

THE
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MAGAZINE



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EDITORIAL

*In the bud of early Spring-time,
In the days of early youth,
When the heart is fresh and tender,
Lord, impress us with Thy truth.*

Many of the joys of childhood fade as we grow older. But Spring comes for ever new. Its enchantment bids us cast aside care and disappointment, and let joy glow in our hearts. If, during the dark days, hope has lain buried beneath the fallen leaves and hoary frost, new courage now returns, and with renewed vigour we pursue our path, uphill though it may be. And as we breathe in the air, laden with the fragrance of the damp earth and scented flowers, we feel stirring within us a strange longing for an indescribable something, a longing for something of which Spring seems to be the earnest, even the gift of everlasting life.

But when we sing, "In the bud of early Spring-time" we think more of the youthful days of mortal life. We know how important it is that fresh and tender hearts should be impressed with God's truth. We do not always realise that we are His ambassadors through whom He can make that impression, both in our homes and in our ecclesias.

Sometimes we may feel that too much is done for young people and that it is this that accounts for their restlessness. But we wonder if enough is done for them in the way that is most needful? A well-watered and sunny Spring brings forth plentiful summer fruit. Yet do we not find that so many of our young plants wilt before they reach maturity? Perhaps we ought to search more conscientiously than we do to find out the reason why.



EDITORIAL MATTER

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OUR COVER

There is something exceptionally beautiful about the first snowdrops and the first celandine. And yet they are here today—and gone tomorrow. "The flower thereof falleth away."

But though the flowers wither yet their beauty is not lost, for their impress remains. They make, as it were, their mark in the pageant of life.

Man also comes—and goes. He, too, makes his mark in the pageant of life. The impress he leaves is not always one of beauty. But those who have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible" are not only able to touch the world with beauty and goodness in their mortal life, but they share also the glory which "abideth for ever."

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FOR CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND ACTION

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Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily
those of the Editorial Committee, but may be published
because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

By a Young Christadelphian

A few years ago an article was published relating the experiences of two young people collecting for Oxfam in public houses (Spring 1962, p. 18-19). Some criticism was received and we were warned against setting a "dangerous precedent." We are happy to say, however, that neither of us has succumbed to alcoholism but on the contrary we have had some interesting preaching opportunities over the last two Christmases, and have also collected a good sum of money.

The first year that we collected in this way, we were the only ones in our city to do so. Last year, however, Oxfam was running a special campaign to raise £1,000,000 and a number of students worked with us, along with a group of War on Want. We, nevertheless, had plenty of areas to cover, and we worked on our own once we had divided the city among the groups. Hoping to have the opportunity to preach, we equipped ourselves with leaflets and with special cards inviting people along to our meetings. We did, in fact, have two interesting conversations.

DISCUSSING CHRISTIANITY

One gentleman made a reference to the Jews (not very favourably) which allowed us to discuss the subject. We spoke of the Bible, the return of the Jews to Palestine, God's purpose with the world, and then about the church. He said he believed in God, though his wife was an atheist, but he had been put off the church by the coldness in the atmosphere he had found there. It appeared that he had gone along to one church to hear his daughter singing in the Sunday School choir. No one had spoken to him while he was there, nor when he was leaving. We were

able to assure him that not all churches were like that, and he would find it different if he came along to one of our services. Giving him an invitation card we left, feeling that at least we had achieved as much and even more "contact" than had been made at many a well-advertised "special effort."

We also spoke to a Roman Catholic about the Second Coming. Seeing that he claimed to believe the Bible, we showed him a quotation on one of our leaflets in which Jesus talked about His return (and we left him with the leaflet.) He was not sure what to make of the quotation. His friend also showed interest and was willing to take a leaflet. We were able to discuss Christ's Return, the resurrection of the dead and the Kingdom of God.

It was of interest to us that this conversation took place in the same building as that in which Dr Thomas addressed an audience on his visit to Britain in 1848. The hall he probably spoke in was upstairs, though we do not know whether part of the building was used as a public house at that time.

HELPING AN INDIAN VILLAGE

In our report two years ago we mentioned meeting some War on Want collectors in the street, and from comments made by them we gathered that they were not receiving as much money as we. This was true as regards individual collectors but there was a good number of them working all Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, holding vigils in the streets together with photographs of refugees. As a result a large sum was collected. This year, to make organisation easier, we collected for War on Want instead of for Oxfam. The total collection of all participating in the city was £450. It was possible

to choose a specific project for the money and it was decided to use it to help an Indian village.

This kind of activity is taking place all over Britain, which means that several thousands of pounds come in each Christmas. Money is raised in other ways, too. Family collection boxes were distributed by Oxfam to many homes and schools, and numerous carol singing groups help to increase the funds of many different charities. Oxfam supply literature on how to give support, not only at Christmas, of course, but round the whole year. If you want to help write to—Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford.

THE CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE

It has been said that little can be done by Oxfam, War on Want, etc., to relieve the suffering in the world, and that any Christadelphian contribution to the work would only be a “negligible trickle to sink swiftly in the vast desert of distress” (and hence, presumably, not worth doing). Such an attitude misunderstands the purpose of the Christian’s life. It would be as fair to object that



since we are not managing to convert all the world by our preaching, we should stop preaching. But the purpose of a Christian is to witness, by his example, to what God wishes all men to be like and all men to do. The Christian should act now in the way he hopes to act when the Kingdom of God is finally established on the earth.

SOLVING PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS

A further objection has been made that if we work along with groups such as Oxfam we will be afraid to talk about our faith. We have not found this to be so, especially as those engaged in this kind of work are usually thoughtful people who take a serious view of life. Even so, we should remember that helping the starving should not merely be an end in itself. It may be that the problem of food production and over population will be solved before Christ’s coming. But, if it is, even then people’s problems will not be removed. While we, in the prosperous parts of the world, have a standard of living higher than ever before known in the history of man, it is only just and Christian that we should share our wealth with the poor. Yet we have seen in our own society that wealth and food do not provide the solution to the problems of life, but instead bring new ones.

There is only one answer which can give ultimate satisfaction—Christ. Once we have fed people it will be our duty to spread the gospel to them. Indeed, it is our duty to do both conjointly. Charity starts at home, and the activities described in this article, if undertaken, should be done in addition to looking after the physical and spiritual needs of those in our ecclesias and in our immediate neighbourhoods.

The greatest gift we can offer to anyone is God’s gift of eternal life, but we are scarcely in a position to act as His envoys unless we are concerned for present needs and difficulties.

Did Jesus Live in Heaven Before His Birth on Earth?

By George McHaffie

Old Testament quotations are from the Authorised Version and New Testament quotations from the New English Bible, except where stated otherwise.

I

INTRODUCTION

THE God in whom Christians believe has made Himself known. In Old Testament times He was revealed to the fathers by the prophets, and with the coming of Christ He has spoken to us by His Son. There is difference of opinion, however, on precisely how we are to regard Jesus. An ancient and popular view is that He is a divine being who left heaven and took up a life and mission among men on earth. A popular chorus puts it this way:

Out of the ivory palaces
Into a world of woe,
Only His great eternal love
Made my Saviour go.

The Nicene Creed

Discussion on the subject in the 4th century of our era led to the formation of the Nicene Creed, first at Nicea in A.D. 325, and, with modifications, confirmed by the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. The creed has been the touchstone of Christian orthodoxy for centuries. It runs:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible:

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man . . .

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life . . .

The Meaning of the Creed

The simple meaning of this creed seems to be that there are three divine beings in heaven, one of whom, the Son of God who is very (or truly)

God, left heaven and became a man on earth. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how there can be only one God, the Father, and at the same time another who is truly God. For a number of reasons therefore the creed has come under criticism and it is not altogether clear what its composers visualised.

The creed is the work of the leading members of the 4th century church. These were Greek thinkers and their form of reasoning followed the patterns established by Greek philosophy, and it was characteristic of many Greek philosophers to speak of ideas or thoughts as though they were living beings. As an example, Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, compared the being of God with the human mind. There is the man, his thought, and, if the thought is, say, about his wife, the love with which he conceives his thought. To make the comparison, God can then be considered as Father (the man), Son (the man's thought) and Spirit (the man's love). The Son is then a mental activity of God and not a separate being. If, however, complications of this kind have entered the formation of the creed, it is evident that its interpretation is not so simple as would at first appear.

From another point of view it is claimed that although the contents of the creed are not found in the New Testament, its teaching arises out of the implications of what is found there. But if, at Nicea, the biblical implications were worked out in terms of Greek philosophical conceptions, a twentieth century mind has every reason to return to the Bible and look at the evidence afresh.

The Bible, however, is older than the Creed of Nicea. It has its own figures of speech and word meanings. The persistent and attentive reader will grow used to the atmosphere and usages of the Book, and, with occasional help from contemporary sources, it is generally possible to arrive at a writer's meaning. The doctrine of the Son of God's descent from heaven may result in misapprehension of biblical figures of speech and may be misinterpreted along the lines of Greek philosophical categories.

I HAVE COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN

I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.
John 6: 38.

He who has come from God has seen the Father, and he alone. John 6: 46.

THESE two quotations from the gospel of John would doubtless leave the impression that Jesus claimed to have descended personally from heaven, that while in heaven He took a decision to do His Father's will and accept a mission among men. By implication, in contradistinction to those who had not "heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (John 5: 37 A.V.), He claims to have actually seen the Father. It is suggested, nevertheless, that the apparently simple and obvious conclusion to be drawn from these texts is not the one intended either by the writer or by Jesus Christ. This problem can only be approached satisfactorily by looking at similar language found elsewhere in the Bible.

Access to Heaven

In Proverbs 30, verses 2-3, a plaintive voice is heard which makes opposite claims to those Jesus made. The speaker, Agur, says:



Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

In the following verse we are given what appears to be an excuse for this moral and spiritual condition:

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?

In the ancient world, men generally did not believe that heaven, where God lived, was very far away: behind the clouds, perhaps, or veiled by the blue of the sky, but not altogether beyond man's reach. So the men of Babel thought to build a tower which would reach "unto heaven." The children of Israel were likely to come forward with the same excuse as Agur, for they were warned against it:

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee,



"I LOOKED, AND THERE BEFORE MY EYES WAS A DOOR OPENED IN HEAVEN"

neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Deut. 30: 11-12.

In much the same vein is Jacob's dream of a ladder which reaches to heaven. The angels ascended the ladder (presumably with messages from Jacob to God) and descended (with answers from God to Jacob). God spoke from the top of the ladder. Jacob spoke of the place as the "gate of heaven" (Gen. 28: 10-22).

Figures which utilise the idea of man having access to heaven to commune with God and to receive information will be found well established in the New Testament. The main action of the book of Revelation is made known to John by a door being opened in heaven, and a voice saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen hereafter" (4: 1). Then follow descriptions of what John sees, including God sitting on His throne and being described as "holy, holy, holy" (compare verse 8 with Prov. 30: 3, "knowledge of the holy (One)"). In II Corinthians

chapter 12 Paul writes of "visions and revelations." He obtained these by being "caught up as far as the third heaven . . . caught up into paradise, and heard words so secret that human lips may not repeat them." The expression "third heaven" was used by the Jews as the place of God's abode.

Heaven wide open

All the above instances may be taken as extended examples of more usual expressions such as, "The Heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God" (Ezekiel 1: 1) and "There appeared a man named John, sent from God" (John 1: 6).

It is especially significant that this mode of expression is used in John's gospel. In John 1: 51 we find a repeat of the vision of the ladder, with Christ as the focal point on earth.

I tell you all, you shall see heaven wide open, and God's angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

This claim to wide open contact between Himself and God is developed in chap. 3: 12, where Jesus throws out a challenge:

If you disbelieve me when I talk to you about things on earth, how are you to believe if I should talk about the things of heaven?

How could Jesus talk of things of heaven? The answer seems to be in the statement which immediately follows:

No one ever went up into heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man. . . .*

This may be thought of as a descent prior to His birth and an ascent subsequent to His resurrection, but in the light of the established imagery of ascending to heaven and descending, it is suggested that we have here a claim to have ascended to obtain heavenly knowledge, and a descent to impart it to men. It is also a claim to be absolutely unique in having made this "journey."

In My Father's Presence

Another instance of the same mode of speech is in chapter 8, verse 38, where Jesus says to the Jews:

I am revealing in words what I saw in my Father's presence; and you are revealing in action what you learned from your father.

* This verse is concluded with the words "which is in heaven" (A.V.) or "whose home is in heaven" (N.E.B.). The A.V. translation is closest to the Greek text, but these words do not appear in certain ancient and important manuscripts and were almost certainly not spoken by Jesus.

The Jew's father in this context is not Abraham but, as Jesus says, "Your father is the devil" (verse 44). While, therefore, Jesus is saying that He has been to the presence of God to learn the words of truth, He asserts that the Jews have been to the devil's abode (perhaps even brought up there) to learn lying and murder, for the devil is the father of these. No Jew had, of course, undertaken that journey. The mode of speech is a reference to the Jews communing one with the other and with their dark and murderous thoughts. Similarly, Jesus is not speaking of having been literally in God's actual presence but is referring to His communion in prayer with His Father.



COMMUNING ONE WITH THE OTHER . . .

The Bread of Life

If we now return to the 6th chapter of John's gospel we will find that the statement "I have come down from heaven" is part of a highly figurative scheme. Jesus claims to be the "bread of life" which comes down from heaven to sustain "eternal life." This is compared with the manna which came down from heaven to sustain the mortal life of the Israelites during their desert wandering. Did the coming down of the bread of life relate to a descent at a period prior to Christ's birth in Bethlehem? If so, the figurative usage would be inappropriate, for the bread which came down from heaven is His "own flesh" (verse 51), which in no sense is generally considered to have come down from heaven. The general meaning of ascent and descent in this figurative manner of speaking, as used elsewhere in the Bible, points

to its use in John of Jesus ascending and descending as a mature person—One who is able to seek communion with God by first “ascending.” The “descending” figuratively means the imparting of the revelation of God. The revelation is the bread of heaven for those who can receive it. The revelation can be understood by contemplating the life and teaching of Jesus Christ who is the “Word” or uttered thought of God. If any man feed on this “bread” or “flesh” or revelation he will find “life.”

Hard Sayings

These were hard sayings for the Jews, who appear to have looked for literal meanings when only spiritual were intended. The next difficult saying is that in verse 62.

What if you see the Son of Man ascending to the place where he was before?

It may be tempting to see this “ascension” as that which followed Jesus’ death and resurrection, and the “before” as applying to the period prior to His birth in Bethlehem. The ascension from Mount Olivet, however, hardly seems relevant to the immediate discussion and unlikely to “shock” (verse 61) any of them, as it was witnessed by only a band of convinced believers. Also, in terms of a coming down from heaven as set out in the Nicene Creed, the expression “Son of Man” is inappropriate because it was not as *man* that He came down. Consistency and relevance to the occasion can nevertheless be maintained by continuing the figurative usage of “ascend.” Jesus has just made a statement which was more than the Jews could “stomach” (verse 60). It was that if they ate the “bread” which He offered they would live for ever. In effect He meant that they should believe the truth He was bringing to them and let it have its effect on their lives. If, however, they were unable to follow His teaching thus far, He now says they would be even more put out if He sought further and more profound knowledge to impart to them by “ascending up where he was before.” But if any are not shocked but go on and feed on the further revelation which Jesus gives, he will have “life” indeed.

III

BEFORE ABRAHAM

IN the previous section it was maintained that spatial terms such as “ascent” and “descent” may be employed for aspects of spiritual com-

munion. It will also be found that expressions relating to time are given a spiritual rather than a literal meaning in John’s gospel. Jesus says, for example,

In truth, in very truth I tell you, the believer possesses eternal life. John 6: 47.

This would normally be taken to mean that the believer is immortal, but a mortal person is meant, one who will die, for the additional promise is “and I will raise him up on the last day” (verse 40). The possession of “eternal life” is, in this context, the possession of the spiritual qualities of life such as Jesus displayed, rather than any temporal extent of physical life.

A Christian life can be spoken about in this way because the qualities of character expressed belong to the timeless life of God. In God’s eternal kingdom all will share these qualities. For a man to have this eternal life is not to be understood as if he had consciously been with God from the beginning of time or that he will consciously continue from now on. The “eternal life” is seen in the transformed life of the follower of Christ.

Rejoiced to see my Day

The conversation between Jesus and the Jews in John 8: 56-59 reveals how completely the Jews failed to grasp the points, spiritual and figurative, which Jesus was making. Jesus says,

Your father Abraham was overjoyed to see my day.

The meaning of this should be clear. Abraham was given a promise of a coming day when all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12: 3). This was to be through a seed which is Christ (Gal. 3: 16). Abraham looked forward to the day when the seed would be born who would guarantee the blessing. The Jews, however, mistook the meaning of Christ’s words, thinking that He was claiming to have seen Abraham, or, as a well supported ancient text reads, “Has Abraham seen you?” In either reading the Jews imply that Jesus claimed to have been living since the time of Abraham.

From an early period of the church this misunderstanding was taken up by Christians. Christ was imagined to be present throughout the period of the Old Testament, surveying the events and helping the Israelites. A mediaeval painting of the incident when Doeg the Edomite told Saul about Ahimelech’s meeting with David (1 Sam. 22: 9 ff.), shows Christ watching the proceedings from heaven. Attempts have been made, also, to see Christ in

person in some of the incidents of the Old Testament. For example, He was thought to be one of the three men (Gen. 18: 2) who appeared to Abraham, the others being the Father and the Holy Spirit.

In His reply to the Jews Jesus does not say that He was before Abraham. He uses, instead, an unusual mode of speech. He says, ". . . before Abraham was born, *I am*." In this way Jesus does not intend to answer the Jews' question in terms of time at all. He is turning the question towards spiritual realities and asserting that He belongs to a way of life which transcends time. His life spiritually belongs to God's way, of which He is a manifestation.

Word and Wisdom

How Jesus is related to this life of God is explained in the beginning of the gospel of John.

When all things began, the Word already was. The Word dwelt with God, and what God was, the Word was. The Word, then, was with God at the beginning, and through him all things came to be; no single thing was created without him. All that came to be was alive with his life, and that life was the light of men. . . . So the Word became flesh; he came to dwell among us, and we saw his glory, such glory as befits the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

John 1: 1-14.

It is important for us to try to grasp what these words meant to the writer and the first readers. When a Jew read them he would recall the creation when "God said . . ." and it was done (Gen. 1). All things, therefore, came into being because God spoke the "word." As, however, the speech or words of God reveal His inner purpose it is natural to identify the words with the mind and will of God. Moreover the imagery of word is linked with activity. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23: 29). So the word was proclaimed as God's special agent in carrying out His will. In the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Aramaic, changes were made which bring out how extensively the Jews thought of the term "word" as an agent. The Hebrew of Isaiah 48: 13 reads, "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth." This was translated into Aramaic as "By my word I have founded the earth. . . ." In a very similar way the word "wisdom" was used. It was described as a woman, created before the world and then, in turn, sharing the life of God during the rest



CHRIST, DEPICTED IN HEAVEN, WATCHES AS DOEG
ACCUSES AHIMELECH BEFORE KING SAUL
—from a French manuscript of about A.D. 850

of the creative process. The Jew, then, was used to the idea that the attributes of God—His wisdom, His purpose or His thought expressed in words—could be spoken of as active and having "life."

When a Greek read the gospel of John he would not find it as easy to understand as a Jew but, even so, he could draw on contemporary use of the "word." Tradition says that the gospel of John was written at Ephesus and it was in this city that the philosopher Heraclitus, for the first time of which there is a record, taught that the "word" or "logos" gave pattern to, and was the principle of order behind, the universe. Later Greek philosophers developed this idea and the "word" became for them the "mind" of God which was suffused throughout the universe, giving it orderliness and, through man's mind, instructing him in truth. There is much evidence, principally in the writings of the Jew Philo, that both Jew and Greek had contributed to a common understanding of "word" by the time in which the gospel was written.

The beginning of the gospel of John is, therefore, saying that the creation had come about according to the thought and purpose in the mind

of God, that this purpose has been a light among men, bringing spiritual understanding through the revealed "word," and that, finally, the fullest revelation had been given by God's act through the birth and life of Jesus Christ. It would, then, be untrue to say that because the "word" was with God, that a person, such as Jesus of Nazareth, was living with God before the birth of this same Jesus in Bethlehem.

Image or Portrait

To this figurative use of "word" and "wisdom" there must be added "image". In New Testament times this meant "portrait". To this day the meaning is still recalled in the "icons" of the Eastern Orthodox Church. These are religious portraits and the name "icon" is derived from the original Greek word for image. In one of the religious books of the Jews, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (7: 26, "wisdom" is said to be the "image" of God's goodness. Paul uses "image" in this way in Colossians 1: 15 "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God." The thought here seems to be that like "wisdom" or "word," God's "image" was created before the world, "the first-born of all creation" (R.S.V.), and now the man Jesus Christ has become "the express image of his person" (Heb. 1: 3, A.V.).

The passages which can be understood in the way the terms "word," "wisdom" and "image" are used in the New Testament with application to Christ are drawn together below. The translation is that of the Revised Standard Version.

(i) *From the beginning God has a purpose: it expresses what He is.*

- (a) The Lord created me (wisdom) at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Prov. 8: 22.
- (b) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. . . . He was in the beginning with God. John 1: 1-2.
- (c) He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. Col. 1: 15.

(ii) *This purpose gives order to the natural world and to the structure of man's civilisation.*

- (a) When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I (wisdom) was beside him like a master workman. Prov. 8: 29-30.

(b) All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. John 1: 3.

(c) . . . through whom also he created the world . . . upholding the universe by his word of power. Heb. 1: 2-3.

(d) . . . for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him . . . in him all things hold together. Col. 1: 16-17.

(iii) *Knowledge of this purpose brings spiritual understanding to men.*

(a) For he who finds me (wisdom) finds life and obtains favour from the Lord. Prov. 8: 35.

(b) In him (word) was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1: 5.

(c) In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets. Heb. 1: 1.

(iv) *The purpose of God, a portrait of Himself, was revealed among men in the birth of Jesus Christ.*

(a) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. . . . We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. John 1: 14.

(b) But in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. . . . He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature. Heb. 1: 2-3.

(c) He who has seen me has seen the Father. John 14: 9.

The passages from various writers of the New Testament quoted above all declare a common theme—the purpose of God being centred upon the man Jesus Christ. Though a man among men He bore a unique relationship to the eternal mind. The meaning of His life was therefore greater than a short, mortal existence would suggest. It spoke of truths which had been essential to God before the world was, and will reach out time without end. These things were cryptically yet spiritually expressed when Jesus said to the Jews: "Before Abraham was born, I am."

IV

A MAN

*Who for us men, and for our salvation came down
from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin
Mary,
And was made man.*

The Nicene Creed.

NATIVE to the religious thinking of the Greeks was a belief that there was a virtually unbridgeable gap between whatever belonged to the supreme God and life on earth. Many philosophic devices were employed to alleviate the problem of divine and human communication. Especially unacceptable to the Greeks was the idea that God could have a direct relationship with humans, or experience emotions and suffering. The Greek leaders of the early church, not to say many of the early heretics, were strongly influenced by these views. As a result they were unwilling to believe that Christ had been a man or had suffered. Some believed that He was an angelic being who only appeared to be a man. Others thought that He only temporarily inhabited a human body but did not experience emotions or any suffering. A number of New Testament passages can be seen in a fresh light if they are recognised as deliberate contradictions of these views. In this connection might be quoted, "the Word became flesh" (John 1: 14), and "every spirit which acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God" (1 John 4: 2). At the same time it was necessary to maintain that, although Jesus was a man, He was nevertheless "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1: 15, A.V.).

"Man"

The Greek attitude is subtly in evidence in the Nicene Creed, which states that the Son of God became "man," that is, He assumed the qualities associated with humanity. This is not the same, however, as saying that He was *a* man. If the authors of the creed had been less influenced by Greek thinking and more ready to accept to the full the New Testament evidence they would have seen clearly that Jesus is presented not only as "man" but as "a man."

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said,

I speak of Jesus of Nazareth, a man
singled out by God and made known to
you

Acts 2: 22.

Jesus Christ is shown also to be in a distinctive relationship to other men. He is the head of a new race. He is the "second" man, the last Adam. Apart from the use of these names by Paul, this teaching is carefully worked out in the epistle to the Hebrews and in the epistle to the Philippians in contexts which recall also His unique portrayal of the qualities inherent in God. In Hebrews 2: 7 a quotation is made from Psalm 8: 5-6:

Thou didst make him for a short while lower
than the angels;

Thou didst crown him with glory and honour;
Thou didst put all things in subjection beneath
his feet.

We naturally associate these words with the creation story:

Then God said, "Let us make man in
our image, after our likeness; and let them
have dominion. . . ." Gen. 1: 26-27 (R.S.V.).

In the epistle a simple point is made that we do not yet see man with this dominion. In one case, however, God's original purpose has been fulfilled. While the first Adam, "the son of God" (Luke 3: 38), has led the race to corruption and ruin, the "Son," Who is Jesus Christ, "the express image of his person" (Heb. 1: 3, A.V.), made "a little lower than the angels" (Heb. 2: 7, A.V.), is now crowned "with glory and honour" as God intended that men should be. In the epistle the complete kinship of the "leader who delivers" (Heb. 2: 10), with his "brothers" (v. 11) sharing the "same flesh and blood," (v. 14) is emphasised.

In Philippians 2 the same basic comparisons between the first and the second Adam are made. The first Adam, though in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1: 26), sought, by seizing the forbidden fruit, to be "like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3: 5 R.S.V.). The second Adam, though "the divine nature was his from the first" (Phil. 2: 6), and therefore living as the divine image ought to be lived "did not think to snatch at equality with God" as the first Adam did. Instead He showed Himself to be a humble servant of God. "Bearing the human likeness, revealed in human shape, he humbled himself, and in obedience accepted even death" (v. 8). In this He is an exhortation to His brothers whose "bearing towards one another" should "arise out of your life in Christ" (v. 5), and so they will themselves reflect the image and likeness of God.

Because Jesus humbled Himself in this way:

Therefore God raised him to the heights
and bestowed on him the name above all

names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—in heaven, on earth, and in the depths—and every tongue confess, “Jesus Christ is Lord,” to the glory of God the Father.
Phil. 2: 9-11.

The bestowal of the name is clearly connected with Isaiah 45: 21-24 (A.V.).

... there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord (Yahweh) have I righteousness and strength.

The quotation of this passage in Philippians and its application to Christ makes it clear that the name bestowed is the sacred name for God, “Yahweh,” translated “Lord.” In Jesus the image of God has become complete. The name of God is bestowed upon Him and with it the qualities and new status associated with the name. He has been raised to divine status. In the book of Revelation, Jesus promises that the faithful will share this:

I will write the name of my God upon him . . . and my own new name.

Rev. 3: 12.

V

TRUE GOD

OF the status of Christ the Nicene Creed has this to say:

We believe . . . in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father . . .

The expressions “God of God,” “Light of Light” are to be understood in the sense God “out of” God, Light “out of” Light, that is, “derived from.” If these definitions “God” and “Light” were used in a similar way and with the same force as “wisdom” in Proverbs 8, their use could have been regarded as a not unreasonable extension of what the Bible actually implied. The Nicene Creed may well be a development from an earlier point of view of this kind, for it was modelled on an earlier confession in use in Caesarea.

The Caesarean statement read, “. . . one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God,” instead of “Son of God.” Nevertheless, the Caesarean and Nicene Creeds both assert that “Jesus Christ” was “begotten of the Father before all ages” (Caesarean Creed) or, as was later added to the Nicene Creed, “Begotten before all worlds.”

Plain Words

In order to evaluate the scriptural evidence with which to compare these statements it is necessary to differentiate between passages such as those found in John’s writings, in Colossians and Hebrews where the use of the imagery of the “word” is found, and other passages devoid of this imagery where direct and plain statements are made. Of this latter type the promise of the birth of Christ, as set out in Luke 1: 30-35, is a good example.

‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for God has been gracious to you; you shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall give him the name Jesus. He will be great; he will bear the title “Son of the Most High”; the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David, and he will be king over Israel for ever; his reign shall never end.’ ‘How can this be,’ said Mary, ‘when I have no husband?’ The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy child to be born will be called “Son of God.”’

This simple narrative sets out the historical action of God in His determining to redeem men in Christ. It explains how Jesus could be uniquely in the image of God. As wax takes the impression of a seal, so He is the “stamp of God’s very being” (Heb. 1: 3), for He was born as the result of the power of God, the Holy Spirit, being the agent of His conception. He therefore takes after the characteristics of His Father, God. There is no hint in such narratives of a divine being assuming “manhood” in the form of a “child.”

If, therefore, we may wish to continue with the figurative usage we could describe God’s purpose, words, wisdom and image, or even the idea of sonship as being born from God before all worlds. It is inadmissible however to say that Jesus Christ was so born.

CONCLUSION

IT would be broadly true to say that since the rise of Christianity, three dominant answers have been put forward as solutions to the problem raised in the title of this article.

- (i) The view generally held to be expressed in the ancient creeds, in which Jesus is regarded as a divine being, the equal of God, Who, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, make up the Godhead. The person (there are various shades of meaning attached to this word), God the Son, is believed to have left heaven and assumed the qualities consistent with human life on earth. This view seems to dominate and be one of the requirements of membership of the World Council of Churches which, while not mentioning the manhood of Christ, requires belief in "Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."
- (ii) The view favoured by Arius of Alexandria in the 4th century. This regards Christ as a divine being Who had a begetting in time but before the creation of the world. He is held to have a subordinate status and something of the rôle of head of all angelic and non-angelic beings. His descent from heaven is understood in literal terms to assume the rôle of a man on earth. The Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses are the most prominent and zealous supporters of this view today.
- (iii) The view taken in this article in which Christ has no conscious existence prior to His birth in Bethlehem.

The first of these views is, as commonly understood, likely to endanger the unity of God. Jesus Christ is presented in the New Testament as One through Whom God is made known and through Whom God acts, not as the supreme God.

The second view can only be maintained if figurative usages, especially of such words as "wisdom," "word" and "image," are not given their essential meaning and weight. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to see how Western readers have been convinced of this point of view.

The third view can make claim to greater antiquity than that of the definitions of Nicea. These arose largely through the adoption of the second view in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. This third view can lay claim, also, to never having been very far below the surface of the most analytical religious thinking. This is especially true today.

Does it Matter?

An agreed solution of this problem is of more than academic interest. Christianity has suffered setbacks for decades and has lost much of its former standing in the hearts and minds of men. While much of this former strength may have been artificial, it seems that a breakdown in the power to communicate what Christ stands for is one of the great failures of today. It is essential, therefore, to recover the simplicity of Christ, freed from the entanglements of doctrinal disputation characteristic of the 4th and 5th centuries of our era.

The issue is not only of local or national importance. It is cosmic in its scope. As Jesus said:

This is eternal life: to know thee who alone art truly God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. John 17: 3.

The above article is not presented as an exhaustive investigation on this subject. The intention has been to offer some leading ideas which can be pursued further.

Consideration is being given to producing this article as a separate booklet, and constructive criticism of the contents is invited.

WHAT IS JUSTICE?

GRECIAN AND PAULINE TEACHING

By Sheila Harris

Part 2.—The Gospel for the Greeks

"I have become everything in turn to men of every sort, so that in one way or another I may save some." (N.E.B.)

AS the apostle Paul stood on Mars' Hill to address the people of Athens, there rose before his eyes the Acropolis, with its crown of marble temples. These temples, especially the Parthenon, dominated the religious thought of the Athenians, for it was there they believed that the goddess Athene, protectress of their city, dwelt. Every four years a great procession had wound its way up the steep slope to pay the honours due. To these people, then, Paul proclaimed that the true and living God dwells "not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands."

Behind him lay the agora, the market place, and centre of the city's life. This was flanked with cool, marbled porticoes in which the people talked of life and thought, of poetry and philosophy. So to them Paul quoted their own poets to prove the living Fatherhood of God which demanded their repentance. Thus Paul draws convincingly upon the experience and knowledge of his hearers to bring them to a recognition of the claims of the true God.

It is, however, in the epistles to the Corinthians that we find him addressing his most typically Greek hearers, and, again, although he is speaking to baptised Christians he, nonetheless, illustrates and clarifies his message by references to their own thought and background. The ancient city of Corinth is dominated by the

great, heavily constructed temple of Apollo. In seeking to reconcile the divisions in the church, Paul likens the Christians themselves to a temple in which the Spirit of God dwells, a temple which according to the true, classical concept must manifest a perfect unity of thought and execution. But there were other things in Corinth, fashionable clubs and places for recreation and gossip, filled, no doubt, by those who had grown rich with trade and commerce and knew well the ways of the world. How appropriately Paul contrasts this worldly wisdom with the spiritual wisdom revealed by the Spirit of God! This wisdom of God, however, is spoken in a mystery. Greeks knew well the strange ritualistic procession of initiates proceeding to Eleusis to participate in the celebration of the Mysteries, in which the worshippers were translated into a transcendental experience, whereby they gained a hope of life beyond death. So the Christian who has entered the bonds of the gospel has entered into an experience of renewed life in which he can indeed know the things of God.

In a previous article something of the equipped to understand the Greek mind, presented the gospel as the supreme answer to the aspirations of Greek thinking, to those who had hitherto sought an answer to life through their own thinkers and poets.

In a previous article something of the thought of their greatest philosopher was shown:

from that there emerge three of the basic principles of Platonic thought: —

1. That the real meaning of life and thought is its unseen or spiritual quality.
2. That true life is a progress towards a spiritual ideal.
3. That true goodness is a state of the mind resulting from a contact with ultimate, eternal being.

The first epistle to the Corinthians is too much concerned with pressing ecclesial problems for a real freedom of spirit but, in the second epistle, Paul breaks out with joy, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ," and there follows a beautiful passage describing the joy, the assurance and the wonder of true, spiritual vision and experience.

In chapter 4, verse 18, he states that the Christian vision is of things unseen — surely a strange paradox. How can we look at what is not seen? Plato had already taught the Greek world that the true reality of any object was its unseen quality or form. A chair is a chair not because of its material, colour or component parts but because of the concept of chair which we apply to it, which gives to it meaning and purpose. Material objects are meaningless without our understanding of their use or purpose. So the true meaning of life is not its outward appearance but the reality which lies behind it. The shadows seen by the prisoner in the cave had no reality without the recognition of the real objects behind them. Paul is concerned with affliction — the sufferings of this present, mortal lot. He proceeds later in this epistle to recount some of his own tribulations — weariness, painfulness, perils. We, too, can be conscious of the difficulties of our human experience — bereavement, disillusionment, frustration, disappointment, loneliness. But, as Paul points out, with that supreme courage which must be the part of every true Christian "we look not at the things which are seen." Beneath the experience of a Christian lies the pattern of his Lord's life, a fellowship with His sufferings, a purpose which is "working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Two

men looked out from prison bars. One saw mud and the other saw stars." What do we see? Is our daily life pulsating with the vision of God's purpose and love in Jesus or is it just the daily round? Which of the two prisoners are we like?

Plato, as we have seen, showed that the noblest life for man consisted of an ascent out of a dark cave up into the vision of the sun outside. In another dialogue he describes this progress as a man climbing a ladder, seeking continually with an inner, burning desire to find that ultimate satisfaction for which he yearns, and getting stage by stage nearer to it. So Paul (2 Cor. 3: 18) says that we "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." As we look at Jesus, beholding Him with desire, so we are changed to be like Him. But not all at once. The Christian life is a journey; we enter it at baptism and then must go on "unto perfection" stage by stage. Our transformation into the image of Christ, however, can be achieved only if we go on beholding — "looking unto" Him. So now we see how Paul has built upon our second Platonic premise. Not only must we look at the unseen but must keep beholding it, and thereby become ourselves transformed bit by bit, gradually getting nearer. What an encouragement sometimes to our faltering hopes to know that there is always a farther point in God's plan for us — a beyond to which we can still strive!

Plato has shown that man's goodness consists of contact with eternal being. Outside the cave there shone the sun, the source of all light and being, in the beholding of which a man could find true peace; his soul could be illuminated with the light of true reality, and he could rejoice that he had escaped from the darkness of the world, yet once more to return there to redeem the rest. Paul, too, speaks of the god of this world who "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2 Cor. 4: 4). He speaks of the light of the gospel shining in our hearts and shows that this light is the knowledge

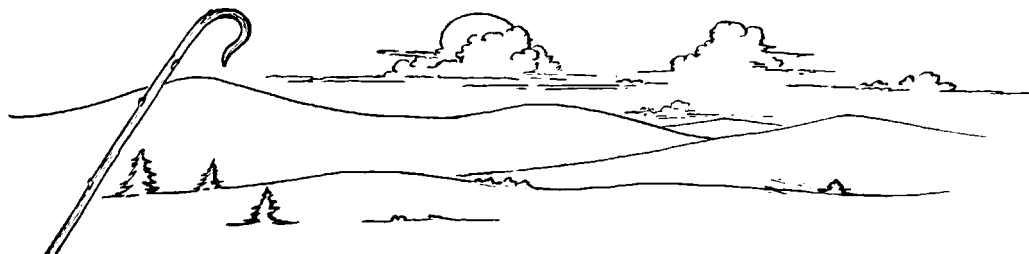
of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; whereby we have an imperishable treasure in our hearts, an inward man which is renewed day by day, a spiritual relationship with God. Hereby may be made manifest in us the life of the Lord Jesus. True goodness, then, to Paul also, consists in contact with eternal truth. Not only must we behold it and grow into it but in receiving it must find it the source of our own spiritual life.

Is Paul a Platonist? Between the Greek and the Christian there lies one profound, supreme difference. Plato sought for eternal reality as the goal of his experience: Paul sought for it in *Jesus Christ*. All the abstract

ideals of Greek thinking had been transformed, sublimated into a man — a perfect man — a man who had walked among men, who had hungered, suffered, died and risen — a man who had conquered not only in death but in life.

The glory of God was now indeed in the face of the Lord Jesus. This is what Christianity gave the world — a vision, an ideal and a reality of perfect humanity. And so for the first time human life, lived by faith in God, could become a manifestation of the life of Jesus, and therefore meaningful and purposeful. This was the gospel that fed the hearts of a starved world and made it live!

THE ONE LOST SHEEP



There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold; —
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender shepherd's care.

"Lord, thou hast here Thy ninety and nine,
Are they not enough for Thee?"
But the shepherd made answer: "This of Mine
Has wandered away from Me;
And although the road be rough and steep
I go to the desert to find My sheep."

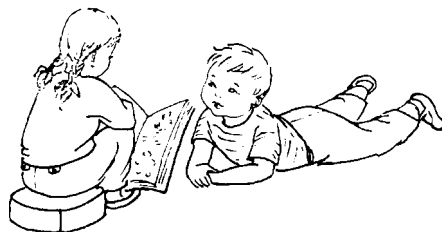
But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed
through
'Ere he found his sheep that was lost:
Out in the desert He heard its cry,
Sick and helpless and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way
That mark out the mountain's track?"
"They were shed for one who had gone astray
'Ere the shepherd could bring him back."
"Lord, whence are Thy hands so rent and torn?"
"They are pierced tonight by many a thorn."

And all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
"Rejoice, I have found My sheep!"
And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His own!"

Elizabeth Clephane (1830-69).

A CHRISTADELPHIAN CHILDREN'S HOME



From time to time The Endeavour Magazine has carried appeals for practical help to be given toward the relief of distress among children. The possibilities of doing more has been in the minds of a number of our supporters, and it is now proposed to open a home for deprived children.

Enquiries have been made about the situation in the Midlands and it has been found that there is a grave shortage of homes of this nature. An approach has been made to the Children's Officer of one local authority, who has expressed interest in the project, and a promise of financial assistance toward the maintenance of any children sent to the home by the local authority has been made. This would considerably help toward the running costs.

It is proposed to start with a small home for about ten deprived children, organised on a family basis. A young Christadelphian married couple, who feel drawn to this kind of work, have expressed their willingness to run such a home. They would be given a modest salary.

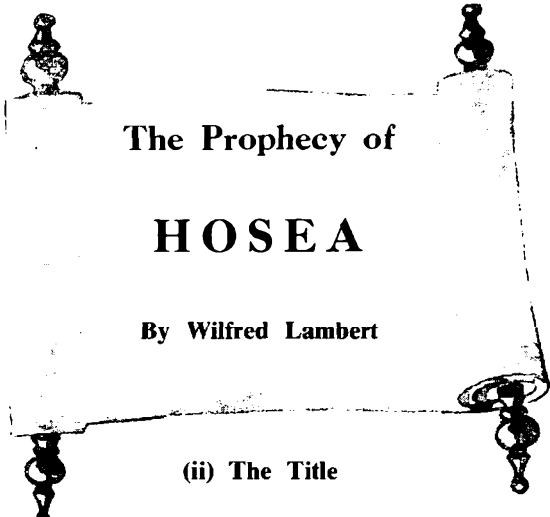
Such a home would give an opportunity for the extension of love and Christian values to a group of children, which would be impossible by any other means, and, with the Father's blessing, might bring many to His Kingdom.

We have already received offers of financial help which encourage us to go ahead with our plans, but whether we can bring the proposal to fruition depends on the response we receive to appeals such as this. A suitable house has been located which would offer facilities for expansion later. The total capital cost is in the region of £7,500 and the estimated annual expenditure about £4,000.

All who are interested are invited to write to: —

The Secretary,
The Endeavour Service Council,
176 Granton Road,
Edinburgh, 5.

At this stage we would ask them only to state the amount which they would be prepared to contribute toward the project, or whether they would be willing to undertake to covenant funds toward it.



The Prophecy of

HOSEA

By Wilfred Lambert

(ii) The Title

The word of Yahweh which came to Hosea, son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel.

TITLES are things which did not correspond in the Old Testament times with the practices of today. Every book today must have a title, and almost all have a title page which contains other items of information, too: the author's name, the place and date of publication, and, often, the publisher. The title itself may serve three purposes in the modern world. It may give a general indication of the contents of the book. In addition it may be intended to encourage potential purchasers. Finally, it must serve as a mark of identification, something to quote to the bookseller and to find in the library catalogue. The second of these purposes was completely unknown in ancient Israel, since there was no mass production or large-scale retailing of books. The first was known, but was not considered to be as essential as today. In a time when fewer books were being written, and when each copy was hand written and individually distributed, the kind of information we seek from the title, the print on the dust-jacket, and the table of contents would normally be communicated by word of mouth. In such a case the only function of a title was the third: a convenient means of identification. As a conse-

quence many books of the Old Testament bear no title at all in the modern sense. The English translations have always supplied these, but they are no part of the inspired text. Whether we read "The First Book of Moses, called Genesis" (A.V.) or "The First Book of Moses, commonly called Genesis" (R.V., R.S.V.), they are alike without antiquity or authority. The Hebrews themselves referred to the book simply by its first phrase, "In the beginning." There was no other title. The same holds of most of the historical books of the Old Testament. Neither title nor author is given. Prophetical books, however, were treated differently. The identity of a man claiming to speak for God, as the prophets did, was not allowed to be lost in the general tradition of anonymity. Those responsible for compiling and handing down the prophets' oracles have normally given a title or a series of titles to succeeding sections, which were part of the book. Unfortunately modern translators have not been content to give the ancient titles the place they should properly have. They are printed as though they were the first verse of the book or section, or the first phrase, and on a few occasions a single-word title has been incorporated quite

wrongly in the following phrase. In Zechariah 12: 1 the Hebrew reads:

An Oracle

The word of the Lord concerning Israel

as the R.S.V. correctly sets it out. The A.V., however, misunderstands and renders, "The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel." Yet the R.S.V. falls into exactly the same error with Malachi 1: 1, which has the same title, "An Oracle," but then a sub-title, "The Word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi." In the case of Hosea the whole of the first verse is the ancient and authentic title, though it is a long one, and does part service for what would be put in the table of contents or on the dust-jacket of a modern book. For this reason we have restored it to its rightful place at the head of this article.

First it gives the author's name, and since family names were not in use in this period, confusion with other Hoseas was avoided by giving his father's name, Beerī. Neither the prophet nor his father is known outside this book, and the father's name is given only in the title. This is not without importance, since it shows that the title was not simply given to the book by a compiler who only knew what the book itself tells. There is, however, reason for thinking that this title in its present form is not in fact from Hosea or an immediate disciple, for it goes on to give the period of Hosea's mission, and does so by naming four kings of Judah, but only one of Israel. This chronological material raises two problems. The first is that if one adds up the figures for the Judean monarchs as given in the Books of Kings, a total of 109 years results, which contrasts with the 41 years of Jeroboam. The second is why this double form of dating is used at all. Did Hosea prophesy to both kingdoms?

On this point the evidence of the book itself is quite clear and conclusive. While the southern kingdom of Judah is occasionally named, all the precise allusions are to the northern, which is most often called Ephraim, less commonly Israel. Thus Samaria, the northern capital, and Bethel and Gilgal, two of

the northern shrines, are mentioned several times each, as well as other northern sites, while there is not a single mention of Jerusalem or any other Judean centre. Allusions other than topographical confirm this picture. Thus the book itself strongly suggests that Hosea was a prophet exclusively to the ten tribes, but, conscious of Judah's pertaining to the purposes of God as much as Ephraim's, from time to time he links the two together.

Accepting, then, the clear evidence of the book that Hosea addressed his message to Ephraim, we can understand that Jeroboam, son of Joash, that is Jeroboam the Second, a northern king, should be named. But why the four Judean kings? It might be thought that perhaps Hosea was compelled to flee the northern kingdom for the condemnation and predictions of doom he brought them. In such a case he might well have taken refuge in the south. However, it must be noted that the title refers not to Hosea's lifetime, but to "the word of Yahweh" through him. If, then, the inclusion of the Judean kings is taken to imply Hosea's presence in that kingdom, it must also imply that he prophesied there. For this theory, as we have seen, the book offers no support.

The length of time reigned by the four kings, 109 years, is not as great a difficulty as might appear at first glance. Hosea was active within the reigns given, which need include only the end of Uzziah's 52 years and the beginning of Hezekiah's 25. More problematical is the synchronising of the reigns of the two kingdoms. According to II Kings 15: 1 Azariah, who is the same as Uzziah, began to reign in Jeroboam's 27th year, which means that the Judean reigns given extend far beyond the end of Jeroboam's reign. We must then take up the question why the southern kings are named at all.

The canon of the Old Testament was the work of the leaders of the orthodox Jewish community centred in Jerusalem. The fact that Hosea was included in the prophets is evidence that from a certain time onwards his oracles were preserved in Jerusalem. No information is available as to just when the written form of

his words received its present arrangement. It is possible that toward the end of his lifetime his reputation was such that devout Jerusalemites had collections of his sayings. Yet it may not have been until much later that books of his sayings found their way southwards. But it seems certain that before Jerusalem fell, and the Babylonian captivity began, such a work must have been in Judean hands, otherwise it is hard to see how it survived at all. On this assumption — it is nothing more — it follows that the book comes to us through Judean hands, and this would explain why the kings of the southern kingdom are used to indicate the period of Hosea's ministry, and why Jeroboam, the Ephraimite, is also named. An originally northern title has been glossed by the Judean compiler. The apparent discrepancy between the range of the four southern as against the one northern king is not so easily explained, and the following suggestion is given merely tentatively: its rightness or wrongness must depend on the exposition of the book which will follow in due course.

A careful reading shows that the book falls into two sections. The first is chs. 1-3, the second chs. 4-14. The former deals with Hosea's personal life; his marriage and its outcome are described in chs. 1 and 3, while the intervening ch. 2 has a discourse closely related to the spiritual lessons arising from the marriage. Starting with ch. 4 there is a collection of Hosea's sayings, devoid of narrative or biography. It begins as though a fresh start is being made, and, as often in the prophets, it works up through denunciation of sin and wickedness to a picture of Israel finally healed and restored. There is no possible dispute about this arrangement of the book, and it has given rise to a theory about the title of the book. It is possible that the original title referred only to Jeroboam and was a title not to the whole book, but only to the first three chapters. If this is so, Hosea's marriage experiences all fell within the reign of Jeroboam. However, when the book was adopted in Jerusalem, it was known that Hosea's total ministry had lasted well after Jeroboam's

death, so the title was glossed to indicate this fact. Hence the double dating and the overlapping periods.

In the modern world such an additional item of information would have been indicated in quite another way, but in ancient Israel, where such scholarly impedimenta as footnotes were unknown, oral tradition passed on from one generation to another explanations of such items in a written text. The matter is not proved, but certainly some explanation is called for, and the suggestion just made can be tested. If there is evidence that the first three chapters come from Jeroboam's reign, while parts of the other chapters presume later times, then the suggestion is at least plausible. To this, and to the other questions raised in the book, we shall now address ourselves.

(To be continued)



Mutual Improvement Society's Essays

Association of Christadelphian Mutual and Bible Study Classes, Essays, Session 1964-65, from T. K. Taylor, 104 Greatfield Road, Kidderminster, Worcs. Price: 5s.

THE annual volume of essays often contains some of the best reading matter to appear from any Christadelphian publishing agency during the course of the year. These booklets deserve to be better known. Usually the essays are oriented by a theme, but this year the usual *Special Study* is complemented by a *Supplementary Study*. The first of these is doctrinal, the second devotional, and there is no particular link between them.

The first section is entitled *Contemporary Faiths and Christadelphian Beliefs*, and, as the introduction to it informs us, is meant to supply information about the denominations chosen and to draw practical lessons for our own benefit. Four bodies are dealt with: the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, the Quakers, and Jehovah's Witnesses. The aim is very laudable, since, when considering other bodies, it is all too easy for us

to adopt a smug attitude, gloating over how wrong they are and how right we are. The fact is that no generation of believers has ever been completely blameless, and when Christ said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," He was not making a disinterested observation, but was exhorting His followers to learn from the zeal even of those farthest from them in outlook.

All four essays are very informative, especially for Christadelphians lacking any special acquaintance with these bodies. The first, on Catholicism, has, however, missed the point of the plan. Its author holds up this church for disapprobation throughout, and the sole lesson he draws is that the counsels of moderation now being formulated in Rome must not cause us to lessen our vigilance lest we be overcome by their wiles. The reviewer has no fundamental difference from the author of this essay, but he doubts very much if this particular presentation of the case has done all it might for Christadelphian readers, and those not yet committed may well be put off by it. It begins, for example, by referring to the undoubted fact that the Roman Catholic church is gaining influence in Great Britain at the expense of other religious bodies. But this fact is supported by some figures which are partly irrelevant and partly contradict it. The number of adult conversions for three consecutive years is given, and this shows a steady decline! The increase in infant baptisms is of little relevance without a knowledge of how many of these babes become active members of the church in later years, and figures of this kind are not given by the church. The total membership as given out includes some who have not attended a Catholic service for decades, but have not formally renounced their connection.

At one point in the essay the author advances a piece of groundless speculation when the facts are well known, and different. On page 7 he suggests that support for Roman Catholic doctrine in two apocryphal books may explain why the Catholic Bible contains the extra books. In fact most of the early Christian churches, at least from the second century onwards, accepted the Apocrypha, so Rome was merely following tradition in this matter. Jerome differed because he had learnt Hebrew from Jewish teachers — a very unusual thing for a Christian at that time — and discovered that the Hebrew canon lacked these books. At another point the author misrepresents, at least so it seems to us, a point of Bible teaching in order to counter a doctrine of Rome. He implies on page 13 that the only confession of sin by man to man approved in the New Testament

is when an injured party receives the confession of the guilty party. We can see no reason for so restricting the application of James 5: 16: "Confess your faults one to another," though this certainly offers no justification for formal confession by a laity to a clergy.

The reviewer must, however, differ if the author's silence is to be construed as meaning that there is nothing we could learn from the Catholic church. At least part of Catholic success comes from the high degree of professionalism within the church. Can Christadelphians, with their extreme amateurishness in almost all matters, learn nothing from this? Paul at least understood the ideal ecclesia to have divisions of labour: I Corinthians 12: 28-30. And if Catholics go farther than we would approve in getting members placed in every department of society as a means of spreading Catholic influence, have not Christadelphians cut themselves off so completely from "the world" that many of us have no outside friends whom we could invite to the Sunday evening lecture?

The other three essays in the expository section adhere much more strictly to the plan and offer both knowledge and wisdom, which the reviewer will not spoil for prospective readers by quoting here. That on the Anglicans is very judicious indeed, and it is therefore all the more unfortunate that due to an error of the printer half a paragraph on the first page has been lost. That on the Quakers is perhaps a little too much an historical survey and not enough a statement of the current position of that body. The last one, on Jehovah's Witnesses, is scrupulously fair to a body that often makes itself repulsive to the outside world.

The devotional section bears the sub-heading *For me to live is Christ*. It likewise consists of four essays. The first is by a mother and deals with creating a Christian home. The reviewer was a little put off by the assertion on the first page that "agnostics . . . allow their morals to run riot," which is a needless and unwarranted slander on many good-living agnostics. Real libertines are rarely agnostic, but the sort of people who just forget about God when immersed in the pleasures of sin, but when things turn out really bad for them, as likely as not they pray! However, this apart, the essay is full of good, wholesome, Christian advice. The second of this group, by a missionary worker, seems a little self-conscious (the use of the first person is reserved to the end, and then is copiously introduced) and is much more a personal testimony than the practical advice which precedes it. As Paul taught, the body

of Christ is made up of different members, and no brother may command that all serve God in his special manner. So the preacher, while showing us the hardships and joys of his calling, must leave the matter there. The Matron of the Christadelphian Nursing Home gives her counterpart to the preacher's story, how a desire to serve led to this vocation, and how a Christian life is maintained in such a position. Finally, a brother and sister who move around the world in the course of the husband's work for the United Nations, give a few of their experiences in contacting brethren and sisters at various spots around the globe.

What was attempted in this symposium was extraordinarily difficult, for it requires considerable moral courage to describe fairly a religious body that is more successful than our own. Still more is needed to suggest how we might learn from their failures and successes. The easiest thing is to give way to the old man of the flesh and to deride them. Nothing in this booklet remotely suggests this, and a high, spiritual tone is maintained. Equal moral courage is required in the type of devotional writing attempted, for nothing is harder than trying to exhort from one's own experiences. The pitfalls of pride in achievement or of servile self-abasement have to be avoided, and this has been done. Thus the planners of this booklet and the nine brethren and sisters are to be thanked for a stimulating collection of essays.

Wilfred Lambert.

Twentieth Century Christian Morality

Right or Wrong, Setting the Standard in Moral Behaviour, The Christadelphian, 404 Shaftmoor Lane, Birmingham, 28. 1965. Price: 9d.

With the issuing of this pamphlet of 16 pages, the Christadelphian Magazine and Publishing Association made a challenge to the 20th century. Its cover marks it as something other than a 19th century tract. Its layout invites readers to pursue the points made, which are briefly and pungently expressed. Its quotations from Scripture are mostly from the very modern rendering of J. B. Phillips. Its whole argument is worded so as to be intelligible to that vast mass of our contemporaries who know nothing of the Bible.

This new approach comes from a realisation that if we wish to make any impact on the world around us, it is no use asking them to come to us to hear an exposé of our problems (they have never heard of Tarshish and will simply boggle at the question of whether Britain is alluded to under

this name in the Old Testament prophets). Instead we must go out to them and show that we, as servants of Christ, have the answers to their problems. So, in a world of changing moral attitudes this pamphlet is well conceived to give a brief but forceful presentation of true Christian standards, justified at every point by appropriate citation of Scripture. How direct and relevant to the modern situation are the words of Paul as read in modern English!

On this very praiseworthy effort only two very minor comments need be made. First, the kind of people to whom this is addressed (it appears to have special reference for young adults) are often highly sophisticated and tend to be very critical of any kind of moralising. Page 5 might have acknowledged that bad employers exist as well as bad employees, to avoid giving an opening to the communist doctrine that religion is a tool of the bosses. Also the comments on dancing and the cinema on page 11 might well provoke the reaction that the same could be said of stamp collecting and photography, but these are "respectable" and so not mentioned. A few positive propositions of Christian ideals would have helped to avoid the very widely held idea that religion is a matter of not doing things. Secondly, this pamphlet is anonymous. The reviewer sees nothing wrong in this, but hopes that it was not solely dictated by the need to deal frankly with moral issues.

Wilfred Lambert.

Commentary on Matthew

J. C. Fenton, *The Gospel of St Matthew, The Pelican Gospel Commentaries*, Penguin Books, 1963. Price: 7s. 6d.

Although presumably published to appeal to a wide readership, this commentary is very definitely for biblical scholars. Nevertheless it does not assume a knowledge of Greek, and where it does need to use Greek words it provides a translation.

It is up to date in the respect that it takes into account the work of others in this and related fields of study. However, it only provides a slender bibliography. It is perhaps unlikely that we shall find any commentary that is precisely to our liking, and this Pelican book may, by its attitude in many places, give offence to some. This the author himself recognises. Nevertheless, there is a paucity of good commentaries on Matthew, and if we are prepared to ignore what appears to be an irreverent attitude in places, we shall find much in this book of value. But let us quote:

The reader may have heard, and he may

believe, that "The Bible is true," and "The Bible is History." And even if he has heard that there is legend and myth in the Old Testament, he may well believe that since we are here dealing with a Gospel, there will not be anything unhistorical here; one of the current meanings of the word "Gospel" is "thing that may safely be believed." The reader may come to the Gospel according to Matthew expecting to find here an accurate historical account of the life of Jesus. If he does so, he will be disappointed.

This rather shocking statement, however, is made to introduce the vital question of "What is a Gospel?" and he demonstrates that even in the synoptic gospels we have not a biography of Jesus but collections of His actions and sayings, arranged by the evangelists, to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to a particular set of people, in the case of Matthew to a Jewish community that had rejected the Christ. Whereas we shall find much that is critical, yet it is not, in general, criticism of the destructive kind that characterised many commentaries of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but one that seeks to analyse the contents of the gospels into the actual words of Jesus, and also those of the evangelist, and to determine, where possible, their original setting. He then postulates the purpose for which the evangelist has selected this or that saying or action. To substantiate this analysis the author has to deal with Matthew's sources — principally Mark, from which Matthew frequently quotes. This, he points out, sometimes interrupts the flow of the text, making continuous reading somewhat arduous. Having made his analysis he tries, frequently with success, to derive the eternal truths of the Master and demonstrates their meaning and value for the 20th century.

This commentary is well laid out for reference purposes and to illustrate its value in this respect we may take the somewhat difficult passage from the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

"the poor in spirit" — the "poor" was a term used of the pious in the Old Testament (e.g. Isa. 61: 1, the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the poor, alluded to in 11: 5, the poor have good news preached to them) and seems to have become a self-designation of certain Jews in the period after the Old Testament (e.g. in the Psalms of Solomon and the Dead Sea Scrolls). "In spirit" may mean "willingly", "voluntarily" — i.e. those who have renounced their possessions in order to follow Jesus, see 19:

23ff. To these, Jesus promises the kingdom of heaven — that is, the greatest possession of all, to reign over the earth when God begins his rule.

"the meek" is similar in meaning to the "the poor": and for the whole of this saying cf. Ps. 37: 11. But the meek shall possess the land (the Greek version of the Psalm is almost identical with this verse). To possess the land explains what is meant in the previous saying by theirs is the kingdom of heaven — i.e. to be set over the earth as rulers under God (cf. 25: 21, 23, I will set you over much).

Though not proved beyond all doubt this explanation of "the poor in spirit" seems reasonable and is backed up with illustrations from the Old Testament and contemporary usage. It is also interesting to note that although the commentator spends little time in extracting a theology out of Matthew's Gospel, as, for example, he might have done with Matthew's usage of the phrase "kingdom of heaven," he does, in passing, observe Christ's usage in the context in which the phrase appears. Here he equates the kingdom of heaven with the future reign of God over the earth.

So although we shall be shocked in places by the author's approach, nevertheless, many will find it a useful book of reference.

John Weaving.

Commentary on Mark

D. E. Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark, The Pelican Gospel Commentaries*, Penguin Books. 1963. Price: 7s. 6d.

It was a happy idea to have a set of *Pelican Gospel Commentaries*, and all who love the Bible should be glad that interest is being roused in this way. So far the three volumes containing Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have appeared. The editor of the series, D. E. Nineham, a professor in the University of London, has contributed Mark. It is the largest of the three, and, in the reviewer's opinion, the most important.

The aim of the series is to offer an authoritative, yet easily intelligible, commentary such as can be grasped by any intelligent layman. In this respect the one under review is not all that was intended. The layman will have to have all his wits about him, and preferably some knowledge of the Bible and its times, for while everything is explained, there is a marked brevity in some parts, and few words convey much. Indeed, it seems

more suited for students, since it quotes works no layman is likely to have read (or to read), and, in places, gives the Greek in transliteration when nothing is gained for the layman. Whatever its use for the average church layman, readers of *Endeavour* need not hesitate to tackle it.

In the 37-page introduction the author sets out his general view of the gospel and its background. In historical matters he is perhaps a little oversceptical. It is clear to all serious students of Mark that the picture is presented of Jesus not revealing His Messianic identity until He made it known to His disciples on the road near Caesarea Philippi. Nineham thinks that this impression may be merely accidental. While we must certainly not ascribe to Mark the mentality of a modern scholar, the contrast between what

precedes and what follows Caesarea Philippi (which Nineham himself describes on page 37) is too striking for us to suppose that Mark himself never noticed it.

The commentary itself has the text of the gospel printed section by section from the R.S.V., followed by the comments. This very convenient arrangement allows the reader to compare the text and comments without using two books. At times the comments are a little pedagogic in style ("point one . . . point two . . . point three"), but this can be forgiven in view of their quality. This is indeed an original work of value, and while no thoughtful reader will agree with all that is said, he will always come away with stimulation. It is very good value for money.

Wilfred Lambert.

WHEN THE HEART IS FRESH AND TENDER



By Ruth McHaffie

IT is sometimes felt that we would like more guidance in our community on the subject of parenthood, but those of us who occasionally attempt to offer any advice do so with reserve. The matter is a delicate one and we are very conscious of being far from the perfect parents producing the perfect children. Also, in a small community such as ours, many of us know each other personally, and there is always the fear that any general criticism of parenthood will be taken as a "dig" by some or other of our friends, though, indeed, they may have been far from our minds. On the other hand, it seems not unreasonable that those who have had family

experience should offer some suggestions to young parents who may or may not be aware that the new venture is fraught with pitfalls and that one has to tread warily; who may think that some vague kind of pious faith, which calls for little effort on their part, is all that is needed to bring the results they desire.

We do not doubt that some will disagree with points we make. As always in this magazine, we believe that no human opinion is infallible and all we write is open to challenge and discussion. We can only write from the experience which we have had with our own family, and each family is different. To some extent parents

have to work out their own parenthood, treating each child in the family differently, according to individual temperament. All parents have to adapt their parenthood to the conditions, facilities and opportunities which are theirs. We ourselves realise that were we working with different material, with children of different temperament, with different facilities, then our parenthood might be easier or more difficult — and the results better or worse.

A SPECIALISED JOB

Today, we cannot pursue any specialised career without specialised training involving hours, weeks and years of study and practice. Parenthood is different, we say. It is so natural. So it is, but we are rearing our children in a highly civilised, artificial world which is not natural at all. Modern times are not particularly to be blamed, for our dilemma is not new. Nearly four hundred years before Christ was born, a writer stated, "Make no mistake, to escape harm and grow up on the right lines in our present society is something that can fairly be called miraculous." The dilemma is, however, new to us, and it would seem wise, therefore, to make definite preparations which should include a careful study both of correct feeding methods and other physical needs, together with methods of training and moral upbringing.

Libraries and bookstalls abound in excellent advice, and we would be foolish to pass them by because we think "it all comes naturally." After all, is not parenthood one of the most important of careers, for it has spiritual implications which are far reaching, influencing the lives of future generations and the people with whom our descendants will associate? But the books which advise us are often not written from a Christian point of view, and that is why we who are Christians should consider the subject together.

It is a tragedy that so few of the parents of the children with whom our children will

work and play have any conception of Christianity in its true sense. Few of them will observe Sunday as a day of worship, few of them will bother to instil a belief in God. Sad as we are about this, and willing as we are to help our neighbours, we have yet to be careful that they do not have a wrong influence upon our children, whom we wish to bring up to be deeply religious. So we are beset by the difficulty of trying to make our children different from so many of their companions without making them stand-offish little prigs.

CAPTURING THEIR MINDS (IN THEORY)

Some adopt the attitude that "boys will be boys" and that we cannot but expect a plentiful variety of wild oat sowing in young days. We prefer the policy of capturing our children's minds before the world does so. (Let it be understood that by "the world" we mean the evil and godlessness which is around us, and not the people who are earnestly doing good but whose beliefs are not identical with our own. We must not hold the idea that we, in our community, are the only ones who have high ideals in the upbringing of children.) If we can be successful in capturing the young minds in early days (which is no easy task), then we can, without any qualms, allow them, as they mature and accept Christian responsibility, to go among the "down and outs," the publicans and sinners or whom they will, because we know that they go, not to share in the worldly evils, but, instead, as ambassadors of their Lord, following His example of preaching to the poor and binding up the broken hearted.

One writer has advocated that children's minds should be filled with right values before television has any impression. We think the same should be done before the child is presented with the rough and tumble of school life. It is possible, we are told, to detect the potential juvenile delinquent before he reaches the age of five. Perhaps it is possible to detect the potential Christian, too? And, perhaps, with the right

training, the potential delinquent can be converted to a better way? But how in practical terms do we set about attaining our end?

CAPTURING THEIR MINDS (IN PRACTICE)

Many parents are only too glad to find playmates "up the road" for Tommy (or Susie, as appropriate). Doubtless Tommy (especially if an only child) does sometimes need the companionship of other children, but the practice of letting a child of pre-school or early school age go "out to play," with only mild discrimination as to whom he plays with and where he plays, is the parents' first step toward the teenage struggle which so many today are facing. While we make plenty of allowance for Tommy being mischievous and naughty yet we believe that the more he spends his infant days under the direct supervision of his mother, in an atmosphere which is Christ pervaded (not sanctimonious but happy and bright), the more his mind will be captured for Christ.

Those with gardens have a great advantage in being able to encourage their children to play at home. The ardent gardener may well get discouraged by his lay-out being disturbed and by balls landing on his seed bed. But we should realise that there is more than one kind of seedling, and that children and characters are more important than chicory and cabbages. It is, of course, possible to arrive at a happy compromise in the use of the garden, for children should not be altogether unruly when playing there and they must learn to be careful of the work and needs of others. So much the better if they can be interested in the garden. Many happy winter hours can be spent beside the fire with a seed catalogue. It is a much happier situation for parents if, in teenage days (when buds begin to open into flowers), their garden is filled with the whistle of their son and the grind of the lawn mower rather than with the rowdy records of a Beatle fan.

If children travel a distance to and from

school then dinners at school are a helpful convenience. But it is a big advantage if they can return home for the mid-day break, and in the case of young children we should think it of enough importance to justify moving house, in order to make their return possible. At least for the infant child, home, and not school, should be the centre of the day. It is, of course, much more tiring for mother if the family returns home at mid-day, and it means a curtailment of any other activity she might wish to pursue; but the effort, we believe, is well worth while and certainly is not without its rewards and enjoyment. If we regard our homes as "missionary nurseries" (where the instruction is as unobtrusive as it is definite) then the more time the child spends there the better. Moreover, there is a warmth and personal touch at home which school inevitably lacks. Teachers need a mid-day break and cannot be expected to give anything other than casual supervision.

Even with older children, we consider that where lunch at home is at all practicable it is a happy arrangement and helps to make the family a united, corporate body. Not only so, but freshly prepared home lunches are likely to be more health giving than those prepared in bulk and kept hot at school.

In the Old Testament the people of God were instructed to teach their children His words. "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in the thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." We should carry this principle into our own day — but we cannot teach them so unless the children are *there* with us — in the house, nor if father and mother habitually have outings on their own while the boys and girls are "gone out to play." As the ancient writer whom we quoted earlier wisely wrote, "We know that the growth of any living thing, plant or animal, depends on it getting the right nourishment and climate and country to grow in . . ." and he goes on to describe the situation when the youth gets in wrong company, "Won't he be swamped by

the flood of popular praise and blame, and carried away before it till he finds himself agreeing with popular ideas of right and wrong, behaving like the crowd and becoming one of them?"

In our teaching of God's words, in our attempts to capture young minds for Christ, we should be careful to avoid ponderous religiosity which will only become increasingly irritating as the child grows. It is not sentences punctuated with pious phrases which will turn our boys and girls to God, but their witnessing, daily in the home, parents who, faulty though they be, are trying to interpret in modern living the commands of Christ. So there will blow upon them, as it were, "... breezes from some healthy country, insensibly moulding them into sympathy and conformity with what is rational and right."

POOR MIXERS?

Some might be afraid lest the child should suffer from being kept "too close" and lest he should become a poor mixer. Admittedly there is this possibility, and yet even this is not wholly a disadvantage, for is it not better for him to be a poor mixer than to be good at mixing with the wrong kind, and easily succumbing to wrong influences? When the damage is done many a parent groans, "If only he wouldn't mix with that group!" But now it is too late to draw him back. If a child sees his parents moving easily among people of different kinds, and adapting themselves to different needs, if he is given the opportunity of meeting other youngsters, and those who are older, in his own home and in the homes of those who are also trying to walk the Christian path, then the difficulty can be overcome and his over-reserve will diminish. Children of the same family vary considerably in this respect, as in other ways, for although brought up under the same conditions, the ability to mix easily comes more naturally to some than to others.

It is inevitable that a child who is being

trained as a Christian should feel that his parents' and his own way of life are different from the majority of his school mates'. It is up to the parents to see that this "difference" is regarded by him not as some queer oddness which arises because they have fanatical ideas, but rather as a "difference" which is caused by their having hold of something which is really good and of which he is not in the least ashamed.

THE NEED FOR VIGILANCE

It is an unhappy thought that we should need to watch over the activities of our children almost with suspicion. But many parents do not realise how quickly and disastrously bad habits can be passed from one child to another, nor how a dominant child can rule over a milder character, even to the extent of "friendship" being forced upon the latter. Sometimes children from Christian homes can influence each other for evil (just when we think they are quite safe), for all are subject to influence from other children who have low moral standards. Some parents would be deeply shocked if they knew just how their children behave and the kind of play they indulge in when out of sight (even though they allow, as we all ought, for mischievous escapades which, in years to come, are recalled with laughter).

More vigilance is needed than we are apt to suppose. Perhaps our best precaution is to capture their consciences in early days so that even if they find themselves (often, at first, innocently and unsuspectingly) led into wrong ways, it will not be overlong before right will triumph, and, because they love and do not fear their parents, we shall be taken into confidence.

RUNNING WILD

We do not deny that some children go through schooldays with little thought of religion and with an apparent disregard of godly ways —

and yet, in the end, become valiant Christians. But we suggest that if parents (finding it so much easier a path, even though they have time and opportunity to pursue another) merely allow their child to "run wild" then they have only themselves to blame if they produce but a "wild vine." With the easier working conditions of today most fathers have more time to win the confidence of their sons than had their own fathers, and the achievement of this should be regarded as a most important work for Christ.

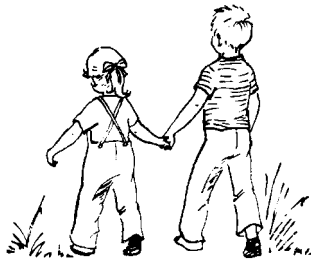
On the other hand we have great sympathy with those parents who feel they did all that was possible in their circumstances and who, so far, have reaped little return. They will echo the words found in Isaiah, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

But they will echo, too, the hope of the

Father Who stands ready to welcome into His everlasting arms those children who have not yet come to Him. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him . . . he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon" (Hos. 14: 4-5).

Disheartened though parents might be that their children have not responded as they hoped, yet they should never feel that the door is closed. As life passes and cares come then the uselessness and the vanity of those things, which in younger days seemed sweet, are apt to make themselves felt. It is sometimes not until then that the seed sown in childhood begins to germinate. In the meantime, there is a challenge to the parents to offer a pattern of true Christianity, of the kindness which does not turn away when rebuffed, of the love which never fails.

(To be continued)



The human child needs parents and home for a very long time, in proportion to his life span. He does not learn the vital activities of life rapidly, instinctively, as the birds and the bees do; he learns them slowly, responsively, imitatively, intellectually, over many years. And the more advanced, or developed, or civilized, a nation becomes, the longer is the period of learning and dependence extended.

G. R. Dunstan in *The Family is not Broken*.

THE HAND OF GOD IN PERSONAL AFFAIRS



By Henry Hacking

II

THE PERFECT MAN

IN apostolic times, the Lord Jesus Christ, in a direct way, overruled the ecclesias, and one of the specific purposes of this is outlined by the apostle Paul in Ephesians, ch. 4, where we read (v. 11-13),

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Thus the work of these specially chosen servants of God was not only to convert men and women to Christianity but to lead them to a state of perfection in Christ. It is noteworthy that the instructors represented a wide variety of spiritual qualifications. It may be true that most, if not all, of the qualifications were comprehended at one and the same time in each of the inspired apostles who were, by definition, the greatest teachers of the way of Christ, but others of lesser degree also played an important part in the growth of the church in both numbers and quality of character. The words of truth constantly presented, and with correct em-

phasis, were an essential part of the ministry which had as its main object the developing of each person into a "perfect man" (v. 13). But the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" is a remarkably high attainment, and it would appear to be undeniable that the direct experience of God and the Lord Jesus which came to the disciples through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit would confirm and demonstrate the words spoken. Paul speaks of this special grace which they enjoyed when he says,

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

(Titus 3:5-6).

One is tempted to speculate on the phrase "renewing of the Holy Ghost." Perhaps the saving grace and power of God came to them freshly at intervals, both in individual and ecclesial connections. How delightful it would be to have a "renewal" of spiritual power at times of difficulty, temptation or stress! Whatever the precise meaning of the phrase, it is clear that the Lord was very near ("at hand," Philippians 4:5), and also very real. The truth of God when believed and acted upon united the believer with the Spirit of God. When the Word was allied to power, perfection was a realisable goal.

TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS

It seems like labouring the obvious in our community to state that any Christian discipleship which is to result in spiritual development entails a period (some would say a lifetime) of trial and tribulation. Our chief example, the Lord Jesus Christ, was not exempt from this discipline. Amongst other trials it was necessary for Him to suffer a forty days' period of temptation in the wilderness, immediately following His baptism in water and receiving of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Peter is an outstanding case in further illustration. His "perfection" did not ensue until after he denied his Lord, was subsequently forgiven, and was finally equipped for service at Pentecost. No wonder he says,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

I Pet. 1:5-7.

It may be fitting to envisage the process symbolically, as the climbing of a mountain—a grinding, sweating, tiring project, accomplished only with determination and perseverance, and a firm belief that the summit can be reached. It is like a journey carrying its disappointments and also its successes, but finally concluded. Then the summit is found to be a wonderful, broad plateau which the erstwhile climber can explore in joy and satisfaction and he can enter into the fruits of his labours. This is the elevated status of living in the fulness of Christ, "complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:10) or being raised to "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). It is the earnest of our inheritance with the Lord Jesus in the future age, proving the truth of the Scripture that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8).

It must ever remain true that in this life we are never really clear of difficulties and trials, and verses of scripture could be quoted to demonstrate this, as readers will no doubt be aware. Nevertheless, it is shown quite categorically that the Christian should strive for a state of considerable spiritual well-being in this life, and the promise of God is that this kind of victory can be achieved with His help. To some who have struggled long, the idea may seem like a dream. But the battle is lost only when faith and hope have died. Let us not lose heart but bind on our hearts the further words of Peter which form an acceptable sequel to his earlier exhortation,

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you (I Pet. 5:10).

Nothing can be more certain than that the active help and guidance of God is an essential element in the painful upward slogging from the lowlands of sin. Why should we doubt that which is so obviously taught in the Bible? Every believer should look for the confirmation in his or her life of that which the Word teaches.

THE HELP OF GOD

Every time God is known to have operated in his life, the believer is strengthened in faith, being taught of God; God is glorified and the stage is set for a further development.

How can we discern the hand of God to-day? Life for most people consists of a wide variety of experiences, generally a mixture of good and bad, joyful and sorrowful. It is true that by random chance and coincidence apparently remarkable things can happen, and sometimes do, to people who owe no allegiance to God and the Lord Jesus. Thus the phrase "the devil looks after his own," was the rejoinder on one occasion when a brother complimented a non-religious colleague on the excellent weather the latter had enjoyed during a summer holiday. In similar circumstances a brother might think that God had guided the choice of holiday dates and God, in fact, might have done so, but real proof would be lacking. The burden of

these comments is that the writer is well aware of "time and chance" and is also well aware of the use (and abuse) of statistics, having worked for a number of years under an eminent statistician.

Any scripturally enlightened person knows that God acted in a multitude of different ways in Bible times. There is no humanly defined limit to the operations of God, and any attempt to formulate a list of the methods of God's intervention would be incomplete. Even so, it is possible to have a knowledge of some of the main ways in which God is likely to influence a believer.

We might suitably consider the matter in connection with three agencies, viz., the Bible, God and the Lord Jesus, and the believer. God is likely to use His Word in any set of circumstances which are interpreted as the hand of God. For the divinely ordered circumstances to have successful fruition,

the believer has a real part to play and must be receptive to the divine instruction. This is true when the gospel seed falls on fruitful ground at the very first, before baptism, and is suitably illustrated in the case of Lydia, a seller of purple, Acts, chapter 16, verse 14, "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

The impact of Paul's message on the mind and personality of Lydia was the result of the perfect co-ordination of the Word, the influence of God, and the willingness of the recipient to receive the divine counsel and grace. This is the kind of situation in which real believers start seriously on the road to "perfection." It can be repeated many times on the pilgrim journey as the Christian marches forward, and each special group of divinely arranged circumstances will bring its own quota of knowledge and growth in experience.

LETTERS

The Magazine

With the renewal of our subscription my wife and I wish to express our appreciation for *The Endeavour Magazine*.

We have read with great interest many thought provoking articles covering "Christian Thought and Action," and must compliment you on this sincere attempt to take a new look at ourselves as a body; and in providing an outlet for views which would otherwise go unexpressed.

We look forward with eager anticipation to future issues during 1965. Perhaps our only criticism is that the magazine is not a monthly publication.

Philip and Thelma Cox.

The views expressed above are representative of many comments which we receive, and we thank our readers for their encouragement. Eds.

The Creation Days of Genesis

Bro. John Nicholls has sent us some queries about how we should regard the creation story in Genesis 1. He writes:

(i) Not ONE of the six days of creation was occupied with creating the globe of the heavenly bodies (see Gen. 1). The verb used in Gen. 1: 16 with reference to the making of the sun, moon and stars (what a great and mighty Creator we worship!) is in Hebrew *asah* which has many meanings, but not that of "create." (See Young's Analytical Concordance Lexicon). It means "to make," "to do," "to execute" and "to prepare," to mention the ways it has most frequently been translated in the Bible. Significantly, the verb in Gen. 1: 1 is in Hebrew *bara*, meaning "to create." A comparison of these two verses would lead to the conclusion that the creation

of the earth, the sun, moon and stars were acts preceding the work of the six days, and it was on the fourth day that God caused the heavenly bodies to be visible from the earth.

(ii) The verse in Ex. 20: 11 which forms the basis of the institution of sabbaths also contains the verb *asah*, "to make." It does not say God *created* the "heaven and earth and sea and all that in them is," but rather that He did things with them in six days. Genesis 1 gives details of the things God did in the six days.

(iii) Scriptural exposition involving long periods of time between adjacent verses is common and quite permissible. We have our Lord's own exposition of Isaiah 61: 1-3 in Luke 4: 18, 19 as one example.

In view of these three points I suggest that this theory is both scripturally reasonable and permissible.

With regard to the evidence of the chaos which preceded the work of creation, it is impossible for any man to say with certainty just what this evidence would be. In Gen. 1: 2 the one who was alive at this time informs us in a few brief words of the state of the earth, as covered with darkness and water. God deems this sufficient for us to know at present, though undoubtedly those who attain to the kingdom shall learn more. Whatever facts are discovered now, no interpretation of them can be correct which conflicts with God's account of creation.

Comment: It is difficult to follow our correspondent's argument since he does not indicate what difference he understands between "create" and "make." In English "create" is generally used for making something original. A designer of hats "creates" them, but the factory merely "makes" them. But the question raised concerns the Hebrew terms bara' and 'asah. The correspondent seems to hold that bara' indicates original creation, while 'asah is used to indicate the manipulation of existing materials for new uses. This, however, is contrary to a number of passages:

And God said, Let us make ('asah) man in our image . . . Genesis 1: 26

So God created (bara') man in his own image . . . Genesis 1: 27

In the day that God created (bara') man, in the likeness of God made ('asah) he him . . .

Genesis 5: 1

. . . the hand of the LORD hath done ('asah) this, and the Holy One hath created (bara') it.

Isaiah 41: 20

It is impossible to avoid the conclusions that in these cases the two verbs are used quite interchangeably. A more exhaustive study shows that bara' is used only of God, while 'asah is very general in meaning, and can be applied to God or man. Some theologians have alleged that bara' means "create out of nothing," and 'asah "create out of something," but this is not proved. Thus there is no reason to suppose that "God created (bara') the heaven and earth" (Gen. 1: 1) refers to a different activity from that described in Exodus 20: 11: "In six days the Lord made ('asah) heaven and earth." It is certainly true that Genesis 1 does not put the creation of the heaven and earth under any of the six divine fiat, and if Genesis 1 were our only source of information then our correspondent would have a good point to argue, but in fact Exodus 20: 11 states what could be questioned on the basis of Genesis alone, so that the matter is not capable of doubt.

W. G. L.

The Winter Issue

Having read *The Endeavour Magazine* No. 14, which, as usual, was very welcome, the need for a magazine of this sort in our midst can be seen even more clearly than before. It has made possible the publication of such a letter as Bro. Gerald Dearden's, the author of which has certainly not been alone in experiencing doubts and difficulties. It is unfortunately true that many problems are not, and somehow cannot be, discussed openly, particularly in the presence of brethren with "unyielding opinions" (Editorial, *Endeavour* Winter 1964). These opinions are often held, and Scripture often quoted in such a manner that it seems almost sinful to question the views which are expressed. Moreover, such individuals can, at times, be so intolerant, and appear to be incapable of understanding anyone else's reasons for disagreeing with them. Apparently nobody should do so. The meek quietly submit, and others who cannot stifle their consciences may feel they have no alternative but to leave the community. There can be little hope of helpful, sympathetic discussion when anyone is determined to adopt a domineering attitude with the spoken or written word.

It is here that some may find your magazine most helpful, because problems can be stated, and other members of the community can contribute a kindly word which may assist those in need. Such contributors will realise that whatever may be their qualifications in this world, their contributions will not be considered as the final words that can be said on the subject, nor will they pass without constructive corrections if such seem necessary.

I was particularly interested in your reference to man's antiquity. Surely the existence of fossils in rocks and attempts by geologists and biologists to date and identify them are matters of fact, and not matters of faith. It does not seem unreasonable to attempt to give an account of the development of life on earth on the basis of the facts with which the scientist is presented. There may be no attempt whatever to explain the ultimate purpose involved, nor to give a mathematically certain explanation as to how everything unfolded. If we cannot examine and evaluate the evidence for evolution, then we ought not to ridicule the conclusions which others have reached. We are well aware of how some of us feel when people scoff at the Bible, when, in fact, they have hardly examined any part of it seriously.

Although I do not wish to enter into the dispute about the right interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis, I think that writers on this subject ought to be careful in their use of such terms as "prove."

Someone may be able to tell us what kind of "proof" we can expect. It might be helpful and interesting if a suitably qualified person could present the evidence from such sources as archaeology and palaeontology (even if only a reliable summary for what is recorded in Genesis, proceeding backwards in time from the call of Abram). We may then be able to see more clearly what events can be accepted as historical in the normal way, and what matters at least for the present must remain to be accepted "in faith."

This leads me to suggest that there are certain and, indeed, many matters which as Christians we must accept in faith. We cannot *prove* them in a factual, scientific manner. We approach Genesis with reverence, particularly because of our attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ and such a man as the apostle Paul. For us the book of Genesis is a portion of God's revelation, not because we were there when it was written but because of the attitude displayed towards it by God's Son and servants. Many would add other reasons as well. Once regarded in this way, the *interpretation* of the early chapters of the book follows and can be discussed. This does *not* mean that anyone's *faith* i.e. sincerity or trust, is being questioned, but simply means that the reasons for understanding certain portions of the Scriptures in a certain way can be stated and considered. The book of Genesis will not change any more than the fossils in the rocks or the rocks themselves, because of discussion. If a sincere individual believes that there are reasons to doubt the literality of Adam, Eve or the serpent he is not likely to change his views if they remain unexpressed and unconfessed to others who may be able to help.

If anyone must go through life without discussing problems with others, then he ought to know the reasons why. If there is no absolutely satisfying answer to be obtained on this side of eternity then, at least, we may as well know that as well. I am quite sure that the type of answer I once received from a much older brother in connection with the doctrine of the atonement—"You can take it from me that Bro. X was right" is not likely to increase one's faith or satisfy for very long.

Perhaps I can conclude with a few remarks about the general attitude adopted in your magazine towards those outside our community, an attitude with which I am largely in agreement. Some of us were reared in non-Christadelphian homes where the Bible was read and regarded as a revelation of God, to Whom prayers were offered regularly. We also spent years as sincere members of other denominations, to which we have very rarely, if ever, felt any desire to return. We can, however, be thankful for the homes we had, and for much of the teaching we received about God and the Lord Jesus from those who had never heard of Dr Thomas, Robert Roberts or, maybe, even the Christadelphian community. We are also thankful for what we have learned through coming into contact with Christadelphians. It does not follow that we shall or should adopt a scornful attitude towards those who do not agree with our views. Anyone without hope should be helped, if possible, not scorned. On more than one occasion have I heard the gospel message presented from a Christadelphian platform simply as a number of beliefs to be accepted and an exclusive way in which to tread. This could result in keeping the majority of people from receiving eternal life, rather than promoting a merciful extension of God's grace, and declaring His provision whereby any sinner can obtain salvation. For this reason I am satisfied that some of the opposition to the truth as advocated by us can be sympathetically understood.

The *Endeavour* Committee has not suggested that we go back to denominations whence we came or that we join in the pleasures of the world at large. They have asked us to examine the nature of our separateness to see whether it is like the spiritual separateness of the Lord Jesus, or the self righteous separateness of the Pharisee. The discussions and debates which take place indicate that we are not the only people who possess Bibles and read them. If there is an element of smugness about our separateness then there need be little wonder that other evangelical communities and their images appear more attractive than our own.

Glaspow.

R. Richards.

A Prayer for Understanding

HELP us, Father, to understand the true worth of eternal values:
Help us to know that material things are but as snowflakes which melt in the sun.

Help us to understand being in the world, bearing its burdens and sharing its sorrows;
Yet not being of the world, craving its lusts and seeking its follies.

Help us to understand one another, our differences of thought, character and circumstance:
Help us to know how to help in times of sadness, strain and difficulty.

Help us to understand the needs of the young who are in our care:
Help us to know how best to guide them into the paths of truth.

Help us to understand the weakness of human nature:
Help us to know Thy greatness and the strength of Thy power.

Help us to understand the inspiration of Thy Word, and the indwelling of Thy Spirit.
Help us to understand being temples fit for Thee.

In the Name of our Lord, Who understands all,

Amen.



The purpose of "The Endeavour Magazine" is to help:

- By providing a forum for fair discussion of difficulties concerning Christian belief in the modern world — especially those difficulties facing young people.
- By encouraging deeper devotion in our Lord's service.
- By offering suggestions for the practical expression of our faith.
- By introducing articles designed to help in Bible study.
- By bringing to the notice of readers books of value which might otherwise escape their attention.
- By producing literature for spreading the Gospel.

Suggestions from readers are always welcome, particularly relating to:

- Subjects you would like to see discussed.
- Practical work in need of support.
- Books you think would help other readers (together with reviews of these).
- Subjects you would like to see discussed in pamphlet form for those who are seeking the Way of Christ.



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THE
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MAGAZINE



SUMMER 1965

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OUR COVER

In everyday talk we refer to the ways of our neighbours in terms drawn from the animal world — feline, scared like a rabbit, or lion-hearted. Jesus Himself draws similarly on the serpent, the viper, the fox, and the dove.

The eagle, too, has distinctive overtones. It soars as it were to heaven's gate. The gospel of John has been likened to an eagle among the gospels because of its soaring inspiration.

Today, the Body of Christ needs eagle-like qualities. It needs to rise above the petty squabbles to comprehend the great vision of salvation. It needs to sense the exhilaration of being caught up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But it can only achieve its purpose through bracing discussion of ultimate issues and taking resolute action in the light of the concerns of our time.

We must mount up with wings as eagles, as they who wait upon the Lord for their strength.



EDITORIAL MATTER

Readers are invited to send articles for publication which are designed to assist all aspects of the Christian life (intellectual, moral and practical) in the contemporary world.

Articles and general correspondence should be sent to:

The Endeavour Magazine,
Moray Lodge,
176 Granton Road,
Edinburgh, 5.

Correspondence about opportunities for practical service should be sent to:

The Endeavour Magazine,
Dove Cottage,
20 Saunby Close,
Arnold,
Notts.

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TENDER

Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily
those of the Editorial Committee, but may be published
because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

EDITORIAL

IN THE year A.D. 323, during the reign of the Emperor Constantine, the Christian church became allied with the state. As a result, standards in the church were lowered, and its wearisome history relates ever recurring dispute and decline. One writer has said, "After Constantine there is not much that is not humiliating."

Worldliness spread throughout the churches and, with persecution ended, it seemed to many that the days of heroism were also over. Some reacted strongly, and vigorously opposed the corruption which threatened the life of the community. A need was felt for something new which would stimulate the Christians, and some new kind of martyrdom was sought. An answer was found in monasticism which demanded flight from the world and rigid asceticism. To separate oneself from all worldly association, to seek the solitude of desert or cave, was not, in any way, regarded as cowardly, for in desolate places, it was believed, the forces of evil abounded, offering even greater temptation and demanding even greater strength of will.

As time passed, monasticism became more and more extreme, one enthusiast vying with another in his effort to subdue bodily desires, each submitting himself to self-imposed punishment and privation. It became, for many, a fanatical, nonsensical and altogether unproductive existence.

But among those who were of monastic persuasion were men who lit torches which have burned throughout history. These realised the absurd level to which monasticism had sunk, and they asked, "If you continue to live alone, whose feet will you wash?" Under their influence the monks were gathered together into communities, living and worshipping under one roof. They moved from the deserts back to the cities.

They not only meditated, but they worked together. Their separation *from* the world was used as a means of working *for* the world. Their beliefs and their conduct were open to criticism, but it is from their pens that we have received some of our most valuable Bible manuscripts, and, as a heritage of their activities, we have our education, our hospitals and our charitable institutions.

Looking through history it is not difficult to see the mistakes of long ago. It is more difficult to see that in our own times, in forms which match the pattern of the present day, we are liable to make mistakes which are fundamentally similar.

Asceticism has always played a necessary part in the life of the Christian community. The Christian has to be alive to the dangers of over-indulgence and worldliness. So the apostle Paul said of himself, "... every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things ... I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ..." (1 Cor. 9: 25, 27). None of us would be so foolish as to flee to the desert there to battle with some imaginary demonic force, and to practise extreme mortification of the flesh, as in those first days of monasticism. But we may have come to believe (without conscious realisation of our belief) that there is some intrinsic virtue in what has been called the "way of negation."

The early monastic movement erred in making the denial of human pleasure an end in itself. God, it was believed, was pleased if man was miserable. Under-nourishment and neglect of the body would of themselves result in spiritual advancement. But this was found to be a false premise. The attempted emptying of desire left a vacuum, and the ruthless suppression of human needs led to greater longing. Asceticism is useless unless it enables men to give greater service to God and to their fellows, unless it results in a filling with godliness rather than an emptying of self.

As Christians, today, we attempt to live moderately. We turn away from much that the world calls pleasure. But if this way of life

merely cuts us off from our fellow men, if it makes us more aware of what we cannot do, rather than what we can, if it only makes us proud of our elevated separateness, then our lives are but emptiness, and we have lost "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

When we set ourselves apart from the pursuits and indulgences which are customary for our fellows, we readily develop a feeling of intolerance for those who are not of our school. Asceticism has repeatedly had as its companions a harshness of character, narrowness of viewpoint and scorn of those "without." In the fourth and succeeding centuries controversy raged furiously and uselessly on doctrinal matters between the different groups, all of whom counted themselves wholly separated from the world, and wholly dedicated to God, and whose common ground of agreement seems to have lain largely in their scorn of the fashionable vices of the age.

We, too, may easily become harsh, narrow-minded and intolerant, believing that only upon us does the favour of God breathe. So, a writer in *The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia* (April, 1965), deploring the effort of our magazine to show, in a practical way, the love of God, Who "so loved the world" and Who is "not willing that any should perish," describes our attempt as "a mistaken charity toward those for whom God has never intended to extend His love."

Sometimes the attempt at separation takes a strangely twisted form. We may have schooled ourselves into clinging to separateness from our neighbours on the grounds of doctrinal beliefs, and yet have failed to understand the implication of those beliefs in our lives. As a result, we have a separateness which exists only in our heads and not in our hearts, and, when all is said and done, we are little different from the people next door. We may find ourselves drawing an illogical distinction between mixing, in person, with their pleasure seeking, and between entering into precisely the same atmosphere through the reading of cheap publications and the indiscriminate use of radio and television

media. We may look at our neighbours as outsiders and yet, at the same time, eagerly imitate their changing fashions, careless of whether the changes are advantageous or disadvantageous, comfortable or uncomfortable, beautiful or ugly. If this is the separateness which we count acceptable then we have, indeed, travelled a long way from the ideas of early Christianity.

When we turn to Jesus we find in Him the perfect pattern of the One Who was always separate from the world and yet Who was wholly involved with it. Perhaps the greatest condemnation which He ever uttered was against those who, thinking they alone were righteous, had separated themselves, not only from their fellow men, but also from the love of God. Their wilful obtuseness prevented them from understanding the message of Jesus, and so they were "offended" or "caused to stumble" by His words.

He, who was the expression of the Father, followed no "way of negation." He chose no cave for His dwelling place: He sought the solitude of the desert only to find, in the presence of His Father, the strength to offer His life in the service of mankind. No cold asceticism hardened His nature, nor prevented Him from finding pleasure in the beauties of nature — in the flowers on the hillside, in the hen gathering her chickens beneath her wings, in the sheep which knew their master's voice. No harsh severity made the common people afraid to approach Him. He entered into their joys; He shared the embarrassment of their sins; He carried their sorrows; and they "heard Him gladly."

His gentleness drew the little children, the weak, the helpless and the oppressed. But if there was no fanatical asceticism neither was there over-indulgence in His life. His birth could not have been more humble and He was brought up in the simple home of an artisan. In later years He had not "where to lay His head."

It is this wholeness of Jesus, this perfect balance, which we find so hard to imitate. We are often conscious of our inadequacy, of the

persistent flaw. We are often aware of the difficulty of being in the world and, at the same time, remaining unbrushed by its foolishness. This is true, not only of ourselves as individuals, but as a community. We know that the fires of zeal which burned in former days have not sustained their brightness, that our efforts to present ourselves as the true church are often inadequate. We stand, except for small minorities, united. We can scarcely claim that it is our zeal which preserves our unity, though we are reluctant to suggest that it is our apathy.

Like the church of the early fourth century we look for something new to stimulate and strengthen us. We will not find it in seeking martyrdom, nor in flight from the world, nor in slave-like asceticism. Perhaps there is nothing

new to find. But the *renewal* by the Holy Spirit, the *renewal* by that which can never become obsolete nor grow old, is there for the asking. Is it not this renewal which we need to add grace and balance to our individual lives, to add vigour and righteous judgment to our community, to add strength and conviction to our preaching?

As the apostle Paul wrote to the Roman church, "... the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness." Or, again, he says, "You are on the spiritual level, if only God's Spirit dwells within you; and if a man does not possess the Spirit of Christ, he is no Christian. . . . For all who are moved by the Spirit of God are sons of God. The Spirit you have received is not a spirit of slavery leading you back into a life of fear, but a Spirit that makes us sons . . ." (N.E.B.).

FAITH LIVES AGAIN

Chill is the wind of faith unsure:
The heart heaves,
And muddle-wearied the brain:
Bitter the snows which now obscure
The lost leaves,
and fuddle-blearied the pain
Of love gone, and comfort fled away.

Cold the assurance of cosily warm
Orthodox,
With clichéd platitudes outworn:
"One feels the wind, but not the storm".
Heterodox—
Alive to life, experience torn,
Steadfast, but understanding yet.

Hell, a vast waste of icy despair,
Bleak, desolate,
An empty eternity, a void without hope:
Heaven, a red disk misted in air,
Ominous weight,
Heavy and crushing and grinding the slope
Down which I hurtle to black, empty space.

A train journey, an unfamiliar place,
One hears
Kindly voices in fellowship outpoured:
The organ throbs, and down my face
Run tears.
Passion is released, and sanity restored,
Faith lives again.

DARDA.

WHAT IS JUSTICE?

GRECIAN AND PAULINE TEACHING

By Sheila Harris

Part 3.—Paul's Letter to the Romans: 1-8

And so the ancient world had failed—the world before Christ came; the world which stands for each of us before we come to Christ, had, as Paul says, come short of the glory of God. All its strivings after goodness and truth, its aspirations to spiritual vision, its longing and yearning for inner peace had ended, as we have seen before, with the death of the One Who had come to a dark world with a message of light. And yet the invisible things of God, being understood by the things that are made, should have revealed to them His eternal power and Godhead. The witness of God in nature, the beat of the waves, the song of the birds, the glory of the sunset and the wonder of the hills, had met but blind eyes and deaf ears. Even the Jew who made his boast in the law, had failed through disobedience, so that a Gentile, by obeying the law written in his heart, had proved himself more truly a Jew than one who was merely a Jew in the flesh.

So, Paul declares, God had been seeking to draw men to Him, to show them true righteousness or justice by the law, by nature, by their own hearts, and yet there was none righteous—no, not one. To this world Christ came to declare true righteousness, a righteousness, which is by faith in Him.

What did this new revelation mean and how could it be experienced by a world which had struggled in vain to find its peace and truth? In Romans, chapters 6, 7 and 8, Paul describes this Christian experience with power and con-

viction, and shows what justice or righteousness means in the outworking of a Christian life. It starts, as he shows, by baptism into Christ, whereby we are buried into Christ's death and raised to newness of life. The new principle of Christ's life now begins to operate in our lives. This is the beginning of true goodness—so that we now become servants to God with a hope of everlasting life.

But that is the start. There follows in chapter 7 a description of the experience so well known to us—the conflict between the things of God and self. This is the conflict from which we learn the early discipline by which we are trained to serve God. This is our wilderness journey after our Red Sea crossing in baptism, the time when we have to be schooled in being satisfied with the bread of heaven and being guided by the light of life. This is a very necessary and important part of our Christian training. But Paul cries "O wretched man that I am!" Was the Christian gospel sent to make men wretched, to teach them the struggle of duty and desire? Was Israel meant to stay in a wilderness?

The ancient world, the world before Christ came, could well have taught them these lessons more poignantly, more powerfully. Aeneas, the hero of the greatest poem of the Roman world, written only a few years before the birth of Christ, could well have taught the world this lesson. Faithful to the will of heaven, he had struggled to fulfil his appointed task with a devotion which cost him all he held most dear.

Time and again he was torn between duty and desire, and won his final victory, not in a blaze of glory, but in avenging his well loved friend — and the poem ends with a sob over his vanquished foe.

Did Christ die for this — to bring His people to despair, to wander in a wilderness till hope and faith were dead? "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan." And under Joshua they went. To those who have become weary of themselves, who know that in them "dwelleth no good thing," before whose eyes stretches a promised land of spiritual victory and fulfilment, chapter 8 is addressed. There Paul shows that in the yielding of our spirit to God, in putting to death our own deeds, in acknowledging before God our own utter need, He responds with His Spirit which makes intercession for us and by which we may cry "Abba, Father." Is this the end of toil? Paul goes on to show that the groaning, the travailing, the yearning for the redemption of the body is still continued, perhaps intensified. But the inner victory is assured. God's Spirit works with our spirit to make us in all things more than conquerors, who cannot be separated from the love of God. It was beyond Jordan that the walls of Jericho fell down. The Christian life is not tragedy but triumph: it is the gospel of a risen Lord Whose power still avails for His people.

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north, south, east and west. It was when he refused to take any goods from the king of Sodom that God declared to him, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." It was in answer to a faithful waiting for twenty-five years that God gave him a son, although he had once listened to Sarai in begetting Ishmael by Hagar. This is a real living faith developed through failure and doubt and difficulty, which should lend encouragement to every wavering disciple. But the final blessing, the promise of victory ". . . thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" is given only after the final surrender. His son, his beloved son for whom he had waited year after year, upon whom the fulfilment of the promises depended, was to be offered. The willingness to give up this dearest, most precious possession must be experienced to be understood. And yet that willingness to give through faith in God, was met by God's richest, fullest blessing in addition to the restoration of the beloved.

This is the righteousness which is by faith, a continually deepening, self-giving, continually met by the power and riches of God's goodness, so that the good is all God's and we are emptied more and more of self. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works." Yet into that emptiness there flows a grace of God which Paul describes in Romans, chapter 5. We may know a peace, a joy, a love, which are beyond all price "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."

The Christian gospel is the death and resurrection of our Lord. The true righteousness is a dying to self first: but it is much more a rising to new life — rich, full, joyful, abundant life in the power of the risen Lord "who ever liveth to make intercession" for us.



JUST IN TIME

By Arthur Mallinder

IN the past the apparently harmless subject of *Signs of the Times* has been the occasion of much discussion, argument, and sometimes controversy, and probably still is so in some quarters even today. Many of us remember how during the Second World War one school of thought strongly urged the notion that Germany was the King of the North, and was equally strongly opposed by the more orthodox school which maintained that Russia was, and always must be, the King of the North. At the end of the war with Germany's downfall, the orthodox group congratulated themselves that "wisdom was justified of her children — the Doctor was right after all and you can't beat *Elpis Israel!*"

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When thinking of signs of the times we automatically think of Luke ch. 21. Let us now take a cool, hard look at this chapter, helped to clarity of vision by the New English Bible, and find out how much does, in fact, have reference to our own day.

The first half of the chapter contains signs

which would herald the destruction of Jerusalem and the throwing down of the Temple. Some of these are extremely vague — the wars, earthquakes, famines and plagues could apply to any period of history, for every generation has had its share of these. In contrast, the first century persecution of the church foretold in verses 12-19 is much more specific and actually happened, by the hand of Saul of Tarsus and others.

Finally, and more pointed still, was the last great obvious sign, the encirclement of Jerusalem by the Roman armies. When this happened they could be *sure* of her near destruction. There would be no room for doubt, argument or controversy, so plain would this sign be.

What then? Israel would be dispersed and Jerusalem trampled down by foreigners until their day had run its course. The word "until" represents a period of indefinite quantity, long or short. However, the end of this trampling down period was to coincide with the coming of the Son of Man in great power and glory.

The signs which would mark the Lord's return are listed in verses 25 and 26. "Portents will appear in sun, moon and stars . . . the celestial powers will be shaken" (N.E.B.). It is customary to interpret these as being signs in the political heavens, kings and queens falling from their thrones, etc. But I suggest that here Jesus is thinking in terms of the literal heavens and the literal sun, moon and stars — in fact He is foretelling a day of cosmic disturbance. The portents in the sky are also mentioned in verse 11, where they are obviously as literal as the earthquakes, famines and plagues.

Should we be surprised at this? After all, the Bible tells us that a star attended the birth of Jesus, and that there was darkness over the land at His death. Is it not to be expected therefore that His return should also be marked by something equally spectacular? The idea is not new. Joel writes: "I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, . . . the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

Note that these signs would appear immediately prior to the return of Christ (the warning is very short) and moreover when they did appear they would be as plain as the leaves on the trees (v. 30), so that we could be *sure* that the kingdom of God was near. Once again, there would be no need for doubt or debate — the signs would be obvious and unmistakable when they occurred.

Can we say that about the signs of the times today? No, the very fact that political signs are open to debate and varying opinions, casts doubt upon the whole concept of political interpretations; but if some day we see portents in the sky, then perhaps we should sit up and take notice!

I was baptised "just in time," and that was nearly thirty years ago. In those days Hitler was coming to power, there were wars and commotions and everybody was keen about signs of the times. Many of our lectures were devoted to that theme. My grandfather once confided to me that he also was baptised only "just in time" (and that was some time in the last century). Everybody then was equally keen about the signs of the times, and certain of the Lord's near return, and still it has not happened. Because of this, some of us may have lost faith in the signs of the times, or at least in our usual interpretations of them. If people so long ago could think the coming of Christ so near, then it seems that the signs must be too vague for us to be absolutely sure of their application, or must be open to misinterpretation, and one wonders whether they were ever intended to be used as we have used them.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

What is important is that, even at its longest, life is short, and therefore for every one of us the coming of Christ is always near. We do not know the day nor the hour when our time may come: we may be involved in a car crash, or develop thrombosis, or die of old age, and our next conscious moment will be in the presence of our returned Lord. Therefore we should always be ready. As the hymn suggests, we should "live each day as if our last."

But what do we mean "always ready"? Is it possible to be really *ready* to meet Christ? Do you feel ready, now? If Christ came tonight, or if I died tonight, would I be ready? Even if I knew that the coming of Christ was so near, I feel I could not do much about it. I am what I am and my life is what it is. Probably I may improve in time, if I am given time, with more contact with Christ, more pondering of the Word, more maturity of character, more growing in grace. I am conscious of many imperfections. I get irritable when I am tired, sometimes I am impatient with the children, often thoughtless, sometimes tactless. We offend each other or neglect each other. If I am to be the more ready to meet Christ I must do something about these things.

There is a word of exhortation which speaks to us thus: "Those who live on the level of our lower nature have their outlook formed by it, and that spells death; but those who live on the level of the spirit have the spiritual outlook, and that is life and peace." (Romans 8: 5-6, N.E.B.). "But the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self-control . . . a man reaps what he sows. If he sows seeds in the field of his lower nature, he will reap from it a harvest of corruption, but if he sows in the field of the Spirit, the Spirit will bring him a harvest of eternal life" (Gal. 5 and 6, N.E.B.).

We are frequently exhorted in scripture to *watch*, but what shall we watch? Political events? World happenings? Or should we not be like the soldiers on watch, watching for the enemy? And the enemy is not Russia or the Arab States,

but this lower nature of ours. This is precisely what Jesus says in Luke 21, v. 34: "Keep a watch on yourselves; do not let your minds be dulled by dissipation and drunkenness and worldly cares so that the great Day closes upon you suddenly like a trap" (N.E.B.).

WHEN WILL CHRIST COME?

A good question. He will come when the time is ripe. So it was when He came the first time—"When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son," and the world was ready for Him in so many ways. So it will be when He comes again. What will make the time ripe? Will it be the hour of desperate need, when there is no other solution to the world's problems? Or will it be when people are ready to receive Him? Probably both.

The Bible repeatedly mentions a time of trouble such as never was. Could this be nuclear war? Or the population explosion? (In forty years the present world population will be doubled.) Are we approaching a crisis? Will it be THE CRISIS of history? Well, of course, the honest answer is that we do not know, we can only guess.

TO SUM UP

Signs of the times can receive too much emphasis among us, and such overemphasis can

lead to disillusionment. People who were baptised "just in time" thirty years ago may now begin to lose faith in the signs, and even begin to doubt the Second Coming itself. Also it gives a bad impression. People who know that we have been preaching for over a century that the coming of Christ is imminent may begin to shake their heads with a smile and, like the people in the story of the boy who called "Wolf," not heed the warning when, finally, it is real.

I believe the plain purpose of God is marked out (such as for example the return of the Jews to Palestine) but the details are uncertain. No one knows the day nor the hour.

What is important is that we should be always ready so that whether He come in the second watch, or the third watch, and find us so — "Blessed are those servants" — or, if we drop down dead tomorrow!

To be ready we must do something about that lower nature, and that is a daily problem for every one of us.

Finally, here is a consoling thought. I believe that even if we are not quite perfect when Christ comes, but if we have *tried*, then we can be sure Christ will look upon us with kindness in His eyes and there will be joy in our hearts, and He will make us finally the sort of people we have always wanted to be (but we never quite made it), and in that day we shall stand with Him in white.

Two people attending with their Bibles to hear a discourse on "The Gospel of the Kingdom of God", or on "Christ's doctrine of Eternal Life", are a sight to make the angels of heaven rejoice; whereas two thousand people, attracted by a sensational lecture on "The bloodiest war the world has ever experienced about to break out in Europe", will confine the smiles to the sensational lecturer and to those who judge after the flesh.

Frank G. Jannaway.

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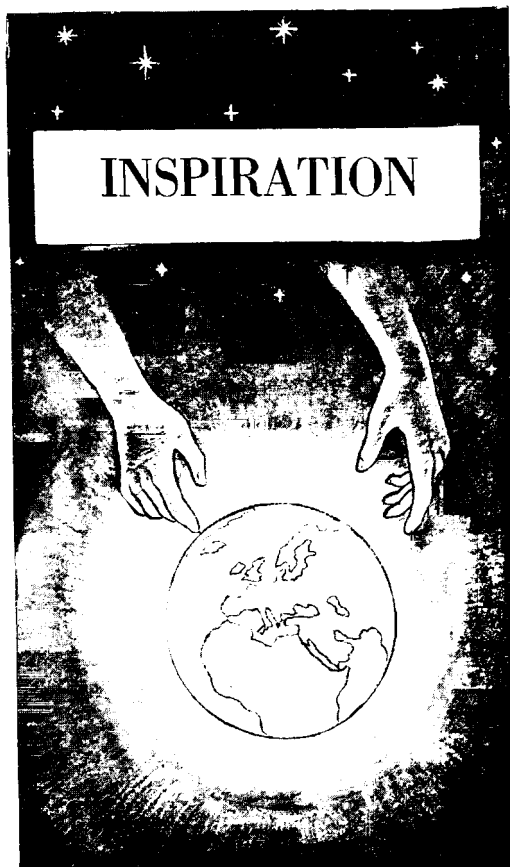
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By Wilfred Lambert

(1)

Inspiration and Revelation

THE faith of the Hebrews and the Christian religion, which, historically, is descended from it, are based on the concept of revelation.

No revelation, no religion. God spoke and the message given is the basis of man's relations with God. Thus the first verse of the Letter to the Hebrews expresses a fundamental truth:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son. . . .

Owing to our dependence on the Bible, we may be tempted to read "Old Testament" into the word "prophets" and "New Testament" into "son." But such an interpretation does no justice to what the writer meant. The canon of the New Testament was not fixed in his day, though some of the books were circulating, and the word "divers" shows conclusively that he was not thinking of God's Word as books alone. He was reflecting upon the multiplicity of ways in which God in Old Testament times had made His will known. God communicated to some men in waking hours, to others by dreams. In a number of cases vision was the medium employed. Angels in disguise occasionally served as intermediaries. God's will was sought by use of the mysterious Urim and Thummim in certain periods. Events of history also spoke God's purposes, and the very universe proclaimed His greatness. It was not one channel that God used, and His revelation is the sum total of the communications given "at sundry times and in divers manners." This granting of revelation culminated, as the writer to the Hebrews states, in Jesus Christ.

It may come as a surprise to note how small a proportion of the revelation was originally given in writing. Much of it took place as events of history. Even the holy men who spoke for God were primarily preachers rather than authors. Jeremiah's case is instructive. He disseminated his message for many years by word of mouth, and only because it was necessary for Baruch to read his words to the people while he himself went into hiding, did he have them put in writing (ch. 36). In the Old Testament, Daniel is the

only book which imparted its message solely in writing. The New Testament is similar. So far as we know, Jesus did not commit to writing any one of His sayings. Though Paul wrote letters, this was not from love of the pen, but for the purely practical reason of dealing with matters that could not await a personal visit. He was a preacher. Again, one book may be quoted as communicating truths only in writing, the Revelation.

The fact is that God chose to reveal Himself in the framework of human history, and the culmination of this aspect of God's work was the sending of His Son. In order that later generations should still have the opportunity of repentance and faith, a permanent record was needed of how God spoke and what He said. Thus the Bible came to be written, not as so much Jewish history, but as the only source of knowledge of God's dealings with the human race. Though men wrote it, God inspired it.

Without the Bible we should have no knowledge of God's purposes. We might deduce something of God from His creation, for as the Psalmist said, "The heavens declare the glory of God." Paul also argued that the Gentiles should have been able to grasp something of God from the universe (Romans 1: 18-25). Such knowledge is not to be despised or ignored, but only the Bible gives us an insight into God's specific revelation. Without it we should know of certain outstanding figures and events such as Hezekiah, the exile, and Jesus, but only the Bible shows the revelational content of these. Without it Hezekiah would appear as a typical petty-state ruler, the exile as another piece of Babylonian imperialism, and Jesus as some obscure Jewish figure.

These facts are, of course, well known, but they need to be repeated for us, who depend so completely on the Bible for knowledge of God's purposes that we may unthinkingly consider the Bible and His revelation identical. From what the Bible itself tells us of the "divers manners" in which God spoke, we must conclude that, in many cases, it is the inspired, authoritative record of this revelation rather than the revelation itself.

The points just made are of fundamental importance for any study of the problem of inspiration, and failure to grasp them leads to much confusion of thought. That the Bible is an inspired collection of books is agreed upon by all who use it for obtaining their knowledge of God. The fact of inspiration is assumed in the present series of articles, which are not concerned with presenting the case for accepting this doctrine, but rather with trying to establish just what inspiration means. Some have the idea that revelation and inspiration are the same thing: that as the Bible is inspired, it is also revealed. A little investigation will show that this is not so. Less than one third of the Old Testament has "Thus saith the Lord" prefixed, or an equivalent phrase, or is of such a character that a phrase of this kind would be appropriate. The historical portions were not written by men who sat in a corner and suddenly had revealed to them the records they wrote. Rather, like historians generally, they drew on the testimony of eyewitnesses, if still alive, and compiled from records when living memory no longer existed. The numerous statements in Kings to the effect that if one wishes for more information it can be found, for example, in the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, clearly points in this direction. Also Luke, in the prologue to his gospel, informs his patron, Theophilus, that his competence to write a life of Jesus rests on having "gone over the course of all the events in detail" (N.E.B.). Similarly, the Psalms could not possibly begin "Thus saith the Lord" since they are not spoken in God's name, but are addressed to God by their human authors. They are not *by* God but *to* God. Yet they are inspired writings.

Revelation is the communication of truths which the human recipients did not obtain from their environment, from profound study, or from any other form of human activity. They were given by God. Inspiration is the effect of God's spirit on particular humans so that their thoughts and actions are raised above their natural level toward God. Revelation and inspiration may occur together. In the prophets we have examples

of men in whom the Spirit was a purifying force, elevating their thoughts to a higher plane and to more spiritual insights, and who were at the same time recipients of revelation. But the purging could occur without the giving of revelation. Most of the authors of the historical books could probably have written history without the gift of inspiration. A modicum of intelligence and education, and a certain amount of determination have always been the minimum requirements for writing history. But had these men written without the aid of God's Spirit, their works would have been different. Even the use of the same materials and techniques would have yielded a different result. Their writings would not have been inspired.

The very many human touches one finds in the Bible are only difficulties to those who confound revelation and inspiration. It was not by an act of revelation that Paul knew that he had left behind some books and a cloak at Troas. Everywhere the human authors have left their mark. The differing personalities of Amos and Hosea are indelibly stamped on their books. The emphasis of Mark's gospel on the succeeding stages of Jesus' life is the opposite of John's drawing out of the theological implications of Jesus' life viewed as a whole. Even if the New Testament letters were anonymous we could hardly suppose that James' came from the same hand as Paul's. The differing authorship of Kings and Chronicles is obvious on stylistic grounds alone. None of these facts in any way alters the inspired character of Scripture.

Much current confusion on the subject of inspiration is the result of careless and exaggerated statements which were very popular in the last century. For example, Dean Burgon preaching from the pulpit of St Mary's in Oxford said,

The Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth on the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every syllable of it (where are we to stop?), every letter of it is the direct utterance of the Most High.

J. W. Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, page 89.

If the Very Reverend gentleman was just using flowery language his extravagances could be excused as bad style, but if he meant his words to be taken as literally true, they are very misleading. It is nonsense to talk of letters being inspired when fashions in spelling have changed in Greek and Hebrew as much as they have done in English. Also the ordinary reader of the Bible will on this view be at a great disadvantage, as he will never be in a position to know just what the original letters are. Also such phrases as "inspired penmen" and even "the Word of God" are capable of misleading if they are not understood correctly. The former suggests that inspired writers were nothing but God's secretaries taking dictation. Although individual passages could be taken in this sense, this idea cannot be applied to the Bible as a whole. Men writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit are not to be degraded to the rank of mere scribes writing down words not their own. In Scripture "the Word of God" does not mean our Bible. It may refer to particular items of divine communication, or to Jesus. In the sense that God speaks to man in the Bible it is not an inappropriate term, provided it does not suggest any mechanical idea of God Almighty framing Greek and Hebrew sentences.

God speaks to man in the Bible. This is the right understanding of the inspired Bible. Using words in their most simple sense we must say, not that the Bible *is* God's revelation, but that the Bible *contains* God's revelation.

Despite the insistence we place on the distinction between revelation and inspiration, it must not be assumed that we may go through the Bible and mark this verse or section as revealed, and that one as only inspired. The two elements are inextricably interwoven, so that it would be completely futile even to attempt such an analysis. The historical portions may, in fact, contain revelation. Luke, for example, collected his facts and organised them like other historians. Yet his gospel may well contain revelation in addition to its being inspired. The perspective of Jesus which Luke portrays may have come to him by revelation while he was working on

his materials. If so, there will be no way of telling just where this revelation is to be found. It will be in no particular verses but only in the general drift of the narrative. Similarly, when a section is said to have been communicated by God it does not automatically follow that it was revealed rather than only inspired. For example, among the laws which Moses was instructed to put before the children of Israel, according to Exodus 21: 1, one is found which occurs almost verbatim in a collection of laws from the Babylonian city of Eshnunna, which antedate Moses by some 500 years:

The second law on the goring ox according to the laws of Eshnunna:

If the ox was accustomed to gore and the authorities have brought the matter to the attention of its owner, but he has not kept it under control, and then it gores a man and causes his death, the owner of the ox shall pay two thirds of a mina of silver.

The second law on the goring ox according to the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 21: 29):

But if the ox was wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner shall also be put to death.

Although the penalty is different, the situation pictured is so similarly phrased as to amount to identity, if allowance is made for the different languages in which the two laws are found. Coincidence must be ruled out, and since the Babylonian law is much earlier than that of Moses it is difficult to argue that the Mosaic law came directly from God. There is no reason to think that any Hebrew from the time of Moses or later had read the laws of Eshnunna. No doubt the two go back to a common origin. This discovery in a portion of Exodus, said to have been communicated by God to Moses, need cause no surprise. Humans are no less capable of framing laws to govern their collective conduct than they are of writing history. Revelation was not needed for either, only the helping hand of inspiration. In this case an adequate law had

long been current, and its continued use received divine sanction. It follows that a "Thus saith the Lord" need not always introduce an item of revelation. It may instead be the mark of divine approval on something human in origin. However, there still may be an element of revelation in the laws. A systematic comparison of all the Hebrew and Babylonian laws reveals differences in spirit, and the higher spiritual level on the Hebrew side could well be a product of revelation.

Just as God's revelation among the Hebrews was closely knit into their national life and history, so in the Bible, the record of God's dealings with men, the revelation is interwoven. No amount of dissection will separate the revelation from its setting. It was intended that we should absorb the two together.

IS JESUS GOD?

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Christian Teaching for the 20th Century

IF . . .

By Ralph Lovelock

Thereupon the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a meeting of the Council. "What action are we taking?" they said. "This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone like this the whole populace will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and sweep away our temple and our nation." John 11: 47-48 N.E.B.

THE first-century Jew was in a position of great religious responsibility, but he had been well blessed by God with circumstances unique within the Roman Empire, which enabled him to meet the requirements of his heavenly king. Alone in all the world he knew and mediated to mankind the revelation of its Creator. The continuance of the divine light was dependent upon his courage, his constancy and his integrity. He was called out and appointed by God to be a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation unto Him, and His peculiar treasure while he contrived to "obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant." No mere personal interest could measure up to this supreme destiny, and in an ocean of mortal humanity without faith and without hope, he was an island of impregnable rock where the restless waves would batter in vain, and eventually subside into the serene sunlit sea where they penetrated into his harbours.

Despite the fact that his country was one of the smaller and less important districts of the great Empire, he was accorded privileges denied to all other people. It may have been that his very unimportance as a political unit made it safe for Rome to be so lenient, and that his otherworldliness removed any threat which such freedom would have augured in others. This being so, however, it became all the more important that any suggestion of political ambition or worldly intrigue should be expunged from his polity. He was allowed a worship in which the national gods of Rome had no part, but was

publicly denigrated and despised. He was allowed a way of life which cut across all Roman customs, and which was a continuous public censure of that which Rome counted worthy. His leaders felt poised on the razor's edge: the slightest indiscretion might plunge them to disaster, and it was much more than their lives that was at stake—it was the greatest thing in the world, the Kingdom of the Living God.

Into this tense situation came a worrying and disruptive influence. Individual centres of sedition there would always be, but such were men of a small and selfish personality, and their followers few and insignificant. One such, Barabbas, had but recently been captured and imprisoned with little difficulty, and any other of his kind would be disposed of just as easily. The prophet Jesus of Nazareth, however, was a totally different problem. There was nothing mean or petty in His disposition, and His personality brought thousands to their knees. So powerfully had He captured the popular imagination, that, within the next few days, they would strew the road into Jerusalem itself with palm branches, and shout His claim to kingship almost within the shadows of the grim Roman fort which looked down over the Temple. Now, when strangers thronged the streets, and the emotions were tense under the influence of the Feast, He had called forth a dead man from his tomb and "many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him."

We have seen Jesus proclaimed Son with power by His resurrection, but this was still future to them. They saw only what Paul described as "the foolishness of preaching," and were too blind to recognise that "divine folly is wiser than the wisdom of man, and divine weakness stronger than man's strength." Theirs was a human judgment emanating from the wisest and most zealous of God's people; it was the Temple which could be taken away, and it was expedient that one man die, rather than God's witness be removed through His folly. Zealous He might be, good intentioned He certainly was, but where wisdom should have counselled silence and restraint, His foolish and frank expression of all which He sincerely thought, threatened the careful structure of three centuries. If He were not silenced, all for which the Maccabees gave their lives would be brought to ruin.

We also are men of their calibre. Their responsibility is now ours, and we have become "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, and a people claimed by God for his own." We enjoy many privileges from the civil authorities, and must walk circumspectly lest we destroy the labours of those who have gone before. Unfortunately, we inherit also all the worldly wisdom and prudence which was theirs. We recognise only too clearly the dangers of simple unguarded efforts of those less cautious than ourselves, and even have a proverb in our tongue that "the way to hell is paved with good intentions." We recognise, equally with them, the fallacy of the democratic foundation that "the voice of the people is the voice of God," but because that voice has so much sway in the everyday affairs of life we strive to protect the masses, together with their way of living, from the influence of undesirable teachers who might lead them astray.

As we read John's account again, it should be seen as a shattering revelation that it is the very zeal and wise judgment which mark out those of us who have become guides, which counselled and accomplished the death of Jesus. In their place, we would probably have been driven by circumstances beyond our control to

give our vote of condemnation against the Holy One of God. In our century He lives again in others, and insofar as those others most nearly approach to His image, they will be misfits and embarrassments to the panoply of human wisdom and human prudence, by which all human organisations are martialled and preserved. He has said that insofar as we do it unto the "least of these my brethren" we do it unto Him, and we face the same snare in which they were entrapped.

This exercise of circumspection, however, was only the first of two snares. The Council which judged it expedient that Jesus should die was, indeed, composed of the élite of Jewry, their wisest and most zealous leaders, but, in experience, they were mere children in comparison with the Roman Procurator before whom they were forced to bring Him. His clear brain and experienced judgment saw through their artificial charge, and recognised in Jesus the harmlessness which He had ever exhibited. "I find no case against Him," he declared, and when they showed dissatisfaction with his judgment he repeated it the more firmly. Roused to fury by the unexpected opposition, they proceeded to apply to Pilate the same kind of pressure which had driven them to the deed — "If you let this man go, you are no friend to Caesar."

As representative of the Emperor at Rome, Pilate had absolute power over this people, and in the weightier matters of provincial government he would not have given way an inch. But in this small matter of the life of a single man, and He an obvious centre of public contention, to flout the zealous pressure of the multitude was to risk his power and authority for little purpose. He cleared his own conscience by the ostentatious washing of hands, and excused himself by blaming them for the decision which only he was empowered to give.

The elevation of Pilate was so great, and the position of those of our number who bear a delegated authority as leaders in God's household is so lowly, that we may miss the obvious parallel with its grim warning about our weakness. Paul told Timothy that the Church of Christ should

not be immune from this fault, but would have some teachers with "itching ears," men, who, though sincere servants of Jesus, would be sensitive to the opinion of the majority whom they led. It is so easy to say "My position is vulnerable," to weigh the good which one could do covertly, against the personal embarrassment of supporting a single individual, whom we may feel should have held his own counsel as his leaders are doing. Human expediency has weighed the slight wrong against the great evil, and sought the path which promised the least disaster. Divine wisdom, on the other hand, is concerned solely with the decision of right or wrong. Circumspection and expediency stand condemned before the cross of Christ. The power which raised Him from the dead could, and would, have kept the Roman at bay or maintained Pilate in power. It was the same expediency which sought to preserve the Jewish polity by sacrificing Jesus which caused the withdrawal of God from His temple, and the final fall of that which they strove to preserve.

Equally fallacious is the ceremonial washing of hands and passing of responsibility on to the heads of those who clamour for blood. Pilate was personally responsible for the death of Jesus because, although he did not give his voice, he at least withheld his prohibition, when he recognised Jesus to be without fault.

It is easy for us to feel personal sympathy

with this or that cause or person, to recognise therein the true spirit of Christ, but to stand on one side for the sake of "the greater good" which we can contrive to do while uncommitted. It was the set purpose of the Jewish Council which planned and executed the murder of Jesus. But the inaction of the Governor, his refusal to commit himself where he recognised innocence, was the ultimate cause of that death. We, with as great a will for good as Pilate, can stand on one side where we recognise an unjust persecution, and, while it may be the venom of others which executes the deed, we will wash our hands in vain, and protest our innocence without avail, in the sight of God. It is because the wisdom of this world and the intricacies of prudence have blinded our eyes, that we do not realise what we are doing until it is too late, and innocence hangs impaled upon a cross. It is when we begin to turn from the question of "right or wrong," of "guilt or innocence," and consider the unaided human outcome with an "If I do this . . ." that the danger threatens. When Paul looks back on this crisis of Jewish history he voices a third "if." He comments that, in all the exercise of their worldly wisdom and prudence, they were unaware of the hidden wisdom of God, that, being men standing in their own wisdom, they had never known it, but,

"if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." I Cor. 2: 8 N.E.B.

Part III of the Series on Hosea has been held over until the Autumn Issue.

THE BEGGAR AT THE GATE

By George McHaffie

THIS article is about a moral problem which many may have encountered. How should we react to the appeals of a beggar at the door?

The challenge lies, of course, in Jesus' words. "Give when you are asked to give; and do not turn your back on a man who wants to borrow" (Matt. 5: 42. N.E.B.). "But you must love your enemies and do good; and lend without expecting any return" (Luke 6: 35. N.E.B.). Any one who tries to follow out this teaching conscientiously will be careful not to turn aside from those in need. Yet one may be uncertain what to do where there is more than a suspicion of fraud in the appeal that is made.

In former times, the beggar formed a greater part of the town and country scene than he does today. In a society which has a rigid class structure, which is peasant based or, through lowly technology, unable to make good use of natural resources, there may be many of high latent ability who must remain impoverished and without opportunity. In such a situation the loss of a breadwinner could throw

a whole family on to the charity of neighbours and friends. This was the position in Palestine in Jesus' day. Through the foreign domination of the Romans, only those Jews who were prepared to be traitors to their country had high hopes of riches. The faithful had to remain poor.

Some of the most upright of the people were, therefore, among the poor. In these circumstances a person could be destitute and yet be absolutely genuine.

Today, among the industrialised nations, the scene is very different. Social welfare is a matter of public conscience, and new areas for relief are constantly being brought to attention. Recently the plight of the homeless and the vagrants has been in the news. Despite the affluence of the many, every

big city has its tail of citizens who are classed as vagrants. Many sleep rough, often in the open. A figure as high as 90,000, made up of both sexes, has been given for Britain. This group is formed from those who are unable to cope with the disciplines of civilised life, particularly that of regular employment. Many



have had family upsets. Whatever the basic reason, they take to the road, abandoning work as a means of support.

From a religious point of view the beggar has provided a moral challenge. Israel was commanded while harvesting to leave sheaves, olives and grapes behind for the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow (Deut. 24: 19-21). The Israelites were to be like Yahweh Who executes "the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Deut. 10: 18). In Israel the giving of alms was, therefore, a universal practice. Jesus presumes that His followers would give alms but warns against using the occasion for self advertisement (Matt. 6: 2-3). The common purse which the disciples kept was evidently not only for their own maintenance but for giving to the poor (John 13: 29).

What, then, should we do when we are confronted by some unkempt individual, claiming that he has nowhere to go and asking for a shilling or more to obtain a cup of tea or a bed for the night? Our first reaction may be that it is worth 2s. 6d. to get him off the premises and out of mind. But this is not an action prompted by a sense of Christian caring for the poor. The situation would be simpler if we knew how genuine was the need. It would probably be true to say that almost none of the vagrants is genuine in any ordinary meaning of the word. Each has cultivated a way of life which depends on pitting his limited wits against society or on his ability to put forward an appealing story.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus did not establish a new legalism to replace the Law of Moses. He taught by laying down principles, and then by giving contemporary examples. To the young man who was immensely rich and who had put all his heart in his wealth, Jesus said, "Sell everything you have and distribute to the poor . . ." (Luke 18: 22. N.E.B.). This is an ethical instruction suited to the needs of the young man rather than a general instruction about caring for the poor. In considering the unselfish and generous hearts which Jesus expects

to see in His disciples, He says "Give when you are asked to give." But here again the teaching is primarily concerned with the disciples' attitude.

Behind Jesus' teaching there is a major principle from which all His ethical directions flow. It is that the disciples' character must become like that of their Father in heaven (Matt. 5: 48). In the quotation from Deuteronomy chapter 10, already given, the Law is clearly seen to follow the same basic principle. The Jews were to be generous to strangers and widows because God is generous to them and cares for them. Similarly, as God seeks to reconcile His enemies by a great love, so Christians are exhorted to "Love your enemies and do good: and . . . you will be sons of the Most High, because he himself is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate" (Luke 6: 35-36. N.E.B.). Because God cares for people and seeks their good, so this must be the motive of the Christian in all his engagements with people. But this does not mean loading everyone with presents: their highest good is not necessarily served in that way. Paul is consistent with the basic principles when he says, "The man who will not work shall not eat" (II Thess. 3: 10. N.E.B.).

A beggar may go from door to door asking for small sums, in the hope of accumulating enough for an evening's drinking session. The sum asked may be so small as to seem trifling to refuse. But giving in these circumstances is not caring for the person or doing him good. Nor would a blank refusal of help. The second way might not contribute to doing him harm, but it is not acting positively as a Christian ought. There should be nothing blank or negative in the response of a Christian who is seeking to carry the love which God bears for people in his heart. The Christian carries the responsibility of revealing this love to men that God, his Father in heaven, may be given praise (Matt. 5: 16. N.E.B.).

The need of the vagrant is to return to a settled life with a roof over his head and, if

possible, regular employment. Until he forsakes his irresponsible way of life he is unlikely to be able to form a meaningful relationship with Christ. This point has even greater force if the asking comes from one who is not technically a vagrant but simply looking for easy money.

The whole problem is clearly larger than anyone can handle on his own. Yet this is no excuse. There are many problems in this category. Our small efforts may never clear up the refugee problem, but we are under obligation so to act that, if all were to follow our example, the will of God would be accomplished, and enormous benefit to the distressed accrue. What then should an ordinary citizen do in the case we are considering?

Overnight accommodation of vagrants is provided by local authorities and various voluntary bodies in lodging houses or hostels. There is a necessary measure of discipline in these places and some vagrants tend to avoid them. In Britain, the National Assistance Board has welfare arrangements for vagrants. The local manager is on call twenty-four hours per day to deal with cases of destitution and he has funds available for immediate use. It is his policy to do all that can be done to rehabilitate vagrants to normal life. He can be reached through any police officer. There is no need, therefore, to refuse blankly to do anything when a case of vagrancy comes our way. People are free to come

and go as they wish but, if they express needs, there are clear means by which these can be met. No one need starve or go without shelter. An offer of help of a fundamental kind will soon reveal the genuineness of any pauper asking for money.

All vagrants have a distrust of officialdom and authority. This may be so strong that they will put up with great discomfort, illness, cold and hunger, rather than seek suitable help. The offer of food, in kind, is therefore a sensible preliminary to obtaining confidence. Beyond this, one must have a clear idea of what the local provisions are for such as he. In this connection, a number of voluntary organisations exist, and some have recently started, which specialise in breaking down distrust and promoting the reintegration of the vagrant. The good work done by such bodies towards those generally called "down and outs" might be remembered in our collections for those in need. The left-overs from fraternal gatherings, for example, would be well received by local hostels and lodging houses.

We should remember, then, that though ". . . the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (Prov. 23: 21), yet it is our duty to "withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (Prov. 3: 27).

The Golden Rule (Matt. 6: 12; Luke 6: 31), taken by itself, might be wrongly understood as mere philanthropy, as it is in humanistic ethics from Aristotle to Kant. But the story of the Good Samaritan makes this impossible (Luke 10: 29 ff.). The lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbour?" . . . His answer is to turn the lawyer's question round: "Who is the neighbour to the man in need of help?" Jesus destroyed the old centripetal grading system, in which the centre was "I", but retained the idea of the neighbour as organising principle and founded a new system, in which the centre was "Thou". But his grading is not a scheme that can be applied mechanically to all men and all occasions; it is concerned only with the concrete, and functions from case to case, whenever a man is in need.

Extract from *Love* by Gottfried Quell and Ethelbert Stauffer.

Between the Testaments

WISDOM

By John Sealey

(Continued from Winter Issue, 1964)

GREEK IDEA OF WISDOM

There is, say Oesterley and Robinson, a fundamental difference in outlook between the Semitic and the Indo-European mind. The Indo-European tends to become pantheistic in his quest for unity; he tends to regard all objects of experience as a phase of a whole. Separate identity is illusory.

Though they would not use the word in its modern sense, the Semites laid stress on personality. Problems of human existence were discussed in terms of concrete examples: "There was a man . . . whose name was Job," or, "And God said to Satan. . . ." To the Jew, men were persons and God was a person. This is fundamental to Jewish thought. On the other hand, the Greek Socrates can say, "Whithersoever reason (*logos*) leads, thither we must go." This would be incomprehensible to the Hebrew mind, which did not think without clear, theological presuppositions. For the Hebrew, true wisdom was rooted in a right attitude to God; a relationship between two concrete beings; for a Greek, it is an abstract thought which might "lead" anywhere.

The Sophists could say "Man is the measure of all things; human knowledge is relative; truth is subjective; therefore a wise man will regard all truth as opinion and study only how to make acceptable to others what he considers expedient." The Sophists gave up the search for abstract truth as hopeless. This again would be incomprehensible to the purely Hebrew mind. Conceptions such as "subjective truth," or truth as mere "opinion," are utterly opposed to its idea of "objective reality" of the Divine. God is the source of everything, especially wisdom. It would

not, perhaps, be going too far to say that truth, far from being mere "opinion" is, for the Hebrew prophet, the very essence of the "word of the Lord." As expressed by the Greek sophists, these sentiments might obviously be used to defeat morality, though to be quite fair it ought to be remembered of Stoic philosophy "moral earnestness characterised their teaching from the first" (Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel*).

ECCLESIASTICUS

The Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach, is one of the most remarkable products of the Wisdom Literature. The date of this book can be fixed with comparative ease. The grandson of the author translated the book into Greek, and, in his prologue, states that he went to Egypt in 132 B.C. It seems likely, therefore, that his grandfather wrote the book sometime between 200 and 180 B.C. The fact that there is not the slightest reference to the Maccabean wars would certainly indicate a date prior to 168 B.C.

THE LAW

A most important development is seen in Ecclesiasticus. Not only is wisdom the highest possession, it is also to be identified with the Torah, ("Law") (24: 1, 3, 23), "Wisdom shall praise herself and shall glory in the midst of her people . . . I came forth from the mouth of the Most High . . . All these things are the book of the Covenant of the Most High God, even the Law which Moses commanded us for a heritage unto the assemblies of Jacob." It is especially interesting to note that the doctrine of the existence of the Law before Creation was taught long before Christian times. We shall

immediately see the relevant connection if we remember that "The Word of the Lord" may equal "Torah," and both of these in turn may be the equivalent of John's use of the Logos: "The word (*logos*) was with God . . . the same was in the beginning with God."

AFTER LIFE

Another important strand of thought is the writer's idea of life after death, if it can be so called. The only way a man can be said to live after death is by means of the wisdom he has acquired in his lifetime (39: 9). "Many shall commend his understanding, and so long as the world endureth, it shall not be blotted out; his memorial shall not depart, and his name shall live from generation to generation." There are no wonderful word pictures of the realised kingdom of God, or even the suggestion of a resurrection, as there are in the canonical books. It retains only the vaguest shadow of the hopes spoken of by the prophets.

GREEK AND HEBREW WISDOM IN ECCLESIASTICUS

If it is true that we may detect Greek influence in this work, for example, in its exaltation of wisdom to a conception which at times is almost abstract, it is also true that its basic point of view is Hebrew. The principle (if we may thus term it) "In the beginning God . . ." is always presupposed: e.g., "All wisdom cometh from the Lord." Again, the practical usefulness of wisdom is constantly emphasised, and the writer implies that wisdom is empty without the Law, "If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments." However, in the chapter that describes the wise man (38: 24-39, 5.), there seems to be something of a contrast between the older Hebrew conception and an assimilated Greek idea of wisdom. "How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough?" the writer asks, and goes on to imply that the farmer, the craftsman, the smith, the potter, though they are essential to the life of a city are not to be classed with the wise scribe. His wisdom, on the other hand, comes from "opportunity of leisure. And he

that hath little business shall become wise." Thus there seems to be here a junction of both types of wisdom. On the one hand the Hebrew, which is practical, concrete, and which has affinities with an older idea of wisdom (cf. Ex. 35: 25), and, on the other hand, the Greek, which is speculative and with a tendency to abstraction reflecting the custom, in Greece, of the wise man, carelessly (in the literal sense) wandering from place to place instructing anyone who is willing to listen. Yet even in this picture, Ben Sirach does not forget his heritage: he has not become purely speculative, for his "wisdom of the ancients" is to be found, basically, in "the law of the most High" and "in prophecies."

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

In *The Wisdom of Solomon*, the influence of Greek philosophy is even more clearly marked. It was written in the first century B.C. by a Jew of Alexandria. B. M. Metzger writes: "The author's teaching of divine and human wisdom is an explication of the earlier ideas of this subject expressed in the book of Proverbs, with a metaphysical twist borrowed from the Stoic conception of the universal *logos*, that impersonal mediator between God and the creation" (*An Introduction to the Apocrypha*, 1957).

The writer follows Plato in maintaining that God "created the world out of formless matter" (1: 17). The reference here is to the four elements, fire, earth, water, and air. Into this creation He sends a soul which (to the writer of *Wisdom*) is wisdom itself. The Spirit of wisdom comes from God (7: 25) and is a "clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty." God created all things by His word (9: 1) "O God . . . who madest all things by thy word," but wisdom was present before creation (9: 9). Since then it has been the "artificer," the renewer, the orderer. "But she reaches from one end of the world to the other with full strength, and ordereth all things graciously:" the "doer" of all things (8: 5). In 7: 22f. an attempt is made to define wisdom; in v. 21 superlative qualities are ascribed to it, but in the end it remains a mystery.

WISDOM AND LOGOS

The identification of wisdom with the *logos* is carried further in *The Wisdom of Solomon*: "For she that is the artificer of all things, taught me, even wisdom" (7: 22). And again "O God of the fathers, and Lord who keepest thy mercy, who madest all things by thy word; and by thy wisdom thou formedst man . . ." (9: 1-2). And 7: 22f. (as noted above) is a passage full of words which are applied to the *logos*, both by Stoics and Philo.

There seems to be, then, an attempted answer to the problem of God-man communication. Previously men sought to discover communication in mechanical ways such as lot-casting; in the prophets God was found to be present in the Spirit of God in man. But in later post-exilic years lot-casting disappears and prophecy fades; men felt compelled to look elsewhere. Thus they came to see that in human thinking the divine mind could be present. Hence the wisdom in man (based on the Law) is the gift of God (Ecc. 1: 1).

THE STOICS AND HEBREW THOUGHT

For the Hebrew wise man, wisdom means redemption *from* evil, or at least, it produces a state of blessedness. But for the Stoic, the possession of wisdom is the *absorption* of evil (which he does not recognise as such), because it is part of himself, as part of nature. For the Stoic, salvation is by "self-surrender."

"Stoicism is really the offspring of despair" (Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel*). At times a mood of pessimism is common to both Hebrews and Greeks. But here the slight similarity ends, for their respective answers are vastly different. We have seen that for the Jew, wisdom comes from God. However far God might be from His people (in terms of morality), for "God is in heaven and thou upon earth," He did exist. Moreover, true wisdom was Torah; the will of God; the very Spirit (*ruach*) of Yahweh. There was nothing vague about the origin or the utility of wisdom. The Hebrew might despair, but in God there was hope though not understood in its entirety: "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground,

and worshipped; and said, naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1: 20-22), and "I know that my redeemer liveth . . ." (19: 25, 26). But the Stoic, ideally, did not even acknowledge the existence of evil or despair. Although, with the Hebrew, the Stoic is sure only that the world's course does not proceed at random, but is like the uncoiling of a rope, he recognises no divine originator. His principle is the law of nature, to which even Zeus is subject. The Hebrew knows nothing of natural law; all that happens in the world is the result of either a direct act or an arrangement of God. The Hebrew wise man will subject himself to the will of God Whom he knows and can trust—for good or evil (cf. Isaiah 45: 7). But for the wise Stoic, pain and evil are unrealities. Epictetus says: "If you love an earthen jar, say, 'It is an earthen jar that I love;' for when it is broken you will not be disturbed. If you kiss your little child or your wife, say that it is a human being whom you are kissing, for, when either of them dies, you will not be disturbed." The two conflicting ideals are seen best in the figures of Diogenes the Cynic, and in Jesus Christ. Diogenes would see pain and evil as his brother, for they are part of his one and universal nature; Christ would see them as aberrations of a divine universe, a universe which has been created for His pleasure. "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; evil will not sojourn with thee" (Ps. 5: 4, and cf. Rev. 4: 11).

It is somewhat surprising that Christadelphians, as a body, should show so much diffidence in the use of these extra-canonical works. A brother will go to considerable lengths to get good authentic background material for an address. Modern authors are often quoted from the platform; textual aids, like Young's *Analytical Concordance*, are constantly being used. Yet I have never heard a quotation from the intertestamental literature, as far as I can remember. I believe our hesitance to use such works serves only to produce a certain poverty in our knowledge of the Scriptures.



Sir Isaac Newton

Sir Isaac Newton—Historian, by Frank E. Manuel.
Cambridge University Press.

This book brings back into scholastic thought the historical and Biblical problems that seem to belong to a past world. Whilst not agreeing with Newton's thesis the writer sets it out fairly, and the Translation of *The Original of Monarchies* is a valuable new contribution. Newton's essay into the sphere of history was chronological, and aimed at demonstrating that Israel was the educators of the ancient nations; that the greatness of Egypt and Assyria had been fictitiously referred to the remote past, and that the dating of early times was in error. He accepted the Biblical chronology as a guide and seems very close to Dr Thomas's chronological scheme. Perhaps the latter had read his works.

The book will have special interest for classical scholars who are also interested in the Bible, in that the classics are cited for historical events contemporary with the Hebrew monarchy.

The gist of Newton's sensational historical system was that the dating of events could be determined from the procession of the equinoxes—that is, the moving back of the sun's rising at the equinox by a degree every seventy-two years against the background of the Zodiac.

From texts in ancient writers he deduced that at the time when the names of the constellations were given, the equinox passed through the middle of Aries; as the names of many of the constellations were culled from the heroes in the Expedition of the Argonauts, and no heroes of the Trojan wars had been elevated to the stars, the inference was that the sphere was made at the time of the Expedition and before the Siege of Troy (he suggests that this was to aid the navigators). With this premise the date for the Argonauts was readily calculable as 939 B.C.—40 years or so after Solomon's death and in the 17th year of the reign of Asa. The Siege of Troy was a generation later and fell in the time of Ahab and Jehoshaphat.

By modern reckoning Newton's scheme is about

300 years out, and, from information not available to Newton, it can be shown that the names of the constellations originated in Babylon and not Greece.

Newton is concerned to relate profane and sacred history and thought that the defeat of the Egyptian Ethiopians by Asa broke the yoke of Egypt over all the north Mediterranean countries, and that the Argonauts were really concerned with making alliances with the new kingdoms in the north, the Golden Fleece being a cover for their aims. Certainly Ahab's war with Syria mentions two kings, and the war between Jehoshaphat and Edom mentions the kings of the Hittites as mercenaries.

Newton's scheme has been rejected by chronologists, but the appearance of this book may be a herald of more historical revisions to come. The students of Linear A and B tablets seem to be moving to a recognition of a Semitic connection for early Greek. Part of Newton's scheme is that Shishak (Pharaoh) invaded Greece and this may account for the Egyptian links in ancient Greek legend—Thebes, Oedipus, the Sphinx, etc.

It may help us, too, that Newton, whose reverence for scripture knew no bounds, none the less treated with discerning judgment the authorship and compilation of the Pentateuch and other books. A few of his comments show that these opinions do not imply a rejection of Scripture as the word of God.

Moses had originally written a history of the creation, a book of the generations of Adam, the book of the Law; but all these have been long since lost except what has been transcribed out of them in the Pentateuch now extant. . . .

The Pentateuch, Joshua and Judges . . . these three books were one continued history . . . and were written down by one and the same author after the death of Samson. They were compiled out of ancient records.

This book will therefore interest Bible students, historians, classicists, astronomers, prophetic exponents, and may lead to more exchange between them and scientists.

RON STORER.

Screwtape Proposes a Toast

Screwtape Proposes a Toast—and Other Pieces, by C. S. Lewis. Fontana Books. 1965. Price: 3s. 6d.

This paperback contains eight different essays. All but one have been previously published elsewhere, and the author chose this selection for

Fontana Books shortly before his death in 1963.

The title of this volume is taken from the first essay, *Screwtape Proposes a Toast*. Screwtape was made well known to the British public in *The Screwtape Letters*. In these, C. S. Lewis pictured an imaginary devil, called Screwtape, giving advice to a younger devil on how to tempt humans to do wrong. Screwtape's whites were, of course, our blacks and vice versa, and the effect was to point out vividly the weak points in human nature.

Screwtape now appears again, this time to propose the toast at a diabolical banquet in Hell. He outlines the form of attack that must be used in the modern world: individual temptation will soon be almost unnecessary. People are becoming so anxious not to be different that they easily follow the crowd. Every dictator, or film-star, or pop-singer, can draw thousands after him. Mass-media help this process immensely, and less and less attention is thus being paid to Screwtape's great Enemy, God.

The main lesson to be learned from these remarks is that the Christian must "be not conformed to this world" but must be different. Any dead fish can go with the stream, but it takes a live one to swim against it.

A similar moral is developed in the second essay, where the author discusses what he calls the "Inner Ring"—the clique which grows up amongst any group of people who are together for any length of time.

Some people spend most of their lives aiming to get into first one and then another of these rings. But they are never satisfied, and never happy. The true course is to aim for the more admirable and less selfish ends, and gradually a man will find himself in the only circle of people that really matters. This may not be the same ring as he first tried to get into, but the friendships made and the satisfaction gained will be more reliable and worth while.

The next section, *Is Theology Poetry?*, despite the rather peculiar title, contains some useful thoughts. Lewis is concerned, first of all, to answer the question, "Does Christian Theology owe its attraction to its power of arousing and satisfying our imagination? Are those who believe it mistaking aesthetic enjoyment for intellectual assent, or assenting because they enjoy?"

He answers this by looking at his own feelings and by seeing that the beliefs of many pagan religions are, in many cases, more attractive to the imagination, at least at first sight. He dismisses, therefore, the charge sometimes made against Christians that they believe only because they find Christianity the most poetically attractive of all

word pictures. This is not to say, however, that Christian Theology has no poetical merit.

Two further difficulties connected with this question are now discussed: the charge that Christian Theology is merely a kind of poetry like all other religions, and since these are untrue, so too is Christianity; and the charge that Christianity uses symbol and metaphor, is therefore merely poetry, and hence again is not true.

In answering these points, Lewis points out the inadequacy of a purely scientific viewpoint of the world, and here he is well qualified to speak since he was an atheist himself for the first thirty-one years of his life. Science has its limitations and leaves far too many points unanswered. It is hardly in a position to criticise Christianity as nothing but poetry, for Christianity can, in fact, give more answers than science. As he concludes at the end of this section:

I am certain that in passing from the scientific point of view to the theological, I have passed from dream to waking. Christian Theology can fit in science, art, morality, and the sub-Christian religions. The scientific point of view cannot fit in any of these things, not even science itself. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else. (Page 58)

Another section of the book deals with *Obstinacy in Belief* where the author explains the Christian position in relation to that of the scientific atheist, showing that Christian belief and faith in God do not involve an unreasonable surrender of the intellect, a surrender which would be unworthy of any honest, thinking individual.

Under the heading of *Transposition*, he discusses a problem which must have occurred to many of us, that of "speaking with tongues." From time to time we hear of outbreaks of this claimed among various Pentecostal groups. Is there any difference between this apparent gibberish and the New Testament practice? An interesting solution is offered. The author suggests that because of our finite capacities as human beings, different heights of spirituality can be expressed to us only within a certain range of experiences. This can be seen in the way in which different emotions can be expressed by the same outward signs: e.g., weeping can indicate great sorrow or great happiness.

So it may have been with the speaking in tongues. Outwardly, the appearance is the same, but the source is different.

The idea of transposition can also be applied to our thinking about life after death. At the

moment, we can only think in terms of our present existence; without the things we enjoy in this life, we wonder how we could be happy; "For now," says Paul, "we see through a glass darkly."

We think like this because we have only a certain range of emotions. Future happiness is too high—or deep—for us to understand at present. We could be compared to a fly walking across a flat piece of paper on which an artist has sketched a beautiful drawing. The fly can only see lines. Everything is just lines going in different directions. For the fly from his limited viewpoint it is a two-

dimensional world. But a three-dimensional world is depicted on the paper, and the artist himself can appreciate it because of his greater ability to understand.

The last three sections of this book deal with other aspects of the Christian life. In his able way, Lewis puts his finger on different elements of our Christianity which we can ignore without meaning to. We are drawn by his writing to look closer at ourselves and to pay constant attention to the path on which we are travelling.

IAN MCHAFFIE.

COMMENT

We introduce a new section. In it we intend to comment fairly on points of contemporary interest. We will also bring under objective judgment articles appearing in other journals.

Did Jesus call God "Yahweh?"

From time to time some one asserts that to serve God acceptably He must always be addressed and referred to as "Yahweh," or "Yahweh Elohim," and not simply as "Lord." In one sad case we know of, a brother severed himself from fellowship with all other believers who would not conform to this practice. It is not our intention here to enter into all the many and complicated problems of the covenant name of God as given in Exodus 3, but a simple way of dealing with this problem is to inquire if Jesus and the apostles did as these people demand of us. If so, then certainly we should conform, but if Jesus and the apostles did not use the name Yahweh in normal circumstances, then we are under no obligation in this matter.

In the Old Testament God is often referred to as Yahweh, in fact some 6,800 times. This is not apparent in most translations, since, following an ancient Jewish custom, "Lord" is substituted. In correctly printed copies of the A.V. and R.V. the term "Lord," when it covers up an original "Yahweh," is put in capitals, and if one wishes to retain the flavour of the Hebrew text, then "Yahweh" should be read in these cases.

The name of God, however, became something very sacred among the Hebrews, and the beginnings of this phenomenon can be seen in the Bible itself.

Certain portions of the Psalter (Book II, that is numbers 42-72, and the first few of Book III, numbers 73-83) have been edited by an editor who has, with few exceptions, replaced "Yahweh" with "God." This is very obvious, for example, in Psalm 68, which re-uses parts of the Song of Deborah. Where the original Song says, "before Yahweh, god of Israel," (Judges 5: 5), the Psalm now reads, "before god, god of Israel" (68: 8). A similar point is revealed by a comparison of Psalms 14 and 53, which are in fact the same Psalm, which appears twice in the present book. In the four cases where Psalm 14 has "Yahweh," Psalm 53 now offers "god."

Indications that the name Yahweh was considered something very special also occur in the earliest copies of the Old Testament. Some, but by no means all, copies of Old Testament books in Hebrew from among the Dead Sea Scrolls (1st century A.D. or a little earlier) have the divine name written in the old Hebrew script, which was used up to the exile, while the rest of the text is written in the later, square script. The earliest surviving portions of the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Old Testament offer similar evidence. In a fragmentary copy of the Greek Deuteronomy from the 2nd century B.C., now in the Fuad Museum of Cairo, the divine name is inserted amid the Greek words by another hand and in the old Hebrew alphabet. The same occurs in a roll of the

Minor Prophets in Greek (a corrected form of the Septuagint) from the Dead Sea scrolls. However, other fragments of the uncorrected Septuagint from the Dead Sea caves do differently. One such transliterates the name in Greek letters as Iaō, and another has the better known "Lord" (*kurios*) substituted. The custom of using "Lord" when referring to Yahweh is already known from the Greek-speaking Philo of Alexandria in the first third of the 1st century A.D., and the New Testament writers do the same, (see for example Matt. 22: 37 and 44; Romans 9: 28 and 29). This usage prevailed so that all Septuagint manuscripts from the second century A.D. and onwards use "Lord" to render "Yahweh."

Jewish custom paralleled what took place in the Christian church. From at least the time of Christ, and probably from earlier times though evidence is lacking, Jews generally were not allowed to use the name Yahweh, indeed to do so was blasphemy punishable by death. Thus when reading Scripture or speaking of God they could not use His name, but had a number of substitutions: "the Name," "the Holy One, blessed be He," and, most commonly, "Lord" (*adonay*). The last one became traditional and obligatory in the public reading of Scripture, and to this day in the Synagogue services where the text has Yahweh, *adonay* is substituted.

The evidence for the general prohibition of use of the name Yahweh among Jews of the 1st century A.D. comes especially from the Mishna, a compilation of traditional Jewish law put in final shape in the latter part of the 2nd century A.D. This twice states:

In the temple they pronounced the Name (of God) as it is written, but in the provinces by another word.

Sota 7: 6; Tamid 7: 2.
Even in the temple use of the name, Yahweh was not casual or general. On the Day of Atonement the High Priest put his hands on the scapegoat and then recited a confession ending with Leviticus 16: 30, a verse which concludes with the name Yahweh. This the High Priest uttered as it was written:

Now the people standing in the court, when they heard the "Expressed Name" coming from the High Priest's mouth, used to bend, bow down, and fall on their faces, saying, "Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom for ever and ever."

Yoma 6: 2.

This reverence for the name of God created difficulties in legal prosecutions of blasphemy, since the death penalty could not be exacted without a full hearing of the evidence, which meant repeating the blasphemous use of "the Name." The Mishna

tells us that the chief witness first repeated what he had heard the accused say, but substituting some other name for Yahweh. Then the court was cleared of all but the judges and the witnesses. Now the chief witness repeated his testimony to the judges, but used the sacred name. As he uttered it, the judges all stood and rent their garments (which they were not allowed to sew up again). Then the second and third witnesses said that they heard this also, but they did not actually repeat the words heard. (See Mishna, Sanhedrin 7: 5.)

Under these circumstances it is totally inconceivable that Jesus and the apostles ever used the name Yahweh in public. To have done so would have been committing a capital crime for which the Jewish authorities would have prosecuted them most zealously. There is the further difficulty that the New Testament gives no hint that Jesus or His followers ever gave offence in this matter. On the contrary, they are frequently represented as addressing God, and as speaking of him as Lord.

We conclude then that Jesus and the early Christians respected Jewish feeling about the name of God and followed current usage in substituting "Lord." We can see no reason for doing otherwise ourselves in most cases.

The New English Bible

No translation of the Bible is satisfactory in every respect, and the New English Bible is no exception. People differ and like different approaches, and while some may like a particular word or idiom of speech, others may not.

Translation, however, is not a matter merely of replacing one Greek word by an English one, but of expressing in English what the Greek means. This is not easy as very rarely do the meanings of words in one language exactly match the meanings in another. Sometimes, therefore, it is necessary to use a phrase in English where only one word is used in Greek.

In a new translation of the Bible there is a need to replace archaic words and expressions by ones which are meaningful to modern people. The New English Bible has attempted to do this, and, on the whole, we feel it has done this successfully.

It is most unfortunate, however, that the aim to translate into a more modern English should be seen by some as a deliberate attempt by the translators to force on to an unsuspecting public their own personal views. This attitude is taken by a writer of an article on the New English Bible in the *Bible League Quarterly*. This article has subsequently been reprinted in *The Testimony* (March 1965).

The writer commences:

Our task is not to give a detailed account of the history of the translation of the Bible into the English language, nor is it to give a detailed examination of the New English Bible. It is rather to bring before you some facts which should serve as a warning of a dangerous tendency in some 20th century translations—a tendency which appears in the New English Bible but is entirely absent from such translations as Tyndale's and the Authorised Version.

He then continues to praise Tyndale's and the Authorised Version as being translated by men with a reverence for Scripture, and therefore implies that these are fair translations of the original text. On the other hand, the translation of the New English Bible was directed by the Rev. Dr C. H. Dodd, whose views on the Bible are strongly disliked by the author of the article from which we have quoted. It is then argued that Dr Dodd influenced the translators so that they translated what he thought the Greek should say, rather than what it did say.

This is a serious charge and requires to be looked at closely: does the New English Bible represent an accurate translation of the original Greek, or does it, indeed, contain the personal views of Dr Dodd? This *Comment* in *Endeavour* is not concerned with what Dr Dodd thinks about the Bible, only whether his views have influenced the translation.

The writer bases his assertions against the New English Bible on the translation of two words. He writes,

In his "Romans" he (Dr Dodd) eliminates the idea of the wrath of God as a divine Person from the teaching of Jesus and of St Paul. Does not that explain the disappearance of "the wrath of God" so largely from the Gospels and Epistles of the N.E.B., and the total disappearance of the word "propitiation"? This reflects the stand-point of Dr Dodd—he has tried in his writings to empty the Greek word (or words) translated "propitiation" of all idea of propitiation.

When the N.E.B. translators drop the word "propitiation," they are dropping or at least beclouding, a truth which lies at the very heart of the Christian faith. Their version would lead, to say the least, to a greatly impoverished understanding of the atoning work of Christ.

If, in fact, "wrath" and "propitiation" had been watered down or replaced by some other word meaning something different, then there might be some ground for this claim. As it is, a careful

examination of the word does not show this at all, but rather indicates that the N.E.B. translators have taken more care to translate what the Greek means than have previous translators.

In the New Testament two words are used for "wrath," *thumos* and *orge*. The word "wrath," however, is archaic and is almost never used in modern English. Instead, we use "anger" and this word is used in the N.E.B. to replace "wrath" in many passages. Other words used to translate these two Greek ones are "retribution," "dreadful judgment," "terrible judgment," "vengeance," and still, in quite a number of instances, "wrath." The words used in the N.E.B. accord with the meanings given for *thumos* and *orge* in Bagster's *Analytical Greek Lexicon* and in Arndt and Gingrich's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. In no way does the meaning of the original Greek seem to be modified or altered to accord with modern prejudices.

The same conclusion must be arrived at concerning "propitiation." The word *hilasmos* has a wider meaning than simply "propitiation," and an attempt to cover this is made in the New English Bible.

In I John 4: 10, "the propitiation for our sins" (A.V.) is translated in the N.E.B. "the remedy for the defilement of our sins," and in Romans 3: 25, "a propitiation through faith in his blood" is rendered "means of expiating sin by his sacrificial death, effective through faith."

To state on the basis of these different translations that a faithful attempt to translate the Greek has not been made, is manifestly untrue. It also casts aspersions on the honesty and integrity of the translators, who write:

Taken as a whole, our version claims to be a translation, free, it may be, rather than literal, but a faithful translation nevertheless, so far as we could compass it. (Introduction, page ix, (Popular Edition).

The translation is not the expression of any denominational or doctrinal leaning. . . . (Write-up on cover).

Readers would be well advised to read the introduction at the beginning of the New English Bible, where the translators explain how they have undertaken the work.

The writer in the *Bible League Quarterly* produces no other evidence for his claims than that discussed above and shown to be false. Unless, therefore, some other passages can be produced where there is good reason to suppose deliberate mistranslation, the whole article is completely misleading and valueless.

Of course, no translation can be free altogether from the views of the translators. Where the text

is ambiguous, obviously the translators have no choice but to translate what they consider to have been the writer's meaning.

In, for example, the incident of Christ's speaking to the thief on the cross, in Luke 23: 43, some of us would be inclined to translate: "I tell you this today. . . ." If we did so, we should be translating the text in accordance with our views, and no one can be blamed for that when ambiguities arise.

But the case at issue in this article is not of that

kind. By all means let us examine carefully all our translations, and let us give criticism where criticism is due. But all publishers have a responsibility to ensure that their criticisms — especially those of such a serious nature as this — have solid foundations. In this case it appears that the publishers of the *Bible League Quarterly* have not taken the care to check the basis of their assertions, and we are sorry to see a Christadelphian magazine endorsing such an article.

A CHRISTADELPHIAN CHILDREN'S HOME



A correspondent writes:

Enclosed herewith is a promise of a small donation towards the Christadelphian Children's Home.

Is it not possible to find homes amongst the brethren and sisters, for a certain number of deprived children? A family atmosphere is, almost without exception, better than a communal Home.

In our ecclesia there are eight adopted children amongst the brethren and sisters — six of these have already been baptised and the other two are being brought up in a good Christadelphian home, so there is good reason to expect them to accept the Truth when they are old enough to do so.

I might add that not one of these eight children has been in any way, an expense to the brotherhood as a whole.

Please do not think I am unsympathetic to the cause — quite the reverse, but I do feel that with comparatively little effort the number of children mentioned could be found homes amongst the brethren and sisters.

We appreciate the main point made in this letter and agree that it is an excellent idea for children who are deprived to be taken into the homes of brethren and sisters. We think, at the same time, that there are many brethren and sisters, who, for one reason or another, are not able to do this, but who would welcome the opportunity to contribute financially to the establishment of a home. We would like to encourage both ideas — the one does not exclude the other.

In the meantime funds are coming forward and we thank those who have so willingly promised to help. Our target is not yet reached and we renew the appeal which was first made in our Spring issue. A form is again enclosed to enable our friends to indicate the way in which their help could be given.

WHEN THE HEART IS FRESH AND TENDER



(Continued)

By Ruth McHaffie

ONE advantage of issuing a quarterly magazine is that we have time to learn readers' opinions on one instalment of an article before we publish the next, and have, therefore, the opportunity of discussing the points which are raised.

A few readers have expressed misgivings over our suggestion that young children should be carefully guarded from the influence of play-mates whose parents do not share our ideals. We would like to make the following further comments.

1. The object of the careful surveillance which we suggested was not to produce adults who feel a superior separateness from the people of the world, but, instead, young Christians whose roots are so deeply embedded in the true way of life that they are able to dedicate their lives in the service of their fellows, young Christians who know that in the eyes of God there are no social class distinctions.

2. There is evidence which indicates that "the deviant or delinquent seventeen-year-old today is probably more a product of the influences of twelve to seventeen years ago than of the influences of today." The first five years of life are especially susceptible to influence, and it is during these years that the mother has her opportunity. After the age of five our children have to learn to work and play for at least five

hours of every school day with children, many of whom come from atheistic or agnostic homes, taught, often, by teachers who do not accept the authority of God. The child has to learn at a very young age to live "in the world." Our difficulty lies in letting him live in it and, at the same time, training him to be not of it. Because this is not easy perhaps explains why we often fail.

3. We did not say that a child should never play with other small children from neighbours' homes. We suggested that "only mild discrimination as to whom he plays with and where he plays" is not enough. Other children can be invited in to play and our discrimination as to whom we invite will never depend on whether they come from the home of the professor or the coalman. An eye can then be kept on the children, with a view to their physical safety and to character forming. One has only to watch a group of small children playing in the street to see the aggressiveness and destructiveness, for instance, of which children are capable, and how the four-year-old stands gazing with wonder and admiration at the "bravery" of the seven-year-old, preparing to act in the same way as soon as he has opportunity. If that four-year-old, even though he has the same tendencies, is taught a better way of behaving, and, like a tender plant, is trained to grow in the right

direction, then, as he grows from being an infant into a junior, the possibility is high that he himself will choose the right companions. There could, of course, arise a position where more patience and understanding are found in the home up the road, and then our infant might receive better training there than in our own home.

4. It is hardly reasonable to think that "faith" in our children and in God will remove the need for diligent care on our part. Our faith will not protect the infant from being knocked down by a bus should he unwarily walk in front of one — because his mother should have been there to protect him. God does not do for us what we are capable of doing for ourselves. So also with moral danger. If, on the other hand, we do all that we are able, then faith in God will, we believe, fill in our shortcomings.

5. We agree that in these articles we are setting out "ideals." Even though we cannot always rise to a high level this is no reason for not having the ideal always before our eyes. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect," (or "all goodness") even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (or "all good"). Whichever translation of this text we prefer, we are called to a very high ideal. There is a great difference between bringing children up to be nominal, respectable Christians/Christadelphians and bringing them up to be wholly dedicated. Surely, we would all prefer to aim at the latter?

6. Yes, it is much easier for some than for others. (We have, in effect, already admitted this.) But the grass in the next field has a habit of looking greener than the grass in our own. Greater privilege brings greater responsibility; and advantage, used as it ought to be by a Christian, often adds to itself disadvantage.

Perhaps, before proceeding further, we can sum up the two viewpoints.

1. THE VIEWPOINT PRESENTED IN THIS ARTICLE

A child's mind, from infancy, should be impregnated with Christian understanding, and tactfully guided away from wrong influence.

Throughout his childhood he will have contact with the world because of the hours he spends at school, though he will become conscious of a difference between his way of life and that of many of his schoolmates. But this difference will not make him altogether out of touch with them, nor priggishly superior, nor embarrassingly odd. At teenage, because of careful early training, we need have no fear of his getting into bad company, and, as he matures, he will be able to take Christ's message to a sinful world, the "down and outs," without, himself, wanting to share loose ways of living. He will move in the world as a dedicated Christian.

2. THE MORE USUAL VIEWPOINT (which has many variations)

There is to be very little discrimination as to whom the infant child or young school child has as his companions. They are all young together and as innocent as one can expect children to be. It is good for all youngsters to "rough it." High standards at this age are not to be expected. But at teenage he should accept the responsibility of Christ and no longer desire contact with worldly friends nor join in their sport and other leisure time activities.

This latter method has some successes, but it does seem to have a high number of failures.

* * *

MAKING FOR SECURITY

It is not true that there are no problem children — only problem parents. But it is true that every child is influenced by the parents and by the atmosphere which exists in the home. Many a child would be less of a problem had his parents been able to play their parts better. The kind of parents that we are rests largely on the kind of marriage we have made.

In *The Scotsman* R. F. Mackenzie has commented on the findings of the American psychiatrist Dr Fredric Wertham: "He refers to the confusion in children's minds as they listen to adults proclaiming different standards of what is right. The children seek uncertainly for a centre and for a goal, and in the presence of influences that tear children to bits, it is difficult

for parents to come in and provide security and accepted truth." It is difficult and that is why it is so important that the parents should offer to their children a background of security, which only a secure marriage can offer.

COOL THINKING ABOUT MARRIAGE

Unfortunately many a girl is willing to enter a "sub-standard" marriage because a wedding and a home of her own are regarded by her as "musts." She feels left out of the picture when her friends proudly display their engagement rings and, with shining eyes, discuss the great day, and the elaborate preparations which seem to be regarded as "musts" too. Not until she herself has enjoyed these pleasures and has settled down in marriage does she realise that she has been building hopes round a glamour which soon wears off, and that happy marriages neither, as it were, grow on trees nor are there for the picking. With the coming of a family, different worries and difficulties arise, so that, sometimes, she thinks back longingly to the jolly days before she was married, when she was free to spend her time as she chose.

Some may consider that we are presenting an unduly pessimistic picture but the number of unhappy marriages is on the increase, and the enthusiasm with which marriage is so often sought would seem to demand that romantic notions should be balanced by common sense and cool-headed consideration.

Some girls think all will be well if they marry in the faith, but even marriages between Christadelphians often fail to reach the high standard we might expect. Such a disappointing marriage can, because of Christian belief, have added strain, for there is often the tacit understanding between the partners that their tension must be covered up by a cloak of respectability: and when it would be helpful to discuss the situation with a friend there is a reluctance to do so, for it is felt to be a shame which must be kept hidden.

A successful marriage is not based merely on physical attraction, nor merely on the application of Christian principles, but also upon

the love and understanding which one finds for the inner self of the other. There are no two marriages which make precisely the same demands. Every husband and wife have different needs, and when each understands what those needs are, then there is contentment and happiness. There must be the same aim and purpose in life. The ardent enthusiast for the work of the church would be an irritation to a partner who was only mildly interested and vice versa. But this does not mean that each must necessarily be of the same temperament. In the best partnerships both are willing to play the parts to which they are most suited, and they are complementary to one another. They paint a picture together, but they use different colours and they paint different parts, and so produce a balanced and harmonious whole.

If conditions such as these obtain then the home is built on a foundation which can stand all strains. There will be no disillusionment such as we have described. The ups and downs of family and ecclesial life are met by husband and wife together. Physical and mental strains are shared and so made lighter, and, sometimes, the very difficulties which they would have chosen to avoid, have revealed a depth of love and a strength of unity to which an easier path might never have led.

MOTHERHOOD AND MOTHERING

There is an inclination at the present time for women to want to be mothers with mothering reduced to a minimum. Perhaps some indication of this is seen in the diminishing number of mothers who make any attempt to breastfeed their babies, even although medical opinion insists that natural feeding is to be preferred for the baby. The mother feels that if a bottle is introduced as soon as possible, she will not be so tied, and this is thought to be an advantage. So she gladly breaks off her first link with the baby, and through his childhood she often insists upon his gaining independence and standing on his own feet. But when he reaches teenage she is puzzled as to why she can find no point of contact. (It is of course, a great disappointment

to some mothers that they cannot feed their babies — but then their mothering love forges the necessary link.)

A child has to learn independence but there is no need to force it. Given a natural and secure atmosphere in which to grow, then his desire for independence will develop as naturally as his body. We may err in the opposite direction and find it hard to realise how independent and capable our young people can become. This, too, we have to guard against. It is difficult to be "just right," but at least we have achieved something if we are aware of the danger of going too much one way or the other.

GOING OUT TO WORK?

Society today requires that more women go out to work. If we are to have smaller classes in our schools and more nurses in our hospitals then housewives must make up the numbers. Many women want to do this so that they can maintain a high standard of living for their families, and, indeed, when many of them can earn as much as, and sometimes more than, their husbands it is not surprising that they are tempted to do so.

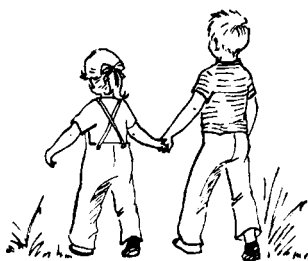
When we come to discuss whether or not a

mother should work it is difficult to speak generally. It depends upon which mother, which work, which family and which husband. The advantages have to be weighed up against the disadvantages in every individual circumstance.

When children are under school age special thought needs to be given. Many would feel that it was a pity for a mother not to enjoy the prettiest years of her child's life. Also, being away from the child during so large a part of his waking hours, she lessens her opportunity of being the strong influence of the formative years. But if she is able to leave him in good hands she may still feel that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Medical findings have brought to light a point which is worth taking into account when making a decision on this matter. "There is evidence," writes G. R. Dunstan, "in the medical journals from 1943 to 1952, based upon war-time and immediate post-war experience, to show that where the absence of mothers at work demanded group-care for their children, in day nurseries and the like, the effect was positively detrimental to the physical and emotional health of children under the age of two, and not very much better for children aged two to five."

(To be concluded)

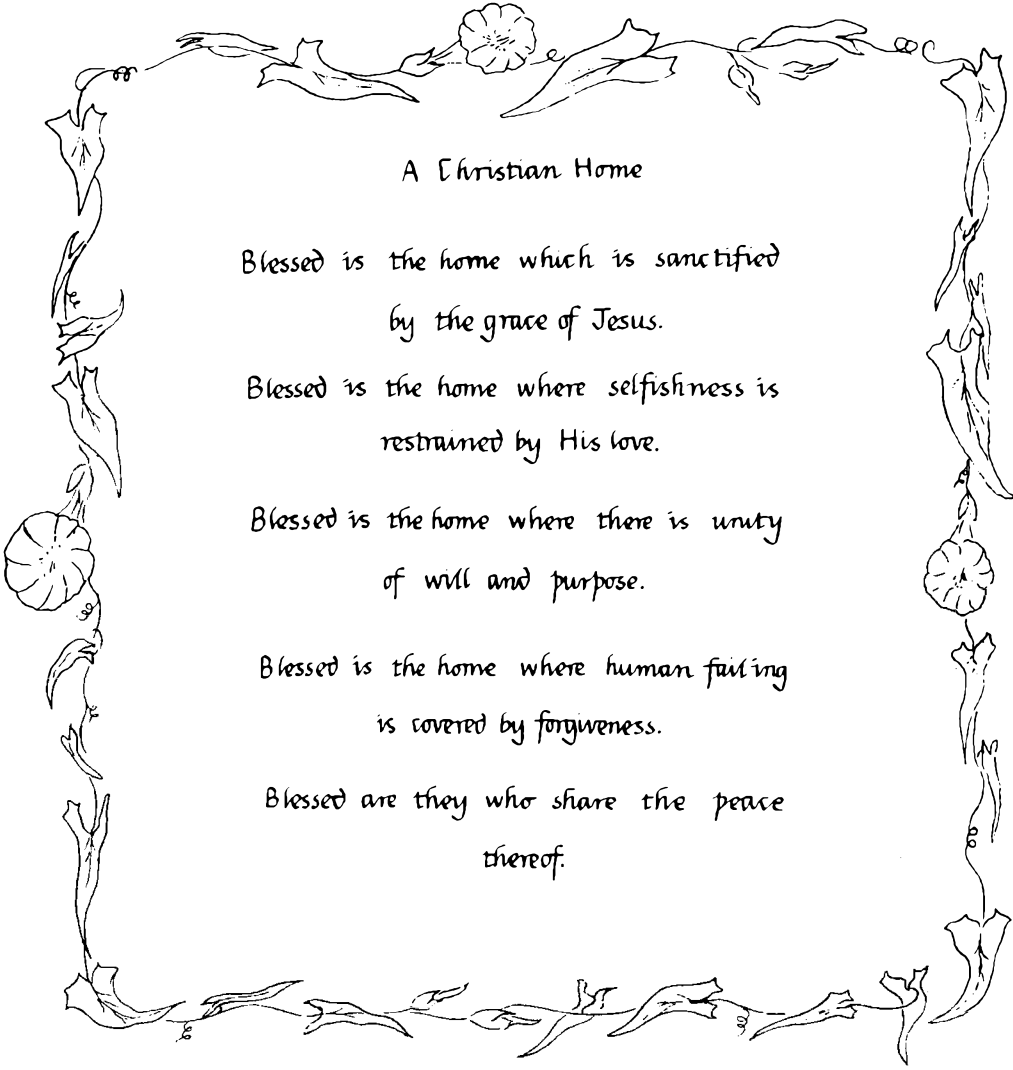


A PRAYER FOR STRENGTH

Father, the source of all power, give us strength in our weakness.
Help us to remember Calvary and the fortitude with which Jesus bore His Cross.
May we be given renewed vigour when we are physically weary and our work is still undone,
And the peace of a calm mind when we feel tossed on a stormy sea.
Give us courage to search our hearts and to own the faults we find.
Give us power to overcome and to sanctify our inner thinking.
Grant us the ability to create harmony in our human relationships,
And the strength to weaken the love of our own selves.
Give strength to those who are too often alone, for whom the hours are long and empty.
Give strength to those who are never lonely, whose hours are rushed and full.
Grant us endurance in time of pain, whether of body or mind.
Give us strength, having put our hands to the plough, to follow the furrow to the end.
And, when evening falls and our footsteps falter, then, Lord, give us strength of vision to see the joy
beyond.
In the Name of Jesus do we ask all.

AMEN.





A Christian Home

Blessed is the home which is sanctified
by the grace of Jesus.

Blessed is the home where selfishness is
restrained by His love.

Blessed is the home where there is unity
of will and purpose.

Blessed is the home where human failing
is covered by forgiveness.

Blessed are they who share the peace
thereof.



THE
ENDEAVOUR
MAGAZINE



AUTUMN 1965

Price 1/6

OUR COVER

The changing seasons of the year remind us of the changing seasons of life. In nature Autumn can be a time of beauty, but it can also be a time of sadness. While among the trees beauty increases yet in other vegetation there is often an insipid yellowing, and weak, failing stems.

It is in the younger days of life that we prepare for our Autumn. In older days we can either have a beauty of character, full of spiritual richness or we can become insipid weaklings, bemoaning the passing of years. How different we find older people one from the other! While some inspire and encourage us and are like the brightness of Autumn sunshine, others merely become like damp, depressing Autumn mists. But what we become must inevitably result from the treasure we have laid up, whether treasure on earth or treasure in heaven.

In our cover design, our artist has captured for us something of the beauty of nature and has held it still so that when the leaves are withered we may yet see their beauty. We all make pictures — in our minds. We make pictures of those among whom we move. And when they are no longer with us then we remember them.

May you and I, in our Autumn, have something of the beauty of a rich Autumn leaf. And when we can no longer be seen by our friends, may the picture they have of us be colourful, and may it breathe the promise of an eternal beauty which will not wither or perish, and which naught can change.

EDITORIAL MATTER

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Articles and general correspondence should be sent to:

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176 Granton Road,
Edinburgh, 5.

Correspondence about opportunities for practical service should be sent to:

The Endeavour Magazine,
Dove Cottage,
20 Saunby Close,
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Notts.

The purpose of "The Endeavour Magazine" is to help:

- By providing a forum for fair discussion of difficulties concerning Christian belief in the modern world—especially those difficulties facing young people.
- By encouraging deeper devotion in our Lord's service.
- By offering suggestions for the practical expression of our faith.
- By introducing articles designed to help in Bible study.
- By bringing to the notice of readers books of value which might otherwise escape their attention.
- By producing literature for spreading the Gospel.

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

FOR CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND ACTION

AUTUMN 1965 No. 17

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Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily
those of the Editorial Committee, but may be published
because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

EDITORIAL

WHAT DID the apostle Paul mean when he said that love "rejoiceth not in iniquity"? (I Cor. 13: 6). Paul was concerned here with the behaviour of the believer toward others. In this portion of his letter to the Corinthian church some have found a description, as it were, of the character of Christ, He who showed perfect love to all men.

The Christian, then, is not to rejoice in the evil doing of others. But why should he wish to do so? It could be that when others sin he finds in their sinning some kind of licence for himself. Or could Paul have been referring to that human trait which delights in believing that others are so much inferior to oneself, and which makes one glad to hear evil reported of another?

When we read the earlier parts of the first letter to the church at Corinth we are horrified at the behaviour of the Christians there. Doubtless if we were plunged into their midst few of us would wish membership and many of us would seek the disfellowshipping of the whole ecclesia. Probably even those of us who are least critical would avoid the company of that church and would keep ourselves in isolation unless we could effect some reform.

In the circumstances which existed, there would have been ample opportunity for one brother to regard another with contempt, and ample opportunity for that brother to find some kind of perverted pleasure in noting the extent of evil to which another would go. Divisions were arising in the church, some claiming to be "of Paul," some "of Apollos," some "of Cephas"

and some (doubtless with superior dignity) to be "of Christ" (I Cor. 1: 12). One who claimed himself to be, say, "of Paul" might well be glad to hear evil spoken of one who claimed to be of another party. After all, such a report would merely confirm that his poor opinion of that particular group was fully justified.

Possibly members of this Greek church knew little of Old Testament teaching. They may never have read in the Book of Proverbs, "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." Nor, apparently, had the full meaning of Christ's love entered into their hearts. And so we have Paul teaching them how to show true Christian love, not only to those whom they liked and admired but also to those whom they believed to be wrong; "Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance" (I Cor. 13: 4-7, N.E.B.).

But still, today, the meanness of human nature reveals itself in the church. We, as individuals, can still find pleasure in hearing some report (though it be exaggerated or untrue) which gives us grounds for feeling justified in our condemnation, which enables us to say, "That is just what I would have expected."

This uncharitable fault may be present in us not only as individuals but also as a community. We often pray that "all men may come to a knowledge of Thy truth" and yet any suggestion that those in another community are coming to a better realisation of God's way brings from some a hostile refusal to acknowledge that this is so. It could not be conceded, for instance, that the officials of the Roman Catholic Church are making remedial moves which will make their position less astray from the truth as we understand it. There sometimes seems to be real pleasure in hearing evil spoken of that and other

churches, whether it be justified or not, and some hearts find considerable satisfaction at the thought of the fearful destruction which will befall evil doers at the day of judgment when we (it is believed) shall be proved so absolutely right and others so absolutely wrong.

Or again, we find ourselves in disagreement with the author of *Honest to God*, and so many of us are unwilling to see that in some of his statements and other writings there is truth indeed. Having made our judgment we prefer to rejoice in downing his heresy rather than in rejoicing in his ability to see the absurdity of many church practices. We ourselves have long preached simplicity of worship but we are apt to be displeased when a prominent member of the established church takes up our theme. But see what he writes!

But, more seriously, the whole theological front is now wide open: the very foundations are exposed. This I cannot but believe is a healthy and hopeful thing. In the process there is nothing that will not be questioned, and many things will be shaken.

Then he quotes from Monica Furlong, with approval:

The best thing about being a Christian at the moment is that organised religion has collapsed. I know, of course, that the Vatican Council meets, that in churches and chapels up and down the land people are still meeting to worship God But for those who have ears to hear and lips to tell, it is common knowledge that the foundations have shivered When we try to walk in the old paths of religion we find them broken and obliterated For while the great holocaust is sweeping away much that is beautiful and all that is safe and comfortable and unquestioned, it is relieving us of mounds of Christian bric-à-brac as well, and the liberation is unspeakable. Stripped of our nonsense we may

almost be like the early Christians

And later John Robinson, himself, writes:

We should be ready to recognize that this "clergy line" is neither native nor essential to the Church. It is indeed an alien importation It was entrenched in the Church at the time of its establishment under Constantine I believe the whole thing could disappear without loss

Is it not of tremendous interest to us that words such as these should come from within the orthodox church? There is an upheaval in Christian thinking today, and many of the doctrines of the church which to us have been untenable are being scrutinised by its theologians, and such matters as baptism are being seen in a new light.

While we do not suppose that there will ever be, in this age, unity of Christian thinking yet we should beware lest we should be trying to disprove doctrines which are no longer held by those who, in some ways, think differently from us, and even more beware lest we should be unwilling to recognise that if we think deeply on the things of God, we are not the only ones who do so.

PLEASE CHECK

We now use an Addressograph machine in the dispatch of the Magazine. Addresses are typed on a stencil, and once this is correct there should be no mistakes in addressing the envelopes.

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INSPIRATION



By Wilfred Lambert

(2)

The Character of Inspiration

IN our last article we took exception to a statement of the late Dean Burgon that every book, chapter, verse, syllable and letter of the Bible is "the direct utterance of the Most High" as too extreme a formulation. By including "letters" the worthy dean did more to help

the cause of his enemies than that of his friends. The adjective "direct" is equally unfortunate, though a consideration of its inadequacy does help to set the mind along more fruitful lines. The writer to the Hebrews states that God spoke not directly but "by the prophets" and "by his Son." They were intermediaries between God and the human race, so that the speaking was mediated rather than direct. It might be replied, as some have, that the inspired men were no more than tools in God's hands. Just as a man uses a pen or typewriter to set down his thoughts, so God employed holy men to transmit His utterances. An objection that has usually seemed fatal to this view is the differing style and language of the different books. It can only be overcome by asserting that God chose to reveal Himself in the very language and style which suited each individual author. Such a hypothesis is uncomfortably similar to an argument of those who hold that God first created the universe exactly 4,000 years before the birth of Christ. When confronted with age-old fossils they reply that God put the fossils in the rocks in 4,004 B.C. to confound the critics. Ideas that need to be defended with that kind of argument are best forgotten. The thought that God revealed Himself mechanically in Greek and Hebrew is surely unnecessary and a little naïve, and the wise and more satisfactory view, more suited to the differences of style so evident in the records, is that the words of the Bible are both the words of God and of the human authors.

Such a formulation, altogether admirable so far as it goes, does not answer every question. To go a stage further and to assert that God provided the thoughts and the human authors the words is to get into deep water. Many psychologists believe that rational thought is impossible without words, and the more profoundly one studies the languages of Scripture the more one is impressed with the intimate connection of thought and language. We come, in fact, face to face with a fundamental issue which underlies all questions of inspiration: the problem of communication. In giving revela-

tions God communicated knowledge from His sphere to ours. In inspiration God communicates some measure of divine perspective to the human recipients. God achieves these ends not directly, but by His Spirit, though in saying this we have explained very little, for we have no knowledge of how God's Spirit works.

One certainty is that communication from the divine to the human sphere can in the nature of the case be no simple thing. How lowly is man when confronted with the Almighty. Before God the nations are as a drop in a bucket (Isaiah 40: 15). Intellectually and spiritually man is on an altogether lower plane: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," (Isaiah 55: 8-9). Some moderns talk as though they were on God's level and have the same kind of intimacy in sharing God's counsels as they might with their human employers. They forget that even among humans communication presupposes a similar mental level and a common language and thought pattern. The writer recently had occasion to read an application of a young American to study the Korean language. The applicant had been in Korea in the American army, and had gone to the country with the express hope of putting right Korean misapprehensions about American aims. On arrival he was able to use excellent interpreters through which to talk to Koreans, but to his chagrin he completely failed in his purpose. Despite all his efforts he never really made contact with a single Korean. Their whole outlook on life was so different that the words exchanged communicated no rational thought. Readers may have had similar experiences with foreigners, or may remember the debate on "Immortality" between a Jesuit and an atheist, which the BBC planned some years ago. In the event it did not take place, as the debaters could not find a sufficient area of agreement on the definition of their subject to be able to proceed further. In fact, even within our own small circle of

acquaintances there are probably some with whom intelligent discussion of certain topics would be impossible, because of differing outlooks. Communication between intelligent adults is subject to these kinds of difficulties, but between adults and children still further problems arise. Parents of young children are often asked questions to which they could give a fair answer, but since they know that the questioning child is incapable of absorbing the whole truth they reply with a rough approximation. For example, a professor of zoology asked by a child, "What is a zebra?" will not, if he is wise, attempt to repeat what he has learnt from advanced text-books or his own research. He will probably reply that it is a striped horse. The child knows what a horse is and knows a stripe, and the answer thus conveys the right idea. Yet the answer is in fact untrue. The zebra is not a horse.

The analogy can be taken further. When dealing with children of five a teacher must be careful not to use difficult words, not to draw on facts and ideas beyond the children's comprehension, and to present everything in a simple way. What is said and done in these circumstances is not the real essence of the teacher's knowledge and personality, but a simplification of them. If the same teacher has a class of ten-year-olds, he will draw more fully on the extent of his knowledge and experience, but he must still simplify. If the same teacher were responsible for advanced research students of 21 at a university, he could address them on his own level. Only then can the teacher be his real self.

Though the parent to child relationship is a figure often used in the Bible, our example of teacher to child has one limitation. Any normal child may grow to be the intellectual and moral equal of his teacher, but only one man, Christ, could ever claim anything approaching equality with God. The rest of humanity, no matter how far they proceed in the spiritual life, are in this world inevitably far below divine standards. Since we ascribe to God wisdom greater than that of any parent or teacher, we

must assume that His self-revelation—intended as it was to teach and discipline any of the human race who may heed it—has been accommodated to our level. In it we do not find the very essence of God: that is beyond our comprehension. We find a simplification of divine truths within the grasp of the human mind.

The Bible itself provides very clear illustrations of this truth of God's condescension to our own level. It will not be doubted that the spiritual standards of Israel varied during the course of their history. The Hebrew serfs who came out of Egypt were different from Jerusalem society of the time of Isaiah. And the Jerusalemites of Jesus' time were again different. We believe that God's revelation was adapted to the needs of each age. That the facts are so can be demonstrated both from the revelations given at the various stages of history and from statements of New Testament writers. The simplest and clearest case is offered in the contrast between the Old and the New Testaments.

A testament, or covenant, was a kind of legal obligation accepted in Old Testament times by a people vis-à-vis a superior. The Assyrian kings, for example, imposed covenants on various of the peoples they subjugated. The covenant took the form of a carefully written treaty whose terms the subject people agreed to observe. The terms, roughly, were to be loyal to the Assyrian overlord in every way. In return they accepted the protection of the Assyrian king, no matter how unwelcome it might have been! God's covenant with Israel was accepted by the Hebrews under the same kind of legal framework, though the terms were of course on an altogether different plane. They acknowledged God as their superior and in return for observing the treaty terms they were promised prosperity and protection. The New Testament, or covenant, is basically similar, except that it is an individual matter, not national. The person who wishes to enter into this covenant must acknowledge God as his superior and resolve to keep the terms of the covenant. In return he becomes associated with the divine purpose and can reap all the spiritual benefits which this involves. Thus each

Testament has certain terms which are in a sense the standard of the covenant. For the Old Testament the Pentateuch is full of requirements which were laid on the children of Israel. If one wants to select a few portions which typify these rules and regulations, perhaps the Ten Commandments and the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20-23) would suffice. For the New Testament the standards required are to be found in the teaching and example of Jesus and His early followers. The Sermon on the Mount and Paul's praise of the all-embracing Christian virtue, love, would perhaps serve as summaries of these standards. No honest reader can deny that the New Testament teaching presents a more mature and advanced conception of holiness than the Old Testament laws. Missionaries have found that newly converted tribes are often not ready for the Sermon on the Mount and have to be nurtured under the Ten Commandments until they have grown in understanding.

About these simple facts there is no dispute. The teaching of Jesus is on a higher level than that of Moses. Was, then, the God Who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt different from the Father of Jesus? This question brings us to the very heart of the problem. The word "direct," which Dean Burgon used, is singularly inappropriate in approaching this question. The issue is not one of mechanism—did God use an intermediary or not?—but of degree—is the Bible of the very essence of the deity or less? The former view has been asserted more frequently than assented to. Out of a sense of loyalty to Scripture many believers, like Dean Burgon, have made statements that seem to imply this, but if seriously challenged whether mere pen and ink could ever contain the very essence of God, affirmation is much more hesitant. But the issue has to be faced, and loyalty must not allow us to assert what is untrue. A good motive, unfortunately, does not justify unsound reasoning. The test, such as we propose, amounts to this. If Scripture does contain the very essence of the deity, its attributes must be absolute, like the deity, and this involves uniformity. God does not change. If, on the

other hand, God, in speaking to His wayward children, has condescended to their level, the level of His teaching may vary: milk for the babes, but strong meat for those that are of full age. It will be a simplification of God's nature, not His very essence.

The alternatives only have to be stated in this way for the answer to be obvious. We can only affirm that the fullness of the divine glory is revealed in the Bible by bringing down this glory to something like human level. Yet in this matter Christians of many ages have wanted both to have their cake and to eat it. While unable to deny the gulf between divine and human, they would still like to believe that the very fullness of divine nature is projected into the human sphere in God's revelation. In the early second century, for example, when the early church was sorting out its beliefs after the deaths of those who spoke with power and authority, there arose one named Marcion, who, starting from the assumption that an inspired book must be uniform, honestly faced the consequences. In his work called *Contradictions* he drew out, quite like a 19th century rationalist, the contrast between the bloodthirsty tribal god of the Hebrews and the loving Father of Jesus. They were, he concluded, two quite different gods, the former of whom he completely rejected. Accordingly his Bible had no Old Testament, and his New Testament was pruned of all books and passages which were opposed to his position. The early church rightly considered Marcion a heretic, but they did not refute his logic. Accepting his premise of a uniform Bible one cannot reach a different conclusion. If inspiration guarantees absolute truths, there cannot be two standards of morality, the one higher than the other.

While rejecting his conclusions, the early church continued to cling to his premise and attempted to reconcile the two Testaments. The commonest means was to try to bring the Old Testament up to the level of the New, and to this day such attempts continue. The usual technique in the early centuries was allegory, of which Origen was the famous expounder. It was

argued that in addition to the plain sense of the words, Scripture often had a hidden meaning which would be apparent to spiritually minded persons. All Old Testament passages which in their literal sense seemed out of harmony with New Testament teaching had a spiritual meaning read into them, and thereby the uniformity of Scripture was maintained. More recently typology has replaced allegory, though the procedure is essentially the same. It may be argued that whatever the extremes to which allegory and typology have been pushed, their correctness in principle is confirmed by, for example, Paul's allegorisation of the two children of Abraham in Galatians 4 and the typological exposition of the Letter to the Hebrews. One question must be put before the relevance of this answer can be admitted. To take the bigger case only, did the writer to the Hebrews state or imply that those under the Old Covenant could or should have understood the types and antitypes that he expounds? Unless they were understood they are irrelevant for the present purpose. God revealed Himself in concrete human settings. If the instructions on living given in these particular circumstances were understood in the plain literal sense only, it matters not what further meaning may be found by later generations. The literal sense is that by which they should be assessed. The children of Israel entered the Old Covenant and accepted the obligations imposed on them as their duty to God: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." It would have been a perverse God who bound His people in this way to observe certain laws without warning them that a hidden meaning had to be sought. A study of the Old Testament shows that the literal sense was the thing demanded. In the course of their history the chosen people often failed to live up to the standards of the covenant, and the writings of the prophets are full of passages in which their faults are specified. They had worshipped foreign gods, oppressed the poor, worked on the Sabbath, and extorted interest, all things condemned by the literal sense of the Law. At times the prophets go beyond the teaching of

the Law and come very close to New Testament standards. Micah, for example, with his 'to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with one's God' shows a knowledge of the principle that mere animal sacrifice will not please God. But Micah does not draw this out of the Law. It was revealed to him personally by God. The same applies to the other prophets. It is nowhere stated or implied that such gems of divine truth should have been drawn out of the Law by uninspired Hebrews. The old Rabbinic dictum that the prophets were the interpreters of the Law is based on the *a priori* belief that the Law is vastly superior to the prophets. But the Old Testament does not support this idea.

Similarly there is nothing in the New Testament which suggests that allegorical and typological insights were meant for Old Testament times. These kinds of exegesis do not, therefore, obliterate the difference in moral tone between the two covenants. Another kind of reconciliation is to bring the New Testament down to the level of the Old. This astonishing idea has more advocates than one would expect. In some circles it is known as the doctrine of the "interim ethic." According to this, the teaching of Christ was not intended as the purest reflection yet known to man of divine standards, but only as a means of disciplining men and women during their probationary life on earth. When Christ returns and the saints are made immortal this temporary support can be cast aside, and Christ's soldiers will then happily take up machine-guns and mow down the enemies of the Lord. Such a horrifying misrepresentation of Christianity stresses passages which speak of God's anger and vengeance and turns a blind eye to much of the New Testament.

Both these attempts at reconciliation ride roughshod over one Testament or the other. It is indeed a very clear example of the difficulties which multiply from a false premise. The idea that an inspired book must be completely uniform is the false premise. Once it has been accepted the plain evidence to the contrary has to be explained away. In fact the New Testa-

ment offers many unambiguous statements that its teaching represents an advance on that of the Old. In his letter to the Galatians Paul explains the relationship of the Law to Christ: "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (3: 24). The term translated "schoolmaster" in the Authorised Version denotes the slave in a wealthy Greek or Roman household who escorted a boy to and from school, and since our society and language have no such institution or term the New English Bible renders it "a kind of tutor." This "tutor" did not teach, but merely led the pupil to his master. The inferiority of the "tutor" to the actual teacher is very plain, and since, according to Paul, the Law similarly led the Hebrews to Christ, it must be considered inferior to Him. In Colossians 2:9 Paul wrote: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This means that the most of God that was ever seen in human form was present in the person of Jesus. By implication less than the fullness was embodied in Moses and the prophets. Whole sections of New Testament teaching could be quoted in support of this proposition. The third chapter of the Second Letter to the Corinthians contrasts the glory of the first Covenant and "the glory that excellet" of the second. A key point in Paul's exposition of the Gospel is the contrast between Law and Grace. The earlier portion of the Sermon on the Mount is built on the contrast between "it was said to them of old time" and "but I say unto you." The whole argument of the Letter to the Hebrews is a contrasting of the two Covenants. Although in the New Testament the superiority of Christ rather than the inferiority of the Law is the line taken, no significance rests on this. In a church based on Hebrews, and in which Hebrews were still numerically strong, obvious reasons of tact lay behind the choice of the positive aspect rather than its negative corollary. The Law was "holy, just, and good," as Paul stressed, but it was still superseded by Christ. Perhaps the clearest statement of the advance in knowledge in New Testament times occurs in I Corinthians 2: 9-10. In speaking of Christian

knowledge he quotes from Scripture. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." This is often quoted to illustrate the unknown blessings in store for the righteous, but the continuing words contradict this: "but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The quotations made by Paul are a combination of passages in Isaiah (64:4, 65:17, 52:15), and the reasoning is that what was unknown to the prophet has now been made known to the Christian church by God's Spirit.

Such a profusion of Scriptural testimony fully justifies the concept of progressive revelation, though the term is of course a modern invention. God revealed more in Christ than in Moses. Attempts have been made to circumvent the clear implications of this indisputable conclusion by alleging that the progress is one strictly of quantity, not of quality. In other words, while more knowledge was available in New Testament times, there was no fundamental difference in the quality of religion. So far as we have been able to ascertain, this idea is not based on any particular evidence of Scripture, but stems from the false premise already discussed, that an inspired book must be uniform. Some Christians have been seriously embarrassed by the Old Testament. The imprecatory Psalms, which pray for vengeance on the wives and children of enemies, Jephthah's rash vow, the presence of Rahab the harlot in the ancestry of the Messiah, Elisha's cursing of a group of children, are a few of the passages which have caused trouble. Every devout reader senses that the Spirit of Christ does not pervade the Old Testament to the extent that it does the New. One way of dealing with the situation is to cut out the offending passages as unworthy of Christ. The fault of this method is that those who share it set themselves up as arbiters pronouncing judgment on the Word of God. Another method essentially refuses to face the facts and by a most tortuous exegesis either asserts that the passages do not say what they do, or offers an attempted justification in the light of Christian

principles. Basically it is the choice between Marcion or Origen. Either we reject, or we explain away.

The difficulty resolves when the concept of progressive revelation is accepted. We are no longer burdened with the necessity of trying to make out that every character in the Old Testament lived up to Christian standards or that every prophet preached the whole Gospel. Nor do we put ourselves in the position of those who know better and look down with a patronising superiority. Instead we follow with intense humility the working out of God's purposes with Israel. To make our own attitude clear let it be said plainly that we do not belong to those who consider that the Old Testament can be given substantially less attention than the New. On the contrary there is so much spiritual food to be gained from it that Christians who practically ignore it are depriving themselves. The history of the 20th century can only make us realise that despite the preaching of the Gospel for nearly 2,000 years much of the world is well below the level of the Old Testament. Which of us can compare with Hosea, whose keen awareness of sin and whose soul wounded by suffering was not far from Christ? Or which of us in a lawless period would have risen to the spiritual level of David? How many Christians can claim to breathe the spirit of the Psalmists?

A frank and honest comparison of the two Testaments leaves room for two opinions only. Either we must say that the God of the one is not the God of the other, or we must admit that God in His wisdom spoke in a way that could be understood in each age, that in His greatness He condescended to us. Unlike many Oriental religions, the Hebrew and Christian faiths do not present a picture of a static world. Rather God moves in history. At a fixed point in time He created the universe. Later man was created. Moses and Christ were further landmarks in divine history, which is still leading onwards to the consummation of all things. Our Bible faithfully reflects two stages in this process.

(To be concluded)

LETTERS

Genesis and Palaeontology

Though I feel distressed by many of the thoughts expressed in *Endeavour*, I find that Bro. R. Richards' remarks on page 32 of the Spring, 1965, issue very unfortunate indeed. Our brother suggests that a qualified person should appraise the geological and palaeontological evidence from Abram's time to the Creation and from this evidence determine the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis. Evidently then, what is scientifically authenticated, we may believe is historical, and what is not established by present scientific data, we have to accept in faith. In other words, science is the ground on which the Bible, at least early Genesis, is to be tested. Is this wise? Have we ever been instructed by the Almighty to place this much value on the wisdom of this world? Are we so bewitched by the wisdom of the 20th century that we deem it necessary to test the inspired word of God by imperfect scientific knowledge?

There is no doubt at all that our times have produced marvellous and awe-inspiring technological advancements, but all fields of science should not be grouped together and treated with the same amount of reliability. As a substantial contributing factor in determining the historicity of Genesis, we should not rely too heavily on the science of palaeontology, especially vertebrate palaeontology. This is simply because the science is based upon theoretical foundations which themselves are subject to change and disputation along with much of the research work.

Though I do not want to mention any individual names, the writer worked for five years amongst vertebrate palaeontologists at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. From what I saw I can assure anyone that the challenge presented against the word of God by these evolutionists is greatly overrated. In fact, instead of being on the defensive in this matter of answering modern science, we should turn the tables and challenge science to prove its claims. This would seem more logical as science cannot claim any such Authority as we have.

Permit me to cite one example of what I learned during my years with palaeontologists. Most of us are no doubt familiar with the alleged evolution of the horse. Many high school biology books and all university level tests carry the story of the horse's evolution with accompanying diagrams. This is considered the outstanding demonstration of evolution in action. Hardly a natural history museum throughout the world will omit a typical display of equine evolution. This usually consists of a geologic time chart from Eocene to Recent epochs over which is superimposed the skulls (if available) or drawings of horses from little *Eohippus* of the Eocene to modern-day *Equus* of the Recent epoch. Between these two horses will be shown a number of fossil horses increasing in size and culminating with the largest specimen of *Equus*. Though it is admitted to the specialised student (in books) that this portrait of the horse is oversimplified, it nevertheless finds its way in most recent evolutionary publications and serves to mislead and deceive millions of laymen. I learned, in fact, that this usual concept of horse evolution is not true to facts and that what is being taught in general biology is erroneous. The notion of small horse advancing to large horse is a fantasy. On the top floor of the American Museum there can be found a gigantic collection of fossil mammals amongst which there are over a thousand fossil horse skulls including many with skeletal parts. On each skull, the geological formation from which the specimen was taken has been carefully noted. And upon investigation, it will be seen that there is no evidence for one clear phylogenetic line of horse development, but rather this vast collection shows an assemblage of diverse creatures of varying sizes and shapes all living contemporaneously at various points of time in the Tertiary Period.

If this is noted, then what reliance can we place on other palaeontological "facts"? What about the elaborate reconstruction of Mesozoic reptiles? How valid are the endless charts of mammalian evolution in which dotted lines are arbitrarily employed to indicate supposed relationships? How accurate a

picture do geologic periods themselves present? Scientists are constantly arguing about the geologic time of fossil sites. For example, some students feel there is a time sequence represented by the fauna of Alaska; others believe there is no time sequence at all. But the shakiest of all "facts" we have been asked to believe are the man-ape reconstructions where complete heads have been modelled around a tooth or skull fragment.

Unfortunately, in the field of palaeontology, much of what was originally conjecture as to the evolutionary development of animal families, has become so time honoured that speculation has "evolved" into fact. Thus it is from questionable theories that devoted men and women of this science have constructed conclusions equally as questionable.

Brother Richards says it is not unreasonable to attempt to give an account of the development of life on earth on the basis of the facts with which the scientist is presented. But how many of the true facts have come woefully short of all that is to be known. The doctor faces the unknown almost every day. As we have briefly tried to show we need not, and should not, place such importance on geology and palaeontology as our brother advocates.

I have always been pleased to view science in another way. Accepting the word of God at face value, I have viewed, for example, archaeological discoveries as a thrilling and fascinating confirmation of that word. That we should take the word, and determine its historicity by present scientific data is placing greater veracity in mundane facts than in God's exalted word.

May I appeal, dear brethren and sisters of *Endeavour*, with a feeling of deep concern and sense of urgency, that we approach the scriptures as little children full of trust and Abrahamic faith, and let us indeed *reassess* the evidence of secular knowledge to see if it conforms with the Word of God.

ELLEN STYLES,

Pasadena, Texas.

There is much in the above letter with which neither we, nor Bro. Richards, could disagree. We have never suggested that every latest scientific opinion should be accepted uncritically, nor that the Bible must be wrong if it fails to conform to current scientific theories. The picture presented in this letter does not adequately represent our viewpoint. What we do say is that when there is an apparent conflict between science and the Bible we should seek a reasonable answer so as to defend the Faith we espouse.

At one time it was generally believed that the earth was flat, and Scripture was quoted to support

this idea: "As the heavens are higher than the earth . . .," " . . . in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath . . ." Such passages seemed quite clear and unambiguous to those who used them in this way, and a very small minority still cling to the idea of a flat earth for this reason. In their own estimation they are "reassessing the evidence of secular knowledge to see if it conforms with the Word of God." Most, however, and with them our correspondent, we suspect, find the secular evidence for a round earth so convincing that we explain the passages concerned as poetic language not to be construed as teaching the shape of our earth. It is not that the Bible has been proved wrong, but that a previous interpretation is now seen to have been mistaken.

Similarly with creation. Before geological evidence was forthcoming it was assumed that the whole of our solar system was created some four or five thousand years B.C. Genesis was quoted as proof of this. Now the geological evidence shows conclusively that the earth is considerably older than this. When evidence is so strong as it is for a round earth, we shall merely undermine the authority of Scripture by clinging to disproved interpretations and by using unconvincing arguments to explain away the plain evidence of our senses. The evidence for the antiquity of the earth is now so strong that the traditional interpretation of Genesis needs devout reappraisal. That the evidence of the rocks is fact and not theory is made abundantly clear by our correspondent, who refutes the theory of the evolution of the horse by reference, not to Genesis, but to fossils of the Tertiary Period.

In one respect the above letter makes us unhappy. It professes to accept the Word of God at face value. This just means accepting our first impressions as infallibly right. Is not this insisting that our personal interpretations cannot be wrong? One such impression maintained throughout the above is that if any part of Genesis is nonhistorical, it must be in error. This is one of those human ideas which just grow until, like evolutionary theories, they seem infallibly right. We do not accept this principle, since it can only be applied to Scripture as a whole with disastrous results.

Might we express the hope that our correspondent, in view of her experience, be a little more positive and explain how she relates knowledge gained from fossils to the record in Genesis? It is easy to point to errors of scientists. But scientists have no monopoly of folly. It can also occur among students of the Bible. When pointing the finger of scorn at the one, we should beware lest we are equally to blame in respect of the other.

Just in Time

I would like to say how much I agree with the main theme of Arthur Mallinder's article in the Summer 1965 issue of *Endeavour*, namely, on the care that should be exercised in the interpretation of the "signs of the times." But should not this same care be exercised on the interpretation of the literal or symbolic nature of the signs in the sun, moon and stars? The author, as evidence, brings forward only two points, both of which, in my opinion, carry little weight. First, that Luke 21: 11 describes literal events i.e. earthquakes, famines and therefore the signs from heaven must also be literal disturbances in the universe. Second, that as a star attended the birth of Jesus, and darkness His death, then it is appropriate that something equally spectacular should herald His second coming. I would suggest that the former point is weak, because signs from heaven may mean no more than signs from God and are more likely to be judgments of God on earth than cosmic disturbances. Again Luke 21: 11 would seem to describe signs that foretold the fall of the temple not the time of the end, though it may be contended that verses 10 and 11 are a summary of what follows. The second point is really a non-sequitur. It certainly does not follow,

that the appearance of a star (comet?) in Palestine at His first coming, necessitates a literal cosmic shaking of sun, moon, and stars at His second coming.

The arguments in favour of a symbolic interpretation of signs in the sun, moon and stars, are probably too well known to need repetition, but a glance at Isaiah 13: 10 helps.

For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

Verse 10 is interpreted by verse 11: —

And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

These verses are in the context of the Oracle concerning Babylon, and the Medes are named as God's instruments of Judgment. As the Olivet prophecy is full of Old Testament allusions it would seem reasonable to assume a symbolic interpretation of the signs in the heavens at the time of the end.

Birmingham

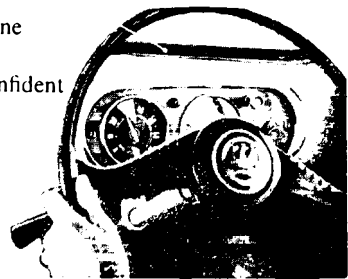
John Weaving

Point to Ponder

HOW do you drive? Recent surveys in U.S.A. and South Africa show that a man drives as he lives. Thus drivers with bad accident records tend to be immature, irresponsible, aggressive towards others and frivolous in their approach to life.

A man also drives as he would like to live, and someone who is normally quiet and unassuming may become self-confident and aggressive when behind the wheel of a car.

As God has called you, live up to your calling. Be humble always and gentle, and patient too . . . PAUL.



WHAT IS JUSTICE?

GRECIAN AND PAULINE TEACHING

By Sheila Harris

Part 4.—“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit.”

IF we could be Christians by our own effort then Christ has died in vain. This, as we have seen, is Paul's conclusion in Romans 8. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” However much we may and do need the discipline of the wilderness, the training in self control, the education in divine thinking, yet while we strive in our own strength we are bound to fail—ultimately. Indeed, it is those who are most successful at this who find it hardest to yield. The good is always the greatest enemy of the best. Perhaps it is this very discipline which teaches us at length that we fail—that we fail to reach the true riches of Christ. “O wretched man that I am!” said Paul. But the Christian life was not meant to be the vain striving after an ideal—an ideal which further and further eludes our grasp. Christ did not come to give man an ideal. Many wise men had thought this out before, Christ came to make it real. He both lived and was this ideal in the whole of His life, His death and His resurrection. In Him, too, the ideal becomes the real for us. Through the sacrifice by which He offered His life to God, this life was made available by the Spirit to all who would receive it.

The Sermon on the Mount is the crystallisation of our Lord's thought upon this. In this we are faced with the true law of Christ by which our motives, intentions and thoughts are challenged—and we know we fail. We can control our words and our actions—but what of our thoughts? We are faced with a constant uncon-

promising challenge, “Take no thought”—but we all do. “No man can serve two masters”—but we all do. “Consider the lilies”—do we? If this is an ideal to which we must try to conform, it is a counsel of despair. We just do not do it—and never will—of ourselves. Only one man ever has and that was Jesus Himself. How dare we even think that we could reach it? But the Sermon does not finish there; it is a perfect illustration of spiritual training; it passes through the disciple, to the vision, from the vision to the despair—from the despair to the means of accomplishment. “Ask, and it shall be given you . . . For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” God will respond to a prayer of faith and if we will build upon the rock of Christ, as the Sermon ends, nothing can shake us. There is then for us, freely offered, fully available, the abounding riches of Christ which God yearns to pour upon us for our blessing and our joy if we ask in faith, in weakness, in brokenness a blessing for which we all come as beggars with empty hands.

Is this righteousness of Christ just imposed upon the yielding and profitless clay of humanity—moulding, shaping, fashioning it to the measure of the fullness of Christ? Is there no avail in the seeking, the striving towards the light of God? Is there no value in our outreaching which has inspired all man's creative power in the realms of art, music, literature, philosophy and science? Paul says “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our

spirit;" there is an inner response in our hearts to the goodness and love of God.

Nygren, in his book *Eros and Agape*, defined the difference between the Greek idea of love—*eros*—as an inward urge in man leading him to seek a satisfaction beyond himself and *agape*—the divine love which came down to man in Jesus Christ. He tried to show how the Christian concept was wholly *agape*—God inspired, and God given, and that this alone is true Christian love. Then all our love and goodness is from God. But "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit." We have already seen the picture which Plato presents of the philosopher struggling from the dark cave of human, worldly awareness up the steep slope, up into the vision of the true light beyond the cave, constantly led onwards by that inner desire for ultimate satisfaction, knowing that in the ultimate vision he would find reality and true illumination. We have also seen that Paul uses this same image in the second epistle to the Corinthians 3: 18. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." So as we look unto the light we are transformed — our inner yearning for God — our *eros* is met by the *agape* of God. Here lies the meeting point of real and ideal — the moments of illumination — when our seeking, our faith, our trust are met by God's goodness — when the ideas and the ideals become real in a real world, when prayer is answered and we know that whereas we were blind, now we see, for "in Thy light shall we see light." The Christian Gospel is real, actual, visible even in our 20th century world if we will meet it, and trust it, and see it and know that true worship is daily life.

And in that meeting point we find our peace because in God we find ourselves. "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." As God meets our deepest needs, our inmost longings and satisfies our search for beauty, goodness and truth, so there wells up within us a true peace, for our inner conflicts are resolved, our strivings cease. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" said Jesus. This

is not a peace that comes from defeat over sin or conquest over evil; it is a peace that comes from a deep sense of self-fulfilment and self-realisation. It is not a peace that arises from denial and rejection but an inner happiness, which to its own surprise, finds that the goodness of God gives back in more abundant measure what in faithfulness to Him we had denied ourselves. And somehow life takes on a different hue. With God all things find their true worth. The sun shines more brightly, the birds sing more sweetly and all trees and flowers seem to echo more clearly that God is good to the soul at peace with Him. But above all, the man whose needs have been met, whose prayers have been answered, who has seen the hand of God in his own life, has a still deeper inner peace of soul, for he knows that God works in human life. He has that inner assurance that with God all things are possible. This is the antidote for care and worry. The faith which casts upon God all our care, trusting in His love, is true rest; the committing to Him of every deed and thought knowing that He knows far better than we what is best for us, is true peace. This is the faith to which God must respond for it is the true relationship of a child to its father. And in this trust lies the supreme joy of finding Him answering this trust in ways we never thought of and which we shall always find are far the best for us, if our eyes are not closed to His infinite love. For this is real joy and security — the knowledge that our Father hears and helps and works for us. And in this we find freedom too — a freedom for self, a freedom to be ourselves — not hampered, and restricted and restrained but freely, willingly, gladly laying on the altar our every talent for Him to use. "Stand fast then in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

But, whatever our inner joy in finding God, the supreme fruit of the Spirit is love, because it is in relationship with others that we experience most deeply the riches of Christ. The deep sense of our own failure which has brought us at last to God creates within us an understanding, a sympathy and a fellowship with others. But it is more than that. Love is a gift of God and comes from Him, for it is of His own nature. The love

that suffers long and is kind is not produced by discipline or training but by His Spirit blending with our spirit in a supreme act of self-giving. The first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 13, is not an exhortation to develop this quality, it is a definition of it enabling us to recognise this true fruit of the Spirit which, as Jesus shows, is the true hallmark of the Christian. And it cannot be explained or enforced. Somehow God makes us care and in that caring all our powers are refined. This is the care which helps to see another's need and longs to help; the care which delights to express itself in acts of mercy and deeds of kindness; the care which finds its joy in humble tasks and trivial ways—a smile, a word, a prayer, a warm drink, a hot dinner, a brief letter, a helping hand, a regular visit, a word of encouragement, of sympathy, of understanding. This is the love which expresses Christ in every deed. The poor widow with her two mites cast in more than they all. It is to those who ask, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger,

and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" that Jesus will say "Come."

As the Roman world looked upon the early Christians, they saw first not the truth of their beliefs, the purity of their lives, the zeal of their service, their willingness to suffer, their steadfastness, their devotion and their trust, but there rose from the lips of that spiritually needy world the famous cry, "How they love one another, how happy they are to be together." And this is true justice or righteousness, for the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit.

Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life and fire of love;
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of Thy grace;
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where Thou art guide no ill can come.

COMMENT

Committees

IN the public life of Britain it is often said that we are in the age of committees. If there is a sticky problem to be solved or an unwanted job to be done, then we "set up a committee." Action can be postponed because "we do not want to pre-judge what the committee will say," or "we are waiting for the committee report," or "the report is received and under consideration."

Committees can also be used publicity-wise to put over to the public unwe'come decisions. Gather together a group of popular and respectable citizens, feed in through the secretariat some strong suggestions and out comes a report with recommendations which would never otherwise have achieved authority and respectability. For if these respectable citizens say so, it must be right.

More seriously, however, the reason for the proliferation of committees is to be found in the complications of modern life and thought. At their best, committees may be "working parties" or, more grandiloquently, "Royal Commissions." In either case they are composed of experts skilled in various facets of the problem who can contribute objectively to the subject under review. It would, however, be useless to have, for example, a commission on the death penalty composed entirely of abolitionists or retentionists, or even a group of non-committed middle-of-the-roaders who have never been exercised on the problem and are never likely to be. What is required is informed people, whatever their view, who are prepared to produce the soundest interpretation of all the evidence which may be available, and to recommend accordingly.

In religious circles, commissions or councils of this type are by no means new. The first Christian example is in Acts, Ch. 15: 6 when "The apostles and e'ders held a meeting to look into this matter." (N.E.B.)

It has now become clear that the formation of a committee or council to review the situation

of Christadelphians today is highly desirable and overdue. Dr Thomas' words are perhaps applicable "... choose a council of the wisest men among you, and let them be your Witenagemote."

If the committee is composed of informed brethren, aware of the real problems of the day, and if they are prepared to make bold recommendations in line with the clearest biblical, practical and modern knowledge available, they will do immense service to the welfare and survival of the community. If they eschew pressures from vociferous elements and other ill-informed sources; if they rise above merely compromise solutions, diplomatically aimed to avoid criticism, then they will merit high praise.

The responsibility resting on such a committee would be great. On their report, the community as a whole would be judged by our contemporaries. If the aim is simply to produce a report, supported by popular names, then we will be back where we started within a few years or even months. The aim should be to produce recommendations which will stand the test of time, and the committee must avoid being stampeded by cries of urgency into making quick, but too lightly considered, judgments.

Inspiration

INSPIRATION is so fundamental to our faith that discussion of it is essential so that we may present our beliefs as effectively as possible to the 20th century world. Our claim that the Bible is the Word of God is so staggering, and of such momentous importance if true, that we must show patience with those who, at least to begin with, are sceptical. They may ask us how pen and ink could possibly contain a full expression of God Almighty, and if we are not prepared with a reasonable and thoughtful answer, we shall have failed our Lord in letting an opportunity drop. Unfortunately discussion of this subject among us has been much impeded in the past. For many decades the subject was virtually taboo because it was held by many that the subject of inspiration had been the cause of a major division in our body. More recently difficulties of a different kind have arisen. Any attempt to define more clearly, or in more intelligible language, what we mean by our acceptance of the plenary inspiration of the Bible has been viewed with suspicion by some of weak faith as a veiled attempt to overthrow the doctrine altogether. "Some have

departed from the traditional belief in inspiration" was the ominous way in which one (anonymous) writer chose to put it. "Loose theories of inspiration" is another phrase being bandied about, which is hardly a well-chosen expression in view of the moral associations of "loose." What one would like to know is what this "traditional belief in inspiration" really is, and here no success can be reported. Vague, unformed ideas are floating about, but we have found so far no clear account in writing of what this doctrine is supposed to be.

It was, then, with anticipation that starting with the past New Year *The Christadelphian* was noted to be putting out a series of articles on this very subject by Bro. F. T. Pearce. This brother was certainly well prepared since over the last year or two he has been lecturing up and down the country on this topic on behalf of a vaguely specified group of brethren, apparently with the aim of supporting whatever may be conceived as "the traditional belief in inspiration." Here, then, a formal statement could be expected. But now that all five articles have been read we are puzzled. We are no nearer to ascertaining what is meant by this phrase than we were before our reading.

It would be grossly unfair to the author to leave the matter here, since there is much of value in his series, and it was not so much what he said, as what he left unsaid, and indeed unattempted, that disappointed us. First, he offered a summary of claims to inspiration made in the Bible. Then at greater length he disposed of objections, and concluded with a brief summary. Here and there in answering the objections the author impinged on what we were looking for, but there was no systematic treatment of the topic so that one is left without a clear picture of the author's conception of inspiration.

In detail, too, we found ourselves a little uncomfortable at some of the things written. Any study must be based on certain facts. On page 102, however, to cite one clear example, a selection of facts and opinions is presented in such a way that the total impression is completely unfactual. It is claimed that there are no serious textual variants in Hebrew MSS of the Old Testament. Admittedly late Hebrew MSS (mostly written after A.D. 1,000) are almost identical. But what use is it to give details of Kennicott's 18th century work on late MSS when today we have an increasing number a full thousand years older? This early evidence shows that there were important differences between old Hebrew MSS. The Septuagint

of Job, for example, is approximately one-fifth shorter than the text we read. The same version has substantial differences in the books of Samuel, by way both of omission and addition. The Septuagint of Genesis gives ages for the early patriarchs differing by one hundred years in each case from the traditional Hebrew text. Previously it was possible to dismiss the Septuagint as an incompetent version done by men who tampered with the sacred text, though this view showed scant respect for the early church's adoption of it. Since the Dead Sea scrolls have been found it has become apparent that many of these variations in fact go back to Hebrew MSS and have, *a priori*, as much claim to be the original text as the traditional Hebrew. It is also strange that W. F. Albright is so quoted as to give the impression that there is one Hebrew text of the Old Testament only, when it is he, in fact, who has done much to draw attention to the divergencies between the earliest known Hebrew MSS.¹

We are not for one moment suggesting that salvation depends on a knowledge of these matters. No fundamental doctrine depends on doubtful readings. The message of God is clear in any version one may choose to read. But we cannot hold our peace when someone encourages people to build their faith on false information. That is no useful service to Christ.

The method of proving a point by quoting (or misquoting) authorities is not confined to this one case. On p. 7 some excerpts are given from the early fathers of the church "as affirming an unconditional belief in the inspiration and accuracy of both Old and New Testaments." The first quotation is from Origen. We may suspect that the author has not read Origen's comment on the difficult verse in Matthew (27: 9) that quotes some words from Zechariah and ascribes them to Jeremiah:

In the scriptures it is nowhere found that Jeremiah uttered this prophecy in his books, whether as read in the churches or as circu-

lated among the Jews. I suspect it is either an error of scripture and "Jeremiah" is put for "Zechariah," or there is an apocryphal book of Jeremiah in which it occurs.

Clearly Origen should not have been quoted for belief in unconditional accuracy.

These, and other small matters, we do not wish to delay over, for, as already intimated, our real disappointment is that the author has not gone into the question of the workings of inspiration, yet this is the question which most commonly arises in the minds of thoughtful men and women of this century. We claim that the Bible is the Word of God, but the style and personality of the human writers show on the surface. At the top of the second column on page 153 we seem to be getting the answer:

It is clear that inspiration cannot have proceeded by a kind of mechanical dictation, but rather that the whole personality of the writer became infused with the Spirit of God and blended with it.

But only one paragraph lower down on the same page, commenting on Isaiah's reception of a divine message, the author states: "It (the message) was exact and must have been verbal." Was not this, then, as good as mechanical dictation? And the next paragraph goes on to say: "The Holy Spirit employed the expressions and forms of speech that would be understood by the prophet and his hearers." It is hard to see anything but mechanical dictation in this. The subject matter on this page needs much explaining. We cannot, however, go further into this matter ourselves, otherwise we should be trespassing on Bro. W. G. Lambert's subject in both this and the previous *Endeavour*. His articles are not published as a committee statement, but are given in the belief that the questions he deals with must be squarely faced if we are to succeed in presenting the Gospel to the men and women of our generation. They are not offered as a final statement, but as a basis for discussion, and any comments on them, whether favourable or critical, will be welcome, provided only they are written in the spirit of Christ.

¹ *Bulletin of the Amer. Schools of Oriental Research* no. 140 pp. 27-33.



Christianity and Other Religions

A Faith For This One World, by Lesslie Newbigin. Wyvern Books. 1965. Price: 3s. 6d.

WITH the increasing facility of travel and communication the problem of relating Christianity to religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam has become more acute. Previous to the 20th century this problem would, for the most part, have concerned only those travelling in the East. But thousands of foreign students are now studying in Europe and America, and Eastern religions are being actively propagated in the West. What would we reply if confronted by a zealous supporter of, say, Buddhism?

The apostle Paul must have been in a not dissimilar situation. He was preaching Christianity to many who had a completely different religious background. It has been suggested that we can find the Christian answer to the possibility of salvation for those who have not heard of Christ in Paul's letter to the Romans:

When Gentiles who do not possess the law carry out its precepts by the light of nature, then, although they have no law, they are their own law, for they display the effect of the law inscribed on their hearts. Their conscience is called as witness, and their own thoughts argue the case on either side, against them or even for them, on the day when God judges the secrets of human hearts through Christ Jesus. So my gospel declares.

Romans 2: 14-16, N.E.B.

Does this mean that all religions lead to the same place, and that therefore we need not try to convert those of other religious convictions? Is Christianity unique, or does the future demand that the best of each religion in the world be merged to create a common religion?

Lesslie Newbigin, who has worked for over 20 years as a missionary among the different religious backgrounds in South India, sets out to answer this question.

He begins by examining the problem his-

torically. When Christian missions first set out to the East, they brought European civilisation with them. The missionaries were not clear in their own minds in distinguishing between Christianity and Western culture, and an English education was thought to be the initial means of bringing men to Christ. Since those times, two things have happened: there has been a vast renaissance of ancient cultures and religions, and, along with this, the white races have discredited themselves in the eyes of the rest of the world. For many in the East, the West stands for war, sex, and technics. Our technical skill is much needed and is adopted rapidly, but our wars are not wanted, nor are Western morals which currently are lower than those of the East.

It is easy to see how that, because of the early association between Christianity and Western civilisation, the decadent state of our society is readily associated with our religion.

Yet, Newbigin points out, the adoption of Western technology carries with it some important basic implications. These arise out of the following differences between Christianity and other religions.

Most Asian religions regard the visible world as an illusion; Christianity, on the other hand, sees this as the work of God. Technology only makes sense in terms of this latter world of reality. But the differences go deeper than this. Apart from Christianity, almost all of the religions of the world have a cyclical view of history: birth, life, death, in an eternal circle. Christianity, however, believes that there is a purpose, a goal, in history. Again, it is from the latter view that technology arises. The technology taken over by the East is, therefore, founded on two conceptions native to Christianity alone. That the visible world is real, and that history is going towards some definite end.

The increasing use of this technology all over the world is drawing nations away from the idea of a cycle in history and is gathering the whole world into a single history. This process inevitably raises the question of the destiny of man. At the moment, the nations see their destiny in terms of better conditions and more money. But such ambitions are apt to lose their attraction once they are fulfilled, and the question is again pressed: "What is the destiny of man as such and what, therefore, is the true absolute which must govern his life?" The Christian sees the answer to this in Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

The spread, then, of a world-wide, secular, technological culture is not, as might at first seem, a reason for despair. For it shows the necessity

for a world faith, and Christianity by its very nature, argues Newbigin, is more suited to this than any other religion.

In his second chapter the author examines three views on a world faith for the future.

(a) There is that advocated by Professor Radhakrishnan of India. This view arises from within the Hindu tradition, and claims that God revealed to the Hindu that: "I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls." Thus it is claimed that there is essential truth underlying all religions. Every man must be encouraged to be faithful to the religious path of his choice, but he should nevertheless attempt to penetrate behind the creeds and dogmas of religions until he reaches the one truth: identity with the Supreme Being.

This view presents infinite tolerance to everything but intolerance, and this is where it clashes with Christianity. For Christianity claims that the Supreme Being has once and for all revealed Himself in a historic Person, and that only by relating one's self to Him can one find the truth.

There is also another irreconcilable difference between Hinduism and Christianity. Hinduism is entirely an individual matter. Salvation comes to the individual through mystic experience. There can be no such thing as a Hindu church, for the Hindu has to withdraw from the world, the world of illusion. But Christianity, while nevertheless being a way of salvation for the individual, considers that this has to be worked out in relation to other people. Thus Christianity involves a community, not simply and solely an individual.

The end result of the Hindu view is that in claiming a truth which transcends all religions, Hinduism inevitably denies the truth of those religions which claim a historic revelation as their basis. This view, therefore, does not solve the problem of reconciling the different religions of the world.

(b) The second view to be examined is that held by Professor Toynbee of London University. Reviewing the rise of the modern world civilisation in relation to Christianity, Professor Toynbee considers that "the great enemy that faces man is the worship of collective man, of Leviathan" and thus "all the higher religions ought to subordinate their traditional rivalries and make a new approach to one another in the face of a fearful common adversary." This means, he suggests, that Christianity should shed itself of its Westernism and of its traditional belief that it is unique, for this belief "inevitably produces intolerance and pride."

Newbigin argues that pride is not an inevitable

consequence of Christianity. We are, in fact, taught to be humble, just as Christ was humbled on the cross. We make no exclusive claims for ourselves and have no cause for pride in ourselves. But if the resurrection of Christ is true, then, surely, Christians have no choice but to proclaim this act of God as unique.

In bringing in the idea of "higher" religions, Professor Toynbee gives room for the charge from someone in a "lower" religion that he himself is being proud in setting up a value judgment of his own. Some standard for judgment, however, is needed and Professor Toynbee suggests that we take three central ideas of Christianity: that God loves His creatures to the point of self-sacrifice; that men ought to share that love; and that they should put it into practice. He then points out that these are present in other religions as well as in Christianity.

To this Newbigin replies by pointing to the life, death and resurrection of Christ as being the only way we can know that these beliefs about God are true. Professor Toynbee's views amount to saying that each religion is only a particular way of looking at God. But Christianity is not based on ideas, no matter how good, but on what God has done for the world in Christ. It is this claim that makes the difference between Christianity and other religions so great, for if what Newbigin calls the "total fact of Christ" is true, then it is necessary that this specifically should be believed rather than a general amalgamation of the ethical values of all religions.

(c) The third and last view to be discussed is that held by another teacher at Harvard, Professor Hocking. This is not very different from the other two views, though more emphasis seems to be placed on Christianity's conception of history.

Newbigin regards this in much the same way as before, pointing out the claims made in the Bible by Jesus Himself and by His followers that God really does act in the world, and that the "total fact" of Christ is His most important act so far. Christ is not depicted in the Bible as just one among the many who have revealed God, but as the Son of God, the Word of God. If either of the three views examined were true, then Christ was mistaken in His claims, and it would be as well for His name to be forgotten lest generations yet to come should be deceived.

This chapter is concluded by asking what we would look for in a world religion. Two things are suggested: we seek reconciliation amongst men, and we seek peace for our world. But for these we need love, and where are we to find this if not from God? How will God show His love if

not by deeds? Deeds, however, have a date and a place, and this being so, it is not irrational to have a universal faith founded on particular and local events. It can thus be seen that the claims made by Christianity are, to say the least, such as would be suitable for a universal world faith.

In the next chapter the question is raised: upon what authority do we preach Christ? One of the most common and popular pictures in India today depicts together Jesus on His cross, Buddha under his tree, and Gandhi—three great exemplars of holy life. Has one any more authority than another in this apparent unity? The answer becomes clear when the resurrection of Christ is introduced. It is on the resurrection that our authority is based.

But the resurrection cannot be seen as an isolated incident. The background behind the belief must be taken into consideration, and this includes the biblical doctrine of Creation: that there is only one God—the creator; the doctrine of Sin—that man has fallen and is estranged from God; and the doctrine of Election—that God has chosen a specific race, the Jews, and then the church, to represent Him on earth.

If we accept these presuppositions of Christ's revelation as sealed with God's approval by the resurrection, we are bound also to accept the content of Christ's message. With the coming of Christ a new age has been introduced to the world. Men have been shown up for what they are and are therefore called to a new life, to be new creatures. Christ proclaimed that in a sense the kingdom of God is here now:

But if it is by the finger of God that I drive out the devils, then be sure the kingdom of God has already come upon you. Luke 11: 20, N.E.B.

It is the duty of those in this kingdom to show the love of God by engaging in loving service to those around, and to spread the word, the good news about the past, present and future acts of God.

More than half of chapter four is devoted to discussing Christianity in relation to history. Newbigin recognises that the idea of an end to the

world is rejected by many theologians. Yet he feels that such an idea is basic to Christianity. He points out that the era of optimism when it was thought that the church would one day convert the world is past. The issue is again rising. Christ or antichrist? The Christian will have to go through tribulation, but he knows that the victory is Christ's. God has a purpose with the world, a purpose in history, and God Himself will ultimately be responsible for bringing this purpose to completion: "God's purpose is not to destroy the world but to recreate it, to make new heavens and a new earth."

This section, like the rest of the book, is firmly based on the New Testament, and it is good to see the doctrine of the Second Coming given a prominent place in the author's understanding of Christianity.

In the final chapter, suggestions are offered as to how the church should best fulfil its mission in the world and to the world. If we are to preach to other cultures, we must separate Christianity from Western civilisation as such. Newbigin feels that the people in the churches in Britain will have to see the church itself as a mission, not as an organisation which sends out a mission. He discusses the relationship which should exist between the "parent" churches in the West and those in the East, and finally makes some suggestions on church unity. Most of this last chapter is not directly relevant to the Christadelphian community, but, for all that, provides much that is worth thinking about.

The study of comparative religion is not an easy subject, and in summarising the already summarised views of Professors Radhakrishnan, Toynbee and Hocking, it is not possible to mention all the points which go together to make up their outlooks. However, the reviewer has attempted to give a clear indication of what they think, as their views are fairly widespread today. Overall, it is felt that Lesslie Newbigin has presented a useful defence of the unique claims made by Christianity, and his book is recommended to all those who have found difficulty when questioned about Christianity in relation to the other faiths in our world.

Ian McHaffie.

TOO INTELLECTUAL?

The Editors fear that the present issue of the magazine is over-weighted on the intellectual side. The content of each issue is determined, inevitably, by the articles we receive. There are many brethren and sisters who are able to write devotional and practical material of a high standard, and we make a special appeal for such contributions.

Articles need not be type-written, though it is helpful if they are. Type should be double-spaced and only on one side of the paper.

The Prophecy of

HOSEA

By Wilfred Lambert

(iii) Gomer

HOSEA'S prophetic experiences began in an unusual way. He married a woman called Gomer. This we are told in the second verse of his book, and his ensuing marital experiences form the basis of the first three chapters. It must be pointed out at once that much of the difficulty we experience in studying these chapters arises from their brevity and the suppression of all matters not bearing on the prophetic message. The narratives do not centre on Hosea's experiences, but on the message from God. Only as much of the former is given as is required to introduce the latter. No doubt when the book was written the reader could supply from his own knowledge of Hebrew life and thought much that we have to assemble from reference books and commentaries.

We shall give a summary of the facts first. Hosea, at divine command, marries and begets three children. This is told in Ch. 1. In Ch. 3 this topic is resumed, but this time Hosea speaks in the first person. The occasion is later in his life, since it begins, "The Lord said unto me, 'Go *again*, love a woman. . . .'" This time he buys as a slave girl the woman he is to marry. This chapter does not name the woman he marries, nor does it state that she was Hosea's

former wife. Accordingly some scholars have postulated two women, each of whom was married in turn to Hosea. While there is nothing in the narratives to contradict this idea, the teaching Hosea receives as a result of his experiences favours the suggestion that one wife only is involved. His relations with Gomer were a kind of parable of God's relations with Israel. Only the Hebrews were involved in this case, so we may legitimately project this back into Hosea's life and assume that chapters 1 and 3 describe two stages in Hosea's relations with Gomer.

There was much bitterness in these relations, though a great diversity of opinion exists as to what actually happened. Hosea's first prophetic experience was the command from the Lord, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry" (1: 2). On the surface this seems like a command to marry an immoral woman, whose children were to follow in her footsteps. Moral objections are raised by this. While a Moslem at Allah's command must do even something normally considered wrong, there is no such inconsistency in the commands of Yahweh to His prophets. His purity being what it is, He could not command

His servants to do evil. To escape, then, from this difficulty some have postulated that all this episode and that of Ch. 3 took place in vision alone, not in reality. The narratives give no encouragement to any such notion. The names of Gomer and her father have no symbolic significance, and the succession of children: boy, girl, boy, seems very real and natural when it is observed that the messages given through the names of these children bear no relationship to their sex. The same messages could have been given if they were three boys or three girls.

Since the moral objection to supposing that Hosea was commanded to marry a prostitute is very real, we should examine the words used more closely: "take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry." Why does it not say simply, "take to yourself a harlot"? The phrase actually used could be the equivalent of this, but it might only indicate a woman with a trait of character whether yet manifested or not. If, as we accept, the woman of Ch. 3 is Gomer, then she must have abandoned her marriage to Hosea, and have lived the life of a common prostitute until, in circumstances unknown to us, she fell into slavery. From this Hosea redeemed her and restored her conjugal rights. On this basis we can understand "wife of harlotry" as a woman with a propensity in this direction, though having done no wrong up to the time of her marriage. This mitigates the moral problem, but in no sense solves it. On this view Hosea at God's command married a wife known to be prone to unchastity.

The additional words "and have children of harlotry" makes one wonder if we are not pressing the words too literally. If Hosea was really commanded to beget immoral children, is it not strange that the book says nothing about the character of these children when they grew up? Nothing beyond their sexes and personal names is recorded. Parallels in other prophets suggest that the message communicated by the names is the only thing that matters. The character of the children is not involved. Isaiah had a child to whom he gave the name Maher-

shalal-Hash-baz (The - spoil - speeds - The - prey - hastes), but this bears no kind of relationship to the boy, since before he could utter coherent speech the plunder concerned (that of Damascus and Samaria) was to have been carried away hastily to Assyria (see Isaiah ch. 8). In this light the full command of the Lord to Hosea is significant: "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry, for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord." It seems very probable to us that the children were not predestined to lead rakish lives, but solely by their names testified to the outpouring of God's judgments on the people of Israel for their spiritual harlotry. Gomer, in contrast, who bore no symbolic name, actually lives an immoral life after leaving Hosea, so the moral problem in her case remains.

Two solutions have been proposed. The one would construe "harlotry" in her case as in the rest of the sentence. She was not necessarily a loose character, but only one who had engaged in pagan rites. Whether this really solves the moral issue we may doubt. According to it Hosea was commanded to marry a devotee of a heathen cult. The second solution, which is adopted here, is that the words of the command were not actually given as such at the time of Hosea's marriage; that the marriage took place apparently like any other marriage; and that only later when looking back over his experiences did Hosea become conscious of the hand of God in his life, and so put in words the divine command which he had unwittingly obeyed. The command, then, is in timeless perspective, and the moral problem is solved.

Parallels can be quoted to the kind of phenomenon which we assume. With other prophets God revealed Himself within the natural circumstances of life. Amos was once looking at a basket of fruit, just as we might happen to be looking at a motor car or half a pound of butter. But suddenly he became aware that this was a revelation from God. The "fruit" (Hebrew *qayitz*) served to introduce a message about the "end" (Hebrew *qetz*) which God pur-

posed. Since the message came as a result of his looking at the basket of fruit, he wrote, "the Lord God showed me. . . ." In the same way we believe that Hosea entered upon his marriage unconscious that anything special was involved. But then he became aware of God's working through it, and from bitter experiences he learnt how faithless Israel had been to their Lord.

Now for some details. The first child was called Jezreel, the name of a town famous for many events connected with Ahab, Jezebel, Elijah, and Jehu. The particular event alluded to here is the blood-bath of Jehu in exterminating the house of Ahab (II Kings chs. 9-10). Despite the seemingly good motive behind this and the direct encouragement of Elisha, Jehu was condemned as a bad king, though it was foretold that his sons to the fourth generation would succeed him in the kingship (II Kings 10: 29-30). Jeroboam, under whom Hosea prophesied, was the third generation, and his son Zechariah, the fourth and last, ruled for only six months. Jezreel, Hosea's first child, was born some little time before Zechariah's demise (see verse 4), so presumably in the reign of Jeroboam. The names of the other two children. "Not-Pitied" (Lo Ruhamah) and "Not-My-People" (Lo Ammi) tell their own story of God's rejection of His people. In Hebrew Bibles, Ch. 1 ends with verse 8, and the rest goes with Ch. 2. This is the better chapter division and so we pass on to Ch. 3.

The redeeming of Gomer from slavery by Hosea was indeed an act of grace. By her immoral life she had sinned against her husband and merited only punishment. Yet Hosea for-

gave her and even spent a large sum of money to free her from slavery. It was not an act for which most people of his age would feel either sympathy or respect. But this was an acted parable showing the greatness of the mercy of God in dealing with Israel. Just as Gomer had been cut off from the sanctifying influence of her husband and had lived in sin, so the people of Israel were separating themselves from their God. While astray they were to miss the symbols of their religion, which are listed in Ch. 3 v. 4: king and prince (as appointed by God), sacrifice, pillar, ephod and teraphim. In other periods pillars and teraphim (some kind of household images) were forbidden. But we must recognise distinctions in time and place. To Hosea these things were part of a religion approved by God. But cut off though Israel might have become through their wickedness, God would accept them back as Hosea had done with Gomer.

The character of the man Hosea is shown throughout his book as one of great tenderness and depth of feeling. He must have been cruelly hurt when Gomer deserted him for a life of immorality. But by these experiences he became uniquely qualified to speak of God's love for man, and in this he is the forerunner of Jeremiah, Jesus Christ, and the Apostle to the Gentiles. As a citizen of the Northern kingdom he was well qualified also to give a penetrating analysis of the causes of Israel's declension from God. Much of this doctrine occurs in Ch. 2, to which we shall turn next time.

(To be continued)

Somehow Christians must recapture on a grand scale this basic certainty that God is love. Unless they do, unless they feel it and know it and show it and live it, it is unlikely that the surrounding world, burdened by the apparent contradictions and all the ills and accidents of this mortal life, will ever grasp the fundamental fact of all creation.

J. B. PHILLIPS

WHEN THE HEART IS FRESH AND TENDER



(Concluded)

By Ruth McHaffie

FATHER AND FRIEND

FATHERS today play a bigger part in the life of small children than they used to do. This is all to the good. Even so, there is often constant friction between teenagers and their fathers — and it is too late then to remedy the situation.

Many children are well fed by their parents, but play starved. Mother gains a certain amount of popularity because she provides meals — and meals are important to children. There is also greater intimacy between children and their mother because of early infancy days. However fond a child is of his father, he nearly always calls for his mother when he is sick. So father has to find his own particular way of making friends. Rather like the mother who hurries her baby on to a bottle, father sometimes tries to substitute real fathering by giving generous pocket money. But this does not make for affection. A pair of white mice and a little instruction on how to care for them would be much more effective.

When fathers are engaged in work for the ecclesia, outside their daily working hours, it is easy for them to be too much occupied to find time for a child. Sometimes it seems that so much labour is put into ecclesial special efforts and into preaching in this country and abroad,

while our most potential converts are left to turn away from us, often inwardly, if not overtly, resentful at their father's lack of interest in them or at his frequent absences.

A child likes to be proud of his father — and is disappointed if he finds him lacking. We remember the small cockney boy, who, watching a neighbour climb a tree, suddenly called out, "You're clever. My dad ain't!" His father was, it would seem, well on the way to losing his son's interest. But a child's admiration is not hard to win. No academic brilliance nor technical skill is called for. If one cannot climb a tree then one can play at elephants, or read stories, or stick models together. Once the link is forged it will not be broken easily.

Parents sometimes feel at a disadvantage because their children are educated beyond their own standards. But this does not necessarily mean a breakdown of happy relationships. A child who has been brought up to understand right values will keep intellectual achievement in its right place, and he will still admire his parents if he finds in them true goodness.

It is better to aim at being the child's friend than at being the voice of authority. One who is the child's friend has the greatest authority of all. When father is expected home in the evening some children eagerly ask, "Is Daddy home

yet?" Others feel more free to enjoy themselves when he is absent, and this is a bad sign. The seeds of teenage rebellion are already sown.

After a tiring day's work it must be hard to come home and take a cheerful interest in all that has been done by the children. But it will pay greater dividends than many a laboriously prepared exhortation or lecture. It is a special effort which has real results.

FORSAKING CHILDREN FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

Parents are apt to feel that their children must always take second place to the work that has to be done in the ecclesia. A child is sometimes left feeling lonely or nervous because parents think that they must both attend the Bible class. God and Jesus Christ must come first, they think. But what do they really mean by this? If children are, as the Psalmist said, an heritage of the Lord, are they not very much a part of the work for God? We may misinterpret the words of Jesus when he said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14: 26).

Today we are not called upon to choose between God and our children. There have been times when parents were. That choice came to John Bunyan. And so he found himself, lonely in prison, with his heart breaking at the thought of his family. He wrote:

The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am too fond of these great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries and wants that my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer to my heart than all beside. Oh, the thoughts of the hardship I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces.

But his duty to God had taken first place.

Or again, during the Second World War, many a German had to make the same choice. A father, Paul Schneider, who was imprisoned by the Nazis and who was later transferred to a concentration camp where he was tortured and murdered, wrote from prison,

Often, my dear wife, I feel like a most unnatural father and wonder why precisely I had to bring down all this upon your heads, and whether I had the right to do so. . . . Yet after all we cannot do anything but follow the way along which God leads us, and despite all my reflections I still have thought of nothing else we could have done or any other way in which we could have done it. So we must confidently leave our case to God and trust in him to justify us. . . . That you were able to write to me so cheerfully made me very happy. I am absolutely convinced that the "way of suffering" that I have imposed upon you, and that you endure so calmly and bravely, is bringing you not only sorrow and trouble but also blessing, joy and the peace "which passeth all understanding."

No such sacrifice has yet been asked of us. At present we are "occupying" till Christ comes. We have talents to use, not to neglect, and perhaps children brought up to honour God, are the greatest talents parents can have.

TEENAGERS

The continual, depressing reports which reach us on every hand of the misbehaviour of teenagers are enough to make parents of younger children sick with worry over the difficult days which might lie ahead. Tommy is such a sweet little boy. He has his naughty moments, of course, but who could possibly imagine him turning into the adolescent who is full of rebellion against his parents, who cares nothing for their feelings, and who cannot believe in God to Whom he now so earnestly says his prayers each night? No — it will happen to other children, but not to Tommy. And they could be right!

But here we come back to the main proposition around which these articles have been built. If our children are a source of worry and irritation at seventeen, we cannot go back to their first five years and lay new foundations. We can only hope and pray that their awkwardness is but a passing phase and that, if we can restrain ourselves to bear with them, they will grow into reasonable and helpful adults. But if those whose children will be seventeen during the years 1977-1982 will use all the influence they possess *now*, then their worries in the future will, we believe, be minimised. We do not mean, of course, that after the first five years one can sit back and wait for results: there is a constant need for wise directing. But in the early days the foundation is laid.

It is almost unnecessary for us to say that however much effort we have put into the training of our children we shall not produce faultless models. As teenagers they will make their mistakes and will not always rise to the standards we would like. Perhaps what is more disturbing than this is that they will notice that we, too, make mistakes, and that we do not always rise to the standards *they* would like.

Perhaps now, more than at any other time, the parents need to preserve a sense of humour in the family circle. We are still needed to restrain and guide but we are no longer dealing with children. We should avoid exaggerations in our criticisms and make allowances for their exaggerations, which are often characteristic of youth. If we are not afraid to admit that on occasion we are wrong, then they, too, will make similar admissions.

If, in younger days, we have paved the way there is no need, now, for any spiritual barriers to arise. It should be as easy to say, "Let's have a prayer" as it is to say "Let's have tea." It may be more difficult than in earlier days to have a regular evening prayer together, for the family is engaged in various activities, coming and going at different times, and it would be foolish to be irritatingly formal and exacting.

But the practice of praying together helps to preserve unity and peace in the household.

It is probable that we shall be asked questions on spiritual matters which we find difficult to answer. Beliefs which we have long accepted will now be queried and we may be surprised at our inability to give adequate explanations. Nothing will be gained by becoming annoyed, nor by pretending to be knowledgeable when we are not. If we do not know the answers then we are better to say so — and take steps to find out what they are.

Again, if in younger days we have paved the way, there is no need now for there to be embarrassment about sex. If there are any questions to be asked we should be able to speak with the same frankness with which we are willing to discuss other subjects.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

When one is trying to give advice on the upbringing of children there is the disadvantage that one can always be proved wrong. We have only to look at Bro. B whose upbringing, by our standards, was appallingly bad and who was given no sense of security in childhood, but who is now the shining example of Christian integrity. Perhaps it is such cases as Bro. B which have made some feel that those whom God has called will come to Him irrespective of parental training, and even in spite of it. A better explanation might be that there are some who are brought up to be Christians and who grow into Christ, while others come to Him by more catastrophic conversion. That this is so does not absolve us from parental responsibility. This responsibility is emphasised in both the Old and New Testaments. Eli was a conscientious servant of God. His fault lay in that he 'did not frown' upon his evil sons. In the letter to Timothy the question is asked, "If a man does not know how to control his own family, how can he look after a congregation of God's people?" Because of the erring ways of us all, most of us would hesitate to press this point, but the relevance of the question cannot be said to be less in the

twentieth century than it was in the first. More thought on it might make us realise, more often than we are apt to do, that our ways of living are equally as important as purity of doctrine, and so our judgement as to who is pleasing to God might sometimes be softened. "For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged."

COMMUNAL RESPONSIBILITY

Perhaps more so than in Paul's day, parents need the help of the congregation of God in bringing up their children. The community is responsible, as well as the parents.

It is difficult to bring up children who desire to join themselves to an ecclesia which seems to them exceedingly dull, and whose dreary services are conducted in drab surroundings. Meanwhile all around are bright attractions to lure them away. In small ecclesias it is sometimes difficult for them to find even a friend, let alone a life time partner.

This is not a problem to be discussed in any depth now, but it is one which we need to recognise and which needs more than discussion. Young people need life and other young company. If the ecclesia or the parents cannot offer to them something more than they can find outside then we shall lose them.

What our answer should be it is difficult to know. Had we more resources, better premises and more labour we could be more enterprising. More is done for youth in larger ecclesias, in areas where we have greater numbers. Whether the children being reared in these circumstances respond in a greater proportion to those living in more isolation we do not know. There is quality of conversion as well as quantity to be taken into account, and though our community has many dedicated young people, we, in common with other communities, have many part-timers who merely belong.

The problem, then, that faces parents is the same problem which faces the community. Upon the vigour of the young people the life of the future ecclesia depends. When John, the Elder, wrote his second epistle to a single church, he

wrote, "I was delighted to find that some of your children are living by the truth, as we were commanded by the Father." (N.E.B.) It is, perhaps, a consolation that it was the same then as now — only "some" of your children. But perhaps with more wisdom applied to our natural parenthood and with more wisdom in our ecclesial parenthood we could increase the number of that "some."

STRENGTH BEYOND OUR OWN STRENGTH

The greatest wisdom of all is that which comes from above. All our strivings will be weak and useless unless we seek help which is beyond our own strength. "I", said Paul, "have strength for anything through him who gives me power." (N.E.B.)

At the beginning of our comments we wrote of the uselessness of a "vague kind of pious faith which calls for little effort." Now at the conclusion we pray for a faith which works actively in our lives and with which we work actively, a faith whereby we may be strengthened to know wisdom and to act upon it.

We live in a world of strain and stress and it is difficult for parents to avoid feeling anxiety for their children. Some may find an irresponsible relief by believing that, come what may, they must take their chance. But those of us who have committed ourselves to our Father can gain a responsible relief, knowing that if we are willing to do our part, then we can rest each child in His hands, believing as did the apostle Paul that the children of the believers are "holy." And though their innocent trust in us, their joyful laughter and their youthful optimism give us a strange feeling of sadness, so that shadows fall even on brightest hours, yet we shall not be left comfortless. Though their way may not follow the rosy path which we would gladly (though perhaps not wisely) lay before them, though they should meet failure instead of success, though they should have problems, setbacks and disappointments, yet if we have made our marriages and built our homes in close co-operation with God, shall we not be guided to guide them on the road to the City of God?

Teach Me

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see;
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee!

A man that looks on glass,
On it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleaseth, through it pass,
And then the heaven espy.

All may of Thee partake;
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with this tincture, "for Thy sake",
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.

GEORGE HERBERT, 1593-1632.

It (the Early Church) immensely strengthened human sympathy for the afflicted and the sorrowful, and immensely increased the sense of the value and sanctity of even the humblest human life. It set on foot unprecedented schemes for the relief of want and suffering — schemes not based on political considerations, nor enforced by political poor-laws, but springing directly out of the love of man for man, and appealing simply to the private generosity of Christian individuals.

The Early Church and the World (Cadoux)

Note: it is clear from other writings that this relief applied to both believers and "outsiders."

O LORD, HOW EXCELLENT THY NAME!

By Jack Murrell

IN his preface to *The Literary Study Of The Bible*, R. G. Moulton defines his field as follows, "An Account of the leading Forms of Literature represented in the Sacred Writings," and "Its underlying principle is that a clear grasp of the outer literary form is an essential guide to the inner matter and spirit."

One such literary form is the envelope figure, and the eighth psalm is taken as an example. Here the higher parallelism is con-

sidered as found in the structure of the portion of literature seen as a whole, in relation to its interpretation. "There is a close connection," says Moulton, "between parallelism of structure and interpretation." This is distinguished from the lower parallelism as found in the repetition of thought in the succeeding lines of the couplet, for example, which gives the musical rhythm to the verse itself.

As a visual aid, the eighth psalm is set out by Moulton thus,

O Lord our Lord,

How excellent is thy name in all the earth!

Who has set thy glory upon the heavens,
Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou established strength
Because of thine adversaries,
That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.
When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honour.
Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet.
All sheep and oxen,
Yea, and the beasts of the field;
The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,
Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O Lord our Lord,

How excellent is thy name in all the earth!

The first and last verses are repeated exactly and indented to the left of the page. They envelope the body of the psalm between them. The closing verse is then read with all the emphasis given to it by the substance of the main part of the psalm. With the help of this graphic view, it becomes clear that the psalm is a unity and must be read as such if the best is to be got from it.

What is contained in the body of the psalm to qualify those opening and closing verses? It is unfortunate that the Authorised Version uses the word "above" in the line which reads in the Revised, "Who has set thy glory *upon* the heavens." With the whole body of the psalm as context, it is plain that we are being invited to consider the natural creation as having the glory of God stamped upon it. We are not asked here to try to visualise a glory of God higher than the heavens either spatially or in degree.

The excellence of the name of God is in all the earth. That is, it is in the eye of the beholder, man, who himself shares the superior place in the work of creation which is being eulogised by the poet. In fact, the question asked and answered is that most interesting one, "What is man?" The answer given deserves full attention equally with the Genesis record with which it is so closely linked. While Genesis is the historical narrative of man's beginning and constitution, the psalm is concerned also with the primary things of human existence and destiny in relation to God. The treatment in the psalm, however, is timeless, concerning itself with the intentions of the Creator which bring forth from the author this bursting forth of praise.

Part of the answer to the question, "What is man?" is given in the first part of verse five by the statement that he is made but a little lower than God. This refers us to the human constitution as given in Genesis. Being made a little lower than God, or being made in the image or likeness of God, is that which gives man his

special status in relation to God. Genesis holds this relationship to be such that man shall not shed the blood of man (Gen. 9: 6). Paul, speaking to fellow "sons of God" seems to have the same relationship in mind when he urges them to follow the example of humility of the Son of God Who, in an even closer relationship to God, emptied Himself and suffered the death of the cross (Phil. 2. 5-8). The special status of man so to be called "Gods" when they were but receivers of the word of God, is the argument used by Jesus when supporting His own claim to be the Son of God (John 10: 34-36).

In the second part of verse five, the full extent of the inheritance of man is stated in that he is crowned with glory and honour. The crown points to a greater glory than dominion over the natural world, for, in truth, man was made for a godlikeness greater than to rule the beasts of the earth and the fish of the sea. There is, therefore, implicit in the psalm, the twofold view of man having dominion in both the natural and spiritual orders of the work of creation.

What are we to make of verse six? "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet." Man has reached an interesting point in space travel. To what extent will his natural dominion reach over the moon and the stars? No doubt the primitive flights of aviators were considered presumptuous in times past. Now, the aircraft is an accepted means of travel and there would not appear to be any difference in principle between circling the earth through the air or through space. The natural world as set out in Genesis, including the sun, moon and stars, is part of the human environment, and man will continue, no doubt, to explore as far as he is able to use his imagination and intellect to provide the means to do so. Man's ability to make and use tools to battle with and seek domination of his natural surroundings is his glory, given by God. This does not presume any readiness to tackle spiritual problems with anything like the same zest. Our scientific age seems to be far more concerned about the sun,

moon, and stars than with the vastly more important matter of the nature and destiny of man.

The Bible reverses this situation. One chapter, the first in the book, is given to list the items in the natural order up to the creation of man. Astronomically speaking, the greatest understatement imaginable is to be found in Gen. 1: 16, where the vast distances and numbers in stellar realms are contained in five words, "he made the stars also." In contrast, the whole of the rest of the Bible is concerned with men and with their destiny as "sons of God."

For our present purpose, we turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews where we find an enlargement of interpretation of Psalm eight (Heb. 2: 5-8). The writer of Hebrews is concerned to present the Son of God as the prime figure in all the creative work. Yet, while supremacy has to be given to Him as the only-begotten Son, the theme worked out shows the impossibility of separating Christ and His brethren in the design of God. The man Christ Jesus apart from mankind is meaningless. Likewise, man without the Son of Man is meaningless. The use by the writer to the Hebrews of precisely the wording of the psalm, but raising it to an emphatic particularising of Jesus, is to be noted, yet it is not Jesus apart from His fellows.—

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Heb. 2: 10-13).

All the expressions are now charged with a fuller

meaning unifying man and the Son of Man. These, together, bear an image of God in a creative design which is to be crowned with glory and honour and dominion now seen to the fullest and most awe-inspiring extent. The passage which suggests this, particularly, is Heb. 1: 8-14. The righteous and immortal Son of God has now the title "Mighty-One" or "God." His supremacy is revealed in His dominion over the heavens and earth. As part of the natural order, even the sun, moon and stars are of limited duration, suffering the running down process common to natural bodies. They wax old. They shall perish (Psal 102: 24-27). As a vesture they shall be folded up and changed, for as befits the New Man, there shall be a New Heaven and a New Earth.

There remains verse two of Psalm 8 to receive attention.

...
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings
hast thou established strength
Because of thine adversaries,
That thou mightest still the enemy and the
avenger.

Who are the babes, and who are the adversaries?

We have the advantage of the use made by Jesus of this verse (Matt. 21: 15-16). Although men share the status of being made in the image of God, not all make the same response. As the sunshine and rain are given to all, but not all give thanks for the gifts from God, so the possibilities in man so freely spread have no such prodigious return. Verse 2 is the only point in the psalm which suggests the division of mankind into the responsive and not merely the unresponsive, but the antagonistic. The situation facing Jesus in the Temple is eloquent enough of the fateful separation of mankind. The significance has to be weighed, also, that it was the opposition of chief priests and Pharisees to the spontaneous cries of children, and it was the same adversaries who heard Jesus declare that publicans and harlots would believe and enter more readily into the kingdom of God, the same

also, who thereafter sought to kill Him.

Luke records a similar incident at the Mount of Olives when many disciples were rebuked for voicing their praises. It is not difficult to imagine something of the emotion evoked by these scenes in Jesus, Who could only say, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19: 40). And it is recorded that He wept for the unbelievers as He looked upon the city of Jerusalem.

In continuing his theme of the superiority of Christ, the writer of Hebrews pauses to remark

upon the issue of belief and unbelief as seen in past generations, and he adds his word of exhortation,

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-Day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end (Heb. 3: 12-14).

Autumn

THE leaves hang gold upon the trees.

The days are getting colder.
Bright gems of frost on aged oak,
The year is getting older.
And spiders webs on bramble thorn,
Their dewy trembling leaves adorn.
Warm sunny days and misty morn
Upon the earth's broad shoulder.

WE praise the Lord for fruitful fields,

Our thoughts to Winter winging.
Who strives for God's own heart to please
His heart in him is singing
And though the skies are dark and grey,
And nights grow long and dreary,
God's coming Spring shall comfort him,
And bid his heart be cheery.

L. PITT FRANCIS.



A PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

FATHER, we find it so easy to follow in the way of our own choosing, instead of listening for Thy voice.

But teach us, we pray, to be ever conscious of our need for guidance.

Give us the desire to stand aside from the rush of life, to be still that we may hear and understand.

Give us an awareness of Thy presence and minds which are ready to receive.

As we stand at the crossroads show us the path we ought to take.

As we doubt our strength to follow it guide us to find strength in Thee.

Lead us through our perplexities and give us light in the sunless valleys.

Guide us to make the right decisions and give us the ability to execute them.

Guide us when we stand on the sunclad hill tops, when life is easy and the road is smooth.

Help us to know, then, that never have we needed Thee more.

Restrain us from any vain aspirations, and rule our desires.

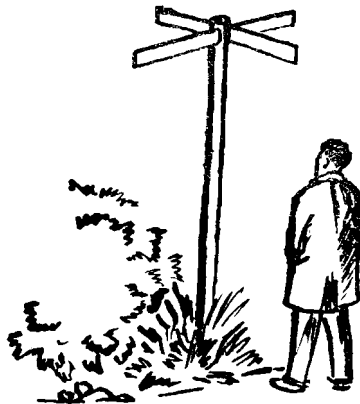
Restrain us from any unworthy motives, and guide our actions.

And if we must weep in Gethsemane then guide us to drink the cup of bitterness,

Knowing that, as Jesus said, the servant is not greater than his Lord.

In His Name do we ask all.

AMEN.



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THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

FOR CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND ACTION

WINTER 1965

PRICE 2/-



OUR COVER

Our cover reminds us of the story in Genesis when the dove, bearing an olive leaf, brought to Noah the message that destruction was over, and that mankind could again live in peace on the face of the earth.

But men have seldom chosen to live in peace. Even those who have claimed to be the followers of Jesus have torn the household with dissent. So we know something of what He meant when He said that He came not to send peace but a sword. Faithfulness to what we believe to be right sometimes demands that we oppose those dear to us, and our opposition, gentle though it may be, often arouses the passions of which men and women are capable.

The peace which Jesus brings is not the peace which the world offers. It is not the adulation of admirers and prestige among men. It is the peace of mind which comes to him who knows that when presented with a challenge he was not among those who sat by in the shadows and watched, fearing the worst and hoping for the best.

It is then that the olive leaf from God brings to him a peace that surpasses all the consolation which fellow comrades can offer.

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- By providing a forum for fair discussion of difficulties concerning Christian belief in the modern world—especially those difficulties facing young people.
- By encouraging deeper devotion in our Lord's service.
- By offering suggestions for the practical expression of our faith.
- By introducing articles designed to help in Bible study.
- By bringing to the notice of readers books of value which might otherwise escape their attention.
- By producing literature for spreading the Gospel.

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ABOUT IT?

Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily
those of the Editorial Committee, but may be published
because they make a valuable contribution to discussion.

EDITORIAL

IN the first issue of our magazine we made it clear that it was our intention to encourage the exchange of viewpoints which were held among brethren and sisters. Not many have taken advantage of the freedom which our pages have offered but we do not feel that we have altogether failed. Lively discussions have ensued between the various magazines of the community. We would have been happier had these taken place within the same cover, though a cover other than our own would have been acceptable to us. Had other magazines in the past allowed the exchange of views then *The Endeavour Magazine* would never have commenced.

We are not unmindful that in the last few years *The Christadelphian* has published material in which different viewpoints have been expressed in a fair and Christian manner. For this we are grateful, though we would be better pleased if more of its readers could regard such discussions as brotherly exchanges and not as division-making controversy.

In September of this year, as most of our readers know, *The Testimony* produced a special number which discussed many of the points which have been raised by writers in *Endeavour*. Hours of labour have been put into this work and brethren with zealous intention have worked hard and tirelessly to set before us what they believe to be a correct interpretation of the Word of God. We hope that all readers of *Endeavour* will be sufficiently open-minded to give these articles a fair reading and to realise that those who think differently from us are not the only ones who might be wrong. We should try to remember that we are not in a contest. We are not on sides. It does not matter whether our particular views are proved to be right or wrong. What does matter is that we should find out how to

interpret Scripture. Let us all take to ourselves the words of Cromwell to those who would dogmatise on religion, "Think it possible you may be mistaken."

Perhaps in considering our differences of opinion, in a general way, we can come to any one of three conclusions. (1) We can conclude that the views put forward in *The Testimony* which differ from those published in *Endeavour* are wholly right and that only those sharing them can be part of the Body of Christ. (2) We can conclude that the views put forward in *Endeavour* which differ from those published in *The Testimony* are wholly right and only those sharing them can be part of the Body of Christ. (3) We can conclude (and at the time of writing this is our own conclusion) that those sharing either views can be part of the Body of Christ.

The contributors to our magazine have been accused of writing as though they were university graduates. This could be so for many of them do have this seeming disadvantage. Perhaps, then, it is a strange anomaly that one of the requests we are making of our community is that we should *simplify* our demands upon those seeking to accept the offer of salvation through Jesus Christ, and that we should *lessen* the intellectual standards which have hitherto been insisted upon. We have around us men and women who are caught up in a world of materialism, and many of our own members are not free from this. To some extent we are all influenced by the age in which we live. We believe that this is no time to be quibbling over matters which do not affect the understanding of God's love in giving Jesus to die for the world.

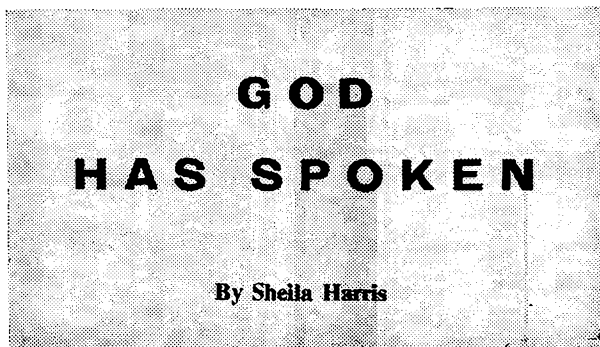
There are young people, and older ones too, who cannot accept exactly the same interpretation of Scripture as do others. If, at a baptismal interview, they were to agree with certain views—for example that the earth is only a few thousand years old—then they could not be honest. Must we turn them aside? Does not all the importance lie in their belief that God was the creator, that man, made in the image of God, sinned, and that salvation is through Jesus Christ? Is it not time that we realised

that we are not all-knowing, that possibly each one of us holds one or another view which is not wholly correct? Is it not time that we asked men and women to accept an uncomplicated and simple faith? Could any more have been asked of those

three thousand who were baptised on the day of Pentecost?

By all means let us have our intellectual discussions. Let us delve deeply into the Word of God. But do not let us make fundamentals of things which are not fundamental.

The above was written before careful examination of "The Testimony" special issue. Later comments will be found in other pages of this magazine.



INSPIRATION is the lifting of the veil between the eternal and the temporal, the infinite and the finite. As the writer to the Hebrews shows, God has done this at sundry times and in divers manners, but the absolute manifestation of Himself in Jesus, Who is the express image of His person in Whom dwells "the fullness of the godhead bodily." We must therefore believe that in Jesus we have manifested to us the essence of God—that in Him we can truly know God. Even if, as some seem to believe, "bodily" implies the limitation, not the vehicle of manifestation, yet the character, the being, the nature of Jesus reveals to us the true nature of God. This is the deep, unshakeable, unswerving faith of the Christian, that in Jesus we have a true picture of eternal reality, of God Himself. Even if, as others may affirm, there is a completeness of God outside this manifestation it is not our concern, nor could we apprehend it. But the real assurance that we possess is that as we penetrate in our own hearts to the mind, the thought, the character of Christ, as revealed in the Bible, we are reaching to the heart of absolute reality. When the sunlight falls upon a stream, however

marred the image, however blurred the vision, the glint upon the water is yet a true glimpse of its origin, it is still a particle of the original source.

But God had already spoken at sundry times and in divers manners, either by direct communication of word, by shaping circumstance or by guiding thought in the compilation of the written record. The light that shone fully in Jesus had already shone in facets of absolute truth, as Jesus Himself showed to the disciples on the Emmaus road when He spoke to them of the things concerning himself beginning at Moses and all the prophets. So, as we firmly believe, the purpose of God, to be consummated in Christ, had been revealed, bit by bit, from the garden of Eden. Gradually, as men were able to receive it, God added to the picture further facets or aspects of truth, as a schoolmaster guiding up to the final vision—the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Seed of David, the pattern of deliverance as revealed in the Exodus, salvation through blood and water—ultimate victory through a wilderness journey sustained only by God's provision of bread and light.

As the writers of the New Testament show, we are privileged to see these fundamental truths because we have already seen the fulfilment in Jesus. But when the message was first given men were not so privileged. All these visions, sayings, messages of God were originally propounded in a very different setting. God spoke to men as they were able to receive it, within the context of their own world and experience. It was related to them, otherwise it could have meant nothing. We can easily see that God used human circumstances, situations, or dispositions as vehicles of His manifestation. Surely we may believe that God helped to mould the material so that it could receive the divine revelation. Do we not see God's guidance in the life of men or nations bringing them to the point at which He can reveal Himself? Did He not lead Israel to Sinai to teach them there the law? He dealt with them there as a people, no doubt crude and uncivilised, needing organisation and basic rules for conduct and life. To the prophets God speaks to individuals of different types and character; and so the message is different. Hosea's is closely related to the personal experience of his family. The message of God through Jeremiah is concerned with the destruction of Jerusalem and a man who suffered therein. To Isaiah He spoke as to one who stood before kings. Through David He spoke as through a man whose early life had been moulded by his contemplation of nature, the stars, the sky, the trees. To Adam He spoke of the destruction of a serpent.

God's message must be relative to people, to place and to time. But it is *still God's message*; it is still the lifting of the veil between the eternal and the temporal, it is still a facet of absolute truth in some way reflecting a true image of the Creator, if we have eyes to see and ears to hear. Perhaps we can see this best in Abraham. God spoke to this man at a certain place and time. He spoke to him in the context of his world. He called him out of an idolatrous city, to travel with his flocks to an unknown land, to settle there in a pastoral life in which water and grass were of prime importance. All of this can be related to a historical context. But when God speaks He speaks to more than one man. As we well know, in His words to Abraham lie the great promises of blessing to all nations, the land for ever, the seed who would possess the gate of his enemies. These extend far beyond the immediate context into the full purpose of God in Christ.

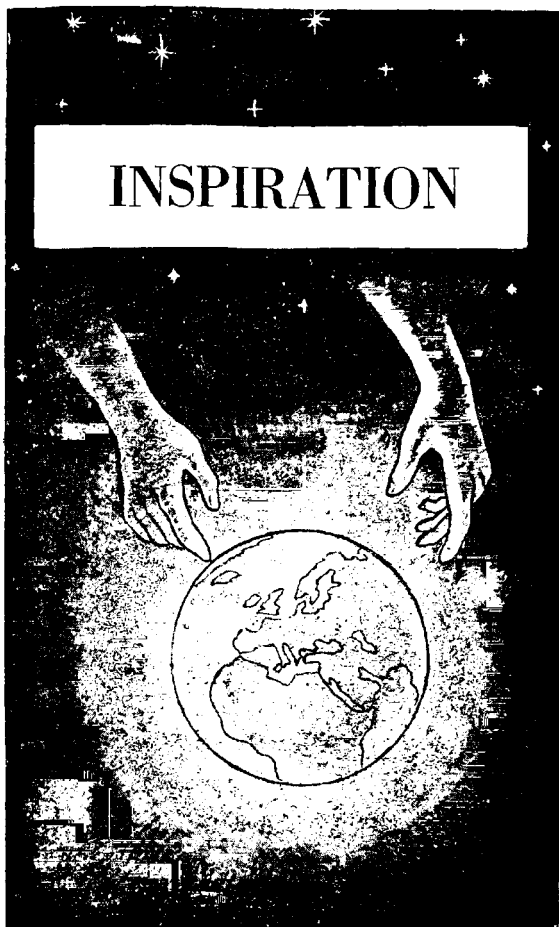
But could Abraham see that? Was the word

of God to him just related to his world, to his need for land, to his need for an heir? As he stood on the mountain when Lot had taken *all* the plain, did he not learn also in addition to the ultimate possession of the land, the great lesson that it is to those who choose the hard way that God's blessing is assured? When he refused to take any of the spoils, gladly offered by the king of Sodom and God said "I am . . . thy exceeding great reward" did he not learn the absolute truth that it is those who take nothing for themselves, whom God will reward? When he had waited year after year till he was ninety-nine for the promised child and eventually God told him that his children would be in a special relationship to God Himself, that He would be their God, did he not learn that they are truly God's children who are willing to wait in faith year after year? When he was told to get out of Ur to become a blessing to all peoples did he not learn that those who are willing to turn their backs upon the world and go out not knowing whither, are those who are truly a blessing to others? And in the final promise of victory, does there not lie the great truth, that the faith in God which is willing to yield that which is most dear, is the faith which ultimately must conquer?

Those are the truths which are revealed in the life of Jesus, in His temptation, ministry and sacrifice, and are therefore proved to be the truths of God Himself.

Surely here we see that in every utterance of God there is a revealing of absolute truth, that through the Old Testament God was educating people to prepare for the ultimate revelation of Himself in Christ—that in some way, by some means, all the time He was leading His people to see ultimately the true manifestation of Himself. Surely even in Eden, Adam learned that the One whom he had disobeyed but Who had called him to repent, yet Whom he had feared and failed, was still, in love, prepared to clothe him. God has revealed these things by His Spirit. However dim our vision, it is still "eternal life to know Thee." Man is in the image of God and can surely respond to God's true nature, and reflect a true picture. Perhaps we may still feel we only see through a glass darkly, but in the context of 1 Corinthians 13, the perfect would seem to be *love*. If then through the Spirit we drink deeply of the true love of God shall we not then perceive the deep things of God which He has shown to His creatures "by dream, by oracle, by seer," through his word? Shall we not truly rejoice that *God has spoken*?

INSPIRATION



By Wilfred Lambert

(3)

The Truth of the Bible

IN the last issue we showed the way in which God brings Himself down to our level in the Bible. We must be grateful for His condescension, as otherwise we should know nothing of Him beyond what our unaided senses could deduce. Even if common sense does not compel us to admit the difficulty involved in God's communicating with men, the contrast of Old and New Testaments leaves no doubt that the true majesty of God has

been reduced to the level of human comprehension. Most of the things we say about God are anthropomorphisms (ascribing human form or characteristics to Him). When we say that God is displeased with sin, exactly what do we mean? No doubt there is on the divine scale something corresponding to human displeasure, but this cannot be understood as being identical with the human sentiment. The Bible often uses anthropomorphisms, and in such a way as to leave the thoughtful reader with no doubt that this is what they are. When Saul disobeyed God in not exterminating the whole Amalekite community the narrative states that "the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel" (1 Samuel 15: 35). However, Samuel, according to verse 29 of the same chapter, told Saul that he was finally and absolutely rejected by God: "for he (the Strength of Israel) is not a man that he should repent." Does God repent—or does He not? According to the simple wording of the chapter there is a plain contradiction. The difficulty resolves in the light of the relativity of God's revelation. Absolute knowledge about God's nature and ways is for the present beyond our perception. In differing degrees we all think of God in our own likeness. Thus our knowledge of God is an approximation to the real truth. The two statements in Samuel are differing approximations. We cannot say that one or the other is right, or that both are wrong, for both are right. In our judgement the statement of Samuel is a fuller approximation to the real truth than the words of the narrative, which is not, for that reason, to be discounted.

The relativity of truth should come as no surprise, for in every facet of life the every-day truths are similarly relative. For example, we all use wooden furniture that is accepted to be smooth and brown. The surfaces, however, might look very uneven under a very powerful microscope, and the colour is not more certain. Dogs, we are told, see everything in black and white, so to them our brown furniture presumably appears a shade of grey. In short, the degree of smoothness or colour of our furniture depends on the visual equipment used. While it is good that we should realize the limitations which our sensory organs impose on our knowledge, in life we rightly go by them. A scientist who believes in the fluidity of all matter will be as surely

bruised by walking into a brick wall as a less learned person.

Another simple example of the relativity of truth is offered by such a phrase as, "the sun rises." The sun does not rise in reality, it only appears to do so to people on the surface of the earth. It is the earth that is moving to give this impression, not the sun. More correctly we speak of the earth revolving upon its own axis. In other aspects of life truths which are expressed in a way which implies a general application must in fact be qualified in many ways. A person who exclaims, "That is a magnificent painting!" when viewing such a work of art is expressing, as far as the form of words goes, an absolute truth. Provided the exclamation is sincere there is an absolute element. If the speaker thinks the painting is beautiful, to him it is. Of course others might instantly disagree, and he himself after the lapse of a few years might have a different opinion. In this respect the truth of the statement is relative. The truth of a work of literature needs equally careful statement. No one calls Shakespeare a liar because he puts into the mouths of historical characters words which they never spoke. His aim was to portray real characters, and if the words contribute to that end, they are true relative to his purpose. The works of a poet who expresses his reactions to life are as true as the opinion on the quality of a painting, discussed above. The truth of a work of irony, if it is true, is the opposite of what it literally says. A myth can have a truth of its own. The Graeco-Roman myth of Persephone or Proserpina describes how this goddess was carried off to the underworld by its king, and how an arrangement was worked out by which she spent six months in the underworld and six months above ground each year. The goddess was identified with the flourishing of plant life, and the myth is an explanation of the changing seasons: one of growth followed by one of decay. It is possible only in a limited sense, if at all, to probe the minds of myth-makers, but if the author of this particular specimen intended it as a kind of parable explaining the changing seasons, its scientific accuracy stands unimpugned. If he intended it as a piece of literal history, we should have to say that its truth was limited to the correct observation of nature which it manifests. The truth of parable is

again a special kind. It is not a question to be asked whether a sower in fact sows as described; the lesson behind the story contains the truth of the parable. Metaphor is an every-day figure of speech which is factually untrue, but which expresses, if correctly used, a real truth. It has rightly been said that truth is "seldom pure and never simple."

All that has been illustrated applies equally to the Bible. When, for example, we read in Acts 2: 5 that on the day of Pentecost there were present in Jerusalem "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven," we should not make ourselves ridiculous by insisting that Eskimos must have been there. The statement is true relative to the knowledge of the time, and even so a little exaggeration can be allowed. Luke is speaking generally, and would probably be well aware of some trivial exceptions. In the story of the flood the statement that "all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered" (Genesis 7: 19) should also be taken relatively. Metaphors occur in Isaiah 40: 6-7: "all flesh is grass" and "surely the people is grass." The people is not grass in reality, but no careful student of the Bible will miss the meaning. Parables are well understood in principle, but what must be stressed is that when Jesus spoke to the crowds He did not introduce parables in any special way. He simply said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho . . ." The hearers were left to grasp that this was not intended as an item of news, or history. The Song of Songs has often been taken as an allegory—we express no opinion on the subject ourselves—and here nothing in the book identifies it as allegory. The readers have to decide for themselves, and the kind of truth extracted will depend very much on the line of interpretation adopted. Predictions about the future are commonly understood as symbolically rather than literally true. For example, very few have taken the picture of New Jerusalem (Revelation 21) literally. Yet it is not uncommon to take the 1,000 year reign of Christ as an exact figure, though contrariwise the 144,000 redeemed is often taken as containing a symbolic figure. We express no opinion on these questions, but only point out the differing kinds of truth that can be drawn out of these passages. Current opinion is certainly no infallible guide. A disinterested outsider might wonder why the serpent and

tree of life are often taken as symbolic in Revelation but literal in Genesis. The truth of either book is not in question, but the interpreter has to decide which kind of truth is involved. The books do not give plain answers to our questions.

Most people of course instinctively know the difference between the account of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem and the parable of the Good Samaritan. But in fine, less clearly differentiated cases instinct is no infallible guide. Often it has been unconsciously moulded by environment, and the 20th century scientific and popular thought surrounding us is not the best background against which to interpret the Bible. An awareness of the problem and some acquaintance with the thought and literature of biblical times can best equip us to take decisions. Many defenders of the Bible have done themselves and their cause much harm by defending ideas of truth that are not biblical. No doubt there is a right sense of understanding every passage of Scripture, but Christian humility requires us to refrain from equating our interpretations with the inspired Bible. Of course we must make decisions and act upon them, but all sober thinking Christians will try to distinguish between the clear unambiguous biblical doctrine and passages capable of more than one interpretation. If, shortly after Paul's letters had been written, it was possible for them to seem "hard to be understood" in some places (II Peter 3: 16), why need we feel ashamed to admit that we too have difficulties in these and other books? The profession of knowing all the answers is usually a very human kind of pride, and it can be maintained only by parading much human misinterpretation as divine wisdom.

Is the Bible true? Of course it is, but only in the sense that God intended it to be true. And since "truth" is no simple, self-explanatory quality, misunderstandings can easily arise from misinterpretation of Scripture. Many of the difficulties surrounding the subject of inspiration are of our own making. We want the Bible to be something that God did not intend it to be. In a scientific age we are sensitive to charges made that the Bible does not conform with modern science. Some will try to find dark hints or premonitions of scientific truths in the Bible. This procedure springs from the very

laudable motive of defending God's Word, but may easily provide its enemies with ammunition. The thesis of our first article, that while the whole Bible is inspired it is not all revelation, has to be stated because it is easy to fall into the habit of thinking that whatever is inspired must be revealed. God could, of course, have given a Bible of this kind had that been His wish. To us it seems very clear that He did not, and to express the mistaken notion can only do harm to the cause of the very Scriptures which it aimed to enhance. Similarly with the thesis of our second article. To pretend that the very essence of God is contained in the Bible may spring from a desire to exalt God's word. Yet the idea that pen and ink could contain God's glory is one so patently mistaken that the alternative opinion, that God reduced Himself to the level of human comprehension, has to be admitted.

Less worthy motives also enter into attitudes to the Bible. Certain people have no sense of security unless they are able to have an infallible answer to every question. This is basically an attitude of the teens, while mature adults are able to acknowledge that not every question can be answered, and still to face life calmly. Through the ages there have been those who have treated the Bible as a storehouse of hidden mysteries, apparently gaining a sense of satisfaction from feeling that they alone had the key to these things. Numerology and all kinds of artificial techniques of interpretation have been brought into play, and the "mysteries" thus revealed have usually been of such a character as to discredit the techniques and their users. Though such exegesis has usually been the monopoly of an eccentric few, the same motive to a lesser degree is operative more widely. The insistence one hears on what is called "verbal inspiration" is often of this kind. Apparently it is not enough that God has revealed Himself to men in the Bible. The very words through which the revelation comes are inspired. Of course, since the Bible is inspired, the words which make it up are also inspired. But in this sense "verbal inspiration" becomes rather meaningless. If more is implied, for example that God dictated every word, or that each individual word, even when taken from its context, is inspired, then it must be firmly rejected. The idea of verbal dictation is contradicted by the different styles found in both

Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, and a study of the most ancient manuscripts does not allow us to conclude that we have the text of Scripture exactly and in every particular as it left the authors. There has been no miraculous preservation of the Bible from the scribal errors which occur in all handwritten books.

* * * *

Our contention throughout has been that the difficulties about inspiration have been occasioned by attempts to use the Bible for purposes for which God never intended it. God's love for His wayward children and His desire that none should perish have impelled Him to send His prophets and His son with a call to repentance. For those who would not be contemporary with these divine messengers the Bible records their messages. God did not wish to make His children infallible or omniscient by granting them His revelation. Just as they are morally imperfect even after conversion, so are they intellectually imperfect as well. Their knowledge is incomplete, and will be until, if faithful, they are perfected. The testimony of one who was granted very special revelations is all the more impressive on this account:

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known. I Corinthians 13: 8-12.

The background of this passage is the insistence on the permanence of love contrasted with certain other gifts of the Spirit. Thus prophecies, tongues, and knowledge come to an end, while love lasts

forever. This statement has been taken to refer to the withdrawal of revelation from the early church at the end of the first century A.D. After considering the remainder of the passage a different conclusion can be drawn. Paul continues to explain that "we"—meaning himself and other members of the church—have no complete knowledge, so that prophesying is also incomplete. To substantiate and develop this idea Paul contrasts the time when "complete" knowledge will have come. "Perfect," as the Authorised Version renders the word, is less appropriate in the context. This complete knowledge will, he says, result in the putting away of the incomplete. It follows that the earlier statement means that the prophecies, tongues and knowledge of the present incomplete kind will pass away. The contrast between incomplete and complete knowledge is further illustrated by the difference between the knowledge of child and adult, and then by two further illustrations. The first brings out the difference between an obscure reflection in a mirror and face-to-face vision. Greek and Roman mirrors were not of silvered glass, but of polished metal, which could become tarnished and give a poor reflection; and if not perfectly flat they would show a distorted image. The second illustration emphasizes the gulf between one's present knowledge and the kind of knowledge with which one is now known. Though the one who already knows so completely is not named, it can only be God. Finally, the over-all contrast unmistakably points to the time when the saints will be perfected in God's kingdom and will know even as they are known.

In the absence of inspired men like Paul we have to rely on an inspired book. It was given to us by God's grace to lead us to Him. It has well been described as containing all things necessary for salvation. The true servant of God, while intensely thankful for the knowledge and guidance received, waits in humility and faith for the day when his knowledge will be perfected. At that time the incomplete revelation will have no more purpose, for he will enjoy full communion with God.

(Concluded)

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

By George McHaffie

views attract support. On the one hand baptism is regarded as an immersion in water, marking a spiritual decision of an adult believer, and, on the other, a reception into the church of an infant. This article is written in support of the former view but also takes into account the evidence which is brought forward to support the latter.

CHAPTER II

(I)

BEGINNINGS OF BAPTISM

In the last decade a number of books and pamphlets have been published by representatives of the major churches of Christendom on the subject of infant baptism. Discussion has been vigorous. Old arguments have been refurbished and new ones advanced. In this article and one to follow the main points are reviewed. In particular, the relation of Christian baptism to Jewish proselyte baptism, circumcision, the divine sovereignty and the covenant of grace. The history of the practice of baptism will also be outlined to assess the reasons for the introduction of forms unknown in the New Testament.

Unless otherwise stated quotations are from the New English Bible.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH there may be many barriers to Christian belief today, a time of awakening interest in Christ is still the experience of many. Jesus, and all that He stands for, becomes very real in life, and concern is felt to find out more. At such a time the Bible becomes an eagerly read guide to a new relationship with God. One does not need to read far in the New Testament, however, before feeling pressed to ask what baptism into Christ means.

Unfortunately a deep division of view on baptism has developed since the time Christ was on earth. It is agreed, where baptism is practised, that it is the occasion of entry to the church of God. But beyond this there is no general assent on its form or effect.

Much discussion on baptism has recently taken place between leading church writers, and two major

THE first mention of baptism in the Bible is in connection with the work of John the Baptist. He came to the Jews of Palestine calling on them to turn away from sinning and to amend their way of life. Those who responded "were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3: 6).

No description is given of baptism. Many will be familiar with paintings which show John baptizing people as they stand in shallow water while he pours water from a small cup on their heads. This traditional idea of baptism cannot, however, be taken for granted. There is much evidence on what baptism would mean for the Jews of John's day which points in another direction.

Jewish Washings

The Jewish people were familiar with the religious use of water as a ritual purification from sin. The priests were prepared for their work by washing. Below the temple at Jerusalem was an immersion chamber for this purpose.

When a Gentile wished to become a Jew his "uncleanness" was removed by a rite known as proselyte baptism. There is no direct evidence from before the time of John the Baptist that proselyte baptism had been introduced, but there is evidence for its use before A.D. 70 in a way which suggests that it had been established for some time.

The instructions for proselyte baptism were such as to ensure that no part of the body was untouched by water. The baptism was held to be invalid if the proselyte's hands were clenched, the hair braided, the eyes or mouth shut, if there was a covering on the head or even if a hair was held in the mouth. These are extravagances but indicate that a complete immersion was the normal practice.

Bathing in water was a daily custom on the part of the people living at Qumran near the Dead Sea. It was in this area, where in recent times the Dead Sea Scrolls have been discovered, that John had spent his early days in the wilderness. The Pharisees also frequently bathed, especially before meals, and it was apparently the neglect of a bath of this sort that Jesus was charged with when He sat down to eat in a Pharisee's house (Mark 7: 1-8).

Another indication of the use among the Jews of cleansing baths, called baptism, in the reception of a convert may be deduced from the nature of the challenge which the leaders of the people made to John. They did not ask him what baptism was, but asked what authority he, in particular, had for carrying it out. "... why then are *you* baptizing ? " (John 1: 25).

Baptism among the Jews was, therefore, a cleansing bath in which the whole person was ritually washed of uncleanness. Pouring water on the head is very much less than the bathing which was their custom.

The meaning of the word "baptize" in Greek confirms this conclusion. It usually means "to dip" or "immerse." In II Kings 5: 14 Naaman, the Syrian, is recorded as dipping himself seven times in the Jordan to be cleansed from his leprosy. The Hebrew word for "dip" is the word afterwards used by the Jews for the baptism of proselytes. In the Greek translation made before the time of Christ the same word (*baptizo*), as later employed in the New Testament, was used to translate it. Later use has certainly given the word a specialised meaning so that today it is usual to speak of the baptism of infants though no bathing is involved.

The Baptism of Jesus

John declared his baptism to be incomplete. "I baptize you with water . . . He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Luke 3: 16). The meaning of John's baptism was extended when Jesus came to Jordan to be baptized by John. Difficulty has always been felt in explaining this request. Why should Jesus Who had committed no sin seek a baptism intended to be accompanied by a confession of sin?

Jesus' attitude to John's baptism may be understood from His later references to it. He asked the chief priest and the elders about John's baptism, "... was it from God, or from men ? " (Matt. 21: 25). The answer Jesus would have given was "of God." For Jesus regarded John as God's "herald"

(Luke 7: 27). As a result of refusing John's baptism the Pharisees and lawyers "had rejected God's purpose for themselves" (Luke 7: 3). John's baptism, therefore, had its origin in the will of God. His purpose was the spiritual and moral preparation of men and women of Israel to meet their Messiah. By his baptism they dedicated themselves and were joined to the community of those who were waiting for the Kingdom which the Messiah would bring. In his work the historical unfolding of God's purpose of man's salvation took another step forward.

Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, could not remain aloof from this. He came therefore to John to be baptized saying "... we do well to conform in this way with all that God requires" (Matt. 3: 15). Jesus recognised in John's baptism the command of God which all, including Himself, should obey. Jesus, in this, identified Himself with those He came to save. This was characteristic of His ministry. He went among sinners, stood by them to lift them up and help them to become like Him.

Jesus must also have approached the baptism conscious of His rôle as Messiah to dedicate Himself to His work. The approval of God, "This is my Son, my beloved, on whom my favour rests," and the "Spirit of God descending like a dove to alight upon him" (Matt. 3: 16-17), confirm His dedication and make up what was lacking in John's baptism—the Holy Spirit. John himself gives this interpretation of the purpose of Jesus' baptism, "... the very reason why I came, baptizing in water, was that he might be revealed to Israel" (John 1: 31). Jesus' baptism was, therefore, a unique one. It had much more meaning than that of any other Israelite who came to John intending to forsake a sinful past. Jesus was the obedient Son of God before and after His baptism. No other baptism has this feature.

In scriptural imagery, to be covered by water is a symbol of being overtaken by evils (Psalm 42: 7). It may be that Jesus in His baptism was given a symbolic foreshadowing of the trials which His rôle as Servant of God would bring, of the triumph which He would know in His rising again from the dead.

Conclusions to be Drawn from John's Baptism

The beginning of baptism under the ministry of John already enables us to draw certain conclusions:—

- (i) Baptism is a bath, an immersion, for outward washing signifying an inward cleansing of the person from sin.
- (ii) It comes by command of God.
- (iii) It is a dedication to a new way of life and entry to a new standing before God.
- (iv) It is understandable only in the light of a conscious response of a responsible person who can review his past in repentance, and make decisions about his future.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY CHURCH

AFTER the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, His disciples preached to all that the message of salvation was based on belief in Him. Their commission was:

"Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples; baptize men everywhere in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you."

Matt. 28: 19-20.

The crucifixion of Jesus was a focal point to which all the sins of men led. On the day of Pentecost, Peter courageously convicted the people of their sins and, in particular, the crucifying of the Lord, the Messiah. He commanded them to "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38). This baptism differs from that of John the Baptist, not in outward form, but in meaning. Christ's mission is now understood; baptism is in His Name and the power of the Holy Spirit is added.

In the Acts of the Apostles we have the record of the advance of the church, baptizing all people without distinction who responded to the gospel. Philip went to Samaria which was the centre of a people despised by the Jews. "But when they came to believe Philip with his good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, men and women alike" (Acts 8: 12).

Later Philip speaks to an Ethiopian, a high official of the Queen of Ethiopia. This man was a

eunuch, permanently unclean by Jewish standards and, no doubt, coloured. After he had listened to Philip's instruction there was nothing to prevent his request for baptism being granted (Acts 8: 37-39).

The Pharisee Saul, a persecutor of Christians, was converted also. He later recalled the words of Ananias who not only brought back his physical sight but was, in addition, the instrument of his spiritual understanding. "And now why delay? Be baptized at once, with invocation of his name, and wash away your sins" (Acts 22: 16).

This instruction emphasises once again the washing or bathing associated with the work of John for the taking away of sins. It shows the deliberate association of the convert with Christ following a comprehension of the gospel message.

None is outside the scope of the call to faith in Christ whether he is an outcast, high or low, rich or poor.

The Teaching of Paul

In the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans we have a comprehensive account of how Paul regards baptism. Fresh insights are added. Baptism is linked closely with the death and resurrection of Christ. It is a burial (v. 4). The practice of washing would not necessarily demand a complete immersion. Copious pouring could be substituted. The use of the imagery of burial confirms, however, that immersion was the early practice of the church. Paul's exposition would fail otherwise.

"By baptism we were buried with him, and lay dead." The believer dies to his old way of life. This is expressed in more than one way. Our "old man" (A.V.) or "the man we once were" (N.E.B.) is crucified with Christ that the "body of sin" (A.V.) or the "sinful self" (N.E.B.) might be done away with.

This is no ordinary death. When a criminal dies as a result of his sins, there the matter rests. Death has a victory. But "death" in baptism is a sharing in the kind of death Christ died. This death is a "death to" giving the sense of "emancipation from" something. In the seeming defeat suffered by Christ in death, His resolute refusal to do wrong was brought to its finest hour. The power of sin itself was defeated and He gained a great victory.

By uniting with Christ in this death by baptism

the believer becomes dead to the claims of the world and the sinful self. He consciously puts away what is associated with his wayward past. It is then possible for the Christian to share also the resurrection of Christ portrayed by His rising from under the water of baptism.

... as Christ was raised from the dead in the splendour of the Father, so also we might set our feet upon the new path of life. Rom. 6: 4.

A similar thought lies in II Cor. 4: 11:

... so that the life of Jesus also may be revealed in this mortal body of ours.

This post-baptismal new way is the following of a transformed ethical purpose in life. So we read:

... yield your bodies to him as implements for doing right. Rom. 6: 13.

and again:

... as you once yielded your bodies to the service of impurity and lawlessness, making for moral anarchy, so now you must yield them to the service of righteousness, making for a holy life. Rom. 6: 19.

Life in the Spirit—Rebirth

This new way of life is described as life in the spirit. This is the element lacking in John's baptism.

Moreover, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells within you, then the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give new life to your mortal bodies through his indwelling Spirit.

Rom. 8: 11 (cf. also v. 15).

The foregoing quotation from Paul forms a link with the gospel of John where baptism is taken under another figure, that of rebirth.

In truth I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born from water and spirit. John 3: 5.

The same teaching is found in the Epistle to Titus.

But when the kindness and generosity of God our Saviour dawned upon the world, then, not for any good deeds of our own, but because he was merciful, he saved us through the water of rebirth and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit.

Titus 3: 5 (cf. I Cor. 6: 11).

The reference to the Spirit here is perhaps best understood not in the impressive phenomena of the first century, such as miraculous powers, tongues and healings, but as an inward moral power in the manner of the promise of Ezekiel.

I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Ezek. 36: 27.

Baptism and the Church

The new status of Christians is described in the Epistle to the Galatians.

For through faith you are all the sons of God in union with Christ Jesus. Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ as a garment. Gal. 3: 26-27.

In baptism they have (as Paul, Acts 22: 16), called on the Name of Jesus Christ. They are baptized in the Name of Christ (Acts 2: 38). In this way they have identified themselves so closely with Him as to belong to Him and to be under trust to live their lives as He did His. Their association with Him is depicted as being of His resurrected body.

For no one ever hated his own body: on the contrary, he provides and cares for it; and that is how Christ treats the church, because it is his body, of which we are living parts. Eph. 5: 29-30.

Baptism is, therefore, the act of union which brings a believer into the fellowship of Christ's church. Having been united with the death and resurrection of Christ in this way he can share in the fellowship meal, in breaking bread and drinking wine in remembrance of the body and blood of his Lord.

It is clear from the terms of the New Testament

that no other route of entry into the church of Christ is open. This conclusion (which is drawn without wishing to pass judgments on people which may not be supported by the mercy of God) arises from a New Testament consideration of what Christianity really means.

It is a turning from a false and sinful course, a sharing of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and living, through God, a transformed life of new moral stature. There is no other way to such a life other than a communion in faith with an obedient acceptance of the will of the architect of this new humanity. To live in union with Christ is the only way of salvation. There is no substitute. This salvation lies in the experience which baptism gives: "... he saved us through the water of rebirth and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3: 5).

The Teaching of Peter

Salvation and baptism are also powerfully joined in the first epistle of Peter. It has been suggested that the epistle contains an address to converts at a baptismal service. Whether this is so or not, it can be so read and profitably meditated upon as a preparation for baptism. In referring to the time of Noah, Peter says:

This water prefigured the water of baptism through which you are now brought to safety. Baptism is not the washing away of bodily pollution, but the appeal made to God by a good conscience; and it brings salvation through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. . . . I Peter 3: 21.

Jewish ritual washings were concerned with achieving a cleanliness of their flesh and their efficacy was apparently judged by their success in this direction. Peter indicates that the Christian washing of baptism does not derive its power in the same way but is primarily concerned with the inward moral condition of the person and a conscious union with the risen Christ.

The word translated "appeal" can mean a "pledge." In either case it is a considered response on the part of the convert with a view to his living in good conscience before God.

The act of baptism is also said to bring salvation through the resurrection of Christ. This recalls Peter's earlier words:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his mercy gave us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

I Peter 1: 3.

The Christian who believes Christ rose from the dead has good reason to hope that death need not be the end. He is, therefore, baptized into union with the resurrected Christ Whose power in him will effect his salvation. This is a similar thought to that found in Romans 8: 11.

In Peter's description of baptism, water alone is no more than an external washing. The act is not baptism until it is undertaken by the responsive convert who can experience a living hope in the resurrected Christ as he rises from the water.

Conclusions from the Preaching of the Apostles

The conclusions which may be drawn from the leading baptismal teaching of the followers of Jesus can now be summarised.

- (i) The description of baptism as a bath, a washing, in a way consistent with immersion, is continued from the baptism of John.
- (ii) The imagery used now covers not only a washing away of sins but a burial and resurrection, a dying and living again and a rebirth.
- (iii) The authority for baptism rests in the command of God through Christ.
- (iv) When a convert believes and makes a decision to share in the death of Christ, God, on His part, effects a living union with the risen Christ in the act of baptism.
- (v) Baptism changes the convert's status. He becomes a member of the church of God and is in the way of salvation.
- (vi) The convert's mode of life is transformed. He sets aside the past and is pledged, with God's help, to holy living in future.

(to be continued)

"I AM THE WAY"

By Ralph Lovelock

THE distinguished scholar Edwin Hatch, who did so much to help forward the detailed study of Scripture, was reader in Ecclesiastical History at Oxford and, as such, a searching critic of orthodox Christianity. When he was invited, shortly before his death, to give Hibbert lectures for 1888, he chose as his subject "The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church." He commenced his introductory lecture with a summary of his own impression of established theology, which is worth quoting.

It is impossible for anyone, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers.

The contrast is patent. If anyone thinks that it is sufficiently explained by saying that the one is a sermon and the other a creed, it must be pointed out in reply that the question why an ethical sermon stood in the forefront of the teaching of Jesus Christ, and a metaphysical creed in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century, is a problem which claims investigation.

It is easy for us to view these long-distant events with a spirit of detachment, and concur wholeheartedly with Hatch. It is much more difficult to realise that the climate of initial and speculative thought which characterised the Greek outlook is also that of our own scientific culture. It is equally possible for us, in common with our fourth-century forbears, to castigate the contents of the scientific thought around us, yet to use its methods and principles in the development and practice of our personal religion. We are immersed in this mental outlook, and whether we like it or not, it has become part of our normal mode of life.

Neither our mode of life nor our climate of thought is simple like that of the early apostles who listened to the Sermon on the Mount. It is necessary for us to criticise ourselves as well as those around us, if we are to return to some semblance of first-century Christianity, and if we are going to place an ethical Sermon as fundamental in our lives rather than a metaphysical creed. Jesus has said, "I am the way," and in its early stages Christianity was known as "The Way" long before it became distinguished as a particular type of theology. The very test which Jesus propounded to determine whether a man was His disciple or not did not rest upon an intellectual acknowledgement of fundamental doctrine, but upon a life which witnessed that the scriptural revelation of God as One Who loves and saves had altered and moulded that life. "If there is this love among you, then all will know that you are my disciples" (John 13: 35).

It is true that the apostles had to contend with members of the early church because they were tending to lose sight of certain fundamental doctrines. In every case where this was so, however, it was because the doctrine ignored was one which was essential to the life of Christian love and

practice. Thus, for example, the strong protest of Gal. 1: 8 was called forth by a departure of teaching which was turning the first of all Gentile churches away from the life of Jesus into the seclusion and barrenness of the Pharisaic life. So also Paul's protests to Corinth were because their philosophising was leading them into a life of discord and vice. Their arguments and fine points of detail about clean and unclean meats led to divisions and schism; their failure to realise the divine presence at the Eucharist and their outlook upon it as merely a human act of remembrance led them to behaviour which was a travesty of that love which characterised Jesus in the Upper Room; and their denial of a physical, bodily resurrection led them back into a life of vice because they counted the "body" as wholly evil and beyond hope.

Just as the feasts and sacrifices of the Mosaic Law were vitally important, but only so because without them the life of Israel would never rise to spiritual heights, so also the revelation through Jesus is fundamental, but only effectual when it revitalises one who has been "born again." The very worship of God, meticulously carried out in accordance with every detail, was an offence to God unless it was controlling the worshipper's life, and "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines' blood" (Isa. 66: 3). James was swift to apply this principle to Christian doctrine: "You have faith enough to believe that there is one God. Excellent! The devils have faith like that, and it makes them tremble. But can you not see, you quibbler, that faith divorced from deeds is barren?" (James 2: 19-20.)

As followers of Jesus we are not called to a life of isolation, but to the fellowship of His family, and, as in the natural family, the love which fills the members has much more frequent opportunity for expression within that family than outside it. It is possible to some extent to assess a man or woman by behaviour to chance acquaintances around them, but it is when they are alone in the house with their family that the real person becomes openly manifest. So in the family of God. It is possible to pick out the very self-centred individual by his lack of concern for all whom he meets during the working

day, but the more normal member of our race, the average member of our family, is more easily distinguished by his behaviour to his own relatives, to those whom he meets most frequently and knows best. So, although Jesus commanded love towards an occasional enemy, real Christianity is shown only "if there is this love among you" and this is seen in open manifestation to one's family.

When a new member wishes to join our community, it is necessary for us to assure ourselves that he accepts the Bible as authoritative, and that he knows sufficient about it to set his personal aims in life at the unique level of Jesus Himself. This testing of knowledge, and this evolving of witnessed profession, is a simple and practical test of admission; in the world the "interview" and the "examination" are still the only practicable method of making personal decision in the case of young applicants for employment or of assessing academic knowledge. The "children of this world" however are sufficiently wise in their generation to know that after a period of practising a particular profession it is the prowess made in applying knowledge, and the personal relationship with colleagues, which are the best witnesses to the ability of an applicant for a more senior post.

Jesus truly said that the children of this world were, in general, wiser than those of light. In matters of religion it is more general to concentrate on the minutiae of first principles than on the living witness of the living faith. It is, of course, much easier to test knowledge and opinion than to measure life, but because a particular profession of belief is the best test for entry, it does not follow that it remains the best measure of attainment after years of practice. It may be an essential element of such a test, but it is a completely inadequate one as witnessed by the words of Jesus to the Pharisees (Matt. 23: 15). Their belief in resurrection was detailed and meticulous, yet their converts became children of hell. Some members of the church at Corinth were rejecting such a fundamental belief, yet while in need of further instruction, remained to Paul "my beloved brothers."

Thus, while the examination of knowledge and profession remain the best test for the novitiate to religion, by what test shall such an infant in Christ determine which sect to join? He must, of course,

make himself familiar with the Word of God, and test the tenets of such a sect by its teaching. But, if the words of Jesus at the Last Supper are to be taken as guides, he must also examine the practice of those already far advanced along the path of profession. Just as no mortal man is perfect in conduct, neither is any perfect in his comprehension of God's Word, and the task of choosing becomes complex. All men will have faults in their belief, and all men will have faults in their conduct. How does one balance the two acts of defect, and what is the relative importance of one against the other? Faulty faith is fatal, because it leads to faulty conduct, but, on the other hand, faulty conduct witnesses to a dead and useless faith.

The conditions of actual life must be faced, and the members of any sect must realise that if their fellows were perfect in knowledge and practice, there would have been no need for Christ to make the supreme sacrifice on the Cross. Our basic tenet is man's impotence to save himself, and his absolute need of the salvation through Jesus. Inevitably, therefore, all sects will have some imperfections both of doctrine and of practice, and providing these are only of a minor nature, the sect is a member of the body of Christ. Only in the event of two separated communities being found, each of whom is in error only in minor matters, will a choice between them be difficult.

In many periods of history, however, there has been no available sect which has been in error in only minor points—even in the first century the Corinthian church for a while denied the resurrection and also had those who prided themselves on faulty conduct of a major degree. In such circumstances we have a direct guidance from both Jesus and Paul. Jesus was prepared to worship in a temple where the officiating priests denied the resurrection and the inspiration of prophecy. Paul was prepared to enter into a Jewish synagogue in each city he visited. But in each case there was an active teaching from the Bible, a discussion of its message and an exposition which convicted of sin.

The one feature which terminated the visits of Paul to the synagogue, and placed Jesus on the Cross, was opposition to a free searching of the Scripture and discussion of its teaching. All men are at fault, and for all men there is hope while they

allow the Word of God to be active in their lives. As soon, however, as the Word is restrained and shut up within a rigid tradition of the elders, all hope perishes and spiritual life is extinguished. As Jesus told those who had placed themselves in such a position "... but because you say 'We see,' your guilt remains" (John 9: 41). However far astray a community may be, therefore, if it is genuinely searching the Scriptures, and humble enough to know that it has need of instruction and help, it is a community within which spiritual progress may be made. If, on the other hand, it is stereotyped and proud that it already knows all that matters, and observes meticulously the vital commands, it stands beside the Pharisee of the parable which "was aimed at those who were sure of their own goodness and looked down on everyone else" (Luke 18: 9).

The life of Jesus was "a way." It was the way of "learning obedience." He studied and meditated to learn more of the revelation of God, and set Himself to be a fulfilment of the Word. Because thus it "was written," then thus He must speak and thus He must act. Because God loved, and visited, and suffered, then Jesus also must do the same. Because God was rejected by the natural man, it was inevitable that Jesus also would be rejected if He made Himself a manifestation of God. So completely did He set Himself to express the Word in His life, that He was that Word become flesh. So completely were His living moments dedicated to "the way," that He could say "I am the way," and because that way was of supreme importance He could say "no man comes to the Father except by me." If we are members of His body we shall be found walking in His way. So He could say "As they persecute me, they will persecute you; they will follow your teaching as little as they have followed mine" (John 15: 20).

Not only, therefore, will biblical doctrine and the godly life be found as manifestations of the true disciple, we shall find also a rejection by the natural man, and in consequence, a small minority rather than a large expanding community. In history, however, the Cross preceded the Crown, and He who claimed to be both way and truth, was also life.

New Testament references are from the N.E.B.

COMMENT

Have We Failed?

LECTURE titles such as "Has Christianity Failed?" and "What is Wrong with the Churches?" frequently turn up in our community. Yet a reading of *The Christadelphian* magazine over the past few years, and especially over the past few months, must have caused any thoughtful brother or sister to wonder if it is not *we* who have failed, and to ask what has gone wrong with *us*. We are not referring to editorial policies or pronouncements, but to the reflection of our community which is written large in its pages. We, who should be seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, are almost shaken to our foundations when a brother makes some suggestions in the interests of reconciling the account of beginnings in Genesis with the findings of the physical sciences. Is the present furor the outcome of a century of Christadelphianism?

There are some who think that Bro. Lovelock is on trial. We consider the whole community are on trial in this issue. For in the first place the sincerity of Bro. Lovelock's purpose is not in dispute. Holding Scripture in such high esteem as he does, he has over the years studied in detail the evidence for the origins of the earth that comes from the rocks, and holding that Truth is indivisible, he has tried to reconcile what he conceived to be the meaning of Scripture with what seemed to him the facts obtained from geology and related sciences. In all this Bro. Lovelock has been following good Christadelphian tradition. Bro. John Thomas also tried to fit new knowledge into that obtained from Scripture, for example in his relating electricity to the Holy Spirit. Over the years Bro. Lovelock, again like Dr Thomas, has given his time and himself with the greatest liberality to the service of God. Furthermore, his conclusions, which are being so hotly disputed by some, have been put forward with the greatest humility. He acknowledges that he could be wrong. He has not asked, like some, that any who do not accept his views should be put out of fellowship. Nor has he urged his ecclesia to put an embargo on all speaking brethren who do not share his opinions. Why then this uproar? Who is to blame?

Some say he should have known better. But let us be frank that this by implication condemns at least a portion of our community as irresponsible hotheads and agitators, who cannot be presumed to act wisely and in accordance with the spirit of Christ. If we are in fact this kind of community, this is surely something much more important to be put right than some tentative suggestions about Genesis and geology. In this life we may never know the final truth about these abstruse and difficult matters, but we shall certainly be judged on the lives we have led and the part we have played in the religious community to which we have belonged.

What would other people think of the goings on in our community? Over the past few years there have been two series of articles in *The Christadelphian* magazine specifically attacking opinions held by single individuals, yet no reference was made to their names or to the real purpose. Now we have long discussions of views which most readers will never know at first hand. We are not condemning editorial policies, but we are saying that a community that does things in this way should ask itself just what right it has to claim to have the Truth. Truth is not just a set of doctrines, but a whole way of life.

There are many in our community who are broadly sympathetic with what Bro. Lovelock attempted, even if they might not agree with all the answers proposed. There is a real problem which, as a community, we have so far avoided. Some cry that there is no need to get involved in such issues at all; simple faith will please God. Certainly it will, but our children are taught things at school that often appear to conflict with ideas traditionally held in Christadelphian circles. And people in this country generally are not unaware that there is some kind of divergence between Genesis and geology. We shall not serve our community well if we just ignore this question. It is indeed a plain duty of us collectively to find the best possible answers to these questions. And this requires calm and careful consideration, yes, even sympathetic discussion of proposals so that some gain may be got from them if possible. But instead we get pandemonium. Agitators quite deliberately stir up trouble. The fine pretensions of loyalty to Scripture that they make often contrast sharply with the means they are prepared to use. Fortunately this group is numerically a very small minority. A somewhat larger number, and superficially much more respectable, take a more political view. If trouble is actually starting it would be wise to disassociate oneself from the controversial matter.

One's own views need not be stated, and one may gain some benefit from denouncing the lack of wisdom in letting such matter get into print, if only as a duplicated set of sheets. But more noise will be made by those who can find fault with what has been proposed. If one can pull holes in the arguments, then the matter is solved.

In fact nothing has been solved. It is all too common in our community to think that negative criticism establishes one's case. If one can find fault with some of Wellhausen's opinions on the Pentateuch, this proves that every verse was written by Moses. Since Piltdown man proved to be a forgery, evolution is disproved and man was created in 4004 B.C. as we had always held. Of course scientists have made mistakes; they are human after all. And some students of the Bible have neglected to distinguish between the Word of God and their interpretation of it, so that they unashamedly invoke divine authority for their own misunderstandings.

There is a great danger in the present controversy that criticisms of Bro. Lovelock's views will be like so much dust in the air: confusing the issue and contributing nothing to it. For our part we are not interested in hearing criticisms at all unless those making them are prepared to offer *their* reconciliation of Genesis and geology and to put this up for criticism. And to this we might add the suggestion that since Genesis was not written in a scientific age it would be proper to ask what it meant to those who first heard it.

In the present controversy it would be well to remember that we are all on trial, and not to each other, but to God.

The Bible and Modern Thinking

The September issue of *The Testimony* is devoted to examining some of the problems raised by contemporary thought and opinion. The assertion that an "incontrovertible rebuttal" has been presented (page 289) is, however, a brave statement which one would expect more from him who is successfully putting off the armour rather than from him who is just putting it on (I Kings 20: 11). The assertion leads one to expect incontrovertible arguments on all subjects treated but it may be suspected that the contributors themselves do not all contend from the same standpoint on any particular subject.

Evolution

There are some excellent rebuttals of popular

mechanistic evolution. The article on page 360 gives a most acceptable appraisal of the work of the Evolution Protest Movement which has done much in a sober fashion to keep alive the scientific objections to the hypothesis. The work of Douglas Dewar receives special commendation. Dewar's position is stated clearly. "Dewar concluded that evolution in nature was limited to variations within the families of plants and animals. Chapter seven of his book is in fact entitled *Evolution within the Family*. This is an important concept because it lies at the root of so much misunderstanding" (page 360).

This cautious acceptance by *The Testimony* of a partial evolution is worth noting. Many in the past have tried to found their objections to evolution on the immutability of species.

On this basis certain groupings of animals and plants are considered to have evolved from a common ancestor. Examples of this are the Golden Eagle and the Sparrow Hawk (Falconidae) or in plants the wallflower, the cauliflower and the turnip (Cruciferae). Dewar's position allows also for the possibility of the much-publicised evolution of the horse.

If even this point of view seems to go beyond the limits of available evidence we are warned on page 304, "Although no convincing evidence has yet been advanced to show that one species can be transformed into another, it is unwise to prejudge the issue." The general picture given, therefore, is of a limited evolution with "fresh acts of creation," "down the ages of geologic time" (page 359). This is a defensible position which in broad outline will commend itself to many. We might suggest that the thoughtful article on immanence on page 373 could afford a basis for an explanation of these processes in nature.

Genesis Chapter 1

It is when an application of the above principles to the Bible is attempted that we find two different streams of thought in *The Testimony*.

The real problem today is not how to rebut mechanistic evolution which, so far as we know, we all rebut, but how, in the light of our knowledge of the past, we are to explain passages such as Genesis Ch. 1. On this the Special Issue gives no answer.

We are tantalised by statements such as, "The writer is of the opinion that all observable geological and biological phenomena on this earth can be interpreted in the light of a literal acceptance of the Genesis record" (page 300). As to the dates of Genesis given in the Authorised Version we are told, "If the Genesis dates, however, are to be rejected we are immediately plunged into absolute darkness." "... the date of the flood as claimed by Scripture to be A.M. (The year of the world) 1656" (pages 326, 327). We feel, nevertheless, that in the absence of any scheme showing a reconciliation between the Genesis record and the observable phenomena, those who write like this can hardly have grasped what the modern problems are.

We suggest that if any intelligent non-believer were asked to understand Genesis Ch. 1 absolutely literally he would say that it taught that the world including the sun, moon and stars and all life were created in six literal days of 24 hours, approximately 4004 B.C. On the third day the seas were formed and vegetation appeared on the dry land. On the fourth day the sun, moon and stars were made. On the fifth day fish and fowl were created and on the sixth day land animals and men.

Until about the 16th century few would find it difficult to be literal in their interpretation. The last 300 years have, however, seen cumulative difficulties arise and these have arrived on our doorstep with final insistence in the 20th century. Yet in the October 1965 issue of *The Testimony* we have the literalist approach set out as though there were no problems. "Why should we not believe it just as it stands? Is anything too hard for the Lord? Yet, often in our attempts to reconcile science with the Bible, we argue as if literal days were too hard. Let us have faith in the Bible record and acknowledge that God could and did perform all that is attributed to Him—in six days" (page 429). At the same time it appears that even for this writer some things are hard to accept, for the creation of the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day is reduced to "became visible" (page 430).

It so happens that the Special Issue of *The Testimony* itself provides an answer to the statement in the October issue. "Only the simple appear unaffected by the problem; the easy way is to accept the simple sense of what God has said about Creation. It is regrettably true, however, that the easy way does not always seem satisfactory. It requires no great mental effort; it appears to evade rather than face the problem; even, perhaps, may seem to deny what is obviously the case. When we view the evidence of the rocks it seems vital that we should meet and defeat the supporters of evolution on their own ground" (page 301). This is well said.

We find, though, that some of the contributors to the Special Issue dismiss evidence in a high-handed fashion. "... observations made by men who deliberately ignore the facts of creation and the flood are not valid" (page 320). How seriously does anyone expect to be taken who writes, "To insist that fossils are derived from animals, that is, to be dogmatic on this subject is unscientific; it involves the claim to recognise self-evident truth, since all other explanations have been rejected and new evidence will not be accepted" (page 302). There have been several attempts at explaining the existence of fossils, during the last 300 years on any other basis than that of an animal or plant origin but they have all yielded to the pressure of the obvious. Nevertheless if really new evidence were to be offered we doubt if any would refuse to consider it.

A cogent point, too, is that it is precisely because a number of writers in *The Testimony* do not accept

the new evidence, which has become available in modern times, that there is a need to discuss the problem of creation at all.

The Flood

The treatment of the flood is interesting. We may note in passing that the staple argument of past years based on Sir Leonard Woolley's discovery of "flood layers" in Mesopotamia is now abandoned (page 320). Based on the Genesis narrative, "all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered" (Gen. 7: 19), a universal flood is maintained. When we turn to the animals in the ark, however, the "all" somehow loses its force and only a limited number of animals are allowed. The text is clear enough, "... all flesh, wherein is the breath of life" (Gen. 7: 15). To cover this a creation of animals after the flood is assumed.

The geological evidence presented to support the universal flood, however, hardly fits the description of the flood in Scripture. The flood originated by "the fountains of the great deep" being broken up, by "the windows of heaven" being opened (in an earlier *Testimony* this was regarded as figurative, page 28, January 1950) and by rain (Gen. 7: 11, 12). The water increased "bare up the ark." "upward did the waters prevail." On the universal theory of the flood the waters prevailed upwards nearly 30,000 ft. (about six miles) to cover Mount Everest. They then receded slowly. The ark grounded on Ararat in the seventh month but not till the tenth month "were the tops of the mountains seen" (Ch. 8: 4, 5).

The *Testimony* contributor brings forward evidence purporting that in not so distant times vast tidal waves swept across continents. Huge 1,000 ton boulders were moved from Norway to England and Germany. That mammoths were frozen in the far North and that animal bones were piled in caves is brought forward as evidence of cataclysm. This would prove, however, that the flood was universal everywhere except in Palestine and Mesopotamia where no such phenomena appear. We wonder, too, what would happen to the ark during these enormous tidal waves. No support is given for dating the phenomena described to a period as recent as 2400 B.C. It is difficult to fit the mammoths frozen in ice into any scheme at all. Velikovsky in *Ages in Chaos*, with a theory of Venus passing near the earth and causing chaos, or Hoerbiger's theory (popularised by H. S. Bellamy in *In the Beginning God, etc.*) of a captured moon, both claim frozen mammoths in support of their theories.

We would prefer the judgment of an earlier *Testimony* contributor.

As Bible students, we incline to the view that the Flood was local in extent, but we are not at all dogmatic on the point (March 1956, page 105).

A CRITICAL NOTICE OF “THE BIBLE AND MODERN THINKING”

By Gordon Hunnings

THE TESTIMONY Committee has published a special number for September 1965 which, for the most part, consists of a serious and sustained examination of some of the problems ventilated by the publication of Brother Lovelock's notes on *The Origin of Man*. This brief review is not primarily intended to be a defence of Brother Lovelock—who is more than usually well equipped to take care of himself—but, as this is the first attempt at a rational discussion made by *The Testimony* magazine of the issues involved, it was felt that this singular event should not pass unnoticed.

In spite of the general improvement in tone of the articles there are still a number of attitudes shared by most, perhaps all, of the contributors that are open to criticism, and I hope that it will not seem to be carping if I concentrate on these rather than on some of the excellent material that also appears. I hope, too, that my long and valued friendship with the brothers Whittaker will rob of all offence my choice of the material contained in their articles as my chief stalking-horse.

VERBAL INSPIRATION

Pride of place in this special number is given to an article by Brother Edward Whittaker on *Principles of Bible Inspiration and Interpretation*. After a brief survey of what is meant by verbal inspiration the writer reaches the conclusion that inspiration “did not extend beyond the originals” and problems of the preservation of the text are not only irrelevant but “confuse the real issue.” He next considers the different accounts of the raising of Jairus' daughter and he quotes Brother Lovelock as follows: “We are entitled to ask what were the actual words used by Jesus.” Brother Edward's rejoinder is this: “Has intellectual confidence reached such a pitch that it will dare to tell the Almighty how He should write His Gospels, and insist that He should have given them in the language in which Jesus spoke over the dead child?” If we refuse to be frightened by the rhetoric—and to disagree with Brother Edward is not to “tell” God anything—then the answer is that this is precisely what we should expect to have happened if verbal inspiration is the fact it is alleged

to be. The point is that verbal inspiration entails verbal preservation, for if the validity of inspiration depends upon the words of the original being dictated by God then inspiration is rendered invalid both by variant texts and even by translation into another language. If it is the case, as we all believe, that the inspiration of the Bible is not affected by differences of language such as variant texts and translations, then a theory of verbally inspired originals is superfluous. It is neither a logical nor an historical prerequisite for believing that the Bible is inspired. As God has not seen fit to give us verbal preservation, a theory of inspiration that hangs all on an inspired original which none of us have seen nor can see, offers no account of the inspiration of the Bible which we actually possess. Those who hold the verbal inspiration theory assume that it is a necessary condition for something to be called the Word of God that it should be verbally dictated by God without seeing that on this criterion the English Bible, for example, is not the Word of God. This is the very opposite of the conclusion that the argument is designed to establish, for if a man denied that the English Bible was the Word of God he would not be retained in fellowship however loudly he proclaimed the verbal inspiration of the original manuscripts.

To deny the *explanation* of inspiration offered by the verbal inspiration theory is not at all the same thing as to deny the *fact* of inspiration and it is gross misrepresentation to suggest that those who reject the alleged explanation are guilty of rejecting the fact of inspiration. The apparent plausibility of the verbal inspiration theory trades upon an ambiguity of the word “verbal”! The argument runs that if the Bible is the *Word* of God then its *words* must be inspired and hence we must accept *verbal* inspiration as the only possible account of inspiration. What the expression “verbal inspiration” masks is really a *dictation* theory of inspiration and when we ask whether the Word of God that became flesh in Christ has a meaning that is exhausted by words dictated in any human language, the argument seems a lot less plausible. The statement that “the Word became flesh” is not equivalent to the statement that “the original manuscripts — even if divinely dictated — became a human-

being." The meaning of "the Word of God" has a significance that is wider and richer than language, including dictated language.

Verbal inspiration, or to call it by its less ambiguous name, the dictation theory of inspiration, was originated by men whose faith in God was exceeded by their faith in mechanical explanation. It is not a theory about inspiration as such but rather about the mechanics of inspiration since it offers no argument *that* the existing Bible is inspired; only *how* the original manuscripts were inspired. For my own part I do not know *how* God inspired the Bible though I am unshakeably convinced that He did, in fact, do so. When I am asked to explain *how* men used the ordinary language of their time and often the idioms of their trades, yet what they said constituted a revelation of God, I confess that I am unable to do so. Before the sceptic goes on his way rejoicing there is a further piece of argument that is relevant here. Consider the origin of those ideas that we associate with purely human genius and let us ask the sceptic to explain *how* there originated the dialogues of Plato, the music of Bach, the plays of Shakespeare, the paintings of Rembrandt and the mathematics of Einstein? He will not be able to tell us. And if we take less exalted examples and ask *how* do we form ideas about everyday objects in the world around us such as tables and chairs he will still not be able to tell us, though he may try. Philosophy has struggled with this particular problem for 2,000 years without providing a satisfactory account of how we form ideas about the world, and more recent attempts by psychologists have fared little better. If we find ourselves baffled in offering an explanation of the origin of those ideas which it is agreed on all sides that we do have as human beings, how can we begin to explain how the Holy Spirit operates on a man such that the source of his ideas in some way comes from beyond himself and constitutes a revelation of God? Our inability to explain *how* this happened no more entails that we must reject *that* it happened than our failure to explain *how* we perceive the world entails that we must reject *that* we do perceive the world.

Furthermore, the dictation theory of inspiration fails to do justice to the rôle of experience in the life of the writers. It was not by dictation that Jeremiah learned that religion could and would survive the temple and that true religion was an affair of the spirit. This was learned in the personal experience of a deeply sensitive man who suffered loneliness and persecution from his fellows, and who, in his agony, cried out that God had deceived him. His message was the outcome of his experi-

ence, and to suppose that inspiration guided only his fingers as the dictation theory implies ignores the fact that this man wrote from the heart. Hosea experienced the anguish of loving an unfaithful woman and learned from this something of God's persistent love for unfaithful Israel; it is this experience that illuminates his writing and gives it such breadth of compassion. The dictation theory of inspiration ignores the majesty and the subtlety of the interplay between the divine challenge and the human response and reduces these men to primitive typewriters.

THE HONEST DOUBTER

Another article in this issue is contributed by Brother Harry Whittaker and is entitled "Dialogue with an Honest Doubter." This is rather a misleading title since the intention of the article is to suggest that the "doubter" concerned is, in fact, dishonest.

The burden of the argument is that anyone who thinks again about the early chapters of Genesis and reaches a different interpretation from that held by "true Christadelphians," by implication at least, is guilty of departure from the Statement of Faith and denial of the inspiration of the Bible. If such a person is honest he would see that the only honourable course open to him is to resign from the community and join another "where a man may believe almost anything, may have mental reservations galore, and still continue as a member."

This argument consists of a mass of seductive fallacies. Throughout the dialogue Brother Harry tacitly assumes that the criterion of a "true Christadelphian" is epitomised by himself, and this emotional loading of the argument in his favour is not disguised by the apparent reasonableness of the tone in which it is couched. This attitude has been a distressingly common one for a long time, so long, in fact, that it tends to be adopted without question, and it is just this that is wrong. As soon as a new interpretation is suggested, others—particularly those who uphold this distasteful question—begging dichotomy between "true Christadelphians" and the rest—assume the rôle of prosecutor, judge, jury and, if they belong to the same ecclesia, executioner too; and instead of offering argument demand assurances. From the outset there is this assumption of moral and spiritual superiority such that one who offers new insights into the Word of God finds to his bewilderment that, in place of rational discussions of the issues involved, he is asked for assurances, withdrawal from speaking appointments, signed declarations, resignation from ecclesial and inter-ecclesial committees, and even from fellowship itself. Brother Harry's refusal to

present his argument in terms of "disfellowship," "excommunicate," or "withdrawal," must not be allowed to obscure where his heart lies; to anticipate criticism does not disarm it. To say of a man that he is not a "true Christadelphian," that he is dishonest, and that he should leave the community for another is only fractionally different from talking openly of disfellowship. All that is missing is the misleading half-truth that "we have a duty to be separate"—and this is supplied in an article by Brother James Carter immediately before Brother Harry's—and the "true Christadelphians" will make an honest man of the "doubter" by ensuring that he is compelled to go elsewhere. In this article he may be shown the door with more politeness than is customary amongst us but he is being shown the door none the less. Even if a man is given "plenty of time in which to sort out his problems" the trend of the argument leaves us in little doubt as to his eventual fate if his solutions do not coincide with the author's. Lurking behind all this is the objectionable concept of an ultimatum with a fixed time-limit for capitulation or else. . . . It may be that there is the merest hint of this attitude in the appendix to the title of this special number; "assent or dissent?" I hope I am mistaken in this and I look forward to the members of *The Testimony* Committee publishing their assurances that they regard these articles as contributions to the general discussion and not as the dividing line between "true Christadelphians" and the rest.

This brings me to the most serious mistake that the article contains which is the attitude enshrined in the words "... the Christadelphian position is what it is for all time—or at least until the coming of the Lord or the disintegration of the community." Under this epitaph lie buried the cold remains of many religious communities and our own will prove to be no exception unless we see that the spiritual response to the needs of one generation does not necessarily meet the needs of the next. It is inescapably true that the needs of 20th-century men and women are not met by stubbornly clinging to an out-worn eschatology that expected the coming of Christ to follow the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; nor by championing the infallibility of Archbishop Usher's date for creation; nor by reverencing scholarship only when it has been hallowed by being a century out of date. The clarion call that "the only way forward is back!" must be ignored; the challenge from modern thought can be met within the framework of an inspired Bible but not by retreating from scholarship into typology or any other brand of obscurantism. The fossil remains of last-century

attitudes make a poor meal for those seeking the bread of heaven today. We must allow room for growth and the development of new interpretations of Scripture if we are to be living and effective witnesses for Christ, for, as happened with Judaism, the diggers of last-ditch positions prepared only their own graves. It is pertinent to note that the logic of Brother Harry's argument is based on exactly the same mistake that the Jews made in assessing the teachings of Jesus and Paul. They, too, supposed that a change in the *interpretation* of Moses was the same thing as a repudiation of the *authority* of Moses. This is a crucial distinction, and their failure to make it not only closed their minds to the new insights that were being offered but so warped their judgment that they were convinced that their opposition to Jesus and Paul was a defence of the Word of God, necessary to prevent the disintegration of the faith from within.

Finally, we come to the charge of dishonesty. Those who resort to this line of argument frequently fail to see that this weapon is double-edged. Could it not be argued that those who hold that "the Christadelphian position is what it is for all time" should "in all honesty" make their spiritual home in the Old Paths fellowship? The point is that there already exists a branch of the community for whom Brother Harry's arguments are meat and drink and who have no inhibitions about proclaiming themselves to be the only "true Christadelphians." Ought not Brother Harry's two favourite stalwarts, George and Tychicus, "in all honesty" "walk out" and join the Old Paths? Of course, if they did, they might be surprised how quickly the Old Paths became the Slippery Slopes leading only and inevitably to the fellowship of the Red Queen whose response to every challenge was the cry, "off with his head; off with his head!"

Surely our fellowship with the Father and with His Son is too serious to be reduced to this kind of farce. To avoid taking even the first step towards this absurd situation can we not stop impugning the honesty and integrity of those whose interpretations of Scriptures are not our own? To avoid taking the second step, can we not stop demanding their withdrawal from fellowship whether by resignation or excommunication? Do any of us want our community replaced by a set of embittered splinter groups each stridently proclaiming itself to be the repository of "true Christadelphian" doctrine? To avoid taking the final disastrous step—and here I know that Brother Edward and Brother Harry will agree—we must unite in love and, to those brethren whose sole concept of Christian action is unchristian division, say courteously, but firmly and together, "No, brethren, not your way; not this time."

Our Responsibilities To Young People

By John T. Wilson



WE cannot pretend to have in our community a monopoly of those who alone are concerned with the problems of life, nor can we pretend to have a community in which *every* member is a thinker, profoundly interested in the deepest philosophy of the Truth. We have, on the contrary, many simple and worthy souls who have been taught to accept the Truth, who have been happy to accept the Truth and who cannot, in their simple faith, comprehend that there are people who cannot merely accept the Truth as they have done without questioning its very foundations to see if they will stand examination.

Before we can consider the challenge of preaching to the young we must ask ourselves what exactly we want our community to be. A traditional attitude has grown up in the nineteenth century of distrust toward education and the "intellectuals." (And who exactly are the "intellectuals"? Those whose ideas differ from our own?) We conveniently forget that Dr Thomas was an "intellectual"—a

university man whose intellectual labours resulted in the restoration of important truths which had been lost sight of by the churches and which we today describe as "the Truth." Yet despite our traditional antagonism to "worldly learning," we eagerly grasp at the opportunity of sending our children to university, and create the dichotomy of "education for a career," but "no intellectualism in the Truth."

Whether or not we are aware of it, the fact remains that we live in an age characterised by science and technology—an age therefore of education. And education affects not merely the area of knowledge concerned with our career, but is also concerned with a general broadening of our whole intellectual outlook and capacities. It is a way of approach to life and its problems—intellectual, moral and practical. The truly educated man is one who is prepared to say (and really mean!) "I may be wrong in my views—I am willing to consider other evidence and if I prove to be wrong I will willingly change my views." But the problem lies here—most of us are not really prepared to search for truth in this frighteningly earnest way. We approve of people being logical—but not when they prove more logical than ourselves!

Those who *are* capable of thinking for themselves on a higher level can usually understand, and adapt themselves to, the less intellectual, but the question is, can the non-intellectual accept the position and attitude of those whose very nature and intellectual make-up insists on being fully satisfied as to the intellectual validity of the Truth? This gulf between "intellectuals" and "non-intellectuals" is one of the problems we are being forced to face in several issues which have raised uglier heads than that of the serpent. We are no longer living in the days when the Truth was composed mostly of miners and shipping clerks, and, like the world, we are tending to fall into the trap of saying "things were different in our young days!"—a common sentiment among us despite Ecclesiastes 7, verses 8-10:

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of

fools. Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

We blame the world for the seduction and loss of our young people, when in fact the real reason lies in the fact that we, the product of those "former days," have not been properly equipped in spiritual wisdom to bring up our families properly in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

We have, as a community and as individuals in the Truth, a fear of change, yet change is demanded for growth to Christian maturity. Change is the essence of progress toward being Christ-like. Conversion is a change. Change must be a constant feature of our experience. The fundamentals do not change, but our human understanding of them does: we are changed by them.

We must take a hard look at our community and do some hard thinking about it, to see what it is, and what it should be, for storm clouds threaten our Galilee, and only Christ in the ship will guarantee our safe passage.

These thoughts are not irrelevant to the challenge of preaching to the young, but are broad questions to form the basis of some hard, and it is hoped profitable, thinking about fundamental issues which must be faced if we are to preach to the young with any degree of effectiveness—the issues of intellectualism and education, of what exactly are the necessary foundations of our faith, our responsibility for how our young folk turn out, and of the inevitability of change for Christian maturity.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PROBLEMS

First, how do we define youth? Broadly speaking, youth can be anything from three to 21, which is somewhat too wide a group to deal with together! We can usefully divide youth into three broad age groupings:

1. Those of Sunday School age.
2. Those of Bible Class age.
3. Young adults.

In a later section we will consider those of Sunday school age, while our approach to those of Bible class age will be similar to our approach to the older group (with whom this article is largely concerned), but modified by the considerations of

their age and type. We must also bear in mind the differences between our own young people who may have a good knowledge of the Bible, and other young people who may not.

The most useful division that can be made for our present purposes is one which is crude and artificial, but nonetheless helpful as exemplifying, in general, the different types of approach involved, that is, the division of young people into INTELLECTUALS and POP FANS.

However we attempt to classify youngsters in order to analyse some of the specific problems faced by different young people, certain general problems are found. Anyone with any experience of preaching to the young will agree that it is the most difficult type of preaching there is. Young people are critical, by tradition if not by nature, of the older generation. The influences to which young people are exposed are extremely powerful, more so than most of us realise, and the young people of today are, in general, better educated than their parents' generation ever had the chance to be. An increasing proportion of young people today are going on to university and other places of higher education. These facts make increasingly difficult any satisfactory communication between the generations, and make preaching to the young increasingly hazardous. The occasion when a scientific and sceptical Bible class made mincemeat of their less educated Bible class teacher will be repeated frequently until we learn to appreciate these problems. These rapidly changing circumstances create a situation which demands the employment of our best speakers, our wisest brethren, our better educated teachers, together with a lively and "switched-on" approach. Our teachers of the young need to be of our most intelligent members with the kind of elasticity in their approach which will enable them to cope with the most awkward demands of the young. Where at all possible the brethren chosen for preaching to the young should be young themselves.

Most emphatically, well-meaning but naive addresses by elderly fuddy-duddies can do more harm than good!

THE INTELLECTUALS

The intellectual type of young person will often

be from a non-Christadelphian home, and in many cases will have little actual knowledge of the Bible. Obviously this means that in our approach to him or her we will recognise the existence of different levels of Bible reading and modify our approach accordingly.

The chief problem with this group will be the questioning of the foundations and the fundamentals of the Truth—a process which causes much needless anxiety in those who fear for “the standards of the Truth.” (Remember Elijah and God’s answer to his self-important worries, I Kings 19). A few searching questions to ourselves will make clear whether our fears are justified, or are merely the results of our own inadequacy and unpreparedness. Two things are important here; the first is attitude, the second is aptitude. In forming our attitude to this intellectual probing, we must make an effort to put aside our fears and prejudices and try to be alive and sympathetic to the problems raised, and to deal with them to the best of our ability, reasonably and open-mindedly. Above all things we should avoid dogmatism and the superior wisdom of the “you listen to me, my lad!” approach. This is not only annoying, it is downright, unchristian, complacent pride. If we are prepared to show that our minds are not brain-washed, tightly corked and narrow, then we may be pleasantly surprised to find that those whom we had begun to write off with hostility as budding atheists, are really only earnest and honest thinkers who want a genuine religion which does not demand that they become intellectually dishonest. This may not be so in every case, but it is in many.

We must learn, too, if we find ourselves being rather lost and puzzled because all this intellectual stuff is beyond our comprehension, to refrain from condemning the doubters with the kind of inverted pride that glories in being ordinary, non-intellectual and ignorant of the wisdom of this world. The mature Christian, whatever his intellectual capacity, will not condescendingly have pity on those “poor lost souls” as inferior beings who need saving from themselves to become good little Christadelphian ostriches! No, the mature man of God will welcome the questioning, probing spirit and seek to learn from it.

This brings us naturally to the second important

point—that of aptitude. If we recognise, as we should, the different levels of intelligence in the brotherhood as in society at large, then we will realise that a Christadelphian dustman (for whom we have great respect) is probably not the man to answer the problems of the zoology undergraduate. This is not necessarily the case, of course, for intelligence and learning are not only to be found in the universities, and intellect bears no correlation (as far as I am aware) to faith and the wisdom that comes from above. But I suggest that some thought and care are needed in regard to aptitude for this kind of work—not only by our community and ecclesial organisations, but by each and every member regarding his or her own aptitude. It is not for nothing that Paul advises “Don’t cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you all.” (Rom. 12: 3, Phillips.) If we cannot deal with a problem, or answer a question, let us learn to have the maturity to say so. There is no shame, but rather commendation in saying frankly, “I’m afraid that one’s a bit beyond me—let’s go and ask brother X. I’m sure he’ll be able to help us both to understand this.” This is not “letting the Truth down,” it is being mature enough to recognise our own limitations. We would be letting the Truth down if we failed to do this.

What can we do in practical terms to meet the challenge of preaching to our young intellectuals? Here are one or two suggestions, some of which have been tried by Glasgow South ecclesia (marked by *) and others.

- *1. Special youth gatherings. These can deal with special issues relevant to young people and their problems. (Glasgow South has had youth gatherings based on topics like “Inspiration,” “Bible Study,” etc.)
- *2. A special series of talks on relevant subjects by a competent brother can be a great help.
- *3. Frequent panels to answer questions is probably one of the best ways of having a lively and interesting time with the young people. Again the important thing is that those chosen to take part must be competent. (Although we have had many successful evenings at Glasgow South we have had flops

too, through having unsuitable persons on the panel.)

4. The panel idea could probably be profitably developed by having a discussion circle (this is done by another Glasgow ecclesia).
5. More open homes—that is the real answer. When more homes are open to our young folk they will not only gain the opportunity to discuss their problems with helpful brethren, but they will also learn more of the character of life in Christ. We should be more ready, too, to open our homes to our interested friends, both young and old.
6. There is a greater need for good, suitable literature. Much of our literature at the present time is poorly written and presented—and most of it is out-of-date and old-fashioned. This situation is improving, but we have a long way to go yet.

THE POP FANS

This group, I confess, presents a more difficult basic problem, for it is not problems about doctrine and philosophy which lose us this type of youngster, but problems of conflicting attitudes and values. The average Christadelphian ecclesia must be an intolerably dull outfit for the average “switched-on” youngster when compared to the Rolling Stones, Friday night dancing or the Fab cafe where he or she meets “the mates.”

What can we do about it? Should we do anything about it? We would surely be the most miserable defeatists if we didn't! We have to face the fact that many of the children of brethren and sisters are coming into this category. This, of course, is an ideal opportunity gravely to shake our heads and intone, “It wasn't like this in *my* young days!” Ecclesiastes has already warned us against this “old man's talk”—“say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.” The ostrich attitude simply will not do.

Reluctant as we may be to admit it, the answer seems to lie in the provision of entertainment and fun in a lively youth circle—because if we don't let Christadelphian youngsters have their fun as a group they will go and get it elsewhere and from their associations in the world.

We have an “ivory tower” approach to the Truth—we say and we know that the Truth is superior to other pleasures and ways of life, and we want others to see and appreciate this. The problem is of course that they don't! There is a failure to communicate what the Truth means. Perhaps this is because we are not talking in language which they understand. It is our job to be “all things to all men” and to bridge this gap by trying to put the Truth into the pop idiom—then perhaps the teenagers will learn gradually to appreciate the Truth as something which belongs to this life, not merely a thing for squares on Sundays. If it is objected that this is pandering to those who are “lovers of pleasure” then we must also note that the quotation continues “*more* than lovers of God.” It is a question of balance and priorities.

The question of half-measures raises its head here. It is obvious stupidity to deprecate the Rolling Stones and offer a compromise of Semprini. The young people would simply regard us as fools—and they would be right. Scottish country dancing might strike us as the most innocuous type of dancing, but offer it to the pop fans and they will be convinced that to be a Christadelphian means following Queen Victoria and being afraid of enjoying life. We cannot hope to stem the tide of the pop trend and if we are prepared to offer activities and entertainments to our young people then we must logically set our cultural prejudices aside and provide what the youngsters want. Can we really maintain that there is some intrinsic virtue in table-tennis which is absent from modern dancing?

When we come to the question of talks and meetings for young people in general, and the pop fans in particular, we must be prepared for a drastic revision of our existing ideas of propriety and about what is and what is not suitable for a meeting for worship and preaching to young people. Our talks must be understandable and enjoyable, for there is no inherent virtue in obscurity, boredom and misery in religion. Teenage religion must be happy—and we have no better example of humorous preaching than the vivid metaphors of Jesus Himself, like “straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel!” Like Jesus we must learn to couch our message in the idiom of the day—by use of pop song

titles, illustrative jokes and everyday illustrations drawn from the teenager's own experience of life. Different kinds of services are needed to give variety and a fresh and modern approach to eternal truths. Why not try a few excerpts from current folk songs (which often contain strong moral criticisms of contemporary life) or even pop records followed by a five minute talk on the subject of each? With apologies for being exceptionally dated, what an opportunity in:—

“With a love like that you know you should be glad” (Beatles).

Or:—

“I believe for every drop of rain that falls a flower grows” (Bachelors).

As Paul said, “As certain of your own poets (Aratus and Cleanthes) have said . . .” Paul was “with it”—are we?

WHERE?

So far we have talked about preaching to young people, but we have not considered where we are going to find them. Apart from the families of Christadelphian parents and perhaps a few other youngsters who attend our lectures, we might, if we are really interested, try to contact other young adults at universities, schools, church youth fellowships and youth clubs. Then there are Sunday schools. We are familiar with the Jesuits' claim to be able to form a child's mind by the age of seven—and psychological research backs up the effectiveness of indoctrination at an early age. One thing we Christadelphians do really well is the running of first-class Sunday schools. This is a vitally important source of promising candidates for the service of Christ and it is one to which we could, and I feel should, devote much more of our resources and our energy—particularly our energy! The money we spend on campaigns and special efforts might be more profitably invested in Sunday schools. This is a work which provides an important field of activity for sisters who often feel unimportant and of little use in active preaching. A lively junior youth circle is a necessary adjunct to a good Sunday school and forms another important field of preaching work. Perhaps we should even use the Sunday-school as the main spearhead of our ecclesial preaching activity—bringing in outside youngsters

and through them reaching and interesting the parents.

FAMILIES

The most important aspect of all is the introducing of our own families to the Way of Life. Children tend to be, in many ways, reflections of ourselves. The husband's relatives say, “My, isn't she like her daddy!” while the wife's folks say, “I can see her like her mother!” But this similarity is not merely genetic, it is more than simple similarity of appearance, it is social, it is a similarity of attitudes, values and character—and it is frightening for the future to consider how many of our youngsters are completely rejecting our beliefs and way of life. Why? Could it be because there is a fundamental lack of appreciation of the Truth amongst us? Could it be that what we hold as the Truth, we hold simply because it is an acceptable prejudice or a convenient outlook rather than a living reality? Something of that kind is suggested by our resistance to change, our backwardness in outlook and our fear of different ideas and ways of looking at things. Could it be that while possessing and valuing the pure doctrine of the Truth we have lost the spirit of the Truth and become arid, doctrinaire dogmatists with very little appreciation of that love which is the very reason for the Truth's existence? There is some indication that this too is true, at least to some degree, for our desire to preserve purity of doctrine often degenerates into a licence for unkind and hostile attitudes to others, for vaunting our own human views as the infallible teaching of the Bible. Unless there is a radical change in our attitude the brotherhood will find itself in much needless trouble and heartbreak.

This attitude is surely a product of the traditional values which we have set up as a community—values which lay stress on the possession by the community of a rigid and detailed body of doctrine to be kept pure at all cost, rather than an emphasis on the spiritual growth to maturity of individuals in the atmosphere of an active Christian home. It is perhaps because our children are able to see this more clearly than we ourselves, that they are rejecting the Truth. It is possible for us to be so involved in the “work of the Truth” that our own families are neglected—yet when things go wrong

and our children despise us, we glory in a grim sort of way in being "persecuted for righteousness' sake." Let us examine our lives and our objectives realistically and see if, in fact, we are glorifying ourselves and our own works at the expense of those very qualities and virtues that the Truth is concerned with—those of mercy, and compassion and love.

In any consideration of preaching we inevitably come back to the basic issue—that the real witness is the kind of people we are. If our children fail to turn out well is it because perhaps they are too like us? Is our family one which is drawn together by the love and the service of the Lord Jesus? Do we make a regular habit of reading and praying with our children? If our young people are failures, then it is highly likely that there is something fundamentally wrong with our approach, not only to them, but to the Truth. Paul points to some of the big issues involved here in the third chapter of his second letter to Timothy and they are points to ponder. Perhaps we fail to appreciate the power of the enemy.

You must realise that in the last days the times will be full of danger. Men will become utterly self-centred, greedy for money, full of big words. They will be proud and contemptuous, without any regard for what their parents

taught them. They will be utterly lacking in gratitude, purity and normal human affections. They will be men of unscrupulous speech and have no control of themselves. They will be passionate and unprincipled, treacherous, self-willed and conceited, loving all the time what gives them pleasure instead of loving God. (Phillips.)

This is the world of today. These are the people next door. And this is the age of communication and the "soft-sell." We need not kid ourselves that we are unaffected. This is the current sociological pattern, and to some extent, imperceptibly maybe, we conform. How can we save our children? Paul gives the clue when later in this chapter he says,

But you, Timothy, have known intimately both what I have taught and how I have lived. My purpose and my faith are no secrets to you. You saw my endurance and love and patience as I met all those persecutions and difficulties at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. And you know how the Lord brought me safely through them all. (Phillips.)

This is what Timothy knew about his "adopted father," Paul. It probably contributed greatly to his conversion. What do our children know of us? Will their knowledge bring them closer to Christ—or will it turn them away?

Point to Ponder



A brother is visited on his 90th birthday.

IT is easy for those of us who have never been in hospital, or alone, to forget how much a card, a letter or a visit can be appreciated. A little effort on our part can mean a lot in terms of happiness to someone who is cut off from the normal relations of everyday life. We all know someone we could help. Let us remember the words of James, "Religion that is pure and genuine in the sight of God the Father will show itself by such things as visiting orphans and widows in their distress and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world."

CORRESPONDENCE

Decentralisation

Let us begin by speaking geographically of the situation. In the Canadian or American West, the vast areas known as the great plains have periods of drought and periods of wet. During these periods of drought or wetness any farmer who concentrates his whole livelihood on one specific crop or livestock, if that particular livelihood should fail, then that farmer will have a very barren year. Then he will begin to think of moving. He shifts from town to town, city to city, country to country. It is during these times that men begin to realise the importance of diversification.

Today a city or town depending too much on one industry or product soon will discover that if the demand for the product decreases and the staff employed therefor is decreased, the number of unemployed will increase, and there occurs a failing and falling away.

When the disciples of Christ began their ministry after the ascension of Jesus from the Mount, they did not work according to what any one brother said or did. They did not work according to what one private sect decided to believe. They worked according to what they interpreted from the Oracles of God and from the Gospel of Jesus Christ His Son. There was an inner strength to be gained from this because each ecclesia had its own faults and failings, its own wants and desires, its own striving for the meat of the word. They thrived on each other's mistakes and each other's ideas. There was love found to be with each one's bond with the other, their common faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ. Because of their diversity, because of their separate yet close state of love and fellowship, they had a strength unknown in the world today.

As a complete contrast we have the example of the Roman Catholic church which has centred around the Vatican. It has centred around the "Holy" city. What the Pope decrees the people must accept. If this powerful hub should ever crack, should it ever fail in its doctrines then the whole great economic system would crumble as a hard, dry cookie crumbles when the centre is hit.

The main point that I am trying to illustrate is that Centralisation is too great a mistake for Christadelphianism to make. Unfortunately, we are gradually making it. Our viewpoints centre on the British Isles. Our magazines are edited and published and printed in England.* Ever since Doctor Thomas originated Christadelphianism in Great Britain we have been regarding British brethren with awe, agreeing with them even if their views are rather awkward or mis-shapen.

It seems that no matter where the Truth had arisen the same would have happened in the United States, Canada, Australia or elsewhere.

We should work towards decentralisation to strengthen our views and our faith in Christ and our faith in each other. Let us not depend on one magazine, one area of the world to look up to and esteem. Let us look to ourselves for answers to our problems, to our own discussions, to several magazines, to every ecclesia, and last but not least to every single brother.

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name there I am in the midst of them." Not just in England, Canada, United States or anywhere else but everywhere—anywhere.

Brantford, Ontario.

D. H. GREEN.

**But not "Endeavour," it comes from Scotland.—Eds.*

SERVICE IN HIS STEPS

Salvation reaches down from Heaven above,
Earth's men of dust to raise to angel state.
Recalled by grace to know the Master's will,
Venture they forth to be obedient and
In full submission they, themselves, apply
Christ's practice and His teaching to their lives,
Evangelists expressing clear, "This do."

So shall we strive: guide men, reach up and seek
Eternal help, that their estate so fall'n,
Repentance sought, baptismal water reached,
Vain show abandoned, cleansed lepers, they
Immersed in healing waters may arise,
Complete in Him, and full engaged to be
Employed, to follow ever "IN HIS STEPS."

LEONARD COOKSON.

WHY DOESN'T GOD DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

If we do not believe in God there is no problem in pain and suffering. The world is a matter of chance and there might as well be pain as there is happiness. But if God exists then why doesn't He do something to remove pain and save the sufferer? Perhaps, you might say, there is only an evil god; perhaps he is a devil who delights in seeing his creatures suffer. But if we believe this then we have to explain why a devil should create beauty and allow his creatures to be happy, and this is more difficult to explain than why a good God should allow suffering.

Most of us are willing to acknowledge that some of our troubles have come to us owing to our own inadvisable actions. We have acted rashly or imprudently and we have reaped the results. But so much suffering seems to come either to ourselves or to others for which we feel neither we nor they are responsible.

To some extent we can see the value of pain. It warns us that something is wrong: without this warning we could be severely injured, as when we are too close to fire. But this does not explain why there is so much pain. Of suffering we can say that it ennoble the character of the sufferer and draws love and sympathy from others. But this does not explain why some people suffer so much and others so little. Nor is it true to say that suffering always ennoble the character. Sometimes it embitters and leaves the sufferer irritated and irritating. It is when we ponder on things such as these that we wonder at God's seeming lack of concern.

Man's Cruelty to Man



There are different kinds of suffering and they cannot all be explained in the same way. There is the wrong which men suffer at the hands of other men, as when six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis. Why, it is asked, if God is love did He not strike down the murderers and save the innocent?

God did not intervene because He wants men to have free wills. It would be contrary to His nature if He did

not allow them this freedom. Man is only free if he can choose to do good or evil, and only if we have the ability to do right or wrong are we capable of becoming good characters. God could, had He chosen to do so, have made us like men on a chess-board whom He could move as He wanted. But would we then have been human beings or merely models made of flesh and blood? We cannot have it both ways. If we are free to choose our actions then there is the risk that we will choose to do evil—and that is what many have chosen to do, to the detriment of their fellow men.

Disease and Deformity

But what of illness and deformity? Is God not responsible for these? Men, you may say, do all they can to overcome disease. But often men do not. A simple and obvious case is where, despite all warnings, a person poisons his body with tobacco. Can he, when he is dying of lung cancer, blame God? Most of us should blame ourselves for some of our physical discomforts and ills.

In days long past, people suffered and died owing to filthy living conditions and lack of sanitation. Today, conditions are more favourable to health but now we live under the strain of the modern rush and rat-race, and most of us think nothing of consuming the refined foods which civilisation offers us. But still we expect our bodies to function healthily. Though we complain that we cannot help being caught up in it all yet the idea of a simple and back-to-nature life rarely attracts us. It would require more physical effort and would lack the advantages of the soft, foam-rubbered, civilised living to which we have become accustomed.



Our Inheritance

Yet even if all the rules of healthy living were obeyed, still a perfect physique would not be acquired. Why so? And can men, in any way, be held responsible for

" WHY? " LEAFLET No. 3

If God really does love the world so much that He sent His only Son, why does He allow so much suffering? This problem makes many people find belief in God difficult. We cannot in this life give a complete answer, but in this proposed leaflet we offer some suggestions which we hope will help those who are troubled by suffering.

inherited weakness and for the birth of deformed and idiot children?

No man can live to himself. We affect others and each of us is affected by those with whom we live and by those who have gone before us. Our forbears, from the very beginning, have not lived as God intended them to live. Sin has been added to sin, wrong ways of living to wrong ways of living. Nature has been thrown out of gear and it has even become pestilential and man's enemy. So, disease, physical weakness and deformity have arisen in the human race. These have sometimes become hereditary and here and there they show themselves in their ugliest forms. The innocent child suffers because of the wrong doing of his forefathers.

Unjust? But how often do we cry out at the "injustice" of our benefiting from the good done by our forefathers? As a corporate body we are affected by their wrong doings, but as a corporate body we are also affected in many ways by the good they have done. Their scientific and other knowledge affects nearly every hour of our daily living. It is not only the sin but also the goodness of the fathers which is visited upon the children.

Natural Disasters

At least, you may say, man cannot be responsible for the tragedies of earthquake and other natural disasters.



Only God can be blamed for these. But we cannot be physical beings such as we are, living in a physical world such as we do live in, unless we are ruled by physical laws. Our earth could never have had the beauty of mountain and vale unless deep down within it there was movement. The land mass would have been a bog. And if there is that movement then in certain parts of the world earthquakes must inevitably occur. The community of man chooses to live where it is known that earthquakes occur, and, moreover, man erects houses in those areas which are known to be unstable and subject to inevitable destruction when the earth quakes. Individuals living in these circumstances may be helpless, too poor to move away or build better houses, but their

poverty has come as a result of man's mismanagement of a fruitful earth.

Similarly, violent storms and hurricanes inevitably arise from time to time owing to the atmospheric conditions which must prevail if our world is to be the physical world it is. But many floods would have been avoided had man not deforested the land.

Accidents

What about accidents? Why are good men injured and killed through no intentional fault of their own or of others? Some accidents can be explained by carelessness but they cannot all. Here again we have to consider the physical world in which we live. We are held to the earth by the force of gravity. If we climb a ladder or a mountain, gravity is operating, and if we slip then we are drawn back to the earth with obvious results. Supposing gravity could be switched off when the climber was falling? Then the rest of us would fall off the earth.



We must have a stable environment where we know what to expect if we act in a certain way, laws of nature which we can trust. We cannot have heat which will warm us without heat which can burn. We cannot have water to drink which is not an element which can drown. We cannot have high powered engines moving vehicles at fast speed which will stop dead if their passage is impeded, and we cannot have bodies made of flesh and blood which can withstand violent collision. In a physical world we must have physical laws.

Miracles

But it would be so easy, perhaps you think, for God to prevent many of the dreadful things which happen. Surely He can work miracles? There is no doubt at all that God can break through nature, as it were, or He can extend nature or He can change circumstances so as to allow what we would call a miracle. Many feel that

God has clearly intervened and made things possible in their lives which, in the normal course of events, would not have been so. Through prayer we can ask God to intervene. But as when a child asks a request from his father he is not able to make the answer yes, so neither can we arrange God's answer. If the answer is no we must not think that we have no answer at all. We must accept that God knows better than we do. We see only the present. God sees eternity.

Limited Vision

That is why our attempted answer to the problem of suffering must leave so much unanswered, why we cannot attempt to supply an answer for any particular case. It is as though we were looking over the countryside, but part of the scenery is hidden by thick mist. We see one end of a battered and insecure bridge, but the other end we cannot see nor where it leads. If the mist were lifted we would know the purpose of a traveller crossing the bridge. Human life is like the part of the landscape which we see. As Christians we believe that this life, which is a testing and character-forming time, is not the end, that God has promised immortality to those who trust in Him and that the eternal life of happiness will bear no comparison with the life which we now have. Only then shall we be able to see what lies at the end of the battered bridge, and why it was necessary for the traveller to cross it rather than another bridge which, to the human eye, seemed to offer greater advantage. God sees the whole landscape and He alone can direct man's steps.

An Old Problem

Our problem is not new. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born men were asking the same questions. While one writer in the Bible could say that he had not seen the righteous forsaken nor his children begging for bread, others saw that often the good suffered from distress and poverty as much as the evil-doers. Sometimes it seemed that time and chance happened to all, that "As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me . . . and that "there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever." We find the good and faithful crying out to God at this apparent injustice. "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" and "Wherefore . . . holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" The only answer which could be given was the answer of eternal life when all wrongs would be righted. " . . . many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. . . ."



Looking Beyond

Those who trust in God today have the same answer. It is only when we can attune our minds to the idea of eternity that we can find absolute security in the midst of an insecure world. We can be sure, then, as the apostle Paul was sure, that nothing in this life, not even death itself, can separate us from the love of God.

We asked, "Why doesn't God do something about it?" Surely He has! He has opened for us the way to immortality in a new age when all physical disability, pain and suffering will be gone for ever.

Ought not our question to be, "Why doesn't *man* do something about it?" Why do so many continue in their wickedness and turn away from the offer of God? It is man who couldn't care less—not God.

R. McH.

STUDY WEEK

IT IS PROPOSED TO CONDUCT A STUDY WEEK FROM 20th-27th AUGUST 1966, God willing. This will be held at Fircroft College, Birmingham, which is about four miles from the centre of Birmingham and is set in five acres of beautiful gardens and woodland.

The themes for the week will be chosen from the Psalms, a New Testament Epistle and Contemporary Problems of Christian life and thought. There will be opportunities for quiet reading and recreation.

The cost of the week will be about £9 10s. It is vital to know the approximate accommodation required, and those wishing to attend the course should write, as soon as possible, to our business address, given below, enclosing £1 deposit.

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE,
104 Lady Byron Lane,
Knowle,
Solihull,
Warwicks.



A Prayer For Those Who Are Sick

Lord,

Give me the strength to search for those who are lonely or unhappy, depressed or in pain.

Help me to serve them by bringing happiness into their lives.

Make me receptive to their problems, that I might help to carry their burdens.

Help all those who have no help: Great Physician, bring them the comfort of Your presence, and the awareness of Your power, and heal them.

Give me a willingness to learn from those who have suffered and conquered.

Make me thankful for the abundance of life, and teach me to care for others as You have cared for me.

Through Jesus Christ,

AMEN.



ONE WIDOW'S NEED



This Bechuanaland widow sits on the parched earth of a dried up dam with a dying cow — one of only four she possesses. Her means of existence depends on cattle. Her children have gone six miles to bring water for the thirsty cow to supplement the meagre supply she has in her bowl. She is one among thousands who have suffered because of terrible drought conditions in this part of Africa.

Oxfam has launched an appeal to help the distress in this area. Already funds have been sent to enable wells to be dug to bring water to the livestock, to purchase seed, including drought resisting maize for next year's harvest, and to purchase food for those who are starving.

This is only one of many activities undertaken throughout the world by Oxfam to bring relief to those who suffer.

Donations to help this worthy cause should be sent to:

OXFAM,
274 Banbury Road,
OXFORD.

(Oxfam photo by Peter Keen)