longer. The benefit of the ransom will be applied to each one personally.

“Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay — not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every



God's Kingdom will bring peace and beauty.

radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete. Revelation 21:4” (*The Divine Plan of the Ages*).

Let us keep this vision before us as John's words echo in our hearts, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” Let us run the race that is set before us to assure our part in bringing the great day of blessing to follow this dark night of sin.

Keeping Our Hearts

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23 ASV).

The heart is probably the most important organ in the human body, and the most industrious. By rhythmical contractions it drives the blood to all parts of the body, if it ceases to work death follows. In view of this important function of the heart, the Bible very properly uses it as a symbol of our motives, affections, intentions and desires, it is used in the Bible about eight hundred times.

The first time it is used is in Genesis 6:5, which reads “And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5 ASV). The last time it is used in the Bible is in Revelation 18:7, which reads “she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning.” The reference here is to Babylon, the “harlot woman,” and she is depicted as being destroyed, but even while being destroyed she continues to boast in her “heart.” To be pleasing to the Lord we have an urgent need for the fulfilment of the Psalmist's words, “Create in me a clean heart, O God ... renew a right spirit within me” (Psalms 51:10 ASV).

As God's children we have been taught through the Scriptures concerning the only way by which we can have our hearts made right with our Heavenly

Father. It is through His beloved Son “who gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Timothy 2:6). “And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2 ASV). We have therefore, accepted Jesus as our personal Saviour, and the invitation, “My son, give me thy heart; And let thine eyes delight in my ways” (Proverbs 23:26 ASV).

Having consecrated ourselves, Paul tells us “Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6 ASV). “Now he that establisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ASV). It is our privilege, as Paul says, “let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22 ASV). Then, if we seek divine assistance in times of stress and discouragement, being humble and submissive to the refining influences of God, we will receive that help and blessing of which we are assured “Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit” (Psalms 34:18 ASV).

A heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep sorrow because of thoughts, words, and deeds not in harmony with righteousness. To these, whose spirit is humble, who realise they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with the Lord, and dwell in holiness, He, is ever near to renew and give them strength. “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite” (Isaiah 57:15 ASV).



Contrition is a predicate for progress.

The Lord looks at our hearts, at the motives that prompt what we say and do, also concerning what we are not doing. “for Jehovah searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever” (1 Chronicles 28:9 ASV). “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7 ASV). We see, therefore, the importance of having our hearts, our motives, right before God in all matters. If we do something that is perfectly right in itself, something that would receive the commendation and approval of all around us, and yet there is a wrong spirit behind it, then it would not receive God’s approval. Because it is difficult to discern our motives clearly, we should go carefully and prayerfully to the Word of God which provides instruction and correction, as it teaches us to discern our intentions, the thoughts of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12 states, “For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart (ASV). The Lord has made it clear that we cannot judge correctly the motives of others. We cannot read their hearts; but we are to judge ourselves. We are to examine our motives in the light of the Scriptures and not merely guess at the matter. Paul says “for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 ASV). Our human imaginations, ideas and reasonings which are so very unreliable are to be demolished. We should also rid our hearts of anger, envy, malice, hatred and selfishness which are the works of the flesh and the devil.

These things are the legacies of the flesh which we have to fight continually, and are roots in our motives which the Apostle Paul warns us

about in Hebrews 12:14, 15. He says, “Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled” (ASV). Let us, then, dig out these roots completely from our hearts, especially in our dealings with our

brethren, as 1 John 4:20 says, “If a man says, I love God, and hateth, his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” Let us, then, love one another without hypocrisy, and forgive, as we hope to be forgiven for Christ’s sake.

How beautiful are the words of Jesus, “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8), and his invitation, “Come unto me ... and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:28, 29). We want our hearts to be like his. Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

In the Psalms we read, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end” (Psalms 119:11, 80, 111, 112). If we let Christ and his spirit dwell in our hearts, let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and also sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, letting God’s peace rule in our hearts, then the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

While for us this “peace of God” is essential, so is the quality of love. Paul wrote, “May the Lord cause you to be full and to overflow with love to each other; and to all, even as we also to you, so as to establish your hearts blameless in holiness before God, even our Father” (1 Thessalonians 3:12 Diaglott).

How true it is that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matthew 12:34.) Our heart, then, should be full of God’s Word, and His love, His peace and the holy Spirit, full even to overflowing.

Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth would’st teach,
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul would’st reach;
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world’s famine feed,
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a faithful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

Horatius Bonar 1808-1889

The Tree of Life

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits ... and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2).

The Tree of Life is introduced in the Garden of Eden and also mentioned in the final scene where the human race is in the process of reconciliation to God during the Messianic era. Man, in his initial perfection and union with God, had access to the Tree of Life. However, during the long years of sin and death he is debarred from the Tree. When the reign of Christ over the earth is abolishing sin and death, and men are coming into vital union with God, the Tree of Life is there again, its fruit for food and its leaves for healing. The Christian who, during the present age (Gospel Age), makes his or her “calling and election sure,” will also eat of the Tree of Life at their attainment of the glory of the celestial life (Revelation 2:7).

Therefore there is a direct link and close association between Genesis chapters 2 and 3 in which the Tree of Life is first mentioned, and then in Ezekiel 47:7-12 and Revelation 22:1-3, which have to do with the final stage of man’s preparation for eternity. It is significant also that in the first picture, the “Tree of Life” was associated with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which because of the consequences in the Eden story becomes the symbol of death. But in the latter picture the Tree of Knowledge is no longer there as there is no more death, for it has been abolished by the Messianic work of Christ (Revelation 21:4).

“The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Genesis 2:8-9). “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.’ — Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the

garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:22-24 NASB).

These verses introduce the “Tree of Life” and make a clear distinction between all the other trees of the garden that were pleasant to the sight and good for food. The “Tree of Life” was placed in the midst (centre) of the garden along with the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.” It is interesting to note that no instructions were given to Adam with regard to the Tree of Life but only the tree of knowledge of good and evil. “The LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die’ “ (Genesis 2:16-17). It was not until after the transgression and their expulsion from Eden that the Tree of Life came in for discussion.

Our first parents partook of the fruit of the Tree of Life so they would not die. To eat of the Tree of Life was expressive of loyalty and allegiance to God, and recognition that their continued life depended upon the unbroken union and communion with God. All the trees in the Garden of Eden were good for food, but man’s support for physical life came from the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve did not possess everlasting life as neither had yet proven themselves worthy of it. This could only be obtained by proving their total obedience to God’s instructions.

Adam failed the test when he wilfully took of the fruit of the “tree of good and evil” (1 Timothy 2:14). If they had not eaten of the forbidden fruit they would not have died, but once condemnation was placed upon them they entered into the path of death and the way to everlasting life was closed to them by the



Eden, with Adam, Eve, and abundant trees

cherubim and the flaming sword. Their access to the Tree of Life was now blocked.

The Way to the Tree of Life Was Now Closed

It is possible that the devil's plan was to have Adam and Eve eat of The Tree of Life. God had said to them concerning the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, "for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." Satan countered God's words by stating, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:4-5).

Was it possible that Satan knew of the purpose of the "Tree of Life" and thought that this would be available and so make God out to be a liar? If this was the case, then Satan's place as the prince of this world would have been assured forever. But God had another plan and stopped access to the Tree of Life, thus restraining Satan.

Adam gave his loyalty and allegiance to Satan by accepting from Eve the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam was told he could partake of the one tree or the other: but he could not partake of both. In a true sense mankind has been partaking of that Tree of Knowledge of good and evil ever since giving their loyalty and allegiance to the "god of this world." Romans 3:10 states that "there is none righteous, no not one."

Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden was not forever. A time is coming in the plan of God when the power of evil shall be overthrown, its consequences eliminated, and mankind restored to a condition of reconciliation and union with God. Then they will have access to the Tree of Life in the sense that they can affirm and maintain their loyalty and allegiance to God and walk in His ways of righteousness forever. The Tree of Knowledge disappears, for there is no longer evil in the hearts of mankind.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophet Ezekiel, in Ezekiel 47:7-12, had a vision of a magnificent temple, reminiscent of Solomon's temple. This vision is symbolic of the future Messianic Age, when all mankind will live under its influence everywhere and walk in its light. This temple has a River of Life which emerges from the central sanctuary and flows through the countryside, bringing life and fertility to the surrounding lands. Verse 9: "everything will live where the river goes," until it eventually reaches the barren waters of the Dead Sea and heals it so it becomes full of fish — another symbol of life. In these verses there is a river of water, and those that live in parched lands certainly know that when the water comes to the area the plants and the animals come to life. The Australian desert is a good example of this. Plants that appeared dead for years suddenly blossom and start to bear fruit. We note that in the vision this water is crystal clear (no pollution or false teaching), coming from the throne of God. The banks of the



Trees of Life will provide food and healing.

river were furnished with Trees of Life on both sides, whose fruit should be for food and leaves for healing.

These Trees of Life derive their potency from the central sanctuary where God dwells, through the medium of the River of Life. Those who partake of the Trees are brought into direct contact and union with God and as long as they maintain that union by those means they will never die. Everyone who believes and becomes Christ's will receive an abundant measure through him, as Christ is the channel of life from God. Our Lord Jesus said, "I came, that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). During the remedial process of the Messianic Age mankind will be in need of healing and restoration from the power of sin and the effects it had on their past lives. That is why Ezekiel says the Tree of Life is for healing.

Access Restored to the Tree of Life

In the New Testament, the first mention of the "Tree of Life" is to the Church of Ephesus. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him that overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7). The reward to the overcomers is once again access to the "Tree of Life," which Adam had lost when he transgressed in the Garden of Eden. It should be noted that this access is only made possible through the sacrifice of Christ. Speaking to Philip, our Lord Jesus stated, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father but through me" (John 14:6). The process starts with Jehovah drawing the prospective believer to Christ (John 6:44). Once this happens and the person accepts Christ as their Redeemer, they have access to the Heavenly Father through Christ, who is the only name by which mankind can be saved. By consecrating one's life to the Heavenly Father's will and overcoming the ways of the world, one is rewarded with access to the "Tree of Life."

The Apostle John on Patmos (Revelation 21:20-22:5) saw a city, the New Jerusalem, come down to earth from God, that God may dwell with restored and perfected man. "Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne

of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads (Revelation 22:1-4).

The nations are to walk in the light of the city. Verse 5: the glory of God is what illuminates it, and the presence of Christ the Messianic King. They become its citizens only when they are fully cleansed from sin and every defilement. As with Ezekiel, there is a river of life proceeding this time from the throne of God in the centre of the city, and on the banks of the river are the very same Trees of Life as seen by Ezekiel, again yielding fruit for food and “the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2). This is precisely the same symbolism of Ezekiel’s prophecy referring to the same era in prophetic time.

For just as man was banished from the tree of life in the beginning of human history in Genesis, so the rescinding of that prohibition comes to an end of human history prior to the eternal state at the end of the last book of the Bible. After that point sin and evil are no more. All creation is at peace and harmony with God, and Christ is ALL in ALL with every tongue confessing him as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The promise to the overcomers of this present Gospel Age, according to Revelation 2:7, is that they are to “eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” The Lord Jesus Christ and the church will conduct the reconciliation work of the Messianic Age and this promise is fulfilled when the Church is complete at the close of the present Age. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 mentions the “change” of every member of the church to heavenly conditions, “since flesh and blood cannot inherit the

Kingdom of God” (verse 50). And the Apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 says this resurrection takes place at the Second Advent of our Lord, also at the end of this Age.

The condition for access to the tree of life is also given in chapter 22: “Blessed are they who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14). The Apostle John writes, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). The Law Covenant was burdensome in the sense that fallen man was incapable of keeping the law perfectly. Christ paid the price so mankind will now have the opportunity under perfect conditions, and with the lessons of the effect that evil had on the world, to wash their robes, becoming obedient to God’s laws.

The Unity of the Scriptures

The unity of the scriptures is apparent when comparing the first three chapters of Genesis with the last three chapters of Revelation. Thousands of years pass between the creation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and the events depicted in the end of Revelations, yet they show a beautiful, harmonious unity in Jehovah’s plan. In Eden Adam fell under condemnation. Sin, resulting in sickness and death, came upon his children. Access to the Tree of Life was removed from all the families of the earth, and regardless of the knowledge that mankind has at this end of this age, they have not been able to find a way to stop the dying process.

In Revelation, Adam and his race are invited to come and partake of the tree of life, and to drink of the waters of life freely. That is the difference! In the Garden of Eden, Cherubim and a flaming sword prevented the way to the tree of life; but there will be no Cherubim and no flaming sword to guard the path to the tree of life in the Millennial Age. Instead, there will be an invitation: “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost” (Revelation 22:17).

Without Cost

The price has already been paid to free mankind from the bondage of sin and to give all access to the pure waters of truth that Christ brought to the world at his first advent, the word from His Father. Only a few then and now during the Gospel Age have had the opportunity to hear these pure words. But in the Millennial Age the situation will be different. The writer to the Hebrews, quoting from Jeremiah, says “And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, Know the Lord: For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest of them” (Hebrews 8:11).



A River of Life will flow to mankind.

The trees from the first paradise will be restored and the leaves will heal the nations. Mankind will be able to experience, for the first time since Adam, a world without sin. It is hard to imagine the world without sin and death, and yet the promise is, “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death : there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain: the first things have passed away” (Revelation 21:3-4).

There is one other change. The devil existed in the first three chapters of Genesis and was permitted to deceive Eve. Since then he has been the prince of this world and the father of lies, deceiving the nations.

During the thousand year reign of Christ he will be bound and unable to deceive anyone. Once again, he will be used by Jehovah to test mankind. “When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth” (Revelation 20:7-8). This will be Satan’s last act, as he is then destroyed. “And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone” (Revelation 20:10).

The one Tree was in the paradise of man, on earth: the other in the paradise of God in heaven. But they are really one Tree of Life. The one means of communion, one bond of union, one channel of life, between God and man and that channel is Christ (1 John 5:11-12).

Last Mention

The last mention of the “tree of life” comes with a warning:

“I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19 RVIC).

The Revelations revealed in this book are so intrinsically woven throughout the scriptures. These verses condemn those that would be tempted to take away from Jehovah’s words. This does not ban minor difference of interpretation, as the reader can only “see through a glass darkly,” but to an absolute attack on the inspired word and the completeness of Jehovah’s plan.

The Harmony of the Scriptures

GENESIS / REVELATION

Creation of heavens and earth (Genesis 1:1)

Destruction of the old heavens and earth (Revelation 20:11b)

Creation of new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:1)

Start of Satan’s reign on earth (Genesis 3:1-7)

Satan cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10)

Sin Enters (Genesis 3:1-7)

Sin banished (Revelation 21:27)

Pronouncing of the curse on mankind (Genesis 3:1-7)

The curse removed (Revelation 22:3)

Right to tree of life forfeited (Genesis 3:24 b)

Access to tree of life restored (Revelation 22:2, 22:19 margin)

Man banished from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24 a)

Man welcomed back to [Paradise] (Revelation 22:1-7)

Death enters the world (Genesis 2:17, Genesis 5:5)

Death removed forever (Revelation 21:4)

Marriage of the first Adam (Genesis 4:1)

Marriage of the lamb (Revelation 19:7)

Sorrow comes to mankind (Genesis 3:16)

Sorrow eliminated (Revelation 21:4)

The Story of John Biddle

Father of English Unitarianism, 1615-1662

What is a Unitarian?

There is one GOD, and GOD is Love and they Judge God to be one Essence, one person and one substance -- Faithful to this belief, Unitarians reject all notion of a plurality within the divine Godhead. Indeed, they insist that this is contrary to the word of God.

In the Scriptures they find no mention of the Word Trinity or anything suggesting that Dogma. On the contrary, they read that the "Father is greater than the Son" and they believe that the holy spirit is not a separate person, but merely a power exercised by God, or a gift donated by him.

"In the sacred scriptures, Christ is more clearly distinguished from God. Since God is the Father who sends, gives, anoints, sanctifies and rewards, whereas Christ is the Son who is sent, receives, is anointed, sanctified and rewarded. They recognize, nevertheless, that Christ is at one with God on account of a mutual consensus of will and purpose. But at the same time, they agree that we also are at one with him and with God his father" (quoted from the Beliefs, History and present position of the Unitarians in England).

This belief was presented to the English Nation in the 1600s by John Biddle (born 1615 in Wotton-Under-Edge Gloucestershire, England), for this stance he was imprisoned and so became known as the Father of English Unitarianism.

John Biddle's father died when he was very young, and he was raised by his widowed mother. Fortunately for John there was a local Grammar School for him to attend and he was able to obtain a scholarship, which enabled him to receive the basics of a classical education. He was a very intelligent student (near Genius). He is credited with the translation of Virgils Bucolics (Ancient Roman Poet 70-19 BC) as well as the first two Satires of Juvenal (Satirical Roman Poet 2nd Century AD) while he was still at school, this attracted the attention of the Lord of Berkeley Castle who help him with a 10 Pound a year Scholarship.

Biddle was sent to Oxford in the year 1634 and was a student at Magdalen Hall, where he graduated with a master's degree (1641). He was recommended by his University tutors for the position as master at the St Mary-De-Crypte free school which was accepted by the Mayor and Council of Gloucester.

In 1644 he drafted what he called the "Twelve Arguments Against The Trinity," and, as stated in the Introduction to this article, these 12 articles can be summed up as a belief in one God, with the rejection of the Holy Spirit as a person (Spirit) coequal to God, and that Christ was a separate person (Spirit) and not

co-equal to God the Father (Supreme Being).

This was a bombshell, to deny the Trinity! What was most remarkable was that John Biddle had gained this knowledge from no other source than God's word. There were others before him that also had the same ideas, such as Laelius Socinus, 1525/1562. At the time of his study into the Trinity John had not even heard of him. The advice he gave to those who wanted to find the truth was -- "That they should read God's word and only God's word for at least twelve months and that they, like him, would come to similar conclusions about the trinity and other false doctrines." He most certainly was guided by the Holy Spirit in his search for the truth.

At first Biddle only showed this tract to his friends, as he realized the danger that he was exposing himself to if the Church and State found out. As usual Satan, the god of this system, used one of his close friends (thought to be the Rev J Corbett) to report him to the Magistrates. His friends knew how brilliant a scholar he was, well versed in the Scriptures. He knew the New Testament by heart, except for the last few Chapters of Revelations (both in English and Greek).

This did not help him in front of the Magistrates who viewed these ideas on the Trinity as heresy. Due to the fear of man at this time he rewrote these views and watered them down to please the Magistrates, who reluctantly accepted it and released him. He returned to his duties as the master at the St Mary-De-Crypte. But this did not last long as he could not keep silent about God's word and the falsehood of the Trinity, as well as other false teachings of the Churches. So, on the 23rd of October 1645 he was



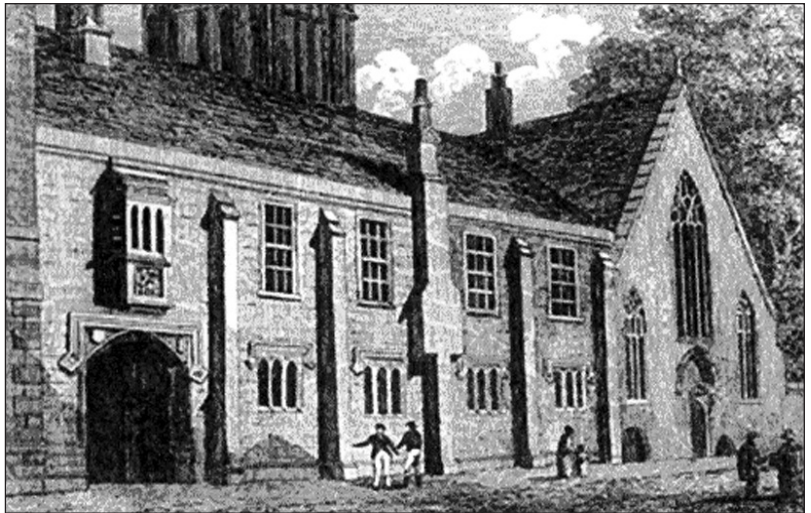
John Biddle

again dismissed from his teaching post, as he had now overcome his fear of man, and with his faith strengthened he again had to defend it before the Magistrates.

This time he ended up in gaol and he would have stayed there if it was not for a very influential friend who stood bond for him and he was released. Six months later after appearing before Parliament he was again committed to prison. This time his friends were unable to help him, he spent the next three years under the restraint of an officer of the house (Parliament).

On this instance his confinement was not severe, and after Cromwell had Charles I beheaded, Biddle was released and took up a post as the preacher to the County of Staffordshire. But Biddle could not keep quiet about what the Bible taught. In 1664 he released more tracts in which he had this to say about the False Church, "Composed for their sakes that would fain to be mere Christians and not of this or that sect, inasmuch as all have more or less, departed from the simplicity and truth of the scriptures." This caused Parliament to order these new tracts to be burnt, once again Biddle was back in Prison.

In 1648 it was demanded that he be hanged, but Cromwell again intervened and exiled him to the Scilly Isles. In 1651 he was allowed to return to



*Grammar School at St. Mary de Crypt in early 19th century
with acknowledgements to Gloucester County Libraries*

England. After Cromwell died John Biddle was again persecuted; he was committed to Newgate Prison as a debtor, unable to pay a 200-pound fine levied on him for his preaching against the Trinity, this was in 1662. He died on the 22nd of September 1662 at the age of only 47, from gaol fever.

Thus, he gave birth to a revolution whose reverberations are still being felt some 350 years later; he has no marked grave, no statue, no record of his life in Gloucester. John Biddle may justly be termed Gloucester's forgotten (but not by Jehovah) son.

Update from the **Dawn Bible Students Association**

Dear Brethren,
The Dawn plans to open a satellite office in the Orlando Florida area. This is being done following a survey of the Orlando brethren in which a commitment to aid in supporting the work of the Dawn at a satellite office was obtained. After much research into this, a site has been found which appears to be suitable to meet the needs of the Dawn. The Dawn is planning to enter a three-year lease, with a five-year renewal option, on a site located in the Orlando area.

Over time all printing, shipping, inventory storage and related clerical work currently done at the physical plant in New Jersey will be transferred to the new facility in Orlando.

The Dawn is beginning the process for the eventual sale of the Dawn House in Rutherford and the Dawn plant in East Rutherford.

The Trustees want to stress that the mission and work of the Dawn will continue as it has for nearly 87 years. With the advent of technology many brethren work for the Dawn remotely from various parts of

North America and abroad and they will continue to do so in the future.

Thank you for your work and support of the efforts of the Dawn to spread the Gospel message to those who have a listening ear.

By His Grace, Michael Balko, Secretary



Dawn Print Shop

Contacts

Berean Bible Institute, Inc.

is the contact for the following organizations:

Dawn Bible Students Association

Publisher of "The Dawn" Magazine

<http://dawnbible.com/content.htm>

Pastoral Bible Institute

Publisher of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom"

<https://herald-magazine.com/>

Bible Fellowship Union

Publisher of the "Bible Study Monthly"

<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk>

Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom

(ABN 23 734 654 922, Reg. No. A0022186J)

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria, Australia 3084

www.australianbiblestudents.org

Enquirybbi@gmail.com

Editorial Committee

Ray Charlton, Adam Kopczyk, Richard Tazzyman

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the discourses reported.

**Subscription payment
can be made payable to:**

Berean Bible Institute Inc.
PO Box 402, Rosanna 3084

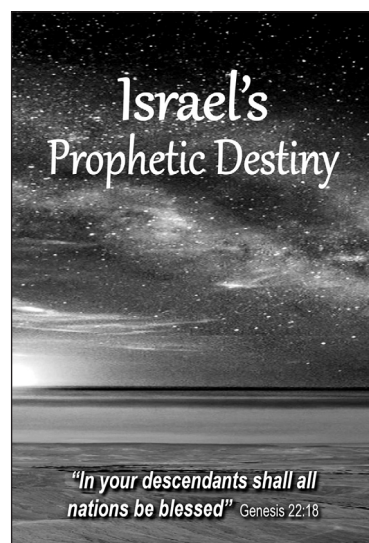
The Bible Teachings

On the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin Offering and Atonement.

This book was published by the Berean Bible Institute during the 1970's and set out the teachings from the Bible on topics which so eluded many in the Christian world. The insert in this edition of the Peoples Paper covers the next part of this 274-page book. For Brethren who would like to read more of the content it is available through the Berean Bible Institute's official webpage.

www.australianbiblestudents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Bible-Teachings-on-the-Covenants2.pdf

Free Book Offers



Israel's Glorious Future in Time and Prophecy

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joyce and I have travelled to Israel almost every year since 2010, sometimes twice a year.

During our visits we have been asked time and again by Israelis both religious and secular, "where do you get such faith?"

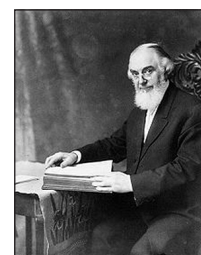
We have had deep discussions with Rabbis wanting details of our Biblical views of the "composite" Messiah and when he would be revealed. Paul Lagno

Originally printed
in the HAARETZ
Israel News,
August 22, 2018

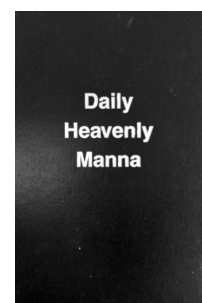
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philippe Bohstrom is an archaeologist, covering archaeology for news outlets and journals in America, Europe and Asia.

Before Herzl, There Was Pastor Russell: A Neglected Chapter of Zionism



Philippe Bohstrom



The BBI has several full sets of "Studies in the Scriptures" in stock as well as the Daily Heavenly Manna plus copies of volume one of "Studies in the Scriptures," *The Divine Plan of the Ages*.

Email: enquirybbi@gmail.com

Write to: **Berean Bible Institute, Inc.**

PO Box 402, Rosanna 3084, Victoria, Australia

The Bible Teachings (Part Four)

On the Covenants — Mediator — Ransom — Sin Offering — Atonement
Berean Series of Bible Studies • Berean Bible Institute • PO Box 402, Rosanna, Australia 3094
www.australianbiblestudents.org • enquirybbi@gmail.com

Scriptures Which Mention New Covenant

Let us now briefly refer to all the Scriptures which mention the New Covenant that we may note their full harmony with the foregoing.¹ We have already examined the one statement connected with our text and see that it applies to the closing of this age — a shaking of the nations and everything out of harmony with God, preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom, as the foundation of the New Covenant blessings to the world during the Millennium. There are just eight other texts in the New Testament which refer to the New Covenant:

Mediator of a Better Covenant

(1) “For this cause he is made Mediator of a better Covenant (not better than the Grace or Sarah Covenant, but better than the law Covenant), which was established upon better promises” (Hebrews 8:6). Our lord Jesus had already begun the work necessary to His fulfilling this office of Mediator of the New Covenant. He had laid the foundation, but He had not yet accepted to Himself all the members the Father intended and foreknew and predestinated. We notice from the context that the contrast still is between the law Covenant and its Mediator Moses, and the New Covenant, superior because of its better Mediator, the Messiah. Moses could offer imperfect sacrifices, but Christ, by antitypical sacrifices of the bullock and goat (Himself and His Body), makes satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and prepares to mediate the New Covenant, which God has promised shall be His channel for blessing Israel and the world.

New Covenant with Natural Israel Only

(2) In the succeeding verse (8) the Apostle supports his argument by a quotation from the Old Testament promise to Israel of a New Covenant, saying, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Clearly this does not refer to Spiritual Israel.

New Covenant Not for Spiritual Israel

(3) Neither does the next reference to the New Covenant, which is a part of the same quotation from Jeremiah 31:31, refer to Spiritual Israel — “Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers ... For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds and write them in

their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Hebrews 8:8-10).

New Covenant Operative Later

The days referred to in the above are “after” the days of this Gospel Age. The Apostle goes on to say, “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, and I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” This is a description of what will take place during the Millennium, and not a description of what we see about us today. God has not yet put His laws into the hearts of the house of Israel, and they are not His people, as He states they will be at the proper time in the end of this age when the New Covenant becomes operative. Compare Acts 15:15.

Paul Taught Law Covenant Would Perish

(4) “In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” Notice that the Apostle is not saying one word about the New Covenant being for the Church of Christ. His readers understood very well that they came in under the Sarah Covenant. But certain Judaizing teachers insisted that they must be under the Hagar Covenant, as well as under the Sarah Covenant. And this is what the Apostle is disputing; he is making clear that the (Hagar) law Covenant would not continue, but perish, and that, in God’s due time, He would provide a New Covenant to take its place with Israel.

Jews Must Be Redeemed from Dead Works of Old Law Covenant

(5) It was necessary that Jews be redeemed from the “dead works” of the Old Law Covenant and that a New one be made for them by Christ — Head and members. The Old one was sealed by the blood of bulls and goats, but the New one by “better sacrifices.” Antitypically the blood of the bullock has been offered, and soon that of the goat will be presented (Hebrews 9:14-25).

Better Sacrifices Require No Repetition

(6) “This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin” (Hebrews 10:16-18). The Apostle is arguing along

(1) Refer to “The Bible Teachings” Part 3.

general lines. He would have his hearers understand that when an acceptable sacrifice has been offered to God for sins, the transaction, is a closed one, and the sacrifice needs no repetition. He shows that this will be so in the future for the world. When the “better sacrifices,” sealing the New Covenant, shall have been offered to God by our Redeemer, and accepted by Him, it will mean the cancellation of all condemnation. On the strength of this work for the future the Apostle urges that we, the Body of Christ, whose sins have been atoned for by our Lord, the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement (in the type the bullock), may count that our sins are completely cancelled, and will be remembered against us no more. “For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified”: all justified by faith, who proceed to full consecration and sanctification. If numbered amongst the sanctified, we may know that our sins are completely obliterated from the Divine record, so far as justice is concerned, and that we have entered upon a new record as New Creatures and will be held accountable only for trespasses against our covenant to the Lord, our vow — by which we became members of the Christ, the Seed of Abraham, and heirs of the great (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

Paul Applies New Covenant to Israel

(7) “For this is my Covenant to them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the elect, they are beloved for the fathers’ sake.” (Romans 11:27, 28). There is no room to doubt that the Apostle here is referring to Israel’s Covenant, the New Covenant, which God will make with them after this Gospel Day. The Apostle says the Covenant will be made when, or at the time that the Lord will “take away their sins.” That time has not yet come. Israel is still under divine condemnation, though we are now privileged to speak: comfortably unto them, and to assure them that the time for their deliverance is nigh, the time when the Mediator of the New Covenant will have taken on the last members of the spirit Body, the Gospel Church, “changed” by the power of the First Resurrection; the time when He will mediate that New Covenant, satisfy the demands of Divine justice on behalf of the world, as He already satisfied it on behalf of the Church.

Then He will become, as previously intended and declared, the great Mediator of the New Covenant between God and mankind in general — the Church being the exception, under the Covenant of Grace. Then will He begin His Millennial Kingdom: “For he must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Then all who drank of His “cup” the blood (sacrifice) of the New Covenant, as members of the Spiritual Seed, will reign with Him (Galatians 3:29).

Church Approaching Mount Zion

(8) “But ye are approached unto Mt. Zion ... to the New Jerusalem — and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant and to the blood of sprinkling” (Hebrews 12:24). Here spiritual Israel is pictured as

an army marching and the things at the farther end are seen and to be reached. Jesus reached the end of the way long ago, but the Church of Firstborns is not there yet. Jesus is the Mediator, but He has accepted the Church as His Bride, His Body, and awaits for her arrival. The picture shows that the New Law Covenant will be established as the old Law Covenant was, only on a higher plane and through a greater Mediator and by better sacrifices (Acts 3:23).

Work of Gospel Age Higher than New Covenant

Not one of these references to the New Covenant makes the slightest suggestion that it is applicable to the Church. A reference to the original prophecy from which the Apostle, quotes, shows that it could not apply to the Church, for we there read that the Lord “will take away their stony hearts out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh.” This is exactly the Restitution Work which will begin with Israel and extend to all the families of the earth, but it is not at all the work of this Gospel Age, which is far higher. The Lord does not give the “little flock” hearts of flesh, but, justified by faith, allows them to sacrifice the flesh and begets them to a new nature, the glorious Seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed, by the inauguration of the New Covenant, sealed, made operative by the merit of the blood of Christ. (Z. 1909-27.)

ABRAHAM’S THREE WIVES

A correspondent objects to our suggestion that Keturah, Abraham’s third wife, represented the New Covenant, as his secondary wife, Hagar, represented the Law Covenant, and his primary wife, Sarah, represented the Covenant of Grace, “the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all,” the mother of the promised seed, Isaac, typical of Christ Jesus the Head and the Church His Body, as the Apostle declares in Galatians 3:29, 4:28.

Keturah a Wife of Abraham

The objection is that Keturah was not a wife, but a concubine or secondary wife, and that Abraham had several of these, according to Genesis 25:5,6, where we read, “Abraham gave gifts to the sons of his concubines.” The claim further is that Abraham was already old at the time of Isaac’s birth, and that the probabilities are that he had several concubines while Sarah was still living.

Keturah Typical, Though Paul Does Not Mention Her

The Scripture record is clear to the effect that Abraham’s companion, fully recognised as his wife and joint-heir, was Sarah and that her son was specially recognised as Abraham’s heir. As for Hagar and Keturah, the record is similarly explicit — that they bore children to Abraham — the former with Sarah’s consent and as her special representative, the latter after Sarah’s death. Whether these two women be termed secondary wives or concubines matters nothing and we need not quibble over a point of no consequence. Evidently concubine is the name which preferably describes the relationship of these two

women to Abraham. And this was eminently proper, since it was evidently the Divine intention, as declared by the Apostle, that Abraham should be a type of the Almighty, Sarah a type of the Abrahamic Covenant, and her son Isaac a type of The Christ, the Messiah, the Prophet, Priest, Mediator, King, Judge, through whom the blessing of the Almighty should ultimately proceed to all the families of the earth. The Apostle carries out this figure by showing that Hagar, the bondwoman or concubine, represented the Law Covenant, and that her child Ishmael represented the Jewish people, born under that Law Covenant. The Apostle shows that they could not be both children of the bondwoman and children of the free woman. He shows that the Jews, in order to become united to Christ and members of the spiritual Isaac, the heir of all, must become dead to the Law Covenant and be married to Christ, begotten of the holy spirit; otherwise they could have neither part nor lot in the spiritual Seed of Abraham. The Apostle does not carry the figure on and declare that Keturah typified the New (Law) Covenant. We believe that this omission was of Divine intention, because the time for this particular feature of the Divine program to be clearly understood was not yet due.

Isaac and Church Do Not Have Two Mothers

One thing, however, can be clearly seen by all who have the eyes of their understanding open and their spiritual minds exercised, and that is that Isaac did not have two mothers. It was the same Sarah who from the first was recognised by Abraham as his mate and only full and proper wife, who for so long was barren, but who finally bore Isaac, the seed of promise. Similarly, the Sarah Covenant, which was barren for centuries, at our Lord's First Advent bore Him as the Antitypical Seed of Abraham.

Then also the Hagar or Law Covenant and her child, the Jewish nation, were "cast out." In the Apostle's figure of Gal.4:28 he represents the spirit-begotten, faithful overcomers of the Church, as newborn of the Antitypical Isaac, the Spiritual Seed of the Sarah Covenant. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." In the picture he gives us in Gal.3:29 the Apostle presents the Church as the Bride of Isaac and his joint-heir — now betrothed and in the end of the age to be married to him, and to enter into his mother's tent — to enter into all the blessings and privileges that belong specially to this great Covenant which God made with Abraham and which He confirmed with an oath.

Hagar and Keturah, Like Old and New Covenants, Were Additions

The record in Gen.24:67 and 25:1 shows that after Sarah's death Abraham took Keturah as his wife — not, however, as taking the full place of Sarah as his joint-heir, as the word wife in olden times evidently signified. She was accepted as his companion in a secondary sense without disparagement to the first wife Sarah and her son Isaac, to whom Abraham "gave all that he had." We submit that Keturah to a very proper figure of the New (law) Covenant, as Hagar was of the old Law Covenant.

It is not the Oath-bound Covenant, which relates to the Spiritual Seed, which becomes heir of all. As the Law Covenant was no part of the original one, but merely an addition to it — so likewise the New Covenant In an addition to the Oath-bound Sarah Covenant. As the children of Keturah did not inherit the original promise, so neither will those who inherit the New Covenant be fellow heirs with those who inherit as members of Isaac or as his bride and joint-heir.

New Law Covenant Supersedes Old Law Covenant, Not Abrahamic

We therefore deny that it is possible for anybody to be logically, truthfully or Scripturally a child of two Covenants or two mothers at the same time. And on the other hand, we urge the reasonableness of the proposition that if the Law Covenant was represented as a mother and a concubine wife the New (Law) Covenant, to take its place, should also logically appear as a concubine wife. We also urge upon the attention of all that the word "New" implies, as the Apostle suggests, that another had become old and ready to vanish away. It was not the original Oath-bound Covenant which vanished away, but the Law Covenant. Hence the Law Covenant did not take the place of the original or Sarah Covenant, but is to take the place of the Old Law Covenant as a New (Law) Covenant under a new Mediator, superior to Moses (Acts 3:22, 23).

Jesus re Two Covenants or Mothers

The query is raised, was not our Lord the child or seed of two Covenants or two mothers, since we read that He was "born under the Law (Hagar) Covenant" and the Apostle teaches that He was the Seed of the original or Sarah Covenant?

We answer, No! If our Lord Jesus had kept the Law Covenant merely and had not consecrated His life, had not sacrificed it, He might thus have had eternal life as an earthly being. Then truly He might have claimed to be Abraham's seed and heir of all earthly things. But, then, He could not have been the promised seed; for the promised seed was to "bless all the families of the earth" — implying the resurrection of the dead. This blessing ability could be our Lord's not by keeping the law and becoming Hagar's wonderful son, but by sacrificing all of the earthly blessings proffered by the Hagar Covenant, accepting instead the spiritual privileges of the Sarah Covenant. Let us get clearly in mind that it was not the "man Jesus," but the "new creature" Jesus who became Heir of all and who liveth to bless Israel and all nations. Similarly, only such believers as have become New Creatures, begotten of the holy spirit, are members of the great Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator and Judge which God is now raising up as the Seed of Abraham to bless the world (Z. 1909-222).

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM AND ITS WORK

Faith in Divine Foreknowledge an Important Lesson

Divine foreknowledge is one of the great lessons which God will impress. God would have us know that every feature of His plan was premeditated, fore

arranged from before the foundation of the world. He would have us recognise the fact that He is working all things according to the counsel of His own will, according to fixed rules, and principles which are unchangeable. This lesson is one of the principal objects served by a Divine revelation; a secondary object is the blessing of a certain class in sympathetic accord with God by giving them in advance such information respecting Divine purposes as would enable them to rejoice therein and to co-operate therewith.

The Scroll in the Divine Hand

A beautiful word-picture of this Divine foreknowledge and prearrangement is given us in the fifth chapter of Revelation. There Jehovah, the Emperor of the Universe, is pictured upon the throne, and in His hand a written scroll, sealed with seven seals. That sealed scroll represents the Divine plan which God purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world, but which He had revealed to no one, no, not to the angels, neither to the Son (Matthew 24:36). In a word, all that has occurred since creation — the permission of sin, the fall, the Covenant with Abraham, the law Covenant with Israel, the coming of Jesus, the Pentecostal blessing, the gathering of members of the Church — all these things were foreknown to the Father and provided for. Additionally, that scroll contains a record of all that is happening now, and all that will occur throughout the Millennial Age, down to its very close — down to the time when every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall ascribe, praise, honour, glory and dominion to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever (Revelation 5:13).

Lion of Judah the Worthy One

In the picture John notes a proclamation made throughout heaven and earth, inquiring for anyone worthy of the great honour of having this scroll of the Divine purpose committed to his care — to be opened, to be executed in harmony with the Divine purpose. He looked to see who the worthy one might be, but none was found worthy. Then he wept. It seemed to John too bad that God should have some great, wonderful purposes which might come to naught because no one was worthy to be the Divine executor in respect of the plan. But his tears were checked by the angel, who said, “Weep not: Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loosen the seven seals thereof.” And John said, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne ... stood a Lamb, as it had been slain.” And to the Lamb was given the scroll. Then all the angels of God worshipped the Lamb, saying, Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and dominion, and might, and power, etc.

JESUS REVEALS THE FATHER’S PLANS IN DUE SEASON

Applying the picture, we see the signification. Until our Lord was slain, until He had given His life as Man’s

redemption price, there was no being in all the universe worthy to be the executor of the Divine purposes. By our Lord’s loving obedience to the Father’s will — even unto death, even the death of the cross — He proved Himself loyal to the last degree. Him the Father raised from the dead, and when He had ascended up on high the proclamation went forth, Let all the angels of God worship Him. He is the Lamb of God who was slain, and by His death redeemed a condemned world of mankind and merited the Father’s confidence that to Him might be entrusted every feature of the Divine program. “He is worthy.”

From that time on every feature of the program would be under His supervision and He would open the seals and see to the execution of every feature of God’s gracious purposes. He had promised His Church that whatsoever thing the Father would reveal to Him, He, in turn, through the holy spirit and by His providences, would reveal to his faithful ones, to those walking in His footsteps of fall consecration

The Gospel Beforehand

St. Paul speaks of the Gospel’s having been preached beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Here was a vague statement of the Divine purpose, relating to the blessing itself as an acorn would be related to an oak tree. Similarly, seed thoughts respecting coming blessings had previously been given, though with much less definiteness. Directly after the fall God had declared that the Seed of the woman should yet bruise the Serpent’s head. In other words, He foretold that evil should not always triumph. Again, through the Prophet Enoch a seed-thought had been given in his prophecy, “Behold, the Lord cometh with His holy myriads, to execute judgment.” But to Abraham the message was so much *more explicit as to make it worthy to be termed a part of the Gospel*, a part of the good tidings now more fully made known unto us who are in Christ Jesus.

God Reaffirms Promise

Abraham no doubt expected that Isaac, the son of promise, would be “the Seed,” or the offspring, through whom the blessings would come; but when Isaac was grown and nothing wonderful was accomplished through him, God confirmed to him and subsequently to Jacob, his son, the same Abrahamic promise, assuring them that “the Seed” was still future, and implied that the promise meant a nation instead of an individual — a nation of Abraham’s Seed, Abraham’s children. And this feature of the Divine arrangement was made manifest at Jacob’s death, when the blessing was passed on from him, not to only one of his children, but to all of them collectively. There He pronounced them a nation of twelve tribes and indicated that to them as a whole descended this Abrahamic promise — that they, as the Seed of Abraham, inherited the promise, “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”