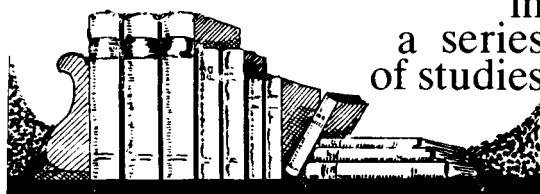


The
FIRST PRINCIPLES
of the
ONE TRUE FAITH



set forth
in
a series
of studies

J. ULLMAN

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AN INTRODUCTORY FOREWORD FOR THE TEACHER

Many times we have been questioned as to the most satisfactory method of instructing Candidates in preparation for baptism.

The queries which have been raised have been by no means uncommon: Which subjects must be correctly understood prior to baptism? Where should we commence the instruction, and how should we proceed? Does wisdom dictate that some aspects of Scripture, perhaps not strictly definable as First Principles, should be understood by the Candidate to ensure their sound grounding in the Truth?

These notes have been prepared in an attempt to answer these and other related questions. They are intended to assist teaching brethren — or those who would desire to become teaching brethren — in the preparation of Candidates for baptism.

Over the course of many years we have found these present notes to be quite adequate for their purpose. However, we would stress that the notes are published with the intention of providing some guidance for those who feel such a need; but we do not suggest that our material or format should be slavishly followed by others.

Inevitably, there will be criticism. Some may feel that we have endeavoured to cover too much ground. Others may be of the opinion that some subjects are not covered in sufficient detail. Such criticism could well be valid, but this is one of the hazards with which we have been faced in the preparation of this material. We have attempted to strike a desirable medium. All major points of doctrine have been covered without becoming (we trust) too complicated. We have tried to avoid producing a complex unwieldy work, which would have largely defeated our purpose.

The notes have been printed in loose-leaf form to permit insertion into a suitable ring-binder cover. Some teaching brethren, whilst using these notes as a guide for themselves, have also found it profitable to present the Candidate with a set of pages, relative to each particular study session. Thus the Student has a record of the matter which has been covered at each session, and may before the next study session review the matters which have been presented and discussed. This will enable the Candidate to become more thoroughly convicted as to the correct teaching of Scripture, and perhaps formulate questions on any aspects of the subject not entirely understood.

Ultimately, if the Candidate is baptised, he or she may use the notes with which they have been provided as a basis for marking their own Bibles on fundamental doctrinal matters, thereby consolidating their knowledge and also becoming more fully equipped to discuss the Truth with others.

May we offer a final word of advice? Rather than teach the Truth with the Bible in one hand and a book of notes in the other, it is much better to teach with only the Bible in hand. We therefore suggest that it is well worth the Teacher's time to carefully study these notes, and then mark their Bibles upon these doctrinal subjects. In this respect, we suggest using the "chain-marking" method. Next to the relative verse or verses, note the subject: i.e. "THE WORD INSPIRED". This helps you to pick up your references without difficulty — especially if you use a special colour ink for doctrinal subjects. Next to the subject title write in the previous reference, and the one which is to follow. For example next to Romans 15:4-6 you would write: "THE WORD INSPIRED: Ex. ISA 55:8-11, See 2 TIM. 3:14-16." This system is not only easy to follow, but it enables the Teacher to readily retrace his steps to earlier references, or go forward to the next.

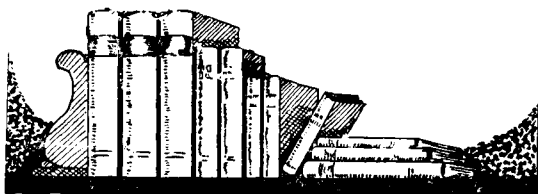
If any problems are encountered with any aspects of this work, we would be pleased to offer further assistance where required.

Finally, we would like to extend our warmest appreciation to brethren in various parts of the world who have persistently encouraged us over the course of many years to eventually publish this work. It goes forth with the prayer that others might be helped and encouraged by these Notes, and that the work of preaching the Truth might thereby be furthered, in the service of Christ and to the glory of God. — John Ullman

BASIC APPROACH TO TEACHING THE TRUTH

In instructing Candidates for baptism the Teacher should be guided by wise principles which are in accord with the divine way:

1. Mere "book" knowledge of first principles will not set an individual soundly on the path to the kingdom. A Candidate must be given a clear and correct understanding; but this must be accompanied by a firm and zealous conviction. Loyalty to Christ is manifested in an attitude of total dedication. This spirit should develop in the Candidate as instruction proceeds. And it will become more richly manifested in the Student if the same conviction is clearly in evidence in the life of the Teacher. The personal strong belief of the Teacher together with the obvious example of his dedication to Christ will greatly influence the attitude of the Candidate towards the truth.
2. There is nothing dull or boring about divine truth. It can therefore be presented in an enthusiastic and convincing manner. The Candidate will be inclined to measure the sincerity of his Teacher by the keenness and conviction he discerns in his Instructor. Genuine love for the truth can become contagious.
3. The Teacher must proceed with instruction at the pace set by the Student. An understanding of divine truth cannot be forced into the mind of an individual. There is the danger that the Teacher's grasp of fundamental principles may convince him that his pupil should comprehend the same things quickly and concisely. This is rarely the case. Care and patience are required to give a Candidate a sound, clear knowledge — and the conviction which must go with it. The Candidate should be led, simply, step by step. He or she should be encouraged to ask questions — which means that the Teacher must be thoroughly certain of his ground! The Student should be told to query any point of doctrine which has not been expounded to his complete satisfaction. A further phase of study should not be proceeded with until there is evidence of a sound understanding and conviction concerning the matter already presented.
4. If a Candidate has little idea of the message of the Bible, it is wise to commence the instruction with a relatively simple exposition concerning the *reason* for a divine revelation to mankind. The Candidate should be given a fundamental understanding of the most basic of all Bible doctrines: that of God-manifestation. The Candidate thus learns at the very beginning of his instruction *why* he should study the Bible. He will be able to grasp an initial understanding of the glorious hope which is set before all who would serve Yahweh "in spirit and in truth". (Notes provided in Studies 1 to 4 cover this vital theme).
5. Throughout the course of instruction the *moral* responsibilities which the truth demands in the individual should be stressed. In these degenerate and permissive times, the Teacher should emphasise that Yahweh calls upon us to manifest the truth mentally and morally before we will become fitted to manifest Him physically, in the perfection of divine nature.
6. There is a simple but demanding procedure which must be followed to produce sound and rewarding exposition of the word of God: the word must be studied and analysed, and its meaning laid bare. It must then be turned *inward* upon ourselves, to produce a response from the heart. This principle applies whenever and wherever the truth is expounded. If this approach is not followed, teaching becomes a mere academic exercise. The Candidate may learn the theory of the truth; but will it find a true lodgement in his heart? Will it become the instrument by which his entire attitude towards life will be changed? Mere academic knowledge of the truth will not prepare any individual for the kingdom.
7. Above all else, the Teacher should remember that he has one major objective in view: to teach the Candidate to *think* and *speak* and *act* in harmony with the divine mind. It is only by this means that the word is made flesh to the glory of God.
8. Finally, may we reaffirm that when dealing with divine things we cannot hope to teach others to do what we are not prepared to do ourselves. First and foremost, then, the Teacher must become a living example of the truth both in word and deed.



INTRODUCTION

It will be our objective to concentrate our attention upon basic principles of divine truth. It should be our mutual desire to gain a clear understanding of the fundamental message of the Bible, and to that end we shall be studying particular sections of the Bible and specific Biblical subjects. Christadelphians refer to this type of study as "First Principles". Such a knowledge of fundamental divine truth enables us to obey the instruction of the Lord Jesus Christ to be baptised (totally immersed) in water, as a means of gaining forgiveness for our sins and bringing us into covenant-relationship with the Creator. In this manner we may be directed into a way of life which can lead us — by the grace of God — into His kingdom, at the glorious appearing of His Son when he comes to take up his throne and rule over all the earth.

The notes which follow have been set out with some brevity, and mainly constitute references to Bible quotations. Explanatory notes have been provided in relation to some of the passages referred to.

Throughout, we shall be making our appeal direct to the word of God, without which nothing can or ought to be determined. Nevertheless, these notes should be reviewed with the utmost care, Bible in hand. It is a divine principle that we should "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good" so that our understanding of the message of the Bible is correct and soundly based (1 Thess. 5:21).

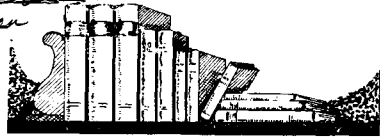
It is necessary that we "search the scriptures" to become thoroughly convicted in our minds that the exposition set out in these notes is totally in harmony with the teaching of the Bible (Acts 17:11).

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). With a confidence born of our own conviction, we invite the student to consider our Biblical exposition upon this firm foundation.

Notes

1 Thess. 2:12-13 "That ye ~~should~~ would walk worthy of
God, who hath called you unto his kingdom
and glory.
~~that ye should walk worthy of God~~

STUDY ONE



THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, AND IS INSPIRED AND INFALLIBLE

The Bible claims to be of divine origin — and provides from within its pages ample *proof* to support the claim, particularly in relation to fulfilled prophecy.

The men responsible for recording the words of the Bible wrote as God directed them. Thus, whilst many men contributed to the compilation of the Bible over the course of some 17 centuries, the real author of the book is God.

One of the most impressive proofs as to the authority and authenticity of the Bible is that, although its compilation was effected over a period of more than 1,500 years, the basic message remains uniform throughout, irrefutable, and without contradiction.

And if the Great Creator is perfect in all His ways, His word likewise must be flawless and complete. That is, in its original composition. There are many versions of the Bible in English and in other languages. The Student will find that all these renditions have their flaws and deficiencies, due to human error.

However, all alleged inconsistencies or discrepancies in the Bible may be satisfactorily reconciled if sufficient care is taken in the pursuit of sound knowledge.

Two key verses of scripture on this subject are found in 1 **Thess. 2:12-13**. In this passage we learn a number of things: the beliefs preached by the apostles were not "the word of men" — i.e. philosophies which the apostles had thought out for themselves, or adopted from other men. The apostles taught only "the word of God" and the Believers at Thessalonica were commended by Paul for receiving his preaching in that spirit. Paul stated that the things he had propounded were "the truth". And he explained that a sound knowledge of the word of God will enable Christ's disciples (in every age) to "walk worthy of God" until the coming of "His kingdom and glory. . ." (v. 12).

v.13 → When these "words" of divine origin are working in the mental processes and moral actions of individuals, the "gospel" becomes a tremendous power to transform the life of the Believer into a life that is acceptable to God (cp. Rom. 1:16). Paul wrote that the power of the word of God "effectually worketh" — or, it is "inwardly working" (Roth). The Greek word which has been rendered "effectually" is *energeo*, from which we have our English word "energy".

STUDY 1

To illustrate the meaning of these two verses, consider the operation of a power station and what it produces. Fuel (generally oil or coal) is brought in to the power station and becomes the energy which drives the turbines. The turbines are set in motion, and electricity is generated. You may then flick a switch and electricity will lighten a bulb, and light will flood forth to dispel darkness. Thus, the Bible is of divine origin; and it can become both "fuel" and "turbine" which will produce spiritual energy and flood the mind of the individual with divine "light".

Other passages which should be carefully examined in relation to this subject are:

Heb. 1:1-2; Neh. 9:30; Isa. 55:8-11; Jer. 1:5-7; Amos 3:7; Jhn. 17:17; Rom. 15:4-6; 1 Cor. 2:13; 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:14-16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21.

STUDY TWO



IT IS NECESSARY TO STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

Only through a careful study of the Bible can we come to an understanding of the will and purpose of God and gain a true knowledge concerning the Creator.

Luke 11:27-28. A "certain woman" had been deeply impressed with words she had heard the Lord speak. She commended him eloquently. However, the Lord retorted that the most important thing in life is to "hear the word of God" and "keep it". Only people of such a disposition can hope to be blessed by God.

Psalms 119:1-2. There is a specific spiritual "way" in which we should "walk." That way is "in the law of Yahweh". As Christ indicated in the passage in Luke referred to above, a blessing will come upon those who "keep His testimonies".

v. 9. We must become cleansed from our sins. There is only one way in which this may be done: by "taking heed" to the "word" of God.

v. 105. The word of God acts as a lamp to our feet. The language used here is that of a man stumbling through the blackness of night. Spiritually, we will remain in complete darkness, not knowing where or how to proceed, unless we have the "word" of God to light our way and guide us.

v. 130. When our minds absorb a true understanding of the word of God, it is like the entrance of light into a dark place. Through "the word" we get "understanding" concerning matters relating to eternal salvation.

Proverbs 13:13. To reject a true understanding of the word of God is to reject all hope of eternal life. But for all who "fear" (or reverence) the word of God there is hope of a great "reward", namely, divine nature in the kingdom of God.

Proverbs 30:5. God's word is totally reliable and infallible, and may be trusted completely because "every word" of it is "pure".

Matthew 4:4. Regular meals will keep alive only the physical body of man; and sooner or later the body will die. The only hope for a life beyond this present existence is dependent upon mentally assimilating principles of divine truth, and morally manifesting them in a way of life which is in harmony with God's will. Thus, man must "live" by "every word" which proceeds out of "the mouth of God". It is because of this basic truth that Paul used the terms "old

man" and "new man" — the former to indicate the purely natural man; the latter to define an individual who discovers a new spiritual existence (or 'birth') which comes into being as the result of the indwelling of the word of God (cp. Col. 3:9-10).

Rom. 15:4. We considered this verse in our first study. We now turn to it once again to view these words from the standpoint of our increased understanding of the Truth as a result of our first study. God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, has provided the Bible for *our* benefit. Through "learning" the things which have been "written" in God's word, we can find: "patience" and "comfort" and "hope". There is no other means in the world whereby we can be satisfied with these vital needs. We will find "patience" and "comfort" and "hope" *only* through understanding the scriptures. Emotional experiences provide no substitute for what has been "written" in the word of God. If we submit ourselves to God's guidance, as set forth in His word, He will set us — faithfully and lovingly — on the pathway which can lead us to life eternal.

Matthew 15:7-19. In these words the Lord referred to a class of people who claimed to be religious and claimed to be worshippers of the one true God. But their religious activities were entirely "in vain" because they failed to understand correctly the principles of Truth which may be found in the word of God. The Lord's words in this passage are extremely profound and challenging to every individual: If we do not "hear" and "understand" the *true* message of the Bible we can never become *true* worshippers of God.

Isaiah 8:20. In this verse, as in other passages, absence of "light" signifies lack of understanding of God's word. Isaiah here sets down the test which must be applied to anyone claiming to be a faithful servant of God and teacher of His word: If he speaks according to the word of God — i.e., if his claims can be established out of the scriptures, he speaks the *truth*. But if a man speaks "not" in harmony with the "word" of God, he has no "light" to illuminate either his own mind, or the minds of others, with divine Truth. Tragically, such a person becomes a "blind" leader of "the blind" so that both Teacher and Scholar will fall into a "ditch" (Matt. 15:14).

Note: Nowhere in the Scriptures is any allowance made for instant conversion. True faith (and hence conversion to Christ) comes in only one way: "By hearing the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Biblical teaching leaves no room for "emotional" conversions that do not reflect a true understanding of the gospel message.

1 Peter 4:11. God is glorified through Jesus Christ when His word is correctly understood and acted upon. God cannot

STUDY 2

be glorified through a *false* gospel, or an "interpretation" of the gospel which is not in harmony with the revealed facts. Thus, those who speak in the name of Christ must speak precisely in accord with the "oracles" of "God".

Galatians 1:6-8. These words summarise all that we have considered during the course of this study. The apostle Paul was totally opposed to any compromise of the One true faith (cp. Eph. 4:4-6). And we must learn to develop a similar disposition. Only *one* gospel message has the power to save. We must search it out, and understand it, believe it, and walk according thereto. There is no other way to eternal salvation.

"Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding" (Proverbs 9:6).

Notes

STUDY THREE



GOD-MANIFESTATION: THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL BIBLE DOCTRINE

The term "God-manifestation" is really quite simple to understand. It defines the fact that God has manifested Himself in various ways throughout history:

He *IS* the One Eternal Spirit. . .

He *HAS BEEN* (and is) manifested in His angels and in His Son. . .

He *WILL BE* manifested in a glorified multitude of the redeemed in the *future*.

The angels are God's servants, and they are like Him: mentally, morally and physically. Thus, when angels have been revealed to men, either in miraculous power in divine glory — or even simply in the form of men — they have been representatives of God and manifestations of Him.

When the Lord Jesus Christ came, he was a manifestation of the Father to the world: mentally and morally, even though he bore Adamic nature. He was "the word made flesh" (Jhn. 1:14). After his resurrection from the grave to the perfection of divine nature, he became a perfect reflection — and therefore "manifestation" — of Yahweh: mentally, morally and physically.

But God-manifestation will not stop at that point. Down through the ages, since the days of Abel, God has been developing character in many men and women (a character derived from an understanding of His word, and an obedience thereto) who, like the Lord Jesus Christ, will be perfected in every sense at the coming of Christ. Such men and women are being developed after the mental and moral likeness of Yahweh. They will be made physically like Him when granted divine nature at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This, then, provides a brief description of "God manifestation".

The subject will be developed further when we come to consider Genesis 1:1, and when we examine the importance of the divine Name (Yahweh) in Exodus 3.

For the present, it is important that we understand that God's purpose in effecting the creation was that He Himself might be glorified *in* His creation. As one Christadelphian writer put it: "Men were not ushered into being for the purpose of being saved or lost! God manifestation, not human salvation, was the great

purpose of the Eternal Spirit.” Which is to say that the glorifying of God in the earth, in the fullest possible sense, was the main reason for the creation; and that the eternal salvation of human beings is really secondary to God’s primary objective. God desires to become glorified in *us*, so that we — like the angels, and the Lord Jesus — will become perfect manifestations of what Yahweh is.

We wish to examine some of those references in the Bible which show us the way in which God was manifested in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:19. A verse sometimes quoted by trinitarians, but even a brief appraisal of the words shows the case of the trinitarian to be unsound. In what sense could “God the Father” be in “God the Son”, since the trinitarian argues that “God the Son” was a god in his own right, and “co-equal” with the Father? This verse makes nonsense of such speculation. Yet, “God was in Christ . . .” How could this have been so? In the fact that the Lord’s entire life — how and what he thought, how he acted, the things which he spoke — were *all* subjected to the influence of God and His word. “Though he were a son, yet *learned* he *obedience* from the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8. “By” in the A.V., has been rendered from the Greek *apo*, “from”). “My doctrine is not mine”, said Christ, “but His that *sent* me . . .” (Jhn. 7:16). The Lord Jesus lived his life by one principle only: “It becometh *us* to fulfil *all* righteousness . . .” (Matt. 3:15). This could only be done by repudiating the flesh and the evil which it produces, and *doing* the “will” of the Father (John 6:38). Thus, God was *manifested* in His Son.

Matthew 1:21-23. The mother of Jesus was told that she should name her son “Jesus” (Heb. Yahoshua) because it means “*Yah* shall save. . .” Man cannot save himself; it is a work which only God can do; hence the naming of the Saviour. But note the important words which followed: “For *he* shall save his people for their sins. . .” Are we contradicting ourselves? We do not believe so. The Lord Jesus would be able to “save” men from their “sins” because he was, in flesh, a perfect reflection of the Father’s character. Hence, “they shall call his name Emmanuel . . .” An important title (fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14) which means: “God *with us*. . .” Jesus precisely fulfilled this requirement, in the sense that we have seen.

John 14:10. Jesus could say: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” because the Son was a perfect manifestation of the Father’s *moral* excellence. The Father and the Son were not *one* identity, but one in understanding and in objective and purpose. Thus, to “see” the Son was the same as seeing the Father.

Galatians 2:20. The Lord Jesus and his apostles taught that, as

STUDY 3

the Son had manifested the Father's moral perfection, so Christ's disciples should similarly submit themselves to the will of God (see Heb. 12:9; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:6). This passage in Galatians shows how the apostle Paul applied this principle in his own life. As the Father had "lived" in Christ, so Paul stated that Christ now lived in him. The purpose of the Truth in our lives is to make us — mentally and morally — like the Father and His Son, thus preparing us for the eternal reward: divine nature so that we might live for ever, and to live and reign with Christ over all the nations in the kingdom of God for 1,000 years.

As the Lord Jesus was a manifestation of the perfect character of the Father, so we are to learn to become manifestations of the Son of God.

Some of the references which show the way in which God's purpose should be developed in our lives should be carefully considered:

Gal. 4:19; Colos. 1:27-29; Jhn. 14:23; Jhn. 17:21-22; Rom. 8:18.

Thus, if we wish to attain unto eternal salvation, we must develop a *desire* to know and understand God's word, that we might become acceptable to God:

Deuteronomy 17:18-20. The kings of Israel were to set an example to the people over whom they ruled. Individually, they were to carefully write their own copy of the entire law, so that they would become familiar with it. They were to read and study the word conscientiously. They would thus learn to become *guided* by God's word in making personal decisions and such decisions as might affect God's people. By this means they would be learning to "fear" or "reverence" Yahweh. Daily, they were to study the "book" and "keep" all the words "found" therein. Such an attitude of wholehearted dedication would develop the principles of Godliness in the kings. Instead of becoming "lifted up" above their brethren (a trait which might be natural in monarchs with such power and authority), they were to be humbled by their knowledge. Consistently, the law taught that *all* flesh was to be humbled before God (Isa. 40:6; Psa. 102:11; 103:14-16; Num. 19, etc.).

Ezra 7:10. Ezra was a man noted for his devotion to the things of Yahweh. He established in his own life four steps towards spiritual development (a wonderful example for each of us to follow):

- (1) He prepared his mind to contemplate the word of God, which required an awareness of the presence and majesty of Yahweh, and an acknowledgment of dependence upon Him in all things.
- (2) He carefully studied the word of God.

STUDY 3

- (3) In his own life, he put into practice those things he had learned from God's word, thus manifesting Godliness.
- (4) He taught others the Truth, and at the same time provided a fine example for them to follow.

Ecclesiastes 7:25. Apart from a knowledge of divine truth, together with the wisdom to apply it, and the right attitude of mind, we will never be able to understand the divine purpose or the way which can lead us to eternal salvation.

1 Samuel 7:3. Samuel's sound advice stands good for men and women in every generation. This expresses the same frame of mind as displayed by Ezra. "Return" to God with "all your hearts". Let us "put away" from our lives those things which are an offence to God, and "prepare" to "serve Him only".

Psalms 1:1-2. True servants of God separate themselves from the evil environment of the world and turn their attention to "the law of Yahweh" in which they learn to "delight". Their delight in the things of God is a constant state of mind ("day and night"), which shows that true religion is not spasmodic, but an unchanging state of mind.

Psalms 24:3-5. These verses speak of the qualities of character which will be manifested in those who are found worthy to inherit the Kingdom of God. (The "hill of Yahweh" and the "holy place" refer to the glory which will be revealed in the Temple of the future Age to be established on Mt. Zion).

John 6:63. The flesh cannot produce any good thing. But the teaching of Christ (which is the spirit-word, because it emanates from God) can "quicken" us — which is to say: can give us *life* in a spiritual sense.

"Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom . . . The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise . . ." (Psalm 51:6,17).

STUDY FOUR



THE WORD OF GOD HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE OUR LIVES

Romans 12:1-2. Consistently, the Bible teaches that the influence of the word of God has the dynamic power to transform our lives: in the way we think, the way we act, our aims and goals in life, and our entire attitude towards the purpose of living. Such a change in us will prepare us for Christ's coming and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. In this passage the apostle Paul taught that we should be willing to sacrifice the natural ways of the flesh so that our character will become moulded after the pattern of Jesus Christ. We must learn to become "holy" (a word which means "separate" and "cleansed"), and thus become "acceptable to God". Rather than being "conformed" to the will of the flesh and the ways of the world about us, we should become "transformed" so that we learn to think in harmony with the mind of God. This is the only means by which such a state can be achieved: through the "renewing" of our mind — i.e., by following the wise counsel found in God's word we learn to think and evaluate things differently. In short, we need a *new* mind; one which does not think according to the dictates of the flesh. It is the *new* mind which will enable us to "prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God". If we would become true sons and daughters of God, this new approach to life is to be regarded as our "reasonable service. . ." (Gk. *logikos*, "logical, rational, reasoned, or reasonable.")

Philippians 2:5-9. The word of God, if we allow it free reign in our lives, must have the effect of developing within us a *disposition* in harmony with that of Christ (the Greek word rendered "mind" in v. 5 more correctly carries the idea of disposition, or attitude). These verses are teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ was obedient to his Father in *all* things, even to death. For him, this meant a life of sacrifice, always putting the will and purpose of his Father *first* in everything. But because he gave such unqualified obedience to God he has now been "highly exalted" and having attained to divine nature can die no more. This is the great blessing of God which is held out to all who will learn the truth, and endeavour to humbly follow Christ's example (1 Peter 5:6-7, etc.).

Luke 17:26-33. In these words the Son of God foretold judgment to come upon an evil and godless world. He spoke of the days of Noah and the flood, an age of divine judgment when all but eight human beings were destroyed. He also made reference to the days of Lot, when the evil people of Sodom and Gomorrah were annihilated. The Lord said: "Remember Lot's wife." He did not say: "Remember Lot." Why was this? Because Lot's wife found it impossible to make a wholehearted commitment to God. She knew something of the truth, but she wanted the best of both worlds. She wanted to escape divine judgment, but she also wanted the things of Sodom. The result? She lost everything. Jesus reminded us of this incident so that we would not exhibit a double-minded attitude. Like Lot's wife. On the other hand, if we are prepared to turn away from the godless ways of an evil world and turn to God in faith — armed with a true understanding of His word — we can live in hope of eternal life.

Titus 2:11-14. These verses show that God will exercise "grace" (a word which means "favour") towards those who serve Him faithfully. He will give them "salvation". God is prepared to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We are called upon to turn away from all ungodliness, and live according to the principles of righteousness as set forth in God's word. At the same time, we are to look earnestly for Christ's coming, knowing that our hope of salvation is dependent upon his return to earth. In giving his life for us, Christ's objective was to "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Even though the world may think us somewhat "peculiar", it is vital to please God rather than man. God can grant us forgiveness for our sins, eternal redemption and a life which will never end. The "world" can offer us nothing but the darkness of eternal death.

1 Peter 1:13-16. We have "hope" for the future, only if we strive to follow Christ. We will cast off our old way of life, if we are influenced by the truth of God's word. We will recognise the flesh for what it is, and we will become transformed in our thinking. As "obedient children" we will listen attentively to the voice of God that we might become "holy" — a word which implies separation from that which is evil, to be made "clean" in the eyes of God. No matter how many trials and problems we may face in life, Christ will bring with him, when he comes, the "grace" of God, which will result in an eternal reward for those who have faithfully served him.

1 John 2:15-17. "Love not the world" because "the world" does not honour God or represent His ways. The "world" (Gk., *kosmos*, "the order or arrangement of things" — i.e., the philosophies and systems of men) serves only the dictates

of the flesh. By giving reign to the flesh, God is dishonoured in three basic ways:

- The lust of the flesh
- The lust of the eyes
- The pride of life

(c.p. Eve's fall, through these three weaknesses: Gen. 3:6; cp. the way in which Christ was tempted in the same three ways — but overcame: Matt. 4:3-10).

The world as we know it today "is passing away" (v. 17, lit. Gk.) because it is directed by the flesh and is therefore basically evil. The *kosmos* (the religious, political, military and social systems of men) will be swept away by Christ at his coming. During the kingdom age the human race will be educated according to divine "light". Meanwhile, those who *do* the "will of God" now (v.17) will live for ever.

Luke 8:10-15. These challenging words from the Lord provide an apt conclusion for this section of our studies. Only a certain class of person can ever hope to understand the truth because the majority will not be willing to subvert their own will to the guidance of God. Even so, those who *do* learn the truth must exercise great care in continuing to submit their lives to the loving direction of their Heavenly Father. After accepting the truth some will still permit the things of the world to predominate in their lives. Such worldly or fleshly influences may "choke" the word of God, leaving the individual spiritually destitute. Tragically, they may not realise their true state (cp. Rev.3:17. The ground for Christ's rebuke of this Ecclesia was their ignorance: they had permitted their materialistic gains and ambitions to "choke" the influence of the word of God out of their lives).

Conversely, those who continue to humbly walk before God, conforming their lives to the will of Yahweh, will manifest those qualities of character in which God delights. Continuing in this way "with patience" they will bring forth "fruit" to the glory of the Father. This faithful class of humanity, though they may be few in number, have a glorious hope: to become complete manifestations of what the Father now is: mentally, morally and physically — and ultimately living for ever in the glory of divine nature. The struggle against the forces of evil is well worth while, not only because of the promised reward, but most especially because we are striving to bring honour to the Mighty God who has created us and given us life, that we might glorify Him.

STUDY 4

“God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you . . . For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us . . .” (Romans 6:17; 8:18).

STUDY FIVE



THE RELIABILITY OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT, AND THE ONENESS OF GOD

Most people who come to appreciate the need for an understanding of the message of the Bible have limited knowledge concerning the various epochs of Biblical history. It is helpful to have a basic grasp of some of the more important details:

From the Creation to the flood at Noah's day.....	1,656 years
From the Creation to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt (approx.).....	2,483 years
From the Exodus to the commencement of the building of Solomon's Temple (approx).....	604 years
From the commencement of Solomon's Temple to the overthrow of Zedekiah, Judah's last king (approx.).....	415 years
From the dethroning of Zedekiah and the overthrow of Jerusalem to the birth of Jesus Christ (approx.)	418 years
Thus, from the creation to the birth of Christ (approx.).....	4,000 years

The Reliability Of The Genesis Account:

Among professing christians the view that the book of Genesis contains a strong element of allegory and even folklore is common. In regard to the first three chapters of Genesis this view is particularly widespread. However, the earnest Student must decide not to be influenced by popular philosophical views, but rather to accept the evidence advanced from within the inspired word itself.

What are the facts?

1. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *believed* that the writings of Moses (the first five books of the Bible) were true and accurate. He did not consider them to have been allegorical, or a record of legendary folklore. See Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6; Luke 16:31; 24:27; John 5:45-47. The Lord Jesus Christ thus accepted the Genesis account of creation as a *literal* record of the events of that time. If this was the position taken by God's own Son on this matter, what should be ours? A true Christian is a *follower* of Christ. How could one lay claim to being a christian and yet repudiate the very foundation upon which Jesus based his teachings?

2. The New Testament writings of Christ's disciples show clearly that they endorsed the writings of Moses, as did their Lord. See Acts 17:24; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 11:7-8; 15:45; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:31; 1 Tim. 2:14; Jas. 3:9; 1 John 3:12.
3. The conclusion is inescapable. Jesus Christ, and that body of people who constituted the first-century Believers, categorically believed and taught that the Genesis account of creation is true, and should be understood literally and *not* metaphorically. Had the theory of evolution been correct, the Son of God must have known the truth and taught it. The theory of evolution — whether it be theistic or atheistic — can never be reconciled with the teaching of the Bible.

The book of Genesis covers a period of more than 2,300 years of human history.

Genesis 1:1 The Bible begins with the awesome and majestic words: "In the beginning, God created . . ." We are not told when this primary activity took place, but in the second verse we are moved immediately to consider the state of the earth at the time of the Adamic creation. "The earth was without form and void" at the epoch of history when God decided, with deliberate intention, to produce a creation upon this earth.

WHO IS GOD?

In the absolute, "God" is the One Eternal Spirit. The "Oneness" of God is constantly stressed throughout the scriptures, as we hope to show. There is, then, *one* source from which all life and living has origin. To Moses, this One Eternal Spirit identified Himself by the name YAHWEH — which means (when God speaks of Himself): "I will be who I will be . . ." Note the singular pronoun. The Name thus identifies *one* God Who *IS*, Who *WAS*, and Who **WILL BE**. The name of God embodies the principle of *One Who will* become manifested in *many*. (We will examine this matter further when we come to deal with the Divine Name, in Exod. 3). The One God, or Eternal Spirit, is the sole source of immortality, or divine nature. Paul says of Him that He "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see..." (1 Tim. 6:16). The words "who only hath immortality" incorporate the two Greek words, *monos exoon*, more literally rendered: "the only one having or possessing. . ." Thus, "Who alone is possessed of immortality..." (Twentieth Century New Testament).

The doctrine of the trinity is false. God is *One*, not three persons incorporated into a God-head. Those who "worship" a triune God bow before a God which does not exist.

STUDY 5

From the earliest Old Testament writings and throughout the books of the New Testament, the concept of *One* God was clearly and consistently taught. This One God must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) — thus it is a matter of life or death (eternally speaking) to correctly worship the One true God.

Upon the theme that there is One God, see the following passages:

Deut. 6:1-4; cp. Mark 12:28-34; Isa. 44:6-8; 45:5; 46:9-10; John 17:3; Acts 26:6, (the "fathers" of Israel believed in monotheism); 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:5.

"The word of Yahweh is right; and all His works are done in truth . . . By the word of Yahweh were the heavens made . . . He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast . . ." (Psa. 33:4-9).

Notes

STUDY SIX



JESUS CHRIST — THE SON OF GOD

Having established that God is *one* Being, with a singular identity — and not the First Person of a triune God — we must now turn our attention to Jesus Christ. If he was not a part of a trinity, who was he? Simply, he was “the *Son* of God”, and not “God the Son”. The Student will observe that there is a vast difference between the meanings of these two definitions.

See Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 1:30-33; John 3:34-35; 17:1; Acts 3:26; Rom. 1:1-4; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 5:8-9.

Jesus himself categorically denied equality with his Father: John 5:18-20; 10:29-36; cp. Ps. 82:6 (see marg.).

Mortal men in Israel were sometimes called “gods” (Heb. Elohim, “mighty ones”) because they acted as representatives for Yahweh. See Exod. 22:9, where twice the word “judges” occurs. In both places the word has been translated from the Heb. “Elohim.”

Concerning Jesus Christ, we learn the following in the scriptures of truth:

- * He was conceived by the will of God, and born of a woman who was of identical nature to ourselves: Matt. 1:18-21; cp. Luke 1:35. (Note: God was his father in every sense; Joseph was not his father).
- * He was a flesh-and-blood man (not spirit), of the same nature as ourselves, and subject to the same trials: Heb. 2:14-18; 4:15; 1 John 4:3.
- * In spite of the pressures brought upon him due to the weakness of the nature he bore, he never succumbed to sin: Heb. 7:26.
- * He had to *learn* obedience to his Father: Heb. 5:8.
- * He was anointed with the holy spirit: John 3:34-35; Acts 10:38.
- * He was strengthened by his Father: Luke 22:42-44.
- * He was the promised prophet like unto Moses: Acts 3:22.
- * He was a *man* approved of God: Acts 2:22.
- * He was to be the Mediator between God and men: 1 Tim. 2:5.
- * He did not have total knowledge concerning his Father's purpose: Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7; Rev. 1:1.
- * He came into the world to offer his life as a sacrifice, to provide a covering for the sins of men: Matt. 26:28; Eph. 2:13; Heb. 10:19; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; 5:9-10.

STUDY 6

- * Like the High Priest in Israel, he offered first for himself, and then for the people: Heb. 13:20; 5:1-3; 9:12. Though he did no sin, in order to obtain eternal life he required a change from the corruptible nature of Adam's descendants to the perfection of divine nature. This he achieved "through the blood of the everlasting covenant" which was his own blood. (This aspect of Christ's life and death will be dealt with further, a little later on).
- * He has now been exalted to the full stature of divine nature, and has been designated our Saviour and High Priest: Acts 2:30-36; 5:31; Heb. 5:5-6.
- * Though God was his father, he was born into the world in the same way as all children of Adam's race. And he did not exist *before* he was born of Mary: Luke 2:4-7; Matt. 1:1; Luke 2:52; 2 Sam. 7:12-14; (note *future* tense); Psalms 89:26-27, (note *future* tense: impossible language, if Jesus already existed); Luke 1:32-33, (note *future* tense); Isaiah 7:14, cp. Matt. 1:23.

"For there is *one* God, and *one* Mediator between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus . . ." (1 Tim. 2:5).

STUDY SEVEN



THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE ANGELS

The "holy spirit" is generally regarded by most professing christians to be the "third" member of a triune God. But the Bible teaches no such doctrine. (If all members of a "trinity" of gods were "co-equal" — as is claimed by trinitarians — it is contradictory to say that they can be placed "first", "second" and "third". This is only one of the many inconsistencies in this false doctrine).

If the "holy ghost" was the third person in a triune god, it is impossible to understand why the term does not rate a single mention in the entire Old Testament scriptures. No wonder the Encyclopaedia Britannica has stated: "The propositions constitutive of the dogma of the trinity were not drawn directly from the New Testament, and could not be expressed in New Testament terms. They were the products of reason speculating on a revelation to faith . . . They were only formed through centuries of effort, only elaborated by the aid of the conceptions and formulated in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics. . . ." All of which is a rather verbose way of saying that the doctrine of the trinity is *not* found in the Bible, and was, centuries after the apostolic era, borrowed from pagan mythology!

In the Old Testament, the expression "holy ghost" never appears in the A.V. On all but two occasions when the A.V. translators have used the word "ghost" it has been rendered from the Heb., *gava*, which means "to breathe out, i.e., (by impl.) expire . . ." (Strong). On two occasions in the O.T. the word "ghost" has been rendered from the Heb., *nephesh*, which simply means "a breathing creature. . ." (Strong).

The Bible teaches that "the holy spirit" is the special power, or exclusive force, which emanates from the One Eternal Spirit. It goes forth from His presence to fulfil His will, and may be manifested through various media. In the N.T. the word "ghost" is a totally inadequate translation of the Greek word *pneuma*, which simply means "spirit".

The word "holy" means "separate" or "sanctified" — hence, the "holy" spirit is a distinctive power or energy from God, which cannot proceed from any other source.

Upon this subject, the following passages should be carefully considered:

Job 26:12-13; 33:4; 34:14; Psa. 104:29-30; 139:4-12; Neh. 9:30; Mic. 3:8; Luke 24:49; Acts 5:29-32; 17:24-29;

19:1-5; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; John 15:26; cp. 16:13. Note: Lit., "the spirit of *the* truth . . . will guide you into all *the* truth..."

Nowhere in the scriptures does the word "trinity" or "triune" ever occur. Nowhere does the Bible refer, either directly or indirectly, to the holy spirit as being the "third person" of a trinity. See Acts 10:38 — If the doctrine of the trinity could be scripturally established, and all three were "co-equal" (as claimed by trinitarians), how could it be possible for the "first" member to anoint the "second" member with the "third" member? However, when this verse in Acts is understood in the light of the scriptures which we have examined in recent studies, this verse may be correctly and reasonably understood.

The term "holy spirit" occurs only three times in the Old Testament (Psa. 51:11; Isa. 63:10,11). Yet many times we read of "the spirit of God" or "the spirit of Yahweh". Obviously, such wording indicates a power which comes from God. The ancient Hebrews — among them such faithful men as Moses, David and the prophets — had never heard of such a doctrine as the trinity. In both Old and New Testaments we learn that certain of God's servants received the power of the holy spirit, to fulfil the will of God which He purposed *through* those servants. In New Testament times, disciples received the holy spirit mainly that they might be guided into "*all* the truth" (John 16:13, cp. Mark 16:20). Clearly, any claimants to a possession of "the holy spirit" in these times who do *not* speak forth "*all* the truth" must have their claims discounted. Paul wrote that when the divinely-inspired scriptures of truth were completed — and the entire purpose and will of God had been thus revealed — the spirit gifts would no longer be necessary, and such power would be withdrawn from men (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

To avoid digressing on this point, this question will be returned to later, among New Testament studies.

WHO ARE THE ANGELS?

The word has been rendered from the Heb., *malak* or the Greek *aggelos* (pronounced angelos), both of which have the simple meaning: "messenger". Thus, in effect, any being or person sent forth as a "messenger" of God may be termed an "angel".

Both words have been applied in the Bible to mortal men: (for *malak*, see Gen. 32:3; Judg. 11:12-19, five times; Hag. 1:13; Mal. 2:7; for *aggelos*, see Luke 7:24-27; 9:52; Jas. 2:25).

However, generally, *malak* and *aggelos* are used in scripture to describe Beings who are immortal, deathless, of the same nature as the One Eternal Spirit, and therefore perfect representatives of the One True God. There are myriads of such beings, who surround the throne of the Father, and who go forth in His Name to fulfil His purpose (see Luke 20:35-36; Matt. 26:53; Psa. 103:19-21; 104:3-4; Exod. 23:20-23; Josh. 5:13-15; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; 9:21; 10:12-14; etc.).

For some of the many usages of *malak* to describe immortal messengers, see: Gen. 16:7; 19:1,15; 21:17; 22:11,15; etc. For some of the many usages of *aggelos* to represent immortal Beings, see Matt. 1:20,24; 4:6,11; 18:10; 28:2,5; etc.

THE ELOHIM: MORTAL AND IMMORTAL

We have seen that the Bible begins with the words: "In the beginning, *God* (Elohim) created . . ." This plural title, meaning "mighty ones" occurs in the O.T. more than 2,400 times. As with the words *malak* and *aggelos*, the word has been used to define both mortal and immortal beings.

For some of the passages where the word *elohim* has been used to describe mortals, see: Exod. 21:6; 22:8-9,28; etc. (The word "judges" has been rendered from the Heb., *elohim*. Note how the Lord Jesus Christ used the word in this way, in denying that he claimed to be a God: see John 10:30-34, and cp. with the passage he was quoting: Psa. 82:6).

The title *elohim* is commonly used for angelic beings, for they are Yahweh's representatives. See Exod. 3:1-6, and note that the immortal creature who manifested himself to Moses at the burning bush is termed "the angel of Yahweh", "Yahweh" and "Elohim". All these terms have been used in the O.T. to describe angelic Beings, because they are manifestations of the One Eternal Spirit, and they go forth in His Name as His direct representatives. See Acts 7:30-35, and note the terms used there by Stephen, in referring to Exodus 3 and subsequent events.

See Exod. 33:18-19; 34:5-8, and cp. with Acts 7:53.

God's dealings with Moses were effected through Angelic Beings, although the Name of Yahweh is often mentioned: Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2; Isa. 63:9; Gen. 16:6-12; 18:1-33; Heb. 13:2; Judg. 6:11-21. Note: in Psa. 8:5 the word "angels" has been rendered such from the Heb., *elohim*.

Thus "mighty ones" (*elohim*) — the angels — effected the work of creation, at the express direction and command of the One Eternal Spirit: Psa. 33:6-9.

However, although immortal angels are of the same deathless nature as the One Eternal Spirit, whom they serve, they are not equal with Him, but are His "messengers" or "ministers" — Psa. 103:20-21; 104:1-4. "For Yahweh is a great Ail, and a mighty King above *all* *elohim* . . ." (Psa. 95:3, lit.).

It may be asked: since *elohim* is a plural title, how can it be used for a singular angel or person? The answer is, simply, that the individual is a representative as well as an individual. A practical example of this is when a Sales Representative calls on a client of his firm, and introduces himself by saying: "I am Charles Brown & Co." Of course, the man is not strictly Charles Brown & Co. at all. No doubt Charles Brown & Co. would be comprised of numerous shareholders. But, for the moment, he

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is their representative to the client. A scriptural example of this application may be seen in Psa. 45:6, "Thy throne, O God (*elohim*) is for ever and ever . . ." This verse is quoted in Heb. 1:8 and applied to "the Son" — singular. How can this be so, since Jesus is *one* person? Note the context: "Thy *throne* . . ." The Lord Jesus has not yet sat upon his throne (Luke 1:32-33; Matt. 19:28), but when he does he will be "King of kings and Lord of lords . . ." (Rev. 19:16). The Lord Jesus, then, is representative of *all* the redeemed; even though he be king over them all. In the same way, one Angelic Being (or *elohim*) is a representative of all others.

"The angel of Yahweh encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them . . ." (Psalm 34:7).

STUDY EIGHT



GENESIS CHAPTER ONE

- V.1 We have seen that at some period of time which is not identified the "mighty ones" (Elohim, or angelic Beings) *created* "the heaven and the earth . . ." (v.1). The two words "God created" combine a singular verb with a plural noun; thus: "Mighty ones, He created . . ." There was *One* source of power and design which motivated many others (i.e., the One Eternal Spirit directing the angels). Isaiah says: "Thus saith Yahweh that created the heavens; *God Himself* that formed the earth and made it . . ." (45:18). The Heb. expression is: *hu ha-elohim*, "He the elohim . . ." Note that it does not say: "*They* the elohim. . . ." Thus, Isaiah supports that which is stated in Gen. 1:1; there was *One* primeval force directing the entire work of creation, through many agents.
- V.2 This verse implies that some great catastrophe may have come upon the earth at some time prior to the Adamic creation. "The earth had become waste and wild, and darkness was on the face of the roaring deep" (Roth.). Out of this chaos a new creation was begun, two aspects of which defy the argument of the evolutionist: design, and order. Because the majority of mankind refuse to open their eyes to this irrefutable evidence, God will hold them accountable in the day of judgment (Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:31).
It was under these cataclysmic circumstances that "the spirit of Elohim (mighty ones) moved — more correctly, brooded — upon the face of the waters. . ." The "spirit of God" (Heb., *ruarch Elohim*) represents the all-pervading power of the One Eternal Spirit. The "ruarch" is that energy or force which emanates from God.
- Vv. 3-5 The first day: LIGHT was produced. Either with or without the light from the sun, such a feat as this presented no difficulties to those endowed with a divine power, which is limitless.
"The evening and the morning were the first day . . ."
This precise description was given in relation to all

six days of creation (cp. v. 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). Such is a typical Hebrew expression to denote a 24-hour period. In an endeavour to reconcile the teaching of the Bible with theistic evolution, some have suggested that these six days were long epochs of history. But such harmony is impossible. See Exod. 20:11; 31:16-17, which provide ample evidence that Moses (by whose hand the Genesis account was recorded) believed that the creation was effected over a period of six literal days. (See *Elpis Israel* p. 10).

- Vv. 6-8 The second day. The FIRMAMENT appeared. The word signifies an expanse. It defines the expanse which surrounds the earth, providing the necessary atmosphere (oxygen, etc.) which is necessary for plant and animal life. (Question for evolutionist: plant-life cannot exist without carbon-dioxide, and carbon-dioxide cannot exist without the presence of animal life: which came first during the long process of evolution? Plant-life? Animal-life? Oxygen? Or carbon-dioxide? Only the Bible provides the answer: All came into existence relatively. "Waters" or a thick concentration of heavy moisture was floating in what we call the heavens. This had to be gathered away from the earth and replaced with an atmosphere which would allow life to be sustained.
- Vv. 9-13. The third day. DRY LAND appeared from out of the ocean. GRASS AND TREES were created on this day. We should note that the "waters" were already upon the earth (v. 10). On this day they were gathered together "unto one place"; that is, separated from the dry land.
- Vv. 14-19. The fourth day. "Night" and "day" became perfectly and accurately regulated in relation to the SUN and the MOON, and the stars could be seen in the heavens. The light which appeared on the first day had not been related to the finite cycles which the earth was to follow. Note that there was a four-fold purpose in the work performed on the fourth day; these "lights" were to be for "signs and for seasons, and for days, and for years" (v. 14). The earth was now placed in a firmly defined astronomical relationship to heavenly bodies, and subject to the influence of such as God decreed. The word "made" in v. 16 may be rendered "appointed".
- Vv. 20-23. The fifth day. SEA-LIFE and BIRD-LIFE were created. The words "creatures that hath life" have been rendered from the Hebrew words "*nephesh chayah*" —

the same words which appear in 2:7 concerning the creation of man, and translated as "living soul". Thus, as created beings, all animal creatures have been given a common definition — including man. (Note: the identical phrase occurs in 2:19). The words "after their kind" are most significant, for they contradict the argument of the evolutionist. This phrase permits of no development of one species into another. Independent creation of all species is the claim of the Bible: a claim which cannot be refuted.

- Vv. 24-27. The sixth day. The creation of ANIMAL-LIFE to inhabit the earth, including MAN. These verses directly challenge the theory of evolution, which claims that all life originated from the sea. Evolution — whether theistic or atheistic — cannot be reconciled with the teaching of the Bible.

The crowning work of the Elohim was the creation of man. Again, we should not miss the Biblical rebuttal of the theory of evolution: the claim that mankind "evolved" from lower forms of animal life is here clearly refuted. God's word states: "Elohim said, let us *make* man . . ." (v. 26). Compare these words with the statement recorded in 2:7, "Yahweh Elohim *formed* man . . ." (Heb., *yatsar*, "to mould into a form"). The angelic Beings — who, themselves, are of the same "image" and "likeness" as Yahweh — made man after the "image" (shape or form), and "likeness" (intellectual ability to reason and moralise upon divine laws and precepts) as themselves. These two vital elements in the creation of man were never applied to any other creatures. The man and the woman were the only creatures made and formed in the "image" and "likeness" of the Elohim. However, in one respect man and all other forms of animal life had one thing in common: their physical similarity. The word "creature" used of sea creatures in v. 20 is the same as the word used of the animals which would inhabit the earth (v. 24). The word has been rendered from the Heb., *nephesh*, which means "a breathing creature". Also, the word *chay* or *chayah*, meaning "life" or "living" occurs in relation to the creatures of creation (1:20, 30). And both of these important words have been used to describe man's physical composition: "man became a *living soul*" (2:7) — that is, *nephesh chayiah*, or: "a living, breathing creature". This is precisely what man was at creation. Never does the Bible teach that man was created with an immortal soul. Thus it is that after

man became a death-stricken, corruptible creature he had "no pre-eminence above a beast: all go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again . . ." (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20). (The question of the soul will be examined more fully in a consideration of 2:7).

It was God's purpose that man, as the highest form of animal life, should "have dominion" over the earth, acting as a representative for the Creator (v. 26). But we are taught that this purpose was never realised with the first Adam, because he failed to develop the characteristics of God-manifestation. Sin entered into the world, and therefore another "Adam" would have to be provided by God to fulfil His purpose (1 Cor. 15:45; Eph. 2:8, 14).

- V. 28 Man was told to "replenish" the earth, but the word can also mean simply "to fill". He was also called upon to "subdue" the earth — obviously, so that it might be filled with the glory of Yahweh (cp. Num. 14:21); but Adam failed to fulfil this commitment. Jesus Christ will fulfil Yahweh's purpose in this regard: Psa. 8; Psa. 72; 1 Cor. 15:25-26.
- Vv. 29-30 Having been created by the Elohim, man was given responsibilities. Later, he was made subject to a basic law (2:16-17). He had been made "a little lower than the angels" (Psa. 8:5). Whilst the angels were immortal, man was a creature formed from the dust, and merely *nephesh chayiah*, a living, breathing creature. If he desired to become elevated to equality with the angels, he would have to prove himself worthy in the eyes of his Creator (Luke 20:35-36).
- V. 31 The work of creation was completed. Elohim pronounced it "very good". This simply means that the entire operation had been completed according to the plan of the One Eternal Spirit.

TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAYS OF CREATION

- DAY ONE:** The revelation of divine "light" is the first principle in God's *spiritual* creation (1 John 1:5-7; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Pet. 2:9). There is a clear division between divine light and the "darkness" of the fleshly mind (cp. Gen. 1:3 with Psa. 119:130 and Rom. 8:5-8).
- DAY TWO:** The separation between heavenly and earthly waters ("water" symbolises people or nations: Isa. 57:20; Rev. 17:15), represents the second stage in God's purpose for His spiritual creation: the division of humanity into two classes, those drawn

STUDY 8

to the light of divine truth and those who reject it or remain in ignorance of it.

DAY THREE: During the third one-thousand year “day” the Israel of God was set apart from the “sea” of nations.

DAY FOUR: At the end of the fourth millennium, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared as the Son of God and as “the light of the world” (John 1:9; 8:12). From that time onward, all human beings on earth should have become regulated, and made subject to, the teaching of “the sun of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2; cp. Psa. 19; Psa. 119:105; Hos. 6:5).

DAY FIVE: Sea-life and bird-life symbolises the extension of the gospel message to the Gentiles. “Five” is the Biblical number to represent *grace* and *restoration*.

DAY SIX: At the end of the sixth millennium, Christ and his Bride will become united in “marriage” (Rev. 19:6-8), thus fulfilling the type as set forth in the union between Adam and Eve. Christ and his immortalised brethren will then “have dominion” over all the earth.

DAY SEVEN: The Elohim “rested” because their labours had been completed. This day symbolises the seventh millennium, when the kingdom will be established for one thousand years. Peace and tranquility on the earth will replace the evil degeneracy and violence which characterises this present age. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork” (Psa. 19:1).

Notes

STUDY NINE



GENESIS CHAPTER TWO

- V. 1. Better rendered: "Thus heaven and earth were finished . . ." The Hebrew text omits the two articles, in contrast to 1:1. This verse, then, speaks of the reorganisation of that which had been earlier created, and, by implication, the restructuring of everything associated therewith. The word rendered "finished" carries the ideas of completion and cessation.
- V. 2. "On the seventh day Elohim ended His work . . ." The Septuagint renders this as "sixth day . . ." On the seventh day "He rested", but not through tiredness (Isa. 40:28). The word "rested" (Heb., *shabbath*) is almost identical to the word which would later be used commonly for the "sabbath". The seventh day is typical for the seventh millennium, when the worldwide kingdom of God will be established (see Heb. 4:9-10). Israel's sabbath, established after they left Egypt, was a type of the "rest" God had in store for all who loved and obeyed Him (Heb. 4:4-5).
(The question of the sabbath will be considered more fully when we come to consider the Law of Moses).
- V. 3. Though God "sanctified" the seventh day (meaning "to set apart" for a special purpose) there was no command given in Eden for the sabbath to be "kept". The reason for its sanctification would be revealed at a later time, as we hope to show.
- v.7 The creation of man. An amplification of 1:26-27. As we have seen, man was created a *living* soul, but not an *everliving* soul. Formed out of the earth and energised by "the breath of life" (Heb., *neshamah chay*), man came alive. The words "soul" and "immortal" are never associated together in the Bible. The phrase "immortal soul" has resulted from fleshly philosophy, not Biblical teaching. The word *nephesh* (soul) occurs 754 times in the O.T. In 326 places the "soul" is said to be subject to death; in 203 places it is said to be in danger of death; and in 123 places it is said to be delivered from death, thus implying its liability to death. In the N.T. the equivalent Greek word is *psuche*, which occurs 106 times. In 45 places it is said to be subject to death; in 29 places it is said to be in danger of death; and in 16 places it is said to be delivered from death. Never, upon the basis of

Biblical teaching, could the "soul" ever be described as "immortal".

Thus we learn:

- A soul is born Gen. 46:18
- A soul can eat Exod. 12:16
- A soul can be eaten Lev. 22:11
- A soul can be saved from death Psalms 56:13
- A soul can die Josh. 11:11
- Even a *sinless* soul died Isa. 53:12

V. 8 A garden was planted in Eden (the name means "delight"). The man was placed in this pleasant environment that he might develop a spirit of oneness and harmony with his Creator. The garden in Eden was a type of that which is yet to come: the "paradise" of God will be established on the earth in the Age to come (Ezek. 36:33-35; Rev. 2:7; Num. 14:21). The earth will then, under wise guidance and with divine blessings, become a place of "delight".

V. 9 Two trees in the garden were of greater importance than any of the others: the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The former, (lit., "a tree of *the* lives") emphasised the principle that there is one source of life, capable of bringing into existence many lives. This applied literally in the actual creation, and it also applies in a spiritual sense. The latter of these two trees bore a title which defines the entire range of human experience throughout life. Adam, not having yet developed in character, was unfitted for such an experiment as partaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

V. 15 God first gave the man responsibilities, and then made him subject to a law.

Vv. 16-17 Adam was now commanded to keep God's law, thus emphasising the basic principle which should govern the thoughts and actions of all human-kind: to learn to live in harmony with the divine will (cp. Deut. 10:12; Psalms 103:17-18; Prov. 6:23; Matt. 12:50; Jn. 14:15,21; 15:10; 1 Jhn. 5:3; 2 Jhn 6; etc.).

Man was commanded *not to eat* of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" for, in "the day" he ate of it he would "surely die" — which meant that immediately the divine commandment was breached the sentence pronounced would become effective. The man and the woman were created with a nature which was *capable* of dying, but they did not become subject to death until after they had sinned. The effects of the sentence were reiterated in unmistakeable terms after the fall: Gen. 3:19. Thus, man is mortal and corruptible because of the effects of sin: Rom. 5:12; 6:23; cp. Psalms 89:48;

- Job 4:17.
- V. 18 God determined that the man should not remain alone. The term "help meet" indicates one who would be his counterpart, or complementary to him. Such were the respective qualities in each, that male and female were capable of becoming "one" (v.24), and developing the best spiritual and moral qualities in each other.
- V. 19 Adam was called upon to name the animals of creation. (Note: the phrase "every living creature" is *nephesh chayiah*, which occurs in 2:7 in relation to Adam). This verse also shows that, as Adam surveyed the animals of the creation, it was apparent that none would provide a suitable counterpart to himself. Adam had been created in the "image" and after the "likeness" of the Elohim. But this is not said of the other creatures of creation.
- Vv. 20-24 The formation of the woman. Christ is termed "the last Adam", and Christ's faithful servants, collectively, are called his "bride" (1 Cor. 15:45; Rev. 19:7-8; cp. 2 Cor. 11:2-3). And as Adam was put to sleep (a figure for death) and suffered physically (a figure for violent death), so the Lord Jesus Christ's death by crucifixion resulted in his "bride" being (in a figurative sense) brought into existence. When the Roman soldier thrust his spear into Christ's side, there came forth "blood and water". (See John 19:34; cp. Heb. 9:22; 1 Jhn. 1:7). As Adam and Eve were declared by God to be "one", so Christ and his faithful brethren shall become one in the fullest sense, when the Lord returns to bestow upon his bride the glory of divine nature. Eve was called "Isha" (see marg., v. 23) because she was taken "out of man".

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him . . . Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. . ." (Psalm 8:4,6).

STUDY 9

STUDY TEN



GENESIS CHAPTER THREE

“Through *one man* (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death *through sin...*” (*Gk. dia*, Rom. 5:12).

V. 1

The serpent is introduced into the narrative. Some teach that he was a fallen angel; others claim that such a Being inspired the serpent to introduce sin into the world. Both theories fail, in that neither can be substantiated from the Bible. The first breaks down entirely when it is appreciated that God sentenced him to go upon his “belly . . . all the days” of his “life . . .” (v. 14). Being thus so limited, he could hardly present super-human problems for mankind. The second theory fails when we observe the way in which God called upon the man and the woman to admit their guilt: the man blamed the woman, the woman blamed the serpent — but the serpent could not pass the responsibility on to anyone, which he surely would have done had he been the subject of some external, evil influence (vv. 11-13).

The doctrine of a supernatural “devil” is clearly repudiated by the positive teaching of scripture. The word devil has been rendered from two entirely different Greek words: *daimonion* and *diabolos*. The first is better rendered “demons”. It was applied to certain illnesses, especially those involving mental disorders. Jesus Christ was able to heal such diseases through divine power. Jesus himself was accused of being possessed by a devil — i.e., it was suggested that he was a madman — but, as he was the word of God made flesh, he certainly could not have been under the influence of any evil, external power (see Jhn. 7:19-20). This type of expression was common vernacular in the Lord’s times, to describe mental and physical disorders where the unfortunate sufferer could not always control his words or actions. The word *diabolos* is derived from the preposition *dia* (meaning through, across, or over) and *ballo* (to throw, thrust, or cast). It has been used in the Bible to define that which “cuts through” or “across” divine commandments and precepts. The word also means a slanderer, a libeller, or a false accuser. Judas was termed “a devil” (*diabolos*) because he betrayed the Son of God. (Note usage of the

word in 2 Tim. 3:3 and Tit. 2:3). The only "devil" we have to oppose is human nature, which is the source of sin.

The word *satan* has been derived from the Hebrew word *satahn*. It simply means "an adversary" and may be used in either an evil or good sense. (See a correct usage by the A.V. translators, in Num. 22:22). Elsewhere, the Student will find that the word has been rendered "resist", and "withstand", as well as being transliterated as "satan". God Himself has been termed "satan" (cp. 1 Chron. 21:1 with 2 Sam. 24:1). This word was used to describe God at that time, because He was *opposed* to the wickedness of His people. "Satan" may also teach us "not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:20) — hardly the activity we would associate with a "fallen angel"! Paul had caused the erring brethren to be put outside the community of Believers that they might be disciplined and mend their ways.

Since there is no such Being as a fallen angel, tempting men and causing them to sin, we must ask the question: from whence, then, does sin originate? The Bible provides a clear answer: human nature is the *source* of sin.

See Mark 7:21-23; Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Ps. 81:10-12; Rom. 7:23; Jas. 1:13; Jas. 4:1.

Thus, human nature is the only "devil" or "satan" from which sin originates.

The serpent was simply a serpent, and nothing more. We are taught three things concerning him: (1) he was more intelligent and shrewd than the other beasts; (2) he had the power of speech, and could thus converse with the woman; (3) he walked in a physically upright manner. This is implied from the verdict pronounced upon him; since there was no point in sentencing him to go "upon" his "belly" if he was already a limbless, crawling creature. In view of the fact that the serpent could not moralise or reason upon divine principles, that which he spoke was purely the outworking of the carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh. Thus, the serpent symbolised *the flesh* (as the source of sin), and the *carnal mind* (which is what the flesh produces, unless restrained by the influence of the word of God).

The serpent questioned the woman: Surely she could eat of any of the trees in the garden? The query was presented as both a statement of fact, and as an attempt to excite discussion.

V. 2

Adam had conveyed God's law to the woman. And her reply to the serpent was in accordance with the truth. However, she omitted the definite words "freely" and "surely" which indicates that perhaps she was not now so

- totally convinced as to the power and importance of the truth. Thus, whilst she answered according to knowledge, she appears to have been weak in faith.
- V. 3 She stated that should she or her husband eat of the tree which had been forbidden them, they would *die*. This was the truth of the matter.
- V. 4 The serpent replied: "Ye shall not surely die..." This was a lie. In view of the fact that the woman succumbed to the counsel of the serpent, it is evident that the *false* teaching of the serpent resulted in sin, and then death. The woman therefore typified God's *truth* (v. 3), whilst the serpent typified the *flesh* and the *carnal mind*. The serpent was incapable of reasoning upon principles of divine truth, as he possessed only the mind of the flesh. But the woman and the man had been given the mental capacity to *moralise* and *reason* upon divine ways and precepts, by which they could walk in harmony with their Creator. Had they remained faithful, they could ultimately have been made "equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:36). The "law" of God is "truth" (Psa. 119:142) and should therefore be honoured as the means of attaining to a state of oneness with God. The dishonouring of God's word will result in death: Rom. 6:23.
- V. 5 The serpent had seen and heard things which he did not fully understand, because he was unable to grasp the moral responsibilities involved. The serpent's reasoning that the understanding of the man and woman would be enhanced through eating of the tree was correct, but not in the way he foresaw. The moral implications were beyond his ability to understand. Thus he was led to reason according to his fleshly mind. Since his reasoning was the product of the fleshly mind, his conclusion was erroneous.
- V. 6 The woman weakened, then sinned. She saw that the tree was "good for food" (the lust of the flesh); that it was "pleasant to the eyes" (the lust of the eyes); and that it was "to be desired to make one wise" (the pride of life) — See 1 Jhn. 2:16. John summarised the three ways through which the mind of the flesh will manifest itself, in opposition to the will of God. (For illustrations of the way in which sin is produced, see Jas. 1:14-15; Josh. 7:20-21).
- V. 7 God's law having been transgressed, the two human beings now found that *conscience* began to work in them; this was due to the fact that they had now developed a greater awareness than before. Nakedness is a symbol for sin, or that state in which, in the eyes of God, man has no "covering" for his sin (Rev. 3:17; 16:15;

contrast Gal. 3:27). In their shame, they endeavoured to cover their nakedness with fig leaves; but it is God who is offended by sin, and only He can provide the covering. Cp. Isa. 30:1-3.

V. 8 Adam and Eve heard the sound of Elohim approaching. They "hid" themselves because of guilt. But how may anyone hope to effectively "hide" from God? See Jer. 23:24; Heb. 4:13.

V. 9 Elohim "called" Adam, because it had not been customary for Adam to withdraw himself from the divine presence.

V. 10 Adam admitted his guilt, even before being called upon to do so. He was "afraid" — an emotion which can be the product of a guilty conscience.

V. 11 Adam had condemned himself out of his own mouth.

V. 12 The man blamed the woman (cp. 1 Tim. 2:14).

V. 13 The woman blamed the serpent (cp. 2 Cor. 11:3).

V. 14 The serpent had no one to blame. From the serpent *alone* had come the reasoning which had resulted in sin. God stated clearly: "Because *thou* has done this..." No guilt was attributed to a "supernatural" devil, or a "fallen" angel. The sentence: "upon thy belly shalt thou go" indicates that the serpent had not originally been physically created in this way. Had the serpent originally been created as a legless, slithering creature, there would have been no point in this divine judgment upon him, and the sentence would have been quite meaningless.

V. 15 In cursing the serpent, God made a covenant with the woman: a continuing state of enmity and antagonism would exist between the two "seeds" — that is, those who defy God and walk in the way of error, and those who understand and uphold the truth of God, and walk in His way. Ultimately, the seed of the woman (singular) would overcome the power and influence of the serpent, by overcoming the flesh.

Jesus was literally the seed of the woman, not of the man — for Yahweh was his father, not Joseph.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE FORCES OF TRUTH AND ERROR (i.e., THE PERFECT CHARACTER OF GOD VERSUS THE DICTATES OF THE FLESH) TOOK PLACE IN THE BODY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. AT THE HOUR OF HIS DEATH HE HAD COMPLETELY OVERCOME THE FLESH, SINCE HE DIED A SINLESS MAN: THUS HE EFFECTIVELY "CRUSHED" THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT. See Heb. 2:14; 9:26; 1 Cor. 15:23-25; 1 Jhn. 3:5. Having overcome sin, and the sin-nature, Christ is now able to redeem us from the power of death, through his own perfect sacrifice; all, in accord-

ance with the will of his Father: Acts 2:22-24; 1 Jhn. 1:7-9; Isa. 53:10.

The serpent must be seen, above all else, as typifying *the flesh* as the source of all sin. In Num. 21:4-9 the people of Israel sinned "against God and against Moses". For this especially rebellious sin, Yahweh sent "fiery serpents" among the people, as a result of which "much people of Israel died". When the people cried unto Moses, confessing their sin, God instructed Moses to make a *serpent* of brass (brass is a Biblical symbol for the flesh), and to affix it to a pole. All who had been bitten by a serpent and who looked upon the brasen serpent, in faith, would live. Commenting upon this incident, Jesus said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up..." (Jhn. 3:14). "And I", he said later, "if I be *lifted up* from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, *signifying what death he should die...*" (Jhn. 12:32-33). The Lord was demonstrating that in his life of perfect obedience to his Father and in his death by crucifixion, he would be putting to death the evil propensities of the flesh; thereby showing that the flesh could produce no good thing, and that only Yahweh is wholly righteous. The flesh is thus rightly related to death: Jhn. 6:63; Rom. 7:18-21; Gal. 5:17-21. Christ's example for us to follow: Rom. 6:1-13.

From what the serpent *was*, and what he *produced*, we must learn that there is nothing in the *natural* man which can bring forth anything whatever to the glory of God. The carnal mind can never be brought into subjection to the will of God, so it must be crushed by the influence of the indwelling of the word of God (Rom. 8:7,13). Therefore, our lives must be ordered and directed according to divine principles, if we are to become pleasing to God.

The promise of Gen. 3:15, then, is a promise of mankind's eventual restoration to God, through the seed of the woman gaining the victory over the serpent power in the struggle against sin. Christ therefore *died* that he might *live* for ever (Jhn. 10:17; Phil. 2:8-9; Acts 2:24). Now, the power of his perfect sacrifice can provide a covering for the sins of all who draw near to God through Christ, "in spirit and in truth" (1 Jhn. 1:9; Jhn. 4:23-24).

We may summarise Vv. 1-15 in this way:

THE SERPENT, The flesh, as the source of sin; and also
 AS A SYMBOL: the mind (or thinking) of the flesh,
 sometimes termed the carnal mind
 (2 Cor. 11:3).

THE SEED OF Those who allow the flesh to govern
 THE SERPENT: their lives, manifesting evil through the

- THE WOMAN,
AS A SYMBOL: thinking of the flesh (cp. Matt. 3:7).
The Truth of God, which is able to provide opposition to the flesh, which, if not subjected to the will of God will lead us to eternal death (Rom. 6:23; Gal. 4:4-5).
- THE SEED OF
THE WOMAN: Primarily, the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23; Heb. 2:14). But the "seed" of the woman, in a typical and collective sense, relates to those who have become associated with the Truth of God, throughout the ages, and who have striven to uphold it — in belief and practice — thereby becoming heirs, together with Christ, of the promises which God has set forth in His Truth (Gal. 4:7,28; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4).

- V. 16 The first typical example of the seed of the serpent at enmity with the seed of the woman: Cain and Abel (4:8). Because of the woman's faithlessness, sorrow would come upon womankind. We all pay a price for disregarding the ways and wisdom of God.
- V. 17 Adam had not been directly led into sin by the serpent, but by the woman. Thus we learn the lesson that we must not permit the influence of others to lead us into a way which is dishonouring to God. We must learn to give our allegiance, first and foremost, to Yahweh. We best serve ourselves *and others* by striving to follow this principle unwaveringly.
Because of sin, not only would the reflection of God's moral likeness be marred in mankind, but the effects of man's sin would be seen in the physical world about him. (See Paul's comment on this: Rom. 8:20-22). "The way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15). The blemished state of the earth would provide, for mankind, a reflection of his own spiritual state.
- V. 18 In the Kingdom Age, when mankind has learned to seek God's way, this curse will be removed from the earth: Isa. 55:13; 35:1; 41:18-20; 43:18-21; Ezek. 36:35; Psalms. 72.
- V. 19 This verse describes the constitution of man. God said: "For dust thou art. . ." He added nothing about an "immortal soul" or any specific essence which continues to go on living after the body has died.
In death, man has no state of existence whatsoever. He ceases to exist entirely.

See Gen. 18:27; Psalms. 103:14; Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24; Jas. 1:10-11; 4:14; Job 7:20-21; Psalms. 6:5; 88:10-12;

115:17; 146:3-4; Eccles. 3:16-21; 9:5-10; Isa. 38:18-19; Psa. 39:12-13.

- V. 20 Previously, Adam had called the woman "Isha" ('out of man'), but now he called her "Eve" (Heb., *chavvah*, "life" or "living") because he was now aware that all hope for the redemption of the human race depended upon the coming of the *seed of the woman*.
- V. 21 The fig tree coverings proved useless, and had to be abandoned (cp. v. 7). Man could not provide his *own* covering for sin — although many endeavour to do so by following a form of religion which is not in accord with divine truth. Yahweh Elohim ('He who will be mighty ones') provided "coats of skins" to cover the nakedness of the man and the woman. (Significantly, the word "skins" in the Heb. is singular and masculine). The phrase 'coats of skins' referred to the sacrificial offering of one male animal, whose blood would have been shed in the presence of Adam and Eve. The principle was being established that "without shedding of blood is no remission" of sins (Heb. 9:22). The blood represented the life of the creature (Lev. 17:11), and therefore typified the person who would offer his entire life as a sacrifice to God, even unto death (Phil. 2:8). The offering of this animal in the garden of Eden was thus a type of the sacrifice of Christ. Through the sacrifice of Christ, we are enabled to "put on Christ" as Adam and Eve "put on" the coats of skins (Gal. 3:26-28). Through Christ, sins may be "covered" (Rom. 4:6-8). Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ was "the Lamb of God" to "take away the sins of the world" — if the world would receive him as Saviour (John 1:29). For us, submission to the will of God begins with baptism, and will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ, at his second coming (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). During the period of our probation, we are given the opportunity to permit the influence of God's word to develop within us the mental and moral likeness of God's Son.
- V. 22 This verse shows categorically that man was not created with an "immortal soul". And to expressly prevent him from attaining to such a state, Adam and his wife were sent forth from the garden. They could never hope to "live for ever" other than upon God's terms and conditions.
- V. 23 Lack of a beneficial occupation provides the grounds for degeneracy. God gave the man some worthwhile direction, which would also remind him of his earthy origin, and his earthy destiny, unless he learned to elevate himself — mentally and morally — above earthy things, to spiritual heights of harmony and oneness with his Creator.
- V. 24 The "tree of the lives" remained in the garden. This was

STUDY 10

to demonstrate that all hope for humanity was not lost. Eternal life may be attained through a correct approach to God, in accordance with the terms and conditions which He has set down. Cherubim (or, Angelic Beings) preserved, or guarded, "the way" to the tree of the lives. It is probable that sacrifices were offered to God through these immortal Beings (4:3-4).

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . ." (John 14:6).

STUDY ELEVEN



GENESIS CHAPTERS 4 TO 8

- 4:1 Cain was born. Eve assumed him to be the promised seed of 3:15. ("I have gotten a man, even Yahweh" — Roth). Her assumption proved incorrect. It is unwise to assume when it comes to the question of divine revelation or intent. Cain's name means "gain". Rather than developing into a man who desired to "gain" salvation through obedience to the will of God, he was content to "gain" merely the things of this present life. Cain was prepared to worship God, but on his own terms.
- V. 2 A second son was born. He was named Abel, which signifies "vain" or "empty". Abel considered the things of this present life to be vain or empty. He thus had quite a different disposition to his brother. He recognised that it is only through developing a sound spiritual character, and walking in obedience to the will of God, that we can become pleasing to God. Our life is mere vanity, unless we develop a character which is in harmony with the Creator.
- Cain and Abel were both religious. However, Abel offered to God the sacrifices which He had specifically requested; whereas Cain brought only that which *he* thought to be good enough. Cain believed God should be pleased with him simply because he was religious. Thus, Abel's offering was accepted, whilst Cain's was rejected.
- Man is not free to worship God as *he* sees fit. God will be worshipped only according to the terms and conditions which He establishes and reveals. This has been an unchanging divine principle since the dawn of history: See Deut. 4:2; Psa. 50:16-17; 103:17-18; 145:18; Prov. 28:9; Jhn. 4:23-24; 9:31; Rom. 1:16; 2 Thess. 2:12; Jas. 4:8; 2 Jhn. v. 6,9; Rev. 22:18-19.
- The "enmity" of Gen. 3:15 is produced because of the inevitable hostility between sin and God's Truth. Either Truth will overcome sin, or sin will obliterate the Truth. Certainly, as the above scriptural references show, there can be no compromise between the two.
- Vv. 3-5 Abel brought to God an "offering" (Heb. *minchah*, "a meal offering" — cp. Lev. 2:1) and the firstlings of his flock. This implies that he offered what was to become known as the *burnt offering*, which typified total dedica-

tion to Yahweh. (It has been suggested that it could have been a peace offering, as it comprised the meal offering together with an animal sacrifice. But since the peace offering came only at the *end* of the sacrificial code (symbolising fellowship with Yahweh), it is unlikely that such would have been offered by Abel, as we are here learning of the *first* sacrifices ever offered to God by man).

Cain brought the meal offering, but failed to present the animal sacrifice which should have been offered. Thus, Cain's sacrifice was incomplete, and therefore was not in accordance with that which Yahweh required.

For an understanding of the typical significance to be learned from Cain's omission, see Gen. 3:21; Jhn. 1:29; Heb. 9:22; Rev. 5:9; 13:8. Cp. Paul's comment on this: "By faith, a *fuller* sacrifice did Abel offer unto God than Cain..." (Heb. 11:4, Roth).

- V. 6 God urged Cain to amend his ways; but to no avail. Cain stubbornly refused to worship God in the manner and according to the conditions prescribed.
- V. 8 Enmity developed between the two brothers (representing the seed of the serpent in opposition to the seed of the woman). The disputation led to Cain murdering Abel. It seemed that Cain had gained the victory; but Abel "died in faith" and is numbered among the worthies who shall inherit divine nature at the judgment seat of Christ (Heb. 11:4, 13:39-40). Abel will be rewarded for his faithfulness; and so shall we, if we follow his uncompromising example.
- V. 16 Cain went forth into the land of Nod, which means "exile". Through his rejection of the principles of divine worship, he was exiled from the presence of God.
- V. 17 Cain and his descendants followed a philosophy and a way of life which separated them from God and His Truth. All contact with the divine mind was severed.
- Vv. 20-22 Cain's descendants became great cattle ranchers and industrialists, and developed a sophisticated standard of "culture". They were dominated by the philosophy of materialism, and were thus alienated from God. Dedication to materialistic ambitions caused them to be lifted up with pride. Having repudiated the guiding and restraining influence of God's word, they became quite godless and wicked.
- V. 25 God's promise (3:15) would not fail. Seth was born to Eve. His name means "appointed", signifying that he was appointed to replace the murdered Abel, so that "the seed of the woman" might continue to develop, until the One should come who would overcome sin. This "One", as we have seen, would be Jesus Christ.

Genesis chapter five contains details of the generations from Adam to Noah and his sons. It provides a tragic picture of the decline of the Truth. The powerful, fleshly influence of the descendants of Cain became great in the earth, so that those who should have been walking humbly in the way of the Truth became subservient to the pressure of evil to the point where the purity of the Truth became almost completely destroyed. The tragic result was that many who had been known as "sons of God" departed from the faith and either died without hope or were destroyed in the flood.

6:1-2 At a time of almost universal apostasy, one man and his family had remained faithful to Yahweh. They were deemed worthy of preservation at the time of the flood. Their names were Noah, and his three sons: Ham, Shem and Japheth, together with their respective wives. This made a total of only eight people who were saved in the ark (see Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20). In the flood the ungodly were destroyed and the righteous remnant were saved. Christ taught that the drama of the flood at the time of Noah typified the divine judgments which would come upon the earth at his second coming: Matt. 24:36-39; Luke 17:26-27.

Some teach that the "sons of God" mentioned here were immortal angels who descended from heaven and "married" mortal women. This belief is false. Christ taught that angels do *not* marry (Luke 20:35-36), because they bear divine nature. The term "sons of God" has been applied in the scriptures to define mortal men whose minds have been enlightened with divine Truth, and who endeavour to walk in the ways of Yahweh. See Deut. 14:1; Hos. 1:10; Jhn. 1:12; 1 Jhn. 3:2; Isa. 43:6-7. At the time of the flood, the majority of those who had earlier been known as "sons of God" had become a part of the godless, apostate world, and had made marriages with those *outside* the bonds of the Truth. The practice of marrying out of the Truth has, historically, been forbidden to all who would remain true sons and daughters of Yahweh. See Deut. 7:1-4; Ezra 9:1; Neh. 13:23-28; 1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Those who receive a knowledge of the Truth, and determine to obey it, are called to a life of separation from the Gentile world: Jhn. 7:7; 15:18-19; 17:14-16; Rom. 12:2; 2 Tim. 4:10; 1 Jhn. 2:15; 4:4-6. God's true saints are required to preserve a "Godly seed" (Mal. 2:15) which means a continuation, from generation to generation, of those who have separated from the world and dedicated themselves to the God of heaven.

It should be observed that these men "saw the daughters of *other* men" — as this phrase can be translated: see

- Jer. 32:20; Psa. 73:5, where the same word occurs. They made marriages with "all of which *they* chose" without any regard for what God would have wanted.
- V. 3 Apart from the family of Noah, all upon the face of the earth were seen to be striving against God. The Creator could not continue to tolerate indefinitely such a state of affairs. Noah was thus to preach the Truth for 120 years, to give the human race opportunity to repent and turn back to God.
- V. 4 It is commonly taught that these "giants" were men of immense physical stature, or angelic beings. But the Hebrew word, *nephilim*, means "ones greatly fallen", and therefore speaks of the degree of their fall from divine grace. They were "greatly fallen" in a spiritual sense.
- Vv. 5-7 God was distressed to see the extent of wickedness and godlessness on every hand. He saw that divine judgment against the people of the earth was inevitable.
- V. 11 Civilisation was being destroyed through worldwide corruption and violence — exactly as in the 20th Century, A.D. This form of degeneracy in society is a reflection of greed, selfishness, ambition, permissiveness and materialism.
- V. 12 God's word was no longer respected or obeyed among the populace. God had been completely dethroned in the hearts of the people — with the sole exception of Noah and his family.
- Vv. 14-16 God instructed Noah to build an ark; that is, a sea-worthy vessel. If the cubit is taken to equal 18 inches, the ark would have been 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Another ancient measure for the cubit approximated to 24 inches; in which event, the ark would have been 600 feet long, 100 feet wide, and 60 feet high. It was certainly no small craft, and could be compared in size with the U.S. battleship, *Oregon*. Marine experts have assessed that the ark would have had a displacement of 43,000 tons; an extremely large vessel, even by present-day standards. It is implied that the ark took 120 years to build (v. 3).
- Developments which led to the flood included: the growth of city life (4:17); God-dishonouring forms of false religion (Vv. 17-18 — see meanings of the names, which have strong religious over-tones); polygamy and permissiveness (v. 19); commercial and industrial development, including the manufacture of weapons for war (vv. 20-22); the use of ruthless standover tactics for personal retaliation (v. 24); the superiority of women over men, after the style of modern-day women's liberation movements (v. 22) — all of which led progressively to a state wherein

"the earth was filled with violence" because "all flesh had corrupted" God's "way upon the earth..." (6:11-12).

As we have already seen, according to the teaching of Jesus Christ the days of Noah are typical of the days immediately preceding his second coming (Matt. 24:37-39). There are, therefore, many vital lessons to be learned from the events of Noah's life and times. One of the most impressive of these lessons is that "in the last days" God raised up a Bible Student and Teacher, who rediscovered the Truth. His name was John Thomas, a doctor of medicine. After many years of searching, in 1847 he published a "Confession, Abjuration and Declaration" which revealed the Truth. 120 years after this event, the Jews regained control of their ancient city of Jerusalem: the last major prophetic event to usher-in the final phase of events leading to Christ's return. See Lk. 21:24-27. In view of the world-shattering events which have occurred prior to 1967 and subsequent to that date, there can be no doubt that we are living in the anti-typical days of Noah. The signs of the times indicate that the return of Jesus Christ is very near at hand.

Genesis chapter seven provides details of Noah and his family, together with selected animals, entering the ark. Then, the flood commenced.

- v. 1 Noah and his family were invited by God to enter the ark, as a means of their deliverance from the judgments to come. This typifies our acceptance of Christ as our Saviour: he is our "ark" and can save us when the time comes for divine judgment. But we must be "in" him, as Noah was in the ark (Jhn. 17:20-21. Note: the phrase "on me" should be literally rendered "into me").
- Vv. 7-9 Noah and his family entered the ark. Then, the animals which were to survive the flood followed Noah and his family into the ark. It was not Noah who selected the chosen animals, but the Elohim, or angels.
- V. 16 Noah did not close the door of the ark upon himself: "Yahweh shut him in." Similarly, when the time is ripe for Christ's return, it will be God who will determine when the peoples of the earth have had their last day of opportunity to hear and obey His word. In preserving Noah and his family, God effectively shut all others *out* from the protection of the ark. Cp. Matt. 25:10.
- V. 24 The waters prevailed upon the earth. The flood was a type of baptism (1 Pet. 3:20-21). Noah and his family were thus "saved by water...."

Genesis chapter eight describes the diminishing of the flood, the ark coming to rest, and the way in which Noah honoured God by the offering of a sacrifice, after disembarking from the ark.

V. 21

“The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.”

With these words, God provided a succinct description of fallen Adamic nature, and the origin of sin. Nowhere in the account of man’s wickedness which led to the flood does the Bible make any mention of a supernatural “Devil”. If such a creature had existed, he would surely have been held responsible for the dreadful state of civilisation which brought divine retribution. As this verse shows, mankind was solely responsible for all that happened. Evil comes from within the heart of man, and from no other source. See notes on Gen. 3:1.

This had been a terrible judgment upon all the earth; but **God had not, in any sense, acted hastily, or out of a sense of vindictiveness.** The apostle Peter wrote that “the *long-suffering* of God *waited* in the days of Noah...” The Creator gave the human race every opportunity to repent of their evil ways, but — apart from 8 people — they failed to take advantage of the goodness and mercy which Yahweh would have gladly extended (see 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:5-9).

Let us humbly accept the goodness of God, in our day of opportunity, since, in His mercy, He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...”

STUDY TWELVE



NOAH TO ABRAHAM — GENESIS CHAPTERS NINE TO ELEVEN

9:11-15 God made a covenant with Noah. A covenant is a binding agreement or promise. God promised that He would never again “cut off” all flesh by means of a flood. The special “sign” witnessing to this covenant was the rainbow. The rainbow is comprised of seven colours — the Biblical number which symbolises both “completeness” and “covenant”. Together, the prismatic colours of the rainbow manifest the pure light of the sun — a symbol for the Lord Jesus Christ: Malachi 4:1; Matthew 13:43. Symbolically, God’s faithful servants have been termed “clouds” (Hebrew 12:1). The power of the sun draws moisture out of the earth to form clouds in the firmament; and in like manner the Lord, at his appearing, will draw the vast multitude of his faithful brethren out of the earth at the resurrection. Those who are accounted worthy of eternal life will become a part of the new political firmament of the kingdom age (See Daniel 12:1-3). Then, they will reflect the full glory of Christ, the “sun” of righteousness.

In this chapter (Genesis 9) Noah is presented as a type of the One Body of Christ (comprised of a great number of individuals, who are “one” in Christ). They will receive the gift of eternal life at Christ’s coming: Revelation 2:7; 3:21; 5:9-11; Philippians 3:20-21. The meaning of Noah’s name (“Rest”) will apply to all the redeemed, in the Kingdom Age (Hebrews 4:9-11).

“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” USED SYMBOLICALLY

Numerous wrong doctrines have been established among the churches of christendom through a failure to understand that various heavenly bodies have been used in the Bible in a symbolic sense. “Heaven” is sometimes used to describe *ruling powers*, whilst “earth” has been used to describe the *subjects* of a kingdom. The “sun” can represent the chief of a governing power, “stars” may represent princes, or lesser lights among the rulers, and “moon” has been used to represent ecclesiastical systems. See Isaiah 1:2-4; Jeremiah 15:9; 22:29; Ezekiel 32:7-8; Deuteronomy 32:1; Leviticus 26:19; Isaiah 24:23; 30:26; 60:19-21; Acts 2:19-21; Rev. 12:1.

V. 18 From this point in history, the three sons of Noah became the progenitors of the human race:

HAM ("hot, dark, swarthy") became the father of the dark races.

SHEM ("name" or "renown") became the father of the Semetic peoples.

JAPHETH ("enlarger") became the father of the white races.

The lineage which had begun with Seth was to be continued through Shem to Abraham and David, finally coming to fruition in the Lord Jesus Christ. (See the genealogy of Christ as given by Matthew — see Matt. 1, in which the ancestry of Jesus is traced back to Abraham; and Luke's account (Luke 3), wherein the Lord's genealogy is taken right back to Adam).

Genesis chapter ten records the generations which followed the flood. (It is profitable to remember that Shem died 2158 years after the creation, which was 35 years after the death of Abraham). The development of events recounted in this chapter provides a similar picture of tragic human behaviour which led to the flood. This chapter, whilst revealing the development of nations, also gives evidence of the decline of the Truth.

Vv. 8-10 Three generations after Noah, apostacy had again become widespread. Ham was the father of Cush, from whom came Nimrod. Nimrod's name means "rebel" and he was bold and shameless in his rebellion against God. He hunted those who opposed him, showing no mercy. He was "a mighty hunter before Yahweh" — which implies that he hunted *in defiance of* God (Companion Bible; cp. 6:11). "The beginning of his kingdom was Babel". The word Babel has been rendered from the same word as Babylon. In the Chaldean language it means "the gate of God", but in Hebrew it means "confusion". Thus, to the apostates the city was identified with a form of religious worship; but to those who understood and walked in the way of the Truth, it represented the "confusion" which one would associate with false religion. Nimrod established himself as a leader of "rebels" against the God of heaven.

11:1 History had repeated itself. Few now remained faithful to the Truth. Again, the sons of God had almost entirely lost their identity as such. The greater number had capitulated to the influences of apostacy. This verse indicates that mankind, with few exceptions, was now united not only in one language but also in a common purpose and philosophy which was godless.

- Vv. 2-4 They decided to build a city, thereby repeating the folly of Cain (4:17). They were also intent upon building a great tower. They intended it to become a focal point as a place of "worship". Ruins of similar towers, or ziggurats, have been discovered on the sites of ancient cities in Mesopotamia.
- V. 6 Social and spiritual conditions were rapidly deteriorating, repeating a similar pattern of behaviour which had led to the flood.
- V. 7 To break up the spirit of unity, which was moving the populace towards greater evil, God decreed that their language should be "confounded". Multiplicity of languages has proved to be the most divisive influence among nations.
- V. 8 Yahweh brought to an end the spirit of co-operation among men, which would have been necessary to achieve the objectives declared in Vv. 2-4. "So they left off building the city" (Roth).
- Vv. 10-26 These verses give the generations of Shem. This genealogy continues the lineage from where chapter 5 has concluded. Omitting the line through Joktan, this list concentrates upon the descent through Peleg. This is most important, as the lineage from Adam to Abraham has now been faithfully recorded.
- Vv. 26-32 Abram, later to have his name changed to Abraham, was one of the most important personages in all history. See Romans 4:11, 16, 23-24; Acts 26:6; Galatians 3:6-16, 26-29. He lived in Ur of the Chaldees — a remarkably well-developed civilisation for those times. The city was built on the banks of the river Euphrates, probably about 25 miles from the head of the Persian Gulf. (It has been estimated that, since the times of Abraham, the ocean of the Persian Gulf may have receded up to 150 miles in this area. This has been caused by a continuing silting-up of alluvial deposits). The Euphrates no longer follows its original course in that area.
- Ur was a city of culture and learning, with its own auto-cracy and theocracy. It featured a huge ziggurat, dedicated to the moon-god, Nanah. Archaeological discoveries indicate that Ur was a splendid city, situated in a most fertile area. Wealth and commerce made the people prosperous, and from a worldly point of view it would have been a fine city in which to dwell. Yet, God told Abram: "Get thee out!" (12:1). To worship Yahweh "in spirit and in truth" requires a diligent application of a two-fold principle: SEPARATION from the world, and DEDICATION to God.

Note the four types of characters revealed in these verses:

Nahor and **Haran** never left the spiritual darkness of their environment, the word of God having made no impact whatever upon them.

Terah heard the message and went part of the way, but hesitated too long and died without having embraced the promises.

Lot heard the promises, accepted them, and began to walk with Abram towards the land of promise. But he permitted wrong influences to cause his separation from Abram (see the seven steps which led to Lot's ruin: Genesis 13). However, despite his failures he is termed a "just" man, and "that righteous man" — 2 Peter 2:7-8).

Abram heard the message of God, believed and accepted it, and walked faithfully in the precepts of Yahweh. It is said that he was "called" (Hebrews 11:8), "faithful" (Romans 4:12), and "chosen" (Nehemiah 9:7). Significantly, these three words are used to describe the redeemed, immortalised saints who will inherit the kingdom with Christ: Revelation 17:14.

In effect, all humanity falls into one or other of these four character categories. There is a remarkable similarity between these four different characters and the four definitions of character given by Christ in the parable of the sower and the seed: Matthew 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:4-15.

God's command and initial promise having been made known to Abram (Acts 7:2-4), Abram left Ur of the Chaldees and travelled some 800 miles north-west to Haran.

STUDY THIRTEEN



THE PROMISES MADE TO ABRAHAM — GENESIS CHAPTER 12

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to *seeds*, as of *many*; but as of *one*, And to thy *seed*, which is Christ.” (Galatians 3:16).

In a consideration of the promises made to Abram (the second of the three great covenants) the above verse, written by the inspired apostle Paul, must always be remembered. The promises made by God to Abraham revolve around the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from the divine purpose which would be fulfilled in the Lord, there could be no inheritance for either Israel or the true saints of God.

The covenant in Eden was a promise of *life* — which had been lost through the sin of Adam. The covenant with Abraham promises an *eternal inheritance*. Later, the covenant which Yahweh was to make with David was to promise an *everlasting kingdom and divine authority*, which David desired, but did not obtain during his lifetime.

12:1 The word “had” has been omitted by the R.V. and other translations. The phrase should be rendered in the present tense. This, God’s second call to Abram, was made at Haran (v. 4), the first having been proclaimed at Ur (Acts 7:1-2).

God called Abram to *separate* from spiritual darkness and evil, and become *dedicated* to God. This is the first step towards eternal salvation. This important principle is embodied in the word “Ecclesia” — which has been erroneously rendered “church” in the New Testament. Virtually untranslatable into one English word, The Greek word *ekklesia* is derived from “ek”, meaning “out of” and “klessis”, meaning “a call, summons, or invitation”. Thus, the word “Ecclesia” (Anglicised for pronunciation) defines those who have been “called and invited to come out of” the world, to have a part in God’s special purpose. Just as Abraham was.

Vv. 2-3 As the principal Biblical number to represent the covenant is seven, so this promise is divided into seven parts:
1. “*I will make of thee a great nation...*” In view of Paul’s comment quoted at the commencement of this study, it is evident that this is a two-fold promise concerning Israel after the spirit and Israel after the flesh.

A great nation of redeemed, immortalised spiritual Israelites will rule the world, together with Christ and Abraham, in the kingdom age. We may become spiritual Israelites through the indwelling of the word of God and obedience thereto. Those who prove faithful will receive eternal life and inherit the kingdom (Genesis 13:16; Galatians 3:29; Romans 2:29; 4:13; 2 Peter 1:4; Revelation 5:9-10).

Israel, nationally, (i.e., those who are Israelites only by fleshly descent) also have a destiny in the divine purpose: Genesis 15:18; 2 Samuel 7:10; Ezekiel 21:25-27; Jeremiah 3:13-17; 30:3-11; Malachi 3:2-4; Matthew 19:28; 23:37-39.

The *nation* of Israel will be regathered, instructed in the principles of the Truth, and become the nucleus of the Kingdom. Consider such important passages as: Jeremiah 31:31-34; 33:6-7, 14-21; Ezekiel 20:33-42; 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:22-23; Romans 11:1, 14-28.

It should be understood that only those who are "Abraham's seed" in a spiritual sense live in hope of eternal life: Galatians 3:7-9.

2. "*I will bless thee...*" God would condescend to ensure the future well-being of Abraham, as an individual, insofar as these promises could be assured of fulfilment. With such an assurance, no-one could take away from Abraham that which God had promised him. The word "bless" is from the Hebrew, *barak*, and means "to kneel to bless". It thus demonstrates God's benevolent and philanthropic love for those who will honour Him as He would have them do.
3. "*I will make thy name great....*" In a sense, this promise was fulfilled when God changed this man's name from Abram ("high father") to Abraham ("a father of many nations, or multitudes") Genesis 17:5. Abraham's name is also "great" in the minds of all who become heirs to the promises, for such heirs acknowledge his faithfulness and his great part in the development of Yahweh's purpose (Galatians 3:29). But, in the fullest sense this promise will not come to fulfilment until Abraham's name becomes "great" in the Kingdom Age. All peoples and nations will then acknowledge that Abraham's name is "great" because of his faithfulness to God.
4. "*And thou shalt be a blessing....*" This means that Abraham, through his faithfulness and obedience, would be able to provide a blessing for others. We are blessed by God if we imitate the faith of Abraham. In

this sense, Abraham becomes a blessing to us. See again: 2 Peter 1:4 — a verse which cannot be appreciated, apart from an understanding of the promises made by God to Abraham. Cp. Matthew 8:11.

5. "*I will bless them that bless thee...*" To receive blessings from God — especially the blessing of divine nature — it is necessary for us to espouse, and identify with, the faith of Abraham. Through an understanding of the promises we can become spiritually at one with Abraham. We must manifest his disposition if we are to receive an immortal inheritance in the kingdom: Galatians 3:28-29; Revelation 5:9-10.
6. "*I will curse him that curseth thee...*" See Zechariah 2:8; Jeremiah 50:17-18. Those who "curse" the Israel of God (whether it be natural or spiritual Israel) will be cursed by God. A modern example is that of Adolf Hitler and the nation of Germany. There have been many other such examples down through history. We should observe that this section of the promise guarantees the continuing preservation of Israel.
7. "*In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed...*" It should be noted that points 1 to 4 of these promises have been related to Abraham in *personal* and *individual* matters, whilst points 5 and 6 related to two conflicting *classes* of humanity. The final point covers *all* nations, and is therefore an international promise. It guarantees a time to come when all nations will become united — under *one* King, in *one* Empire, and with *one* religion. This state will become a reality when the Kingdom of God is ushered in, upon the earth: Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14; Micah 4:1-8; Psalm 72; Revelation 11:15.

When this epoch arrives:

- Christ will return to earth: Acts 1:10-11.
- He will raise the dead who are amenable to judgment: John 12:46-48; 1 Corinthians 15:12-18.
- He will grant eternal life to all who are worthy: John 6:44; Hebrews 5:8-9.
- Together with his immortalised saints, he will confront the nations at Armageddon, and then subjugate all nations to his will: Ezekiel 38; Revelation 16:15-16; Psalm 2; Psalm 149; Malachi 4:2-3; Revelation 2:26-29.
- He will reign from the throne of his father, David, in Jerusalem: Luke 1:31-33; Isaiah 24:23.

Abraham has never yet received these promises: Genesis 15:15; Acts 7:5; Hebrews 11:39-40. Abraham entered the land of promise only as a "stranger and pilgrim" (Hebrews 11:13). He must, therefore,

receive the fulfilment of these promises through a physical resurrection from the dead:

Acts 4:1-2; 26:6-8; Hebrews 11:39-40; Revelation 20:5-6.

Together with Abraham, those who are approved at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be given a spiritual body. The body which we at present possess will be changed. "This corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." See 1 Corinthians 15:50; Luke 24:39; John 20:19-20, 25-29; Philipians 3:20-21.

Since the promises God made to Abraham as yet remain unfulfilled, we must have the same faith and confidence as Abraham. God cannot lie, and has proven constantly that He can be fully trusted. We must walk by faith until Christ comes to fulfil all that has been promised:

Romans 2:7-8; 15:8; Acts 3:25-26; Matthew 19:27-28; Psalm 102:13-16.

The promises made to the fathers of Israel constitute the vital nucleus of "the gospel" or "the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God". Significantly, the name of Abraham is mentioned no less than 74 times in the New Testament, thus showing him to have been one of the key figures in history.

Galatians 3:8-9; Matthew 9:35; Mark 1:14; Luke 13:28; Acts 8:12; 19:8.

STUDY FOURTEEN



GENESIS CHAPTERS 13 TO 50

Before considering the basic principles set forth in Genesis 13, it is wise to remember that, when Abram came into the land of promise, God made a statement to Abram that was to become the basis for Paul's exposition in Galatians 3 concerning the promises. At Shechem, God told Abram: "Unto thy seed will I give this land..." (12:6-7). This is a simple, yet vitally important statement. It means that the land was promised to Abram's *seed* before it was ever promised to Abram himself (13:14-17). The superiority of the *seed* over even Abram himself was therefore clearly established. Christ is greater than Abraham: and it will only be through the perfection of Christ's sacrifice that Abraham — together with all the faithful — will gain his promised inheritance. Abraham, like all other sons of Adam (with the sole exception of the Lord Jesus Christ) was a sinner, and therefore unable to redeem himself.

- 13:1-3 Abram had now passed through the land of promise. He had descended into Egypt, and had returned to Bethel. He now knew that God would give this land to his "seed".
- Vv. 11-12 Abram and Lot (Abram's nephew) parted company. Lot would have been much better off to have stayed close to Abram, but he chose to make his way to the cities of the plain — which included the abominable cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are many lessons to be learned from this: it is always to our advantage to remain associated with those who can provide us with a sound example, and exercise an influence over us for good. Lot paid a terrible price for this wrong decision. Abram, in contrast to Lot, chose the remote and rather desolate area of Bethel. The name "Bethel" means: "The house of God" — likewise, such should be our choice.
- Vv. 14-17 These verses clearly point to a literal inheritance in a particular land, upon the earth. Abram was told to look "northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward". (Note: God never told Abram to look *upward* toward heaven for his inheritance!) God would give all this land to Abram and his seed. The "seed", we must remember, was a singular individual: the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16); but, as these verses show, the singular seed would become greatly multiplied to become "like the dust of the earth". This is speaking of the develop-

STUDY 14

ment of the sons of God, down through the ages. Those who come "into Christ" through baptism become heirs according to the promises. In the day of Christ's glory these words will find their fulfilment: The vast multitude of the redeemed will be given divine nature; and Israel after the flesh will be restored and spiritually revitalised (Galatians 3:27-29; Zechariah 12:9-14).

GENESIS CHAPTER 15

- Vv. 13-16 A promise to Abram concerning the later migration of his people, Israel, down into Egypt. Eventually, they would come again to the land of promise. The migration took place in the days of Jacob; and this prophecy was conclusively fulfilled when Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Joshua brought them into the Promised Land.
- V. 18 The area of land to be ultimately inherited by Abraham's seed was now more specifically defined. It is noteworthy that never at any stage in their history have the Israelites taken possession of all this area. The promise is thus clearly still to be fulfilled.

GENESIS CHAPTER 16

- Vv. 1-12 Being barren, and unable to produce a child, Abram's wife, Sarai, thought that the promised "seed" might be obtained through Hagar, her handmaid. So she gave Hagar unto Abram. As a result, Ishmael was born. Ishmael became the father of the Arab nations. See Genesis 25:1-6. Although there have been numerous periods of deep hostility between Jews and Arabs, in the Kingdom Age they will be united upon the basis of divine truth, both nations accepting Christ as their Messiah and King (See Isaiah 60:6-7; Zechariah 12:10-14).

GENESIS CHAPTER 17

- Vv. 1-8 The promises to Abram again confirmed. His name was now changed to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude" or "father of many nations". His wife's name was changed to Sarah, which means "princess".
- Vv. 9-14 The rite of circumcision was now instituted. Abraham and all his male descendants were to be circumcised on the 8th day. "Eight" is the Biblical number to symbolise the cutting-off of flesh, as indicated in this rite. See also Deuteronomy 10:16. This practice became a law in Israel, as God required; and later became associated with the ritual of the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 12:1-3). As a ritual, circumcision taught the same principle which we now learn from the act of baptism. That is, a repudiation of the flesh and

its evil works, and a resolve to crucify (or cut off) the flesh with its ungodly lusts and affections. See Galatians 5:24. Whilst we should still appreciate the spiritual lessons which were taught in the rite of circumcision, it is no longer binding upon those who are baptised into Christ. Jews, even today, still preserve their *national* identity by means of circumcision (amongst other things); but whilst they remain in ignorance of the Truth concerning Christ and the gospel, they do not possess the hope of eternal life which is shared commonly by all *spiritual* Israelites. See Romans 2:28-29; 9:1-8; Galatians 6:12-15.

GENESIS CHAPTER 22

- Vv. 1-2 Abraham was instructed to take his son Isaac (through whom the promises would be advanced: 21:12) and to offer him as a sacrifice, upon an altar. In this, Abraham's faith in God was put to the test. In type, this chapter prefigured the perfect co-operation between Yahweh and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, which resulted in Christ's perfect sacrifice by which our sins may be covered and forgiven. The major difference between the type and the anti-type was that, when his faith was proved, Abraham was prevented by God from putting Isaac to death, whereas it was necessary for God to require the death of His own Son: John 10:17-18; Acts 2:22-24. In V. 1, the word "tempt" has been better rendered "test" (R.V.). God subjects all his sons and daughters to trial and testing to prove and purify their faith.
- V. 3 The "two" young men typify the two men who were crucified, one on either side of the Lord.
- V. 4 The number 3 is repeatedly associated with the covenant. There is also a type here of the Lord's ministry (3½ years), and the three days Christ lay in the tomb.
- V. 5 Although Abraham expected to slay his son, as God had commanded him, he expressed his absolute faith in the fact that, should Isaac die, God would promptly restore him to life. Abraham, with awesome conviction, believed this because God had stated: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called...." (21:12).
- V. 6 Isaac, sometimes wrongly pictured as a young boy when this incident took place, was about 17 years old. He was at least as physically strong, or stronger than his father, and therefore co-operated with him in the sacrifice. There is also revealed here the touching type of Christ carrying his own cross: John 19:17.
- V. 8 These words were wonderfully true. Only God could provide the "lamb" which would atone for the sins of humanity (See John 1:29)

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- V. 9 Isaac could have violently opposed this fearful procedure. Yet, he willingly submitted to the demands of his father. A type of Christ: a willing sacrifice. As Isaac could have run away and avoided the sacrifice, so Christ had a similar opportunity: John 18:5-6.
- Vv. 10-12 The angel of Yahweh called to Abraham, telling him not to slay his son, as his (Abraham's) faith had been proved beyond doubt.
- V. 14 Abraham named the place "Yahweh-Yireh", meaning "Yahweh will provide", thus demonstrating again the lesson taught to his son in v. 8. "In the Mount of Yahweh it shall be seen" meaning that down through the ages men and women of Abraham's faith looked for the coming of "the Lamb of God" who would atone for the sins of men, and later would fulfil all that God had promised to Abraham.
- Vv. 16-18 Abraham's faith having now been proved, the promise stated here was *completely unconditional*. Note again the singular seed: ".... thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies...." (v. 17). This seed, as we have already seen, was Christ.
- V. 19 Exactly as Abraham had predicted! (v. 5). His faith had been vindicated.

GENESIS CHAPTER 23

Sarah died, and Abraham sought a suitable site for her burial. In this chapter, Abraham's faith was once more demonstrated. The sons of Heth wished to *give* Abraham the cave of Machpelah for his purpose. But Abraham refused to accept their generous offer. Why? Because *God* had promised to "give" him this land, and therefore it could be given to him by no other. Abraham insisted on *paying* for the land; thus, the only part of the promised land Abraham ever legally owned was a burial ground!

GENESIS CHAPTER 24

Eliezer, Abraham's servant, was sent to Abraham's "country" to find a wife for Isaac. Under no circumstances was Isaac to marry "of the daughters of the Canaanites" (v. 3). The principle that sons of God must remain separate from the Gentile world (which knows not God) was again demonstrated in this incident. Eliezer was sent "in faith" — and the faith of both Abraham and Eliezer in this matter was rewarded. This chapter provides a wonderful lesson concerning the way in which Yahweh can work in the lives of Believers, guiding and strengthening them. See Psalm 34:7; Hebrews 1:13-14. At this stage of our studies it is important to understand and believe that these are not mere theoretical principles: Yahweh is a living God, and His help and strength may be sought and found in our daily lives. This chapter brings home to us

the wonderful reality of worshipping the only true and *living* God.

GENESIS CHAPTER 25

Vv. 1-6 The Arab sons of Abraham received gifts from their father, and were then sent away, eastward. Abraham understood that the generations which were to follow would lead ultimately to the “seed” of promise, through Isaac, and not through these other sons. The development described in these verses also typifies that which will occur in the Millennial Age of Christ’s reign upon earth. God’s long-range promise concerning Ishmael had guaranteed that Ishmael would “*dwell in the face of all his brethren*” (Genesis 16:12, lit.) — which must imply: close by, or in the sight of, his brethren. Thus, in the Kingdom Age, the Jewish people will dwell in the land of promise and the Arab peoples will live in Arabia — an area adjoining the promised land (Isaiah 21:13-15; 60:6-7).

V. 8 The death of Abraham. He died “in faith” not seeing the fulfilment of “the promise” (Hebrews 11:13,39). As we have seen, he will be resurrected at Christ’s coming — together with all the worthies down through the ages — to share in the fulfilment of the promises, and the immeasurable joy of divine nature.

Vv. 21-23 Rebekah, Isaac’s wife, gave birth to twins. The elder was Esau, who became the progenitor of the Edomites — a race of people who remained constantly hostile in their attitude towards Israel. “Edom” is almost identical to the word “Adam” — which, in its meaning, is related to “red”, or “earth”. Edom therefore typifies *the man of the flesh*, unrestrained by the guidance and direction of divine principles. In other words, the Gentiles in contrast to the Israel of God. Numerous prophecies foretelling the eventual total destruction of the Edomites have been quite wrongly applied to the Arabs. The nation of Edom was totally obliterated during the period of the Maccabees, prior to the birth of Christ. As a nation, they were offered the choice of either accepting Judaism or being destroyed. Similarly, note the destiny of all nations: they must eventually decide to embrace the Truth, thereby becoming part of the Israel of God (even as we do at this present time: Ephesians 2:12), or else face eternal death. To gain a basic understanding concerning the typical significance of Edom, see Amos 9:11-12, and observe how these words have been quoted in Acts 15:15-17, where, for the word “Edom” in the original, James substituted the phrase “the residue of men....”

The subject of Edom and its prophetic significance may appear to be relatively unimportant. But without a correct

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- understanding of this matter, one would be led to quite erroneous conclusions, generally, upon the subject of Bible prophecy.
- V. 26 The other twin was Jacob, to whom Esau, in due course, sold his birthright. The coming of the "seed" of promise was to be through Jacob.

GENESIS CHAPTER 26

- Vv. 3-5 God repeated the promises to Isaac.

GENESIS CHAPTER 28

- Vv. 13-14 The promises were repeated to Jacob. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are correctly regarded as the three patriarchs of the nation of Israel.

Summary Concerning The Promises Made To The Fathers of Israel

These promises constitute "the Gospel" — Galatians 3:7-9. If we desire to have a hope of eternal salvation in the Age to come, we must wholeheartedly embrace the beliefs, hopes, and faith of the patriarchs of Israel. Please read and study these vitally important passages of scripture, which provide a key to the understanding of the gospel: 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 4:13-25; Ephesians 2:11-12; Hebrews 11:39-40; Colossians 3:4; 2 Timothy 4:7-8. Some of these passages have been referred to earlier, in relation to special aspects of the promises. However, when these verses are considered together, they provide us with the true message of the Gospel.

It should now be clear why the Gospel has been described as "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20) and "the hope of the promises made of God unto our fathers" (Acts 26:6).

GENESIS CHAPTER 32

Jacob's name changed to Israel — meaning "A prince with God". This name describes the ultimate eternal destiny of all who embrace the Hope of Israel, and walk faithfully before God until the coming of His Son. All the redeemed will become "princes with God".

GENESIS CHAPTER 35

Israel's twelfth son, Benjamin, was born. The names of Israel's (Jacob's) 12 sons provided the names for the 12 tribes of Israel; excepting only that, as Joseph received the birthright, his two sons received equal tribe-status with Jacob's eleven other sons. Thus the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh came into being.

GENESIS CHAPTERS 37-50

Jacob and his family moved down into Egypt, in accordance with

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God's will (See Genesis 15:13; 46:1-4). The life of Joseph is recorded in these chapters. A brief study of Joseph's life will reveal that he appears on the pages of history as one of the most remarkable types of Christ on record. These chapters end with the death of Jacob — whose body Joseph returned to the land of promise for burial; and, finally, the death of Joseph. At the time of his death Joseph promised the people of Israel that God would raise up a deliverer to bring them up out of the land of Egypt.

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STUDY FIFTEEN



EXODUS CHAPTERS ONE TO ELEVEN

This book deals with the plight of the Israelites under Egyptian persecution; the birth of Moses and his preparation to become Leader of Israel; the plagues brought upon the Egyptians; the institution of the Passover; Israel's departure from Egypt; the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai; and the building and erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

For an understanding of God's purpose in calling Israel out of Egypt, see Exodus 4:23; 19:5-6; 29:45-46.

The life of Moses was divided into three periods, each of forty years. He spent his first forty years in the court of Pharaoh (Acts 7:23), another forty years in the desert, being prepared for his role as leader of the people (Acts 7:30), and the last forty years of his life as Leader of the nation of Israel (Deut. 34:7). We should note that if we remain faithful to God our own lives follow a similar pattern. Before we come to a knowledge of the Truth the first period of our lives is spent in Egyptian darkness (in the Bible, Egypt is used as a symbol for spiritual darkness); our second period is spent on probation in the wilderness of life as we make our way by faith towards the Kingdom of God. The third era in our lives will be in the kingdom of God, if judged worthy at Christ's coming (cp. Exodus 19:6).

EXODUS CHAPTER ONE

- Vv. 6-11 A different dynasty of Pharaohs now ruled Egypt. They did not acknowledge Joseph, or the good which had come upon the Egyptians through Joseph's faithfulness to God. These Pharaohs brought heavy oppression upon the Israelites.
- Vv. 20-22 The nation of Israel multiplied dramatically. In an endeavour to prevent them from becoming a danger to Egypt it was decreed that every new-born male child should be put to death.

EXODUS CHAPTER TWO

- Vv. 1-2 Moses was born, in Egypt, to Amram and Jochabed, who were of the tribe of Levi. His mother was informed by God that Moses was to be set apart for a special divine purpose (Hebrews 11:23), and therefore would be preserved from the murderous activities of the Egyptians.

- V. 10 Through the Hand of Providence Moses was kept from harm and was brought up in the Court of Pharaoh. But in his heart (due, no doubt, to the diligent instruction and education in the Truth given him by his mother) he remained an Israelite, knowledgeable in the promises made to the fathers of Israel.
- Vv. 11-21 Moses, eventually, was forced to flee from Egypt. Whilst defending an Israelite he had killed an Egyptian, and would have suffered death at the hands of Pharaoh had he not departed speedily from Egypt. He fled to the land of Midian, where he remained 40 years.

EXODUS CHAPTER THREE

- Vv. 1-6 Moses came to Horeb (a place in the Sinaitic mountain range), and there witnessed a manifestation of the God of Israel. He saw a burning bush; yet, miraculously, the bush was not consumed by the fire. This incident symbolised the history of the nation of Israel: they have experienced the fires of suffering and persecution, and yet remain unconsumed. This indicates that the people of Israel still have a part to play in the unfolding of the divine purpose.
- The one who spoke to Moses is termed "the angel of Yahweh" (v. 2), "Yahweh" and "Elohim" (v. 4). According to Acts 7:30-35 this was an Angelic Being. And whilst being literally an "Angel of Yahweh" he could also be termed "Yahweh" because he was a manifestation of the Creator, a representative of Yahweh, and speaking in His Name. Similarly he could be described by the plural term "Elohim" (meaning "mighty ones") because he was one of the multitude of Angelic Beings, and therefore one of their representatives.
- V. 14 Yahweh declared His Name to Moses. The A.V. has "I AM THAT I AM". But this is not supported by the Hebrew text. The Hebrew words are: "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh" meaning, "I Will Be Whom I Will Be" (cp. R.V. marg.). The Name of Israel's God is thus expressive of His purpose to eventually become manifested in a great multitude of all the redeemed. The Name speaks of a God Who *is*, Who *was*, and Who *will be*. He is therefore a God who has conceived a plan with an ultimate objective in view.
- The "I" in the meaning of the Name is first person, singular, and speaks of the One Eternal Spirit Himself — the one source and fountain of all life and all living. The words "will be" indicate a future purpose, to be manifested at a later time. The relative pronoun, "who" is both singular and plural, masculine and feminine; and can therefore stand for a great multitude. The final phrase

"will be" relates both to the "I" and the "Who" — thus showing that the One, Singular Deity of all creation will ultimately be manifested in many. See John 17:17-23. Literally, the Name is spelled YHWH ("He Who Will Be") and pronounced Yahweh. This Name had not been known to the Patriarchs of Israel (Exodus 6:2-3). It is therefore apparent that Moses (writing under divine inspiration) compiled the book of Genesis *after* receiving enlightenment concerning the Name and its significance, and included the Name in the Genesis narrative at appropriate places, under divine inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). In almost all cases where the word "LORD" appears in capitals in the A.V. Old Testament it is the Name "Yahweh".

The importance of the Yahweh-Name and its meaning has been repeatedly stressed in the pages of Scripture:

- It is a strong tower.....Proverbs 18:10
 - It is holyPsalm 33:21
 - It is vocally important to identify Israel's GodJoshua 9:9.
 - We should *love* the NamePsalm 5:11
 - We should *remember* the NamePsalm 20:7
 - We should *fear* (reverence) the NamePsalm 86:11-12
 - We should *praise* the NamePsalm 44:8
 - We should *extol* Him by His Name, YahPsalm 68:4
 - We should *exalt* His NamePsalm 34:3-4
 - We should *bless* the NamePsalm 96:2
 - We should *pray* to the NamePsalm 80:18
 - We should *call* upon the Name1 Chron. 16:8
 - The Name is a source of confidencePsalm 9:10
 - We should *think* upon the NameMalachi 3:16
 - We should not despise the NameMalachi 1:6
- A note of warning: *False teachers will tell us to forget the Name.....Jeremiah 23:27*

"In the path of Thy judgments, O Yahweh, we wait for Thee; Thy memorial Name is the desire of our soul..." (Isaiah 26:8, R.S.V.)

EXODUS CHAPTERS FOUR TO ELEVEN

Moses was sent by Yahweh to visit the Elders of Israel. He was instructed to inform them that, under Yahweh's direction, Moses would lead them out of Egypt and to the land of promise. He was then sent to Pharaoh to seek permission for the Israelites to leave Egypt. Pharaoh refused. This led to the confrontation and contest between

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Yahweh and Pharaoh, resulting in the plagues which came upon the Egyptians.

The plagues sent upon the land of Egypt were:

- (1) Rivers and water turned into blood
- (2) Frogs
- (3) Lice
- (4) Flies (Probably the Egyptian beetle).
- (5) Murrain of beasts (a cattle disease)
- (6) Boils and blains (a pustule; an inflamed and ulcerous sore)
- (7) Hail
- (8) Locusts
- (9) Darkness
- (10) Death of the firstborn

This last plague occurred on the night of the first Passover and the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt.

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EXODUS CHAPTER TWELVE

Pharaoh had refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt because he feared the men would remove their wives and children to safety and then return to wage war upon the Egyptians (see Exodus 10:8-11, R.S.V.). The final plague, which broke Pharaoh's stiff-necked resistance, was the death of the firstborn throughout Egypt (Exodus 11). With this dramatic climax to the confrontation, Moses was commanded to teach the Israelites concerning the feast which was to celebrate their deliverance from Egypt. It became known as "the feast of Passover" (See 12:12-14).

Vv. 1-2 The entire concept of the Israelitish year was now to be changed. The Passover was to be recognised as a new beginning for the nation. In this respect, the Passover typified baptism for Christ's disciples, which results in a "new beginning" for them (See 2 Corinthians 5:17). And as the Israelites were to remember this occasion and its import, year by year, so the disciples do likewise. They assemble at the Memorial Meeting to take bread and wine, that they might renew their spiritual birth by remembering the sacrifice of *their* "Passover Lamb" — the Lord Jesus Christ.

This first month was to be known as "Abib", meaning "green fruits", and therefore symbolises newness of life (cp. Romans 6:1-4). The time of year answers to our March/April. It was at this time that Israel was delivered from Egypt.

V. 3 The entire nation became involved in the feast of the Passover; none were excluded (v. 47). Similarly, the whole Ecclesia of God must partake of the Passover Lamb (Christ) as the means whereby they might be delivered from darkness and death (symbolised by Egypt). John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Revelation 5:6-12. All requirements for the preparation and partaking of the Passover were to be meticulously observed, as Yahweh had commanded. So it is also in the anti-type: God has clearly set down the terms and conditions upon which He will deliver us, through His Son.

Vv. 4-6 On the tenth day of the first month, a lamb — under a year old — was to be chosen. (The word rendered "lamb" could describe a kid either of the sheep or goats, but the word of God indicates that for the Passover sacrifice only

lambs were used). It was to be a male, and it was to be penned up for four days. The penning was to provide time for a thorough examination of the animal to ensure that no spot or blemish marred its physical wholeness. If an animal proved imperfect in these respects, it could not be offered as a Passover Lamb. Similarly, the Lord Jesus entered Jerusalem on the tenth day. The most thorough examination revealed him to be morally perfect, "without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19).

A lamb was to be taken for every "house" — teaching Israel that the nation was to be united in the principles of divine worship. Every "house" typified the various elements of the Ecclesia, uniting in remembering their Passover Lamb. The anti-type illustrates the perfection of Christ's sacrifice: for, as Israel were to celebrate this feast every year — each time with a new lamb — Christ died once only, thus providing the perfect sacrifice and removing the need for the type (Hebrews 10:3; 9:25-26). "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4), as will have been apparent from our studies in Genesis chapter 3.

V.6 emphasises that the lamb was to be put to death on the 14th day, "between the evenings" (see marg. for lit. Heb.). It refers to the "early evening" and the "late evening," or late afternoon, when one day concluded and the new day began. The N.T. accounts show that the Lord died upon the stake at the time appointed for the Passover Lamb to be put to death.

V. 7

The blood of the sacrificial lamb was to be sprinkled upon the doorposts and the lintel, but *not* upon the threshold — pointing forward to the fact that we should be covered (surrounded) by the blood of Christ but that it should not be trampled underfoot (i.e., treated with lack of respect or reverence: Hebrews 10:29).

The blood was to be sprinkled with hyssop (v. 22), a symbol for a cleansing agent (Psalm 51:7). Thus, the blood of the Passover Lamb symbolised blood *with the power to cleanse* (see 1 John 1:7). There was nothing "magical" about Christ's blood (as taught by many of the churches); it simply represented a man's life of perfect obedience to Yahweh, culminating in his death, which illustrated that only Yahweh is righteous and that the flesh of Adamic nature is rightly related to death because it can produce "no good thing" (Romans 7:18).

Every Israelite who passed through his doorway, into his house, was virtually covered (implying protection) by the blood. This was a type of baptism, when the individual is totally buried in water.

V. 8

The blood of the Passover Lamb was to symbolise a life poured out in perfect obedience to the will of God.

The lamb was to be eaten with "bitter herbs", to teach Israel that life — in this present mortal existence — is bitter because of the effects of sin. The flesh offers no real sweetness, and there is a certain bitterness in continually striving to subdue the evil propensities of the flesh. Yet, it must be said of us, as it was of Christ, that we "love righteousness" and "hate wickedness" (Psalm 45:7). These terms indicate a continuing conflict within each one of us, as we struggle towards developing the character and disposition of Christ (see Galatians 5:17). But it is all worthwhile, to a degree which we cannot yet comprehend (because we have not yet experienced the wonder of divine nature); for the "fruit" which we develop in suffering to develop a Christ-like character has its "end", and that is: "everlasting life" (Romans 6:21-22).

In the "eating" of *our* Passover Lamb, on the first day of each week, we continue to taste — and thus identify with — the bitterness of the suffering and death experienced by our Saviour.

In giving himself as a perfect sacrifice — the anti-type of the Passover Lamb — the Lord Jesus Christ was the *first* one to benefit from his sacrifice, since, after his resurrection, he cast off forever the shackles and proclivities which are inherent in Adamic nature: Hebrews 5:1-2; 9:12 (Lit., "he found for himself eternal redemption" — third person, masc., middle voice); 9:22; 13:20.

According to v. 8, the lamb was also to be eaten with unleavened bread. On occasions in the Bible, leaven is used as a symbol for corruption. But in Christ's death (as with the Passover Lamb) he did not suffer corruption (Psalm 16:10). No leaven was permitted to be offered with any of the sacrifices under the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 2:11). This was teaching that the purpose of sacrifice to Yahweh is that *He* might be honoured, and that *we* might eventually escape the corruption which is associated with the flesh (2 Peter 1:4).

V. 9

The lamb was to be roasted with fire; a symbol for judgment and purification. In his death, as we have seen, the Lord showed that the flesh is rightly related to death; and therefore Yahweh is not unjust in passing such a judgment upon mankind. But also, through his death, the Lord attained to the purification of divine nature. Each first day of the week Christ's disciples partake of their Passover Lamb, judging themselves and seeking purification (1 Corinthians 11:23-31).

Sacrificial meals, normally, were boiled. But this sacrifice

was roasted, thus associating it with a burnt offering (symbol for a life totally dedicated to Yahweh). The process of roasting was carried out by using a spit; thus adding a clear allusion to death by crucifixion.

- V. 10 By morning, none of the lamb was to remain. Any left over was to be totally burned away in the fire. This emphasised that under no circumstances should any of the animal see corruption (Psalm 16:10).
- V. 11 The Israelites were to be fully clothed when partaking of the Passover Lamb. Thus they were to be fully covered. Cp. Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 1:13-16. Being clothed, they were to eat of the lamb "in haste", an intimation of steadfastness of purpose, total dedication to the cause, and URGENCY. The lesson is that we cannot take lightly — or casually loiter over — those things associated with Christ and salvation. Thus, having become covered by the blood (baptism) and having partaken of the Passover Lamb (the Memorials of bread and wine) we must be ready to immediately fulfil the commandments God has given us. We must become *moved* by the power of the Truth to begin our journey out from Egyptian darkness, without delay or impediment, into the wilderness of life — setting our faces steadfastly towards the Kingdom of God.
- V. 12 Yahweh would destroy *all* the firstborn in Egypt, both of man and beast. This was to teach Israel that Yahweh would never compromise with sin. Israel could be delivered only by conforming to that which God required of them. Likewise, the same principle applies to us.
- V. 13 Figuratively, Christ's blood is sprinkled upon the heart of the Believer by faith. If we walk humbly before God, following those commandments which He has laid down, so that atonement may be provided for our sins, He will deliver and redeem us. As the Angel of Death "passed over" all the houses which had followed the instructions given concerning the blood of the Passover Lamb, so eventually the sacrifice of Christ will bring us eternal life.
- V. 22 The Israelites were to remain inside their houses throughout the night, until commanded by Yahweh to do otherwise. Why? Because outside there was only darkness and death! Similarly, we must remain inside the Ecclesia throughout the continuing long night of Gentile darkness. So long as we remain, in faith, within the "house" of God (the Ecclesia, 1 Timothy 3:15) we will find that we will ultimately gain life eternal at the "dawn" of the new Messianic day (Malachi 4:1-2; Hebrews 3:6).
- Vv. 23-25 The great principles of the Atonement, as taught in the Passover, were to be remembered year by year by the

people of Israel. Similarly, although Christ offered himself "once" only, because his sacrifice was perfect (in contrast to the Israelitish Passover, in which a new animal was slain by each house every year), we still follow the same principle as taught to the Israelites: On the first day of each week, through the bread and wine of the Memorial Emblems, we remember Yahweh's great atoning work on our behalf.

- Vv. 43-48 The Passover feast was *entirely* Israelitish. Anyone not circumcised (circumcision was a symbol for baptism) was to be absolutely excluded. This reminds us of the Israeli-tish nature of our hope: in the N.T., our hope has been described as "the hope of *Israel*...." (See Acts 28:20; Ephesians 2:12-13). We must become a part of spiritual Israel to benefit from the atoning power of Christ, the Great Passover Lamb. We thus come into covenant-relationship with Yahweh only upon this basis. Therefore, there was established an awesome connection between the feast of Passover and the COVENANTS OF PROMISE MADE TO THE FATHERS OF ISRAEL — because the Law of Moses, as such, *had not yet been given* to Israel; and they could, at *this* time, equate the rite of circumcision ONLY WITH THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT! (The incorporation of circumcision into the Law of Moses came *after* this time: Leviticus 12:3). True circumcision must be "of the heart", and therefore typified a *disposition* rather than a mere ritual (Deuteronomy 10-15-16; Romans 2:29).

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STUDY SEVENTEEN



EXODUS CHAPTERS NINETEEN AND TWENTY

EXODUS CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Israelites were brought down to Mount Sinai, where the Law of Moses was given to them.

Vv. 5-6 In our early studies, we considered the subject of God-manifestation. The things we learned then should now be brought to mind once again. For these verses teach us that Yahweh's whole purpose in calling Israel out of Egypt was based upon the same concept as Genesis 1:26. They were to become *a nation* of King-Priests. (The phrase "a kingdom of priests" has been rendered "a royal priesthood" in the Septuagint). God desired that they would become His rulers and priests to all other nations; thus, to represent Yahweh, they would have to learn to become like Him. See Deuteronomy 4:6-8. But Israel broke the covenant (Exodus 32:25-29), and all rights to the priesthood were invested in the one tribe of Levi, because they remained faithful on that occasion. It is important to note that Peter quoted these words and applied them to *all* Believers, whether Jew or Gentile (1 Peter 2:9; but note the context, Vv. 5-9). Similar words to these in Exodus appear in Revelation 5:9-10. A note of warning should be considered at this point: Here was the divine purpose to which the nation of Israel had been called. Yet, they failed to honour Yahweh and His word according to the terms of the covenant. Will we fail similarly? Only a constant, daily application of the word of God will help us to develop the disposition which was in Christ; and if we follow resolutely in his footsteps, though at times we display weakness, we shall attain to the kingdom with all the worthies who have lived through the ages.

EXODUS CHAPTER TWENTY

Chapter 20 lists the ten commandments, around which the rest of the Law of Moses was framed (Exod. 34:28).

The Law of Moses was given for two *bāsic* reasons:

- (1) "Because of transgressions" — i.e., a wise set of laws to

- place restraint upon the evil propensities of the flesh; and to prevent anarchy. Members of every nation need to be protected — against themselves and others — by wise laws. There could be no wiser nor more just Law than that provided by Yahweh (See Galatians 3:19; Romans 7:12).
- (2) To act as a "schoolmaster" to prepare the nation for the coming of the "seed" of promise (the Lord Jesus Christ). See Galatians 3:24. The word rendered "schoolmaster" means, quite literally, "a child-leader". The metaphor is that of a wise and learned teacher leading a child in its mental development: educating the child in knowledge and understanding of divine things. Such was the Law of Moses to all who were prepared to see it in that light. David was such a man: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.... I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil...." (Psalm 119:18,162). Although the Law was to be kept as such, it was able to "lead" the way towards the development of faith. The prophet Habakkuk, who lived under the Law, taught: "The just shall *live* by his *faith*..." (Habakkuk 2:4). The Law consistently taught of the Christ who was to come, and in many direct and parabolic ways spoke of his mission and that which he would accomplish. Thus, a true spiritual Israelite, whilst bound under the Law of Moses, could develop *faith* in the coming of that One who would become the Saviour.
- The Law of Moses could not bring salvation to mankind, because of the inherent weakness of the flesh. Man was incapable of perfectly keeping the Law, and therefore could not hope to be saved through the principle of Law (Galatians 2:21; 3:11; 5:1-4). "If there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been *out of law*..." (Galatians 3:21, see Diaglott). Absolute *faith* in what Yahweh has promised is the only principle upon which we may hope to be eternally saved, and therefore the covenants of *promise* took precedence over the Law of Moses (Galatians 3:16-18). Disciples of Christ are not bound by the Law of Moses. "After that *faith* is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster...." (Galatians 3:25). See Colossians 2:14; Romans 7:4; Galatians 4:9-11. But this does not mean that we now have no responsibility to keep divine Law: rather, if we genuinely and earnestly strive to "live by faith" we will become fully devoted to walking in the footsteps of Christ, by striving to keep the commandments which he has given to us: John 14:15; Romans 2:7-8; 2 Corinthians 10:5; 1 John 1:5-7; 5:3.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE SABBATH

As disciples of Christ, are we called upon to keep the Ten Commandments? The answer is in the negative, since we have learned that the Law of Moses — of which the Ten Commandments were an integral part — has been done away, in Christ. However, nine of the ten commandments were taught — either directly or indirectly — by Christ; thus we are bound to strive to uphold them since they form part of Christ's teaching. But throughout the entire New Testament there is not one commandment (or even allusion) suggesting the necessity for Christ's disciples to "keep" the sabbath. As all the ritual associated with the sabbath was to disappear, there was no way Christ's disciples would have been able to keep it, as was required in the Old Testament. No new or revised instructions concerning the sabbath are to be found in the New Testament.

Some teach that the Law given at Sinai was divided into two parts: the moral Law and the ceremonial Law. This may sound impressive, but the statement is utterly without foundation. Nowhere does the Bible speak of a "moral" Law and a "ceremonial" Law. The phrase is a man-made invention to defend a false doctrine.

We should note these basic points:

1. A law requiring men to keep the sabbath was unheard of until *after* the children of Israel had left Egypt (see Deuteronomy 5:2-3).
2. Exodus 16:23-26 is the *first* recorded commandment in scripture that men should "keep" the sabbath. (Cp. Numbers 15:32-34, which shows that the Israelites were not even aware of the penalty to be imposed upon those who broke the law relating to the sabbath — a penalty not sought by sabbath-keepers today! See v. 35).
3. Laws relating to the sabbath were given only to Israel, and have *never* been binding upon Gentiles. See Deuteronomy 5:15; Exodus 31:16-17; Ezekiel 20:12.
4. Nine of the ten commandments became (either directly or obliquely) part of Christ's teaching. There is not a single reference to Christ's disciples having to keep the fourth commandment. See Romans 14:5; Colossians 2:16-17; Ephesians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 3:6-9; etc.
5. The sabbath was the seventh day. As such, it typified the seventh one-thousand-year "day" of the Kingdom Age. After 6,000 years of subjection to the influence and power of Adamic nature, the "rest" (sabbath) of the 1,000-year Kingdom will be ushered in. Hebrews 4:10; Matthew 11:28-29; Isaiah 11:10; etc.

Since the keeping of the sabbath does not form a part of Christ's teaching, the question arises: upon what day did the Believers meet together to remember the Lord's death by the partaking of bread and wine? The only answer provided in scripture is that they met for this

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purpose on the *first* day of the week, which was Sunday. See Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. However, there is no set commandment, only the apostolic custom which we have referred to above. Perhaps in some cases, Believers in some areas were unable to meet on Sundays; in which event, the principle in Romans 14:5 would apply.

The subject of the sabbath may be pursued further, if required.

STUDY EIGHTEEN



LEVITICUS TO THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

This book takes its name from Levi, the priestly tribe. The book thus describes those matters relating to the Law, the sacrifices, and the priestly duties especially in relation to the Tabernacle.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

This book has been so-called because it records the “numbering” of the children of Israel during the wilderness wanderings. It deals with the period of Israel’s history from the time they departed from Sinai until they came to the plains of Moab, not long prior to their crossing of the River Jordan.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

The word “Deuteronomy”, in its latin origin, signifies something which is second or secondary; it is therefore said to relate to “the repetition of the Law”. The book records Moses’ final speech to the nation in the last year of his life, which was the fortieth year of the wilderness wanderings. Some of the matters recorded in his earlier books are stressed once again, but generally in a different form and with additional matter. The book ends with the death and burial of Moses.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Joshua’s name means “Yah shall save”. With the death of Moses, the Law, in a figurative sense — but only in that sense — “died” with him. The lesson was: the people of God can never be led into their inheritance through Law. Only through the mercy of Yahweh can men and women be saved. Thus, the work of Joshua, as the new leader, prefigured the work of Christ; for the Lord’s work was based upon GRACE rather than LAW. Under God’s guidance and direction, Joshua led the people of Israel across the Jordan and into the land of promise. To that end, God miraculously held back the river.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

From the exodus out of Egypt to the death of Joshua was a period of 70 years. After the death of Joshua, no single man emerged with the standing and position of a Moses or a Joshua to lead the nation. There

followed the period of the Judges, which lasted "about 450 years" (Acts 13:20). During this long period numerous Judges were raised up at appropriate times, but generally it was not a happy or spiritually-prosperous time for Israel. This was due to their apathy and indifference to the things of Yahweh.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

This book deals principally with the ministry of Samuel, the last of the Judges of Israel, and the transition of the nation from a tribal nation into a Monarchical kingdom. Yahweh was most displeased at the request from His people for a king, because He had been their King; and because the people were moved by wrong and dangerous motives (See 1 Samuel 8:4-22). The result was, that Yahweh gave Israel the type of king they deserved: a man who appealed to the flesh, but who was not spiritually-minded or educated in the things of divine wisdom. His name was Saul. During the course of his reign, he brought the nation to the brink of total disaster (See especially 1 Samuel 31). Saul had lacked the qualities of faith and obedience to Yahweh (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL

Saul having been killed in battle, and Yahweh having earlier promised the throne to David (1 Samuel 16:1,12,13), David now became king over the united twelve tribes and established his throne in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:1-7). Whereas Saul had been, in effect, the choice of the people, David was Yahweh's own choice for the Monarchy, because he was a far better man than Saul (1 Samuel 15:22-23). Despite his weaknesses and failings, David was a wonderful man in the Truth; a man of deep understanding of divine principles (Psalm 119:18,162, etc.) and an abounding love for Yahweh and God's people (2 Samuel 22:1-4; Psalm 78:70-72). Because of David's integrity in the eyes of Yahweh, God made the third of the three great covenants of promise to David. We recall that the first of these three promises had been made in Eden, and the second to Abraham. It is necessary to understand these three covenants before it is possible to correctly grasp the true message of the Bible.

CHAPTER SEVEN — YAHWEH'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

- V. 1 David had good cause to be humbly grateful to God. He had been taken from the humble status of a shepherd-boy to become the most powerful man in Israel, sitting upon Yahweh's throne in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 29:23). He came to the throne only after many years of trial and suffering, and therefore his qualities of faith and love for God had been proven under the most difficult circum-

- stances (cp. ourselves: Acts 14:22; 1 Peter 1:7).
- V. 2 David desired to build a Temple suitable for the glory of Yahweh to dwell in, as had been the case with the Tabernacle of old.
- V. 3 The prophet Nathan thought David's motive and wish was commendable, and saw nothing amiss in David's earnestness in this matter.
- Vv. 4-7 Yahweh intervened. David was not to build a Temple for God, because David had been a man of war, and the building of the Temple was to be undertaken by a man of peace (1 Chronicles 28:3). We should note at this point that both David and his son Solomon typify the Lord Jesus Christ: David types Christ as a man of war subduing the nations, whereas Solomon types him as a man of peace, ruling over the established kingdom.
- The word "covenant" is an English word not commonly used these days, but which basically means "a binding agreement, or contract, or firm promise". It has been rendered in the A.V. from the Hebrew *berith*, a word associated with "cutting" — "since it was the custom in making solemn covenants to pass between the divided parts of victims" (Gesenius). See Genesis 15:10; 21:22-30; 26:27-31; Jeremiah 34:18-20. In a slightly different form the word *berith* can also signify "something which cleanses". In its scriptural setting, then, the word conveys the idea of "the making of a binding agreement upon the basis of a sacrificial victim, which has the power to cleanse". In view of what we have already learned concerning the doctrine of the atonement and the sacrifice of Christ, the meaning of this word is of profound beauty and significance. Through the perfect sacrifice of Christ we have access to Yahweh, and to the promises which He has made.
- V. 10 God promised that, ultimately, Israel would be regathered from the nations and permanently restored to the land of promise. Note the heavy emphasis in the words chosen: "I will *appoint* a place....and will *plant* them... that they may *dwell*and *move no more*..." This verse also indicates that, as Israel has been subjugated under the heel of Gentile powers for so long, the time will come when they will be raised to supremacy above the Gentile nations.
- V. 11 Peace and well-being will come to the nation of Israel, when this covenant is fulfilled. This verse is given the *future* tense in the R.V.
- V. 12 "WHEN THY DAYS BE FULFILLED, AND THOU SHALT SLEEP WITH THY FATHERS" means that the events promised in this covenant will find their fulfilment after the

the death of David. In its fullness, this covenant could never have applied to Solomon, for he ascended the throne whilst David was still alive (1 Kings 1:28-34).

"I WILL SET UP THY SEED AFTER THEE, WHICH SHALL PROCEED OUT OF THY BOWELS" indicates that one would come who would be a very special "seed" directly descended from David. Unquestionably, this is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. See Matthew 1:1; Romans 1:3; Acts 2:29-30.

"AND I WILL ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM." This kingdom will be the restored kingdom of Israel. See Daniel 2:44; 7:14; Isaiah 2:2-4; 24:23; Psalm 2; Psalm 72; Acts 1:6-7; 3:21; Revelation 11:15; etc. Thus, the restored kingdom of Israel, which will spread abroad to embrace all nations, will constitute the kingdom of God on earth.

V. 13

"HE SHALL BUILD AN HOUSE FOR MY NAME." Firstly, we should note the reference to a singular seed, as in the promise to Abraham. Christ's task, in building a "house" for the "name" of Yahweh has a two-fold application. The first and primary meaning of this phrase relates to the "building" of a *spiritual* "house" constituted of men and women. This is the class of humanity who become illumined by the light of the word of God, and permit its influence to transform their lives after the pattern of Jesus Christ. The Truth cleanses and purifies them (through the "covenant victim") and they become "heirs of salvation". See 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:20-21; Hebrews 3:5-6; 1 Peter 2:5-9. The Lord was discoursing upon this theme when he said: "In *my Father's house* there are many resting-places..." (John 14:1-2, Wey.) i.e., there is room in the Father's *spiritual* "house" for all whom He will call, and who will respond to His extended mercy. (At this point reference could be made again to Study Three, upon the subject of God-manifestation).

Secondly, this part of the covenant will find fulfilment in the building of a literal Temple upon the site of Mount Zion, in Jerusalem. See Ezekiel 43:1-7; Haggai 2:7-9; Zechariah 6:12-15; 8:12-13; 14:16,20; Isaiah 56:7; cp. Mark 11:17; Isaiah 2:2-4.

"AND I WILL STABLISH THE THRONE OF HIS KINGDOM FOR EVER." Verse 12 has mentioned "his kingdom" but now specific mention is made of "the throne". This section of the promise will result in the restoration of the throne of David, from which Christ will rule. See Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 6:13; Luke 1:31-33; Matthew 19:28; 25:31; Acts 2:30.

V. 14

"I WILL BE HIS FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE MY SON"

means that this promised seed would be both son of David and son of God. See Psalm 2:6-7 (quoted in Acts 13:33, applying the Psalm to Christ); Psalm 89:27-29; Matthew 16:16; 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-5.

"IF HE COMMIT INIQUITY I WILL CHASTEN HIM WITH THE ROD OF MEN, AND WITH THE STRIPES OF THE CHILDREN OF MEN." This part of the promise has given rise to numerous interpretations; but we must let the word speak for itself. Was Jesus ever likely to disobey his Father, and thus become the recipient of divine punishment? Such a thought is untenable. We have no wish to involve the Student in puzzling grammatical matters which are difficult to understand; but in this case we must stress the Hebrew grammar, to prove our point. The key phrase, "if he commit iniquity" (A.V.) is, in the Hebrew text, set forth as the "hiphil, infin." which is the causitive of kal. Kal is the simple active tense. Thus, in "Eureka" John Thomas has correctly rendered the phrase as, "whom, in his being caused to bow down, I will chasten him with a sceptre of men, and with stripes from the sons of Adam..." (See "Eureka", Vol. 2, p. 12). The phrase is therefore stating that the Lord Jesus Christ would offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, receiving in the process the suffering and venom which men would heap upon him.

V. 15 "MY MERCY SHALL NOT DEPART AWAY FROM HIM, AS I TOOK IT FROM SAUL." God's mercy was withdrawn from Saul because he proved unworthy to receive it. This statement is indicating that Jesus would in no respect fail his Father, and therefore these words constitute an assurance that the promises would be fulfilled.

V. 16 "AND THINE HOUSE AND THY KINGDOM SHALL BE ESTABLISHED FOR EVER BEFORE THEE." Here was a moving and very personal message for David: He would be raised from the dead to see these promises fulfilled! David certainly understood that this was his only hope for a life after death: see Psalm 71:20.

David foresaw the time when this covenant would become a reality. See 2 Samuel 23:1-5; Psalm 27:4. In regard to Psalm 27, it should be noted that when the Psalm was written *no Temple existed*; thus David's expressive thoughts in this Psalm are clearly related to the future. David rejoiced in these promises, longing for the day when he would be resurrected to receive his inheritance, and to see the glory of Yahweh manifested in His Temple, and throughout the earth. Let us strive to emulate the faith and disposition of David, so that we might rejoice together with this man of faith, when the hopes and aspirations of all the faithful, down through the ages, become a living reality.

Notes

STUDY NINETEEN



THE KINGDOM OF GOD: PAST AND FUTURE

The Kingdom of God has existed in the past. The people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt that they might become the Kingdom of God, as we have seen: Exodus 19:5-6. cp. Deuteronomy 7:6. Their King was none other than Yahweh Himself: 1 Samuel 8:4-7; 12:12. When David became King, he ruled on behalf of Yahweh, and subsequent Kings were required to do likewise: 1 Chronicles 28:5; 29:11; 2 Chronicles 13:7-8. The Kingdom attained its peak under the rule of both David and his son Solomon. In the days of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, 10 tribes revolted under the leadership of Jeroboam, and formed the Kingdom of Samaria in the north. This left only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with their capital at Jerusalem. The breakaway by the 10 tribes was not endorsed by Yahweh, for He had "chosen Jerusalem" to put His "Name there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). Abijah, Solomon's grandson, recognised that only the tribes with their centre at Jerusalem constituted "the Kingdom of Yahweh" (2 Chronicles 13:8). The Kingdom in the south became known as "the Kingdom of Judah" (1 Kings 12:16-33).

The northern Kingdom continued separately for more than 200 years, during which time not one of its Kings has been described as righteous in God's eyes. Because of their rebellion against Yahweh they were eventually overthrown and taken into captivity by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17). The Kingdom of Judah continued for a further 134 years, until B.C. 587, when Jerusalem was sacked by the Babylonians, and the people taken away into captivity. Yahweh had foretold that these fearful developments would occur, if the people continued to stubbornly reject God's way: 1 Kings 11:9-13; cp. Nehemiah 13:26.

Zedekiah, the last King to sit upon a Jewish throne, received a significant prophecy (see Ezekiel 21:25-27) in which it was foretold that the Commonwealth of Judah would be overthrown, and that the throne would remain downtrodden "until he come whose right it is...." The covenant made to David shows clearly that the one "whose right it is" is the Lord Jesus Christ, who will return to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth, which will also be the restored Kingdom of Israel: 2 Samuel 7:10-16; Acts 2:29-30; Acts 1:3,6,11; Acts 3:19-21; Matthew 19:28; 23:37-39.

According to such passages as Acts 15:14 and Revelation 2:26 etc., God has, down through the ages, been preparing a class of people to inherit his coming Kingdom — men and women who will receive the gift of divine nature. In this perfected state, they will rule over the earth with the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:4; 2 Timothy 2:12;

Revelation 2:26-27; 5:9-10; 11:18. The Kingdom of God being thus constituted will continue for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4,6). Note that such teaching in the book of Revelation is based upon the prophetic words of Daniel, in Daniel 7:12, where the phrase "a season and a time" should be literally rendered "a set time and seasons". A "set time" is the period of gestation, 280 days; and a "season" is a Jewish year of 360 days. In the Hebrew text the word is plural, and should thus be rendered "seasons". Thus, $280 + 360 + 360 = 1,000$ day-years. At the end of this 1,000 year Kingdom Age, many mortals will endeavour to throw off their ties with divine laws and ways, and will rebel against Christ and the immortalised saints, much after the manner portrayed in Psalm 2. However, their efforts will prove fruitless and the enemies of God will be destroyed. See Revelation 20:7-9; cp. Isaiah 26:10. A second resurrection will then take place of the mortals who have died during the Kingdom Age, having learned to understand the Truth. Those judged worthy will, as at the first resurrection, be granted divine nature; and the unworthy will perish eternally. The full cycle of the divine purpose with the earth will then have come to a glorious fulfilment. See Numbers 14:21. The earth will be thoroughly perfected, and will be populated only by perfected sons and daughters of the living God. Thus, John wrote of a time when there would be "no more sea" (Revelation 21:1). Sea is a symbol for mortal nations.

The *last* enemy to be destroyed will be "death" (1 Corinthians 15:26) — and since mortals will populate the earth during the 1,000-year Kingdom Age, it follows that mortality will disappear from the earth at the end of the Kingdom Age. See Revelation 21:1-5. When perfection and tranquility have been established in the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ will "deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father that God may be all *in* all...." 1 Corinthians 15:23-28.

THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that there would be a partial restoration of Israelites to their land. See Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10. This was, in due time, effected under the leadership of Ezra, and later, Nehemiah. These Israelites, basically, were the progenitors of the Jews who constituted the remnant in the promised land at the epoch of Christ's birth. However, by that time a large proportion of Jewry had been scattered among the nations throughout the then-known world. (See Deuteronomy 28:15-29,37,64-66; cp. Acts 2:5-11).

STUDY TWENTY



BAPTISM IN WATER IS ESSENTIAL FOR SALVATION

In the New Testament the English word "baptism" has been rendered from three similar Greek words: *baptisma*, *baptismos*, *baptizo*. Never in the A.V. have any of these words been rendered as "sprinkle" or "pour". When these words are used in relation to baptism into Christ they are always used in the sense of total immersion in water. The root word in the Greek language originally related to the dyeing of a garment with the objective of changing its colour. Such would require a garment to be completely immersed in the liquid.

God's Son required of his disciples only two rituals: One is the regular partaking of bread and wine in remembrance of his death. The other is baptism, which is total immersion in water. Christ taught that salvation was impossible apart from obedience to the commandment concerning baptism. See John 3:3-5. As various references upon this subject are considered, it should be noted that baptism is efficacious only for those who are of sufficient years to have a sound understanding of divine Truth. Nowhere does the Bible speak of baptising infants. It is necessary to understand "the things concerning the kingdom of God" and the things "concerning the name of Jesus Christ" before baptism can bring one into covenant relationship to the Father through the Son (Acts 8:12).

See the following passages upon this subject:

Mark 16:15-16; John 3:23; Acts 2:38-41; 8:12,27-38; 9:18; 16:14-15; 10:1-2,6,47-48; 19:1-5; Ephesians 4:4-6.

Baptism is an act of faith, based upon an understanding of the gospel. It also represents a repudiation of the flesh; and is symbolic of a sacrificial death: Matthew 3:13-15; cp. v. 3; cp. Isaiah 40:6; Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 2:20; 5:24.

In the act of baptism the convert recognises that there is no good thing in the flesh, and that the flesh can produce nothing of worth in the eyes of Yahweh: Romans 7:18; Mark 7:21; John 6:63. Upon this basis, the new candidate for the Kingdom of God is prepared, symbolically, to put to death his flesh, as Christ did throughout his life, culminating in his death upon the stake. See Matthew 16:24-27.

BEING BORN OF WATER AND BORN OF SPIRIT

An individual becomes a "new creature" in the eyes of God after being "born of water". This is a process which requires a knowledge and acceptance of the Truth, followed by total immersion in water. See 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Colossians 3:10. We become

spiritually "quickened" (or made alive) when the influence of God's word acts upon us. See Ephesians 2:5; James 1:18; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23. Baptism in water becomes an evidence of our conviction concerning the Truth of God's word.

To become "born of the spirit" necessitates a change to divine nature. This will become a reality for those who are found worthy at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Being "born of the spirit" and granted eternal life is a gift from God, and may only be obtained, in God's mercy, through faith and a zeal for fulfilling the will of Yahweh.

See Romans 5:15; 6:23; John 6:35-40; Romans 2:7; John 12:25; Galatians 6:8.

When we have been "born from above" (i.e. brought to spiritual birth through the power of God's word) baptism enables us to "see" the kingdom, through the eye of faith. But when we have been both born of water *"and of the spirit"* we shall be able to *"enter into the Kingdom..."* (John 3:3-5, note marg.).

When applied to the human race, the term "a spiritual body" means that the present weak, mortal, corruptible body will be changed. Instead of being kept alive by means of oxygen and blood (Leviticus 17:11) the body will be energised and sustained, eternally, by the spirit of Yahweh. Thus, the worthy ones at the Judgment Seat will be made "equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:35-36).

See 1 Corinthians 15:50; Luke 24:36-43; Philippians 3:20-21.

For the major contrasts between a natural body and a spiritual body, see 1 Corinthians 15:42-44. Concerning the contrast between Adam's state, and that of Christ after he had received divine nature, v. 45 adds: "And so it has been written, the first Adam became a living soul, the last Adam into a spirit life-giving...." (Diag. transl. and lit. Gk.).

The only means by which we can hope to come to such a state of perfection is through a resurrection from the dead: 1 Corinthians 15:12-18.

STUDY TWENTY ONE



A CHRISTADELPHIAN'S RELATION TO THE STATE

The attitude of Christadelphians towards the State and Government authorities around them is based upon two fundamental principles.

The first is that we have been called out of the world to a life of separation from the world, and dedication to Yahweh. We are therefore not our own to please ourselves in all matters pertaining to conduct and actions in life. We therefore become a separated and dedicated people, who must manifest the principles of divine truth in the world about us.

Second. The Scriptures make it plain that God intends to overthrow *all* the kingdoms of men, together with their respective governments, and to replace them with the just and righteous Kingdom of God upon the earth. It would therefore be futile for us to attempt to support or sustain that which we know God intends to remove.

God rules in the kingdoms of men: **Daniel 2:21; 4:17; 2 Chronicles 35:20-24.**

God will eventually destroy these kingdoms: **Revelation 11:15; Daniel 2:44.**

The reasons for wars: **Amos 3:6; Isaiah 45:7; Proverbs 16:4; Ephesians 5:1-7.**

God's object: **Acts 15:14; Numbers 14:21.**

We must obey God: **Ecclesiastes 12:13; Deuteronomy 10:12; 1 Peter 4:17; 2 Corinthians 10:5.**

Those who do the Will of God will abide for ever: **1 John 2:17.**

We are not our own: **1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:18-19.**

We are called to separation: **2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 2:15-17.**

We are to be strangers and pilgrims: **Hebrews 11:13-15; 1 Peter 2:11.**

CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD **John 18:36**

1. Christ would not judge in worldly matters: **Luke 12:13.**

2. He rebuked Peter for resisting the power of the world: **Matthew 26:51.**

3. Christ came to save and not to destroy: **Luke 9:54.**

CHRIST OUR KING

Christ is our king. **John 18:37.**

1. We are his soldiers: **2 Timothy 2:3.**

2. We must not take oaths: **Matthew 5:34.**

STUDY 21

3. We cannot serve two masters: **Matthew 6:24.**
4. As Christ's soldiers our weapons are not carnal: **2 Corinthians 10:4.**
5. We are to possess only the armour of God: **Ephesians 6:11-18.**

THE COMMANDMENTS OF CHRIST

1. We must do his will: **Matthew 12:50.**
2. Resist not evil: **Matthew 5:38-39.**
3. Love our enemies: **Matthew 5:43-44.**
4. Avenge not ourselves: **Romans 12:19-21.**
5. Do not kill: **James 2:11.**
6. Render not evil for evil: **Romans 12:17-19; 1 Thessalonians 5:15.**
7. Do not the works of the flesh: **Galatians 5:19-21.**
8. Overcome evil with good: **Romans 12:21.**

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD

1. A friend of the world is the enemy of God: **James 4:4.**
2. Love not the world: **1 John 2:15.**
3. Be not of the world: **John 17:14-21**

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE STATE

1. Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's: **Matthew 22:17-21.**
2. Obey the laws of the land: **Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13.**
3. But God must come first: **Acts 5:29.**

THE FATE OF THOSE WHO SUCCUMB

1. Those who take the sword shall perish by it: **Matthew 26:51-52.**
2. It would have been better had they never known the truth: **2 Peter 2:13-21; Hebrews 10:27-31.**

GOD CAN AND WILL SAVE THOSE WHO OBEY HIM

1. God can save: **Isaiah 59:1.**
2. We will not be tempted above we can bear: **1 Corinthians 10:13.**
3. No one can harm us if God be for us: **1 Peter 3:13.**
4. A true soldier of Christ will reign with him: **Psalms 149:7-9; Revelation 2:26-27.**

STUDY TWENTY TWO



SUMMARY OF VARIOUS DOCTRINAL MATTERS

1. Jesus Christ did not pre-exist:

The belief that Jesus existed in heaven before he was born of Mary stems, basically, from the doctrine of the trinity. If it is accepted that God is three persons, all co-equal, co-eternal and co-substantial, then it follows that Jesus must have existed as a Deity, possessing divine nature, prior to his birth at Bethlehem. Since we have seen from the scriptures that there is only *one* God — the Father — and that Jesus was the Son of God and not God the Son (there is a vast difference between the meanings of the two terms), there arises no necessity to provide an argument for his pre-existence. It is logical and reasonable to accept the straight-forward revelation of scripture: "Thou (Mary) shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son.... The holy spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God...." (Luke 1:31-35). No passage in the word teaches that Christ existed in heaven before he was born of Mary. The various passages which are used by trinitarians and others can be satisfactorily explained within their respective contexts.

In the great covenant which Yahweh made with David, God promised: "*I will be His Father, and he shall be my Son...*" (2 Samuel 7:14). Surely, such a promise was pointless and erroneous, if Christ already existed. Similarly, in speaking of His purpose in the Deliverer who was to come, God said: "*I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth....*" (Psalm 89:27). Likewise, these words are meaningless and contradictory, if the Son already existed; in which event he would have already held a position "higher than the kings of the earth".

2. The doctrine of predestination is false:

Some claim that our entire lives have been pre-ordained, or pre-planned by God, and that therefore we inevitably work out our lives according to a destiny we cannot avoid. This teaching is false. Yahweh certainly "knows" the "end from the beginning" because of His limitless power. See Isaiah 46:10. But God's foreknowledge is quite different to the proposition embodied in predestination.

See 1 Thessalonians 5:9; Deuteronomy 30:19; Ezekiel 33:11; Acts 10:34; 2 Peter 3:9.

3. The destiny of the ignorant:

Because of His own perfection, Yahweh is able to perfectly bal-

ance the qualities of justice and mercy in all His dealings with mankind. The question then arises as to how God deals with men and women who have never known or understood His Truth. This question would pose grave difficulties if we believed in the immortality of the soul. But since we have learned from scripture that man is wholly mortal, and that at death he absolutely ceases to exist, there is no problem.

If God were to bring such ignorant persons forth at the resurrection, and punish them for not honouring His Truth, would that be an example of *mercy*? Of course not. Similarly, if He were to grant them an eternal reward in His Kingdom when they have done nothing whatever that has been pleasing to God or in accordance with His will, would such a verdict be *just*? It would not. The Creator therefore lets nature take its course in such cases. Men and women who remain in ignorance of God and His word remain forever in the oblivion of the grave. They remain unconscious and unknowing. Whilst they have not gained a reward, neither are they conscious of any loss. They have ceased to exist.

See Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 21:16; Psalm 49:19; Isaiah 43:17; Jeremiah 51:39,57; Matthew 7:13; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:12.

4. "Hell" is the grave, not a place of eternal torment:

Believing that man has an immortal soul, the churches of apostate christendom have the problem of where such "souls" are sent at death. Obviously, whilst "good" souls might be expected to blissfully wend their way heavenwards, such would be no place for "bad" souls. Hence the necessity for christendom to have a "hell" where, at death, the souls of evil people can be sent. But we have learned that there is no such thing as an "immortal soul" — so we have no need for the invention of a "hell".

In the Old Testament, the word has been rendered from the Hebrew word *sheol*; while the equivalent Greek word in the N.T. is *hades*. *Sheol* occurs 65 times in the O.T.

In the A.V. it has been rendered 31 times as "hell", 31 times as the "grave" and 3 times as "pit". In each of the three cases where the word has been rendered "pit" it clearly signifies "grave" (Numbers 16:30,33; Job 17:16). Gesenius comes close to describing the meaning of the word *sheol* when he writes that it signifies "a hollow, a hollow and subterranean place". A more literal meaning of the word is "a hidden place". When direction is mentioned, it is always downward, thus indicating below the earth. Both these O.T. and N.T. words are only ever mentioned in relation to *the dead*; and never are the words used in relation to an immortal soul departing from the body. "Hell" or the grave is a place of silence, non-existence, insensibility, and ignorance: Psalm 6:5; 31:17; Ecclesiastes 9:5-10. Clearly, since man ceases to exist at death, the word *sheol* can only relate to the grave.

In the N.T. *hades* is connected with death, but never with life or a continuing existence. Note that all mortals who die during the King-

dom Age *live* “not again” until the end of the thousand years (Revelation 20:5). Thus, those in *hades* do not live at all, in any sense.

The N.T. makes use of another word, *geenna* (pronounced *gehenna*). The word is equivalent to the Hebrew *Ge-Hinnom*, the name of a valley outside the city of Jerusalem, which was a perpetually-burning refuse heap. This was the place of “unquenchable fire” where rubbish was burned, and where the bodies of criminals were sometimes thrown to burn and rot with discarded waste matter. In the N.T. the word has never been used in any sense other than this.

5. Gifts of the holy spirit not now available to Believers:

In regard to this subject, we recommend that the Student study “The Spirit Gifts — Not Now Available” (“Herald of the Coming Age”, October 1971, H. P. Mansfield). We also suggest the consideration of “The Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit Gifts” by Graham Pearce (Logos Publications) and “The Spirit” by A. Crawford.

Those who today claim they “possess the spirit” are, generally, in one of two categories. One group claims the ability to perform miracles, and such people are usually associated with the so-called apostolic or charismatic churches. The other class is rather more subtle: they do not claim to have any miraculous powers, but believe that the “spirit” or the “holy spirit” *dwells within them* “to comfort, guide, counsel, etc.” — as one such “Believer” has written. The claims of both classes are equally false. The Bible teaches that God can and will work — miraculously, if necessary — on behalf of His Saints, to deliver them, should it be the will of God, in time of need (see Psalm 34:6-7). But such work, though it involves the spirit-power of God, is entirely *external* to the individual whom God may be helping. To claim that such spirit-power *resides within* men and women is another matter entirely, and is a claim not endorsed by the teaching of scripture, insofar as this present age is concerned.

Many first century Believers received an outpouring of divine spirit-power to assist them in their understanding of the Truth and in their labours to establish it. See John 15:26; 16:7-13. The spirit would guide them “into all *the* Truth. . .” (Lit. Gk.).

It is inconceivable to suggest that God would grant His miraculous power to those who neither understand or teach *the* Truth. And since all “charismatic” movements, so far as we are aware, believe and preach at least some of the major doctrines of apostate christendom, any claims they make to “possess” the “holy spirit” must be rejected on this ground alone.

With the completion of the scriptures, which is God’s revelation to man, it was no longer vital or relevant for Believers to have the added advantage of possessing spirit gifts. Thus, with the deaths of the apostles the ability to transmit the holy spirit gifts to others ceased (see 1 Corinthians 13:9-10, lit. Gk.).

John Thomas, a Christadelphian Expositor of more than 100 years ago, once wrote: “Paul says that the sacred Scriptures are able

to make us wise for salvation.... What more do we want than wisdom in relation to this matter? If the sacred Scriptures are able to make us wise, we need no other instrumentality...." Another highly respected Christadelphian Expositor, John Carter, wrote: "Some years ago we went carefully over every reference to the word 'spirit' in the New Testament.... We found then as we have since, that brethren were following a mirage in talking of possessing the spirit today..." Robert Roberts, in his book "Christendom Astray" wrote: "The present days are barren days, as regards the Spirit's direct operations..."

There is no evidence in Scripture to suggest that any of these Expositors are in any sense incorrect in their convictions upon this subject.

For our own times, we must accept that which the word of God clearly teaches:

"The spirit is the truth....." (1 John 5:6, lit. Gk.).

"The sword of the spirit is the word of God...." (Ephesians 6:17).

6. Believers referred to as "brother" or "sister":

Following apostolic example, Members of the One Body of Christ should be addressed with the prefix "brother" or "sister". After baptism we become Members of the family of God (Ephesians 3:14-15), and therefore we become brothers and sisters of Christ, and of one another. It is wise to preserve this "family" association. See **Matthew 12:48-50; Acts 9:17; Romans 16:23; James 2:15; 1 Corinthians 9:5; etc.**

7. The necessity for meeting regularly with the Ecclesia:

We have learned throughout the course of these studies that an understanding of the Truth must change the mental and moral processes of the individual to harmonise with those seen in the character of the Father and His Son. There can, therefore, be no question of a *true* Believer being little different to a Sunday-morning "church-goer". It is vitally important that the new Convert to Christ becomes, in every possible sense, an active Member of the One Body of Christ. Loyalty to the Ecclesia, in all respects, is a vital part of life in the Truth.

See Hebrews 10:25; 3:13; Matthew 18:20; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:30-34.

It is especially important and necessary for all Believers to meet regularly with an Ecclesia for the weekly act of remembering the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the partaking of bread and wine. The *bread* symbolises the Lord's body; the *wine* represents his blood. Together, these two emblems speak of a life given totally in service to Yahweh.

The principle to be discerned in these emblems is that the way to life is through death. Obedience to the word of God will result in "death" to the ungodly will of the flesh. The sacrifice of Christ involved both positive and negative principles. See Psalm 45:7. The bread represents a *denial* of the flesh: "Let *not* sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof...." (Romans 6:12). The

wine represents a life poured out, positively, in obedience to the will of God (see **Leviticus 17:13**; cp. **Psalm 62:8**).

8. Prayer — Must be offered to the Father through the Son:

The Truth, when we have accepted it, bring us into *fellowship* with the Father and the Son. This comes about because we have learned to think in harmony with the mind of Yahweh, and make His purpose our own. The word “fellowship” (as it occurs in passages such as 1 John 1) is derived from the Greek word *koinos*, which relates to having things in *common*. And whilst the Truth has brought us to such an awesome relationship with the Great Creator, it is evident that such a relationship must be maintained. This necessitates the regular and consistent daily reading of the Word of God, and regular Bible study. Every time we open the Word, Yahweh is speaking to us. But, as His sons and daughters, we need to be able to regularly and consistently communicate with the Father.

See 1Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 18:1; Colossians 4:2,12; Philipians 4:6; Ephesians 6:18; Romans 12:12.

Prayer is necessary for the following reasons:

1. We should praise and magnify our Heavenly Father.
2. We should offer thanks and gratitude for all the blessings we receive through His goodness and mercy.
3. We should openly lay before Him sins which we have committed, and humbly seek His forgiveness.
4. We should pray for the return of Christ and for the coming of the Kingdom, and the fulfilment of all the divine purpose.
5. We should pray that Yahweh will continue to bless us (always especially seeking His blessing upon those things we endeavour to do in His service); for, apart from His continuing blessing we will become alienated from Him. This does not mean that everything in life will go well for us, because trials are necessary to test our faith. Trials can be great blessings; although we may not be aware of it at the time.
6. We should pray for our brethren and sisters, especially for those who may have special needs, which only the Father can meet.
7. Remember other necessities which we, or the Ecclesia, or Members of the Body, may have, where our Father's blessing is especially needed.

Remember a good definition of the purpose and power of prayer: **PRAYER IS PLEADING THE CAUSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Selfish interests have no part in acceptable prayer. We do not pray for self-advancement or self-gain; but rather that in all things Yahweh's will might be done, His purpose furthered, His Name glorified, and His word honoured.

We strongly recommend that one of the most important books which should be read by those newly baptised is: “Making Prayer Powerful” by H. P. Mansfield.

9. The Commandments of Christ:

The life of the newly-converted Believer must now become dedicated to following in the footsteps of Christ, with the objective of developing a character and way of life based upon the pattern of Jesus Christ. Honouring and keeping Christ's commandments must become the dedicated objective of the new disciple, whilst he walks by faith, awaiting the coming of the Lord.

This means making good use of the knowledge and wisdom of the Truth to produce a way of *thinking* and a way of *life* in conformity with the *MORAL* excellence of the divine character, as manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ.

See John 14:15,21; 15:10; 1 John 2:4; etc.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may GROW thereby that we henceforth be no more children but speaking the Truth in love may GROW UP into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ..... GROW in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ...."

— 1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:15; 2 Peter 3:18.

