



# ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY



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## HIS COMING

Think, will it be tonight?  
From those arched heavens dark  
Whose unseen source dispense the dropping rain  
In manner like descending, archangel voice attending  
The Lord Himself will come.

Think, will it be at morn?  
Mid mists of dangling dew dispersing  
From off the grass-grown graves of saints  
Whose death-sleep hour, defeated, yields to awaken-  
ing power  
When He Himself will come.

Think, will it be at noon?  
When shafts of sunlight search  
With fanning gaze, unmissing, each earthly store  
Then living saints, changed in light, caught to unfad-  
ing glory bright  
When He Himself will come.

Think, will it be at twilight?  
When day with night is merging  
And shadows long distort true forms, unclear  
Then at the trumpet cry, secured, saints soar together  
in the sky  
When He Himself will come.

Think, at some destined hour  
Around the fleeing face of time  
Swift hands move o'er the marks and fly between, un-  
measured  
Millennial past, the hopeless dead, arise, accept God's  
sentence dread  
He will Himself have come.

*Roland Entwistle, (Killyleagh)*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Twenty five years is a long time and I look back over the years with gratitude to the Lord for the privilege of editing "Assembly Testimony" during those difficult years. Years of (in some cases) rapid decline into the sorry state of the days depicted by Malachi or Laodecia.

The Lord has given great encouragement however, as with His help the magazine has sought to hold back the tide that began at "High Leigh," was increased at Swanwick and still continues in the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship.

Many faithful servants of the Lord have been taken home during those years leaving fragrant memories. Many others, leaders in departure, are also absent from the body and present with the Lord. They all await, as we do also "the judgement seat of Christ" when every man will receive his own praise from God. What a solemn day that will be—"I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts: and I will give to every one of you according to your works," Rev. 2.23.

Now because of old age coupled with failing eyesight I feel the time has come to relinquish the task, and end over 50 years in Christian Publishing. I have much joy in commending to you our dear brother Brian Currie who has been assisting me for a number of years now. I have every confidence in Him — an excellent gospel preacher, an effective teacher and a wise counsellor. I pray and shall continue to pray that our gracious God may bless Him as he seeks to maintain the truth and earnestly contend for the faith.

Brethren and sisters — HE is coming! Hold fast till He comes. It is true:—

"I can almost hear His footfall on the threshold of the door

And my heart, my heart is longing to be with Him evermore."

"Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Fare ye well. Maranatha.

—A. M. Salway Gooding.

# THE PROPHECY OF AMOS

by E. R. BOWER, Worcester

## Paper 5

### THE SECOND DISCOURSE. (Chap. 4. 1-13;)

An introduction — reading this chapter we may see a similarity to the story told by our Lord of the “prodigal son” (and what does the word ‘prodigal’ mean? Literally, “to squander”), but let us take note that there were TWO prodigals — the one squandered his father’s goods; the other squandered his father’s love. It has often been said that the story of the wayward son is the story of Israel. Two solemn phrases stand out in this passage — “Yet ye have not returned unto Me” and “Prepare to meet thy God O Israel”. Israel had known God’s blessing but they had turned away from Him. They had known hunger and a water shortage; crop failure and pestilence; and earthquake but they had not returned to the One who had blessed them. And now? There was no remedy or healing (2 Chron. 36. 4-16;) and they were to make preparation to meet the One they despised.

### THE KINE OF SAMARIA — LOVERS OF LUXURY. (vv. 1-3;)

The words of the prophet are very strong for “the heifers of Bashan”. (note 3. 9-10). Amos the herdsman had first hand knowledge of the fine cattle of Bashan — the land between Hermon and the mountains of Gilead on the east of Jordan. We remember the word of Ps. 22. and the telling words, “Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me around” — a heart cry from the heart of Messiah. We may be reminded, too, of Is. 3. 16-25; and make a comparison with Prov. 31. 10 and 1 Tim. 2. 9-11. Amos pulls no punches as he inveighs against these ‘heifers’ who oppressed the poor (the exhausted ones); crushed the needy ones; commanding their masters or ‘lords’ or husbands to “bring wine and let us drink” (cf. 2. 6-8;). Amos continues his metaphor of the ‘cows’ in vv. 2-3; for he sees these same women being led away to the markets of Israel’s enemies to be sold as slaves. Assyrian monuments shew the scene very vividly as they were led away with rings in their lips and hooks in their noses. Cf. 2 Chron. 33.11;

which should read, “. . . Assyria captured Manasseh with hooks . . . and led him away . . .”. Through breeches in the walls the women were led out and dragged to an inidentified place. Some say that it was to Hadad-Rimmon the sun-god at a place of that name. A terrible fate.

**HAVE IT YOUR OWN WAY, BUT . . . (vv. 4-5)**

These verses are an example of Divine irony. Bethel and Gilgal had many sacred associations, but now they were corrupted by calf-worship and an unholy form of Jehovah worship. The wording is very bitter and lashes the false worshippers for their abundant generosity to false priests and false gods. Tithes were exacted in excess of legal requirements (Lev. 2. 11-12; 7.13;), (Deut. 26. 12;) and leaven was offered contrary to the law. Well, if that is the way they wanted it let it be so, but remember that in so doing you multiply your transgressions.

**YOU HAVE NOT RETURNED TO ME. (vv. 6-11;)**

Despite the rehearsal of past judgements their hearts were hardened both to the judgements and the heart cry of their God. The ‘curses’ of Deut. 28 were (after years of pleading) coming to pass. “And yet ye have not returned”.

**THEREFORE . . . PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD. (v.12)**

What is God going to do? Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly destroyed, but I saved some of you as brands from the burning and left you as charred sticks but you have returned to Me. The lesson is unlearned so get ready to meet your God.

**DOXOLOGY — IT IS YOUR GOD WHO SPEAKS. (v.13)**

God here gives us a fourfold declaration of His attributes. He formed the mountains; He reveals the thoughts of man; Turns day into night; Walks upon the high places. Jehovah of Hosts is His Name.

*—to be continued*

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<b>The Saviour Lifted up</b> .....	John 3.15
<b>The Saved Brought up</b> .....	Psalm 40.2
<b>The Satisfied Looking up</b> .....	Psalm 5.3
<b>The Steadfast Going up</b> .....	I Sam. 10.3
<b>The Sanctified Laying up</b> .....	Matt. 6.19
<b>The Strengthened Mounting up</b> .....	Isa 40.31
<b>The Saints Caught up</b> .....	I Thess. 4.17

*—W. Goodson (Uruguay)*

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# EPHESIANS EXPOUNDED

by A. D. THROPAY (California)

## Paper No. 4

### 1. THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT 1: 13-14

Verse 13

—**In whom:** Referring to the Lord Jesus Christ.

—**ye:** The word “ye” is emphatic. It is used in contrast to the word “we” in verse 12. Many believe that he is referring to the Gentiles here.

—**also (trusted):** The word trusted is supplied from the context. It would have the same meaning as the word “trusted” in verse 12. “To repose, hope, and have confidence in a person or thing beforehand.” The phrase “we have obtained an inheritance” could also be supplied here.

—**after that ye heard the word of truth:** (alētheias) reality at the basis of anything. The definite article precedes the word “truth” in the Greek. “. . . the word of the truth.” It is the genitive case, meaning,:

1. “the word which is the truth.”

2. “the word of which the truth is the very essence, or content.”

—**the gospel of your salvation:** This phrase further defines what the word of truth is. It is the good tidings of salvation.

—**in whom:** These words are repeated. There was an interruption in the sentence while Paul introduced other preliminary ideas. Now he is resuming his thoughts and taking us back to the Lord Jesus.

—**also, after that ye believed:** (pisteusantes —aorist, active, participle of pistis) To trust, confide, or rely on a person. The participle can be translated, “when ye believed,” or “at the time ye believed.” (Linguistic key to N. T.)

—**ye were sealed:** (sphragizō) The seal was used:

1. To make something secure against tampering (as the tomb, Matt. 27:66; the Den of Lions, Dan. 6:17).
2. To mark out as one's own possession (as the 144,000 Israelites in Rev. 7: 2-8; and those who are saved now, 2 Tim. 2:19).
3. To keep secret (Rev. 10:4; 22:10), to conceal (Cp. Psalm 5:11 margin).

—**with that Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit Himself is the seal on every believer. He seals every part of our being. He indwells our spirit. Our spirit is in every cell of our body that has life. Where there is no life, we have no spirit of life. Thus, every cell in our body is indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

1. He secures us and protects us against unlawful tampering by Satan or his helpers. Satan cannot touch us without God's permission.
2. He marks us out as belonging to God. He gives us the assurance that we belong to God, by bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16).
3. He has hidden us with Christ in God (Col. 3:3) "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom (be) honour and power everlasting. Amen." (2 Tim. 6:16) We are concealed in that light.

—**of promise:** The definite article precedes the word "promise" in the Greek text. It may mean

1. The Holy Spirit is the object or content of the promise made in the Old Testament.
2. The Holy Spirit is the One who made the promise in the Old Testament.

Verse 14

—**which:** or "who" (hos)

—**is the earnest:** (arrabōn) A part given in advance as a pledge

of what will be bestowed or payed fully afterward. It is a non-refundable down payment. The Holy Spirit is God's partial payment of our salvation, the guarantee of full delivery of all parts. In this way, He gives the believer assurance of salvation. Salvation is guaranteed, in that believer enjoys at the present time, in reality, the life of the future through the Holy Spirit.

—**of our inheritance:** (Klērōnomia) “A lot, properly, an inherited property, an inheritance.” W. E. Vine The phrase embodies all that we are to receive.

—**until:** (eis) Unto, with a view to. The Holy Spirit was given with a view towards, with the purpose of . . .

—**the redemption:** (apolutrōsis) as v7 — a releasing effect by the payment of a ransom; deliverance or liberation procured by the payment of a ransom. The word refers to the final part of our redemption, when body, soul, and spirit are released from the presence, power, and affect of sin.

—**of the purchased possession:** (peripoiēsis) “preserving, laying up acquiring.” “Gaining for oneself without specific reference to a price.” (From two words, “peri,” = around; and “poiesis,” = a performance, an acting or doing). Hence, it means to perform around a person, to be doing around a person, and thus to acquire or gain him for oneself.

—**unto:** (eis) unto, with a view towards — Our receiving the gospel of salvation and the seal of the Spirit is glorious for us. However, it will produce a far greater reward for God than for us.

—**the praise:** (epainos) (as v 12) commendation and honour paid to another. Literally, it means to “celebrate or praise over” (someone).

—**of His glory:** (doxa) the outshining; brightness or splendour; The outward manifestation of God's attributes. In this case, it is the bright, shining, splendour of His grace.

Everything that God does is for the glory of His Son.

—*to be continued*



# Messages from Muller

These are notes of addresses given by  
the late George Muller

## No. 1 — The Secret of Effectual Service to God

### A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

We have through the Lord's goodness been permitted to enter upon another year, and the minds of many amongst us will no doubt be occupied with plans for the future, and the various spheres of service in which, if our lives be spared, we shall be engaged. The welfare of our families, the prosperity of our business, our work and service for the Lord, may be considered the most important matters to be attended to; but, according to my judgment, the most important point to be attended to is this: *Above all things, see to it that your souls are happy in the Lord.* Other things may press upon you; the Lord's work even may have urgent claims upon your attention; but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme and paramount importance that you should seek, above all other things, to have your souls truly happy in God Himself. Day by day seek to make this the most important business of your life. This has been my firm and settled conviction for the last five-and-thirty years. For the first four years after my conversion I knew not its vast importance; but now, after, much experience, I specially commend this point to the notice of my younger brethren and sisters in Christ. The secret of all true effectual service is,—joy in God, and having experimental acquaintance and fellowship with God Himself.

But in what way shall we attain to this settled happiness of soul? How shall we learn to enjoy God? How obtain such an all-sufficient soul-satisfying portion in Him as shall enable us to let go the things of this world as vain and worthless in comparison? I answer, This happiness is to be obtained through the study of the Holy Scriptures. God has therein revealed Himself unto us in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the Scriptures, by the power of the Holy Ghost, He makes Himself known unto our souls. Remember, it is not a god of our

own thoughts or our own imaginations that we need to be acquainted with; but the God of the Bible, our Father, who has given the blessed Jesus to die for us. Him should we seek intimately to know, according to the revelation He has made of Himself in his own most precious Word.

The way in which we study this Word is a matter of the deepest moment. The very earliest portion of the day we can command should be devoted to meditation on the Scriptures. Our souls should feed upon the Word. We should read it—not for others, but for ourselves; all the promises, the encouragements, the warnings, the exhortations, the rebukes, should be taken home to our own bosoms. Especially let us remember not to neglect any portion of the Bible: it should be read regularly through. To read favourite portions of the Scriptures, to the exclusion of other parts, is a habit to be avoided. The whole Divine volume is inspired, and by degrees should be read regularly through. But to read the Bible thus is not enough; we must seek to become intimately and experimentally acquainted with Him whom the Scriptures reveal, with the blessed Jesus who has given Himself to die in our room and stead. Oh, what an abiding, soul-satisfying portion do we possess in Him!

But another point here needs especially to be noticed: it is that we seek habitually to carry out what we know, to act up to the light that we have received; then more will assuredly be given. But if we fail to do this, our light will be turned into darkness. It is of the deepest moment that we walk with a sincere, honest, upright heart before the Lord. If evil be practised, or harboured and connived at, the channel of communication between our souls and God (for the time being) will be cut off. It is all important to remember this. Infirmities and weaknesses will cleave to us as long as we remain in the body; but this is a different thing from willingly allowing evil. I must be able, with a true, honest, upright heart, to look my heavenly Father in the face, and say, “Here I am, blessed Lord; do with me as Thou wilt”.

Then let us remember that we are His stewards. Our time, our health, our strength, our talents, our all, are His, and His alone. Let us seek to remember this, and carry it out this year, and then what happy Christians shall we all be! It is a Divine principle, “To him that hath shall more be given”; and as assuredly as we seek to

make good use of that which is confided to us, more will be imparted. We shall be used of the Lord, and shall become increasingly happy in His own most blessed service. Brethren! we have only one life—one brief life; let us seek with renewed purpose of heart to consecrate that one life wholly to the Lord—day by day to live for God, and to serve Him with our body, soul, and spirit, which are His.

Let it be our unceasing prayer, that as we grow *older*, we may not grow *colder* in the ways of God. As we advance in years, let us not decline in spiritual power; but let us see to it that an increase of spiritual vigour and energy be found in us, that our last days may be our best days.

Our holy faith does not consist in *talking*. “Reality, reality, reality”, is what we want. Let us have *heart-work*; let us be genuine. Brethren! we should live so as to be missed—missed both in the Church and in the world, when we are removed. Oh how rapidly is time hastening on! We should live in such a manner as that, if we were called hence, our dear brethren and sisters might feel our loss, and from their inmost souls exclaim, “Oh that such a one were in our midst again!” We ought to be missed even by the world. Worldly persons should be constrained to say of us, “If ever there was a Christian upon earth, that man was one”.

But to revert to the Scriptures. In them, through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, we become acquainted with the character of God. Our eyes are divinely opened to see what a lovely Being God is! and this good, gracious, loving, heavenly Father is ours, our portion for time and for eternity; and our adorable Lord Jesus, who gave Himself for us, is that blessed One, to whose image and likeness we shall be conformed; and to serve Him should be our greatest joy and privilege as long as we remain on earth.

But then, when trial and affliction come; when God deals with us as though He were not the lovely, kind, and gracious Being presented to us in His Word, shall we murmur and despond? Ah! no. Beloved in Christ! let us trust our heavenly Father; let us, like little children, hang entirely on Him, reposing in the sweet assurance of His unchangeable, eternal love. Let us remember how He acted towards His saints of old, what His dealings were with them; let us remember what is recorded concerning their history;

for now, as He has ever done, God will most surely act according to His word.

This intimate experimental acquaintance with Him will make us truly happy. Nothing else will. If we are not happy Christians (I speak deliberately, I speak advisedly), there is something wrong. If we did not close the past year in a happy frame of spirit, the fault is ours, and ours alone.

In God our Father, and the blessed Jesus, our souls have a rich, divine, imperishable, eternal treasure. Let us enter into practical possession of these true riches; yea, let the remaining days of our earthly pilgrimage be spent in an ever-increasing, devoted, earnest consecration of our souls to God. —to be continued

## **An Outline of 1st Thessalonians**

**by the late J. B. Hewitt**

*Written from Corinth.*

*Date: A.D. 51-52. Message: Gain and Victory*

**PURPOSE** Written to Confirm their faith ch. 1 v. 4,9,10.

To Commend Them 1 v. 6,7; To Correct Evil Reports ch. 2.

To Counsel Them 2.11-3.13; To Chastise Them 4 v.12,13.

To Comfort Their Hearts 4.13-17.

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It's Deliverance 9-10 The Ability of God

**CHAPTER 2 HISTORICAL** The Reminiscences of the Servant

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CHAPTER 5 v.12-28 PRACTICAL The Responsibilities of The  
Saints

- (1) Social Responsibilities v.11-15 Advent Precepts  
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- (2) Spiritual Responsibilities v. 16-25 Advent Principles  
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Be Dutiful — Prove v.21,22; Be Watchful and Holy v.23  
Be Restful for God is Faithful v.24.
- (3) Assembly Responsibilities v.25-28 Advent Privileges  
The Church at Prayer v.25; In Fellowship v.26;  
The Church Instructed v.27; Encouraged v.28.

#### THE MESSAGE FOR MY HEART TODAY

Chapter 1 Life in the Lord — My Assurance  
Chapter 2 Labour for the Lord — Always Abounding  
Chapter 3 Love like the Lord — Affection  
Chapter 4 Looking for the Lord — Anticipation  
Chapter 5 Be Loyal to the Lord — Allegiance

“YE SERVE THE LORD CHRIST”

# **CHRIST AND THE CURSE**

by  
**B. AVERY, Malvern**

## **The Fruit of the Curse**

Consequent upon the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, the Lord God pronounced a curse upon the serpent, the woman and Adam. (Gen. 3, 14-19) In v. 14 we are told of the seed of the woman (Christ) and a prophecy is made of what was to occur at the cross. In the following verse we are reminded of the results of the curse, i.e. sorrow, thorns, sweat and dust. How the Saviour alone upon whom the curse had no claim, was to experience these in such a vital and amazing way is brought before us in the history of His life and work as told out by the apostle and even referred to by the prophets.

The first result of sin brought to the readers notice in Gen. 3 is sorrow. In v. 16 it is in connection with the woman in the sphere of the home, (childbearing) and in v. 12 with Adam in the sphere of work (breadwinning) We may experience deep sorrow, but what of Christ's? Isaiah 53.3 points forward to the Lord as "the Man of sorrows." Lamentations 1.12 invites the reader to "see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow". Whilst this may be historical yet surely it is also prophetic (Comp. Hosea 11.1) and reminds us that whatever sorrow we may have known His was far in excess. In Mark 14.34 He could say to His disciples "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." How great His experience of sorrow was in such circumstances!

But not only sorrow, He was also to feel the effect of the thorns. Who has not felt the pain of a thorn from time to time through life? But how much greater the experience of Christ as in mockery a crown of thorns was placed upon His head. Those cruel large Palestinian thorns were deliberately pressed into His blessed brow. How our association with this part of the curse fades into significance when compared with Christ's experience of them!

Similarly sweat. Who has not experienced this as a result of labour or fear? But His experience of it was far in excess of anything anyone of us has known. Luke 22.44 refers to "His sweat

as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground". This was as He anticipated Calvary.

Finally, in Gen. 4. 19 we have reference to dust. Although as the perfect, sinless Man the Lord's body could know no corruption. (Acts 2.27-31) yet Ps. 22.15 speaks prophetically of His death. The result of the curse for the sinner is death (Rom. 6.23) but He over whom death had no power (for He was without sin) knew death in a way that we shall never know. Upon the cross He completely experienced the curse, Gal. 3.13.

As we contemplate the position He was willing to take for and instead of us, our hearts go out in gratitude to the Father for sending, Yea not sparing His Son to endure the sorrow, thorns, sweat and death that He so willing knew in such awful infinite reality that we might have eternal life and share His eternal home. We shall be like Him (1 John 3, 2) may we seek and know His help to be more like Him now, whilst still left in this cursed world — For His glory!

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## ***FEATURES OF LOVE***

**by D. WARD, Birmingham**

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“For if you should love those who love you, what reward have ye? Do not the tax-gatherers the same?” (Matt. 5. 43-48). The Lord Jesus drew attention to a nauseating feature of the fallen nature — a selfish love that acted for its own benefit. God loved because, He is love. He was true to His nature. But for believers to love only those who love them is not the divine will. This kind of love does not include the unfortunates who are not in a position to return love as it is expressed in hospitality, gifts, or any other means, whereby love can be shown. It is a partial love and is governed by social status, family connections, business advantage and many other reasons.

Party spirit among believers can also have this obnoxious aspect. Particular views about certain features of truth can easily govern our love to each other. Sad that it should be so but facts need to be stated.

In abnormal situations such as discipline and disorderly con-

duct, love may be adversely affected in its flow and when necessary adjustments have been made love should resume its normal activity; "love one another as I have loved you," John 13.24, and in Ephesians 5.1 we have the same sentiments.

If we show love to each other it is a good thing to examine our motives. When our motives are pure and unselfish we can rejoice that our love is like Christ.

James in his letter to the saints of his day, charges them with partiality in their behaviour, 2.1-6. The rich brother was shown every favour and consideration, the poor brother relegated to a place of no importance. How contrary to the Lord's command, and to Paul's commendation to the Ephesian saints for their "love to all the saints," Eph. 1.15.

Romans 12.5 supplies us with a very good reason why our love should not be partial. We are members of a living organism and each member is necessary and dependent on others. We are members "one of another." We did not attain this position of blessing and privilege, we were given it because we trusted Christ as Saviour and received the gift of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12.13).

Since we have been blessed in such a wonderful way, the corresponding responsibilities are very high. But in the power of the Spirit they can be attained. Note in the following passages the apostle's insistence on loving one another. (All the quotations are from Romans, always keeping in mind the truth of Romans 12.5). Respect for one another 12.16; Love one another 13.8; Don't judge one another 14.3; Build up each other 14.19; Like-minded towards one another, 15.5; Receive ye one another 15.7; Admonish one another 15.14; Salute one another 16.16.

Is any comment necessary? The baneful spirit of parties, cliques, and special friendships which create havoc among the Lord's people would come to an end if these directions of Paul were followed.

At Bethlehem the Lord Jesus made no differentiation in His love. He loved all three in that faithful home, John 11.5. Would we have put Martha first in the quoting? Care-worn Martha would not have commended herself to us, Luke 10.40. We would have loved the spiritually minded Mary. But the Lord, as always, is our example. He loved them all.



# **A Consideration of Lampstand Removal**

by B. CURRIE, (Belfast)

When considering the messages to seven churches in Asia in Revelation chapters two and three, a question which often arises is, "what is meant by the Lord's words to the church at Ephesus in 2.5, I will remove thy lampstand out of its place?" It is this question which is addressed in this paper.

## **1. THE PARALLELS IN HISTORY**

There are those who would immediately answer the question by suggesting that this happens when the saints are scattered and the meeting place closed. However that cannot be the answer ought to be evident to all who take a few moments to ponder the history of parallel happenings in the record of scripture.

It is worthy of note that the Spirit of God links the Lord's message to Ephesus with the happenings in Eden by the promise to the overcomer, which is "to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God". When Adam lost his place in Eden i.e. his place before the Lord, did he cease to exist?

Later in the history of the nation, the cry was heard, "Ichabod . . . the glory is departed from Israel:" 1 Samuel 4.21,22. Did the nation cease to exist because the glory was gone?

In the time of our Lord's ministry on earth He rejected the nation, after it rejected Him, Matthew 13.1. Did the nation cease to exist?

On the occasion of His death the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, which left it obvious to all who looked that there was no Shekinah Cloud in holiest thus clearly indicating that God had left Judaism. Did Judaism cease to exist?

The answer to all the above questions is a resounding NO! Why then are we asked to accept that when the lampstand is removed out of its place it, (the assembly), ceases to exist?

## **2. THE PROCLAIMED TESTIMONY**

It is often overlooked that these are golden lampstands i.e. their

testimony is not to the world but is of a Godward aspect and responsibility is to Him. If testimony manward had been in view consistency in typology would have demanded that these lampstands be wooden. This is illustrated in the lampstand of the tabernacle which was never seen in the world but had its responsibility before the Lord in the holy place. There is sometimes the suggestion that as long as a healthy evangelical spirit exists in the company and the gospel is preached then the testimony is burning brightly. Such is a complete misunderstanding of the golden character of the lampstand. In fact, one of the major blights on the testimony of our day is that many see evangelism as an end in itself without realising that the commission is only complete when there also the preaching, baptising and teaching, Matt. 28.19,20; Mark 16.15.

In typical teaching we must differentiate between pure gold and gold. In the O.T. tabernacle the lampstand was of pure gold and thus totally and exclusively speaks of Christ as the Illuminator of priestly activity and is not Him as the light of the world. However, these lampstands were of gold and so do not speak of deity but of speak of divine righteousness i.e. this is the testimony of men who are both imputedly and practically righteous. To what do they bear testimony?

This defined by Paul in 1 Tim. 3.15, “. . . pillar and ground of TRUTH”. Thus these golden lampstands are precious before God since they uphold and maintain His righteous requirements as they propagate and practice truth.

Therefore we conclude that when a company ceases to hold and uphold divine truth it may be in danger of being “removed,” but not ceasing to exist.

### 3. PLACE OF RESPONSIBILITY

In seeking to answer the vexed question we must define what is meant by “its place”. To suggest that removal means cessation of existence, then “its place” simply means geographical location and the Lord was referring to the street or district in which the meeting room was situated. As well as being a very superficial interpretation of the inspired text, this suggestion loses sight of the fact that these are golden lampstands. It also supports the false notion that the church is OF a particular place. It is true that

nowhere does the Spirit of God employ the preposition OF concerning the location of an assembly. It is never the Church of Ireland, or the Church of England etc. as commonly accepted in Christendom. It is always “the church IN Smyrna”, Rev. 2.8, “the church IN Pergamos”, Rev. 2.12, etc. A glance at the RV or JND will give a similar reading for Rev. 2.1.

“Its place” can only mean the place given to the lampstand in chapter one where it had the privilege of being one of those lampstands amongst which the Lord was moving, and this is its place of responsibility. However, because of internal conditions there was the solemn possibility that it would forfeit “its place” i.e. the Lord would continue to walk in the midst of those lampstands which maintained their golden character, but Ephesus would be excluded from that circle thus losing its character Godward as golden. It is submitted that that and not cessation is being taught. Eventual cessation may or may not be the result.

#### 4. POLLUTION OF SIMPLICITY

It is the observation of the author that when an assembly loses “its place”, instead of becoming weaker numerically and eventually fading away, a lot of innovations are introduced in an attempt to camouflage the fact that the Lord is absent. This really caters to the flesh and attracts the unsaved to the company, resulting in a mixed multitude. This issues in the reception of those who are not the Lord’s and to satisfy the ever increasing demands of the flesh, they desire more and more of that which is mere entertainment and while the company may grow numerically there is little or nothing of spiritual value which could be appreciated by the Lord. He will always appreciate obedience and scriptural simplicity but in the case described such will have been polluted.

It has to be stated that this removal is no overnight experience. It will begin with some disobedience to the Scriptures. This may be in the form of worldly innovations, the loss of distinctive character through interdenominational pursuits, the insidious inroads of charismatic teaching, the sanctioning of women publicly taking part in meetings etc. etc.

Initially brethren will visit these places faithfully bringing a ministry of correction and not consolation. It is encouraging to realise that in some cases this will effect restoration, but unfortu-

nately in our day this will often be rejected by the majority in the company until it becomes clear that their position is just about irreversible. It is at this stage it becomes obvious to the spiritual mind that since almost every semblance of a New Testament assembly has been obliterated it is manifest that it has lost "its place".

Thus it is submitted that it is a fallacy to think that if a company once in their history was an assembly then such must be its place perpetually. That teaching only gives licence to every kind of disobedience and looseness.

On the basis of the above it behoves us to look deeply into our hearts and examine ourselves both individually and collectively lest we drift away until we lose our value in His sight. Let us be content with obedience to the simple scriptural principles of gathering unto His Name, and be found among the faithful remnant when He comes.

## **"The Symphony of a Solemn Tale"**

**by David N. Boyd (Belfast)**

*Read:* A. Luke 19.41, 23.28, 22.62  
B. John 13.5; Matt. 27.24  
C. Matt 21.12, 27.5; Mark 12.42

In these verses we hear sounds coming from incidents which took place within the last week of Our Lord's Life. It is like a Symphony of Sorrow.

Three sounds are clearly identifiable.

1. From the first group of verses can be heard "Sound of Sobbing" Jesus Wept, the woman wept, Peter wept.
2. From another pair of verses could be heard "The Drip of Water" Jesus took a basin — Pilate took a basin.
3. And from the other verses could be heard "The Clink of Coins" Jesus overthrew the tables of the moneychangers.

A poor widow threw two mites into the treasury. Judas cast down the pieces of silver in the temple.

### 1. "Sound of Sobbing".

Regularly punctuating the last week in the Life of Christ, three times in fact, the salt tears of sorrow spring.

The Sobbing of the Saviour is the Sob of Compassion.

The Sobbing of the Citizens is the Sob of Confusion

The Sobbing of Simon is the Sob of Contrition

The Sob of the Saviour's compassion is heard in Luke 19.41 "And when He was come near He beheld the city and wept over it". Elsewhere the Countenance of Christ is described as "the sun shining in its strength". To see that face clouded with grief and see that frame of His shake with convulsive sobs, demands that we enquire Why? The answer is in that in the overwhelming love of Christ, Jerusalem and its people were exceedingly precious. During the course of Our Lord's earthly life the Master was oft found on the hills overlooking the city.

In His infancy He had been carried to the temple.

In His boyhood He had again been brought to worship

He loved the city with a passionate, selfless, devotion.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem", He cried, "How oft would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings but ye would not". This favoured city has become a frustrating city, and shortly as He revealed, it would become a flattened city. The heart of "He who was despised and rejected" was breaking over this favoured city and its citizens.

Oh what a sight! — the Sovereign Son of God sobbing over sinners on the eve of His death is not only a touching sight but a heart rending symphony of sorrow and the sound stills the night air.

In Luke 23.28, we find the "Sob of Confusion". Says the Master "Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for yourselves". The sight of the Stricken Sufferer moves them emotionally to weep for Him. Tears of pity are useless tears! The sight of His anguish demands tears of penitence from these sobbing citizens. Crocodile tears for Christ will never save— Robert Murray McCheyne wrote

“Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll  
I wept as the waters went over His soul  
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the tree  
Jehovah Tsidkenu—t’was nothing to me”

How different it was with John Newton who wrote

“My conscience felt and owned my guilt, and plunged me in  
despair  
I saw my sins His blood had shed and helped to nail Him  
there”

A third sobbing can be heard in the distance, leaving its tear  
stains on this story.

Luke 22.62 “And Peter went out and wept bitterly”. The Sob  
of Simon is a Sob of Contrition.

Peter’s broken heart is the result of a broken vow! He had  
said “Though I should die with thee, yet will I never deny thee”.  
Yet he had denied the Master with ‘oaths and curses’ unmis-  
takably, publicly. Out of the broken earthenware of his denial  
Peter learned this wonderful truth

“Christ’s an unchanging love  
Higher than the heights above  
Deeper than the depths beneath  
Free and faithful strong as death”

## **2. The Drip of Water**

On the first occasion it is heard in “an upper room”. It is not  
a single drip but repeated 12 times! On the second occasion it is  
heard in ‘a courtroom’. In the courtroom it is short and sharp  
but far from sweet!

The first prolonged dripping of water emerges from an Act  
of Humility on the part of Christ. The second, brief drip,  
emerges from an Act of Haughtiness on the part of Pilate.

The first act reveals what Christ ‘can’ and ‘must’ do for us if  
we are to have part with Him. Christ must cleanse us! No ex-  
ceptions. None is too good not to need it! None is so bad that he  
cannot have it!

The second act reveals what we can never do for ourselves.  
We can never wash our hands of the responsibility we have  
towards Christ. It is the cowardly who try to compromise.

The last sound in this 'Symphony of a Solemn Tale' has a metallic ring about it—it is:

### 3. The Clink of Coins

Three times in the course of passion week the unmistakable jingle of cash emerges from the pages of holy scripture. Each occasion has a message for us who will listen!

(a) *The Coins of Covetousness—Matt 21.12*

“And Jesus . . . overthrow the tables of the money-changers”

(b) *The Coins of Consecration—Mark 12.42*

“And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites which make a farthing”.

(c) *The Coins of Calamity—Matt 27.5*

“And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple . . . and went and hanged himself”.

(a) *The Coins of Covetousness*

It was the great Apostle Paul who had “suffered the loss of all things and had counted them but dung that he might win Christ”, whom the Spirit of God inspired to write “The love of money is the root of all evil”, ie. all kinds of evil in all kinds of places. The realm of religion has alas always been one of the most vulnerable realms for the misuse of money.

The Jew was often rebuked by the prophets for robbing God to enrich himself. In the incident recorded in matt 21.12 he is robbing his fellow Jewish worshippers in two ways. many thronging the temple at Passover time were Jews from abroad whose cash was in foreign currency. The 'money changers' exchanged that currency at a ridiculously high commission rate. Secondly—each worshipper required a sacrificial animal which had to be passed fit by the priests! If an animal was brought outside the temple the priests would not pass the animal. The truth was that worshippers had to purchase inside the temple at inflated prices by these commercial clerics. It was a religious racket, which the Lord Jesus stopped.

A mal-appreciation of money is still a curse which blights the cause of Christ and blinds the vision of many to the real issues of the gospel. On one hand there are those who are so

obsessed with acquiring money that they would work night and day seven days a week, without regard for God, and without time to give to God's assembly. On the other hand there are those who think by giving money they are absolving themselves from responsibility to fulfill their priestly role within the assembly.

*(b) The Coins of Consecration*

There is a second sound of money. You will have to really listen very carefully to detect it! For it is a mere tinkle this time not a torrent. It is the sound of Coins of Consecration "Two mites that make a farthing".

Here is the attitude, not only to money but to life, which produces praise from the Lord. This poor widow did not give a 'farthing' she gave two mites which make a farthing. What's the difference?—There is a big difference.

If she had only one coin she might have been judged to have given under the compulsion of only having that single coin. She had two coins, she could have given one and kept one but she didn't. She gave 'even all her living'. She enacted in the fact that she gave her all the truth of the old hymn

Thou spared not thine only Son  
But gavest Him for a world undone  
And freely with the blessed one  
Thou givest ALL.

In the light of Calvary, how can we give any less?

*(c) The Coins of Calamity*

Finally, the last clink of coins we hear emerging are the Coins of Calamity—Matt 27.5.

"And Judas! What a solemn sound he made through his act of remorse. Was there ever a more expressive picture than this of what money can't buy — "Peace with God"? Or of what money cannot buy back "Peace of Mind" if you betray the love of the Master. Listen carefully to that Clink of Coins and answer honestly in your heart!

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"



## **“ESTEEM THEM . . . HIGHLY”**

by **JIM JARDINE, Brazil**

Overseers do not always get the best of publicity. Some time ago I was talking to a young brother and asked him what improvements he would like to see in his assembly. “Abolish the elders!” he immediately replied. Certainly few openly advocate such an unscriptural extreme but some perhaps would feel sympathy for the disillusion that lay behind the comment. It would be foolish to deny that there have been, and that there still are, elders who do little to enhance the work that they are presumed to be doing. Such men carnally rejoice in their supposed authority. Their main activity seems to be to domineer the flock and maintain the existing system no matter how dead that system may be. They are always ready to say a quick no to any new idea that may be produced. The fact that the new idea may be perfectly within scriptural guide-lines is beside the point. Of such a one, after he had been called home, C. H. Spurgeon remarked that he hoped the flowers would grow around his grave as nothing had grown around him during his lifetime!

While such tragic cases do exist, it would be very unfair to forget that truly New Testament eldership can be seen in thousands of instances all over the world. There still are godly men who humbly before the Lord shepherd the flock and pour out their spiritual energies in work that may seem fruitless in the short term but whose reward has already been promised at the judgement seat (I Peter 5.4).

The author of this article gives thanks to God, that at an early stage in his Christian life, he had the privilege of seeing at close quarters how a truly scriptural oversight can function. As a young man of 18, I left home for the first time to live in a distant city where I attended one of the local assemblies. In the atmosphere of the polytechnic there were many interpretations of the Scriptures even amongst professing believers. Had it not been for the counter-influence of what I received at the Gospel Hall, it is doubtful if I would be in fellowship with New Testament assemblies today.

The elders of that assembly (most of whom happily are still with us) would be the first to admit their imperfections, yet there can be no doubt that the Lord has used them constantly over the years to His glory. Looking back, a number of features about their lives and ministry come to mind:

### 1. THE ELDERS WERE THE REAL SPIRITUAL LEADERS OF THE FLOCK

This may seem self-evident but unhappily it is not always the case. After a time in fellowship it should be obvious even to the newest Christian who the elders are. When a brother's name is mentioned as now meeting with the oversight it should cause no surprise to anyone. I remember reaching a conclusion about the identity of the elders in that particular assembly. A few weeks later, a short meeting of the oversight was convened after the mid-week meeting. As the building the assembly used only had one back room which was approached through the main hall, it was comparatively easy to loiter near the front door and see just who attended the meeting. I remember being a little surprised that they were exactly the men I had marked out as being the true shepherds of the flock. Blessed is the assembly whose oversight is only made up of Spirit-chosen guides!

### 2. THEY WERE MEN WHO HAD A SHARED INTEREST IN THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THE FLOCK

While those who have had a much longer association with the assembly would be able to say much more, even as a student and thus often at home for week-ends, I sensed this. A number of the brethren had me out for meals regularly and I was encouraged by them in many other ways. It should be said that it was not just the elders who showed such kindness. I have happy memories of hospitality by others also. As a longish-haired student type of the early 1970's, I am sure that there were factors that the elders weren't happy about, yet they had the discernment to keep to essentials and let the Lord work on the rest. He's still doing so!

### 3. THEY PROVIDED SPIRITUAL FEEDING FOR THE FLOCK

Having now seen assembly work in a variety of places, I can say that the level of Bible teaching which I enjoyed during those

years was superb. Ministry meetings were held three Saturdays in four during the Winter months, the first Saturday being reserved left free to attend a central ministry meeting for all the assemblies in the area. While all of the men who ministered were loyal to the Scriptures, they were not limited to one rigid "party line".

Even more profitable at times were the mid-week Bible readings where not only the elders but a good number of other brethren took part. The elder brethren made sure that the readings progressed at a reasonable pace and when some seemed to get a little bit over-excited calmed things down. Personally, I will ever be grateful to this meeting. Unknown to the good brethren, I was passing through considerable perplexity with regard to the miraculous gifts found in the New Testament, particularly the gift of tongues. I felt that if the "gift of tongues" that was being practised by my charismatic friends was for real, then my place was not with assemblies. 1 Corinthians was being studied and as we approached chapters 12 to 14, I thought: "Right, if they waffle their way through this, I'm finished." Well, there was no waffle and the teaching I received has stood me in good stead till today. A highlight came when one of the elders (the last I would have expected), referring to the Pentecostals, mentioned that he had been saved through these dear folk but had come to see that what they believed about spiritual gifts was unscriptural. It would be an understatement to say that I was extremely surprised!

#### 4. THEY WERE NOT AFRAID TO EXERCISE BIBLICAL DISCIPLINE

During the two years I spent with the assembly there was only one case where a brother had to be put away from fellowship. Happily he was later completely restored. What impressed me was there was no cold form of "reading out" but a loving application of what 1 Corinthians 5 taught, linked to appropriate pastoral care. When in more recent years I have witnessed sad cases where discipline was used where it clearly should not have been or not used where it was required, it has been profitable to reflect on the wisdom of these overseers.

Much more could be written about the evangelistic outreach, promotion of missionary endeavour and other subjects, but enough has been said to show that elders who follow the biblical

pattern are perhaps not quite the endangered species that the pessimists may think. If a brother reading this has the requisite spiritual qualifications (1 Tim. 3, & Tit. 1) and feels that before the Lord he should spend and be spent in this glorious service, you can have complete certainty that "if any one aspires to exercise oversight, he desires a good work" (1 Tim. 3.1 JND). For the rest of us, if we have contact with even one or two such brethren let us thank God for them and seek to follow the apostle's injunction: "Know them which labour among you in the Lord and admonish you . . . esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." (1 Thess. 5.12-13).

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### COMMITTEE NOTES

The swiftness with which time passes is once again emphasised as another year closes. With it too, we recall the passing away of loved ones and brethren beloved in Christ, who have left behind fragrant memories. A number of these dear brethren contributed so helpfully with articles over past years.

Human fragility and the brevity of life, although acknowledged because obvious, need to be appreciated more deeply. Moses seems to be aware of the need for God to teach us these things, when he prays in Psalm 90 "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" or "Teach us so to number our days and we shall obtain a heart of wisdom". It would appear, therefore, that a proper understanding of the shortness of our time down here, does not come naturally, but is taught by God — hence Moses' prayer. May we pray likewise and value each daily opportunity to serve the Lord.

The faithfulness and kindness of God can be traced throughout another year of Assembly Testimony work. We are indebted to those dear brethren who contribute articles — such ministry demands time, concentration of thought and spiritual exercise. In this respect we would urge such brethren to keep up the good work. To those who handle such material and make decisions as to publication viz our Editor and Assistant Editor. To our Secretary and Accountant who give of their valuable time and expertise. To those who support in the maintenance of the magazine by their practical fellowship and prayers. Who can measure these various contributions? Only the Divine Assessor Himself. To all the foregoing we express our deep gratitude in the Lord's Name.

## **CHANGE OF EDITORSHIP**

After 25 years of outstanding service to saints of God in the capacity of Editor of Assembly Testimony, our dear brother A. M. S. Gooding has expressed his desire to be relieved of this position. This is due to failing eyesight and advancing years. However we are delighted to report that his years of experience and his spiritual insight will not be lost to the magazine, since he will be available to give counsel and advice from time to time .

Our brother Brian Currie has been undertaking many editorial duties for sometime and the committee are happy to intimate that from 1st January he has become the Editor. Prayer is requested for our brother Currie that he may have the wisdom and grace to function in this role for the glory of God and the upbuilding of His people. We are confident that under his editorship the magazine will continue to uphold the distinctive position of the New testament assembly and the position of the saints as being in, but not of, the world.

## **MY CONVERSION AND CALL (16)**

*by Albert Glass (Skibbereen)*

I was saved, by the grace of God, in September 1951 while sitting in my own home reading a book called "The Traveller's Guide".

My father had died when I was about 3 years old but my mother saw to it that I attended Sunday School, for which I am now very thankful. However, like many young people, I desired the pleasures of the world and was glad when the time came for me to leave the Sunday School.

Not long after leaving I started to gamble and finished

up a compulsive gambler. However I always had a fear of death and the thought of dying was often brought before me. On one occasion I picked up a piece of paper in the place where I worked and on it was only one word 'DIE'. Another time I saw a young man drop dead in the boxing ring.

God was speaking to me through these things and bringing before me the reality of death. Death is on the track of each one of us and sooner or later will take us to the great eternity. Are we ready to go? Are we sure all is well with our souls?

‘What if the word were passed,  
This night should be thy last  
Where would thy soul be cast,  
Where hide thy face?’

In the year of 1951 I became very dissatisfied with my way of living. I came home from the dog track racing one evening and found a tract entitled “Christ Rejected” lying in the hall. (Thank God for all who engage in tract distribution). I believe I was getting my last opportunity to get God’s salvation. It is possible someone reading this testimony is getting their last opportunity to be saved —

“There is a time I know not when, a place I know not where

That seals the destiny of men — for glory or despair”.

I decided to seek salvation and the next evening I went to a tent meeting close to where I lived. At the end of the meeting anyone who was interested was invited to stand up. Even though I was of a very backward disposition I stood up and was given a card to sign. We know that standing up or signing a card does not save anyone but this could be an indication that one is seeking for salvation. After these tent meetings I attended others in the Grosvenor Hall, Belfast and then I went to hear a converted Chinaman preaching the gospel. He brought before us the reality of hell — and dear reader, hell is a reality!

I had started to read the Bible and read in Matthew 12.

31-32 about the unpardonable sin. This troubled me greatly until I read in a book "if a person has a desire after salvation, that is an indication that they have not committed the unpardonable sin". This, to me, was a great relief.

It was shortly after this, and about three weeks after the signing of the card etc., that I began to read "The Traveller's Guide". In this book there were stories illustrating the way of salvation. I came to one entitled "Are you praying for pardon?" I had been doing this! The writer told the story of someone who was on his knees praying to God for pardon when another person enquired what he was doing. He explained that he was praying for pardon and was you "you don't need to keep praying for pardon. God offers it and you take it". In a moment the way of salvation dawned on my soul. I realised Christ had died for my sins —

"My chains fell off, my heart was free  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee".

It is now over fifty years since I first trusted in the Lord and can truly say "He is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother".

Shortly after my conversion I was baptized and received into the assembly at Adam Street Hall. There, with God's help, I began to engage, with other believers, in village work (that is, preaching the gospel and distributing tracts in villages around the country), open air preaching in streets, including the street in which I lived and around the area, Sunday School work and the carrying of large scripture texts.

In the year 1954 when I was reading in the Book of Ezekiel the little clause in Ch. 20 v. 46, "Son of man set thy face toward the South" seemed to come home to my heart; through this and other scriptures I felt that God was exercising me to carry the gospel to the South of Ireland. I had never been over the border before, so "I went out not knowing whether I went". I knew little or nothing, at that time, about the matter and manner of commendation to the work of the Lord (maybe if there was more teaching given along this line it might be a help to others who are exercised about

stepping out in the Lord's work), so a short time before I went down South I told the brethren of my exercise. I probably took them by surprise, but they did not, thank God, hinder me from stepping out in the work, so on the 7th January, 1955 I set off for the South of Ireland.

About two years later when I was back up North for a short period the brethren at Adam Street gave me a letter commending me to the Lord's work in the South of Ireland. Thus I have continued, by God's grace, until this day, seeking, in various ways, to sow the good seed in the hearts of our fellow-countrymen, "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you.

It is now 37 years since we first came down South and we can truly testify that the Lord "has done exceeding abundantly above all we could ask or think".

## **ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY**

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# ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY



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## "ETERNAL SECURITY"

Can I, a child of God, be ever lost?  
Is God's salvation ever insecure?  
Did He not purchase at His life's blood cost?  
And shall He not His treasure all procure?

Can I with Christ in heavenlies be set,  
Yet ultimately lost forever be?  
Did He not for the glory sons beget?  
Yet may those sons the glory never see?

Can I, elect of God, and hid in Christ,  
From sovereign grace be ever torn away?  
Will He not yet fulfil His sacred tryst  
And keep us safe till that eternal day?

Saved once, yet lost again! It cannot be,  
Not angels, men, nor demons, have the power,  
To take me from my God, or God from me,  
Forever mine since that decisive hour.

We'll give Him glory if our faith be strong;  
And give Him glory though our faith be weak,  
Redemption's glories all to Him belong,  
And of those glories we'll forever speak.

—*Jim Flanigan (Belfast)*

# THE PROPHECY OF AMOS

by E. R. BOWER, (Worcester)

## Paper 6

### THIRD DISCOURSE (Chap. 5. 1-27)

#### DIRGE FOR A FALLEN VIRGIN (v. 1-3)

Amos “lifts up” a burden — a personal lamentation for the “house of Israel”— the whole nation. The beloved virgin upon whom had been lavished the covenant love of God had fallen. “Fallen thou art, now and for ever; thy might, thy glory departed; for there is no rising; no more tender care; thou, once known as “the virgin of Israel”, thou art cast down, a rejected thing; a wreck upon thine own land, in the midst of thine resources for a prey and a derision.” (O. T. commentary). Israel fell and only in recent years do we see signs of revival, but just as a ‘remnant’. “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion . . . to those who are careless (and trust) . . .” (6.1;) It has been said that in many ways the message of Amos to his day and generation was, or is, not unlike that required by the present day generation. His situation was not unlike ours. He was a man of God living in a wildly permissive society. Another has said “We should study this book for the Holy Spirit would still speak to us through its pages.” Desiring the day of the Lord; thinking they were God’s people; resting upon His promises; they had nothing to fear from His wrath and His judgments and were apparently unaware that their constant rebellion must end in judgment.

#### ENTREATY — “SEEK YE THE LORD.” (v. 4-9)

Three times in this section there is the appeal to seek the Lord and Isa. 55.6 comes vividly before us “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. . .” How patient our God is!

Israel wanted change; the old ways and the old paths were out of date; everything was so ‘boring’; they wanted excitement in their worship. They wanted ‘life’. But God says, “Seek ye me and live.” Do not seek after the excitements of Bethel and Gilgal

in the northern kingdom and Beersheba in Judah. (See 1.5; and 8.14;) Bethel the “house of God” was now Bethaven the “house of vanity”. Gilgal (a circle) would roll away. The oath at Beersheba was forgotten. (See 8.14;). All Israel is spoken of here — Dan to Beersheba. (Cf. 1 Sam. 3.20;) Joseph would appear to speak of Israel, the northern kingdom largely composed of Ephraim and Manasseh the sons of Joseph.

The blessings of the “fruitful bough” (Gen. 49.22-25;) were about to come to an end. In v. 8 and 9 God appeals to Israel as the Creator of the heavens and earth, and it is almost as if He “signs His Name”— He is JEHOVAH.

Israel when in the wilderness were ‘star worshippers’ (v. 20; Acts 7.40-43;) let Israel seek Him who made them. They saw the never varying circuits of the “signs” (Gen. 1.14;), the ‘lights’ dividing day from night and light from darkness (Gen. 1.18;), let Israel seek Him who ordered them. They saw the sea and how it kept its bounds (Gen. 1.9-10;); let Israel seek Him that divided the waters from the land. Let Israel remember that He who created could also destroy. BUT. . . . despite all that God had done in Creation and for Israel they did not like His admonitions through His servants — including Amos. Instead of love there was hatred.

#### **“I WILL PASS THROUGH” (v. 10-17)**

v. 11-13 are a picture of an affluent society; treading down the poor; self-seeking and taking full advantage of the temporary prosperity that was theirs, but forgetting the law, they missed the warnings of Deut. 28.30,39. It may be remembered that this part of the Deuteronomic law was written for the time “when thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” (Deut. 26.1;). In modern parlance it was an “I’m alright Jack” society. The prophet realizes the truth of the proverb, “A still tongue makes a wise head.” (Cf. Prov. 21.23;). The days were indeed evil. Do we see a picture of a modern affluent society? The word of our Lord in His “Sermon on the mount” are still as true as the words of Amos to Israel. “Seek ye first. . .” (Matt. 6.31-33;). Amos continues to appeal (v. 14-15) and repeats “Seek the good. . .that ye may live.” The foreshadowed doom is conditional. It is “as ye have spoken” — that is, they believed that God was with them, then if He was truly so the doom would be turned

to grace for "the remnant". In the measure in which they obeyed, so would be the presence of God among them. "I will pass through"(v.17). Did Amos wish to remind his hearers of the words of Ex. 12.12;? A dreadful reminder.

#### **AND WHAT IF WE DO NOT? (v. 18-20.)**

What is this "day of the Lord" so desired by Israel? There are many references to this day throughout the scriptures. If Amos is indeed the second of the prophets whose writings have been preserved for us, the occurrence here of "the day of the Lord" is the first chronologically (although it may be contemporary with Isaiah). It is certain, however, that the expression was well known to Israel, as is evident here. A writer has said of the day of the Lord, "Expecting that day to bring you deliverance and judgments upon your enemies. It shall be the reverse! There is a dark side to the pillar of fire." No doubt but that the writer had Ex. 13.21-22; 14.20 in mind. "Very dark" (v. 20) is the same word as in Ex. 10.22 Cf. Isa. 5.30;. Was "the day of the Lord" a common expression in Israel? Was it used by the patriarchs — the song of Moses, for instance (Deut. 32.43);? Judgment before the rejoicing. There would be no escape for how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? (Heb. 2.3;). This verse was addressed to the Israel of the N. T.

#### **WE DO THE BEST WE CAN**

"Look at what we do! We keep the feasts and the holy days; we even offer more than required by the Law of Moses; what is it that you require of us? We sing the hymns and songs of David and we play our musical instruments to God can we do more than that?"

In effect, the answer that God gives to the "worshippers" is, "I have no pleasure in that which you bring to Me for it is all "sham" — a pretence (Isa. 1.10-15;). Your sacrifices, your offerings, your hymn singing and your "sacred music" bring Me no joy for it is all so false. From the time of your altars in the wilderness until now, you have not changed. Why do you not bring to Me the cool refreshing waters of justice and of integrity? No? Therefore I will send you away from Me." Cf. Deut. 32.17, "They sacrificed to demons." See also Jer. 5.5-7; Acts 7.37-43; Deut. 15.1-13 is upon them!

*(to be continued)*

# EPHESIANS EXPOUNDED

by A. D. THROPAY (California)

## Paper No. 5

### C. The Prayer of the apostle 1.15-23

#### 1. The Cause for his prayer 1.15-17

a. Their faith and love

b. That they might grow in their knowledge of God

#### Verse 15

—**Wherefore:** (dia touto) on this account, i.e., what is stated in v.13 making v3-14 true of them.

—**I also:** (Kagō) I on my side.

—**after I heard of your faith:** (pistis) trust, some grammarians translate it “I heard of the faith among you” (Interpreters Alford and Westcott).

—**in the Lord Jesus:** Faith in the Lord Jesus means that they placed their complete confidence in Him for their eternal salvation and welfare. Their confidence was in no one else and nothing else.

—**and love:** (agapē) A sacrificial attachment based on reason, selection, and choice from seeing in that person a need for love. This person loves the unattractive in spite of, not because of. He loves regardless of what is done or not done.

—**unto:** (eis) unto or toward.

—**all:** (pantas) **the saints**” their love encompassed every believer and was manifest toward them.

#### Verse 16

—**Cease not:** (pauomai — pres. ind. mid. — pauō) = to cause to pause or cease, restrain, prohibit. The middle voice indicates that Paul would not restrain or prohibit himself from giving thanks. Thanksgiving was such a natural part of Paul’s life that it would require restraint not to do so.

—**to give thanks for:** (huper) on behalf of, in the interests of.

- you:** Though Paul was in prison, see 3.1, 4.1, 6:20, Acts 28.30, he was still thankful for the blessings of others and used his time to pray.
- making:** (poioumenos = pres. mid. part. of poieō) = English, “poem.” A creative performance, a productive action pointing to an actual result. It is an action that requires thinking and creativity. We are to find new and creative ways of expressing ourselves to God. Prayers are not to be dull repetitions. See Matthew 6.7.
- mention of you:** possibly by name, see 1 Thess. 1.2.
- in:** (epi) This word means ‘at’ or ‘on’ as added upon. When used with the genitive case, as here, it emphasizes contact.
- my prayers:** (proseuchas) This is a comprehensive term and is used of general prayers addressed exclusively to God. Like the frosting on a cake, ‘I top my prayers off by making thankful mention of you.’

Verse 17

- That:** (hina) in order that, stating the purpose for his prayers.
- the God of our Lord Jesus Christ:** This phrase views Christ as Man without detracting from His Deity. See v.3.
- the Father of glory:** literally, “the Father of the glory.” — glory originates in Him and emanates from Him. He is its source and splendour.
- may give:** it is free.
- unto you the Spirit:** There is no article in the Greek text. Grammar, context and usage indicate this is the Holy Spirit and not our spirit. (Expositors) However, He works through our spirit (Romans 8.16).
- of wisdom:** (sophia) It includes the ideas of producing the best end result by using the best means while having insight into the true nature of a thing. The Holy Spirit gives us His insight into the true nature of a thing; what is fitting.
- and revelation:** (apokalupsis) The unveiling and disclosing of hidden things; the uncovering of mysteries.
- in the knowledge:** (epignōsis) exact, accurate, and full knowledge (W. E. Vine).

—**of Him:** that is, God. Paul’s desire was that they would increase in their knowledge of and acquaintance with, God Himself.

2. *The effect of his prayer 1.18-23*

That they might know

a. The hope of His calling 1.18

b. The riches of His glory 1.18

c. The greatness of His power. 1.19-23

Verse 18

—**The eyes of your understanding:** (dianoia) Lit. “To think through.” It refers to the operation of the understanding, thoughts, imagination, and intellect. Many MSS have “kardias,” “heart.” This would refer to the core of ones person, the source of his every thought and deed. It is the centre of affection, the birthplace of conviction; the seat and centre of mental and spiritual life.

—**being enlightened:** (Pephōtismenous — perfect, passive part. of phōtizō) “to be illuminated by light.”

—**that:** (eis) to the end that; with a view towards.

—**ye may know:** (oida) to see or perceive. Hence, to know from observation.

—**what is:** (tis) i.e., the true essence and nature of a thing.

—**the hope:** (elpis) favourable and confident expectation. Happy anticipation.

—**of His calling:** (klēsis) Invitation. In the New Testament, it is always used of God’s invitation to mankind.

—**and what:** (tis) **the riches:** (ploutos) wealth; fulness, mighty measure (as verse 7)

—**of the glory:** (doxa) the outshining; brightness or splendour; The outward manifestation of God’s attributes.

—**of His inheritance:** (klēronomia) “A lot, properly, an inherited property, an inheritance.” W. E. Vine. The phrase embodies all that we are to receive. In this case it is His (God’s) inheritance yet to be given.

—**in the saints:** (en tos hagios) The saints “are the sphere in which these riches of the glory of the inheritance are known and realized.” (Expositors). This knowledge is for the pres-



ent time. Paul is not only praying that we might know what the inheritance is, but that we might also know its brightness and splendour. Again, it is not only its brightness and splendour that we are to know, but the fulness of this glory. Only God can reveal this to an individual!

#### Verse 19

- And what is the exceeding:** (huperballō) “To throw over and beyond.” (WEV) “Surpassing”, (Interlinear Newberry), “To excel something.” (II Cor. 3.10).
- greatness:** (megethos) greatness, vastness.
- of His power:** (dunamis) inherent ability; power residing in a person or thing by virtue of its (his) nature. (Thayer)  
The word “huperballo” is repeated three times in this letter (1.9, 2.7, 3.19). Inherent power that exceeds or surpasses greatness is limitless. It is the origin and controller of all other power; Viz. atomic, cosmic, electrical, chemical, physical. Power that excels greatness, is a power that is more to be desired than greatness itself.
- to usward:** (eis hēmas) Lit. “Unto us.” The direction towards whom His power flows even now. It has reached us and is inherent within us, ready for God’s use in His times.
- who believe:** This mighty power is only directed to the believer. The unsaved person, cannot handle such holy, pure, power.
- according to:** (kata) In accord with, being measured and characterized by.
- the working:** (energeian) (In the N.T. it is only used of super human power. It is either used of power that is Divine 3.7, 4.6; or Satanic, II Thessalonians 2.9) = “efficiency; operative, energizing power.” (Exp.).
- of His mighty:** (kratos) power as shown in action; power as force, mastery, or strength.
- power:** (ischus) inherent, passive might or power possessed by one. It is an attribute, element, or quality of His inmost being. Hence, the phrase means, “the efficiency of the active power which expresses inherent might.” (Exp.) or “the efficient energizing of the powerful force proceeding from His attribute of power.”

## Verse 20

- which He wrought:** (energeō) Means literally, “to work in;” “to be operative in.” This power of verse 19 was operating in.
- the:** note the article.
- Christ, when He raised Him from:** (ek) out of, from among.
- the dead:** God used tremendous force and power when He raised His Son from among the dead. He uses no less no power in the life of every believer now, so that we may become better acquainted with Him.
- and set:** (kathizō) to cause to sit down, make to sit down (Cp. 2.6)
- Him at His right hand:** The right hand denotes the highest power; the most Divine authority. (This is called “anthropatheia” or “condescension.” Human attributes are ascribed to God. He condescends to our ignorance to improve our understanding of His work).
- in the Heavenly places:** (epouraniois) the upper heavenlies; i.e., the upper heavenly regions. The abode of God. This is an infinite sphere encompassing all heavens. Christ has ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things (4.10). It is a spiritual sphere where our spiritual blessings are resident (1.3). Since it is spiritual, it is invisible to us but very real, more real than this physical universe. It is also eternal (II Corinthians 4.18). It is a place where spiritual wickedness fights against God and His people (6.12). Although there are wicked beings in the heavenlies, Christ is far above them all (1.21). Those who are saved are with Him. It is the place where believers are now seated intimately together in Christ Jesus (2.6).

## Verse 21

- far above:** (huperano) over above.
- all:** (pasēs) every.  
Paul is going to list a number of titles. In each case, classes or categories of spirit beings or human leaders are expressed.
- principality:** (archē) Literally, “a first one, a leader,” government, rule. This would be an angelic being given leadership

over other angelic beings whether good or evil. (See Colossians 2.10; Ephesians 6.12). It may also refer to a human leader over other leaders (Luke 12.11).

—**and power:** (exousia) delegated authority; those with permission and liberty to exercise power. This would be a group of spirit beings (either good or evil) with delegated authority under the head leaders (the principality). (Cp. Ephesians 6.12).

—**and might:** (dunamis) power; inherent capability to perform anything. This would be a group of beings given inborn, intrinsic powers to fulfil God's will. They could be very powerful beings in the spirit realm called "mighty angels" or literally, "angels of power." (II Thessalonians 1.7). They may also be evil spirits of power, or men such as the Antichrist, to whom Satan has given his own wicked power to execute his malignant evil. (Cp. II Thessalonians 2.9; Revelation 13.2).

—**and dominion:** (kuriotēs) lordship. These are beings (spiritual or human) that are given a sphere of beings over which to rule. (See also Colossians 1.16; II Peter 2.10; Jude 8 — Only used in four places in N.T.).

—**and:** This word has a summary force, "in a word." (Vincent).

—**every name that is named:** i.e., let any name be uttered, or mentioned, Christ is not only above it; He is far above it!

—**not only in this world:** (aiōn) age, the present state of things.

—**but also in that which is to come:** There is still another age to come in which God will govern His universe by very powerful, intelligent, and superior beings. The Lord Jesus Christ has a position of acceptance, authority, and power far above them all.

NOTE: There are at least seven periods of time called ages or dispensations during which God is governing this world. We are in the sixth age at present, there is still one to come. These periods can be outlined as follows:

1. The age of innocence — Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.
2. The age of conscience — After sinning, Adam and Eve transmitted to mankind the knowledge of good and evil, the basis for conscience and moral judgment. This age ended with

- judgment at the flood. See Gen. 3.7,22; 6.5,11,12; 7.11,12,23
3. The age of responsibility — After the flood, God gave man authority over the earth. This ended in the tower of Babel and the confusion of languages. Gen. 9.1, 2; 11.1-8.
  4. The age of promise — After mankind was divided by language barriers and dispersed, God chose Abram and promised him a land and a Saviour. Abram believed God's promise and lived by faith. Gen.12.1-3; 13.1-4; 15.5; 26.3; 28.12-13.
  5. The age of law — God tested Abraham's children in the land of Egypt. Finally, He delivered them and brought them to the desert of Sinai. He there gave them the ten commandments. They said "All that the Lord hath said we will do," instead of asking God to deal with them according to grace as he had done already. This age ended in their failure to keep the law and the ultimate murder of the Lord Jesus Christ. Exodus 19.1-8; Romans 3.19-20; 10.5.
  6. The age of grace — The death of the Lord Jesus Christ brought in the age of grace. God offers salvation absolutely free to "whosoever will," based on the finished work of His Son. He is longsuffering, not punishing the evil doer immediately when he sins. John 3.16.
  7. The age of Christ's personal rule — After this present age is concluded in judgment because of mankind's rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus will personally come back to this world to rule over it in peace and power. That age will end in the final destruction of the earth. Isaiah 11.1-16; Revelation 20.1-15.

#### Verse 22

- and hath put all things under:** (hupotassō) a military term meaning, "to put in subjection under another, to arrange or subordinate under another individual."
- His feet:** Quoted from Psalm 8:6. This means that the Lord Jesus has complete supremacy, authority, and position over all others. He is not only far above all others regarding their varied ranks of government and administration, but all things are subdued underneath His own power and will.
- and gave:** (edōken) to give, deliver to another, assign to a person or group.

—**Him to be the Head:** That is, the One Guide, the Final Authority, the One on whom all must depend.

—**over all things:** There is nothing over which He is not Head. All things includes both visible and invisible.

—**to the church:** (ekklēsia) to call out and call together. The church is not an organization. It is a body of people. It is composed of individuals who have been saved from sin and its penalty by the Lord Jesus Christ. After exalting Christ to the highest place of authority and supremacy, as Head over all things He is presented as a gift to the Church!

### Verse 23

—**Which is His body:** (sōma) a living, vibrant, organism with all the parts united and functioning as one. Christ then, is the living, vital, life giving and controlling Head of the Church. He is inseparably united to it.

—**the fulness:** (plērōma) “That which completes and complements another.” As head, He would be incomplete without a body. Not only does the church, which is His body complement and complete Him, but it is through the church, His body that He is seen. People can not physically see Christ now, but they can see His people the church.

Marriage gives the picture with the man being the “head,” and his wife as his body. (This will be dealt with in 5.23,28, 29) As Adam was not complete without Eve, so Christ will not be complete without His church. See Genesis 2.18-20.

—**of Him that filleth:** (plēroō) to complete, fill, make full.

—**all:** (panta) all things. (Without the Lord Jesus, nothing is complete).

—**in all:** (en pasin) That is, everything necessary to make them complete and beautiful. (For example, see Psalm 24.1, “The earth (is) the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” He fills the earth with fulness). We (the church) are the fulness or complement, of the One who fills everything with what is necessary to make them complete and beautiful!

Nothing is complete and beautiful without Him. He will not be complete without His church!  
*(to be continued)*

## Messages from Muller

These are notes of addresses given by  
the late George Muller

### No. 2—"Crucified, Dead, and Risen with Jesus."

*An address delivered at a Conference of Christians, on the 7th  
of November, 1865.*

How may we know that we are crucified with Christ, that we have died with Him, and that we are risen with Him? Possibly some believers may not know how to settle this point. It is of the deepest moment to have a clear understanding of it. It is not by a voice from heaven, not by some powerful impression made on us in a dream or otherwise, but simply by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in Him for the salvation of our souls, that we settle the point that we are united to Him, that with Him we were crucified, that with Him we are raised again, and with Him sit in heavenly places. We have simply to say to ourselves, Do I trust in Jesus for the salvation of my soul? Do I know I am a guilty, wicked sinner, deserving nothing but judgment; but do I trust, at the same time, in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of my soul? If so, then Jesus is my substitute; then Jesus died in my room and stead; then am I looked upon by God as one united with Christ; then have I been punished for my sins in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; then was I hung, as it were, on the cross with Jesus—God having accepted Him as my substitute; then was I buried with Christ, and have been raised again with Him; then, in my Forerunner, I am seated at the right hand of God in heaven; then, as assuredly as the Lord Jesus is there, so shall I be. These are precious truths, not man's inventions. The Book of God speaks of them again and again. The epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and others, are full of these glorious truths. But what we need is, that they become increasingly realities to us. Not so much that we are able to speak with clearness about them, but that more and more we know their power in our hearts. We have, therefore, to say to ourselves, I am a wicked, guilty, hell-deserving sinner; and had not God, in the riches of His grace, given the

Lord Jesus to die in my stead, hell must have been my portion for eternity; but it pleased God to deliver Him up for me; and since I trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation, I shall not be punished, because my blessed Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, was punished in my room and stead. Now, what follows? My sins are forgiven. Not, shall be when I die. Not, I shall find out some day that they are forgiven. But, they are forgiven—are now forgiven. By the grace of God I am as certain that my sins are forgiven as I am certain that I am speaking to you. Not because I deserve it. I am a guilty, wicked, hell-deserving sinner; but I trust in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of my soul; and God declares that all who put their trust in Him shall have forgiveness. As it is written in Acts 10.43, in reference to the Lord Jesus—"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." I do believe in Him—that is, I do put my trust in Him, and therefore my sins are forgiven.

Now, let me affectionately press this point on you, because it is a matter of deep moment that we be assured our sins are forgiven, and habitually assured of it. Because it is just this which makes heaven certain to us—that we know God has nothing against us. The knowledge and the enjoyment of the forgiveness of our sins will keep our hearts from going out towards this present world.

To be heavenly-minded, really and truly, we must be assured our sins are forgiven; and this we know simply from the Divine testimony, that those who put their trust in Jesus have the forgiveness of their sins. But this is not all. Through faith in Jesus we are now the sons of God. We are not only reconciled, because of our Substitute and Surety, and God is wellpleased with us, but we are also the children of God, and as children we are the heirs of God, and as the heirs of God we are joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this brings us to another point. If we are the children of God, if we are the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, then all who believe in the Lord Jesus constitute one family. They may be scattered all over the world, may in ten thousand things differ as to the present life, and in ten thousand things have differed as to their manner of life before they were brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus,—may differ after their conversion as to their position in life, and in numberless

ways also as to attainments in knowledge and grace; but nevertheless, as assuredly as they believe in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of their souls do they constitute one heavenly family—they are brethren. We glorify God by living as such here. In heaven we shall be together. Throughout eternity we shall be unspeakably happy, and love one another perfectly and habitually. But we are to glorify God by manifesting this love now earth, while in weakness and exposed to conflict, while the struggle is going on; now we are to be united together, and to manifest that we are one family, the heavenly family. This is the way to bring glory to God. In order to do this let us keep before us “Crucified with Christ.” What does this imply? That we deserve to be crucified, that we are sinners, wicked, guilty sinners—I, and every one—all the members of the heavenly family, all sinners, and such sinners that we deserve nothing but hell. And in order that we might escape the torments of hell, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ died in our room, and became a curse that we might escape it. Where is boasting then? Who has ground for boasting? Perhaps one says, “Ah, but I have made much greater attainments in knowledge and grace than others.” But what does Paul say? “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” The child of God has nought wherein to glory but the cross of Christ. Therefore if we boast, let it be that the blessed Lord Jesus died for us guilty, hell-deserving sinners. And if we have a little more light and a little more grace than some of our fellow-believers, let us testify that it is by the grace of God we have it.

Now because we love one another we may speak freely. It has been stated, that, if we are of one mind about the foundation truths, we should agree to differ about minor points, in order that thus brotherly love may not be hindered. Allow me to say, that according to Philippians iii. 15, 16, I am of a different judgment. We should *not* agree to differ, but should expect and pray that we and other believers may have further light given to us; yea, we should remember that the day is coming when we shall see eye to eye. In the meantime, however, we should act according to the light which the Lord has given to us already,—always seeking, at the same time, to exercise gentleness, tenderness, and forbearance towards those from whom we differ; remembering that we are what we are by the grace of God, know what we know by the



grace of God, and that a man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven. Instead of agreeing to differ, let us agree to love one another because of Christ's love to us. While in weakness and infirmity, let us agree to walk together, having the same precious blood of Christ to make us clean, and being of the same heavenly family.

Perhaps some present are not prepared for eternity. I cannot sit down without speaking one word to you, my fellow-sinners. I know the state in which you are, for I was once in the same state. You may be seeking for happiness,—you will not find it except you find it in Jesus. Seek it never so much and never so eagerly, you will not find it except you find it in the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord Jesus. Let me, as one who has been brought to the knowledge of Christ, tell you of the blessedness I have experienced as a disciple of Christ. Times without number might I have gone back into the world, if I had desired to do so; but so unspeakably blessed and precious have I found it for forty years to be a disciple of Christ, that, if the attractions of the world were a thousand times greater than they are, by the grace of God I should have no desire for them. Well, then, as one who eagerly sought happiness in the present world, and never found it, and now for forty years knows the sweetness and preciousness of walking with Jesus, I affectionately beseech you to seek Him. Poor sinner! only put thy trust in Him, only depend on Him for the salvation of thy soul, and all thy sins, numberless as they are, shall be instantly forgiven; thou wilt be reconciled to God, brought unto the road to heaven, and when this life is over, have eternal happiness as thy blessed portion.

### AN APOLOGY

It has come to our attention that due to an error in collation some pages have been missing from recent magazines. We wish to apologise for any inconvenience caused, and if requested we will forward the required pages.

## **"RECEPTION"**

by Jim Flanigan (Belfast)

### **TO GOD'S ASSEMBLY? OR TO THE LORD'S TABLE?**

"Reception to God's Assembly" is not a statement from scripture, neither is "Reception to the Lord's Table." But the former is nevertheless a very scriptural statement, while the latter, as we hope to show, is not only UN-scriptural but ANTI-scriptural also. A firm grasp of the correctness of the first statement will do much to establish the believer in many truths relative to the local testimony, whereas the latter is a phrase and a doctrine not to be played with at all, which undermines many fundamentals of assembly truth, and opens the door for all kinds of looseness and compromise in a company of God's people. The widespread practice of this present day is to "receive to the Lord's Table, all who truly love the Lord," but this presumed graciousness is not really grace, and this supposed humility and love really harbours much that is erroneous when brought to the Scripture of Truth. Let us go then to that same scripture and learn the mind of the Spirit regarding "Reception." With regard first to

#### **"THE LORD'S TABLE"**

a deeper study of 1st Corinthians 10 and 11 may suffice to reveal that the meeting in question might be more intelligently known as "The Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11.20). Surely the Lord's Table is not that wooden article of furniture which we cover with a cloth, and around which we sit to remember our Lord Jesus? Yet undoubtedly that is what is in the mind of most who speak of "receiving to the Lord's Table all who love the Lord"! —and with this they link the plausible argument — "it is the LORD'S Table, not ours, and how then can we keep away from the LORD'S Table those who love the Lord?" But let us think of this very argument in another aspect. On these hallowed occasions we celebrate the LORD'S SUPPER (1 Cor. 11.20). This was instituted by the LORD Jesus (v. 23). It was revealed to Paul by the LORD (v. 23). The loaf and the cup are emblematic of the body and blood of

the LORD (v. 27). During the supper we ought to discern the LORD'S body (v. 29) and the whole procedure should be a proclamation of the LORD'S death (v. 26). Are the solemn implications not obvious? There is a favoured little corner of the earth, where in almost every building used by those who meet as God's assemblies there is displayed that glorious text, "Jesus Christ is LORD" (Philippians 2.11). That is it! The weekly supper is a gracious privilege of those who meet outside the rebellion and insubjection of earth, distinct from the schisms of Christendom, giving, in a scene of mass rejection of Christ, a corporate confession of the LORDSHIP of our still-rejected LORD Jesus. Participation in the supper is only a privilege (and a responsibility) of those who have been received into the fellowship of such an assembly, sharing all the other joys and sorrows of that separated company which acknowledges the LORDSHIP of Christ.

"Outside the camp unto Thy dear Name;  
This in Thy Word I see,  
Unto that Name, then I share in His shame,  
Privileged place to be.  
Feasting on Christ, His reproach to share;  
Tempt not my soul away,  
Nought can compare with the blessedness there,  
Outside the camp with Thee."

It might be necessary (sadly enough) to point out here that every believer is not in the local church. As the late, much-esteemed W. E. Vine has put it— "We are living in days when there are believers in ecclesiastical circles who do not form part of the local assembly. They are ignorant of what constitutes an assembly in a locality according to the scriptures." While every believer, young or old, weak or strong, has a place in that glorious church which is Christ's body, yet there are multitudes of Christians who refuse to have fellowship with those companies which, in a scriptural manner, meet in various districts in local testimony to Christ. Such companies are known in scripture as "The churches of God" (1 Thess. 2.14). "The churches of Christ" (Rom. 16.16). "The churches of the Saints" (1 Cor. 14.33). Any believer who deliberately puts himself outside the fellowship of such a church, puts himself also outside the sphere of assembly discipline and should not expect to be permitted to share in the privileges of that com-

pany when he will not be subject to its disciplinary authority.

A devout Christian in an evangelical denomination used to present to the writer another argument from this very same chapter. It says—

#### **“LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF**

and so let him eat” (1 Cor. 11: 28). Now, said this believer, it does not say “let a man’s brethren examine him, and decide whether or not he should partake.” It was unfortunately forgotten by this dear brother that the recipients of the epistle were **AL-READY IN FELLOWSHIP** in the assembly at Corinth. As members of an assembly we should still subject ourselves to stern examination with the supper in view. 1 Corinthians 11: 28 has absolutely no bearing on reception.

What then of those who are devout believers, who meet in sectarian circles, but who desire to have

#### **OCCASIONAL FELLOWSHIP**

on a Lord’s Day morning, to show at least that they are not sectarian bigots, and wish, by their occasional visits to express their brotherly love to the assembly. Such conduct, say some, will do much to break down the denominational barriers that divide God’s people. Will we receive such an one? Or is he to be excluded from participation in the supper, even with the knowledge that he is a genuine believer?

A similar case is that of a believer who is visiting friends who are in assembly fellowship, and he wishes to break bread where they do, though he has denominational connections. His friends can vouch for his being a genuine believer, and his practical living agrees to his confession; can we dare refuse such? Human sentiment and mistaken notions of grace and love would say “Receive our brethren.” (But godly overseers acting in a scriptural manner will assure us that it takes exceeding more love and grace to ask such dear brethren to take their proper place outside the company and look on while the others break the bread and drink the cup.) Now with regard to these cases, where in all Holy Writ can we find any precedent for this occasional or casual fellowship? Where, anywhere, do we read of one breaking bread who is not in church fellowship? Occasional fellowship has absolutely no place in scripture, but “steadfast continuance” is the scriptural example

and order (Acts 2: 42). "Saul assayed to JOIN HIMSELF to the disciples" (Acts 9: 26). And again, in that same Acts 2: 42 the indisputable implication in the Spirit's order is that the person not only receives the word of the evangelist, but is baptised, before proceeding to the fellowship and the breaking of bread and other assembly privileges. It will be conceded that there are many who are said to "Love the Lord" (thus qualifying for "casual fellowship") who have never obeyed the Lord in baptism! And so the Spirit's order is abandoned. In the case of these visitors, too, there may be a person who holds false teaching; for instance, denial of the eternal security of the believer. What happens if such should desire to take active, audible participation in the meeting? Would not confusion result, no matter how the brother was silenced? Scriptures relative to the church order do not in any sense leave room for casual fellowship. The Spirit of God also does not admit of any believer, anywhere, meeting in any place other than in God's assembly. Sectarian circles and denominational organisations are hateful to the Lord and can never be acknowledged by Him, no matter who they are who form them. God has ONE place — His assembly. It is never a sect, but in most places and times has the character of a remnant. We sing sincerely and with joy—

"Soon Thy saints shall all be gathered  
Inside the Veil.  
All at home no more be scattered;  
Inside the Veil.  
Nought from Thee our hearts shall sever;  
We shall see Thee; grieve Thee never;  
Praise the Lamb! shall sound for ever—  
Inside the veil!

"But," say some of our brethren, "there is another case yet."  
That of some

#### **BELIEVERS WHO DO NOT KNOW**

They may be, for instance, young believers who have not yet learned the great truths of the assembly. Are they excluded, in their ignorance, from the supper? Here we need to pray for our beloved brethren who take the oversight in the assemblies and ask for them a great sense of discernment.

Might it not be that some can be received to the assembly and

THEN nursed and nourished in its glorious doctrines; whereas with some it may be wiser to let them look on for a while and occupy the place of the “unlearned” (1 Corinthians 14: 23, 24, here absolutely distinct from the unbeliever), and then after some time, receive such in a scriptural manner to assembly fellowship. Pray for wisdom for our dear brethren who will one day give account as shepherds and guides of the assemblies. In either case, the supper is only for those who meet as part of the assembly, having been received to it with all that reception entails. Whatever may be the cause or reason for the ignorance, the unlearned are still regarded as outside, until scripturally received in. We do not of course be harsh or unkind in any way, because a brother or sister is so excluded, but with all grace and joy we show them brotherly affection and look forward to the day when they with us will share in the songs and sorrows, the triumphs and tragedies, the privileges and responsibilities of fellowship in an assembly of God.

#### LETTERS OF COMMENDATION

These leave no doubt for the fact that in New Testament days only those meeting with one assembly were received in another. Paul said to the assembly at Corinth, “Need we, as some others, letters of commendation to you” (2 Cor. 3: 1). Undoubtedly it would have been arrogant behaviour on the part of the Corinthians to demand a letter of commendation from the well-known and beloved Paul, but does not Paul’s very statement show that they were very correct in demanding letters from others. Literally Paul says: “Do we need, as others need, letters to and from you at Corinth?” The brother has no scriptural rights to be received, who cannot bear a commending letter from an assembly, and the assembly has all scriptural rights to refuse such a brother a part in the supper. (Indeed it is a duty to refuse such).

Now may the Lord help us to a solid conviction regarding scriptural reception. It may mean that we shall have to stand against the strong current of modern opinion. These are last Laodicean days, with our long-rejected Lord on the threshold of the door, but assembly testimony must not cease. In Revelation 3: 20 the Lord looks for communion and fellowship with THE INDIVIDUAL, but He still looks to the assembly for corporate testimony, right to the end of church history down here. He still has a

place for His Name! God still has an assembly! Let us gather there! Let us stand firmly for the great truths that are relative to the local testimony, and let us pray that many of our dear brethren with sectarian connections may sever those connections and that in our day, before the return of our Lord, we may see much more of scriptural reception to God's Assembly.

*(The above was first published in Melbourne, Australia, in 1954. It is printed here with the author's consent).*

## **HE CARES**

by T. WILSON, (Levin, New Zealand)

In his first epistle Peter was writing to suffering Saints. Theirs were not just the ordinary problems of life. Although only a generation had passed since our Lord had died and risen again, they were suffering all kinds of trials because they belonged to Him (1.6). These adversities would continue (4.12-14). They were part of following the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ through life (2.21). Had He not said before He suffered on the Cross that His disciples were to take up their cross, and follow Him (Luke 9.23)?

These sufferings were not arbitrary, they had a purpose. They would teach His own to abide in the will of God (4.1,2). They were a continuing reminder that their hope was in God, not in the temporalities of an alien world (4.12-14).

It was however necessary for them to know that their sufferings were for Christ, not merely the result of their own misdeeds. Only then would they bring glory to God (4.15-16).

Against this reasoned background of inevitable sufferings in the lives of God's children Peter then makes the classic statement of chapter 5.6-7: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

A SIMPLE INJUNCTION:

**"Humble yourselves"**

In a world of pride, power play and selfish ambition, they were by an act of will to humble themselves under God's mighty hand.

They represented the One to whom authority and power belonged by sovereign right. He was the Word of God, who had ever been with God, indeed who was God. He had brought all things into being. He was the Source of life and the Giver of light. Yet even He humbled Himself, deigning to become flesh, adding humanity to His deity, so that men and women might come to know “the unknown God” (John 1.1-5; 14; cf. Acts 17.23).

It was the Father’s will that He be humbled and to that will He was in total subjection. He had come glorify the Father on earth, to declare His name. His own would not only know that oneness that He had with the Father, they would also demonstrate His humble spirit to the world from which they had been chosen (John 8.29; 17.4; 21-26).

This grand design was not imposed upon His followers, they would express it of their own volition. How can love be conveyed by compulsion: Peter’s call to humility was primarily to the younger believers — a new generation (5.5). But it applied to all. How could they follow the steps of the Saviour and not humble themselves under the mighty hand of God? A simple directive, but how profound!

A CLEAR PREDICTION:

**“that He may exalt you in due time”**

But they were also being humbled by persecution inflicted upon them, over which they had no control. The Holy Spirit through Peter promised that though they were abased in this way for a season, they would be exalted in due time.

Even today many suffer for the gospel’s sake. True, in the western world not many of us face martyrdom as some of our forebearers have done, yet even today in our world there are those who face physical death for the cross of Christ.

Persecution has not silenced the gospel testimony or extinguished those who are the light of the world (Matt. 5.14). Indeed the light often shines brightest where the darkness is deepest. It is recognition and prosperity that have often brought coldness and decline, whereas facing death has often caused a ravaged child of God to prove the ultimate victory of the risen Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8.37).

In this epistle Peter is in effect saying to the chastened believ-



ers of his day that though so many of them had to face those who were able to kill the body (Matt. 10.28) their humbling was in fact not before men but under the mighty hand of God. And had His Son not given this assurance: “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake”? Had He not then said, “Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matt. 5.11,12)? On the strength of that promise Peter was able to give them the assurance that that same One would exalt them in due time.

#### A GENTLE EXHORTATION:

**“casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.”**

How sweet this promise: He cares! He who sent His only begotten Son to die in our place, how could He now leave us destitute and comfortless? Humbled from without, they ought also to humble themselves within. What else matters?: “He careth for you”! Humble yourselves under His mighty hand because no matter what life brings — even death itself — He will exalt you in due time. That is the measure of His care as it is the measure of His power.

It is unlikely (but not impossible) that we shall face a martyr’s death. But as faithful witnesses for Christ we shall surely suffer, perhaps increasingly so in this alien world. What cross can we bear that does not cause us to “die” in one sense or another (Matt. 10.38-39)?

Whether we live or die, however we are called to suffer, let us heed the gentle call to cast all our care upon the One whose care for us led Him to the Cross. Let us humble ourselves under His mighty hand, knowing that He will exalt us in His good time.

“For every tribulation,  
For every sore distress,  
In Christ I’ve full salvation,  
Sure help and quiet rest.  
No fear of foes prevailing!  
I triumph, Lord, in Thee!  
Lord Jesus, Friend unfailing,  
How dear Thou art to me!”

# THE ATONEMENT

by William Blane

## No. 1 — Introduction

When selfish, narrow-minded man  
The mighty works of God would scan,  
He's sure to estimate the whole  
In keeping with his narrow soul,  
Till he, by truth divine, advance  
Into the infinite expanse  
That lies beyond his shallow thought,  
And face-to-face with God be brought  
To measure, by Jehovah's strength,  
The height, the depth, the breadth and length  
Of all His works, which, every one,  
Are worthy of their Author done.  
God's works are perfect; therefore man,  
Who is imperfect, never can  
Their fulness infinite explore,  
But, gazing on them, must adore,  
Ascribing wisdom, honour, might  
To Him who reigns in Heaven's light.  
Then let us, with the consciousness  
Of all our own unworthiness,  
And with a deeper, holier sense  
Of what God is, with reverence  
Approach His mightiest work, that we  
May meditate thereon, and He  
May condescend to shed some ray  
Of light divine to chase away  
The misty notions all abroad  
About this wondrous work of God,  
Which yet is as the purest light  
Shed freely on the darkest night,  
Wherein God's glories shine so clear  
That sinless seraphs cannot bear  
The sight; while we, as in a glass,  
Behold them dimly, till we pass  
To where no vail shall intervene,  
Nor cloud nor darkness come between;  
But face-to-face, before the throne,  
We'll know as we ourselves are known.

*(to be continued)*

## **MY CONVERSION AND CALL (17)**

*by Noel P. Burden (Prince Edward Island)*

I appreciate having the privilege and count it an honour, to put on paper the very simple story of God's grace in reaching down and rescuing me from perishing in unquenchable fire.

In January, 1937, I was born into a family of twelve, four girls and eight boys, and was brought up in the village of Annalong, Co. Down, N.I. We were a poor, hard-working family and while we were not too religious, yet there was some reverence for God and a respect for the Sabbath, as it was called.

When about six or seven years old, I remember the Church of Ireland preacher coming to our community (we lived about a mile north of the village) and when making his rounds, he told the folks that he was coming to the little Church Hall for one week's meetings.

The meetings commenced, each evening the little hall was full to capacity and the most of our large family attended. There were farmers and fishermen, as well as hard-working men from other occupations.

As the man preached very fervently each evening, there were impressions made on my young mind. The preacher spoke faithfully and seemed to have a balanced message. When he spoke of the love of God, he would quote those grand words of the hymn—

"I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene  
And wonder how He could love me, a sinner, condemned,  
unclean.

How marvellous, how wonderful, and my song shall ever be;  
How marvellous, how wonderful is my Saviour's love to me."

This hymn was sung each night. (The man is still living and when I was on a visit to N.I. some years ago, he told me this was still his favourite hymn).

Then the preacher would give the other side of the story and told the dear people that there was an awful day of wrath coming. Most solemnly he would quote those verses from Rev. 6.14-17 "For the great day of His wrath is come and who shall be able to

stand." The meetings ended and I guess the most that I heard was forgotten, but impressions remained.

A number of years passed, I grew up, then left home to work in Scotland and while there, met a young man from Northern Ireland with whom I companied. After a while we decided to go to Canada, so in the year 1957 we both came to Montreal, then on to Toronto and after some time there, we moved to Vancouver.

After walking the streets of Vancouver for days in search of work, one hot afternoon, tired and weary, walking eastward on Broadway Street, we decided to take a bus. Coming to the bus stop, we found a bench, sat down and waited. On the back of most of these benches there were advertisements, but on this particular one was the address of a Gospel Hall and part of a verse from the third chapter of John, "Jesus said, 'Ye must be born again.'" This didn't mean much to me, but my friend took down the address and time of meetings. The following Sunday, for the first time in my life, I ventured over the threshold of a Gospel Hall.

As I sat in my first gospel meeting that evening and listened to what the man was preaching. I must say it was all foreign to me. I don't know what he preached about and remembered very little of it; however, as at other times there were impressions made, so at this meeting. I was impressed by the preacher's relating an incident when he was in South America.

He was having gospel meetings and there was a saved widow who was deeply concerned about her teenage son, so she asked the preacher to invite him out to hear the gospel. The opportunity arose on the Tuesday of that week and while the missionary was in conversation with the young man, he asked him along to the meetings. His reply was, "I won't be there this week as I have a date with my girl friend on Friday and we are going to the dance, but I promise you I will go to your meeting on Sunday." The young man worked in the shipyard and his work took him high up on the ship. On the Thursday while at work, either he lost his balance, or misplaced his foot and fell to the steel deck of the ship. Without any notice or warning, he left the shores of time and entered the confines of eternity, never to come back. He didn't get to the dance, nor did he get to hear the gospel. This incident made a lasting impression on my mind.

The next Sunday we were invited for the day to a Christian

home. After the evening meal, the man of the house said, "Would you young men like to go to a meeting tonight where you will meet many people from Belfast?" We consented and again were found listening to the gospel.

That evening, another Christian man and his wife invited us to their home for the following Sunday. During the afternoon, they took us for a drive to see some of the beautiful City of Vancouver.

As we were driving along, my friend asked these people for their phone number. The lady very kindly said, "Our name and number are in the phone book and my name is the Lamb's Book of Life. How about yours?" My friend answered in the affirmative. She then turned to me, "How about yours, Noel?" I said, "I am sorry to say, my name is not in the Book of Life." I only wished I could have answered in a positive way.

We went to other meetings and met many more from Northern Ireland. These people had an interest in our souls and showed us no small kindness.

Before I came in touch with the clear gospel, I thought we were all God's children and one day we would all land in Heaven. By this time, my spiritual geography was a little clearer because of what I heard from God's Word. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." After hearing the gospel for six or seven times, as well as a number of individuals at different times speaking to me about my soul and the need of salvation, within my heart there was a real desire to get to know Christ and be sure of being in Heaven at the end of life. My yearnings were like that of Job, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him."

In the middle of the second week of September 1957, as I was working in one of the large sawmills on the Frazer River, Vancouver, between ten-thirty and eleven at night, the words of the chorus, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so," were going through my mind. Then the next verse came to mind,

"Jesus loves me, He who died,  
Heaven's gates to open wide;  
He will wash away my sin,  
Let His ransomed one come in."

Although not having heard much of the gospel preached and ignorant of most of what was in the Word of God, that night on the old wooden platform, for the first time in my life, I understood and

appreciated the marvellous truth that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, died in my stead and bore my sins in His own Body. In childlike simplicity, I took that noble truth for myself and at that very moment passed from death to life. I became the possessor of eternal life, saved from Hell and fitted for Heaven, on the sole ground of the redemptive work of our Kinsman-Redeemer. I thank God for the truth of those words in Gal. 2.20 "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."

After I was saved there was a real desire for reading God's precious Word and while travelling to work on the bus, spent my time reading, as well as during lunch hour, when others were playing cards, I would be reading my Bible. In this way I was growing stronger. After some time I was baptized and received into Assembly fellowship at 14th Avenue and Woodland Drive, Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

As time went by, from what I learned at the prayer meetings and Bible readings, the uniqueness of God's Assembly became clear to my mind. I kept reading and did some praying in my own simple way. Now and again, I would ask a question and take a little part in the prayer meeting; also on Lord's Day give God thanks at the remembrance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is a great honour and privilege and I am grateful to God for His mercy in saving me and through His Word, showing me the truth of God's Assembly.

My weekends were spent in gospel work. On Saturday I would go to a small town outside the City and visit from door-to-door with gospel tracts, then on the way home would call at the Home for the Aged, distributing tracts, reading Scripture and speaking a little word in the gospel. In the evening I would go down town and stand on the street corner with those who preached and was encouraged to take a little part. Two weeks vacation were usually spent in visitation work in some small towns of the British Columbia interior. Right from the beginning of my Christian life, I had a definite interest and exercise in this type of gospel work and enjoyed it very much. The Holy Spirit of God was creating within my heart a real desire to give all my time to this work.

In 1963 I returned to Northern Ireland and took my place in the Assembly there. The brethren asked if I would tell how I got saved. This I was pleased to do and on the second Lord's Day after my

return, I told my very simple story. That evening the hall was filled and a number out who had never come before. After that meeting, some of the brethren suggested trying a few gospel meetings, to which, after some consideration, I consented, being helped each evening by some of the local brethren.

Each evening the hall was well filled with a number of strangers coming out. The first six weeks came and went, people came steadily, but there was no break up to that time. These meetings went on for eleven weeks and ere they finished a few professed faith in Christ as Saviour. Some of these continue on to this day and are in Assembly fellowship.

The same year our esteemed brother James Henry Mayhew retired from his work in the city of Belfast. I became acquainted with him and for the next three years spent much time in his company. His sound, balanced advice was to me invaluable, his godly life and shepherd care I appreciated. We preached together and found we had much in common and I greatly enjoyed the hospitality and kindness that he and his wife showed to me. He was a good man and full of the Spirit of God.

Returning to Canada in 1967, I spent some time in British Columbia carrying on as I had done previously, working daily and keeping exercised in the spread of the Word. God was giving some encouragement and we did see a soul saved now and again. One afternoon in the home of our late brother Mr. Cecil Copp, he asked, "Do you ever think of giving your full time to gospel work?" My answer was, "I think about it all the time." He then inquired, "Do you have any place in mind?" And I said I had been thinking of Prince Edward Island a lot. Brother Copp wrote to Mr. Albert Ramsay and told him of my exercise, as well as writing to Mr. Mayhew and at least one other preacher, seeking their mind in relation to my exercise. The answer he received from these different sources seemed to be positive.

About that time, brother Albert Hull and I had a series of gospel meetings in the assembly where I had been received over ten years previously. When those meetings finished, God gave some fruit in the gospel. The assembly at Woodland Drive, in conjunction with the saints in Westbank (where I had spent a few years) gave a joint letter of commendation to the grace of God, for the work whereunto I was called.

I left Vancouver in the month of May, 1968, travelled across the country by train and arrived on the red soil of Prince Edward

Island, where I was met at the ferry by our brother Albert Ramsay. After spending a short season at his home, I moved to the west end of the Island. I did much visiting in many areas of this part, carried on gospel meetings and tried by God's grace to help build up the little assemblies. Betimes God gave some souls as a result of the gospel preached. These souls have been added to the little companies and over the years have grown.

After being here for over twenty years, our circle has enlarged somewhat and now we move in the general region, including Newfoundland. God has been pleased by His grace to save some here and there and it is still our exercise to help the small assemblies gathered to His Name.

More could be said about this work, but I come to a close and trust that what has been written in relation to the moment of salvation may be used by God in others trusting Christ. Also regarding my exercise in spiritual matters, that the same God by His power, may use such to stir the hearts of His own to rise to their responsibility and seek to fulfil the purpose for which God by His grace has saved them.

## **ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY**

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*Lines written for the encouragement and comfort of a  
coloured brother, grieved by the attitudes of certain  
white brethren towards him.*

Brother beloved, our hearts are knit as one;  
The great divides of men have come to naught.  
In Christ the bars of colour, caste and tongue,  
Are gone, and with one blood we've both been  
bought.

Heathen you were, and I though white of face,  
Was heathen too, and steeped alike in sin;  
Sing we the wonders then, of that same grace,  
That reached us both and gently drew us in.

Idols you worshipped in your godless past,  
And I, despising you, was pagan too,  
And scorned your colour till by grace at last,  
I learned I was, in sin more black than you.

When sovereign grace stooped down to you  
and me,  
We bowed our hearts at yonder cross of love;  
Our hearts together melted at the tree  
Of Him who bled to take us both above.

Brother beloved, rejoice, our hearts are one,  
We love one Book, one Lord we both adore.  
Soon comes the day when with one heart and  
voice  
We'll sing together on yon happy shore.

—*Jim Flanigan (Belfast)*

# THE PROPHECY OF AMOS

by E. R. BOWER, (Worcester)

## Paper 7 — FOURTH DISCOURSE (Chap. 6. 1-14;)

### FALSE SECURITY, AND COMPLACENCY (Vv. 1-7).

It has been well said that “in many ways the situation Amos found himself in was not unlike ours — here was a man of God in a wildly permissive society. That is why we need to study this prophecy . . . the Holy Spirit would still speak to us all through this book.” In verses 1-7 of this chapter there is a warning to the “notables” — the leaders of the nation. “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion and to those upon the mountain of Samaria who are careless.” — “The notable men of the chief of the nations to whom the house of Israel come.” (Amplified version). Note, yet again, that it is the whole house of Israel that is addressed. This “woe” is the second of the book; the first was in chap. 5. 18, “Woe to them that desire the day of the Lord.” Calneh, Hamath and Gath — cities of Assyria, Syria and Philistia — was Israel any better than they? Israel would be judged as they had been. Careless! and they cared less. Living for today and a tomorrow that would never come; eat, drink and be merry! The heart of man has not changed and it is sad to see in our own day that there are many believers who conveniently overlook the solemn words of Him whom they call “Lord”, “Take no thought for the morrow. . . “ (Matt. 6. 28-34;). V. 7. of our present chapter is a dire warning, “Therefore you will be the first.” As we read this prophecy, do we remember the words that Peter wrote to a dispersed Israel? “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Pet. 4. 17). To Amos it was “Bethel”; to Peter it was “the house of God.”

### “I WILL ABANDON YOU” or PRIDE BEFORE THE FALL. v. 8

One of the sextuplet of hatred things — hated, that is, by God — listed in Prov. 6. 17; is a “proud look”. Here, ‘Excellency’ is pride. Oh yes, they had the truth but what were they doing with it?

## **“HUSH! DO NOT CALL UPON GOD. IT IS TOO LATE.” v. 9-11.**

Pestilence — hence the burning of the bodies — and a prohibition against calling upon God. It is thought that the calling upon the Name of God in the presence of death would defile the Name.

Earthquake follows plague. Is this the earthquake of chap. 1. 11? The great house destroyed; the small house smashed to pieces. There would be no difference between the rich and the poor when judgment fell.

## **A NATION’S MADNESS. THWARTING GOD? v. 12-14.**

The nation was attempting the impossible. As a horse galloping upon rocks; as attempting to plough the sea with oxen; yet you persist in living dangerously and your judgments are bitter; your “righteousness” poison; your rejoicing vain and your idols nothing. You trust in your own strength BUT — and here is one of the most telling ‘buts’ of the scriptures — and it is God who speaks, “I will . . . .” So ends the fourth discourse. Man cannot fight against God. Israel and Judah were soon to learn the lesson.

## **THE THREE VISIONS Chap. 7. 1-9;**

### **THE FIRST VISION. Locusts prepared v. 1-3**

Notice that Amos was watching the preparation of the locusts, (Cf. 4. 9;) and the time was between the first mowings, that is, the first growth, and the main crop which was the latter growth just as it was showing up. The “King’s mowings” were probably for the use of the king’s horses and his cattle (Cf. 1 Kin. 18.5;). For ‘grass’ cf. Gen. 1.11; where the same word is used for grass, inclusive of herbs etc., Amos’s own character stands out in this vision — a man tenderhearted and merciful; a true intercessor. He pleads with God for His people as Jacob the name of Israel’s weakness. “Who is Jacob that he should stand, for he is small.” or, “How can Jacob withstand this?” Amos is yet another who, like so many others who were noble and often anonymous, was prepared to stand in the breach when judgement threatened. The visions needed no interpreter for their meaning was clear. And God “repented as He had done in Gen. 6.5, and other occurrences. This is not a change of mind or of purpose, but an expression of His Divine sorrow for His people; those who He had declared were His son, His firstborn. Cf. Gen. 6.6; “It grieved Him at His heart.”

### **THE SECOND VISION. Fire V. 4-6;**

For “deep” see Gen. 1.1; 7.11; 8.2; The water sources (Ex. 20. 4:). Are we reminded of the word in Heb. 12. 29; “our God is a consuming fire”? Notice that God not only “prepared”, but he “calls.” Amos pleads again, but this time he does not say “forgive” but “cease”. Amos could “stand no more” as we might say. Amos saw not only the stripping of the harvest, but also the all-consuming fire, and beyond those, the terrible results, as we might see them today in the famines of Ethiopia and the Sudan and the result of a eruption and earthquake. And God repented again.

### **THE THIRD VISION. The Plumbline. v. 7-9;**

Israel is judged by a plumbline in the midst. It has been claimed that a plumbline may be used for demolition as well as for building. God would not “pass by” His people — that is to overlook — the waywardness of His people. They were “out of true.” Cf. Jer. 7.16; 11.14; 14.10-12; The door of mercy appears to be shut. The line was set not only for the nation but also for the house of Jeroboam “Who did evil in the sight of the Lord.” God had used Jeroboam in recovering lost territories, but Jeroboam went his own way in despising the word of the Lord. Some aver that Amaziah the priest was in fact telling a lie when he made his report to Jeroboam (v. 11.)

### **AMOS OPPOSED BY THE PRIEST AT BETHEL. v. 10-17;**

Amaziah, priest at Bethel, (3.14; 4.5; 5.6;) appears to have been a toady to the king, telling him of the prophet and orders Amos to “Get out” of Bethel because it was the king’s holy place and his palace. A writer has put into the mouth of the priest the words of a proverb — “Eat your pudding, slave, and hold your tongue.” Have we heard similar words anywhere? Amos, as Moses and David, was following a true persuasion, but the priest at Bethel was following that which was false and idolatrous and now he hears the word of the Lord judgment. Did Amaziah tremble as he heard the terrible judgment?

### **A FOURTH VISION. Ripe for judgment. Chap. 8. 1-3;**

The ripe summer fruit had been collected and in the words of Jeremiah, “the harvest was past: the summer was ended.” (Jer. 8.28;) Israel, too, was ready for harvest. But what a harvest was to be theirs!

“The end is come.” “The days when I forgive you are finished. The singing of the temple girls (so a translator) will be turned into a howling. Like fallen leaves littering the streets in time of harvest your dead will lie everywhere” And we here again the solemn “Hush” of death. (see 6.10;). Read Is. 5.1-7; John 15.1-2.

—(to be continued)

## Messages from Muller

These are notes of addresses given by  
the late George Muller

### When I Die, shall I be Missed?

*An Address on Monday evening, February 19, 1866. The first Prayer-meeting Mr. Müller attended after the death of his fellow-labourer, Mr. Henry Craik.*

We miss our beloved brother Craik, and it is right that we should miss him. The godly aim of our lives should be that when we die we may be missed. My soul longs for grace so to live, so to walk, so to act, that when my course is finished, I may be missed,—I may be greatly missed. It becomes every one in the body of Christ,—every member in the body of Christ, to aim after this; that when their course is finished they may be missed. If our beloved departed brother were not missed, we should have great cause for weeping, great cause for sorrow; but because he is missed, we have great cause for giving thanks, great cause for praising God for the grace that was given to him so to live, so to walk, so to preach, and so to act, as that now he is gone he is missed. Well, then, let us ask ourselves individually,—Suppose this were my last night on earth, suppose I should not have to stay another day here, would my brethren and sisters in Christ miss me? How deeply important it is that we should so walk, so act, and so pass through this world, that when we are gone we may be missed. If when we are gone, we are not missed by the saints, it is a plain proof that we have not been strengthening their hands in God, it is plain proof that we have not been ministering to their spiritual profit, that we have not been helping them forward in the things of God. If we take our place,—though we may not be

preachers, though we may not be pastors, though we may not be holding any public position among the saints,—yet if we take our place as members in the body of Christ, and act according to the place the Lord has given us, and walk graciously according to that place, when we are gone we shall be missed,—we must be missed, After this we all have to aim. Let each one take away with us to-night this godly purpose,—that by the grace of God, from this evening and henceforth, it shall be my earnest prayer, my constant aim, so to live, so to walk, so to carry myself, that when I am gone I shall be missed.

## **EPHESIANS EXPOUNDED**

by **A. D. THROPAY** (California)

### **Paper No. 6**

Chapter 2 can be divided into three sections

- I. REDEMPTION BY GOD — 2.1-10**
- II. RECONCILIATION TO GOD — 2.11-19**
- III. RESTING PLACE FOR GOD — 2.19-22**

#### **I. REDEMPTION BY GOD**

- A. Walking in trespasses and sins V1, 2
- B. Fulfilling selfish desires V3
- C. Salvation by grace V4, 5, 6
- D. To show the exceeding riches of His grace V7
- C. Salvation by grace V8, 9
- B. Fulfilling God's desire V10
- A. Walking in good works V10

Verse 1

—**And:** (kai) the conjunction has the force of “and you too” or “you also, as well as Christ.” (Expositors) Paul has told us what the Father has done with His Son the Lord Jesus, now he will describe what He has done for the believers.

- you (hath he quickened):** These words are supplied from verse 5. The thought started in verse 1 is interrupted in verses 2 and 3. They are continued in verse 4 with the words, “But God.” Paul’s thought in verse 1 is then given in the words, “hath quickened us.”
- who were:** (ontas) “being,” “when ye were.” (Revised Version) The words express the condition that they were in when God’s power worked in them.
- dead:** That is spiritually dead. The death is a literal fact. Death is separation from that which has life. In God is life. All those who do not have divine life in them are dead. Spiritual death is far more real than the physical. Physical death is only a picture of the spiritual reality.
- in:** (en) denotes the sphere which keeps the person lifeless as well as the cause for the death.
- trespasses:** (Paraptōma) literally “a fall beside something,” “a falling aside,” “falling by the way.” (Cp. Kittel, FF Bruce). “It denotes a trespass, a deviation from uprightness and truth.” (W. E. Vine) It is used of Adam’s sin (Romans 5.15, 17). “It refers directly to the disruption of man’s relationship with God through his fault.” (Kittel) Hence, “trespasses, or offences.” — When man sinned, he fell from the position of harmony, peace, and fellowship with God that God had originally intended. Anything that disrupts that relationship with God or maintains that disruption is a trespass.
- and sins:** (hamartia) “A missing the mark.” Failure. The picture is that of a person who is aiming at what he thinks is the target. He shoots at what he thinks is the mark only to find that he was way off centre and probably even off the target altogether.

## Verse 2

- Wherein:** (en eis) in which (referring to trespasses and sins)
- in time past ye walked:** (peripateō) Literally, “to walk around,” thus, “to order one’s behaviour.” A person who is spiritually dead (unsaved) orders his life in the sphere of sin. Not one act gets outside of this circle.



—**according to:** (kata) in accord with, being measured and characterized by.

—**the course:** (aiōna) age, a period of time during which moral and spiritual characteristics are displayed. It is transient and unstable. See Galatians 1.4.

—**of this world:** (kosmos) Primarily, an arrangement, order. Then the earth. It came to be used for the people on the earth, mankind, and then for the present condition of human affairs apart from God.

—**according to (kata) the prince:** (archōn) “a ruler, commander, chief ruler.” (Thayer)

—**of the power:** (exousia) delegated authority; those with permission and liberty to exercise power. This would be a group of spirit beings with delegated authority under the head leaders (the principality). In this case the head leader is Satan himself. Satan and his demons must work within limited freedom. They must work within the limitations that God has set. Cp. Job 1.12; 2.6; Matthew 8.31

—**of the air:** (aer) That sphere where oxygen is breathed and humanity lives. Satan’s evil authority is confined to the earth’s atmosphere! He claims that this scope of authority was given to him and that he has the prerogative to hand it to whoever he chooses (Luke 4:6). In reality, he has usurped this authority from the Lord Jesus, its rightful Owner, as Absalom did from King David (II Samuel 15-18). As with Absalom, eventually his evil rule will be overthrown. (1 Cor. 15.24).

There is another word translated “air” or “heaven,” (ouranos), which is limited to the earth’s atmosphere as is (aer). It is translated “air” in Matthew 6.26; 8.20, 32; Acts 11.6. It is also used of the sphere where God dwells. See Matthew 6.1, 9, 10, 20 etc.

—**the:** (tou) “of the.” The one who is ruler of the power of the air is also ruler of the. . .

—**spirit:** (Pneuma) the word “spirit” refers to one’s way of thinking and acting here like the “spirit of Antichrist.”

- that now worketh:** (energeō) Means literally, “to work in;” “to be operative in.”
- in the children:** (huios) A Hebrew idiom, describes one with a certain behaviour.
- of disobedience:** (apeithēs) Not able to be persuaded, obstinate, not compliant.

### Verse 3

- among whom:** (en ois) Literally, “In whom,” that is, numbered among whom, or numbered with whom.
- also we all had our conversation:** (anastrephō) one’s conduct, manner of life, behaviour. Paul excludes none from this condemnation. All of us have had our experiences in Satan’s camp among the unconverted, acting like them.
- in times past:** i.e., before we were saved.
- in the lusts:** (epithumia) a strong desire, a craving of any kind.
- of our flesh:** (sarx) This word is used to refer to the totally depraved nature in the unsaved.
- fulfilling:** (poieō) to do, perform, accomplish (with imagination and creativity). (Eng. “poem”).
- the desires:** (thelēma) a thing willed; an inclination.
- of the flesh (sarx) and of the mind:** (dianoion) Literally, “To think through.” It refers to thoughts and meditations of a person.
- and were by nature:** (physis) “What is innate, implanted in one by nature, especially their constitution.” W. E. Vine
- the children (teknon) of wrath:** A Hebraism as verse 2. By nature we were exposed to the wrath of God and essentially connected with it.
- even as others:** (hos kai ho loiroi) “as even the rest.” i.e., none are excluded.

### Verse 4

- But God:** Paul now returns to the statement which was interrupted at verse 2. The word translated “But” is used to distinguish one thought from another. In this case, the distinc-

tion is between the fact that “you were dead” in verse one and what will be related now. The word “God” has the article preceding it. This indicates that God is the object which is to be before our minds at this time. “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (1.17) who exhibited so much power regarding His Son in resurrection.

- who is:** (on) “being,”
- rich:** (plousios) wealthy, abounding in resources, having an exhaustless supply.
- in:** (en) denoting the sphere in which God’s riches and wealth is found.
- mercy:** (eleos) “the outward manifestation of pity. . . God’s attitude towards those who are in distress.” (W. E. Vine)
- for:** (dia) on account of, because of, through. This word indicates the basis or means by which something is accomplished.
- His great:** (polus) This word means “strong, intense, large, great,” when associated with a noun of emotion as it is here.
- love:** (agapē) A sacrificial attachment bases on reason, selection, and choice. The one who loves sees in that person a need for love. This person loves the unattractive in spite of, not because of. He loves regardless of what is done or not done. The recipients God’s love are mentioned in verses 2-3 of this chapter.
- wherewith He loved:** (agapaō) This phrase expresses the deep, constant, affection and interest of God in totally depraved and unworthy subjects, namely,
- us:** We are the objects of God’s love. We can make no claim to His love based on our own value or worth. The source of love is all in God.

#### Verse 5

- even when we:** emphasizing the state we were in when His mercy was bestowed on us.
- were dead:** (nekrous) This is literal death. The death of the unsaved is literal, actual, spiritual, death. Physical death is only a dim picture of the true death which is spiritual.

- in sins:** (tois paraptōma) “trespasses,” as verse 1. It means, “a fall beside something,” “a falling aside,” “falling by the way.” (Cp. Kittel, FF Bruce). “It denotes a trespass, a deviation from uprightness and truth.” (W. E. Vine) — Notice the article. We were dead to the trespasses. That is, we were totally oblivious and insensitive to the fact that we were deviating from the straight path of truth, having fallen aside, away from God.
  - hath quickened us together with:** (sunzōopoieō) “To cause to live together with another.” (As Colossians 2.13)
  - Christ:** We have been given the life of the One in whom is life. “In Him was life.” John 1.4 his life is spiritual, literal, real, genuine, and actual. We have been made sharers with Him in His life.
  - by grace:** (charis) as 1.2 The unlimited (Romans 11.6), unmerited (Ephesians 2.8), unselfish (II Corinthians 8.9), loving favour of God to the sinner which produces “leaping for joy” and thankfulness.”
  - ye are:** the present tense indicates an action which persists through the present time.
  - saved:** (sōzō) To save, deliver from, rescue, preserve safe and unharmed. The word is a perfect participle. This denotes an action which took place and was completed in past time having results existent in the present time. “The idea is that they were saved and continued to be so.” (Expositors)
- The context shows that the salvation is from everything mentioned in verses 1-3. That would include salvation from spiritual death, sins, trespasses, as well as being controlled and dominated by the world, the devil, and the flesh.

## Verse 6

- And hath raised us up together:** (sunegeirō. From sun = together; and egeirō = to raise up.) This is a literal, actual, real, genuine spiritual resurrection. It is as real as the death was prior to salvation, and the life that we have after conversion. The aorist tense points to a definite time when this occurred. The actual occurrence was when we by faith believed in Him.

The grammar allows this word to refer to (a) union with the Lord, “raised together with Him.” or (b) union with other believers, “raised together with other believers. I believe that the context indicates that this and the following word refers to the Lord Jesus Christ.

- and made us sit together:** (sunkathizō. From sun = together; and kathizō = to cause to sit down, make to sit down, as 1.20). Hence, it means “to cause to sit together with another.” This word is also in the aorist tense. It too refers to an accomplished fact that occurred when we placed faith in the Lord Jesus. We are seated together with Him. . . .
- in:** (en) indicating the sphere in which we are seated.
- heavenly places:** (as 1.20) (epouraniois) the upper heavenlies; i.e., the upper heavenly regions. The abode of God.

The power that God used to raise the Lord Jesus Christ from physical death, and exalt Him to a sphere in the Heavenlies was described in 1.19-23. God has used that very same power to accomplish the same thing in believers. The place to which the Lord Jesus has been exalted, Heaven, is the very same place that believers have been placed at conversion.

Again, this is no less literal than the spiritual death, life, and resurrection already mentioned. If we are already sitting in Heaven, it is impossible for us to ever lose our salvation.

- in:** (en) showing the sphere in which all this has taken place.
- Christ Jesus:** At conversion, we were placed in Christ. In Him we are able to share in all that has been done for Him. We are literally, “In Christ.” When we are saved, being “in Him” takes on new meaning. His Spirit now permeates our own spirit so that the two become united as one. His life becomes our life, His will our will, what is true of Him becomes true of us. His sphere of rule is as endless as His Person. The entire vastness of His dominion is called “the Heavenlies.” We are there because we are in Him. We can not see this sphere with these physical eyes and bodies. They are like tents obstructing the view. One day these tents shall be removed and we will look out on the vast plains of Heaven that we have been in since salvation.

# HIGHER EDUCATION — Its Prospects and Its Perils

by D. E. West, (Leicester)

## Paper 1

*Readings* :— Leviticus 10.8-9; 1 Samuel 2.30; Job 32.21-22; Eccless. 12.12; Daniel 1.3-5,8; 1 Tim. 5.22, 6.20-21.

### PARENTAL ASPIRATIONS

Firstly, a word to Christian parents — what are your desires and aspirations for your children? The Lord alone can read the heart. Are you concerned foremost for their spiritual progress and prosperity?

Could it be that you are more interested in them gaining 8 or 10 G.C.S.E.'s at the first attempt than in seeing them saved? Would you rather be present on the occasion of their Degree Ceremony than to witness their baptism as believers in obedience to the Word of God? Are your aspirations set more upon them sitting on a Board of Directors than upon them taking their place in the fellowship of the local assembly and partaking of the Lord's Supper?

We sometimes pray that God will give us men who will be useful for Him, but He does not give us men, He gives us children. It is our responsibility to make them men and women that God can use. "Train up a child in the way he should go:" says Solomon, "and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22.6) and how we train our children in their early years may well determine their ultimate usefulness for God.

Of course, God gives them new life when He saves them, but we begin to build character into them from the day they are born.

### CAREER OPTIONS

And now to the younger believers — At about the age of 16 years, a decision has to be made whether at that stage to seek employment or to continue with further study, with a view, at 18 years of age (normally), to entering higher education. It is more of

a milestone in life's experience than many would be prepared to acknowledge.

Some thought must be given as to which combination of subjects should be studied and Advanced Level (or Higher Level) — since this may have a direct influence upon one's future career (a poor choice might be a combination of Chemistry, English and Art!) The decision must finally be made by the individual, although, of course, help will be sought from elsewhere, e.g. advice from parents, counsel from godly elders.

We need to bear in mind that the Lord has planned for His people to be found in all walks of life in order that the divine character may be manifested in all spheres. Each will be equally valuable in His sight and essential for the fulfilment of His purpose, but it is the individual's responsibility to make the right choice.

Remember that manual employment can be just as God-honouring as a professional career. There is nothing to be ashamed of in manual labour. Says Paul, "and that ye study (i.e. make it your aim) . . . to be quiet and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands" (1 Thess. 4.11). To the Ephesian elders he says, "these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me (Acts 20.34). Thus Paul's own example was in complete harmony with his own teaching.

When writing to the Corinthian saints, Paul says, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor. 1.26). Note that it is not "not any" but "not many"; thus we read of (i) Saul of Tarsus, an educated man, "brought up . . . at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22.3); (ii) "Luke, the beloved physician" (Cor. 4.14).

As the time approaches for you to complete your secondary education, a final decision will have to be made as to whether to move on to higher education.

### SUBJECT SELECTION

The question arises, What am I to study? N.B. The present writer would not sit in judgment upon any who chose to take a degree in one of the following subjects, but certain factors need to be borne in mind:—

*English*—under some syllabi students are requested to read literature which is morally corrupting;

*Modern Languages*—as part of most Degree Courses, it is necessary for the student to spend a year in e.g. France, Germany or Spain—if this is the case, careful consideration ought to be given to the matter of assembly fellowship in the foreign location;

*Religious Education*—the study of comparative religion can be a great stumblingblock to a young believer;

*Geology*—do we believe that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1.1)?; in all probability this planet is not more than 6000 years old;

*Philosophy and Politics*—do not become involved in the politics of this world; remember "our conversation (or politics) is in heaven" (Phil. 3.20).

#### UNIVERSITY LOCATION

Where am I to stay? Divine guidance is necessary in this matter. In order to ascertain the will of God, we must be sincere in our praying; if we have already made up our minds beforehand, it is hypocritical to ask His will.

We need to take into account certain principles of divine guidance:—

- (i) there must be a definite conviction in our hearts that God desires us to follow a certain course or to do a certain thing;
- (ii) the path He would have us to take will be indicated by outward circumstances which make it humanly possible, or expedient, that we should take it;
- (iii) after definite waiting upon God for it, there will come some special word from the scriptures which is suited to our need and which, by the Spirit bringing it to our notice, is plainly a message from God to our individual heart.

So, where am I to study? N.B. Academic considerations must not be the chief criteria for making such a decision. As to location, I must ask myself the question, Is the college or university near to an assembly of the Lord's people? If so, seek to find out something about the character of the assembly—is it going to be a real help to me spiritually?



There may be a certain apprehensiveness on the part of parents in allowing their offspring to leave home. For the most part, children of believers will have lived somewhat sheltered lives. It might well be advisable not to encourage a son or daughter to move away from home if he or she has not yet been converted and made a bold stand for Christ.

However, there comes a time when children have to "stand on their own two feet" spiritually; there is a great need for youngsters to form their own personal convictions and not simply to fall back upon the convictions of their parents. —(*to be continued*)

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## THE ATONEMENT (2)

by William Blane

### Part I

When God the Earth's foundations laid,  
And at their bounds the proud waves stay'd,  
With angels' shout the heavens rang,  
The morning stars together sang.  
And why such joy? Did He not know  
It yet would be a scene of woe,  
Of misery, and grief, and pain,  
Where sin e'en unto death would reign?  
Yes! From the first He knew the last;  
With Him the future, present, past  
Is all one vast, eternal *now*.  
Who dares to say, "He knew not how  
Sin would His fair creation mar,  
And from His presence man debar?"  
Then how could He the secret keep  
Which would have made those angels weep  
Instead of sing? Would He thus show  
His power alone, and make them know  
The vengeance of His dreadful ire,  
To punish with eternal fire  
Rebellious creatures? No! They knew  
That He with whom they had to do  
Was the Almighty, and that He

Sin in His presence could not see.  
When Satan and his host rebell'd,  
His awful wrath they had beheld,  
As o'er the battlements of heaven  
They from their ancient seat were driven,  
To prove the vengeance they had dar'd,  
Where Justice had their place prepar'd.  
But in His heart there reigned a love  
That reached beyond the realms above,  
And thus He did this world destine  
To be the scene where it should shine  
In all its rich and full display,  
For which the curse but paved the way.

Though all th' infernal host combin'd,  
And sin and death were with them join'd,  
To do their worst, in hellish hate,  
God's will and purpose to frustrate,  
Their efforts, though they wist it not,  
That very will and purpose wrought.

A world which nought but sin did yield  
Alone could be a fitting field  
On whose dark scene to demonstrate  
The love so rich, so free, so great,  
That filled His heart—a love that would  
Reach far beyond the just and good,  
And with its circle circumscribe  
Each nation, kindred, tongue, and tribe,  
And, for His boundless mercy's sake,  
For all their sins atonement make—  
Provide salvation for the lost,  
Free, yet at an infinite cost ;  
Yea, overcome the sinner's heart,  
And love, where hatred reigned, impart,  
And people heaven with a throng  
Of pardoned rebels, to prolong  
To all eternity the lays  
Of their Redeemer's glorious praise.

*(to be continued)*

# The Wisdom of Solomon

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(From the Book of Proverbs)

by David G. Whiteley

These notes have been prepared, not as an exposition of the scriptures, but rather as presenting the teaching of the book of Proverbs in a way whereby we can see the individual verses as part of an integral whole.

To follow the notes it is essential to have your Bible open at that book, and read each reference prayerfully and meditatively (chewing the cud) as it were (Leviticus 11.3). You will find that what is taught here is not the natural behaviour of men and women but rather it cuts across the grain to produce a pattern of true godliness.

## BASIC TRUTHS

(1) **Mercy and Truth.** These are integral parts of the godly life 14.22,31. They are God's principal way of handling iniquity 16.6, and amongst His rulers their absence would overthrow the throne 20.28. So we should meditate therein 3.3, and practice them even with our beasts 12.10! It will do good to our own soul 11.17.

(2) **Confidence.** The secret of this is to turn away from one's own understanding, and like all the true examples of faith from Abraham on, to trust in the Lord with all the heart 3.5-7, and fear Him 14.26. In that state we may have practical means to help us in life's warfare 21.31, but our trust should only be in Him 18.10, compare v. 11.

(3) **Lowliness.** Such is the Lord's concern over pride that He opposes it, or rather, "him" — the proud man 3.34, compare 15.25. It brings a man to shame 11.2, and with it comes contention, 13.10, destruction, and a fall 16.18; 29.23. It is the peril of riches 28.11, and we are exhorted against conceit 3.7. It is an "abomination" (exceedingly hateful) 6.16-17; 16.5. It results, in wicked acts against men to secure spoils! Better to be poor! 16.19.

On the contrary, lowliness is associated with wisdom (e.g. Joseph and Daniel) honour 15.33; 18.12, riches and life 22.4. God will help and set forward such 3.34; 29.23.

(4) **The Heart.** This is the great citadel of life 4.23. Out of it proceed the issues of life, speech, walk etc., 10.20; 14.30; 15.14 and hence is the place to consider commandments 6.20-23.

We must soon learn that discipline is one of God's tools to produce obedient sons 3.11-12.

We may also learn His guidance as we look for and acknowledge Him in our ways 3.6. In this we are not taught always to look for God's intervention but to exercise His integrity 11.3 and prudence 14.15.

### PRACTICAL MATTERS

(1) **Diligence and Sloth.** These are seen mainly in the context of providing for oneself and one's desires and appetite, 12.11,27; 16.26. Some examples are given to aid the memory:—

a) The ant 3.25; 6.6-11 compare 10.4-5. It has no guide, overseer or ruler.

b) Vinegar to teeth and smoke to the eyes 10.26. A slothful servant is usually a "talker" 14.23.

c) Hedge of thorns 15.19. This man can't find a way to do it! (Compare 20.4).

d) The result of diligence.

He shall bear rule 12.24, cp. Joseph.

He shall enjoy plenteousness 21.5.

He shall be in the presence of kings 22.29.

The result of sloth.

He is conceited 26.16.

He is a destroyer 18.9, cp. 24.30-34.

He shall die 21.25.

(2) **Intoxication.** Here we are told of its devastating effects on one's life 20.1; 23.29-32, particularly in bringing poverty 21.17; 23.20-21. It has no place in the life of the ruler 31.4.

(3) **Anger.** Anger and foolishness go together 14.17, as do slowness to wrath and understanding 14.29. Such a one is better than a mighty man 16.32. Anger in others is to be met by a soft answer 15. 1 — but keep away from the angry man 22. 24, for fear of learning his ways v.25.

(4) **The Tongue.** Death and life are in the power of the

tongue! 18.21. Many of the references are to do with the evil of it 4.24; 6.12; 14, 17, 19, and particularly sowing discord. What pain this causes 18.8; 26.22. Without the talebearer strife would cease as would a fire without wood 26.20. To drive away a backbiting tongue an angry countenance is required 25.23.

Another point of wickedness in speech is too much of it 10.19. Lies are an abomination 12.22.

Abounding in the Proverbs are pictures of the tongue of the righteous. "A well of life" 10.11, "Choice silver" 10.20, they "feed many" 10.21, give "health" 12.18, 13.17, are a "tree of life" 15.4, as a "honeycomb," sweet to the soul and health to the bones 16.24. "Apples of gold in pictures of silver" 25.11.

So the righteous studieth to answer 15.28, and is a man of few words 17.27-28.

The effect of his words? The lip of truth (not grace!) is established forever 12.19. The sweetness of the lips increaseth learning 16.21.

(5) **Discord.** A most hateful wickedness to the Lord 6.19. It starts as something small 6.14; 17.14, becoming a fire. It is the activity of worthless persons 6.14, and froward (i.e. foolish, perverse, deceitful 16.28, and whispers. If it wasn't for the talebearer this fire would go out 26.20. Pride 28.25, and anger 29.22; 30.33, are triggering mechanisms.

(6) **Deceit. In Proverbs** — to do with weights and measures. False ones are an abomination 11.1, 16.11; 20.10; 17.23. (Note — the "weighing up" spiritually applies here).

(7) **Rule.** Two things are said to affect the ruler in his work — one positive, the other negative. (1) The Lord guides the King's heart 21.1. (2) Drink perverts judgment — it is not for kings 31.4-7.

Numerous principles of action are mentioned. The throne is established by righteousness 16.12, 25.5. Respect of persons has no place here 24.23, but rather a wise king will root out evil persons 20.26. Mercy and truth are great watchwords 20.28. The true king will not answer a matter before he hears it 18.13.

The effects of this are shown 19.12; 20.2,8. Failure in judgment is abomination to the Lord 17.15, but its success establishes

the land. Bribery overthrows it 29.4,14. The people can rejoice over righteous rule 29.2. The king is honoured in a multitude 14.28.

Note:— better not to exalt oneself in the king's presence — wait an invitation 25.6-7. He is a friend to a person of purity and gracious lips(22.11. His heart is unsearchable, he searches out what God conceals 25.2-3.

(8) **Revenge.** We are to show patience, restraint, and seeking the enemy's good, rather than his downfall. So 20.22; 24.17-18. So accordingly we must give the enemy bread, provide his needs, heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward 25.21-22).

(9) **Giving.** This is the province of the righteous, not the slothful 21.26. It is an area where God is particularly caring to the poor and needy and is watching the actions of those who can supply needs. To them are promises of help as well as commands to give. So see 3.9,27-28; 11.24-26; 28.27.

(10) **Reproof.** We are advised not to reprove a scorner, but a wise man (who wants advancement) will appreciate what you do 9.7-8. It will advance a man of understanding in knowledge 19.25. So a wise reprover is very valuable 25.12 and the wounds of a friend are faithful 27.6. Afterwards such will find more favour than a flatterer 28.23.

So it is prudent to regard it 15.5, and to listen is to be wise 15.31-32. It is refused by those who forsake the way 15.10,12. It is more effective to the wise than 100 stripes to the fool 17.10. To be often reprovved and harden the neck (be stubborn) reaps sudden, remedial destruction 29.1.

(11) **Correction of children.** This is required 22.15. There is an unreasonable fear of correction 23.13. To spare the rod is to hate one's son 13.24. So a loving father seeks ways of correction. It must be performed early on 19.18, while there is hope, it being a cruel kindness that withholds seasonable correction 22.6. He must be trained up, i.e. hedged in, as cattle are guided, in the way he should go "at the mouth of his way," i.e. the opening, or beginning of his way. The end of the verse shows the happy result — compare 29.15,17.

(12) **The Virtuous Woman.** The Hebrew word is “strong in all moral qualities” and is applied only to Ruth in chapter 3.11 of the book that bears her name. Such a woman is described as a “Crown” to her husband, someone he can look upon with pride, love and joy 12.4.

31.10-31 is an acrostic of the 22 Hebrew letters, outlining the qualities of such an one. The main thrust of her character is persistent industry. She is a worker rising early, and staying up late v. 15, 18 feeding and clothing her household and being generous to the poor. She knows how to guide the house, being characterised also by wisdom of speech v. 26. She is watching their ways v. 27 and is honoured by them v. 28. She receives suitable reward v. 31.

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## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **Christ in the Apocalypse** by John B. D. Page

This book is based on a series of articles which were published in Assembly Testimony during the period from May/June, 1984 to March/April 1989. These articles have been revised and expanded to form the book.

There are many books dealing with the Revelation from a purely prophetic aspect but few which seek to highlight the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as He is presented in the book. From this aspect, brother Page's book fills a gap. He deals essentially with the Names and Titles of the Lord Jesus in the Revelation and seeks to understand their meaning in relation to the context in which they are found. His exposition is sound regarding the eternal Sonship, absolute Deity, true and impeccable Humanity, atoning death, physical resurrection, bodily ascension, High Priestly ministry, pre tribulation rapture of the saints and the ensuing millennial kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

The exposition, in a contextual manner, deals with many quotations from the Old Testament. This displays our brothers familiarity with the Old Testament Scripture and its typology. The wide ranging Bibliography indicates the amount of background reading and research which has been carried out.

The book is well presented by Gospel Tract Publications and at £3.60 (plus 60p. postage) for more than 200 Christ exalting pages is excellent value.

—*Editor.*

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# **WORSHIP AND MINISTRY**

by **D. M. CLARK**, Stoney Creek

The ground of all worship is the work of Christ, Our only approach to God is through Christ who suits us for His presence. We are told to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,” Ps. 96.9. If we attempt to worship Him in any other way than in accordance with His holiness we are neglecting the fact that it is sin that alienates from God. Ps. 66.18, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Of paramount importance in the exercise of ministry of any kind, or participation in worship, is the need to have a sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit and His guidance. In John 14.16,17, we read: “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you.” Do we “know Him”? To know Him means that by being in communion and fellowship with Him we will have nothing in our lives that grieves Him; only in this way can He use us to effectively glorify God.

Further, those participating should recognize that they are the mouth-piece for the assembly. In worship they address God on behalf of the assembly; in ministry they address the assembly on behalf of God. When they speak on behalf of the assembly it is not as an individual but as one giving expression to the voice of the assembly, for it is as an assembly that we gather to worship the Lord.

## **WORSHIP**

True worship is a grateful and joyous response of the heart to God, when filled with a deep sense of the blessings poured upon us. It presupposes a relationship with God; it recognizes His nature and attributes and what He has done for us through the death of Christ. Although we can worship as individuals there is a fuller expression found when the Holy Spirit has liberty in drawing worship from a company of believers.

It is as priests that we worship. If our worship is to be approved



of God it must be “in Spirit” John 4.24, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” To worship in Spirit is to do so according to the true nature of God in communion with the Holy Spirit. Believers have been suited to worship for we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ — 2 Cor. 5.21 — and have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. However, our spiritual state must agree with our standing in Christ and the Spirit be ungrieved if the “sacrifice of praise, that is the fruit of our lips” (Heb. 13.15), is to be acceptable to God.

To worship “in truth” is to do so according to the revelation that God has given to us of Himself. The glorious attributes of God have been revealed to us in various ways but never more clearly than at the cross of Christ our Saviour. There we apprehend God’s holiness, righteousness, wrath, grace, mercy, and love.

His holiness is revealed in the fact that “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil” and so for three hours, while the Lord Jesus bore our sins, all was covered in darkness. His righteousness is demonstrated by the fact that He could not pass over sin but must judge it in the person of the Lord Jesus. His wrath is revealed in the magnitude of the punishment that the Lord Jesus endured to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, “My God, my God why has Thou forsaken me?” J. I. Packer has written that “wrath is righteousness in judicial action.” How solemn the judgment then that was borne by our Saviour. Our sins deserved that we should have been cast from God’s presence into the lake of fire, but in mercy God spared us and gave us life in Christ, which we did not deserve. His love was clearly shown in that He went to such extreme lengths to open the way to receive us as He received His own Beloved Son. In the recognition of these attributes our hearts are drawn out in worship, praise and thanksgiving. This in turn will ascend as a sweet odour to God, by Christ Jesus, which is what God is seeking.

We also know that the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the New Testament to give instructions to guide us as to how, when and who takes part in assembly meetings. Will He lead us contrary to His own instructions? The answer is a resounding “NO” for God is not the author of confusion. Some of these instructions are found in 1 Cor. 14.26-35; and 1 Pet. 4.10,11.

Gift is not required to give out a hymn, to read a scripture nor

to pray. The one participating, however, must be led of the Spirit and be sensitive to the spiritual tenor of the meeting. There should be an even tone to the spirit of the meeting so that all will coalesce about the theme that the Holy Spirit develops. We do not give out our "favourite" hymn or scripture but what the Spirit raises in our hearts. What is given forth must be that which expresses the sentiments of the assembly. For the Spirit to raise such we must be familiar with the hymns and scriptures. We should not be thumbing through our bibles and hymn books looking for a "suitable" portion.

More than knowledge of the Word is required too. There must be personal application and appropriation of the truth by which we have gained wisdom and understanding. The assembly can readily distinguish what is ministered from the heart and that which is acquired by the intellect alone. "Let all things be done unto edifying." 1 Cor. 14.26b.

It is equally important to note that the spiritual state of the assembly is affected by the spiritual state of each member of the body, brothers and sisters alike. Our dear sisters, who usually outnumber the brothers, have a very great impact here. Their spiritual state must be such that it has God's approval, else it too may have a detrimental effect on the whole, for a little leaven leavens the whole lump!

### DISCERNMENT

Gathering as we do, without a stated ministry, provides opportunity for the flesh to act and therein lies our difficulty. We need spiritual discernment to distinguish between the flesh and the Spirit. From whence flows the part we take in the meetings of the assembly? Our qualification must go beyond the fact that we can read! The assembly will be the final judge as to what is of the Spirit or not, for in 1 John 4: 1 we are told to: "try the spirits whether they are of God." Silence should not be a cause for "filling in the gap". Indeed silence provides opportunity to meditate on what has been before us and can be an important spiritual benefit.

### MINISTRY

Gift is a factor in ministry. The one ministering should recognize the gift(s) God has given to him and when he speaks "Let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it

as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ”, 1 Pet. 4:11. Again, it should not just be something we have enjoyed ourselves but that which the Holy Spirit raises from the heart in communion with Him. Such ministry should be within the scope of what we have personally apprehended and made our own and be beyond our own spiritual experience.

All the gifts that God has given are for the benefit of the whole body. The exercise of gift parallels the work of the Levites in the Old Testament for it is to be used as a ministry from the Lord, by His Spirit, to His people.

For ministry to be approved of God and glorify Him it must be in keeping with the injunction in 1 Pet. 4.10, “As each man has received a gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Every believer has been given a gift and should be prayerfully before the Lord that it be used to fulfill His purposes. We are accountable!

#### CONCLUSION

The purpose in writing the foregoing is not to lay down a set of rules for assembly participation but to encourage the hearts of the Lord’s people to render the worship He seeks, and to use their gifts to edify the saints. The Holy Spirit will then have greater liberty in fulfilling God’s purposes in our lives. His purposes include “Showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us,” 1 Pet. 2.9 and “that we might be to the praise of His glory.” Eph. 1.12.

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### ***PRAYER — a little meditation***

*(Luke 22.39-43; Col. 4.12)*

He went	And will I find,
as He was wont	because I want,
He had a special time and	A special time and place, to say
place,	Here will I sacrifice, for Him
where He	and pray
might pray, a willing	for you — each day
sacrifice to be	
for you—for me.	but sadly; then perhaps I won't!

*(J. D. Hodgetts)*

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# **SPIRITUAL INSENSIBILITY**

by the Late W. W. FEREDAY

It is very touching the way the Lord rebukes the insensibility of the disciples in Mark 8.14-21. The Pharisees had just distressed Him by their perverse demand for a sign from Heaven (after all His works of power wrought in their midst), and the Lord warned His disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

They at once reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread." They should have understood that His reference was to

## **The Evil Principles and Doctrines**

of these parties. Bread was a small matter in His eyes. The lack of loaves was surely a trifle with One Who had recently fed two vast companies of famishing men.

He meant something far more serious than food for the body when He warned His own against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. He had before His mind those deadly teachings which can never nourish the soul, but which may easily impoverish and poison it.

The Lord's remonstrance with His disciples for their spiritual dullness may well appeal us to all. "Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? And having ears, hear ye not? And do ye not remember?" (Mark 8.17,18). The language is striking, because it is so like that in Matthew 13.15, where the Lord is describing the unbelieving mass: "This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed"

The mass in Israel were thus deaf and blind, being under

## **The Pall of Satanic Unbelief.**

But the disciples were men born of the spirit, and they have been Divinely granted ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." Yet the Lord had to remonstrate with them as in

Mark 8! “Perceive ye not? See ye not? Hear ye not?” We thus learn the solemn lesson that even Divinely-given sensibilities can be so deadened that they become practically inoperative. 2 Peter 1.9 gives us an extreme example of this, where the apostle speaks of the non-progressive soul as “blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

We do well to search our hearts as to this.

### **Spiritual Sensibilities**

are kept keen and alert by exercise, as the apostle reminds his dull Hebrew readers in chapter 5.11-14 of that Epistle. But what do we know of *exercise*?

We are living in a day of lightness and superficiality, and the spirit that is all around us in the world may easily affect those who, although in the world, are not of it. To be pointed. When we read, do we ponder what we read? Do we concern ourselves to grasp its meaning? Do we ask ourselves what is the lesson to be learned? Also, when we listen (and these are days of many meetings) do we revolve again and again in our minds what is set before us, that we may make it really our own in faith? Or is a conference (for example) a mere passing pleasure, leaving no permanent mark upon our souls?

If our

### **Physical Sensibilities**

were to fail us, we should be alarmed. Eyes, ears, heart! We should quickly inquire for specialists in these, and seek to get the weakness corrected, if possible. Is the soul really of less importance than the body?

In Isaiah 42.18-20, 43.8, Jehovah rebukes His unfaithful people Israel for being both blind and deaf. Their position was that of witnesses in the midst of the idolatrous nations, but what is the value of witnesses and messengers who lack both hearing and vision for themselves?

Coming back to our Lord’s remonstrance in Mark 8, we learn that it is possible to have eyes that see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that do not understand. To this may be appended the words of Hebrews 3.13: “Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” The Lord have mercy upon us all, and grant us to be spiritually awake and Divinely intelligent concerning His will.

## **MY CONVERSION AND CALL (17)**

*by H. M. Wilson (Brazil)*

I was born and brought up in Co. Armagh, N. Ireland. Although I attended Sunday School and other services in the local Presbyterian meeting-house I do not remember hearing that I was a sinner in need of salvation. However, while still a boy gospel meetings were held in a house not far from our home. As I listened to the preaching I thought that they had a few texts of scripture upon which they based their beliefs, but that we had far more of the Bible to support us. In due time I learned that it was not something found in a few isolated portions, but that all Scripture taught that man is a sinner by nature and practice, in danger of perishing and needing to be saved. I heard some tell of the change in their lives when they got saved and sometimes I thought that they needed it, but a person who had never been in the evil sins of the world would get saved without any big experience. One night I heard an old preacher say that no one could get saved without knowing it, and in that meeting I was convinced that I not only needed to be saved but it was something which did not happen gradually but at a definite moment when the sinner passed from death unto life, and from the power of Satan unto God. Very few people in our countryside claimed to be saved and I did not want to be different, and so the years passed by. From time to time I heard the gospel and had serious thoughts, and I can still recall certain meetings.

Early in the year 1945 a series of gospel meetings commenced in Lisnafedy Orange Hall. By this time I was really seeking salvation but could not understand how I could be sure I was saved. I clearly understood what I heard concerning my guilt and danger, but how to believe and be saved was a mystery. I never had the courage to ask anyone for help and no one ever spoke to me personally about my soul. At the close of the meeting on the 1st March, 1945 I was still in the dark, although I had tried to listen and understand. I said to myself "If I die as I am I will be in hell, but if there is salvation for me it's in Christ," and as I sat

on the seat, as best I knew how, I trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for my soul's salvation. I told no one, but the great transaction took place which changed the life of a lad who would have been looked upon as a good Christian in the district. That week I bought a new Bible and began taking it to the meetings. It was three weeks later when asked if I was saved that I replied in the affirmative.

I resolved to keep a good distance from gospel halls and their meetings. Mr. Stanley Wishart of Armagh, whom I had known and heard preaching for a number of years, sought to help me. He asked me about salvation and spoke to me of God's path for His people, also told me something of his own experience. I began to learn from the Holy Scriptures, and after reading the late Mr. Wm. Rodger's "Notes on 1st Corinthians" I was fully convinced that the word of God gave no support for any religious denomination.

It was not easy to break with family, friends and traditions, but the happy day came when I sat behind for the first time in the Battleford Bridge Gospel Hall while the saints met to remember the Lord in the Breaking of Bread, as the Lord Himself requested. What I saw confirmed to me that here were believers following the pattern which we have in the New Testament. They were few in number and mostly elderly, with no young people, but I was truly happy to be with them. A few weeks later I was baptized and received into the fellowship. A Presbyterian elder came to our home to warn me of the "error" into which I was falling and let me know what he had seen amongst such people. He came too late. I was fully persuaded from the word of God of the unscriptural basis of every sect, denomination and mission of men, and of the principles and pattern of the local church as we have it in the New Testament.

Now enjoying God's salvation and our blessings in Christ in a fuller measure, I began to take a little part in the various meetings and the desire arose within my heart, "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" I felt that life was too short and the message we have, too urgent and important to spend my days occupied merely with material and earthly interests. Mr. Wishart encouraged me to think on the "Regions beyond." I did "Look on the fields" and sought the Lord's guidance. After reading "Adven-

tures with the Bible in Brazil” by F. C. Glass I was much impressed with the need and opportunities to spread the gospel in that vast land. I went to work in Strabane, Co. Tyrone, and during that time had some correspondence with Mr. and Mrs. McCann who had recently gone to serve the Lord in Brazil. After three years in Strabane, “assuredly gathering” that it was the Lord's will, and with the hearty fellowship of the assemblies in Strabane, Sion Mills, Newtown Stewart and Battleford Bridge, I left Belfast on the 13th February, 1952, on the first stage of the journey to Brazil, where I joined Mr. and Mrs. J. McCann in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. Six years later while on furlough I was married. Over the years with them and others it has been our privilege to sow the Precious Seed and from time to time see some fruit. Never have I regretted, but continually thank God for the steps taken, and “having obtained help of God I continue unto this day witnessing,” with the desire to “finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

## **ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY**

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## WHITHER BOUND?

Endless being, endless torment—  
Terrible the thought to man;  
Everlasting ages passing,  
Running on beyond mind's span;  
Not an end to offer comfort  
In that ocean of God's wrath.  
To that prospect you are going;  
You are now on future's path.

OR

Endless being, endless bliss—  
'Tis a prospect sweet and sure;  
E'er to leave a world like this,  
Revel in that home so pure.  
Nevermore to grieve the Saviour:  
Instant fellowship with Him;  
Tasting, feasting at the fountain—  
You may also reach that clime.

What's the difference—Hell or Heaven?  
Why is it there must be two?  
What has happened to the sinner,  
Who has said, "What must I do"?  
He has felt the awful sentence:  
"Sin brings death, and judgement too;"  
He has turned to Christ the Saviour:  
Hell is closed, now Heaven's in view.

—Roy Marshall (Falkirk)

# BEHOLD THE MAN

*(Meditations in Luke's Gospel)*

by JIM FLANIGAN, (Belfast)

## 1. PREPARATION

It is a high privilege. Perhaps it is the highest privilege ever given to men, that we should be allowed to contemplate Christ. In an especial way this privilege was granted to those four men whom we call "The Evangelists", who gave us the four Gospels, and in these Gospels the fruits of their inspired meditations on Christ have been preserved for us. Each has written in his own unique way. It is as if Matthew has heard that cry, "Behold your King" (John 19.14), and has replied with a regal, royal account of the life and ministry of the Messiah. Mark has responded to that word of Isaiah 42.1, "Behold my Servant", and has given us his delightful story of Jehovah's only perfect Servant. John of the fourth Gospel writes of the glory of Him of whom Isaiah 49.9 exclaims, "Behold your God". And in a manner greater and more reverend than Pilate ever intended or imagined, Luke has heard the exhortation, "Behold the Man" (John 19.5), and has responded accordingly.

It is befitting that, of the four, it should be the privilege of Luke to particularly emphasise our Lord's manhood. Luke was, after all, the beloved physician (Col 4.14). He had seen many men in the pursuit of his professional interests. But he had never seen a perfect man like this Man of whom he now writes. Here was a life of incomparable grace and beauty. Here were thirty three wondrous years indeed. They have been called, "The Holy of Holies in the history of the world", and from babyhood, through childhood and boyhood, and into the maturity of perfect manhood, Luke gives us devotional and doctrinal glimpses into a life that was lived wholly in dependence upon God and for His pleasure and glory.

We have in mind (D.V.) to look at the preparation in the world for the coming of this Blessed One; then to consider the annunciation at Nazareth, and the incarnation at Bethlehem.

There follows the adoration of shepherds and angels, the presentation in the temple to Simeon and Anna, and twelve subsequent years of subjection to earthly parents in Galilee. The story unfolds in fragrance as a bud opens into flower and into full blossom, perfect at every stage. His temptation in the wilderness; His introduction in the synagogue at Nazareth; His compassion and His intercession, and His gracious exposition of Gospel truth. There is the account of His transfiguration on the holy mount, from which mount He now begins His journey to Golgotha. As we ponder these things, along with His humiliation in the Judgment Hall, His crucifixion at Calvary, His resurrection in the garden, and His ascent from Olivet to glory, may we be moved to exclaim again and again, "What manner of Man is this?". There is now, bless God, a Man in the glory, but once He was a Man of sorrows down here, and it is our privilege, in the loveliness of Luke's Gospel, to "Behold the Man".

Amid saints and sinners divine sovereignty moved in the world in preparation for the coming of the Christ. It was J. N. Darby who once said that God was behind all the scenes and that He moved all the scenes that He was behind. Many individuals are named by Luke in connection with this preparation for the advent and ministry of the Messiah.

They are drawn from the two spheres that we have mentioned. On the one hand there were the Caesars and Tetrarchs and Governors of the pagan world. On the other hand there were godly souls, as Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna.

Sovereignty knows no boundaries or limitations. The hearts of all men are in Jehovah's hand for the outworking of His purpose. Whether emperors or carpenters, kings or governors, priests or prophets, daughters of Aaron or daughters of Asher, or the humble maid betrothed to the Galilean, all are in the divine plan. Whether wittingly or unwittingly, willingly or unwillingly, Jehovah will use whom He will, and this He does in preparation for the coming of the perfect Man.

It is not surprising, considering the momentous happenings of those days, and the exquisite beauty and glory of the life of Jesus,, that, as Luke says, many others had already undertaken to narrate the stupendous events. Other narratives, however, have

long since gone. Luke's remains, with those of Matthew, Mark, and John, divinely preserved. Luke was accurately acquainted with all those things which were fully believed by the saints of his day. He had the testimony of those who had been eye-witnesses, and who had been attendants on the Word Himself. It seemed good to him, he says, to write with method to one Theophilus, whose name means, "A lover of God". And all lovers of God will revel in Luke's story.

Zacharias is at the altar. Caesar is on the throne. Joseph is at his bench. Zacharias is in Jerusalem. Caesar is in Rome. Joseph is in Nazareth. Jehovah will move into the routine of their daily lives. The faith of Zacharias, (as is the case with many of us), was not as great as his prayers. His petitions, nevertheless, will be answered, and he will become the father of the fore-runner of the Christ. Joseph will become the husband of the maiden who is to be the virgin mother of that same Christ. Caesar Augustus will, in his supposed sovereignty, issue the decree which, unknown to him, will bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem for the birth of the holy Child, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Micah (5.2). Roman governors and provincial tetrarchs will ensure that Caesar's decree is obeyed. And while the preparation goes on in the world, Simeon and Anna wait expectantly, and Elizabeth and Mary will fellowship together in the hill country. Morally elevated from the wilderness world around them these devoted souls rejoiced together and magnified the Lord. They sang together their psalms of joy.

He was coming, who was the Son of God of the Highest.

Well do we, who live on the other side of their expectations, join in their songs and rejoice with them as we "Behold the Man". The preparation is eventually complete. The fulness of the time has come, and God may now send forth His Son, born of a woman.

—to be continued

*More of Thyself, O show me, hour by hour;  
More of Thy glory, O my God and Lord;  
More of Thyself in all Thy grace and power;  
More of Thy love and truth, Incarnate Word. —H. Bonar*

# Messages from Muller

These are notes of addresses given by  
the late George Muller

## The Gospel in the Holy Ghost.

“Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.”—1 Thessalonians 1.5.

“Our Gospel.” That is, simply, the gospel which *we* preach. There is but one gospel, *the gospel of the grace of God*, the glad tidings, that God gave His only begotten Son,—who gave Himself for us, who suffered and was bruised for us, and who died for our sins. This is what we are to believe. The sinner believing in Jesus,—yea, the vilest, the most hardened, the oldest sinner,—will at once obtain the pardon of His sins, the full forgiveness of them. He has not to do any work, but just as he is, he should come; he has only to receive what God has to give in the person of His own dear Son, who, in our room and stead, died for us, unworthy, guilty sinners.

This gospel, the apostle says, “CAME NOT IN WORD ONLY, BUT IN POWER.” Not only as a statement, nor even as a mere clear and scriptural statement, but in spiritual energy, in spiritual power. Such power is to be obtained by a holy and prayerful life, by which *even now*, believers may be brought into such a state as that out of them flow rivers of living water.

It came further to them “IN THE HOLY GHOST;” viz., the gospel was, as it were, inclosed all round by the Spirit, and accompanied by *His power*, though uttered by mortal and sinful lips. Only as the Holy Ghost works will the gospel be effectual. We should therefore, above all, seek by earnest, frequent prayer, the power of the Holy Spirit.

This “power,” in connection with the ministry of the Word, is not only to be sought after by public preachers, or by such as minister to stated congregations, but also by district visitors' tract

distributors, teachers in schools, by masters, by parents, by all classes of believers seeing that this "power" is the result of a holy walk and a prayerful life. All believers should seek to win souls for Christ. None should be content to go alone to heaven.

But if we would work *successfully* for God, we must have "power," and we cannot have this spiritual power without much prayer; we must also be especially careful that we do not allow anything which we know to be hateful to the Lord. Thus shall we be "vessels meet for the Master's use;" but thus alone have we any right to expect to be used by the Lord.

The office of an apostle we never can have, but this spiritual state of heart which the apostle had we may have, yea, ought to have; and just in the degree in which we have it, will the gospel which we preach come in power and in the Holy Ghost. It is not the much we do, the number of visits we have made, or the number of tracts we have distributed; it is not the *quantity*, but the *quality* of our service which we should regard. If we have distributed a good many tracts, how much have we distributed them in prayer, and how much have we followed them in prayer?

"AND IN MUCH ASSURANCE;" viz., much full conviction. What an experience is this! a full conviction of the forgiveness of their sins, and of all their sins—hearts brimful of joy; thus showing, by their happy faces, their peace with God, and out of full hearts pouring forth blessed truths! It is true I am a stranger here, but heaven is my home. I am on my way to God. God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned me.

Dear Sunday-School teachers, day-school teachers, superintendents of schools, district visitors, visitors of the sick, tract circulators, let all those with whom you have to do see that you are happy men and women. Let it never be asked by the children we teach, or those we visit. "Does Mr. So-and-so himself believe what he says?" "Does Mrs. So-and-so herself believe and enjoy the things she speaks of to me?" Therefore, my beloved brethren, do not expect fruit, unless you speak in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.

"AS YE KNOW WHAT MANNER OF MEN WE WERE AMONG YOU." There should be no uncertainty about this—no doubt as to whether the one who speaks, who teaches, who visits, is a man of God or not. It is to my shame, if men do not know

what manner of person I am. If we want to know what manner of men we ought to be, let us read what Paul says of himself in the second chapter of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

I have made these few remarks, firstly, in order that all of us who in any way seek to serve the Lord may be encouraged. Do not let us say, this is too much—this is too high an attainment. Verily it is not! We may not expect to be able to perform miracles, nor have the gift of tongues, nor the office of an apostle; but we may confidently look for this spiritual power, and we shall not be disappointed.

And I have, secondly, made these remarks because the kind of service which I have been noticing is now so particularly needed. Let us pray that God, in the riches of His grace, would raise up, as pastors and teachers, as evangelists, as district visitors and tract distributors, as teachers of schools, etc., holy men, who shall speak not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; and who by their manner of life shall commend themselves to the consciences of men.

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### OUR "SACRIFICES" ARE MEAGRE ENOUGH

We are only ashamed that the little sacrifices we have made are so terribly small as to be invisible. When we think of the life of our Lord and Saviour and God, who came to earth to redeem us, who was born in a manger, who had nowhere to lay His head, who died a felon's death on the Cross, who said "Follow Me," then great shame oppresses us, because we are such terrible caricatures of Christ and His apostles.

Our object is the conversion and edification of these people, and for such a cause we are glad to sacrifice our personal comfort and to lay down our lives.

I believe more than ever that Jesus Christ is God, who died for me and for all men. I also believe that in the light of such marvellous grace, love and sacrifice, no sacrifice that I or any other person can make is of any value whatever; all sinks into insignificance. To mention Christ's sacrifice for us and then suggest that anything on our part could rightly bear the name of sacrifice, is veritably a passing from the sublime to the ridiculous. *C. T. Studd*

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# THE ATONEMENT (4)

by William Blane

## Part I (continued)

Th' Atonement was no business act  
In which the Saviour did contract  
To undergo so many pains  
That He might cleanse so many's stains.  
He gave *His all* — His life's blood flowed  
To reconcile *the world* to God.  
'Twixt God and man, to close the rent,  
The spotless Lamb of God was sent.  
If all the sins of Adam's race,  
With perfect justice to each case,  
In Heaven's balances were laid,  
They would be utterly outweigh'd  
By Jesus' death. The value lies  
All in th' infinite sacrifice:  
When Christ for man was crucified,  
Th' Creator for the creature died.  
The *vail* within God's house of old,  
That hid the mercy-seat of gold,  
With cherubims was strangely wrought,  
Which sadly to the memory brought  
The gate of Eden, where these stood  
With flaming sword lest man intrude,  
And showed that Justice veiled God's face,  
And stayed the current of His grace.  
But, when the vail was rent in twain,  
These creatures were beheld again,  
No more a terror to the heart,  
But of the mercy-seat a part;  
Beneath their wings the sprinkled blood,  
Inviting sinners near to God.  
Th' Atonement is the mercy-seat  
Where God the guilty one can meet,  
And show him how his sins are gone,

Through what the Lord of Life hath done.  
There Truth and Mercy meet together,  
Justice and Peace have kissed each other,  
God's attributes are harmoniz'd,  
And in His boundless love baptized;  
There Justice, which we once did fear,  
With outstretched hands invites us near.  
The Cross is now God's trysting-place  
Where He can meet with man in grace—  
Where, on the ground of Jesus' blood,  
The world may drink of Mercy's flood,  
And every soul by sin defiled  
To God in Christ be reconcil'd.

What means a universal call  
If there be not enough for all?  
As if the Saviour passed some by  
While He for others' sins did die,  
And that, though all are told to come,  
There's but provision made for some;  
Or that, in some mysterious way,  
God means not what the Scriptures say.  
Let hampered minds their thoughts expand,  
Nor on such narrow footing stand:  
The mighty work of Jesus scan—  
He "tasted death for every man."  
He "died for all" that they who live  
Back to Himself that life should give.  
He has for "all" Atonement made—  
For all mankind the ransom paid.  
God loved the world; and when He gave  
His Son, it was the world to save.  
And though He knew some would not take  
Of the provision He would make,  
The foreseen choice of self-willed man  
Changed not heav'n's universal plan,

As, in the love that moved His heart,  
All in th' Atonement had a part.  
Some will be lost, and rescued some  
Yet "Whosoever will" *may* come.  
If not, He only mocks their fate  
Who presses all, "ere 'tis too late,"  
To trust a work not for them done,  
To take a pardon while there's none,  
To fly from hell without a way,  
Or perish if they disobey.  
They never can the sinner reach  
Who, crippled thus, the Gospel preach.  
'Tis He who knows of food for all  
That only can afford to call  
A hungry world to come and feed—  
All others would but mock their need.  
O tell the tidings all around,  
That every soul may hear the sound—  
Th' Atoning work embraces all  
Who were enveloped in the Fall.  
To earth's remotest regions go,  
And preach to every child of woe,  
Impartial who or what they be—  
The rich, the poor, the bond, the free,  
That Christ on their behalf has died,  
That God with Him is satisfied,  
And now is ready to forgive—  
The simple terms, "Believe and live."  
And he who disregards the news,  
And doth his day of grace abuse,  
Shall find the worm that never dies,  
As in the burning lake he sighs  
To all eternity, shall be—  
"There was provision made for me:  
I might have been in heaven above,  
But I despised God's mighty love."—(*to be cont.*)

# EPHESIANS EXPOUNDED

by A. D. THROPAY (California)

## Paper 8

### II. RECONCILIATION — 2.11-19

- A. Gentiles — Strangers, aliens from Israel — Verses 11, 12
- B. Gentiles made nigh by the blood of Christ — Verse 13
- C. Christ Jesus is our peace (between Jew and Gentile) — Verse 14
- D. One New Man — Reconciliation of Jew and Gentile — Verses 15, 16
- C. Christ Jesus preached peace (to Jew and Gentile)—Verse 17
- B. Gentiles and Jews have access to the Father — Verse 18
- A. Gentiles — no longer strangers and foreigners — Verse 19
- Verse 11

- Wherefore:** (dio) That is, based on the facts in verses 1-10.
- remember:** (mnēmoneuō) “to keep in mind,” or “to call to mind.”
- that:** (hoti) the fact that.
- Ye:** This word is emphatic — What follows is a description of who they are. This description interrupts the sentence until verse 12.
- being in time past:** (pote) Once, at some time or another, at some time in the past.
- Gentiles:** There is an article in front of this word in the Greek: “The Gentiles.” The article sets them apart as distinct.
- in the flesh:** Their bodies declared by their lack of circumcision their heathen condition.
- who are called “Uncircumcision”:** This was a derogatory name of contempt thrown at the Gentiles. . .
- by that which is called “circumcision” in the flesh made by hands:** Those who did not have the true spiritual circumci-

sion of the heart made without hands (Romans 2.28, 29; Colossians 2.11), but only its physical picture, emphasized the difference in outward appearances by their name calling. They considered themselves superior to others because of this physical identity with Abraham.

#### Verse 12

- that:** (hoti) resuming the thought from the beginning of verse 11. “Remember, I say, the fact that. . .”
- at that time ye were without:** (chōris) separate, apart from, aloof from, having no association with or relationship to.
- Christ:** or Messiah. He had relationship to and was associated with the hope of the Jews.
- being aliens from:** (apallotrioō) This word is a verb, and is better translated, “having been alienated from.” It means, “To alienate, estrange, shut out from one’s intimacy and fellowship.” Comp. 4.18; Colossians 1.21.
- the commonwealth:** (politeia) (a) a state, country, or empire (b) citizenship or rights of a citizen. (We get our English word “politics” from this word).
- of Israel:** The Gentiles were made to feel this alienation very keenly. They were considered “dogs” and “unclean animals.” They were not even allowed to assist in the building of the temple. Ezra 4.1-3.
- and strangers:** (xenos) a stranger, a foreigner, one having no share in a thing.
- from the covenants of promise:** That is, the many covenants made to Abraham and the other Old Testament prophets of the coming Messiah and the blessings that should follow. Compare Genesis 17.1-14; 22.15-18.
- having no hope:** (elpis) They had no favourable or confident expectation. They had no happy anticipation of good beyond this world.
- and without God:** (atheoi) Being ignorant of the true God, they worship false, fake Gods that really do not exist, and thus have no God. Cp. Galations 4.8 It means, (a) They were ignorant of the true God (b) They were without God’s help and salvation.

—**in the world:** (kosmos) as Verse 2 — Primarily, an arrangement, an order. Then it refers to the earth. It came to be used for the people on the earth, mankind, and then for the present condition of human affairs apart from God.

### *B. Gentiles made nigh by the blood of Christ — Verse 13*

#### Verse 13

- But now:** (de nuni) (a) Now at this very moment, or (b) Now, as the case stands.
- in Christ Jesus:** He is introducing a state that is distinct from both the Jew and the Gentile. It is a new entity composed of believers IN Christ Jesus.
- ye who were sometimes:** (pote) at one time, in time past, once.
- far off:** (makran) A long way off. At a great distance. (That is, at a great distance from all that is mentioned in verse 12).
- are made nigh:** (engus) near, close by.
- by (en) Literally, “in” the blood of Christ:** The blood of Christ not only cleanses us from all sin, but it also brings us very close to God. In fact, by placing us IN Christ, we are as close to God as it is possible to be.

### *C. He is our peace (between Jew and Gentile) V. 14*

#### Verse 14

- For:** (gar) Giving the reason for our nearness to God now.
- He:** (autos) This word holds the emphatic position in the sentence. “He and no other,” (Expositors).
- is:** that is, in His own Person. He not only **made** peace, He **is** peace. Without Him, there is no grace.
- our peace:** (hē eirēnē hēmōn) Literally, “the peace, ours.” “The word refers to things joined together that were separated,” (Wuest). “At one again,” (W. E. Vine) “state of untroubled, undisturbed, well-being,” (Cremer). “That which brings into unity,” (Young). He is Himself the peace that is ours, personally.
- who hath made the both (that is, Jew and Gentile) one:** (hen) The word is a singular, neuter word. “One thing, one organism.”
- and hath broken down:** (lusas) This word means primarily,

“To loosen.” Here, it means to loosen what is compacted or built together. Hence, “to break up, demolish, destroy,” (Thayer).

—**the middle wall:** (mesotoichon) A midwall, especially in a house.

—**of the partition:** (phragmos) A fence or hedge. Verse 15 makes clear that this refers to the law of Moses. The metaphor may have been taken from the temple barriers where posted signs warned Gentiles to proceed no further on pain of death. It may also have been taken from the analogy of Israel being a fenced in vineyard. See Isaiah 5.2, Matthew 21.33

The hedge or fence kept them at a distance; the wall kept them in ignorance, they could not see past.

#### *D. One new Man — Verses 15, 16*

Verse 15

—**having abolished:** (katargeō) “To reduce to inactivity,” “to render inoperative.”

—**in His flesh:** That is, His crucified flesh.

—**the enmity:** (echthra) Hostile, separating feeling, hatred. Luke 23.12; Romans 8.7; James 4.4; Galatians 5.20; Ephesians 2.16. This word is the opposite of agape (love in action). This hostility and hatred was between the Jew and Gentile. In the Greek New Testament, the words translated “the enmity” come immediately after verse fourteen, and may be associated with either the midwall of the partition or with the law of commandments as the KJV.

—**even the law of commandments:** (entolē) An injunction. Here it refers to the whole Mosaic law.

—**contained (or expressed) in ordinances:** (dogma) An opinion expressed with authority; a decree, statute, ordinance.

—**for to:** (hina) with the purpose of; in order to. . .

—**make:** (ktizō) To create. In scripture, this word always signifies creation as an act of God. We are a new spiritual creation. II Corinthians 5.17

- in Himself:** The new creation, as the old creation (the universe) is created and sustained IN Him — They exist and consist by vital union to Him.
- of twain:** (the Jew and Gentile) **one new:** (kainon) New in quality. There was nothing like it before. The old distinctions of Jew and Gentile are lost in a new type or kind of .
- Man:** (anthrōpos) A person, a human. This word is not specific for male or female. It is man in general.
- so making:** (poieō) to do, perform, accomplish (with imagination and creativity). (Eng. “poem”).
- peace:** (eirēnē) As above.

#### Verse 16

- And:** (kai) This conjunction shows that he is going to give a further statement of the purpose of Christ in making peace.
- that He might reconcile:** (apokatallasō) “To reconcile completely,” W. E. Vine. The word conveys the idea of a change in mutual relation. (Expositors) See also Colossians 1.20, 21.
- both:** (amphoteros) “Both of them together,” (Exp.)
- unto God:** It is the new creation that is presented to God for reconciliation with Himself. The Lord places the believer, whether Jew or Gentile, into the “new man” and presents the “new man” to God for reconciliation.
- in one body:** The concept of one body eliminates duality completely. They are no longer two but one. They are so much a “oneness” that they are called “one body.”
- by:** (dia) through, by means of.
- the cross, having slain:** (apokteinō) to put to death, kill.
- the enmity (as V.15) thereby:** Man and God were enemies. Man was hostile and hateful towards God. This hostility ends in death at the cross.

Thus, the Lord Jesus is the peace, horizontally, between two enemy groups on earth, Jew and Gentile, and vertically, between God and Man.



### *C. He preached peace v17*

#### Verse 17

- And came:** (aorist participle) “having come.” These words refer to His first coming.
- and preached:** (euaggelizo) “To proclaim good tidings.”
- peace:** as verse 14 (eirēnē) In verse 14, He is HIMSELF presented as the peace that is ours, personally. In verse 15, we are told that he MADE peace. In this verse, we are told that He PREACHED peace.
- to you which were afar off:** These are the Gentiles referred to in verses 11-12.
- and to them that were nigh:** This phrase refers to the Jews. The first word spoken to His disciples after His resurrection when they were all together was “peace.” The Lord said in Matthew 5.9, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” The Lord Jesus is the Peacemaker. His example for us is that there can be no peace without suffering on the part of the peacemaker.

### *B. Both Jew and Gentile have access through Him. v18*

#### Verse 18

- For:** (hoti) This word is used when a fact is being stated and is usually translated “that,” meaning, “the fact that.” (a) Some take “hoti” as “that” to give the contents; of the subject matter preached in v17. Christ “came and preached peace. . . the fact that, etc. (b) The KJV and some others translate “hoti” as “for.” The verse then becomes a confirmation of verse 17 in the form of an appeal to the experience of those addressed.
- Through:** (dia) “By means of, through.”
- Him:** That is, the Son. He is the Channel, the Means, or the Way.
- we both have access:** (prosagōgē) Literally, “A leading into the presence of.” It is used for “freedom to enter (for an interview) through assistance of another,” (W. E. Vine). “An introduction,” (Moule).

- by:** (en) Literally, “In.” That is, we are “surrounded, animated, and penetrated by”
- one Spirit:** He is the one who produces the desire to communicate with the Father. By His dwelling within us and surrounding us, He transforms our desires and inclinations.
- unto:** (pros) “This word usually involves motion towards a remote object.” The same word is used in John 14.6, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto (pros) the Father, but by me.” John 14.6 was written to and for disciples as was Ephesians.
- the Father:** He is the goal. To know the Father was the desire of the disciples. Philip was their spokesman. Believers, from among both Jew and Gentile, have come face to face with the Father and are able to communicate with Him intimately, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

*A. Gentiles are no more strangers and foreigners. V. 19*

Verse 19

- Now:** (ara) “So,” or “This being so.” (JN Darby) Paul uses this particle often to sum up the force of argument.
- therefore:** (oun) This word is used to show the consequences of what has been mentioned. “This being so, that is, that Christ is our peace, made peace, and preached peace, and as a consequence thereof, . . . ”
- ye:** i.e., Gentiles
- are no more strangers:** As verse 12 — (xenos) a stranger, a foreigner, one having no share in a thing.
- and foreigners:** (paroikos) Literally, “To make one’s home along side of.” Hence, “A resident alien, a non-naturalized foreigner liable to legal removal any time,” (H. C. Moule).
- but:** (alla) But, in contrast.
- fellow citizens:** (sumpolitēs. From “sun,” together, and “polities.” citizen.) They are citizens together.
- with the saints:** (hagios) “Holy ones.” People set apart with God who sets evil apart from Himself by His glory. Every believer is a saint.
- and of the household:** (oikeios) Fellow members of an immediate family. Belonging to the same household.

—of God: Not only have the barriers between Jew and Gentile been broken down by the cross of the Lord Jesus, and not only has He provided equal access to the Father for all believers, but through His peace making, we have become members of the immediate family of God Himself!

## A Prophetic Jerusalem

by E. G. Parmenter (Barton-on-Sea)

### 2. The Review of the Saints

It is necessary that our hearts and minds are established in the doctrine of scripture regarding future sessions of judgment and the believers eternal standing.

The New Testament reveals that there are three future sessions of judgment. Two are pre-millennial: one is post millennial

1. Consequent on the rapture there will be the judgment seat of Christ for all christians (Rom. 14; 2 Cor. 5).
2. At the conclusion of Daniel's 70th week there will be the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25.21-31).
3. When Christ has reigned for 1000 years and the last effort of Satan to destroy the saints and the beloved city has been aborted (by fire from God out of Heaven, the nations in revolt being devoured by it); the devil himself cast into the lake of fire and the earth and the heaven have fled away — then there will take place the judgment of the wicked dead at the great white throne (Rev. 20).

The judgment of the living nations, and the judgment of the great white throne are both connected with judicial judgment, and in both cases the throne is a throne of authority.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is not a throne from which judgment issues and sentence passed, it is a seat upon which sat the man who at the Greek games would bestow the victors garlands.

Thus the judgment seat of Christ is the elevated seat from which Christ will appraise the life-work of all who stand in the relation of servant to Him.

The New Testament doctrine regarding the eternal standing of the believer simply stated. God in His own essential righteousness, on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ, has come out as “just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” and those who have believed God have been reckoned righteous, and placed before the throne of His uncreated glory. The blessedness of this is expressed by David “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” Romans 4.7,8.

Once and for all, we who have believed God and are in Christ, have been judged by God as to the question of our sin. In Christ, at Calvary during those hours of darkness on the cross, a holy God dealt with the question of my sin, and as a result God has placed me beyond judgment forever, and I will never be exposed to judgment and the second death. Thus the following statements are true.

1. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (John 5.24; Rom. 8.1).
2. We are clean every whit (John 13.10).
3. We are holy and without blame before Him eternally (Eph 1.4).

Therefore, reasoned the apostle, “who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect . . .” (Rom. 8.33-34).

During the present time God now, as our Father deals with us as sons and He chastens every son whom He loveth — “For our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness”. This is not joyous but grievous at the time but “afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.” Heb 12:5-11.

Our eternal standing in Christ must be kept firmly in mind, when we consider the judgment seat of Christ. It is fundamental that the believer is “justified from all things”. Through Christ he has received “the remission of sins” (Acts 13.38-39).

With this in mind we will consider Scriptural teaching concerning the judgement seat.

The Judgment Seat will not be in respect of our persons, but rather as to our works and our attitudes, both of which will come under the all searching eye of Christ, and all will be righteously assessed. In that day, nothing will remain hidden, all will be manifested.

This solemn matter is not revealed in scripture to put us in a state of fear. It is given as an incentive to live more holy and serve with purity of motive and greater obedience.

At the judgment seat, we shall there read the whole story of our life and marvel at the grace and long suffering of the Lord and heartily acquiesce to His assessment of our life and service in this world.

THE TIME of the judgment seat is indicated in (1 Cor. 4.5) "Wherefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord come who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the heart" The Corinthian christians were indulging in passing judgment on the servants of Christ and Paul reminds them that all such judging is both premature and unauthorised. The appraisal of his servants, will be done by the Lord Himself at His coming. After the rapture, and before the marriage of the Lamb.

THE SCOPE of the judgment seat (2 Cor 5.10) "We must ALL appear": (Rom. 14.10) "We shall ALL stand before" The individual nature of the assessment is stated,

that Each one may receive (2 Cor. 5.10)

Each man's work shall be made manifest (1 Cor. 3.13)

Each one of us shall give account of himself (Rom. 14.12)

THE DETAIL of the judgment seat. The Christian's attitude is the subject in Rom. 14.1 to 15.7.

1. The problem stated. All revolved around Receiving, Despising and Judging. Some were expressing their liberty by eating all things and regarding not days etc. Others were very restricted in what they would eat and kept all sorts of days.

Let not him that eateth despise . . . . Let not him which eateth not, judge (v3)

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant (v4)

Why dost thou judge thy brother? (v10)

2. The principle involved. "We shall all stand: each one of us shall give account" that is, we shall all be made to stand — be placed before (v10) and each one shall give account. The strong Christian who has been engaged in despising others. The weak Christian who has been judging the strong.

To the strong Paul says:

Remember Calvary — and destroy not him for whom Christ died — Christ gave up everything for that man (v15)

Remember the kingdom — it is not meat and drink — but righteousness, peace and joy in the holy spirit (v17)

Remember the work of God — "for meat do not overthrow that divine work (v20)

To all Paul says:

Remember Christ "For even Christ pleased not Himself" (V3).

Christian attitudes in the anticipation of the Judgment Seat ought to be those of Christ-like consideration and God-like patience.

The Judgment Seat of Christ in 2 Cor. 5.10 is connected with, "Receiving things done in the body, whether good or bad". The whole of our life's history will come under review — "we will come face to face with both the good and the bad"

Illustration: Father gives to his boy a "Piggy Bank" into which he can put coins. In due course the boy has filled his piggy bank with coins and the day arrives when his father takes the key and opens the piggy bank. All that the boy put in came out, whether good or bad. If any coins were bad they did not change the good, and the good did not change the bad — they were received exactly as they were put in.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ everything that has been done will be received by the one to whom it belongs.

Every idle word: every false statement: every wrong thought: every unkind deed, will one day be received by us and not by another. Every action done, every day, every hour, every moment, is being registered in heaven. Everything we do, every impression we make in this world is, as it were, being recorded above, and one day we will come face to face with it again. Everything will then come out in its true colour and at the Bema, Christ will give His assessment of all that has gone to make up our life in this world.

In 1 Cor. 3 the spiritual and the carnal christian is in view and the Judgment Seat of Christ is indicated in v13. There the apostle says "each man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it". First the apostle gives in v6 an illustration of work which received the stamp of God's approval. Paul planted: Apollos watered: but God gave the increase, that is God gave the growth (v7).

God is everything, neither I or Apollos are anything, we are nobodies. Yet says Paul we are one in purpose and each man shall receive his own reward according to his labour, meaning, the fruit and the growth belong to God, the labour is my responsibility and for that there is reward.

The spiritual and the carnal representing two builders are reminded,

v10 Take heed HOW you build

i.e. In what spirit you build (cf v3)

v13 Take heed WHAT you build

i.e. There are two classes of materials.

v12 Take heed WHERE you build

i.e. There is a right foundation.

Our service for Christ can be of:

Good quality — Gold, Silver, Precious Stones

Bad quality — Wood, Hay, Stubble,— bulky but inflammable and when put to the test of the fire, the one will stand the test, but the other will be reduced to ashes. This may be illustrated as follows, the making of a mirror in days gone by was after this method, a clear sheet of plate glass was laid on a hot table which

was covered with a woollen substance something like a blanket. Nitrate of silver was dissolved in distilled water and poured on the surface of the glass which was lying perfectly level: The heat of the table caused the silver to be deposited on the surface of the glass, the glass plate was then tilted and all the silver that did not adhere to the glass ran on to the woollen blanket. With this process constantly going on — the blanket became charged with silver and turned black, and to all appearances was of no value. It was then placed in the melting pot which was put on the fire. All the fibre of the old blanket goes off in smoke and nothing is left in the melting pot but a beautiful white molten silver lava. The fire has burnt up the fibre leaving behind the silver.

At the judgment seat of Christ, all will be put in the crucible, the fire will consume the “Wood, Hay, Stubble” and leave the “Gold, Silver, Precious Stones”.

In Gen. 13 & 19 We have a man whose works were all burnt up behind him. Lot built much in Sodom, after great trouble he was dragged out by the angels, but he lost his wife in his flight from the doomed city and he lost all that he had Sodom, it was all burnt up behind him. He himself was saved . . . yet so as by fire.

Luke 23 We have a man who had no works to be rewarded and none to be burnt. The thief dying on the cross, with words of faith cried, ‘Lord remember me’ — The Lamb of God swiftly replied, ‘today shalt thou be with Me’. He entered heaven with no works to be burnt up and no works to be rewarded. He was saved by grace alone.

2 Tim 4 We have a man who had an abundance of works to be rewarded Paul said ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course: I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all them that love His appearing.’

A good fight — will bring a good reward.

Keeping the course — will receive the well done and . . .

Keeping the faith — will be rewarded with — enter thou into  
the joy of thy Lord. *—to be continued*



# Lessons from the Life of David

By J. Burnett, Dunfermline, Scotland

## No. 1 — Introduction

*Scripture References: 1 Sam.17.20, 28-30; 1 Chron. 22.11.-16;  
1 Chron.27.18*

The examination of characters is one of the most interesting, instructive and rewarding ways in which the Word of God can be studied, since it has pleased God to link personalities with principles of truth.

As we examine the lives of those of a past day we see on the one hand these principles being observed and obeyed resulting in a life of usefulness. However, on the other hand, we see those same precepts being ignored resulting in spiritual poverty.

With that in mind it is the intention in this series of papers to highlight some practical lessons centred around the life and experience of David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel. In so doing it is not the intention to highlight the failures of the man but rather to note some moments of greatness as he walked in fellowship with God. There are many features of moral beauty about David we do well to carefully and prayerfully consider. Many and varied are the things which the Bible describes as being beautiful, for example:

The Beautiful Features of David —1 Sam.16.2

The Beautiful Fellowship of the House —Psalm 48.2

The Beautiful Feet of the Saviour —Isa.52.7

The Beautiful Flock of God —Jer.13.20

It has been well said that the men of God are not produced in the *storms of life* but in the *Sanctuary of God*. It is there character is formed and lasting impressions are made. It is there truth is imparted and Spirit begotten convictions are wrought. Many years ago an outstanding servant of Christ gave words of wise counsel to all who would handle God's word when he said, "dwell much in the secret of the sanctuary until such impressions are made that in public the *expression* of these *impressions* are made easy."

However if such men are not *produced* in the storms of life they are certainly *proved*. Men of God will always be tested by God

especially on their own ministry. This has been well verified by the experiences of the faithful through the generations and must be accepted by all who put their hand to the plough in the service of God. Men who live for God and seek to make straight paths for their feet, walking with the Lord in the light of his word will inevitably find themselves in the crucible of testing.

The prophet Ezekiel found it to be so as seen in Ezek. 24.18,  
“So I spake unto the people in the morning” —His Teaching;  
“and at even my wife died” —His Testing;  
“and in the morning I did as I was commanded —His Triumph.

Having been bereft of his dear wife he showed no signs of bitter resentment but demonstrated that even in life’s darkest hour it was no grievous thing to keep the precepts of God. Only men of the Sanctuary could rise to such heights of spiritual greatness.

We want to assess the worth of David in the sphere where he was most severely tested and that was in his own home with his own family. There is nothing quite like a man’s family to prove his worth. There are good men who have handled the pressures associated with the business world admirably; they have endeared themselves to the Lord’s people within the assembly fellowship, never putting a foot wrong; but alas have been found wanting when faced with the challenge of home life.

It is always very strange and sad when men are prepared to change course mid stream, simply to accommodate the family. This is not stated without feeling. Being a family man, the author fully appreciates the problems that can and do arise, but there is nothing to be gained in burying one’s convictions. Better by far to remain true to all that is held dear and seek grace from God to continue, despite the failure of the family, to follow the ways of the Lord. Had the father in Luke 15 gone with the Prodigal there would have been no home to which the wayward boy could return!

In the next papers we shall consider David and his relationship with three members of the family circle as outlined below.

1. With His Father Jesse — The Respect He Showed.
2. With His Brother Eliab — The Restraint He Exercised.
3. With His Son Solomon — The Responsibility He Fulfilled.

*(to be continued)*

## God's Will and Man's Independency

by The Late THOS. NEWBERRY,  
of the "Englishman's Bible"

There is but one will in Heaven. Angels never consult their own will, or plan their own pathway. They "do His commandments hearkening to the voice of His word" (Psa. 103. 20). One will regulate all, with neither jar nor discord.

I suspect the first discord caused in Heaven was by Satan's having a will of his own, a counter will, and this discord he introduced into the world, by tempting our first parents to have and to exercise a will of their own, instead of carrying out the will of Him who said: "Thou shalt not" (Gen. 2. 17).

It is the independent will of man which fills the world with discord, and peoples the bottomless pit with millions of miserable souls.

God has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. He willeth not the death of the sinner.

He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3 .9).

How comes it then that the Broad Road is thronged from age to age? Because man has a will of his own. He is not willing to come to Christ that he might have life.

What is conversion? What is salvation? What is eternal life? Letting God have His will with us, that is it.

Why are all in Heaven so eternally serene, happy, and blessed? Because there is a *throne* set in Heaven and One sitting upon it. No wonder the Lord Jesus put that marvellous prayer into the mouth of His disciples, "Thy *will* be done on earth, *as* it is in Heaven." When this prayer is answered, it will be "Heaven begun below." The starry heavens move on in unbroken harmony: "Not one faileth." This world, it would seem, is the only province in the universe in which God's will is not fulfilled—the only part of the vast machinery which is out of gear. Man has a will of his own.

## MY CONVERSION AND CALL (18)

by Albert Hull (Nova Scotia)

When relating a conversion story we are made aware that each conversion to God has it's own peculiar distinctiveness and yet at the same time each has similarities. Some have different backgrounds, culturally, religiously and socially yet all are joined eternally by our link to Christ. Again there are differences as to ages, some in very young life some later and some in old-life. Thus conversions are always interesting and intriguing. When all are written down or related publicly we *must* ever give to our God and His Son all the glory.

I had the privilege of a clear gospel background, so that from earliest days the basic truth from God's Word was taught. Sin and it's wages, death, the Lord's coming and salvation through the death of Christ were constantly brought before us in the home and also while attending Sunday School and gospel meetings. I can remember while young, some of the family being reached by the mighty grace of God and the attendant joy accompanying this newfound peace. However with shame I acknowledge my limited desire to go in for God's salvation. Isaiah 53.5; the first part described my desires . . . . "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his *own way*." A few times it was evident that God was dealing with me and looking back one clearly understands such was God's grace seeking the wanderer. The Lord's coming was ever a constant concern to me and I knew if this took place my destiny was eternally sealed. These thoughts were very real especially when events in the world were alarming. Yet sadly such thoughts were like the morning dew or the passing cloud, they were so brief. At sixteen years of age I became most disturbed while attending meetings in the Whitehouse Gospel Hall, the speaker was the late Mr. Wm. Bunting. Many nights I was in deep concern, often bowed at my bed-side wondering how I could know that all my sins were forgiven, but these meetings passed and I was still a wandering sheep, away from God and sadder still, I lost all interest in salvation. From that time until mighty grace awoke me and His mercy saved me I was never again (except for one occasion) under the message of the gospel.

My life could well be summed up in the words of Luke 15 . . . “wasted his substance with riotous living.” There is no doubt during the next four years many dear saints of God prayed for me and this was confirmed many times after God in grace saved me. Many times in my depravity and darkness the gracious Spirit tried to reach me but such was unheeded and unwanted. In December 1956 at the Christmas season I was in circumstances where once again I was brought face to face with my sin and eternity. My grandmother had died and at the viewing in the home I was in the room alone, staring at death and an inner voice seemed to say; “Albert your grandmother is in Heaven, but if it was your body in that casket, your soul would be in Hell.” It was so real, I tried to cover it up before others, my stubborn heart fought against it, but *this* solemn moment remained with me until saved by grace. Until January 27th., 1957 I was under constant conflict, the world was calling, friends were calling and the devil was calling. The battle raged, the world or Christ, sin or salvation. I struggled in my darkness, sometimes my most solemn convictions were drowned by revelry and friends. On January 27th the choice was made (made in a little room in Whitehouse), as I sat with a number of my friends as we played that Sunday morning our weekly poker games. At approx. 10.30 a.m. I left, dejected and yet determined to go after salvation as a drowning man would grasp for a life-saver! A sad note here, one of my closest friends in those days who begged me to stay on at the game is now in eternity, died in 1987, others also who were in that little room are now in eternity.

At approx. 8 p.m. on that same day I left my home and walked alone with thoughts flooding my soul, the Bible verses came back to me that I was taught in earlier life, my sins tormented me, indeed at one point I trembled as I considered that all my sins would be set in order before me by God. I passed a portable hall (this was of God!) and heard them singing, I stopped and listened to the words; “*Christ receiveth sinful men, even me with all my sin etc.*” This stirred within a deep longing to know how I could know that Christ would receive me, others I knew He had received. But my problem was, *how could I know*. I continued walking with increased burden. I tried to visualise Christ on the Cross, then I tried to feel and look for something to tell me I was saved, the verses like John 3.16,36; Isaiah 53.5,6 and others I quoted and pondered, but all of no avail. Finally I returned on my journey home with heavy heart. Near home, beside a

School-House I paused a moment and there acknowledged to God that I was going to Hell in my sins and I could see no way out. At that moment a verse from the Bible came to mind; Matthew 11.28 Come unto *me* all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I *will* give you rest. In that moment I took in the precious truth that Christ had died for me and His Word said, I *will* give you rest. In the lines of another;

“Then fully I trusted in Jesus and Oh what a joy came to me,  
My heart was filled with his praises for saving a sinner like me.”

“Now rest my long divided heart,  
Fixed on that blissful center rest,  
Nor ever from my Lord depart  
With Him of every good possessed  
Happy day, happy day when Jesus washed my sins away.”

When I arrived home I bowed my knee for the first time in willing and thankful appreciation for God’s Son. A verse from the Bible touched my heart; Romans 6.22 . . . But Now being made free from sin etc., sin that held me! sin that blinded me! sin that would have cast me away from God forever, I was free at last. (I was informed afterward that one of the speakers in the portable hall had said to his partner as there were few in the hall, open the windows there might be someone passing that will hear.) I was the one that was passing and thank God Jesus was passing also.

After conversion there was burned deep in my soul an interest in “others” and this brought me into a definite exercise before God as to my life and what the Lord wanted me to do. It was not too long after conversion that I was baptised and received in the assembly at Whitehouse, N.I. Choices had to be made and one could not relate all the various ways in which God seemed to indicate to me in the words of the Lord to His own in Mark 11.2, 3 relative to the colt tied; “the Lord hath need of him.” From that time forward the Lord prospered me in the secular world and I received promotions as manager in the Retail Grocery Business from time to time. While in this position it was encouraging that two of the staff professed salvation. While the demands at work were heavy I had time for some gospel meetings, tract distribution and open-air work. It was at Saturday night open-air meetings conducted by the Ebenezer assembly that I was introduced to open-air preaching. I had gone along to support the good brethren but they gave me a wee push out to speak

a word in the gospel, this was done with shaking knees and a fluttering heart! My home assembly at Whitehouse were of invaluable help to me and some at that time took me under their wing. I am deeply thankful for their care and interest, while with others we consistently and on a weekly basis distributed tracts and preached in the open-air with their full and happy fellowship. One of my dearest and closest companions was the late Mr. Hugh Alexander. I must give great credit to this dear brother for his help and encouragement as to engaging in 'full-time' work in the gospel, he was a strong link and of great support. Many experiences took place until I finally came to the conclusion that the Lord was calling me for 'gospel work'. It was climaxed at a Buckna conference when one servant of the Lord in particular had a very personal and definite message for me, it was like the 'green-light' that gave direction and confirmation. From then I resolved whatever, whenever and wherever I was at the Lord's bidding. The late and much esteemed servant of the Lord, Mr. L. K. McIlwaine was across to N.I. in 1962 on a visit, his wife also with him. There seemed to be a friendship formed from our first meeting. It was not too long, indeed the same year after they returned to Nova Scotia that a letter arrived with a 'Macedonia' call in it, there was an urgency that implied an immediate response. Well this was at first too much for me, but I replied by assuring them of my appreciation and interest but felt it too soon to go immediately. I made my exercise known to the assembly and was greatly encouraged by their same exercise for me, thus mine, their's and Mr. McIlwaine's was the same. Mr. Alexander was very happy that I was going to Nova Scotia and intimated that at one time he was very much exercised to go to Nova Scotia. I waited upon the Lord and was happy that in the period of waiting I found a true-helpmeet to come with me in 1963. Mae Torrens of the Killykergen assembly and I were married on the 3rd July 1963 and we left the shores of the home-land on the 10th July arriving in the land of our adoption on the 17th July.

I re-call on one of my visits to the late Mr. Edmund Allen who was of great encouragement and help to me. When speaking with him as to the Lord's work etc., his advice to me was most valuable. He said before leaving; "Go out trusting God and in twenty years you can recount His faithfulness."

We raise our sweet Ebenezers as we reflect of the kindness of

God and have been deeply grateful to the Lord allowing me to be yoked to a true pioneer and worthy servant of the Lord, Mr. L. K. McIlwaine with whom I served as a son with a father for my first nine years. From this man we learned simple trust and confidence in the living God, and proved that God's ways are best in carrying on the work of the Lord. During our 27 years here we have laboured with many of the servants of the Lord and thankful for the one-mindedness that is still maintained, pray for us that such will continue. While the Lord has given some blessing in the Work during the many years, yet so little has been accomplished for Him who did so much for us at the Cross.

Our record is on high. In closing one would express the deep gratitude for the prayers of the Lord's people and their invaluable help as we continue unto this day preaching the gospel and ministering to the saints.

When I shall look on His beautiful face  
I'll wish, Oh I'll wish I had given Him more.

## **ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY**

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GRACE TRUTH

# ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY



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## REST

Made for thyself, O God!  
Made for Thy love, Thy service, Thy delight;  
Made to shew forth Thy wisdom, grace, and might;  
Made for Thy praise, whom veiled archangels laud;  
O strange and glorious thought, that we may be  
A joy to Thee!

Yet the heart turns away  
From this grand destiny of bliss, and deems  
'Twas made for its poor self, for passing dreams;  
Chasing illusions melting day by day;  
Till for ourselves we read on this world's best—  
"This is not rest."

Nor can the vain toil cease,  
Till in the shadowy maze of life we meet  
One who can guide our aching, wayward feet  
To find Himself, our Way, our Life, our Peace.  
In Him the long unrest is soothed and stilled,  
Our hearts are filled.

O rest, so true, so sweet!  
(Would it were shared by all the weary world!)  
'Neath shadowing banner of His love unfurled,  
We bend to kiss the Master's piercéd feet;  
Then lean our love upon His boundless breast,  
And know God's rest.

—*F. R. Havergal*

# BEHOLD THE MAN

*(Meditations in Luke's Gospel)*

by JIM FLANIGAN, (Belfast)

## 2. ANNUNCIATION

The story of Mary of Nazareth is a delightful one. It is the story of what divine sovereignty can do with humble piety in the out-working of heaven's purposes. Mary, who thinks of herself only as a submissive bondmaid, is forever blessed because of her passive yieldedness to God's will and the favour of God bestowed upon her.

She lived remotely, in Nazareth of Galilee, far removed from the sophistication of Judea and the theological centre in Jerusalem. Nazareth was a town of ill repute. Could there any good thing come out of it? (John 1.46). But in the midst of the squalor of it all Mary lived tenderly pure, and the eye of God was upon her as a vessel suited to the divine purpose.

It was Gabriel who visited Mary with the heavenly announcement. Gabriel, whose name means, "God is mighty"; Gabriel, who had touched Daniel centuries earlier and had talked with him about the coming of Messiah the Prince; Gabriel, who had so recently conveyed God's mind to Zacharias; the same Gabriel now comes to Nazareth and to Mary. His salutation is very beautiful. "Hail, thou favoured one! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women . . . Fear not Mary . . . thou hast found favour with God" (Luke 1.28-30 JND).

His message to the virgin was an astonishing one. She was to conceive and bear a son. His human name was to be "Jesus", Jehovah-Saviour. He would be the Son of the Highest; the Son of El Elyon the God of Melchisidec of Gen 14. He would inherit the throne of David and reign over the house of Jacob in an everlasting kingdom. It was all reminiscent of Isaiah 9.6, "A child born . . . a son given . . . the government upon His shoulder . . . His name wonderful . . . Prince of peace . . . of His government no end, upon the throne of David".

Notice that both Zacharias and Mary say to Gabriel, "How?"

For Zacharias, the promise of a son seemed too late. For Mary the promise of a son seemed too early. But there is a difference as they question Gabriel respectively. With Zacharias it is the "how" of unbelief, of incredulity and doubt. It is a failure to trust God's promises and God's power. With Mary it is the "how" of a trusting believing child, asking in simplicity for an enlargement of the divine message. Zacharias is accordingly rebuked and is stricken deaf and dumb for his unbelief. Mary however, is further blessed with a more full and detailed account of what God was about to do. God delights in the trust of His dependent people and He ministers to them in proportion to that trust.

Mary's child was to be conceived supernaturally, outside of the order of nature. The Holy Spirit, the power of that same El Elyon, the Most High, would come upon her and overshadow her, and her son would be the Son of God. Heaven was bringing Mary into the divine plan. Her Child would be the Seed of the woman. She was to be that virgin mother of prophecy. It was a big thing that was being asked of Mary. A virgin mother? The people of Nazareth would never believe her story. Nor indeed would Joseph, apart from divine assurance. Mary must have been aware of what the future held for her. Misunderstanding! Scandal! Slander! Cruel insinuations of immorality from those who were themselves immoral. Mary must have, in that moment, anticipated it all, but in beautiful submissiveness she simply says, "Behold the bondmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word". Gabriel, content, departs from her.

In such circumstances, when God is peculiarly working, godly souls are inevitably drawn together. Mary journeys in haste to the hill country, to the house of Zacharias. Mary salutes Elizabeth. Elizabeth blesses Mary. They rejoice together. Elizabeth has, in holy discretion, hidden herself for those five months. Hidden in hill country the two women converse about God's things. How beautiful a scene is this. An old woman and a maiden with kindred interest in what God is doing. Luke's Gospel abounds with godly women. It has been likened to the Beautiful Gate of the temple that opened onto the Court of the Women. Here are two of these women, communing together, morally and spiritually on a higher plane than the world around them, and elevated in their thoughts far above the thinking of the men of Judea and Galilee.

Mary's song has been preserved for us, enshrined in the Word of God, and called by many, "The Magnificat". It was Mary's response to Elizabeth's blessing. Notice how Elizabeth calls Mary's unborn Child, "My Lord"! What devotion is this, and faith too, perhaps greater than that of Zacharias, her priestly husband. Mary's song ranks great with the Psalms. It reveals her heart and her character, and her deep knowledge of God and His Word and His purpose. She sings of might and of mercy, of holiness and of reverence, of love and of power. She sings of the nation, of the fathers, and of the covenant. In it all she magnifies a Saviour God who exalts the lowly and humbles the proud.

For three months these kindred spirits dwell together. What holy converse there must have been! What exulting and praise! Until they part, anticipating the imminent birth of the forerunner, and the advent, six months later, of the Messiah Himself. The incarnation! Of both forerunner and Messiah it is said, "He shall be great" (Luke 1.15). "He shall be great" (Luke 1.32). But the forerunner will one day exclaim, "He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3.30). He who cried, "Behold the Lamb," would rejoice to have us "Behold the Man."

## Messages from Muller

These are notes of addresses given by  
the late George Muller

### Jealousy for God in a Godless World

"I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts."

—1 Kings 19.10.

We have especially, dear Christian friends, to notice that we are to be jealous *for God*; for *His* honour and *His* glory, and not for our own honour and glory; not for our own reputation and name, not for our party, our ecclesiastical position, nor even for our particular religious notions. The spirit of that holy man of God, John the Baptist, when he said, with reference to the Lord Jesus, "He must increase, but I *must* decrease" (John 3.30), should be aimed after by us. The more we are willing, like him, to go down in our own esteem, and in seeking our own honour, the more we are fit to

be used by the Lord; and He will also see to it that we are honoured by Him, because we seek to honour Him (1 Sam2.30).

As in everything, so in jealousy, or zeal, for the honour of God, our adorable Lord Jesus is to us the perfect example, whom we have to set before us, and whom we have to seek to imitate. But in order to be able in *any degree* to imitate Him, we have,—

1. Through faith in Him to obtain spiritual life; for we are naturally “dead in trespasses and sins.” We have therefore, naturally, no desire whatever to seek the honour of God : yea, are unconcerned about it when He is dishonoured. But when we have become the children of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus, and are thus reconciled to God, and have our sins forgiven, we begin to seek to please God, seek to honour Him, and desire that others, too, should honour Him and please Him.

2. This zeal for God allows of an increase or a decrease *in ourselves*; and it will be found to increase, in the measure in which our own hearts are practically entering into the loveliness of the nature and character of God. We have therefore to seek for ourselves to become more and more convinced of the graciousness of God, of His love, His bountifulness, His kindness, His pity, His compassion, His readiness to help and bless, His patience, His faithfulness, His almighty power, His infinite wisdom; in a word, we have to seek to know God, not according to the views of men, or even according to the notions of Christians generally, but according to the revelation He has made of Himself in the Holy Scriptures, in order to have our hearts filled with love to Him, so that we may be earnestly longing to honour Him, and seek to stir up others to honour Him.

3. Our Lord Jesus knew the Father perfectly: He came out of His bosom. Moreover, as the perfect Man, the Servant of the Father, He meditated day and night in the Holy Scriptures (Ps. 119). The more we, the children of God, meditate in the Holy Scriptures, the more perfectly we shall become acquainted with the true loveliness of God, and the more shall we therefore ourselves seek to please Him, and the more shall we seek to stir up others to acquaint themselves with Him, that they may please Him.

4. There never was a time when it was not true regarding the

world what the Apostle John says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5.19). Hence the deep importance that all the children of God in this godless world should seek to bring honour to God, live for God, be as lights in the world, manifest their zeal for the glory of God. In seeking to do so they may meet with many difficulties, but God will help them and strengthen them, if they pray to Him for help, and expect help from Him. They may find themselves sometimes almost alone, or quite alone, in their path in seeking to glorify God, as was the case with some men of God of old; but the more alone, the greater the importance to live for God, to seek zealously His glory, and the greater the reward of grace at last for doing so. Sometimes also it may appear as if we thus lived and laboured in vain for God; but the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures is the very reverse; for it is written, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15.58). Again, it is written, "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6.9).

As we are drawing nearer and nearer the close of the present dispensation, spiritual darkness, departure from the Holy Scriptures, and consequent ungodliness, we have reason to believe, will increase more and more, though coupled with a form of godliness (see 1 Tim. 3.1-5); therefore the path of a true disciple of the Lord Jesus will become more and more difficult; but for this very reason it is of so much the more importance to live for God, to testify for God, to be unlike the world, to be transformed from it. If we desire that thus it may be with us, it is needful that we give ourselves to the prayerful reading of the Holy Scriptures with reference to ourselves. The Bible should be to us the Book of books; all other books should be esteemed little in comparison with the Bible. But if this is not the case, we shall remain babes in grace and knowledge.

And now, beloved fellow-disciples, how many of us are in heart purposed to live for God, to be zealous for God, and to be truly transformed from the world? We have but one brief life here on earth. The opportunities to witness for God by our life will soon be over; let us therefore make good use of it. Let none among us allow his life, nor even a small part of it, to be wasted, for it is given to us to be used for God, to His glory, in this godless world.

# THE ATONEMENT (5)

by William Blane

## Part II

The glorious Gospel will effect  
The gath'ring in of that Elect  
Which, long before time had begun,  
God did foresee would trust His Son;  
And whom He therefore did destine  
To be conformed by power divine  
Into His image, and to be  
His "glorious Church," from blemish free.  
But this, though known and valued much,  
Doth not the great Atonement touch.  
True, 'twas the special *treasure* sought,  
But, for it, all the *field* was bought.  
"Christ loved the Church," and in His love  
Did for her die, that she above  
Might be the partner of His throne.  
But she is not the fruit alone  
That from the "Corn of Wheat" doth grow,  
Which He on Calvary did sow.  
Think of the souls before the flood  
Who trusted in the Living God—  
Of Abr'am and the saints of old  
Who died in faith, as we are told—  
Of Israel's thousands who foresaw  
The *End* of all their shadowing law—  
Of nations, tribes, and kindreds who  
Have lived and died and never knew  
Of Revelation's glorious light,  
With whom the judge shall do the right.  
Then, death takes half our race away  
In infancy and childhood's day;  
These, through th' Atoning work, are His  
Who said, "Of such the kingdom is."  
Then let our minds reach on before,  
Till times of tribulation sore  
Shall overtake the sons of men,  
And see the grace of God e'en then  
In sealing thousands as His own;  
Then, turn with John to yonder throne—



See gathered there from every land  
That countless, white-robed, praising band,  
Who, in the Tribulation great,  
For God and Truth their lives did hate.  
Then think of the millennial bliss,  
When Christ shall reign in righteousness;  
A thousand years of peace sublime  
Shall be enjoyed in every clime.  
Then, on the merits of His blood  
He shall the whole creation flood  
With waves of blessing, rich and free,  
For He shall reign from sea to sea;  
And then, as now, for every breath  
All shall be debtors to His death.  
And when that scene has passed away,  
And all is one eternal day—  
When gathered is that myriad throng,  
Who through the Cross to Him belong,  
From Adam to the latest one  
Who'll trust the work on Calv'ry done,  
"The travail of His soul" He'll see,  
And satisfied His heart shall be.  
And as to all eternity  
He leads that shining company  
From fount to fount of pure delight,  
'Mid still increasing glory bright,  
Where He shall to their gaze unfold  
Those glories which have ne'er been told;  
For ever at each fresh display  
Of love, and grace, and glory, they  
Shall fall adoring at His feet,  
Forget all heaven in worship meet,  
And gladly to His glory own  
That, through the Atoning work alone,  
They have a title to be there,  
To see Him, and His glory share.

The cherubim of dreadful ire,  
The seraphim with Mercy's fire,  
All angels, the Archangel too,  
Shall reap eternal blessing through  
The death of Christ. For while therein  
They see God's estimate of sin

And fear, they also there can see  
His love revealed beyond degree;  
Which firmer confidence inspires,  
And tunes all heaven's unceasing lyres,  
In loftier strains than e'er before,  
To swell His praise for evermore.

The Father who receives the lost,  
The Son who paid in blood the cost,  
The Holy Spirit of all grace,  
Who leads them to their resting-place—  
The great eternal, triune God,  
The Source from whom Life's river flowed,  
The Goal to which its course doth tend—  
Beginner of all things and End,  
Finds in th' Atonement such a rest  
As seraph tongues have ne'er expressed.  
God's perfect bliss shall ever be  
Around His shining throne to see  
His ransomed through the Cross enjoy  
Pleasures for aye without alloy.  
To all creation—land and sea—  
Each blade of grass, each flower and tree,  
To fish and reptile, fowl and beast,  
And to mankind (deserving least)  
Each dawning day fresh blessing brings  
On Mercy's long-enduring wings;  
And every drop of dew and rain,  
And ray of light and sheaf of grain,  
And universal blessing giv'n  
To guilty man by gracious Heaven,  
And all the pleasant things of earth,  
Proclaim the great Atonement's worth.  
But for th' Atonement who can tell  
Why earth is favoured more than hell?  
Why fallen man such good receives,  
While fallen angels nought relieves.  
But all these blessings are no more  
Than earnest of what lies before.  
Creation now sin's bondage owns,  
But, hopeful for redemption, groans,  
And waits the time of joy and peace,  
When sin and sorrow, all shall cease.

To earth O what a joyful day!  
 The long-felt curse shall flee away,  
 And all creation, free, shall raise  
 One universal shout of praise.  
 The mountains and the hills shall sing,  
 The woods with joyful voices ring;  
 For Nature all afresh shall bloom;  
 And earth primeval bliss resume.  
 The raging sea, hushed to a calm,  
 Shall murmur a millennial psalm,  
 And all its inmates peaceful be,  
 Alike from fear and hatred free:  
 While man to man, from shore to shore,  
 "Know ye the Lord," shall say no more.  
 And when the righteous King of Peace  
 Proclaims Creation's sweet release  
 From all the curses of the Fall,  
 'Twill to His death ascribe it all,  
 And, joyful for a thousand years,  
 Shall reap what He has sown in tears.

*to be continued.*

## EPHESIANS EXPOUNDED

by A. D. THROPAY (California)

### Paper 9

#### III. A Resting Place For God

A. God's household — verse 19b

B. The foundation — verse 20a

C. The Chief Corner Stone, Jesus Christ Himself — verse 20b

B. The frame — verse 21

A. God's habitation — verse 22

We are members of the immediate family of God. God desires that His family should have a place to live. This house is called a Temple.

*B. The foundation — verse 20a*

—**And are built:** (epoikodomēthentes — aorist, passive particle

of epoikoidomeō) “To build upon.” The passive voice indicates that it is another person (God) who built them upon the foundation.

—**upon:** (epi) Resting upon. With the Genitive case it emphasizes contact. (Dana and Mantey)

—**the foundation of the . . . :** The genitive is variously understood. (1) Genitive of apposition = “consisting of . . .” (2) Genitive of possession = “belonging to . . .” (3) Genitive of origination = “laid by . . .”

—**the Apostles and Prophets:** Note that there is one article with two nouns. “The omission of tōn (the article) before prophētōn (prophets) does not necessarily identify the Apostles and Prophets as one and the same persons; . . . It indicates, however, that they both belong to the same class.” (Expositors) So Darby, etc.

Those people who are saved and who belong to the immediate family of God, are built and resting on the very same foundation on which the apostles and prophets rested. In fact, it is the same foundation which was laid by them.

—**Jesus Christ Himself:** These words are placed in such a way that they may go with what has just been previously stated as well as with what follows. (1) Jesus Christ is the foundation that has been laid by the apostles and prophets and upon whom every believer rests.

Cp. 1 Corinthians 3.11 It is not only truth about Him, but He Himself that is the foundation. (2) Jesus Christ Himself is also . . .

### *C. The Chief Corner Stone—verse 20b*

—**being the Chief corner stone:** or “The Headstone of the corner.” This is the most important stone. It is the stone on which the entire structure rests and depends for its existence. Compare Isaiah 28.16 where the foundation and the chief corner stone are the same. “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tired stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”

*B. The frame—verse 21.*

- In whom:** We are not only built UPON Him as the foundation, but IN Him as the uniting bond between the stones.
- all the building:** (Some manuscripts omit the article. Thus the Revised Version translates it, “every building.” However, the context favours the King James Version. Also, even if the article is omitted, the law of the article would allow the KJV translation). The Temple of Solomon is likely in mind.
- fitly framed together:** (sunarmologeō — This word is used only here and in 4.16) In the passive voice, it means to be fitly joined or framed together by another’s power. The structure is progressively closer and firmer together. When Solomon ordered the building of the temple, every stone was hewn and shaped prior to placing it in its position at the temple site. There was no sound of a hammer or any other tool at the temple site. All stones were fitly framed together in their proper position. I Kings 6.7 says, “And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” God places us in the building where it pleases Him.
- growth:** (auxanō) To grow or increase as a result of having life. Used of plants, fruit, etc. See Matthew 6.28. The stones in the temple are “living stones.” I Peter 2.5
- unto:** (eis) With a view towards. This indicates the incompleteness of the temple at the present time.
- an holy temple:** (naon) An inner temple consisting of the two sections, the holy place and the holiest of all.
- in the Lord:** This refers to the Lord Jesus. As the Lord of the temple, He oversees the building process and maintains its holiness.

*A. God’s habitation — verse 22*

- In Whom:** Again referring to the Lord of verse 21. THE SON
- ye:** Referring to the readers of this letter.
- also:** (kai) This word points to the dignity of the present

position. They were not excluded. They were included as well as all other believers.

—**are builded together:** (sunoikodomeō) In the present tense and passive voice this word means “are being built closely together with.” The previous context would indicate that this has reference to the fact that believers from among Jew and Gentile groups are built together, united in the same temple.

—**for:** (eis) unto, with a view towards

—**an habitation:** (katoikētērion) A permanent dwelling place or living quarters. Contrast Revelation 18.2, “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” This word is only used in these two places in scripture.

—**of God:** In contrast to the great Babylon of man’s religion, the home of demons, this spiritual temple composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the dwelling place of GOD himself. THE FATHER.

—**through:** (en) Literally, “in.” As the element of the life; each living stone is surrounded and engulfed by the presence and power of. . .

—THE SPIRIT:

NOTE: The Trinity is actively involved in the building of God’s temple as well as in our access to the Father (verse 18).

### **CORRECTION**

In the last issue, No. 241, an article entitled “God’s Will and Man’s Independency”, on the front cover was wrongly attributed to the late W. Rodgers. It was correctly stated at the commencement of the article in the magazine that it was by the late Thos. Newberry. We apologise for any confusion caused by this error.

# Lessons from the Life of David

By J. Burnett, (Dunfermline, Scotland)

## 2(a) — David and his Family

The previous paper concluded by indicating that we would continue by considering David and his relationship with three members of his family circle: viz. his father Jesse, his brother Eliab and his son Solomon. We shall highlight practical lessons from the first of these.

### 1. WITH HIS FATHER JESSE — THE RESPECT HE SHOWED

In 1 Sam. 17.20 David is described in a three fold way — A SERVANT; A STEWARD; A SON.

#### (a) AS A SERVANT

We read that David rose up early in the morning. That day he was set on visiting his brethren to seek after their welfare — thus he woke early that particular morning. Spiritually this depicts a young man who in the full bloom of first love was attending to the things of God. Before him lay a life of service for he was destined in the counsel of Divine Purpose to “serve his own generation by the will of God.” There is something good and healthy and wholesome about all this. This is not a man giving to God the dregs of life, having yielded to the world the best years of his life. In Psalm 92.14 we read that those who are planted in the house of the Lord will STILL bring forth fruit in old age — the word “still” is important and gives us to see that the process of fruit bearing had begun early and not in old age itself. Not that we would lightly esteem the autumn fruits of life because very often they prove to be the sweetest and the choicest. Nevertheless habit must begin at the dawn of one’s spiritual experience. What we are in old age will be determined by what we were in the morning of life for it is then that the course is set.

Many young people are understandably concerned about their education, career, their desire to marry and have a family etc. Above all this we would beg of any young believer reading these words to give the Lord His rightful place and never allow the things of earth to squeeze out the interests of God. It has been

said, "Before you were saved it was a matter of Heaven or Hell; after you are saved it is a question of Heaven or Earth." The saintly R. C. Chapman of Barnstable once said in a similar vein, "Before I was saved I was afraid to DIE, but after I was saved I was afraid to LIVE."

Let us ensure that we spend the rest of our time not according to the lusts of the flesh but according to the will of God. The following words impressed the author as a young believer,

"Oh' for a will to will God's will  
And then to will is well  
The willing will that wills God's will  
Within God's will will dwell."

### (b) AS A STEWARD

Again we read that he left the sheep with a keeper. This is another feature of great beauty which marked young David. Knowing that he would be absent for a season he ensured the few sheep would be in safe hands.

What promise and potential there was in David especially when we remember that God had in mind a far greater responsibility for him in relation to the people of God. Thus was the Lord testing him.

### (c) AS A SON

Finally we learn in the same verse that David did as his father Jesse commanded him. The lesson is — the man who has never learned to submit will never be fit to lead. David did not argue or question his father's wish. He simply obeyed the voice of Jesse. Here once more David was being proved. The family home was becoming a training ground for David where precious lessons were being learned that would stand him in good stead for days to come.

Before leaving this, please note that he is called the son of Jesse on two occasions. 2 Sam.23.7, "These be the last words of David the Son of Jesse." In Psalm 72.20, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." It is important to note that these references are to the end of his life. David never forgot he was the son of Jesse always remembering his upbringing, the simple source from which he sprung. We have nothing to be proud of and do well to remember the hole of the pit from whence we were digged. Many years ago a well known Irish brother said, "Go Slow, Keep Low, Don't Blow." Timely words indeed.

*(to be continued)*



# A Prophetic Perusal

by E. G. Parmenter (Barton-on-Sea)

## 3. The Rise of the Man of Sin

Consequent upon the fall of man (Gen. 3) there was introduced a world system at the head of which is Satan, who purposed in his heart to attempt all the functions of God. In His wisdom God is permitting Satan to work his system, to attempt the ambition in his heart and to manifest increasingly his authority. But Satan's dominion is limited, and any direction of the governments of the world which he exercises, is by "Permission from God"

Under the restraining hand of God, Satan is now in authority over an unregenerate world; and the unsaved are unconsciously organised and federated under his leading. As to the Satanic system — Satan is its governing head.

Three times the Lord Jesus referred to Satan as the prince of the satanic system

John 12.31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out".

John 14.30 "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me"

John 14.11 "Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged."

Satan is revealed as the recognised head of this world system—

1 John 4.14 "Because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

1 John 5.19 "And we know that we are of God and the whole world lieth in the wicked one."

Satan is set forth as having direct control of the physical well-being of his subjects. In Luke 13.16 we read of a woman bound by Satan, 'lo these eighteen years.' At the same time he is able by special permission to gain access to the people of God. In Job 1 & 2 God said to Satan, 'behold all that he hath is in thy power only upon himself put not forth thine hand.' Luke 22.31 'Simon,

Simon Satan hath desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee . . .’

All that is in the Satanic system is summed up like this — “The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world”, 1 John 2.16. Satan’s system is wholly self centred; and without any thought of God. Satan (though proposing to supercede the Almighty) is not omnipotent but his power and the extent of his activity are immeasurably increased by the co-operation of his host of demons.

Satan is not omniscient: yet his knowledge is greatly extended by the combination of his wisdom and observation of his subjects.

Satan is not omnipresent:— but he is able to call up an unceasing host who are so numerous as to be called legion.

Satan’s motive is to become “Like THE MOST HIGH” The object of worship. He is working to this end, promoting a condition of society where he will be received as supreme. The increasing irreverence and lawlessness toward God is the sure preparation of the forthcoming manifestation of himself as predicted in Dan. 11; 2 Thess. 2; Rev. 13.

The satanic ideal is an improved social order. The satanic message is reformation and self development. Satan in his imitation of the Most High is working toward a universal kingdom of morality and peace upon earth, a moral and cultured people who will be devout worshippers of himself. A programme, resulting in a brotherhood of man with himself on the throne, drawing men from their reverence of God, that they may acknowledge and worship him, obtaining at last publicly and openly worship as God by the world.

### **HOW DOES SATAN PURPOSE TO ACHIEVE HIS END?**

Dan. 2.27-49 records The Dream of Destiny. With the exception of the feet all is now history, the 10 toes of the image refer to 10 kings as Daniel in his interpretation indicates, “in the days of those kings”, the kingdoms of the 10 kings will be democratic in their rule, that is government by the people. Such will have the strength of the iron and the brittleness of the clay, but as iron and earthenware just do not mix together, so a democratic form of government is always nebulous.

Dan. 7 is a continuation of what we have in chapter 2. This dream is given to Daniel. Of the four beasts which Daniel sees,

attention is focussed on the fourth beast which has 10 horns, these are interpreted as 10 kings (v24). So in the end time we can expect 10 nations to come into prominence, each one with its own recognised ruler. Events of the present time are interesting to follow because we are seeing with some rapidity, nations coming into prominence with a desire to co-operate with each other.

Rev. 17 pictures a great religious power in the end of time under the figure of a harlot which will greatly influence the 10 nations and for a while will direct the course of these 10 kings.

Dan. 7.8,20 reveals that among the 10 horns, another little horn i.e. a remarkable personage, is to arise.

Rev. 6 tells of the loosing of the seven seals, the first of which produces a horse with a rider. The horse as a prophetic figure always denotes conquering power. The first seal has a specially interesting character because of the peaceful time which it foreshadows. A rider on a white horse is seen to go forth conquering and to conquer i.e. he has a career of astonishing and continuing success.

Dan. 7.8,20 relates that three of the 10 kings dispute the authority of this statesman. He uproots them, giving a display of his power, consequent upon which he will either reinstate them or replace them, in that way he will have established his authority over the 10 kings.

With the winds of divine judgment restrained, until the servants of God have been sealed in their foreheads (Rev. 7). There will be a period of calm and prosperity which will be increased by the political measures of this little horn, the rider on the white horse. A treaty will be made with the many Jews at Jerusalem (cf Isa 18.1-7). He will confirm this treaty for a period of seven years at which point the seventieth week of Daniel 9, those last all important 7 years, will have their commencement.

This remarkable personage who will be unique in his character, time and undertakings is the little horn of Dan. 7; The 'desolater' Dan. 9.27; The 'wilful king' Dan. 11.36; The 'man of sin' 2 Thess. 2.4-8; The 'rider on the white horse' Rev. 6.2; The 'first beast' Rev. 13. He will be the last Gentile world ruler and the most God dishonouring. His reign is prophesied in detail in Dan. 11.36-39. Whose mouth speaking great things. Whose look is more imposing than others. He will make war with the saints. He

will have a colossal disregard for God. A hatred of the true Messiah, and to him Satan gives all the glory and power he first offered to Christ (Luke. 4.5-6).

In Rev. 12 we have a graphic picture of Satan in conflict with Michael and their respective armies of angels, resulting in his banishment from heaven. In great wrath that his time is short he will pour forth his wrath on earth, and there will commence great tribulation. It will be at this time, midway through those all important 7 years, that Satan will give to the man of sin, the first beast, his power and his throne and great authority (Rev. 13.2).

The first and most important thing to be stated is "that one of his heads was as it were wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed". This might well mean, that Satan will attempt to imitate, in the man of sin, that which was the supreme miracle of the Christ, His death and resurrection.

The effort is plainly effective — v3 "All the world wondered after the beast", and after they wondered they worshipped v4. First they worshipped Satan who performed the miracle. Then they worshipped the beast saying — who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? v4.

The terrible blasphemy of the man of sin seen in 2 Thess. 2 is here more vividly pictured, and for 42 months, the last half of the seven years, he will be permitted to continue and by overwhelming supernatural power and wisdom he will gain authority over all in the Satanic system "excepting those in the Lamb's Book of Life" Rev. 13.8.

Rev. 13 in its 2nd part presents another mighty person who is called a beast and later appears as the false prophet Rev. 19.20. He exercises all the power of the first beast, but his mission is not to attract attention to himself. He co-operates by gaining worldwide worship and the authority for the first beast. Whose deadly wound was healed. He compels loyalty to the first beast:

1. Fire is called down from heaven
2. He deceives the people by means of miracles.
3. He suggests they make an image to the beast which he makes to live and to speak, compare Matt. 24.15.
4. He will establish a union of all people in trade, imposing a death penalty upon them — and by all these means he furthers the interest of the first beast.

Then there will be upon the earth that travesty of the holy trinity, a counterpart of the Godhead. Satan — Anti— God. First Beast — Anti — Christ, Second beast — Anti — Spirit.

The future world ruler who is to appear on the earth heading up a 10 Kingdom confederacy, with superhuman power, ascribed to Satan, will be the climax of all satanic exaltation and opposition to God. This last and greatest of earthly rulers, from his position of unsurpassed influence, speaking great words, manifesting great wisdom and great miracles performed by himself and by his prophet will be accepted by God. The people will first marvel and wonder, then they will worship at his feet and at last in mad devotion they will challenge the universe to produce his equal. "Who is like the beast?" So the man of sin will appear as the culmination of all the counterfeit methods of Satan, he will rule the world.

This programme of Satan (permitted in the purpose of God), will only be for a moment: For the resistless coming of the Ancient of Days, will unveil all this deception, and banish all the enemies, and bring in His own long predicted and glorious reign of everlasting blessedness.

The Devil's — Superman, Statesman, World Magnate, Constituted head of a vast, popular, but false religious system deceiving them that dwell on the earth, is only such, until He come whose right it is to reign, our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the page of scripture and of eternal history two men stand out as exact opposites.

The Lord Jesus — The man of righteousness.

The Man of Sin — The culmination of all wickedness.

The Lord Jesus — Humbled Himself.

The Man of Sin — Exalts himself.

Jesus declined when they would have made him a king.

The Man of Sin takes the place of a king and will exalt himself.

The Lord Jesus — was rejected, crucified

The Man of Sin — accepted, acclaimed and worshipped.

'In all things He must love the pre-eminence'

—(to be continued)

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# DILIGENTLY REVISED

*by John Glenville (Saltash)*

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Owing to the fact that the university presses of Oxford and Cambridge were jointly publishing The Revised English Bible, a thorough reworking of the New English Bible of 1970, the London 'Times' dated 23rd September, 1989 used the above title for its second leading article regarding the principles of Biblical translation.

This editorial finally averred that "the new translation must make its way in what has always been a ferociously competitive part of the market place". If I am permitted to utilize William Cowper's words "God's most Holy Book was never meant, was never used before" to be merely a chattel of common commerce; rather, indeed, an instrument for our "common salvation" making us wise to this noble goal.

However, it is para. 7 of 'The Times' article which concerns the present writer: "it will surprise large numbers of people living north of Watford to learn that "thee" and "thou" are antiquated forms of address reminiscent of the vocabulary of 19th century clergymen" to which one might add, the West Country, too.

The English language has never entered the portals of the Divorce Court for the purpose of divorcing the second person singular, to which it is indissolubly wedded. Consequently the usage of "you" and "your" in addressing Deity is tantamount to acknowledging the worship of a plurality of gods.

It has been observed in Gospel meetings that during the opening and closing prayers the ears of the hearers have been regaled (or rather assailed) by a repetitive banal barrage of "you" and "your".

If the preacher were a novice then he could be helped and suitably instructed. Sadly, the preachers are either overseers of many years standing, or able brethren acting in defiance.

Incidentally this defiant attitude is insidiously creeping into other areas of assembly life, which are not within the province of his current article. Now this is the language of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in Canberra, 7th-20th February, 1991, e.g. "your presence" "your friendship" "you yourself" and much more of that ilk.

Understandably they "worship they know not what" (see John 4.22), and if this now occasions alarm amongst some of our evan-

gelical friends, what foreboding is thereby engendered when assembly overseers lack the saintly intelligence to distinguish 'Thou' and 'You'.

Even 'The Times' secular editorial puts us to shame. Did not the Lord Jesus Christ say that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"(Luke 16.8)?

Unless this rot is not peremptorily stopped assemblies will continue to be undermined and the sad haunting lament of Isaiah 59.14 echoed, "for truth is fallen in the street" — not the street leading to the common market place, but "through one street" (Acts 12.10) which leads to where many were gathered together praying" (v12).

## COMFORTING THOUGHTS

*by Nelson MacDonald (Scotland)*

The Lord Jesus exhorts us in Matt. 11. 29 to "learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart:" He is meek and will not give offence, He is lowly and will not take offence. One has said,

"Learn to know Christ, thou needest no more obtain,  
But if thou knowest Him not, all knowledge is vain."

Matt. 11.29 — Learning to Know

1 Peter 2.2 — Longing to Grow

Matt. 13.3 — Labouring to Sow

Ephes. 4.1 — Living to Show

Phil. 3.20 — Looking to Go.

*In Knowing Him:*

- i) we know the Inscrutable — John 17.3
- ii) we hear the Inaudible — 1 John 1.1
- iii) we see the Invisible — 1 John 1.1
- iv) we touch the Intangible — 1 John 1.1
- v) we believe the Impossible — Heb. 11. 1,6

*It is amazing to know that God has revealed Himself to us in all His fulness. He is:*

- i) the God of Eternity — none can CHANGE Him,
- ii) the God of Omniscience — none can COUNCIL Him,
- iii) the God of Omnipotence — none can CONQUER Him,
- iv) the God of Omnipresence — none can CONTROL Him.

*In Psalm 139.5, we read "thou hast beset me behind and before, and hast laid thine hand upon me."*

"Behind me" — that's the past,

"Before me" — that's the future,

"Thine hand upon me" — that's the present.

No wonder v 6 reads, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:

it is high, I cannot attain unto it." It is a tremendous thought to be in and controlled by, His hand. Deuteronomy 33.3 has often been a comfort to the saints of God. "Yea He loved the people: all His saints are in Thy hand: and they sat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words."

"He loved the people"	— Loved by His heart
	— the place of Affection,
"His saints are in Thy hand"	— Locked in His hand,
	— the place of Assurance,
"sat down at Thy feet"	— Learning at His feet,
	— the place of Accumulation.

The following poem about His hand was a blessing to the writer and he took the liberty of adding a little heading to each verse.

*Powerful Hands — John 10. 27-30.*

We'er in His hand, that mighty hand, which flung a universe in space,  
That guides the sun and moon and stars, and holds the planets in their place.

*Physician's Hands — Mark 1.31-34, 41,42.*

We'er in His hand, that skilful hand, that made the blinded eyes to see,  
That touched the leper, cleansed and healed, and set the palsied sufferer free.

*Practical Hands — John 6.10, Matt. 19.13.*

We'er in that hand, that loving hand, that lifted children to His breast,  
That fed the hungry multitudes, and beckoned weary hearts to rest.

*Pierced Hands — Psalm 22.6, Zech. 12.10, John 19.34*

We'er in His hands, those pierced hands, once nailed to Calvary's cruel tree,  
Where there in agony and blood, He paid the price to set us free.

*Priestly Hands — Luke 24.50, Mark 16.19, Acts 1.11.*

Those hands still outstretched to bless His people, wayward feet to guide,  
Till dawn shall break and shadows flee, when He shall come to claim His bride.

*Pure Hands — Psalm 24.4, Job 17.9.*

Then in those saint thronged courts above, from every clime and land,  
With wondering joy we'll look on Him, who kept us safely in His hand.

What a comfort to know Him and the serenity, security and authority of HIS HANDS.



## **MY CONVERSION AND CALL (19)**

**by W. D. Halliday (Zambia)**

I wanted above all things to be an engineer at sea; on my mother's side our folk were fishermen living at Portrush, and I suppose the liking for the sea stemmed from that. My greatgrandfather was lost at sea off the Skerries as he and other fishermen went to assist a schooner in distress on which his brother was a member of the crew. Through lack of work in that area my grandparents, with their small family, moved to Belfast towards the end of the last century.

I was born after the first world war. My father had been a prisoner throughout the war and returned a physical wreck, but was able to drive a tram to provide for his family. He was always in and out of hospital and it was a common sight to see him wear the blue uniform of the U.V.F. Hospital. He died in 1930 when I was just eleven years old; I missed him a lot as he was a very kind and loving father.

With the bread-earner no more we moved into a very small house the rent of which Mother could afford from the small war pension which she got. I was anxious to get a job to have money to enable me to enjoy the world and go to sea; eventually my worldly desires began to be fulfilled when I got the job in the Sirocco Engineering Works, Belfast. God was in this as work was hard to find. I soon entered into all that men in such places enjoyed, but one day as I spoke to a man by the name of John Jackson he promptly told me that I was a sinner going to hell. I did not resent that as I knew it to be true. With my up bringing in a God-fearing home I believed that from my childhood. I always dreaded death and there was a lot of it during the depression years. Mother always insisted that we go to "church" which was an exercise I loathed. We had to attend Sunday School too. In those days the teachers were saved men and women and I am sure they taught us the gospel and prayed for our salvation, but, sorry to say, I had never taken it in and thought that to reach heaven, one would have to be good and

attend "church". That perhaps is the reason we called Christians "good living people". Not wanting such things I settled for a life of pleasure and at the end of the day take what was coming to me. But on being told so emphatically that I was a sinner going to hell I could not get rid of the thought. I was afraid to die and find myself in hell.

At that time of my apprenticeship I helped to look after the air-compressors and repair pneumatic machines and tools so I was able to go around the firm without being asked any questions. On one of my walks I found myself in the boiler-house where our late brother Tommy Maxwell (Matchett St., Belfast) worked. He was talking to John Jackson and John asked him if he had ever spoken to me about my soul. I had always kept clear of "good living people" so I never went close to Tommy. I was now in a different mood and on many, many occasions after that I went to Tommy who faithfully told me God's way of salvation and the outcome if I refused it. I trembled at the thought of being in hell and many a sleepless night I had as I thought of dying without Christ. I was in no way passive, but put up my arguments and tried to make out that Tommy in his own way could enjoy the world, but he was endued with spiritual wisdom. During one of our chats he told me that he had been speaking to a brother the previous evening and had mentioned me to him. He told me that the brother said that he would go home immediately and pray for me. I thought this was most serious when someone who didn't know me should go to his home to pray for me. Tommy had noticed my deep concern and was seeking the prayers of the Lord's people. Even though I was in distress and my concern was being seen I was still unsaved. One morning as I travelled to work on my bicycle I realised my pleasure seeking life was taking me to hell. Immediately thought if that be the case it is time I got clear of the things which I am going in for and enjoying. I had no idea how I was going to change. I was one of the "boys" and certain things centred around me. But God continued to deal further. I had acknowledged that my sins were taking me to hell and that my pleasure seeking life was hindering me from going to heaven and was taking me to hell. On such a confession the Holy Spirit — then I knew nothing of His work-

ings with sinners — brought before me: “Whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.” I did not know it was the Word of God. It is possible that I learnt it in Sunday School or in day school or perhaps Tommy Maxwell had quoted it to me. Those words never left me, day and night they were in my thoughts. I had never been to a meeting, and had never heard the gospel preached. I am sure, too, if I had been invited to a meeting I would not have gone. One day in May, 1938, as I stood upon the roof of the air-compressor house beside the water-coolers, over looking the river Lagan and the Albert bridge I cried to God to accept me. I believed: “Whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.” It was afterwards that I learnt that those words were found in John 3.15. I determined that I would tell no one as I was sure I would never be able to keep it and had no desire to be laughed at by my pals and others. So I was silent. I did not know the extent of what had taken place nor the word of 2 Cor. 5.17: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” I was a new creation and it was being noticed by the world. One by one the men who brought their pneumatic tools for repair asked: “Have you changed your way of living?” I had to admit that it was true. So the word got round and then my close companion in the works came round for a smoke and he offered one to me. I refused, “Why”, he asked “have you changed your way of living?” and on confirming that I had he immediately said: “You should have told me.” That rebuke I have never forgotten. I did not know Rom.10.9. On telling my workmate at the compressors he said: “Thank God for that.” I had never liked him and tried to make things difficult. The news spread quickly through the works and most gave me one week and it would be over, others six weeks and the end would come, and one man gave me six months. Weeks, months and years have passed and I still thank God for saving me out of a wicked sinful world and putting me in Christ. I was saved in May, 1938, but have no idea which day it was as I did not know that people remembered such dates to tell later while relating their testimonies. I know it was in May and it was a beautiful sunny day that God in His wonderful grace

saved a poor sinner like me through the sacrificial death of His Son on the cross. I had no trouble in believing, I did not know that such a problem existed, I simply accepted the word of John 3.15. My first Saturday evening as a Christian can still be well remembered. My companion was a professional footballer playing for Liverpool and as it was the off-season he was at home; and as arranged I called at his home early on the Saturday to make arrangements about our meeting and going out for the evening. He suggested that we go to the picture house, I said: "no". Then he said that we could go to the "Chapel Fields" to the boxing and again my answer was "no". So he wanted to know what was wrong and asked if I had got "good living" and I admitted that I had. He had often stood at open-air meetings, but I walked on and waited for him. He suggested that I call at six and we would go for a walk. As I was going to meet him I saw him and his father going to the tram and that was the end of the companionship.

I went down into the city alone, but unknown to me, I was ruined to the world. The lights of the cinemas and other places of amusements attracted no more. I walked through the streets not knowing one believer apart from the two who had spoken to me.

I started going to the Mission Hall on the York Road connected with the "church" where I had been sprinkled when a baby and confirmed and I was around twelve or thirteen. I knew of no where else. I attended meetings conducted by the late W. P. Nicholson in the Cripples Institute, Donegall Road; he confused me a lot as he had a number of ways a person could be saved and as I was saved none of the ways he mentioned I got into doubts, and wondered if I was really saved. One day in the works I was speaking to a brother called Sammy Shields — the late father of Mrs. McNally of the Bloomfield Assembly — when a man reared in a Christian home came along and with a sneer on his face said how that "the birds of a feather flock together". Immediately Sammy Shields replied "Yes, we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14). Immediately all doubts went, I was assured of my salvation from the Word. I knew that I was really saved because I did have a real

love for a people I had never been attracted to before. I went on my way rejoicing. I settled down with the Christians of the Mission Hall and with them I went out on to the streets for open-air meetings and this was a very big trial. To stand in front of people whom I knew and to stand in the centre of the ring to tell how I got saved was an exercise that did not come easy to me, and as I had a good strong voice I was called upon often to speak. I can't say that I looked forward to that evening in the week but I went. There was an open-air meeting each Saturday evening facing the Midland Station, York Street and I kept away from that until I was so convicted that I walked to the place in a blizzard and never missed that meeting for some-time afterwards. The Christians in the Mission Hall were very missionary-minded; and it was in October of 1938 that I told the Lord that I was willing to go to Africa if this was His will for me. That exercise and promise never left me.

The Word was being read and at every opportunity I talked about the Scriptures. Our late brother Tommy Foster (Albert-bridge Road and later Bloomfield) worked in the Sirocco Works and he was well taught in the Word and at lunch time he helped us with the Scriptures. He knew what he believed and was most firm, and with no uncertain sound taught me the proper way of gathering and his teaching made my position in the Mission Hall and Sunday School most untenable as I knew that I was in the wrong place. I was eventually put out of the Sunday School by the clergyman for teaching that confirmation would never take a person to heaven. I was realising at that time the clergy were not preaching the truth of the gospel and spoke to them about it. Once there were two visiting clergymen who did preach the gospel and faithfully warned sinners to flee from the wrath to come. They were saved men, no doubt, but in the wrong place like myself. I commenced looking around for a Scriptural place to meet, but sectarian names turned me away. So not being able to find a place without a name I decided I would try the "Brethren" the last ones I wanted to be with. I had no idea how to go about entering in that hall in Adam Street; if I had mentioned my concern to my two brethren at work they would, no doubt, have helped me in my quest for a Scriptural gathering place. However, I intro-

duced myself to the late Robert Gordon and he took me to Adam Street. On that Lord's day morning a brother ministered from Matt.18.20 and I thought that was all they had to talk about and I did not go back for a number of weeks. I was fighting against going to Adam Street as I knew the cost of separation unto Himself. The Holy Spirit was at work and I could resist no longer. I went back and one Lord's day morning waited and had a chat with the brethren. I told them that I wanted "to join the Brethren". The late Mr. David Jemphrey in a most gracious manner instructed me "more fully in the ways of the Lord". Shortly after that I was received into the assembly in May, 1940.

I should say that I had been in certain organisations, but resigned, knowing that as a Christian I should not be one with the ungodly in societies and so severed my connections with the world. My break then with the religious world was the final act of separation. I was most unpopular, but I did not mind as I was "bearing His reproach outside the camp", Heb.13.13.

My exercise to go to Africa never waned and each morning I disciplined myself to rise early to spend an hour in the Lord's presence to ascertain His will as to my going to Africa. I felt so unworthy of such a calling and I wanted to be sure of His will in such an important step. Many were the times I heard His voice from the Scriptures which I accepted. Psalm 2.8 spoke to me: "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Isa.45.1,2 let me see that when it was His will for me to go "the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee." These were some of the Scriptures used to let me see His will; but one was always with me, Isa. 55.2, "Your labour for that which satisfieth not." That made me most unsettled and I was determined to do what He wanted of me. Many were the times I sought further confirmation as I felt so unworthy and He was most gracious to give me further confirmation from His Word. The waiting time was long and the war was raging through Europe and other parts of the world. I went to the village work in the summer months and when Johnny Walker got saved he and I went into the city centre each Saturday evening for a gospel meeting. The open-air meetings held at Fountain Lane for a number of years were commenced

through our going there. At the works we had an open-air meeting close to the entrance at the lunch-hour. So in this way I was exercised about the gospel and enjoyed being a witness for my Lord.

Now being gathered unto the name of our Lord Jesus Christ my going to Africa would be much different as there would be no Mission Society involved. I knew the Lord's will and that He would open the way for my going to serve in that land. Eventually I picked up courage to mention my exercise to the elders of the assembly, they listened attentively but did not rush to commend me to the work, nor did I harass them; but eventually they did and I set sail for Africa on June 12th., 1946. Alone, I set out with confidence that it was the will of God for me. I left all that I had and went wholly depending upon God. He was with me and directed every step which I took to get me to Dipalata. My contact with Dipalata was due to my attending meetings in Albertbridge Road, Gospel Hall conducted by the late James Geddis. I decided to have a chat with him and he put before me the need of the place where he had lived and laboured. I felt that this was the place for me, and after forty-six years in the African work I am still satisfied that I did the will of the Lord.

I sailed on a troopship to Durban, South Africa. The voyage took three weeks and from Durban I got a train north to Johannesburg and another to Bulawayo, S. Rhodesia now Zimbabwe. At Bulawayo I met an American brother who had just come down from the interior and on hearing where I was bound for asked how I was going to get there. I confessed that I did not know, but would take a train to Ndola. He gave advice to send a telegram to Mr. Jim Caldwell who had moved out to the rail-head but he did not know his address. He gave me the address of the Lorch family in Chingola and off went the telegram asking J. Caldwell to meet me coming off a certain train at Ndola. The American advised me to break my journey at Livingstone to give the telegram time to arrive and find J. Caldwell. So on the appointed day on the arrival of the train there was a man looking at names on baggage and he stopped with me and introduced himself. He took me to where he was building and I

slept in a grass hut until he took me to the Lorh home in Chingola where I stayed until brother Lorh got transport for me to the Zambezi river. That was a long, long journey along two tracks through hundreds of miles of forest. We slept rough but eventually arrived at Chitakoloki and with help from there reached Dipalata. One sees how God worked for me and every step was guided by Himself. I should add that my telegram arrived at the Lorh home just when J. Caldwell called to visit them. He was building over thirty miles away, and forty miles from Ndola.

My wife and I were married in 1950 and have had a very happy life together serving the Lord in Zambia. Our only regret is that life seems to be have been very short and we trust that all we have done had been for His glory. We are not as fit as we once were but we will try to carry on in His will to see some more saved and more assemblies established to bear testimony to the Lord and the saving grace of God.

## **ASSEMBLY TESTIMONY**

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