

The

Endeavour

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A CHRISTADELPHIAN REVIEW

TWO SHILLINGS

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CORRESPONDENCE

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THE QUEST OF TRUTH

A STORY is told of a barrister who advised his client to say nothing in court in answer to any question except to repeat the words: "Any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third." This, he said, was the only thing which could not be proved wrong.

Whether true or not, there is an ironic accuracy about the story. Truth, it is said, is shaped like a tree, and not like a straight line. It has more than one side and it has many branches. We cannot grasp the mysteries of life or grapple with the sum of all truth. Whatever we do, contradictions and riddles will continue to baffle us.

Unless we approach the quest of truth with some guiding principles we will soon become hopelessly lost.

The first of these — a very vital one — is that we should realise our own limitations. "To know what we know, and to know what we do not know — that is wisdom," says an old Eastern proverb. There are many things which we will not understand at all, until the day when we understand perfectly (1 Cor. 13: 12). We must therefore try to distinguish what are the limits of our understanding.

There are other important distinctions which we have to make as well. We find that some things are certain, that others are probable, and some are merely possible.

Sometimes in the end we find that there are some things which will not fit in. We are left, not with an answer, but with "something to be going on with."

Here we must resolutely resist the temptation to construct a foolproof system of answers to difficulties by skilful manipulation. If we are not sure, let us say so. If the evidence is mixed, let us say so. Let it never be said of us that we know all the answers even if we have to make them up.

Again, very often we have to ask ourselves, on doubtful

(Please turn to back page)

Thoughts on Thinking and Feeling

by Margaret Lovelock

"A MAN is what he thinks." If we could have a comprehensive knowledge of a man's thoughts, including his imaginations, we would consider that we knew a great deal about his personal character, in fact that we "knew him." It follows therefore that the mind is an important factor in personality, and in its need for nourishment we should be careful to provide it with the right food. In a sense, everything in our experience is food for thought, but not much of it is edifying for development; hence the necessity of protecting children until the age of discrimination. When we are adult we must know of many things evil and unwholesome about which we have to think, but there is a difference between knowing and assimilating. To know need not be part of ourselves, or of our imaginations. *The Bible is a feast for both mind and imagination.* for the latter, as much as the intellect, colours the thoughts and directs the actions. Jesus in His teaching appealed to the imagination when His message was in stories, poetic symbols and analogies.

Let us ask the question - What, in a word, is the true food of the mind? The answer must be Truth, not a narrow conception of truth like a set of rules called doctrine but, as John records that Jesus said, not only His words were true, but He Himself was "the way, the truth, and the life." It is evident that He did not

mean that His truth was just for philosophers, it was for all who could think and imagine. When He came into conflict with the "lawyers" and denounced them as having taken away the key of knowledge, His advice called for the sweeping away of much mental lumber which obscured the truth. We, too, may have some well-intentioned lumber to cast off before we can see the Living God. The development of the spiritual life is analogous with that of the natural: it begins in infancy and grows towards adult fulfilment, and it would appear that in Paul's view the wisdom of God cannot be apprehended until this stage is reached. Is it really the best plan to attempt to teach the whole of the Christian faith to minds which are still in the earliest stages of development, to teach, for example, the doctrine of atonement and forgiveness before even a sense of sin has been developed?

Paul told the Corinthians that their propensity for strife, for the setting of one apostle against another, proved that they were only babes, fit only to assimilate milk, and unfit for more solid food. Where is the place of intellect in the divine wisdom? It is in the enlightened asking and answering of questions which weigh upon the perplexed soul. The natural man does not feel the weight of such questions, and the beginning of wisdom is often perplexity about the self, and about the universe in which we live.

By such the Christian believer is often discredited as "obscurantist," that is, having an understanding darkened by dogma and fanaticism. No doubt some of us are not entirely guiltless of this charge; the temptation to use for purely secular ends the authority which spiritual leaders acquire is often more than frail humanity can resist. Interdict and excommunication have often been employed for personal motives. Good, sincere men like Calvin have failed to make theocracy work; Geneva under him was, in some sense, a godly city, but it was hardly a Christian brotherhood. While the New Testament insists on the need for faith, it never contrasts it with knowledge and understanding, nor does it call for the sacrifice of intellect; indeed, to the contrary, it regards faith as liberating the mind and dispelling ignorance. "Now this I affirm and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds: they are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them . . ." (Eph. 4; 17-18. R.S.V.). Those who feel a need to seek Truth with an unclouded mind must rid themselves of prejudice and of personal interest.

We shall do well to remind ourselves that to many of His contemporaries Jesus appeared to be a rebel, one who was disobedient to the Law of God. A kindly Pharisee would have prayed for the heart of Jesus to be turned to the "wisdom of the just," but in this case it was the rebel who had the true wisdom, and it was because He held on until death that we have our present insight. All rebels against accepted standards of belief or conduct are a nuisance to the organisation men, those who want to

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"keep on an even keel," "keep the boat from rocking," "keep the ship afloat," and, to change from nautical metaphors, "keep to the middle of the road." When Jesus, on the mountainside, proceeded to say "You have heard that it was said to the men of old . . . but I say unto you . . ." He was doubtless viewed as we view the "angry young men" of today, and many an elder must have said that He deserved what was coming to Him. Meditating on the saying that "a servant is not greater than his lord," Michael Quoist in one of his prayers addresses Jesus thus:

It is too late for you to be quiet,
you have said too much.

You have not been sensible you
know, you exaggerated, it was
bound to happen.

You called the better people a
breed of vipers.

You told them their hearts were
black sepulchres with fine ex-
teriors.

You kissed the decaying lepers.

You spoke fearlessly with unaccep-
table strangers.

You ate with notorious sinners and
you said streetwalkers would be
first in the Kingdom.

You belittled their religious regu-
lations.

Your interpretation of the law
reduced it to one little command-
ment, to LOVE.

They have taken steps against you,
action will follow.

Lord! I know that if I try to live
a little like you, I shall be con-
demned.

I am afraid. They are singling me
out.

Some smile, others laugh, some are
shocked, and several of my
friends are about to drop me.

The whispers . . . it is better to
come to terms with the adver-
sary . . .

Yet Lord, I know you are right.
Help me to fight. Help me to speak.
Help me to live the Gospel to the
end.

To the folly of the cross.

There is a built-in tendency in all
of us to conform; if not, society
would probably break down. But the
man who accepts beliefs and prin-
ciples without question, who is be-
loved of advertisers and says that

"the majority is always right," is not
the man whom Paul exhorts (Rom.
12: 2): "Do not be conformed to this
world." It could well be that peace
of mind is not what God desires for
us, and He could be using a rebel to
awaken us to new thoughts and en-
deavours. Any society which consisted
of ethical "yes men" would be static
and morally moribund. The world of
the first century, like that of any
other, was full of grudges, anta-
gonisms and resentments. We must
learn to distinguish between two kinds
of anger. When Jesus looked round
in anger on the stupid fanaticism of
the Pharisees, it was not because of
any slight or wrong offered to Him-
self, but the wrong against His
Father's Name, achieved by their
false idea of divinity and lack of
sympathy for a suffering fellow. In-
dignation against injustice and oppres-
sion is the sign of a sound and lively
conscience; we are often deficient in
this kind of anger, and it was of this
that Paul wrote "Be ye angry, and
sin not." When he continues "Let not
the sun go down upon your wrath,"
he would be thinking of the smoul-
dering personal grudge which is a
*slow poison to the soul and which
should be overcome by the will to
forgive.* Such personal grievances
should lead us, like Jesus, to grieve
for the hardening of the heart, and
to pray for the perverted spirit that
can act in such a manner.

Our consciences are not always
reliable guides. Paul says (I Cor. 4:
4, R.S.V.): "I am not aware of any-
thing against myself, but I am not
thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who
judges me." Paul realised that his con-
science could be fallible, and while
it is wrong to reject the call of con-
science it is necessary to seek to
educate it. A man can have the con-
science of a goose, the bird which
joins in the indignant hissing at a
crowd, and we are under an obligation
to inform our conscience on the lines
of principles rather than of prejudices.
A martyr, when bound at the stake,
saw a poor peasant woman throw
wood on the fire, and cried "O sancta
simplicitas," which is akin to saying
"Father, forgive them; for they know
not what they do." In her simplicity
she was directed by love of God and
thought she was doing His will. So,
all the appalling list of injustice, cru-
elty and hardness of heart which is
a blot on Christian history and quite

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able contribution to discussion.

abhorrent to God, has arisen through
ignorance of what He really is. Thus
we can see that an action can be
innocent from the doer's point of
view, but evil and damnable viewed
from a divine viewpoint. Paul was
concerned for the effect which it could
have on the morale of the Church
and on its fellowship as the Body of
Christ.

To have a quiet conscience is a
great blessing, as Paul knew well, but
he also knew that to have a quiescent
one was a very dangerous state. It
can lead to complacency, hence his
caveat "I am not thereby acquitted."
When we consider ourselves we must
realise that there may be things of
which we wish to remain in ignor-
ance lest, knowing them, our con-
science would not let us rest. When
we look at others we must remember
that they could be ill-informed
through no fault of their own, and
in condemning the evil deed we must
not judge the individual. Our love for
them should be genuine, and our
hatred confined to the deed which is
evil.

The question whether conscience
is more governed by thinking or feel-
ing is important. Only a person who
thinks and feels is capable of a moral
choice. It is important to consider
which of the two is fundamental, and
it would appear that thinking intellec-
tually is the basis of what we call
acting conscientiously. Paul, when
writing (Rom. 12: 1-2) of offering
ourselves to God, urges the renewing
of our minds that we may prove what

(Continued on back page)

The Bible and Science

by George McHaffie

EVERYONE TODAY is aware that there is a tension between religious belief and scientific theory. For many this raises a conflict which is a long way from solution. As a community we seem never to have given the subject the balanced attention it deserves. Any review of our position which seeks positive lines of advance must, however, take a hard look at the subject.

Atheists, humanists and Marxists take a particular interest in turning scientific developments to their own account. If, however, we are believers in God there should be no fear felt in discerning new information about the structure of the world and the universe. We are simply finding new facets of God's activity and adding to our appreciation of the world in which we live. It should be possible to meet the atheistical arguments on their own ground.

Probably most people who, in a general way, think about this question believe it to have its origin in the rise of evolutionary philosophies in the middle of the nineteenth century. Differences of this kind are, however, many centuries older than Darwin. The older controversies merit study because all the principles necessary for solving current difficulties have been worked out painfully in centuries gone by. The point at issue may change but the solution always follows a common pattern. Unfortunately many religious people never learn to carry the lesson of one controversy over into the solution of the next but stumble into each new crisis in a manner which does no credit to their cause.

Flat or Round?

In the sixth century B.C. the Greek, Pythagoras, already taught that the earth was a sphere. Nevertheless 800 years later the prevailing view in the Christian Church was that the earth was flat. This view, which held sway for centuries, was not a scientific view based on measurement and precise

observation but was built up from statements, allusions and deductions from biblical references. The flat earth view was embellished in medieval times and the earth's sphericity only gradually gained acceptance. Even at a late date the Reformers, Luther and Calvin, contested not only the movement of the earth round the sun but also its spherical shape.

The medieval conception which figures in numerous classical church paintings was of a three-tiered universe. The earth itself was thought to be a disc or parallelogram bounded by seas. Below was a fiery or sometimes bleak underworld or hell. Above was a dome or arch supported by pillars. Within the dome, or firmament, were the sun, moon and stars. Above the dome was a sea of waters and above this the heaven where God and the angels lived.

The flat earth was set on a base or foundation. "Thou didst set the earth on its foundations" (Ps. 104: 5, R.S.V.; cf. also Job 38: 4, 6) which was on the seas (Ps. 24: 2). The base was made up of pillars (Job 9: 6) which tremble in an earthquake but God keeps them steady (Ps. 75: 3; cf. R.S.V.). Below is the underworld or nether parts of the earth (cf. Ezek. 32: 18-21 ff.; Isaiah 14: 9, 10). Entrance was through bars or gates (Job 38: 16, 17; Jonah 2: 5, 6; cf. R.S.V.). Above was the arch or vault (translated circle) which enclosed the earth like a tent (Isaiah 40: 22). The vault was also supported by pillars (Job 26: 11). Set in the vault or firmament were the sun, moon and stars (Gen. 1: 16-17). Above the firmament were "the waters which were above the firmament" (Gen. 1: 6, 7 and Ps. 148: 4). These waters were the source of rain. When the windows of heaven were opened (Gen. 7: 11) the water came through from above the vault. The sun, moon and stars were in the firmament itself and therefore below the source of rain.

All this scriptural undergirding for the "scientific" view of medieval

churchmen was a formidable obstacle for any proponent of the theory that the world was spherical or that it moved round the sun. A word from Scripture could settle a scientific argument. If the earth was a sphere (or perhaps even if not) there might be men on the other side of the earth. But this was held to be ruled out by Paul's citation of Psalm 19: 4 in Rom. 10: 18, in a passage about the extent of the preaching of the gospel.

But I say, Have they not heard?

Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

The psalm is a reference to the whole of the natural creation and it was an easy deduction from Paul's use of it to conclude that there were no men outside the areas where the Church had preached. This became an entrenched theological standpoint. Lactantius, tutor of Constantine, rails at those who believed that there were men on the other side of the earth in terms reminiscent of an infant's reaction to his first geography lesson, "Is there anyone so senseless as to believe that there are men whose footsteps are higher than their heads?" The weight of the authority of Augustine was thrown behind the deductions from Romans 10: 8 and those who asserted that there were men on the other side of the earth were accused of giving "the lie direct to King David and to St Paul and therefore to the Holy Ghost." Augustine's attitude prevailed until the sixteenth century when Magellan sailed round the world and met men on the other side. Already in this seemingly simple issue there is to be found the basic principles of the Bible/science debate. Those who proposed what was afterwards proved to be correct were met by biblical arguments and vehemently denounced as being opposed to God. In the fourteenth century one astronomer was burned alive over this issue.

"It Moves"

The shape of the earth was not yet settled when the exponent of the spherical view came forward with an idea which was to destroy for ever the medieval three-tiered universe. Up to the time of Copernicus and Galileo those who believed the earth to be a sphere thought in terms of a number of concentric spheres bearing the sun,

moon and stars, all revolving round an unmoving earth. This was not seriously out of keeping with the medieval view.

In 1500 Copernicus made known his conclusion, which was not entirely an innovation, that the earth and planets revolved round the sun. His ideas were published as speculations and seem to have obtained a fair degree of tolerance as such. When in 1616 Galileo proclaimed, and supported by telescopic observation, that the matter was beyond a speculation, a vicious onslaught was made on him by religious leaders of all the main parties. The Pope put his book on the index of forbidden reading. It was not removed from this until 1822. The whole controversy is well documented. The usual results followed. Luther said, "This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy; but sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and not the earth." Melancthon said of those who asserted that the earth moved, "... it is want of honesty and decency to assert such notions publicly, and the example is pernicious. It is the part of a good mind to accept the truth as revealed by God and to acquiesce in it." Calvin brought out a well-used passage in this controversy in Psalm 93: 1, "... the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved" and asked, "who will venture to place the authority of Copernicus above that of the Holy Spirit?" Wesley in England thought that Copernican astronomy leaned in the direction of infidelity. One of Galileo's most outspoken and determined opponents declared "his pretended discovery vitiates the whole plan of salvation."

The case against Galileo was not a scientific one. In 1615 the Roman inquisition set out their judgment.

The first proposition, that the sun is the centre and does not revolve about the earth is foolish, absurd, false in theology and expressly contrary to Holy Scripture.

The second proposition, that the earth is not the centre but revolves about the sun, is absurd, false in philosophy, and from a theological point of view at least, opposed to the true faith.

These propositions now would be regarded as false, absurd, etc., etc., despite their claims to have scriptural support.

In 1873 the Lutherans of Missouri published an attack on astronomy in which the following appears:

The entire Holy Scripture settled the question that the earth is the principal body of the universe, that it stands fixed, and that the sun and moon only serve to light it. . . . Let no one understand me as enquiring first where truth is to be found—in the Bible or with astronomers . . . my God never lies, never makes a mistake, out of His mouth comes only truth.

In such pious phrases are rejected Newton's laws of gravity and Copernican astronomy. Such piety, such claims to scriptural fidelity, can be used to support scientific absurdities and it would not be difficult to find statements of comparable demerit at the present time.

The Demons

Long before Galileo's view was generally accepted the implications for medieval religion of his refutation of medieval astronomy were becoming apparent. In the wake of the new astronomy explanations of a "natural" kind were found for phenomena which hitherto had been held to be supernatural. Storms, for example, had for a long time been believed to be

stirred up by evil spirits. Closely related was the belief in witches and their supposed control of the weather. This is a dark aspect of Roman and Protestant eighteenth-century activity. To challenge its factual basis produced the characteristic result. On Wednesday, May 25, 1768, John Wesley wrote in his journal:—

It is true that the English in general, and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it; and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. I take knowledge these are at the bottom of the outcry which has been raised, and with such insolence spread throughout the nation, in direct opposition, not only to the Bible, but to the suffrage of the wisest and best of men in all ages and nations. They well know (whether Christians know it or not) that the giving up witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible. And they know, on the other hand, that if but one account of the intercourse of men with separate spirits be admitted,



A representation of the ancient and medieval world view

their whole castle in the air (Deism. Atheism. Materialism) falls to the ground. I know no reason, therefore, why we should suffer even this weapon to be wrested from our hands. Indeed there are numerous arguments besides which abundantly confute their vain imaginations. But we need not be hooted out of one; neither reason nor religion requires this.

Doubtless because of their height above surrounding buildings, cathedrals were frequently struck by lightning. At the height of the storm the bells would be rung to ward off the evil spirits. The discovery by Franklin of the electrical basis of lightning led to the invention of lightning conductors as a more practical safeguard than bell ringing. Franklin was accused of presuming upon God and attempting to control the artillery of heaven. In Germany, it is calculated that 400 towers were struck and 20 bell-ringers killed before the use of lightning conductors was agreed. Another case in point is Newton's statement of the law of gravity. He is accused of dethroning providence.

An aspect of all this which is perhaps nearer to our own understanding and experience is the controversy which surrounded the first challenges to the belief in demons. This challenge appears to have started at least by the early years of the seventeenth century. Some idea of medieval life is seen in this quotation from Luther in his *Table Talk*.

Many devils are in woods, in water, in wildernesses and in dark poorly places ready to hurt and prejudice people; some are in the thick, black clouds, which cause hail, lightnings and thunderings.

Nature rambles through the wood would hardly be popular in these days. The prophetic expositor Joseph Mede, who was of very high standing in his day (1586-1683), was of a different frame of mind to Luther. He wrote in a commentary on John 10: 20,

I am persuaded, till I hear better reasons to the contrary, that these demoniacs were no other than such as we call madmen and lunatics.

In the early years of the eighteenth century the controversy was in full swing. In a booklet entitled, *Some Thoughts on the Miracles of Jesus by an Impartial Hand* (c. 1739) the author wrote,

For is it probable that one of the evangelists should say that "a Spirit tare him"; and another, that the "Devil threw him down and tare him," in writings designed for the use of the world, if no more was in it than the effects of a natural disorder?

In the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1797, the author of the article on Demons evidently felt that his readers were likely to be evenly divided on the subject and he sets down both sides of the case one after the other. Here are some selections in support of demons.

The language in which the demoniacs are mentioned and the actions and sentiments ascribed to them in the New Testament, show that our Saviour and His apostles did not consider the idea of demoniacal possession as being merely a vulgar error concerning the origin of disease.

It is not the caution of philosophy but the pride of reason that suggests objection to this doctrine.

Should any person in compliance with popular opinions, talk in serious language of the existence, dispositions, declarations and actions of a race of beings whom he knows to be absolutely fabulous, we surely would not praise him for candid integrity; we must suppose him to be exulting in irony over the weak credulity of those around him and taking advantage of their weakness. . . . And if he himself should pretend to any connection with this imaginary system of beings and should claim in consequence of his connection with them particular honours from his contemporaries . . . nobody would hesitate for a moment to brand him as an imposter.

Such the case for the reality of demons. It has changed little over the years. In some quarters among the Jehovah's Witnesses, the evangelical wing of the established Churches and most of the smaller sects, belief in demons is as potent as ever. The belief is an obvious embarrassment, however, in cases of mental disorder. Few would attempt exorcism. The demons have receded into the mysterious recesses as the origin of evil in the world.

The other side of the case in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article has a modern touch.

When the symptoms of the disorders cured by our Saviour and His apostles as cases of demoniacal possession correspond so exactly with diseases well known as natural in the present age, it would be absurd to impute them to a supernatural cause. It is much more consistent with common sense and sound philosophy to suppose that our Saviour and His apostles wisely, and with that condescension to the weaknesses and prejudices of those with whom they conversed, which so eminently distinguished the character of the author of our holy religion, and must always be a prominent feature in the character of the true Christian, adopted the vulgar language in speaking of those unfortunate persons who were groundlessly imagined to be possessed with demons.

In *Christendom Astray* Brother Roberts expresses the matter similarly.

In view of the heathen origin of this "doctrine of demons" it is a natural source of wonder that it should appear so largely interwoven with the gospel narratives and receive apparent sanction both from Christ and the Apostles.

Christ's conformity to popular language did not commit him to popular delusions.

On the matter of Beelzebub, Brother Roberts wrote:

Yet this might, with as much reason, be taken as proof of his belief in Beelzebub, as his accommodation to popular speech on the subject of demons is taken to sanction the common idea of "devils."

. . . but, in judging of the theory of possession, we must carefully separate between critical statements of truth and rough popular forms of speech, which merely embody an aspect, and not the essence of truth.

In a discussion of the relationship between science and the Bible the principles embodied in the controversy over the demons are of cardinal importance. In 1793 replying to the *Impartial Hand*, quoted above, Dr Gregory Shape in a booklet *A Review of the Controversy about the Meaning of Demoniacs in the New Testament* recognised that the principle of interpretation reached beyond the matter of demons.

. . . had our Saviour reproved

the Jews for an error of this kind, it is more than probable that many of the Jews would have entertained greater prejudice against him, and the Gospel might have met with stronger opposition than it really did. Thus, too, in the Old Testament the sun and not the earth, is often said to move, though it be false in fact. It is possible that had the inspired writers declared the astronomical Truth to the Jews it would have seemed so absurd and contradictory to the seeming experiences of their senses that they would not at that time have believed them. . . . So neither should we blame the enquirer for supposing Jesus to use expressions suitable to the times whose business it was neither to correct such errors nor to satisfy men's idle curiosities.

If the principles expressed in these quotations had been fully grasped they would have saved the Victorians and many who have followed from falling into the massive estrangement of science and religion which still leaves its entail with us today.

The Antiquity of the Earth

Evidences of the earth's past in the form of fossils have been known for a long time. Tertullian (A.D. 160-240) seems to have been the first to have asserted that fossils were the result of the flood. This view was the prevailing one in Christian circles until the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1800 the flint implements of early man were posing a serious problem of antiquity. Observations in the 1830s on the formation of modern volcanoes led to conclusions about the antiquity of mountain ranges. The new approach to geology was pioneered by Lyell. His books *The Principles of Geology* (1830) and *Elements of Geology* (1838) were immensely popular. These books laid down the foundations on which modern geology is based. The flood theory was by then in speedy recession though it still found favour with certain Lutherans and Roman Catholics as late as the 1870s. Indeed in our present century it was revived by the Seventh Day Adventist, Price, and very recently in a more modern form by Morris and Whitcomb in *The Genesis Flood*.

Dr Thomas wrote *Elpis Israel* (1849) during the eclipse of the flood

theory. There is little doubt where his sympathies lay:—

Fragments, however, of the pre-Adamer world have been brought to light by geological research, to the records of which we refer the reader for a detailed account of its discoveries, with this remark that its organic remains, coal fields and strata belong to the ages before the formation of man rather than the era of the creation or the Noachic flood. . . . Geologists have endeavoured to extend the six days into six thousand years. But this with the scriptural data we have adduced is quite unnecessary. Instead of six thousand years they can avail themselves of sixty thousand.

In 1823 Dean Buckland who was also Professor of Geology at Oxford published a book on the flood theory, but to the disgust of many of his contemporaries later abandoned the theory in favour of Lyell's system. In 1837 the Dean published the *Bridgewater Treatises* which employed the "gap theory" to explain Genesis, chap. 1. This theory, which was adopted in *Elpis Israel*, is in contradiction to the basis of the Sabbath law "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Exod. 20: 11). Whichever way we expound this chapter we must not separate the creation of the heaven and earth from the work of the six days. We should, however, look beyond Dr Thomas' use of the "gap theory" and try to understand what his actual outlook was. He was clearly trying to take the text of scripture out of any controversy about geological discoveries. He wrote when the antiquity of the earth was just beginning to be comprehended. Although 60,000 years may seem a paltry figure for the formation of the earth, in the light of the understanding of the 1840s this was a generous gesture, not far short of conceding as long a period as necessary. His reference to the non flood-based geology books (which in the context would be mainly Lyell's) as a source of knowledge about the formation of the earth, made way for a flexible position in which geological discovery could be judged on its merits and within its own discipline.

Unfortunately the subsequent history of our community has not shown a continued flexibility of ap-

proach. Instead, from some quarters, a tendency has developed to follow the vociferous voices raised in the evangelical sects whose typical attitude is to use Paul's reference to gnosticism (a pagan other-worldly religion), "science falsely so called," as though it could be related to the careful researches of geology and anthropology. This antagonistic spirit to genuine geological, anthropological and often archaeological advance is positive hindrance to the gospel message. It seeks to commit Christians to aberrant science as a basis for their faith. Many today whose knowledge and honesty of outlook forbids them from assenting to extreme conservative attitudes, are pursued by accusations of unsoundness and infidelity in much the same manner as has been the mistaken practice of previous generations. In White's book *The History of the Warfare of Science and Theology* (Vol. I), 1896, to which book I am indebted for many of the medieval references, he writes of the weapons used in the warfare.

These weapons are the epithets "infidel" and "atheist." They have been used against almost every man who has done anything new for his fellow-men. The list of those who have been denounced as "infidel" and "atheist" includes almost all great men of science, general scholars, inventors and philanthropists. The purest Christian life, the noblest Christian character has not availed to shield combatants. Christians like Isaac Newton, Pascal, Locke, Milton and even Fenelon and Howard have had this weapon hurled against them. . . . These epithets can hardly be classed with civilised weapons. They are burning arrows; they set fire to masses of popular prejudice, always obscuring the real question sometimes destroying the attacking party.

But surely after all these repeated controversies something is to be learned?

It will be observed that after each controversy, once the scientific viewpoint had been established beyond dispute, all the threats about atheism and infidelity seemed to vanish. Men were able to adapt themselves to the new approach and yet continue vigorously in their faith. It seems, too, that some people can only feel secure in

their righteousness by finding infidelity, real or imagined, in others. This censorious attitude can be observed in all sects and denominations. When a new view is still struggling with its new insight, when its supporters are still in a minority, where there is still an appreciative audience for the older idea, this censorious attitude finds almost unlimited scope to thrive. When, however, the new view is beyond dispute, scriptures which previously were sufficient grounds for torture and the stake become remarkably amenable to explanation. Did Paul say that the gospel had been preached to the ends of the earth? Well, what he meant was the ends of the then known world. It might be asked whether this was all that God knew at the time. But awkward questions are no longer asked. Nowadays no one would be prepared to found his scientific reputation on the reality of, for example, the "waters that be above the heavens." Luther's triumphant reference to Joshua commanding the sun, and not the earth, to stand still is easily explained on the basis that the *Bible is using the ordinary language of the people*. Even today we speak of the sun rising although we know very well that this is incorrect and actually the earth turns.

The result of each controversy has pointed steadily to the conclusion that the language of the Bible is the popular language of the people (a pre-scientific people) and that it employs expressions whose origin is in the simple appearance of things. The language contains no scientific intention or subtlety. The message of the Bible is conveyed in and through the cultural settings, poetry and vivid imagery of the times in which it was written.

That the foregoing is the case is recognised by conservative, evangelical scholars who promote the I.V.F. publications and the Paternoster Press. The *New Bible Dictionary* of the I.V.F. on the exposition of Genesis, chap. 1, says,

Let it be agreed that the Bible is asserting that, however life came into being, God lay behind the process, then the chapter neither affirms nor denies the theory of evolution or any other for that matter.

But a curious inability to carry this through becomes apparent. In the article on "Possession" there is a *timid reluctance to give up belief in demoniac activity as a cause of mental illness*.

Students of personality disorders know that it is often impossible to

say just how these are triggered off. We are not saying that all or even the majority are due to demon possession but some may be.

In Christadelphian circles one often finds this position transposed. There is great readiness to declare that the references to demons in scripture are there as an accommodation to the common ideas of Palestine, but inconsistently an equal readiness to condemn, for example, radio-carbon dating on some scriptural basis or other.

The hidden danger in condemning the results of geological and other research is that we may well, unknowingly, be deriding the way in which God formed the world and putting ourselves at odds with the truth of what took place in the past.

The Christian today should be able to thank God for his knowledge of the earth's past which comes through geology. He should not look on the geologist who turns up yet another fossilised skull as though he were an especial sinner. But he should be able to take an intelligent interest in the past, and dispute on their own ground the *Marxist, humanist and materialistic theories in defence of the guiding, creating power of God*. Only thus can the demands of the gospel be adequately served in our day.

THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

THESE WORDS of Jesus are so familiar to us that perhaps we do not think enough about what is said. Why should we break bread in remembrance of Him?

We do it because Christ's crucifixion was the crowning point of His mission. He died for our sins. We must never forget how much that death cost, nor that it was the fault of each one of us, as sinners. We remember that we might repent of our sins. The memory brings us sorrow. But, by repenting, we know that we shall be forgiven. Christ died that this might be so. We remember that we might rejoice. The memory brings us joy. We did not force Christ to give Himself for us. He did it of His own free will. He did it because He loved us, and still continues to do so. We remember that we might adore. The memory brings love home to us.

How, then, can we show our love? "If you love me you will obey my commands" (John 14: 15, N.E.B.). Which commands? "I give you a new commandment; love one another; as I have loved you, so you are to love one another. If there is this love among you, then all will know that you are my

disciples" (John 13: 34-35, N.E.B.). We love, then, because Christ loved us: we must be like Him.

Thinking love is not enough; to feel love is to show love in action. How are people to know of this love if it doesn't impel us to show it in action? "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, or a poor tree good fruit. . . . That is why I say you will recognise them by their fruits" (Matthew 7: 18, 20, N.E.B.).

We live in a supposedly affluent society, but this does not mean self-sacrifice is just a matter of pledged giving, the tithing of anise and cummin, nor even the tenth of one's income. It means pledging the whole of one's self, body and bones.

We are wholly God's; He has taken over the direction of our lives. Jesus gave His whole life into God's service, and finally gave His life for us because it was God's will. And He is our Master, our guide.

"A pupil does not rank above his teacher, or a servant above his master. The pupil should be content to share his teacher's lot, the servant to share his master's" (Matthew 10: 24-25, N.E.B.). If Jesus put Himself wholly at the disposal of God, can we do less?

THE FOSSILS

— Part three of an article describing some of the prehistoric stages of God's creation

THE PLANTS

BEFORE COMMENCING our consideration of the animals and man created on the sixth "day" (Genesis 1: 24) we will take another quick look at the fossil evidence of plant life. As we have previously noted, the period of time (500,000,000 years) during which there is clear evidence of life has been divided by geologists into three eras, early,¹ middle,² and recent.³ We have traced plant life to the forests which formed the coal seams in the early era. In the early part of the middle era cycads were the commonest plant; they had rather short, stumpy unbranched trunks breaking out into a cluster of palm-like fronds, a typical type having a trunk some six feet in height. The maidenhair tree which still exists today, largely in China and Japan, was also widespread. Towards the end of this age vegetation almost everywhere was essentially of a modern type, angiosperms (plants-with-a-seedbox), shrubs and deciduous trees being strikingly familiar to the living fig, magnolia, poplar and plane which contain their seeds in a protective covering. These were distinct from earlier plants which were termed gymnosperms (naked seeds), as their seeds were carried on modified leaves, which did not enclose them, e.g., the conifers.

In the last era, during the last million years, for all intents and purposes plant life was identical to that of today, with the exception that, because of the changes of climate during this era, the distribution changed considerably. These migrations of the flora were particularly influenced by the advance and retreat of the ice, during the Quaternary Epoch.

MAMMALS

Mammals include most of the species we familiarly call animals. They are more or less covered with hair or fur, are warm blooded, have highly developed sense and give birth to their young alive and nourish them with milk from the mammary glands of the mother. They are characterised by their large brains.

As we have seen they first appeared in the Triassic, small creatures about the size of mice. They remained inconspicuous through Jurassic and Cretaceous times. Towards the end of this period the oldest marsupials, opossum-like creatures have been found. These are now peculiar to Australia, New Guinea and South America. It is believed that Australia was severed from south east Asia at this period.

The oldest placentals date from the same period but generally speaking mammals were inconspicuous among fauna until after the close of the Mesozoic era, which saw the extinction of the ruling reptiles, which had reigned supreme for some 100 million years.

The new era, the Cainozoic, saw the rise of the present masters of the earth, the mammals. It covers the last 70 million years and the most notable geographical feature was the formation of the Alps and Himalayas in the Miocene period some 20 million years ago. These earth upheavals were accompanied by volcanic activity and intense erosion due to increased rainfall.

In the earliest period of the Cainozoic era, the Eocene, all the main groups of placental mammals, including rodents, insectivores, primates, carnivores, ungulates (or hoofed animals), whales, and sea-cows, also pouched mammals such as opossums, existed.

Fossil remains of horse-like animals are found in North America, and

by John Weaving

evidence shows that from time to time these migrated into the Old World. One of the earliest types, *Eohippus* (dawn horse), had arrived in Europe before London Clay times. It was no bigger than a fox terrier and had four-toed front feet suited to marshy ground and teeth suited to browsing.

Primates* were already widespread in early Eocene times; their remains have been found in North America, France and southern England. Some were similar to the lemurs of Madagascar; others were closer to the tarsiers of the East Indian archipelago. By late Eocene times early monkey and gibbon-like forms had appeared in Burma and elsewhere.

In the next period, the Oligocene, elephants are found with short trunks, and tusks in both upper and lower jaws. Odd-toed ungulates, in which the central toe is the largest and bears most of the weight, included three-toed horses; the largest, e.g., *Mesohippus*, were about the size of sheep.

Carnivores included creodonts, the earliest flesh-eaters ranged from weasel-like creatures to savage beasts as large as lions. Other animals bore a close resemblance to cats, bears, and dogs. In Africa there were gibbon-like primates.

Most of the mammals of the following Miocene period, belonged to families which have persisted to the present day. Miocene horses, about the size of Shetland ponies, were common. Rhinoceros, the other important group of odd-toed ungulates, included horned types as well as the hornless.

Elephants of varied types, and steadily increasing size, spread from Africa into Europe, Asia, and North America. *Trilophodon*, which roamed

* Monkeys, apes, etc.

¹ Palaeozoic, ² Mesozoic, ³ Cainozoic.

over the Old World, had relatively simple three-ridged molar teeth, suited to crushing soft herbage, and a pair of long, straight tusks in both upper and lower jaws.

The commonest carnivores in Miocene and Pliocene times were small sabre-tooth "tigers," civet cats, and early dogs and bears. More types of primates are found, particularly in Central Africa. They include the anthropoid apes known as Proconsul.

We have now arrived at the last period, the Quarternary, covering the last million years. Ice-sheets and glaciers developed in the north of Europe and America, in the Antarctic, and in high mountain regions such as the Alps and Himalayas. From time

to time warmer conditions returned and the ice was reduced in extent.

Most of the present day species existed during this period but because of the great climatic changes they became differently distributed. For example, during the last glaciation, reindeer, arctic fox, and the steppe-marmot ranged as far as southern England where steppe and tundra conditions prevailed; but in the interglacial periods hippopotami lived in the Thames, and lions ranged as far north as Yorkshire. The spotted hyena, too, lived in England during these times; its bones and teeth, together with those of its prey, are often found in caves. Other animals, which were well protected to resist

the harsh climate of the Ice Age, were the woolly rhinoceros, the mammoth (fig. 1), the great cave-bear, and a hairy elephant whose many-plated teeth are common in river-gravels. Where there was lack of competition and an abundant food supply, as in South America, giant animals thrived such as the giant sloth *Megatherium* and giant armadillos, *Glyptodon*, while a large marsupial, *Diprotodon*, lived in Australia. All these are now extinct. Dwarf hippopotami and dwarf elephants inhabited the Mediterranean islands.

So we come to the end of our examination of fossil animals and now we shall consider the evidence of fossil men.

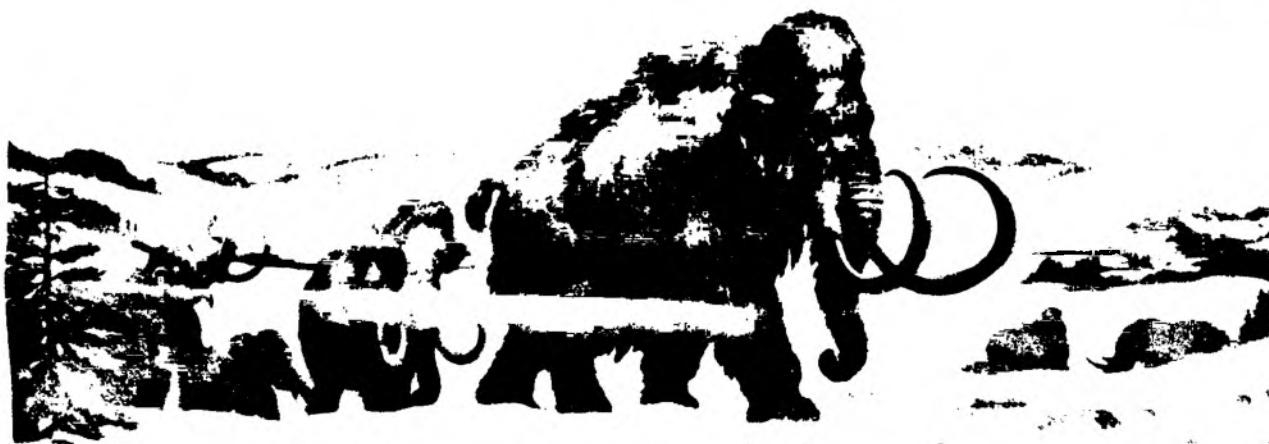


Fig. 1 Mammoth and Woolly Rhinoceros

FOSSIL MAN

Evidence has been presented in previous articles* that man-like creatures have inhabited the earth for about a million years. Questions arise:—

- (1) Is the evidence presented reliable and sufficient?
- (2) How accurate are the dates?
- (3) Were they really men?

Most readers will have seen reproductions of a pre-historic scene depicting a cave-dwelling family with hairy bodies armed with clubs and devouring large quantities of meat. Obviously some imagination has been employed in filling details. But has imagination run riot? Have these pictures, as has frequently been

suggested, all been built up around a tooth or part of a skull? Although in the past a great deal of conjecture was used, today so much evidence of the more recent fossil skeletons is available that the only conjecture that remains belongs to the external appearance, that is skin colour and body hair. Evidence of the very old skeletons does however still remain rather scanty.

Arnold describes the four main types of "men" using the word at this stage only to describe his outward appearance.

Type	Brain capacity
1. Australopithecus (Southern Ape)	600 c.c.
2. Pithecanthropus (Ape-man)	900 c.c.

3. Neanderthal Man 1,540 c.c.
4. Modern Man 1,550 c.c.

He well discusses the problem whether all the above can fitly be described as "man." Fig. 2 shows a comparison of the later three types with an Ape.† Arnold concludes that while, biologically, they can be so described, spiritually, only the later can with confidence be put in this category. We will therefore take up our questions at this point.

Evidence of Modern Man

Many of our readers will have seen Gough's Cave at Cheddar, and noticed at its entrance Cheddar Man (Fig. 3). He belongs to what is popularly called the Reindeer Age, archaeologically termed The Upper

* "The Antiquity of Man" by W. J. Young, *Endeavour*, Summer 1963; "The Antiquity of Man—Thirty Years Later" by D. C. Arnold, *Endeavour*, Autumn 1963. It is suggested that these articles be re-read.

† Brain capacity of an ape 600 c.c. Brain capacity, though an indication, cannot be relied upon to denote intelligence.



Fig. 2 Gorilla, Java Man, Neanderthal, Modern Man

Palaeolithic (later part of early stone-age). The reindeer was not new to this period but it played a great part in the life of *Homo sapiens*, for whom it provided food, clothing and the raw material for a large proportion of his industry. These "men," in the opinion of Boule and Valois (1) differ no more from modern man than modern men differ from themselves.

Archaeological deposits resulting from them are distributed throughout most of Europe as well as being present in Asia and Africa. But it is in France in the vicinity of the Pyrenees and the valley of the Dordogne near Les Eyzies where they appear to have been most abundant. Les Eyzies has been familiarly referred to as the prehistoric capital of France. These "men" were mainly devoted to fishing and hunting and their weapons were much finer and more beautifully worked than in previous times.¹ Most of their stone implements were intended to be hafted and were longer and more slender than their predecessors. Stone was no longer their only material; they now had ivory from mammoth tusks and the antlers of reindeer. From these they tipped javelins, arrows, spears and daggers for the chase. They also made utensils for domestic use, for preparing furs, and needles with eyes for sewing garments.

The reindeer age corresponds geologically with the Upper Pleistocene, that is, the later part of the last Ice Age when the ice had begun its final retreat to where we know it today.

How old are the men of the reindeer age? According to anthropologists, Cheddar Man belongs to the Creswellian culture about 10,000 B.C. to 12,000 B.C. Of sixteen important discoveries in France the ages are estimated as ranging from 10,000 B.C. to 23,000 B.C. *Relative* and *absolute* dating are both relevant. The relative date, that is the relationship of the fossil specimen to older and newer cultures, has been established by the successive layers in the rock shelters in which they have been discovered. Fig. 4 shows a diagram of a typical cave. Oakley (2) observes that "In caves which have been occupied from time to time by prehistoric man, the natural deposits alternate or interdigitate with 'occupation layers' consisting usually of the ashes of fires (hearths), broken animal bones and

artifacts. These are usually concentrated near the mouths of caves. Systematic excavation of such cave deposits, layer by layer, reveals the changes and substitutions of culture which have taken place in course of time. By comparing the sequences in a series of different caves it is possible to establish the general succession of cultures in a region. The standard Middle and Upper Palaeolithic successions were established through excavations in the caves and rock-shelters in the limestone hills of Southern France."

By such relative dating we can be confident that such a deposit, if it is not a burial, is contemporary with its associated artifacts, animal remains or remains of fires. It will naturally be older than the layer above it. Absolute dating, that is B.C. dating,² cannot always be established at the site from the specimen itself (A1 dating), as owners of fossils are not always prepared to give up a portion of such valuable specimens. However the absolute date can be established with reasonable accuracy by correlating the date of fossil remains with similar animal bones in close proximity (A2 dating) or by comparing the associated tools and other artifacts with similar artifacts found at other sites where it is possible to date them by absolute means (A3 dating).³ In the case of a discovery at the Abri Pataud cave in the Dordogne it was possible to date the actual layer in which the fossil skeleton was found by carbon fourteen analysis of associated remains. This gave a date of approximately 19,000 B.C. Other examples:—

Site	Culture or Type	Radiocarbon Date B.C.	Remarks
Altamira	Magdalenian (Reindeer Age)	13,540±700	Cave Paintings
Dolni	Cro-Magnon (Pavlovian)	25,820±180	Homo sapiens
Arcy-sur-Cure (Grotte de l'Hyène)	Mousterian	35-70,000†	Neanderthal Remains
Olduvai Bed	Zinjanthropus	1.15m*	Australopithecus

† The limit of Carbon 14 dating is 70,000 years hence the very wide limits of these Neanderthal remains.

* Protoactinium/Thorium method.

¹ See Young, W. J., Fig. 2, illust. 4, 7, 8.

² Or B.P.—before present dating.

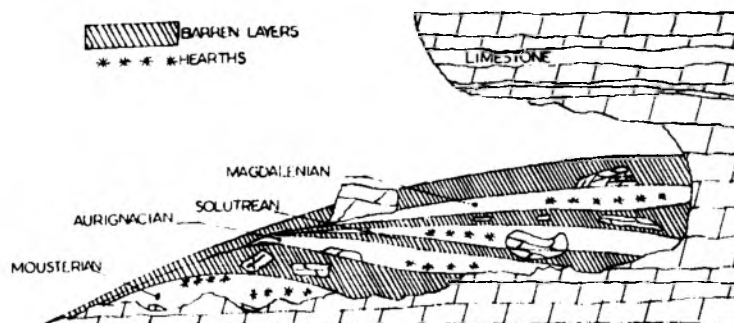
³ For greater details see Ref. 2.

It is to be regretted that there are no AI datings of the older skeletons, but confirmatory tests, when performed, would take away the last shreds of doubt relating to the ages of man, as the indirect factor would then be removed.

We have, so far, only been assessing evidence of antiquity and it must not be assumed that antiquity means evolution.



Fig. 3 Cheddar Man, Homo Sapiens, Upper Paleolithic



DIAGRAMMATIC SECTION OF IDEAL ROCK SHELTER IN SW FRANCE

Fig. 4 Diagrammatic Section of Typical Cave

References:

- (1) Boule and Valois—*Fossil Men*. Translation. Publ. Thames & Hudson, London.
- (2) Oakley, K.—*Frameworks for Dating Fossil Man* 1964, Publ. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London.

Acknowledgments

Figs. 2 and 3 by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum (Natural History).

EDITORIAL NOTES

The editors are conscious that this issue has rather an emphasis on the current discussion on science and religion. This has come about more by coincidence than by design and no doubt partly because recent events in the brotherhood have concentrated our minds on the problems involved. In future issues we hope to embrace a much wider field of challenge in our contemporary scene.

The article *The Quest of Truth* was written by the late Bro. James White.

Readers will have noticed in *The Christadelphian* for February a rejoinder to our comments on the Watford Statement which appeared in *The Christadelphian* for December. In our comments we wrote "It must be acknowledged that the tone of the statement contrasts most commendably with the tone which our com-

munity has set in similar situations even in the recent past." We would hesitate, however, to give similar commendation to the tone of the rejoinder. But we feel that the matter must now rest on the points put forward, as there is a danger that this discussion will go the way of so many of its predecessors and the original point at issue be lost in a series of accusations and counter accusations.

We have been challenged to publish the letter which appears below. We do so with some reluctance as it adds little to the current discussion. It is, however, indicative of an attitude shown by some, and our comments are subjoined.

1. *The Endeavour Magazine* has sown seeds of discord among brethren with considerable success, ever since it first appeared upon the field of Christadelphian activities. Never before, however, have you published anything quite so subversive of the peace and unity of the fellowship to which you belong, as the article entitled *The Watford Statement* which appeared in December 1966.

2. The Christadelphian community has always believed that ideally the decision of one Ecclesia regarding withdrawal, should be accepted by all those in fellowship with it. It is true that the *Ecclesial Guide* recognises that this ideal cannot always be maintained, and provides for difference in opinion between Ecclesias over matters of fact. One Ecclesia might consider that a brother holds a wrong doctrine and disfellowship him. He might then apply to another Ecclesia who after examining the case, might conclude that he did not hold that doctrine, and offer him fellowship. Individual brethren who disagree with another Ecclesia's action, presumably have the right to protest, but one would think they would be well advised to communicate their complaints to the Ecclesia concerned, rather than the brotherhood at large.

3. It must be emphasised, however, that the differences envisaged in the *Ecclesial Guide* relate only to matters of fact. Differences in doctrine between Ecclesias have in the past never been tolerated, and it is particularly disturbing that the facts in the case of Brother Lovelock are nowhere in dispute. That Brother Lovelock holds certain beliefs about the origin of man has never been questioned. Your defence of him is not that he does not hold the beliefs he is alleged to believe, but that there is nothing unscriptural about his beliefs, although his own Ecclesia, after months of careful consideration, are convinced that his views are opposed to the teaching of the Bible.

4. A further disturbing feature of your article is that your defence is

based upon scientific rather than scriptural grounds. You censure the Watford Arranging Brethren because "they were new to the subject only about twelve months ago." Yet you acknowledge that these brethren are "of twenty, thirty, forty or more years standing in the Truth." They are new to the subject only from a scientific point of view. Surely the only qualification needed to decide a question of fellowship, of a religious not a scientific body, is a good knowledge and understanding of Scripture.

5. The way in which you deal with the scientific point of view, is in itself biased. You regard the question of long time periods for the existence of man, as being proved beyond all question. You recommend certain literature which your readers may study in order to remedy their deficiency of scientific knowledge, and while you somewhat grudgingly concede that some might not like the writings of atheistic scientists, one

does not support the beliefs of Brother Lovelock.

7. When you state four main options for "those who wish to pursue the subject further," it is noteworthy that you reject almost out of hand those views which are nearest to the Scriptural record, and reveal a marked preference for those ideas requiring periods of time for the existence of man which make it necessary "to impose accommodating meanings" on scriptural chronology, or which "cannot avoid the implication that not all living are descended from Adam."

8. One cannot help but wonder why it is that in view of your regard for beliefs which far from reconciling Scripture with science, support scientific theory at the expense of the biblical record, you should wish to continue as members of a religious body committed to a belief in the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God. One would have thought that

Correspondence

wonders why you fail completely to mention the works of those scientists who are sympathetic to the Genesis record. Why do you fail to mention, for example, Morris and Whitcomb, Beasley, Velikovsky, the many works published by the "Evolution Protest Movement," and above all, the writings of our own Brother John Watts, and others, published from time to time in *The Testimony* and *Logos* magazines? Even though you may not agree with these writers' conclusions, one would have thought that you would recommend your readers to consider *all* the evidence.

6. Your attempt to use the writings of Dr Thomas in support of Brother Lovelock's opinions is hardly relevant. Although Dr Thomas did believe in a pre-Adamer race, it must be pointed out that he held that it was completely destroyed in a cataclysm which occurred at an unknown time prior to the first day of creation, except for the redeemed which are now the angels of God. This cataclysm resulted in the earth being without form, and void as described in Genesis 1: 2. Whether one accepts that view or not, it certainly

your logical action would be to establish a separate fellowship in which Brother Lovelock and others of your persuasion would be welcome. One would think that you would have a fairly numerous following. From Brother Lovelock's letter, it would seem that about a quarter of the Watford Ecclesia would join you. From personal knowledge I would think there would be a substantial number from my own Ecclesia, Birmingham Central, and no doubt there would be groups throughout the country. Those of us who wish to follow the ways and beliefs of our pioneers of a century ago, could then meet in peace, untroubled by the various winds of doctrine which emanate so persistently from your pages; we could then continue, in the eyes of the world, as "just cranks."

9. I hope you will have the moral courage to publish this letter. It seems to me to present the only reasonable solution to the troubles in the brotherhood, for which *The Endeavour Magazine* is largely responsible.

Philip H. Taylor.

Comment on the letter overleaf

We have numbered the paragraphs in the letter overleaf for ease of reference.

Paragraphs 1 and 8.

The position of *The Endeavour Magazine* on the issues raised in Bro. Taylor's letter is a simple one. We hold that as the community has never reached an agreed and informed decision on the challenges raised by e.g. geology, the matter should be discussed in a sensible and tolerant way so that, together, an agreed solution may be worked out. We counsel caution and brotherliness and avoidance of excommunication. It is, therefore, one of the greatest of ironies in the present situation that those who support excommunication and even counsel division (Para. 8) should find that we are the ones who sow discord among brethren and are largely responsible for the troubles in the brotherhood. We must reaffirm therefore that there would be no reason why we should not have an amicable discussion on genuine problems, which we did not create, if it were not for the attitude shown by brethren such as the writer of the above letter.

Para. 2.

The comments we made on the Watford decision were in reference to a long article in *The Christadelphian*, circulated to the brotherhood at large, which raises issues which we felt were disturbing in their trends, and we said so. In addition the decision was a new one and set a precedent. In our view the truth of an issue is more important than allowing anyone to take shelter behind the *Ecclesial Guide*.

Para. 3.

Our stand on this matter is not that there is nothing unscriptural about Bro. Lovelock's beliefs. Dr Thomas's "gap theory" is unscriptural. Our position is that Bro. Lovelock has made a sincere effort to unite Scripture and science. Any such attempt is likely to be dubbed unscriptural from some point of view but should not thereby be made a ground of excommunication.

Para. 4.

This is an interesting paragraph. It indicates from a different standpoint from our own a confirmation of our interpretation of the Watford Statement — that they were new to the subject only from a scientific point of view. This the Watford brethren now rebutt. Otherwise the paragraph represents a lamentable inability to see the point. Of course if one is prepared to shut one's eyes to the scientific evidence altogether we can claim there is no problem. But we are also beyond the reach of contemporary discussion about the claims of the Gospel in the modern situation.

Para. 5.

Far from "grudgingly conceding" that some might not like the writings of atheistic scientists (we do not fancy them much ourselves) we positively recommended the works of an evangelical publishing house (The Pater-noster Press) whose scientist writers are sympathetic to the Genesis record. We wish people would read what we say more carefully before making their accusations. Furthermore we understand that Bro. Taylor commits himself to the creation of man around 4000 B.C. If this view satisfies him he should hold by it, but it is futile to accuse us of not taking account of evidence put forward by those who do not take his view. Morris and Whitcomb do not date the creation of man so late. Neither do many of the principal exponents of the Evolution Protest Movement whose main lines of exposition we would support. The Evolution Protest Movement's late president, Douglas Dewar, asserted that "fossils of men of modern type have been found in deposits of early Pleistocene." Can it be seriously maintained that Morris and Whitcomb's theories and Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* are in line with the ways and beliefs of our pioneers of a century ago? Dr Thomas expressly repudiates the flood-based geology theories, in *Elpis Israel*, page 11.

Para. 6.

This paragraph merely points out what we have already stated.

Para. 7.

This is simply a reflection of Bro. Taylor's 4000 B.C. dating and his own bias against any other point of view.

Para. 9.

It does not take much moral courage to publish such material as is contained in Bro. Taylor's letter.

Further we think that the ideas which Bro. Taylor presents are at odds with the thinking of the majority of Christadelphians, and in fairness we do not think he represents the opinions of the Watford brethren.

Editors.

According to the preamble to an article in the January *Christadelphian* headed "Christ's Use Of The Scriptures" a group of brethren have formed themselves into a study group to review the effects of modern problems upon the foundations of our faith. One's first reaction is to applaud this long over-due recognition that we now live in the twentieth century and that our problems no longer centre in the fate of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the outcome of the Eastern Question or the number of hidden references to Russia in the old Testament. Since these issues were of burning interest all kinds of objections to the Christ-ian faith have been raised both within and without the Church. We have avoided them by the simple expedient of a blanket condemnation of all "human philosophy" and the consignment of those who showed any interest in them at all to the dreadful fate which apparently is reserved for all philosophers. It seems that at last the logic of unbelief is to be carefully scrutinised and dealt with at a reasonably advanced level. The question is, what confidence can we repose in the work of the group who have undertaken this great task? In spite of the integrity and ability of each of its members, the answer is, unhappily, very little. The reason is that as a community we have just bound them hand and foot in a way that minimises the independence of their inquiry. For another brother of great integrity and ability has trod the path before them and suggested ways in which the early chapters of Genesis may be reconciled with the findings of geology and biology. Those who attended Bro. Lovelock's lectures and troubled to read the printed notes will know how reverently the task was undertaken; with what patience even the most bad-tempered critics were

answered; and how often he too made "affirmations of the foundation clause of our Statement of Faith."

How did we repay brother Lovelock's labours on our behalf? Why, we disfellowshipped him of course! In the words of the satirical song, "It's all been done before." Our new study group thus begin their work assured that we are right behind them — ready to push them out if they too dare to depart from the cliché-ridden interpretations of the nineteenth century. In this way we turn our young people out in the battlefield of religious controversy clad in rusty armour and armed with a broken lance.

If we are ever going to face the kind of problems which Bro. Lovelock, and now the study group, are grappling with, it must be an independent inquiry free from the threats of disfellowship which in the face of original thought fly about as thick as gnats on a summer evening.

Why do we persist in behaving in this fashion towards those whose only offence is that of changing certain traditional interpretations? The nature of much of this behaviour points in the direction of *fear* as a principal cause. Fear, firstly, that any change of view will entail the loss of eternal life, and secondly, fear deep-rooted and never consciously admitted that perhaps after all the Bible can-

not withstand modern attacks. Both fears are groundless; the first is the heresy that salvation is by knowledge rather than by God's grace and its effect is to exclude the possibility of growth which should be a feature of our spiritual development. The second fear is due to a lack of faith which regards the Truth as if it were a fragile flower easily crushed unless we build round it the hard shell of our own intolerance and exclusiveness. In fact the Truth is a rock on which men build or on which they will be broken. If the Lord should not return for a thousand years and Christadelphians all but vanish from the pages of history the Truth will stand unbroken because its foundation is the risen Christ. Our primary concern is not to defend the Truth — although that is one of our duties — but rather to be worthy of it. Intemperate behaviour inspired by fear is neither worthy of nor defends the Truth.

What of the much-repeated argument that those of "simple faith" need protecting by disfellowshipping those who it is alleged threaten their simplicity? In fact, Christianity itself would never have been founded for that too was a threat to the simple faith of Jewish believers. To those who use their susceptibility to offence as an instrument of blackmail, not I, but the Lord says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted

will be rooted up" (Matt. 15: 13). And again scripture says, "Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119: 165).

Perhaps there is still a deeper reason for our hostility towards innovators. We have lived in yearly expectation of the Second Coming to the exclusion of almost all else for more than a century. History suggests that a hundred years is about as long as a community can endure such unfulfilled expectation and survive. There are welcome signs that we are at last beginning to believe our Lord when He said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons . . . but . . . ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 7-8). Our witnessing can take many forms — preaching at home and overseas; the care of others; social and educational work in under-developed countries; and honestly facing up to modern problems. Our growth will be stunted and our witness frustrated if fear is allowed to prevail and we continually draw back. We demean our witness by resorting to the psychological equivalent of stoning in disfellowshipping those whose services and insights we need to sustain and guide us.

Gordon Hunnings.
Khartoum.

THE "WHY?" LEAFLETS

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(Continued from front page)

points. "Is it important?" and almost as often, conclude that it is not.

In all this self-questioning, a sense of good humour added to responsibility helps us to find a true sense of proportion. This good humour is even more necessary when we have reached any conclusion. We will realise that no one can see the whole truth, that nothing and no one is perfect, least of all ourselves. Those who disagree with us are not necessarily obstinate or unthinking or insincere.

We can therefore listen without ill-humour to others, from whom we may learn much. Our quest is to hammer out the truth, and not one another. There is a famous prayer which says: "Where we are wrong, make us willing to change. And where we are right, make us easy to live with."

Things are not right because they are "old," nor are they right because they are "new."

Something apparently new may seem to threaten our mental security and therefore we reject it. Sheer mental laziness can thus overcome the quest of truth. Nothing is easier than to live within a small circle of ideas, never learning, with the conviction that all things have, within that narrow compass of conformity, been revealed to us. We can very easily begin to assume that we are

thinking when we are merely "rearranging our prejudices."

Then again, something "new" may seem attractive simply because it is different. We can fall easily into the habit of fruitless speculation, seeking always to tell or hear some new thing like modern Athenians, forgetting the limitations of the mind and the supreme excellence of simplicity.

Let us therefore resolve to examine fearlessly this house of the mind, and give it, if necessary, a thorough spring-clean.

Let us open this cupboard door which holds the skeleton we were always afraid to see. It will probably crumble to dust if we dare!

All this lumber called "ready-made arguments" and "preconceived ideas" can go outside. It may be useful as firewood, but not for anything else. And this glittering object called "idle speculation" — it, too, can go outside. It will soon rust away in the rain.

Let us clear away these cobwebs of prejudice blocking the windows, and open them up so that the fresh air can come in.

Thus many a precious old object may be revealed, long covered by the dust, and many a sad omission can be seen and made good, so that it may be made fit to receive Him who is the Truth, Jesus, in whom the mind and heart are eternally satisfied.

THOUGHTS ON THINKING AND FEELING

(Continued from page 3)

is the will of God. We can have differing opinions at different times. There are times when the demands of conscience seem quite irrational and to proceed from emotional sources, but when we stop to think, we realise that what is truly rational is truly right for us. This does not mean that what each individual regards as right is of necessity truth; the mind can be confused, or the information incorrect; where there is difference we have to defer to the one who is best informed so far as we can judge.

While admitting this to be so, we must also acknowledge that intellect divorced from imagination or feeling would be inert and impotent. Moral action is concerned with people. Without imagination we cannot love, because only through imagination can we make real to ourselves the needs of the people around, and of the world at large. Through this means comes our practical understanding. God reveals Himself to and through human thought and imagination, and,

in a sense, conscience is the voice of God. Christian behaviour then is love in creative action, and in that sense never merely a matter of a set of rules. The ethics are those of grace, they go beyond the Law and not behind it. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Every encounter with another person is an opportunity to lift or unfortunately to add to another's burden, and we do well to ask how much, or how little, of His love has reached others through

us. We are naturally hasty in condemnation and grudging in forgiveness; we can all confess with shame that in some measure we have all been guilty at some time or another of betraying Him, or forsaking and denying Him, as did the apostles. For as much as we did it unto the least of "these my brethren," we did it unto Him. Let us therefore not miss an opportunity of passing on the love of God be it in the most significant or insignificant of encounters.

SUMMER SCHOOL 1967

SATURDAY, 29th JULY-SATURDAY, 5th AUGUST

Our Study Week will again be held, God Willing, in the house and lovely grounds of Fircroft College, Birmingham. The course will be run on similar lines to last year and will have the Gospel of John as the main study.

The cost of the week will be about £9 10s. It is important to know the approximate accommodation required, and those wishing to attend should write as soon as possible to our business address:

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The

Endeavour

Magazine

A CHRISTADELPHIAN REVIEW

TWO SHILLINGS

WHAT IS OFFENCE?

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DOING THE TRUTH

No. 24

Summer 1967

"Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believes in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."
Jesus.

"Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."
Paul.

THE GRAVITY of the crime of "offence" needs no underlining after these quotations. But the nature of the fault is often missed, and especially by those who only read the *Authorised Version* and make no study of the meanings of words. No thoughtful person will fail to note that some words used by King James's translators no longer bear the same meaning, or have gone out of use altogether. "Charity" is now giving to the poor, and not the comprehensive Christian virtue. "Wormwood" is hardly used in modern English, unless for special effect. "Offence" is particularly liable to misunderstanding because in the Bible it has two quite distinct senses, of which only one is in ordinary use at the present time. The tendency is to understand all passages in the modern sense, an error of tremendous implications as it is the now obsolete sense against which Jesus and Paul spoke.

"Offend" today is to provoke to anger, to irritate profoundly, to shock. A biblical example of this occurs in John 6: 61. Jesus had told His hearers that His flesh was meat and His blood drink, and that to attain life they must partake of these elements. Being Jews they were horrified at the suggestion of drinking blood especially, so Jesus asked, "Doth this offend you? . . ." They were shocked. In a slightly different sense the word is used by Jesus in Matthew 17: 27. There had taken place the discussion with Peter about paying the temple tax, and Jesus had given reason why they, as sons of God, might consider themselves exempt "Notwithstanding," Jesus continued, "lest we offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook . . ." The temple authorities would be angry if Jesus did not pay, hardly shocked, since no doubt many Jews avoided paying.

(Please turn to back page)

The Book of Revelation (I)

Introduction

THAT THE REVELATION is historical, that it describes events from the time when it was given to the Second Coming and beyond, no doubt exists: this is stated in the very first verse. The question, however, is what these events are.

Our usual method of finding this out is to read history and apply the Visions wherever we can. But the fascination in this has its pitfalls. Here three general criticisms must suffice.

The first is that there is very little plan in the applications and what there is, is terribly complicated. Chapters are supposed to be inserted here and there, giving fuller details of a certain part of a series. Never is there any indication that this is so — and worse than this, they usually manage to appear in the wrong places. Part of the order in the usual view is: the Constantine Revolution, the Kingdom, the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Saracens and Turks, the Kingdom again, the French Revolution, the Constantine Revolution again, the Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire, the Kingdom again, the French Revolution again and so on.

The second criticism is that, by this method it is possible to apply the Visions almost anywhere in history. There are vast numbers of different

views, all based on this method, and offering no proof at all: each scheme merely takes shape according to the will and inclinations of its author. This will be seen from Table I, giving five out of a multitude of such interpretations of the Seals.

The third criticism is that Biblical proof is practically ignored. Two cases of this which may be taken are the 6th Seal and the Birth of the Man-Child (6: 12-17 and 12: 1-6), both usually applied to Constantine. The former plainly describes Jesus' Second Coming, and the latter His Birth, as the simple comparison in Table II will show.

The correspondence is striking and thrilling, and reveals the true method — the Bible itself is the guide.

Instead of involved plans, it is now possible to give the simple structure at the start. For, with our guide, the Revelation is simplicity itself. It is in four main parts:

I.—A General Survey.

The Seals: Up to Jerusalem's Destruction, the Interval, and the Second Coming.

II.—The Climax of History.

- (a) The Trumpets: The Final War.
- (b) A Picture of the Foes.
- (c) The Vials: Judgment of the Invader.

Explanation

In this part is given the whole sweep of the story, together with the proof of its meaning.

The Revelation must either have been written in the 60s, or the 90s of the first century (the two great periods of the persecution when John could have been banished). As it is tech-

nically not in good Greek, whereas John's Gospel is, the Revelation must have been written at the early date, before John had learned the language well. It was written, therefore, some time before the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is not merely given to us in words, but is shown in vivid picture. The events are represented in the Theatre of Heaven. The coming Drama of the Earth is enacted in symbols before John's eyes.

A scroll is handed to Jesus, which contains the story of the future, and it is sealed with seven Seals. All of the Seals are seen, and therefore they are fixed in a series along the way. As Jesus breaks each of the first six Seals, a vision accompanies the act, giving a general survey of the future. But when He breaks the seventh Seal, no vision occurs, for of course this opens the scroll itself, and it contains the second part of the story — the Climax of History.

I. A General Survey

The Seals Chapter 6

Four horses appear: a white one (righteousness) going forth conquering; a red one (from blood) bringing death, especially in warfare; then a black one (sorrow and mourning) bringing famine; and lastly a pale one (death) bringing even more severe judgments.

Then the martyrs are represented as asking how long the delay will continue till the vengeance falls, and finally in the 6th Seal, great convulsions occur in heaven and earth, and the day of wrath has come.

TABLE I

	<i>First</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Third</i>
Mede	Peace after Vespasian War.	Roman Empire under Trajan.	Justice under the Severuses.
Elliott	Nerva's Age.	Oppression of Commodus.	Taxation under Caracalla.
Wordsworth	Christ's Coming.	Ten Persecutions by Roman Emperors.	Heresy in the Church.
Cunninghame	The Gospel.	Conflict with Arians and Donatists.	The Papacy.
Vitringa	Peace in Church, A.D. 96-250.	Persecution from A.D. 250.	From Constantine to the 9th Century
	<i>Fourth</i>	<i>Fifth</i>	<i>Sixth</i>
Mede	Evils under Decius, Gallus and Valerian.	Persecution under Diocletian.	Revolution under Constantine.
Elliott	Judgments on Roman Empire.	Persecution under Diocletian.	Fall of Pagan Rome.
Wordsworth	Barbaric and Mohammedan invasions; also the Papacy	Souls at rest.	Last age of Church and world.
Cunninghame	The Inquisition.	The Reformation.	French Revolution.
Vitringa	Saracens and Turks.	Persecution of Albigenes and Waldenses.	<i>Either</i> : The Reformation, <i>or</i> The Constantine Revolution, <i>or</i> the Fall of the Jews, <i>or</i> the Destruction of Antichrist.

TABLE II

(i)		
There was a great earthquake	One at the Second Coming (Rev. 16: 18).	
Sun blackened, moon as blood	"Sun into darkness, moon into blood" then (Joel 2: 31)	
Stars falling, heaven removed	Sun and moon darkened, stars falling, powers of heavens shaken, connected with the Second Coming (Matt. 24: 29).	
Islands and mountains moved	Islands and mountains moved at the Second Coming (Rev. 16: 20).	
Men hide in dens and rocks	Men hide in rocks and caves at the day of the Lord (Isa. 2: 19, 21).	
"The great day of his wrath is come"	"The great and terrible day of the Lord" (Joel 2: 31, Mal. 4: 5).	
"Who shall be able to stand?"	"Who shall stand when he appeareth?" (Mal. 3: 2).	
(ii)		
A woman arrayed with the sun, moon, and twelve stars	In Joseph's dream the sun, moon and twelve stars stand for the father, mother and twelve brothers—the ancestors of the Jewish nation (Gen. 37: 9).	
She travailed and brought forth	Immediately after the prophecy of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem, Micah speaks of "the time that she which travaileth—the Jewish nation, Mic. 4: 10—hath brought forth" (5: 3).	
"A man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron"	Jesus "shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 19: 15).	
"And her child was caught up unto God"	"He was come from God, and went to God" (John 13: 3).	
"And to his throne"	"I am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3: 21).	

The key to this will be found in that most important of New Testament prophecies, the Olivet Prophecy, which gives a whole general survey of the future from the Divine point of view, which is recorded three times (Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21).

It will be seen from a comparison of Rev. 6: 12-14 and Mark 13: 24-25, that the events of the 6th Seal and the last part of the Olivet Prophecy are identical. It is then only a question of working back through each to find the solution.

The Olivet Prophecy consists of the following: a warning about false Christs (Mark 13: 5-6); a prophecy of wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes, and famines (7-8. The R.V. omits "troubles"); a warning that the disciples will be persecuted and killed for the sake of the gospel, which must first be preached to the nations: the promise that even the persecution will become for them a testimony, because they will be given "a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (9-13 and Luke 21: 12-19); a description of the destruction of Jerusalem with its great massacres (14-20); another warning about false Christs (21-23); then a description of the Second Coming, with signs in the sun, moon, and stars (24-27).

Two things are to be noted: (1) The warning about false Christs which occurs twice because of its importance is stated to belong to the period

of its occurrence in Mark 13: 21. Appearing there, it is an indication of the interval between Jerusalem's destruction and the Second Coming, so clearly shown by the long "Times of the Gentiles" in Luke. (2) The gospel preaching is said by both Mark (13: 10) and Luke (21: 12) to come at the very beginning.

We then have the result shown in Table III.

Further comment is unnecessary. The Six Seals are a prophecy of how, after the gospel being preached far and wide, a wave of widespread bloodshed and famine would be followed by the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and then after an interval Jesus would return. To add the perfect ending to this general survey, the Seventh Chapter of the Revelation is a vision of the redeemed kept of God and sharing in the Kingdom.

II The Climax of History

So the last Seal is broken, and the Scroll itself can be unrolled. After the general survey in the Six Seals, on what part of the future does the Scroll concentrate? It will be seen that it tells of the events of the last days, just before the Second Coming and including it. What we have had before, Jesus had already given the substance of on Olivet. But with that which is to come, what Jesus did not give on Olivet, he now reveals on the Isle of Patmos.

The Scroll contains two main parts,

the Trumpets and the Vials, with a section between. The Trumpets and Vials are on the same plan, for the first four in each case have a representation of creation being smitten, after the order of Genesis Chapter 1. But they are not equivalent: it is the contrast that is clearly the point. The Trumpets (by their very nature a call to battle) are a picture of the great final war. Only a *third* of creation is smitten in them, which is a way of saying that the Power which causes the affliction can only bring a *partial* destructive effect (see II Sam. 8: 2, Zech. 13: 8-9). But the Vials contain God's vengeance on this Power itself, and they are represented as being like the *whole* of creation being smitten—the force behind them is all-powerful.

At creation God caused the water to go off the earth so that the plants could grow, and this formed seas and left rivers; then He appointed the sun, moon and stars. Here in the Trumpets (chapter 8), earth with its plants (1st Trumpet), the sea (2), the rivers (3), and the sun, moon and stars (4), are shown in a partial upset—they are, as it were, disturbed by the great terrors of modern warfare. In the Vials, there is a deliberate parallel, and the same order is preserved, but so great is God's vengeance compared with the terrors which the last Power inflicts, that it is as though these parts of creation are wholly disturbed.

Since Christ's Second Coming does not occur until the 7th Vial, God's

people remain ungathered and watching events as they proceed throughout the time of the Trumpets and Vials. It is in them especially therefore that the message for us is to be found.

They show us what we are to expect when the final war comes. We are enabled easily to identify the general meaning of the Trumpets and Vials from the rest of the Bible, but nowhere else are we told the details of what is to happen in that Climax of History—the order of events, the rise and fall of battle, the advance, the reversal, the triumph, and the defeat of the Invader.

The Trumpets Chapter 8

The key to this is found in the same way as in the Seals. The 5th Trumpet consists of a great picture of locusts, and it becomes instantly clear from the vast mass of marginal references that the locust-vision is exactly the same as that of Joel 2. It is then only necessary to work back and forward, and everything fits in.

It is not directly stated in Joel 2 who the locusts are, except that they are intended to represent a great army of advancing men. But the prophets describe how there will be a great divine battle with northern nations invading Palestine just before the Kingdom. Three things place beyond all doubt the fact that it is to this gathering of nations in the last days that Joel's vision refers: (1) The locusts are said to stand for "the northern army" (Joel 2: 20), (2) their advance is connected with "the day of the Lord" in words that can only indicate the time of Christ's return (2: 11), (3) Joel 3 is one of the chapters which describe the gathering of the nations to invade Palestine, and it will be seen by comparing Joel 2: 10-11 with 3: 14-16 that the locusts are merely a symbolic form of the same thing.

There are certain other things in connection with the locusts in Joel 2 which fill in the rest. Later in the chapter God says:

I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come (2: 30, 31).

The Seals

1. A white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer.
2. A red horse bringing death, especially in warfare.
3. A black horse, its rider carrying balances to carefully weigh out all food.
4. A pale horse, whose rider is named death who kills with the sword, hunger, death (the name for pestilence) and wild beasts.
5. An interval, with delay in avenging the blood of the martyrs.
6. Sun and moon darkened, stars of heaven falling, heaven removed, connected with the great day of wrath of God and Christ.

A comparison of this with verse 10 of the same chapter will show that these things result from the approach of the locusts. We have then this list: blood, fire, pillars of smoke, and a darkening of the sun, moon and stars (Joel 2: 10, 31); then the coming of the locusts. Finally in Joel 3, the vision changes to the literal gathering of the invading nations.

We have then the comparison as given in Table IV.

It will be seen from Jeremiah 51: 25 that a mountain stands for a nation, and from Isaiah 14: 12 that a star means a ruler. The fiery mountain and the burning star of the second and third Trumpets are therefore the invading power and the invaders' leader respectively. What then do the Trumpets tell us about the course of the final war?

It will hardly be disputed that the first four must represent the effects of the destructive forces available to modern warfare. But what do the armies do? It is quite clear that in the Trumpets they do not yet reach Palestine. In the 5th Trumpet the locusts go out to torment men for an appointed period (9: 5). That is, they first of all advance into the world generally. But in the 6th Trumpet, there is a clear indication that the armies have started their progress to Armageddon. There is a voice,

Saying to the sixth angel, which

TABLE III

The Olivet Prophecy

The preaching of the Gospel far and wide, with persecution met by an eloquent wisdom none can resist.
Wars and rumours of wars.
Earthquakes.
Famines.

The destruction of Jerusalem, with great massacres.
The four things named are "God's four sore judgments on Jerusalem" in Ezekiel 14: 21. An interval from the destruction of Jerusalem to the second coming.

Sun and moon darkened, stars of heaven falling, powers of heaven shaken, connected with Christ's second coming.

had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year (Rev. 9: 14-15, R.V.).

The result of this act is that the armies advance.

Now four angels had been prepared "for that hour and day and month and year" (Moffat). In other words, this act on the vision symbolises the fact that God allows the advance to occur at the exact time HE has planned.

For an army to "cross the Euphrates" would symbolise a great breakthrough to Palestine. For it to be "at the Euphrates" as it is here (that is, to reach it but not cross it) must mean an advance towards Palestine without a breakthrough.

This then is what will happen:

The destructive forces of war will first be inflicted on the world (Trumpets 1-4).

The armies will then advance into the world for a time, bringing terror with them (Trumpet 5).

They will next bring great pressure to bear in the Middle East, and will advance towards Palestine without breaking through (Trumpet 6).

And there we leave the invaders for the present, to be given an assurance that the nation to be invaded will not be finally defeated.

We shall continue the fortunes of the invaders when we come to the Vials.

The Assurance

John first sees a mighty angel, representing Divine Power, poised and waiting to bring down judgment on the invaders (chapter 10). Then comes the assurance about the Two Witnesses (chapter 11).

God's Two Witnesses are given power for a period of 1,260 days—otherwise known as 42 months or $3\frac{1}{2}$ times—during which Jerusalem is trodden down: then a great beast kills them. Shortly they are brought to life again and exalted.

Who are the witnesses? God again speaks of "My witnesses" in Isa. 43: 10, 12 and 44: 8, and there they are the Jewish nation.

I will give power unto my two witnesses (Rev. 11: 3).

Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord, that I am God (Isa. 43: 12).

The two witnesses are the Jewish Nation or the New Israel.

It will be seen from the comparison which follows that the resurrection of the Two Witnesses is an echo of the resurrection of the Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37.

The Two Witnesses:

The breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet (Rev. 11: 11, R.V.).

The breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet (Ezek. 37: 10).

But the reference to "their Lord" (N.E.B.) who was "crucified" suggests the New Israel.

What is the period of time spoken of? 1,260 days, 42 months and $3\frac{1}{2}$ times all add up to the same amount, almost $3\frac{1}{2}$ years (a "time" being an ancient measure of 360 days). And a comparison of all the places where they occur in Revelation will show that they refer to the same period (11: 2, 3; 12: 6, 14; 13: 5).

Three and a half times is apparently the general description. 1,260 days, days being taken from the sun, the day measure, is applied when the good aspect of the period is referred to. 42 months, months coming from the moon, the night measure, occurs when the evil aspect is spoken of.

What then is the period? We must

TABLE IV

The Trumpets	Joel 2 and 3
1. A hailstorm with fire and blood cast on the earth.	Blood and fire.
2. A mountain burning with fire cast into the sea.	Fire.
3. A burning star falling on the rivers.	Fire.
4. Sun, moon and stars darkened.	Sun, moon and stars darkened.
5. A great smoke caused by the escape of the locusts.	Pillars of smoke, the locusts.
6. A literal army.	A literal army.

not invent some ingenious method of interpretation and then apply it to history somewhere: but rather find from the Bible what the period is, and then knowing the time in history, seek the basis of measurement.

It only needs a glance at the marginal reference in Rev. 11: 2 to Luke 21: 24, and a moment's study of the thrilling exactness of the parallel there, to show that we are provided with a complete key in the Olivet Prophecy, where it speaks of Jerusalem's last great period of desolation beginning in A.D. 70—the Times of the Gentiles:

It is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months (the $3\frac{1}{2}$ times) (Rev. 11: 12).

And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Luke 21: 24).

The period of time spoken of is

from the destruction of Jerusalem to the second coming.

What is its basis? $3\frac{1}{2}$ times will not fit this part of history, nor will any manipulation of it. Clearly then, $3\frac{1}{2}$ times is a symbolic figure, and its basis is easy to find.

The phrase was used among the Jews to describe a time of great tribulation. And with good reason: it had been so in the nation's past. It was famous as the length of the great famine in the time of Elijah (Luke 4: 25; James 5: 17): and this received added significance from the almost identical length of the great oppression of Jerusalem in the times of the Maccabees (Dan. 11: 31; 12: 11), I Maccabees 1, Josephus' Antiquities 11.1.5). When a period of tribulation—of whatever length—was to be indicated, this phrase became its symbol.

(to be continued)

(The article above was written some years ago by the late Brother James White)

SUMMER SCHOOL 1967

SATURDAY, 29th JULY-SATURDAY, 5th AUGUST

Our Study Week will again be held, God Willing, in the house and lovely grounds of Fircroft College, Birmingham. The course will be run on similar lines to last year and will have the Gospel of John as the main study.

The college has intimated a rise in the cost of accommodation and the cost of the week will now be about £11. It is important to know the approximate accommodation required, and those wishing to attend should write as soon as possible to our business address:

The Endeavour Magazine, 104 Lady Byron Lane,

Knowle, Solihull, Warwickshire.

The Doctrine Of The Holy Spirit

By George McHaffie

IT HAS BEEN SAID that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the most neglected aspects of Christian doctrine. In so far as the development of the Creeds is concerned the inclusion of the Holy Spirit within the developed doctrine of the Trinity was never subject to the intense discussion and passion which was devoted to the relationship of Father and Son. Neglect of the doctrine itself, however, has big dangers. A reading of the New Testament indicates that there is an intimate relationship between the holy spirit and the salvation offered in Christ.

The use of the holy spirit in the New Testament can best be understood in the light of the preparation for the coming of the gospel, which is found in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament

The history of a nation has a parallel also in individual lives. In the case of Israel's history there are basic moral and spiritual lessons worked out, for all to see and understand. Despite all the advantages of having a knowledge of God's will in the Mosaic Law, Israel was, nevertheless, a standard example of sinfulness with a heart "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17: 9). This led to the collapse of the nation in catastrophes culminating in the carrying away to Babylon in 586 B.C. Even in national disgrace God could triumph over Israel's sinfulness with an everlasting love.

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

Therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you (Jer. 31: 3, R.S.V.).

This love foreshadowed the later declaration of Jesus.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3: 16, R.S.V.).

The Prophets and the Spirit

Israel had been scattered because of wickedness, and if they were to return and remain in God's favour personal righteousness could be the only foundation. But here is the greatest problem in the world: how to turn wicked and rebellious hearts into good. God is able, nevertheless, to solve this problem, and the prophets who wrote about the time of the fall of the kingdoms of Israel and between that time and the New Testament, showed how this would be done.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel

Two main prophetic statements must be considered: that of Jeremiah who wrote during the closing stages of the deportation to Babylon, and that of Ezekiel who was carried away and prophesied in Babylon.

Israel had failed to keep the Mosaic law and covenant, therefore Jeremiah says:—

Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers . . . which my covenant they brake. . . . But this shall be the covenant. . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer. 31: 31-34).

This "new covenant" would be such that those who had a part in it would have the law of God in their inward parts, i.e. in the depths of their personality, and in their hearts, i.e. in the seat of their affections.

This would issue in good conduct so that the whole community would know, and see in each other, God's character and will. Then their past would be forgiven, for when the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts, God will abundantly pardon (Is. 55: 7). All this would be accomplished by the activity of God. Ezekiel tells us more particularly how this would be done. In writing of the same event Ezekiel says:—

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And 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: 26-28).

The breath (spirit), which gives life to our bodies, gives us energy which is of a natural character and leads to selfishness and sin. Ezekiel promises another spirit which would give an energy and drive from within, and lead to righteousness. The deceitful heart would then be no more and all would be "pure of heart."

Perhaps we should look more closely at the word "spirit" which, it is well known, is the same in Hebrew (ruach) as "breath" or "wind." There is a consistency in the three meanings. One of the most obvious indications of life is the breath, a little wind, coming and going in the nostrils. It is easy to link this little wind with the greater wind which surrounds us. A tempestuous wind was likened by David to "the blast of the breath of his nostrils" (11 Sam. 22: 16). So when "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecc. 12: 7) the primary idea is no more than that of the breath of the nostrils being united once more to the breath of God which surrounds us in the prevailing winds of nature.

Breath is not only a means of oxygenation; it can be a means of expressing emotion. This is obviously so in the case of the deep breathing of anger. Indeed a common word for anger in Hebrew is derived from "nose." Just as "bowels" were thought of as the seat of mercy so the "nose" was the seat of anger.

So when anger goes as is recounted in Judges 8: 2 it is literally the ruach or breath which is calmed. Astonishment has the opposite effect: we catch our breath and this is perhaps at the back of such expressions as "there was no more spirit in her" (1 Kings 10: 5), referring to the Queen of Sheba's amazement. Terror has an even more pronounced effect and we may hardly be able to breathe at all, and so a fitting description of the terrorised kings is found in Joshua 5: 1 "their heart melted neither was there spirit in them any more."

In the above examples the association of power and the spirit becomes evident. Where the spirit is present in quantity in deep breathing of anger or perhaps the heavy breathing accompanying great effort, there is a big output of strength. When it is absent there is weakness and fear. More than physical effort is, however, expressed by spirit. Anger and fear have moral associations and the use of "spirit" became expressive of personality attitudes. So we find a spirit which is "grieved," "contrite," "humble," of "whoredom," "in which there is no guile" (Is. 54: 5, 6; 57: 15; 61: 3; 66: 2; Ps. 32: 2; Hosea 4: 12). Spirit can also express the whole attitude of the person as when the spirit (ruach) of Elijah rests on Elisha (2 Kings 2: 14). The characteristics which belong to God, whether expressive of power, wisdom or moral attitude could be given to men through His spirit coming upon them.

The Israelites were acquainted with the phenomenon of God working in particular individuals through His spirit. Although a man by nature might be weak, from God he could obtain "another spirit" which would infuse power into his personality, giving courage (Numbers 14: 24). Leading individuals in Israel's history had been moved by this power. The outstanding abilities of Joseph led to the acknowledgment by Pharaoh that he was "a man in whom the Spirit of God is" (Gen. 41: 38). Moses' administrative ability is to be similarly explained, and the likeness was transferred to seventy elders who were to help him. "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto them, and took of the spirit which was upon him (Moses), and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came

to pass, that when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease" (Numbers 11: 25). That is, they were able to expound the will of God to the people through this power which came upon them. The exploits of Joshua arose because he was "a man in whom is the spirit" (Numbers 27: 18). Of Samson we read that "the spirit of the Lord began to move him at times" (Judges 13: 25). So his action in slaying the lion is explained when we read that "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him (the lion) as he would have rent a kid" (Judges 14: 6). Similarly this supernatural strength, above that which his muscles could normally do, enabled him to break the cords. "The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax" (Judges 15: 14). Othniel judged and made war against a stronger nation through the spirit power. "And the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war . . . and his hand prevailed" (Judges 3: 9-10). So likewise, Gideon and Jephthah (Judges 6: 34 and 11: 29). The qualities which made David great also spring from this source. "And Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him . . . and the spirit of the Lord came on David from that day forward" (1 Sam. 16: 13). So, also, the prophets of Israel acted and spoke by and in the power of God's spirit which came upon them. So Micah, "I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3: 8).

The terms of the "new covenant" in Jeremiah 31 and also the promise in Ezekiel 36 indicate that this spirit would come upon all the members of the community, in the interests of moral power for righteousness. Instead of having a law written on stone which, while it could command and point the right way, gave no power to the reader to perform, the roots of the personality were to be energised by God's own extra natural power so that the person would be "caused" to keep the law and walk righteously. Human nature is such that no matter how great our knowledge of right and wrong, or how great our desire to pursue the right, there is no surety that right will be done. This is sin, and comes from

the self-regarding forces within us which produce "natural" conduct out of step with the divine. These selfish driving forces must be halted and the selfishness replaced. This replacement God promised to Israel. He promised to implant His own character into man by His spirit, and by this power sustain the individual's righteous conduct.

The willingness of the various individuals concerned was essential, and it required on their part a fulfilment of Jeremiah's words "Ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29: 13). But God's part in the matter was not passive. In Isaiah 53 we can read of one, who is the son of God, who would suffer at the nation's hand, before the nation could be turned to God. He would also send prophets (preachers) to come to prepare their hearts before the great day of God's judgment. One especially would be like Elijah (Mal. 4: 5). God would then pour out His "spirit on all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy (i.e. preach about the coming deliverance) (Joel 2: 28). The effect of this would be that some would call on the Lord "And whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (Joel 2: 32).

The "new covenant" which would be established in this way was to be an everlasting one because of the power which would make it sure, and it is often referred to as such (Is. 54: 10; 55: 3; 59: 20-21; 61: 8; Jer. 32: 40-41; 50: 4-5; Ezek. 16: 60, 63; Hosea 2: 18-23).

There are a number of additional references which might be looked up also. Pouring out of the spirit, Is. 32: 15; 42: 1; 44: 3; 61: 1; Ezek. 11: 19; 39: 29; Zech. 12: 10. The new heart, Jer. 24: 7; 32; 39.

The New Testament

It is unfortunate that the word "testament" appears in the title "The New Testament." "Testament" is an alternative for "covenant" and if the collection of books had been called "The New Covenant" their connection with the promise through Jeremiah ch. 31 would have been much more readily realised. The books are the record of how God brought the New Covenant into operation, first to the

Jews and then to the Gentiles. The New Testament gives a much more detailed and comprehensive account of the work of God's spirit than can be found in the Old Testament.

At the beginning of the gospels we read of John the Baptist, the Elijah-like prophet, who goes before the Messiah "in the spirit and power of Elias . . . to turn the hearts . . . to make ready a people." And he "shall be filled with the holy spirit from his mother's womb" (Luke 1: 15-17). In this we find the characteristic way in which God's spirit is referred to as the "holy spirit." Only once does this usage appear in the Old Testament (Psalm 51: 11) and there it is not fully comparable to the New Testament meaning.

The basic meaning of "holy" is "separate." This separation is only meaningful when seen as a separation from a life of sinning. The New Testament meaning suggests a spirit which is directed to achieve righteousness and holiness among those who receive it and are moved by it. This is its main purpose, and other activities are subservient to this end. Jesus was born by the power of the holy spirit. So He Who was to head a new creation filled with holiness is, in His birth, compared with the creation of the physical world when the spirit of God hovered over the waters (Gen. 1: 2).

Jesus and the New Covenant of Jeremiah

Jesus made it clear to His disciples what He was accomplishing when He gave them the emblems of His body and blood.

This is my blood of the new testament (covenant) which is shed for many for remission of sins (Matt. 26: 28).

The reference to the "new covenant" of Jeremiah ch. 31 which would bring remission of sins is very evident in this quotation. The same theme is taken up in the epistle to the Hebrews which alludes not only to Jeremiah 31 but also to Ezekiel 36: 26. In the eighth chapter, in verses 8-12, a quotation from Jeremiah 31 (verses 31-34) appears and follows in support of the statement that Jesus "is the mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises" (verse 6). Again, in Hebrews ch. 10: 16-17 there is a quotation from Jeremiah 31. Now that the

New Covenant is taken effect we are exhorted to have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of the new covenant . . . let us draw near with a true heart" (a "heart of flesh," Ezek. 36: 2-6) in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. (I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean (Ezek. 36: 25), and our bodies washed with pure water (Heb. 10: 19-22). Similar thoughts are found in the closing benediction.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus . . . through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing (cf. "cause you to walk in my statutes," Ezek. 36: 27) in his sight, through Jesus Christ (Heb. 13: 20-21).

Further allusions to Jeremiah and Ezekiel's prophecies will be found in Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians. In chapter 3: 1-3 he says that there is no need to write an epistle to commend them to anyone for "you yourselves are our letter of recommendation written on your hearts . . . and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us" (R.S.V.). They are not an epistle written "with ink," an allusion to the old covenant "but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (v. 3, R.S.V.). With this may be compared Jeremiah's reference to the law "and I will write it upon their hearts" (Jer. 31: 33) and Ezekiel's reference to the "heart of stone" and the "heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36: 26, R.S.V.). With such a conversion from their sinful ways the Corinthians become "qualified" as "ministers of a new covenant, not in a written code but in the Spirit, for the written code kills but the Spirit gives life" (II Cor. 3: 6, R.S.V.). Both Jeremiah 31: 31 and Ezek. 36: 26-27 are alluded to here. So the chapter concludes showing how the believers are changed into the moral excellence of Jesus and God. "We all reflect as in a mirror the splendour of the Lord; thus we are transfigured into his likeness, from splendour to splendour; such is the influence of the Lord who is Spirit" (v. 18, N.E.B.).

There should be little doubt that the appearance and operation of the holy spirit in the New Testament is a fulfilment of the promises made through Jeremiah and Ezekiel concerning a "new covenant" and a special way in which erring man may be made clean, upright, reverent and righteous. The fulfilment has come largely through the response of Gentiles to the gospel message. The fulfilment among the Jews will be one of the fruits of their coming redemption (Rom. 11: 25-28). The doctrine of righteousness through the holy spirit is of first importance to an understanding of the meaning of being Christ's and sharing in His resurrection and Kingdom.

Beginnings

Each one of us has a natural birth. From this we grow up with an assortment of strivings, longings, ambitions, appetites and fears. Some good and some bad points go to make up the total picture. But self-centredness remains the mainspring and puts a screen between us and God. Worldly respectability preaches self-improvement, obeying rules and adopting new resolutions to ensure that our conduct is not an embarrassment to the society in which we live. Jesus' teaching is different. He says "Who-soever will come after me, let him deny himself . . ." (Mk. 8: 34). Renovating "self" will not do, we must start at the foundations and begin all over again. Being "born again" is the best way to express this. Hence we have the words "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John 3: 5). Being born of water in the true form of baptism is readily understood, but what of "born of the spirit?" Of those so born we read "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God" (John 1: 13). It is therefore God's will, God's activity as a Father which brings His true children into being. For a very practical example of this we see Jesus born by the power of the holy spirit overshadowing His mother. Similarly the believer has a "new" birth: God being the Father, and the holy spirit acting as the counterpart of the male "seed" in human reproduction. So Peter is able to describe Christians as "being born again not of corrup-

tible seed (i.e. mortal human seed) but of incorruptible (i.e. divine seed —the holy spirit 1 Peter 1: 23).

John sets the power of this "seed" very high; he says "Who-soever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed (i.e. God's seed) remaineth in him: and he cannot sin for he is born of God" (1 John 3: 9). Here no doubt the "grown man" of God is being spoken about. There is a childhood too of those born of God.

The believer therefore has a new character formed within his personality, and that by the spirit power of the holy God. He is a new creature. Old ways of life have

passed away. In Titus chapter 3 we again see the process. In verse 3 we read "We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Such became "justified," "saved," "by the washing of regeneration (baptism of re-birth, compare John 3: 5) and renewing of (or by) the holy spirit which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (verses 5, 6).

Peter, therefore, at the time of the foundation of the Christian church sends out the invitation:

Repent and be baptised every

one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. For the promise (see verse 33) is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2: 38-39).

This declaration remains today the basis of the true Christian call, and the resultant assurance and peace. Repent; be baptised; have your sins forgiven; and a new power of holiness enters your life to transform your character into the image of the Son of God. That power is "the gift of the holy spirit."

(to be continued)

THE WORK OF GOD

Was He sent, think you, as any man might suppose, to establish a sovereignty, to inspire fear and terror? Not so. But in gentleness and meekness has He sent Him, as a king might send his son who is a king. . . . He sent Him, as a man unto men; He sent Him as Saviour, as using persuasion, not force; for force is no attribute of God. He sent Him, as summoning, not as persecuting; He sent Him, as loving, not as judging. For He will send Him in judgment, and who shall endure His presence? . . . Dost thou not see them thrown to wild beasts that so they may deny the Lord, and yet they are not overcome? Dost thou not see that the more of them are punished, just so many others abound? These look not like the works of a man; they are the power of God; they are proofs of His presence.

Letter to Diognetus

(130 to 150 A.D.)

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The Letter of Paul to the Romans

By Ralph Lovelock

Part two — The Background (cont.)

Relief of Famine

WHEN PAUL as a Christian had first gone to Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-27). "He tried to join the body of disciples there; but they were all afraid of him, because they did not believe that he was really a convert. Barnabas, however, took him by the hand and introduced him to the apostles." Thus commenced the close friendship between the two men which was to have such a determining influence in the life of Paul. On arriving at Antioch as the apostolic delegate to examine and report on the admission of Gentiles to the church in that city, and seeing "the divine grace at work, he rejoiced, and encouraged them all..." (Acts 11:23). Recognising a field in which Paul would be happy, he went to Tarsus and brought him to Antioch, and "for a whole year the two of them lived in fellowship with the congregation there, and gave instruction to large numbers."

It was while they were thus employed that a prophet from Jerusalem predicted the great famine which occurred during the Herodian persecution of the church in Jerusalem. The coincidence of persecution and famine made the plight of the mother church pitiable, and the disciples at Antioch gathered a contribution in relief of their brethren, and chose Barnabas and Paul to bear it to the capital. This is the visit which Paul recounts in Galatians ch. 2, where he reveals that "I went up because it had been revealed by God that I should do so." This would have been the report brought back by Barnabas concerning the admission of Gentiles at Antioch, and so Paul continues "I laid before them — but at a private interview with the men of repute — the gospel which I am accustomed to preach to the Gentiles..." The fact that this was not a public report to the whole church, such as he gave on the return

from his first missionary journey (Acts 15) indicates how delicate a matter it was at that time, and how divided were the opinions in Jerusalem. This controversy is confirmed in the same context by Paul's reference to "a concession to certain sham-Christians, interlopers who had stolen in to spy upon the liberty which we enjoy in the fellowship of Christ Jesus." Final confirmation lies in the slightly later incident "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. For until certain persons came from James he was taking his meals with gentile Christians; but when they came he drew back and began to hold aloof, because he was afraid of the advocates of circumcision. The other Jewish Christians showed the same lack of principle; even Barnabas was carried away and played false like the rest."

The incidence of famine, and the fact that the delegation reporting on this contentious matter bore relief contributed by Gentile believers, served, in the wisdom of God, to ameliorate the bad feeling which might otherwise have grown up at that time between the Gentile and the Jewish sections of the church. That this is no guess, but was indeed the case, is shown by Paul's account of this visit. Having recorded that James, Cephas, and John agreed that Barnabas and Paul should continue to invite Gentiles into the church, he continues significantly, "All they asked was that we should keep their poor in mind, which was the very thing I made it my business to do."

The troubled minds in Jerusalem were to be even more troubled however. No sooner were Barnabas and Paul safely returned to Antioch than "The Holy Spirit said, 'Set Barnabas and Paul apart for me, to do the work to which I have called them'." The two, together with John Mark, set sail for Cyprus, and from there, after a difference of opinion with John Mark, they proceeded into the regions of southern Galatia. So

popular were the two apostles among the Gentile citizens of that region, that the Jews became jealous and condemned Christianity "with violent abuse." This was the turning point in the history of the Christian church. Up till then Gentiles had been admitted to the church through the synagogue, and effective control remained in the hands of the more numerous Jewish members. Paul's reaction was firm — "since you reject it and thus condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles." Thus, in Galatia, was established the first church which was entirely Gentile, which was established as a hostile act against the Jews, and which caused the commencement of active Jewish persecution of Christianity, accusing it of being more than a strange heresy, and an active falling away from Moses to Gentile customs.

The Conference at Jerusalem

The church at Antioch rejoiced to receive back its two delegates with news of such successful preaching. Jewish reports reaching the church at Jerusalem had a different reception however (Acts 15). "Now certain persons who had come from Judea began to teach the brotherhood that those who were not circumcised in accordance with Mosaic practice could not be saved. That brought them into fierce dissension and controversy with Paul and Barnabas. And so it was arranged that these two and some others from Antioch should go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question."

It was probably while he was journeying from Antioch to Jerusalem that Paul wrote the short, hasty, and agitated epistle to the churches in Galatia. The whole spirit of the epistle bears witness to the "fierce dissension and controversy" which Luke says raged around him. In this epistle he describes his actions up to that moment, but makes, of course, no reference to the council at Jerusalem because it had not then taken place. The fact that the trouble was still raging, and that it was emissaries of the church at Jerusalem which had troubled the church in Galatia, accounts for the way in which Paul is at pains to disassociate himself from the apostles and claim Jesus as

his sole authority. A close comparison of the epistles to Galatia and Rome, such as has been made by Lightfoot, demonstrates conclusively that the later epistle was an amplification of the earlier one; each of the points raised in Galatians is covered at great length and in calmer mood in Romans, with the significant exception of the disassociation of Paul from the apostles. Thus, it was in the heat and agitation of this first clash between orthodoxy and the "new wine" that the argument of the epistle to Rome was born, and it is this which explains some of the puzzling things about the later letter.

A critical conference was held at Jerusalem, in which Peter added his weight to the argument that the Gentile churches should be considered free of the Mosaic legislation (Acts 15), and eventually, James, as its president, ruled in the name of the church that only certain general rules should be kept by Gentiles such as would allow them to mix from time to time with Jewish brethren without bringing ceremonial defilement upon them. This ruling was conveyed back to Antioch where "they all rejoiced at the encouragement it brought." After a while Paul journeyed again through the churches he had established in Galatia, taking with him from there the young Timothy to be his companion on an extension of his preaching into the district of Macedonia. For many years Paul continued as the apostle to the Gentiles, establishing churches in many cities, but from time to time there are references in the narrative which remind us that the dispute between Jew and Christian concerning the Mosaic legislation was an ever festering sore, and the incident recorded in Acts ch. 21 indicates that it was not the non-Christian Jews alone who were agitated about it, but the church at Jerusalem as well. There is little doubt that this formed part of "the care of all the churches" which pressed so heavily upon him, and as he saw it mounting again to dangerous proportions, he turned for the second time to the course which had been so successful before.

The Great Collection

As the missionary efforts of Paul were blessed ever more fully by God,

and the Gentile churches outnumbered the Jewish, assuming in consequence by far the greater importance in the life of the catholic church, the Jewish enmity began to focus on Paul personally, even more than it did on Christianity as a "sect." The Christian Jew, by virtue of his love for Moses, felt in practice a greater sense of fellowship for the orthodox Jew than he did for his fellow Christian who was a Gentile, and whose scale of values and manner of life was so different from his. Thus, within the Christian church, the general Jewish enmity, through being focussed on one man who was a controversial character, tended to fan and increase the sense of division between Jew and Gentile. It would seem to the Christian Jew that if only there were no Paul with his Gentile converts, the orthodox Jews would have no stumbling block to the acceptance of Jesus, and Paul was viewed by many of his brethren as a mistaken man, who through obstinacy in pursuing his narrow ends, was preventing the growth of Christianity into the national Jewish religion.

That the enmity of Jewry was personal against Paul rather than against Jewish Christians is shown by the fact that when Paul was prevented from taking the easiest way because of a plot against him (Acts 20), it was he and the brethren from Asia who had to make the circuitous route by land, and the rest of the party were able to proceed by sea in safety. That this enmity had grown to serious proportions within the church itself is shown by the words of James (Acts 21) "You see, brother, how many thousands of converts we have among the Jews, all of them staunch upholders of the Law. Now they have been given certain information about you . . ." The strong desire of Paul to do all that he could, short of forsaking the course appointed to him by the Holy Spirit, is shown by his willingness to follow the scheme devised by James to persuade his Jewish brethren that Paul was not as black as they had been told.

Remembering how effective the alms which he bore to Jerusalem had been in mollifying the resentment felt against his first Gentile converts, Paul now commenced a united collection of alms for Jerusalem from every one of his Gentile churches. If the whole of this purely Gentile element, and

they alone, were to provide in this way assistance to the much revered church in Jerusalem, they would be seen as part of a united whole, and not just a feared and disliked outgrowth on the united Jewish Christian community. Some of the Gentile churches were lax and lukewarm in their acceptance of the scheme, and the fervour with which Paul exhorted them to greater diligence is evidence of how greatly he valued this last effort to heal the widening breach. A whole chapter (9) in his second letter to Corinth witnesses to the importance with which he viewed the outcome. He confesses to having boasted of one district to goad another into enthusiasm, and it is only with the most important matters that Paul would go to such lengths. That the aim was to heal a breach is shown by his closing words — "For through the proof which this affords, many will give honour to God when they see how humbly you obey him and how faithfully you confess the gospel of Christ; and will thank him for your liberal contribution to their need and to the general good. And as they join in prayer on your behalf, their hearts will go out to you because of the richness of the grace which God has imparted to you."

His own words to the Ephesians (Acts 20) indicate that he considered this journey, bearing alms, as of more than normal importance. So far as the safe delivery of help was concerned, there were many in his party who could have done that as securely as he, but he set great store by his own personal participation in this act — "And now, as you see, I am on my way to Jerusalem, under the constraint of the Spirit. Of what will befall me there I know nothing, except that in city after city the Holy Spirit assures me that imprisonment and hardships await me. For myself, I set no store by life; I only want to finish the race, and complete the task which the Lord Jesus assigned to me, of bearing my testimony to the gospel of God's grace." As in each place the disciples begged Paul not to continue his journey because of the danger at Jerusalem, his recorded answer (Acts 21) emphasises again that it was a journey with an especially important purpose — "Why are you trying to weaken my resolution? For my part I am ready not merely to be bound but even to

die for the name of the Lord Jesus." Luke records the end of the journey in brief but significant words. "So, as he would not be persuaded, we gave up and said, 'The Lord's will be done' . . . So we reached Jerusalem, where the brotherhood welcomed us gladly."

Paul's Attitude to the Law

From the agitated words in his epistle to Galatia many have formed a false opinion of Paul's personal attitude to the Law; they have assumed that it played no part in his life after his conversion to Christianity. That this is entirely wrong may be gathered from the narrative in Acts ch. 21. James says that the Jewish Christians have "been given certain information about you: it is said that you teach all Jews in the gentile world to turn their backs on Moses, telling them to give up circumcising their children and following our way of life". The description, by James, of the Mosaic Law as "our way of life" rather than "their way of life" is itself witness that the church at Jerusalem still followed the regulations of the Law. Furthermore, the action which he urged upon Paul was to the end that "everyone will know that there is nothing in the stories they were told about you, but that you are a practising Jew and keep the Law

yourself". Paul's acquiescence in the scheme is our assurance that he was indeed a practising Jew, teaching the Jews, as distinct from Gentiles, to continue in that mode of life when they were converted to Christianity: beyond all doubt, a man as honest as his letters show Paul to have been, would have had no hand in duplicity, nor have acted a lie.

There are a number of references, which, while not definite proof in themselves, bear witness to this fact. Thus, for example, writing to Corinth he says (I Cor. 9:20) "To Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; as they are subject to the Law of Moses, I put myself under that Law to win them although I am not myself subject to it." Here we see the reconciliation of the problem; while acknowledging himself freed from the Law in Christ, and demanding freedom to live in Gentile houses seeking Gentiles, he nevertheless lived privately according to Moses in order to evangelise Jews, from whom he would have been cut off if he had forsaken Moses. Doubtless it was with the object of conserving the unity of the Jewish church that he also encouraged his Jewish converts to do likewise. This is, of course, further witness to how live a problem this was in the Christian church at that time. We receive confirmation that Paul continued to live according to the strictest rule of Moses, that of

the Pharisee, when he could call out in council (Acts 23) claiming to be *still* a practising Pharisee, a claim which his enemies could have rapidly refuted unless it were true, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, a Pharisee born and bred; and the true issue in this trial is our hope of the resurrection of the dead."

In Rome was a branch of the Christian church, and to it Paul had desired to journey for some time — "God knows how continually I make mention of you in my prayers, and am always asking that by his will I may, somehow or other, succeed at long last in visiting you." Having been hindered on a number of earlier occasions, he now hoped, after the conclusion of his mission to Jerusalem, to accomplish his desire. It is with this in mind, and acutely conscious of the mixed feelings with which his own person was viewed by many in the church, that he sat down in Corinth on the eve of his departure for Jerusalem, to pen them a letter. It is the issue which commenced with the establishment of the church in Galatia which had mushroomed into so vital a controversy; accordingly he takes the original argument, written in such haste on that occasion, and restates it in calmer mood and more dignified phrases. Thus, out of the turmoil of hopes and fears by which he was torn, came this, one of the greatest of his letters.

Correspondence

A Letter from the Central Ecclesia

The attention of the Birmingham (Central) Arranging Brethren has been drawn to a statement in a letter by one of our members appearing in the Spring issue of *Endeavour*. This says that if a separate fellowship were set up for those holding certain views not generally acceptable in the Brotherhood (we quote) "From personal knowledge I would think there would be a substantial number from my own ecclesia,

Birmingham Central" who would join it.

We believe this statement to be quite unjustified. In the first place, no one has a right to judge what brethren would do in hypothetical circumstances; but in the second place, we have no reason at all to believe that any "substantial number" of our members would in the supposed circumstances be disposed to leave the Central fellowship. Unfortunately such a statement is only too likely to be used in some quar-

ters to reflect unfairly on the standing of the Central Ecclesia.

While we appreciate that you published this letter under a challenge which you may have felt obliged to accept, we deplore that such a statement should have been made, and would request your publication of this disclaimer.

A. Clifton.
(Recording Brother)

Birmingham

In Understanding Be Men

By John T. Wilson

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

PAUL'S EXHORTATION to the Christians at Corinth (first letter, chapter 14, verse 20) is one which has a great deal of relevance to ourselves, as indeed to the followers of Jesus in every age. What does Paul mean by "understanding"?

There are a number of words in the Greek originals which have been translated by our English word "understanding," most of them having "mind" or "intelligence" as their root meaning.

For instance, when we read in Ephesians of, "The eyes of your *understanding* being enlightened, that ye may *know* what is the hope of his calling," and of, "other Gentiles . . . having the *understanding* darkened . . . through the *ignorance* that is in them," and also in John of, "the Son of God" who "is come, and hath given us an *understanding*, that we may *know* him that is true" (Eph. 1: 18; 4: 18; 1 Jo. 5: 20), it is clear from the association of "understanding" with knowledge and ignorance that the emphasis is on understanding of a mental kind.

Similarly, the Greek word *nous* is translated fifteen times as "mind," seven times as "understanding," and again, as the following examples show, is related to an *intellectual* understanding:

"Then opened he their *understanding*, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke 24: 45).

"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my *understanding* is unfruitful" (1 Cor. 14: 14).

"Let him that hath *understanding* count the number of the beast" (Rev. 13: 18).

Yet another of the Greek words used in the New Testament for "understanding" is one which means primarily "intelligence," "a sending together" (*sunesis*):

They "were astonished at his *understanding*" (Luke 2: 47).

"Ye may *understand* my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3: 4).

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee *understanding* in all things" (II Tim. 2: 7).

In I Corinthians 14: 20, however, it is not *intelligence* that Paul is concerned with, for he is careful to avoid using the Greek words freely used elsewhere which place emphasis on intellectual grasp, processes of the mind and head-knowledge. Paul is *not* saying, "Become university men, swot up your facts and figures and theories," for the word he uses here is quite different in meaning, and certainly unique, inasfar as this is the only place in the New Testament where the word appears as a noun.

This word which Paul uses to express the "understanding" which he exhorts the Corinthians to follow after, is the Greek word *phren* (from which we get such English words as *phrenology*—that study of the bumps of the head supposed to indicate character, so beloved of Victorians, but long-since discredited by modern science). It is essentially a word associated with the *heart*—in fact it is literally the "diaphragm" which was thought by the ancients to be the seat of the emotions; in fact they were not so far wrong, as modern physiology attests to the relationship between emotional factors and disturbances of the internal body mechanisms.

The word more often occurs as a verb and invariably means to "entertain sentiments or inclinations of a specific kind," as for example, in Philippians 4: 10: "I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your *care* of me hath flourished again!" This use of the word shows clearly how firmly it is associated with the heart, the emotions and with personal relations. It is a word which stresses warm understanding against cold knowledge. It implies the sympathy, compassion, appreciation, fairness and gentleness which are the essence of true spirituality.

This emphasis is brought out further by considering how the word is placed in its context, for we note that it is contrasted, not with ignorance or lack of knowledge, but with "malice," which gloats over faults and failings, delights in verbal battle and victory,

uses scorn and vicious persecution under the robe of Fairy Snow purity.

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

Our Authorised Version obscures the depth and beauty of Paul's counsel by its inept translation of this verse. In fact Paul uses three distinct words relating to different stages of human growth—"children," "babies" and "of full age." They were not to be children (that is, children from say, three or four to nine or ten—without much sense or wisdom in behaviour) in understanding; they were to be *babies* in malice (that is, like infants—incapable of feeling and acting out refined emotions like malice); and were to be men or "of full age" in understanding (that is, they were to be mature in the love and life of Jesus' followers). The New English Bible captures the full flavour of Paul's thought much more accurately:

"Do not be childish, my friends. Be as innocent of evil as babes, but at least be grown-up in your thinking."

When we consider the reason why they were to "be grown-up" in their thinking we find that the exhortation becomes painfully applicable to our own little fellowship today, for the background of the exhortation, indeed the whole reason for the letter, was the turmoil and the bickering which existed and which were leading to divisions in the name of Christ and the gospel. Thus we have the famous statement of the position which opens the letter and sets the scene for all that follows in Ch. 1 verses 10-13 which begin, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." It becomes clear as we carefully follow Paul's reasoning, that this is far from a plea to make some elements toe the line of the theology of the majority, but rather a plea for toleration in intellectual differences, that attention might be centred on that which was and is of supreme importance—not "wisdom of words" but "the cross of Christ." Paul's central policy and doctrine of fellowship in a situation like that which he found at Corinth (and like our own position today) is expressed in the powerful words of

Ch. 4 verses 3-5, which will bear much thoughtful consideration:

"For my part, if I am called to account by you or by any human court of judgment, it does not matter to me in the least. Why, I do not even pass judgment on myself, for I have nothing on my conscience; but that does not mean I stand acquitted. My judge is the Lord. So *pass no premature judgment*; wait until the Lord comes. For he will bring to light what darkness hides, and disclose men's inward motives; then will be the time for each to receive of God such praise as he deserves." (N.E.B.)

One writer says of the church at Corinth: "Although the majority were not of high birth or education there was an air of social and intellectual pretension about the church. They delighted in cheap rhetoric . . . and assumed airs of comfortable superiority." There is more than a trace of these characteristics in our community, for we, too,

squabble and create schisms over exactly the kind of intellectual theorising in which the Corinthians indulged, for their divisions were not over the true fundamentals any more than ours are. They were behaving, in the words of the translation by J. B. Phillips, "just like men of the world," *surrendering to traditional human tensions and feeding on prejudices and petty human arrogance.* The change which was necessary in the Corinthians was not an increased education in terms of factual and theoretical theology, but an education in terms of the spirit—a change of heart, which might also involve a change of attitudes, values, and even of beliefs, for maturity is marked by a *genuine* quest for truth in humility and understanding. Change is the essence of growth to Christian maturity. It is essentially this which Paul calls for when he tells us to be men in understanding. He says in effect, "grow up in understanding—

leave your childish arguments behind and learn to see the central things—the cross of Christ and the change this demands in men's lives."

Christianity is not just a grand theory (as we tend to make it), nor is it merely the development of ideas and intellect (as our keenness for complex Bible-study would suggest), but it is something much more, and much greater if simpler—it is a way of life. It is the development of a personality and character in tune with the eternal qualities of God Himself, revealed in the perfection of the life and Person of Jesus, Who has drawn us with bands of love to a fellowship of understanding and compassion which will be perfect only insofar as we learn a real and living perception of the central principle of that fellowship outlined by Paul's exhortation:

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in understanding be men."

Doing the Truth

THE WORD "truth" is one that we as a religious community use relatively often. We ask if Mr A is "in the truth" or if Mr B "knows the truth." We are convinced that Christadelphians have the truth or the nearest approximation to it. Truth has become for us, in a very real sense, those principles which lead to a true belief in God. Some would go further and maintain that the truth is in those doctrines to be accepted and non-truth in the doctrines to be rejected. Truth has become for most of us very much a notion of right concepts; of right beliefs; of right theories which we accept because the case for them has been convincingly demonstrated to us. The truth tends to become something abstract which we could either accept or reject in much the same way as we accept or reject a scientific theory.

Undoubtedly the Bible stresses the importance of a true belief, but have we not in our struggle to maintain truths of Christianity rather lost sight of how the truth is presented to us in the Bible? The concept of truth in ancient thought was one which concerned itself not so much with the rightness or wrongness of the principle involved but with the atti-

tude of mind which the person adopted. If we think of truth as a theory then let our practice reflect our acceptance of the theory. Theoretically one accepts honesty as a guiding principle for living, few maintain it in practice. There was no such divorce between theory and practice in biblical or ancient thought. Let us take an example.

My brothers, believing as you do in our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns in glory, you must never show snobbery. For instance two visitors may enter your place of worship, one a well-dressed man with gold rings and the other a poor man in shabby clothes. Suppose you pay attention to the well-dressed man and say to him "Please take this seat," while to the poor man you say "You can stand: or you may sit here on the floor by my footstool" do you not see that you are inconsistent and judge by false standards? (N.E.B.)

These words of James give us a pointer to the biblical conception of truth. Truth is not a matter of theory alone, he is telling us. If we ignore the theory in putting it into practice then our inconsistency condemns us.

Truth is something that has to cover not only our ideas but our

actions too. We admit that it is better to be honest in our dealings with other people but practice often makes us regard this as socially inconvenient. We admit that it is better to be humble and self-effacing before others — but our practice of these ideals never matches up to them. The message of the New Testament is that our practice must match our theory. The message of social convenience "Oh that is fine in theory, but it won't work in practice" is not to be found in the teaching of the Son of God. Actions are not separate from belief. "The honest man comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that *God is in all he does*" (John 3: 21 N.E.B.).

The point is perhaps illustrated better if we look at these words of Jesus to Nicodemus in the Authorised Version. Jesus said

Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be re-proved. But *he that doeth truth* cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

How can you do the truth? How can you do a theory? Perhaps we are taking more out of these words

than was originally intended. Perhaps all that Jesus meant was "he that acted according to his knowledge of the truth." If we do take this interpretation from these words we find that we have to face other passages in the New Testament which present a similar idea. The idea that truth is involved in actions and personalities.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14: 6).

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: . . .

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1: 6, 8).

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32).

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1: 17).

None of these passages would have any meaning if truth were a matter of theory alone—say the doctrines to be accepted or rejected. Truth is something much more personal. The Apostle John with his constant linking of the word truth with the name of Jesus of Nazareth, leads us on to consider the fact that Jesus Christ is the only criterion of truth that we have. He is the truth and Christianity is about the response we make to this truth which we see in Him. Do you remember His words in trial before Pilate?

"My kingdom does not belong to this world. If it did my followers would be fighting to save me from arrest by the Jews. My kingly authority comes from elsewhere." "You are a king, then?" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "'King' is your word. My task is to bear witness to the truth. For this was I born; for this I came into the world, and all who are not deaf to truth listen to my voice." (N.E.B.)

The truth which we have in Jesus Christ is not merely a right theory; a right way of thinking, but it is also a right way of doing. If the theory is right then the practice should be right too. There is no true theory which could be wrong in practice.

When we make a contrast between theory and practice we are not being truly honest with ourselves. Experience has taught us that the middle way is usually the easiest way out. To carry out our convictions in full would make us too conspicuous. Our experience of life teaches us that for peaceable living, to maintain a comfortable position in our society we will

eventually have to succumb to the standards of those around us or make some sort of compromise with them. We accept accustomed practices for no other reason usually than that they are done or always have been done in that particular way. We accept nothing but a repeated confirmation of what we already accept or believe. This is where the truth is different. The truth rejects OUR experience of life. The truth that we have in Christ is something that shatters our preconceived notions. The truth in Christ is something revolutionary rising above the experiences of mere men and women. If we are in Christ truly — then we have been begotten by the word of truth. We have become part of something new. We have become new men.

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures (James 1: 18).

Truth has always come as a potent force showing up the shallowness of men's conceptions and replacing them with the depth of God's truth and wisdom. Again and again throughout the Bible we have a recalling to the fundamental issues of life. The scriptural writers present to us the truth of God in action — with a startling message for the peoples around them. The most obvious example is of course the cross of Christ. Men characteristically are bound to their own particular place and period in history. They seek for an explanation of the universe in terms which they understand. The cross of Christ is a truth in action, which breaks down this barrier; it was something which questioned the whole system of ancient values. The cross of Christ is nothing less than this and it has to be for us what it was to those who heard the original gospel — the truth of God in action. The sacrifice of Christ was an explosion in the world which had never been witness to anything similar. Paul did not mince his words in explaining the cross of Christ to a surprised world.

Christ did not send me to baptise, but to proclaim the Gospel; and to do it without relying on the language of worldly wisdom, so that the fact of Christ on his cross might have its full weight . . . the world failed to find him by its wisdom, and he chose to

save those who have faith by the folly of the Gospel. Jews call for miracles, Greeks look for wisdom; but we proclaim Christ — yes, Christ nailed to the cross; and though this is a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Greeks, yet to those who have heard his call, Jews and Greeks alike, he is the power of God and wisdom . . . God (1 Cor. 1: 17, 21-4, N.E.B.).

The emphasis which we find laid on truth in the Bible should help us to escape making a misleading contrast between truth as a theory and truth as a practice; the two are inseparable. To accept the truth we have presented to us in Christ but at the same time disregarding the effect this truth should have in our lives is to make nonsense of our religion. Thorough thinking is necessary if we are at all concerned with the truth of Christianity.

"Doing the truth," "being of the truth," "the truth has become," "I am the truth"—all these combinations of words indicate that truth in Christianity is something which happens. . . . Truth is something new, something which is done by God in history. . . . Truth is a stream of life centred in Christ, actualised in everybody who is connected with Him, organised in the assembly of God, the Church. . . . You can only do the truth by following Jesus or do the lie by denying Him. Therefore it is impossible to make Him a teacher of truth among—or even above—other teachers of truth. This would separate the truth from Him, and the decision for truth from the decision for Him . . . (Paul Tillich).

Our stand for truth is not one that rests on the fallible interpretations of man regarding the universe and his position in the scheme of things. Our stand for truth rests on the unshakable rock of Christ. He is the truth — the only criterion of truth we need to have. Jesus has shown us in His life that truth is not something abstract but something personal, alive! Something we can demonstrate to all and sundry. Something that can make others realise that their present values are wrong. As the New English Bible puts it — if we reject the truth of Christ we are living a lie. Jesus is the truth which has become and those who follow Him are of the truth and therefore able to do the truth.

It is easy to transfer this both biblical and modern sense of "offend" as "shock" or "anger" to 1 Corinthians 8, from which the second passage at the head of this article is quoted. Paul is discussing the question of eating food which had first been dedicated in a nominal way to a pagan god, but was then sold through the market like any other food. Some, he says, are so sure that pagan gods are nothing that they can eat food of this kind without any moral harm. Others have more tender consciences and prefer to avoid it because of its associations. The danger, Paul continues, is that the strong may by their own example put social pressure on the weak to eat this dedicated food, and the weak will do so, but still feel that it is wrong. The point is not that the weak brother is shocked to observe the strong brother eat, but that he himself is encouraged to do what inwardly he feels to be wrong, and thereby condemns himself and commits sin. Paul does not say, "lest I offend (i.e. shock) my brother," but "lest I make my brother to offend," i.e. make him sin.

This other scriptural sense therefore of "offend," which is not current today, is "make to sin," either by encouraging the doing of wrong, or by driving away from faith in Christ. It is bad enough to sin or to fall into unbelief oneself, but to be responsible for these conditions in others is infinitely worse. Hence the severity of Jesus' words quoted under our title. There is no dispute about these facts. They can be learnt from standard reference works, and a study of passages from a concordance is, as always, the surest way to be convinced oneself. A commonsense approach yields the same results. Jesus shocked the Jews many times in the course of His teaching. The prophets likewise offended many by their blunt denunciations of current evils. It was not this kind of offence, then, against which Jesus spoke such unqualified disapproval.

However well students may grasp the meanings of words, it is usually the wrong sense that conditions the application of this New Testament doctrine of offence to our own situation. Our doctrine of offence is usually concerned with others' susceptibilities. We should not drink whisky because if this became known to our brethren and sisters it would "offend" (i.e. shock) them. We should not raise

questions about the future application of Ezekiel's temple because this will "offend" (i.e. dismay) some of our number. Nor should we break bread on any other day than Sunday (though there is nothing unscriptural in this) because it would "cause offence" (i.e. disturb some who have set ways). Whatever the rights and wrongs of these particular points, they have nothing to do with the New Testament doctrine of offence. They are part of a big problem in the lives of all Christians and need careful consideration. A pointless breaking of all conventions is not the sign of a mature man or woman in Christ, but of an immature or unstable person who is trying to draw attention to himself or who is at odds with society. But under some circumstances it may be right to be provocative, to challenge conventions of the day, and to prick the bubble of self-satisfaction and conceit. Christadelphians in the past often disparaged "college-bred divines" and were merciless in condemnation of anything that could not be justified from Scripture, but we are not nearly so radical when our own traditions of scarcely more than a century are put to the test. Though the Sunday evening lecture may be achieving very little, any one who proposes that it be dispensed with and replaced by some other form of activity on another night will hardly get his motion seconded at the business meeting!

A particular misuse of this spurious doctrine of offence is to treat the word as the equivalent of a veto in the United Nations. A brother declaims that the use of lipstick by certain sisters on a Sunday is "giving offence" and must stop. Whatever one thinks of this matter, it involves a misuse of scriptural terms. And certainly vehemence shown in resisting what are considered new trends is no indication that, scripturally speaking, offence has been given. Anger or ruthless opposition is not the mark of "one of these little ones" or "the weak brother." Indeed, many of the occasions on which we cry, "Offence!" are either petty or downright quarrelsome.

Unfortunately misuse of this word on trivial matters distracts from appreciating its more serious implications. It is possible to upset a brother's faith by advancing "new" ideas or by engaging in ill-advised conduct.

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But very rarely does such a member completely abandon all faith in God; more commonly it is a temporary disturbance that is either resolved or accepted as a problem to live with. More frequently true offence takes place where we are least suspecting it. A young man or woman is earnestly seeking after God. We tell them that unless they believe that the flood covered Mount Everest "because the Bible says so" they are making God a liar. In sorrow they go away convinced that they cannot become disciples of Christ. A colleague at work is a good-living person inwardly longing for fellowship with similar spirits. But he observes a moral pettiness in us, an inability to assess matters rightly, and an indifference to massive suffering in the world. He concludes that Christianity has nothing to offer him, and joins the humanists. In our exhortations we needlessly sneer at the motives of those who worship in other places, and so encourage our brethren and sisters in self-righteousness. At the business meeting we urge others to pharisaical action, never suspecting it in ourselves. The responsibilities we all bear in these and many other situations are inescapable, as is the condemnation if we fail our Lord.

Alas for the world that such causes of stumbling arise! Come they must, but woe betide the man through whom they come! (N.E.B.)

WILFRED LAMBERT.

The Endeavour

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Autumn 1967

JUSTICE

[I]t is reported that in a recent exhortation the ministering brother spoke disparagingly of "our overdeveloped senses of justice." It would be unfair to pass judgment on the brother without having heard the whole context, but the phrase certainly reflects an attitude which is more common among our community than it should be. Justice does not seem to be a Christadelphian virtue. Three reasons may have contributed to this situation. First, the word "justice" occurs rarely in the Authorised Version of the Bible, only some 25 times, and never in the New Testament. Thus a community that grew up on the words of Scripture has placed no particular emphasis on this word. Secondly, since the New Testament forbids Christians to go to law, but rather "to be defrauded," and since justice in the modern world tends to be thought of as the sphere of the courts, it has become an unconscious habit of thought that justice is something from which we stand aside. Others may seek redress for wrongs done them, but we have higher purposes in life. Thirdly, from the very fact of acknowledging lofty purposes in our lives it is possible to go one stage further and to act on the view that these are supreme, so that where they are concerned there are no private rights or privileges. Everything—even justice—must be subordinated to the will of God.

There is some truth in each one of these reasons for our hesitant stand on justice, but they are only half-truths, more dangerous than positive error. "Justice" is a rare word in the Authorised Version, but the same Hebrew word is much more often rendered "righteousness," as is the corresponding Greek word in the New Testament. Basically righteousness is justice. It is not merely conformity to those rules which will keep us out of jail here and now. It is conformity to principles of conduct between ourselves and God, and between ourselves and our fellows, which God himself has prescribed.

(Please turn to back page)

The Divine Purpose With Israel

by George McLaffie

RECENT CONFLICT in the Middle East has focussed attention on expectations of a significant turn in the world's history which will bring Christ on earth again.

These expectations affect more churches than is commonly realised. In *The British Weekly*, a predominantly non-Conformist and Presbyterian Church magazine, one writer in the 15th June issue complains:

The Arab-Israeli war has already produced its crop of text quoting and prophecy. The scene for Armageddon was being painted again in glowing and contemporary colours. The reasonable man might well be excused for leaving the Bible severely alone during this struggle. But that would be to capitulate once again to the fanatic! The Bible does have something to say about the present struggle, but it has to be carefully separated from the irrational quoting of texts.

It seems that any trouble, for any cause, with Russia, U.S.A., Britain, the Jews and the Arabs involved in the Middle East, is likely to lead to voices proclaiming that the last battle is about to be joined. Indeed any global war at all for whatever cause can lead to similar proclamations. At other times much ingenious thought

is put into prophesying likely combinations of nations and political manoeuvres which will lead to the same eventual cataclysm.

The events of June 1967 indicate that many of these carefully built up hypotheses can be readily abandoned when an event with apparently more immediate promise comes along.

What these speculations point to most of all is an enthusiastic but imprecise and often completely imaginative "interpretation" of biblical passages whose main purpose is alignment with contemporary events.

The possibility of the return of the Jews to Palestine from their dispersion in virtually all countries of the world has captured the imagination of many generations in history. The hope is rooted in such passages as Romans chapter 11, verse 25: "... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

There are numerous Old Testament references which can be brought within the scope of this hope:

He "shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Is. 11:12).

"He that scattered Israel will gather

him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31:10).

"Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country . . . and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem" (Zech. 8:7-8).

The important consideration about these passages, however, is their context and their implications for the spiritual history of Israel. We have to consider whether the physical movement of Jews to Palestine for purely secular motives can be considered a significant fulfilment of the message.

One of the most quoted prophecies of the Old Testament in relation to Israel concerns the dry bones of Ezekiel 37. The revival of the bones is put as follows in verses 12-14:

Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord . . . And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land.

The present writer in many an address in the past has used this passage as relating to a national revival of Israel. One can portray the horror of the ghetto in Europe, the lot of the Jews in Morocco and the Yemen, as a state of dry bones. Then one can turn to the vigorous dynamic Israel of healthy limbs, happy music, fertile deserts, and claim that indeed God's "spirit" (breath) has blown into the dry bones and they live. But one must ask whether this tourist-conscious land of fine hotels and night-spots, whose agrarian background is supported by Marxist

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atheistic philosophies, whose religious leaders seem so hidebound by medieval Jewish superstitions and practices, is what Ezekiel meant by "shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live."

What Ezekiel meant is spelt out at some length in the previous chapter, Ezek. 36:25-28:

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you . . . A new heart also will I give you . . . And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

The imparting of the spirit is clearly a stage here in the cleansing and the godly walk which both here and in Ezek. 37:14 precede the entrance to the land.

This point is made again in Ezek. 20:38 (R.S.V.):

I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me: I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel.

Much more could be written in support of the above and can be readily found by anyone who is prepared to look at the relevant prophecies in their context of time and circumstance. In order not to prolong this article unduly only two passages which are usually adduced in support of a secular Israel returning to the land as a fulfilment of prophecy will be looked at.

The first is Rom. 11, verses 25 and 26:

. . . blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

It is not all that easy to determine how Paul visualised the turning away of the blindness.

The modern and popular view, no doubt, is that Israel returned to Palestine in blindness will be confronted with the returned Christ and so converted. The text does not, however, presume such a return and would seem, in a sense, at variance with the main point of the passage. If Israel

were "cast away" (verse 15) because of unbelief it would seem strange that they should be brought back in unbelief.

Another view which would in no way be at variance with the immediate context nor with the rest of Scripture is that in their dispersion, the Jews, hearing of the returned Christ (or some such event) would repent and have their blindness removed, use the "highway . . . called The way of holiness," and so "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (Is. 35:10).

Consideration of the Scripture which Paul is quoting offers another facet. It is found in Isaiah 59:20 (R.S.V.) where the Hebrew version has:

And he will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the Lord.

This puts the matter in another way. When Israel turns from transgression the Redeemer will come. This is the understanding of the Jewish question which has been mainly reflected in Christian circles down through the centuries. It accords well with the preaching of Peter to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, Acts 3:19, 20 (R.S.V.):

Repent therefore, and turn again.

- (1) *that* your sins may be blotted out,
- (2) *that* times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and
- (3) *that* he may send the Christ appointed for you.

In Romans 11:26 Paul is quoting from the Septuagint version which differs verbally from the Hebrew. It is doubtful, however, whether there is any basic difference in meaning. Repentance and godly walk may be "caused" by God (Ezek. 36:25-28) just as blindness is imparted. "God hath given them the spirit of slumber . . ." (Rom. 11:8). In neither case is the human choice really violated. The Redeemer can only turn away ungodliness from Jacob when Jacob is willing and repents. But God has His plans to assist.

The second text raises fundamental issues in considering the Jewish return. The text is Zech. 12:10, 11:

They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him . . . In that day

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there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem.

The prophecies about the Jews were written at well-defined periods in Israel's history. The first group were written prior to and when Israel was carried to Babylon as a captive nation. It is necessary in order to keep our perspective right to appreciate this timing. Jeremiah addresses the Jews of Jerusalem of his day in well-known words (Jer. 29:18):

I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach among all the nations whither I have driven them.

It is a shallow exposition which sees this as only a reference to a scattering after A.D. 70 when the Jews rejected Christ. The same principles, of course, apply whether it be Babylon or Europe which is the scene of scattering. Equally, however, the conditions of return will apply. These are expressed by Jeremiah in the same chapter, same context:

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away

your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive. (Jer. 29:11-14.)

The group of prophecies at this time pictures a great religious revival among the Jews and their return from captivity as a cleansed, holy people. So speak Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

The second group of prophecies was given when the Jews returned from captivity. These prophecies, e.g., of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, deal with the problem of a people who had not matched up to the expectations of the prophets. Captivity had cleansed them of idolatry but they found other ways of being unacceptable. If, however, we run both groups of prophecies together we get erroneous results. Isaiah's prophecies about captive Israel imply a turning to God and consequently for Israel the desert is blossoming as a rose. If we apply this prophecy as though it were a blessing on the Jews in Palestine who, by modern technology, reclaim waste land, but without turning to God, we are liable to confuse the true spiritual significance of events.

In such circumstances the words of Malachi are a better guide (3:8). "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. . . ." Ezekiel, speaking for God, had promised a rebuilt temple and a secure throne to the renewed Israel. Haggai and Malachi are concerned with the lack of desire on the part of the returned Israel to build the house. So Haggai 1:4, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?"

This principle laid down in the second group of prophecies has great relevance for the present-day return of the Jews. It is important, nevertheless, to comprehend what is contemporary to the prophets' time and what are the underlying principles. The second group of prophecies looks straight at the position of Jews returned without divine acceptance because of their attitudes. They set about converting these Jews to God. The basic message of Zechariah is in chapter 1:2 (R.S.V.):

The Lord was very angry with your fathers. Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord of hosts; Return to me, says the Lord of

hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. Be not like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried out. . . .

The effort of conversion was to involve adversity (Zech. 12-14), a pouring out of the spirit to inspire compassion and supplication (Zech. 12:10). "'Yet even now,' says the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart'" (Joel 2:12).

Apart from the ministrations of these prophets a prophet like Elijah is promised (Malachi 4:5 and 6, R.S.V.):

"And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse."

Turning the hearts of the father to the children may well be an illustration of godliness in contrast to the ungodly situation of children rising up against their parents (Mark 13:12) at a time of national disobedience.

The situation contains both a promise and a warning, however. Without the turning to God the land may be cursed. Conversion is neither automatic nor certain.

Modern Israel is in the environment of its spiritual history. They can view the rock from which King David reigned, look to Mount Carmel where Elijah triumphed, the city over which the prophets spoke and where Christ trod. To this history and locality they are devoted. As a nation they have many qualities of greatness. By love and care they have brought new life to refugee Jews from impoverished situations and persecutions in other lands. Their scholarship and technology is world renowned, their industry admired. The true spiritual life and response of modern Israel is, however, more difficult to assess and what seems to be lacking is a correspondence among them to the work of the prophets and a turning to God with the whole heart.

It may be that brilliant material successes of Israel divert our eyes from the implications of the scriptural promises. In earlier days this was not so and as early as 1864 the return of Christ was confidently expected on the basis of the handful of Jews then resident in the land. The implications of the texts were also more clearly appreciated. In the *Ambassador* for 1864 Brother Roberts, after reviewing the passages concerning the Jewish return writes:

It may be objected that the predictions of national restoration are contingent upon national repentance and reformation; and prove nothing apart from the likelihood of reformation or otherwise. This is true, and the objection would be a fatal one if we were without testimony as to the fate of the contingency, that is, if we were left without information as to whether or not the nation would reform; but we are not without information.

* * * * *

The prophets who succeeded Moses threw great light on this point. They tell us with great clearness and amplitude of expression that one of the most notable features of God's purpose with the Jews is to reclaim them from their present state of perversity and unbelief, and beget in them nationally that state of mind which is becoming and essential in a people holding such a close relationship to God.

* * * * *

The restoration is a foregone conclusion in the divine mind for reasons already indicated; but the restoration will not be carried out in violation of God's righteous laws. He does all things in righteousness, order, and peace, and will not restore a nation in wickedness to prosperity.

The evangelisation of Israel remains, therefore, the outstanding question in modern times. If we wish to follow a prophetic course of events we should be looking at this question rather than expressing immoderate satisfaction over military victories. In addition to God's promises in Joel 2:28 and 29 or Malachi 4:5 it may be there is yet a mission for Christ's people in Israel, despite the resistance of her government's policy towards overt preaching of Christ.

Against this background the words of Jesus must have their full weight:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that murders the prophets and stones the messengers sent to her! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you would not let me. Look, look! There is your temple, forsaken by God. And I tell you, you shall never see me until the time when you say, 'Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (Matt. 23:27-39, N.E.B.)

The Book of Revelation

(CONTINUED)

by James White

IN THE SUMMER ISSUE events in the Book of Revelation were traced up to the period of the witnesses in Chapter II.

The assurance about the two witnesses consists of the statements given in Table I.

We left the gathered armies when they had made an advance towards Palestine. We have yet to witness the events which contain their breakthrough (the Vials). But we have now been given a great assurance. We are to expect the triumph of the invaders. We are to expect them to capture Jerusalem and possess it for a short time. This does not mean that God's purpose is lost: He will quickly intervene, and the invaded nation will be saved.

So the 7th Trumpet sounds (11: 14-19). This means that the time for judgment has come, and the way is ready for the Vials.

The Climax of History

A Picture of the Foes

But when the Battle of Armageddon comes in the Vials (16: 13-14) three great foes are involved—The Dragon, The Beast and The False Prophet.

We must clearly make their acquaintance before we see the battle, to know the greatness of their power, and the momentous nature of the conflict now to be seen.

The Dragon

Chapter 12

In this chapter a woman arrayed with the sun, moon and 12 stars has a Man-Child who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. A great dragon appears in opposition to the child. There is then a war between a certain

Michael and the dragon. The latter is cast out of heaven, and in some sense the Kingdom comes. But the dragon causes greater trouble on earth, and persecutes the woman who brought forth the child.

It has already been proved in the introduction that the woman is the Jewish nation and her man-child Jesus.

It is clear from verse 9 that the dragon is the devil, or in other words, as always throughout the New Testament, that he represents evil. Similarly, Michael who contends with him must, from first century thought, stand simply for God.

What then is the time when the devil is thrown out of heaven and the kingdom comes in some sense which is not its ultimate sense? We have just witnessed the birth of Jesus: and Jesus himself states in the plainest terms that it was during his life on earth that the devil was thrown out of heaven (Luke 10: 18, John 12: 31) and the Kingdom "came nigh" so that from the time of John the Baptist "every man presseth into it" (Luke 10: 9, 16: 16). It will be seen from the former passages that the meaning of the devil being thrown from heaven is that Jesus by going about healing diseases (it was the disciples' success in this that led him to use the words in Luke 10: 18), and by finally condemning sin by his

death, defeated evil, throwing it from its previous position of supremacy: and this is the meaning here.

It has been objected that the Revelation cannot at this point go back in time, when it was given to show things in the future. The objection, however, has little weight. This section is not part of the three series, but is designed to give us a picture of the foes who are involved in Armageddon: and if they played an important part in the past, this obviously must be shown.

The Beast

Chapter 13: 1-10

The dragon is seen at the beginning of this chapter to give his power to The Beast—in other words, this beast is evil's instrument in the world.

More than 500 years before, the prophet Daniel had seen four beasts rising out of the sea (the peoples): a lion, a bear, a leopard, and another beast not compared to any animal—which represented the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome respectively.

This beast which John sees rising out of the sea

"Was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion."

These are Greece, Persia and Babylon, and we must clearly understand that Rome also is included, though it could not be shown by an animal resemblance. But the beast of the Revelation stands for even more than these four great empires. It has Seven Heads and Ten Horns.

When the beast reappears in chapter 17, it is explained that the seven heads are seven great powers. The ten horns are shown there to be in the seventh head (for they make

TABLE I
The Events

Revelation 11: Verse:

1-6

The Jewish nation would be preserved during the times of the Gentiles, even though Jerusalem is trodden down.

7

A great beast, who, we will see, in this appearance stands for the invading nations, will at the end of that time defeat the Jews.

8

The invaders will capture Jerusalem (for the bodies of the witnesses lie in "the city where also our Lord was crucified"). The invaders rejoice at their triumph.

9-10

But very soon the nation will be made strong and be exalted.

11-13

war with Jesus at his Second Coming), and it is explained that they are ten powers. In other words, the seventh power consists of ten separate nations.

Now, we are given a perfect key to identify the heads in that chapter. For John is told that in his time, of the heads:

"Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come" (Rev. 17:10).

The sixth head then, was the one that existed in John's time: and of course the great power that existed then was the Roman Empire. There should therefore be five great powers before Rome, and one after. And in history this works out with perfect precision:

Heads						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 (10 Horns)
Egypt	Assyria	Babylon	Persia	Greece	Rome	The 10 invading nations of Ezekiel 38

The False Prophet Chapter 13: 11-18

A second Beast appears. He partly resembles a lamb, but his voice is that of a Dragon—that is, he appears *deceptively as good, but is really* another instrument of Evil in the earth. He exercises all the authority of the first Beast, and does great wonders, making everyone worship an image of the first Beast which he causes to be made.

This second Beast is given no name here. But when he reappears later he is called The False Prophet (Rev. 16:13, 19:20, 20:10).

This is already a clear indication of his identity, and there is plenty of confirmation. It will be seen from the marginal references that the working of wonders is always associated with warnings about false prophets, while the connection with a lamb is clearly like that of false prophets who "come in sheep's clothing" (Matt. 7:15).

The second Beast must then be some form of deceitful religion.

Now it will be seen that he is very closely related to the first Beast: he is in fact never mentioned unless the first is. He appears not as a successor, but as a supporter, exercising all the authority of the other, and making the earth worship him.

The first Beast represented the Power of the Nations. The second, being some kind of evil religion, is seen from its relation to the first to be religion paying subservience to the state and being used by the state for its own ends.

The great Powers have always in

the past put religion to their service, and sought by means of it to gain greater adherence from their subjects: and the pagan priesthoods (and not only they) have needed little persuasion to play their part.

We have here, then, the Power of Nations in its religious aspect, which by such things as professed miracles and revelations, deceives the world.

The statement that the False Prophet makes everyone worship an image of the Beast he has caused to be made, is drawn from a fact very familiar to early Christians. The Roman Empire was filled with statues of the Emperor and the gods, and it was demanded of Christians that they should offer incense before these.

These are the forces involved at Armageddon: Evil itself, and the Power of Nations in its last appearance, with the subtle use of religion in the service of the state.

Transition Chapters 14-15

We have seen the advance towards Palestine and been assured of the survival of the nation dwelling in it. Then we have seen the three great

Foes who came to battle. Now in this transition, just before the invasion story is resumed in the Vials, there is the promise of the deliverance of the good and the judgment of the evil. After a vision of the redeemed, three angels come, proclaiming successively the arrival of the hour of judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the wrath to be poured on those who serve the Beast. Having seen this, John is told by a voice to write a blessing on the dead in the Lord: they may, as it were, rest peacefully: their labours will certainly be rewarded. Then after two brief symbols of judgment, Harvest and Vintage, and one last vision of the redeemed, the great Drama moves swiftly to its close.

The Vials Chapter 16

The meaning of the Vials is found in the same way as in the Seals and Trumpets. The 6th Vial is one of great convulsions, with mountains disappearing, an unparalleled earthquake, and a great hail.

Where do we find these things together again? We find them again in the description of God's vengeance on the invading nations in Ezekiel 38. Once again a simple comparison as given in Table II proves this to be the meaning here: and the rest of the Vials is found in that passage too.

TABLE II

The Vials

1. A noisome and grievous sore.
- 2-3. Blood.
4. Fire.
5. Pains and sores—this time on the leading nation.
6. (They are allowed to advance to their destruction.)
7. A great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth.

The mountains not found.
Great hailstones.

The identity is thus made clear, and the events of the Vials are then as follows:

The Vials

1-4

A series of reversals for the invaders—pestilence, blood and fire.

5

A reversal—pestilence—affecting the country of the leading nation, (the throne of the beast).

6

The Euphrates is dried up to allow them to cross: that is, God allows them to break through to Palestine, and the forces of the three great foes advance towards Armageddon.

7

Jesus returns, and the great open vengeance falls on the invaders.

Ezekiel 38: 19-22

Pestilence.
Blood.
Fire.
(Pestilence again.)

A great shaking in the land of Israel, so great that fish, birds, beasts and creeping things, and all men on the face of the earth, are shaken.
The mountains thrown down.
Great hailstones.

The Events

It is to be noted that "the kings of the east" (16:12) or rather, "the kings that *come from the sunrising*" (R.V.), for whom the Euphrates is dried up to provide a pathway across, are the leaders of the 10 invading kingdoms (those named in Ezek. 38).

It will be seen at once from a map that northern invaders must, because of the angle of the river, come towards Palestine from an *easterly* direction.

The Appendix Chapters 17-18

When the 7th Vial was poured out, it was said that "great Babylon" came into remembrance, that God should punish her (16:19). Obviously some explanation is called for.

So one of the angels who poured out the Vials takes John to see a woman called "Babylon the Great" and then to see her destruction.

It is agreed by all that it is not the *original* Babylon that is intended, but some successor. The indications

of who she is could not be clearer:

(1) She existed before John's time and during it (17:1-2, note the tenses of the verbs). (2) She was "that great city, which *reigneth* over the kings of the earth" (17-18). (3) She was responsible for the deaths of martyred apostles (17:6, 18:20, 24, 19:2).

The city which ruled the earth in John's time, and which was responsible for the martyrdom of apostles, was of course **THE CITY OF ROME**.

She is seen by John sitting on **THE BEAST**, who reappears. This was indeed the case then. The City of Rome controlled the Power of the World—a control largely retained still in a different and religious form. In both pagan and Papal forms she is a great centre of iniquity, and Chapter 18 depicts her doom.

The Vision of Glory Chapters 19-22

God's people are redeemed, they subdue the earth with Jesus, and the kingdom comes.

TABLE III
Plan of the Revelation

I—A General Survey

The Seals

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Gospel preaching. | 2. Bloodshed. | 3. Famines. |
| 4. Jerusalem's destruction. | 5. Delay. | 6. Christ's return. |

Pause: The Kingdom

7. This opens the scroll, which contains:

II—The Climax of History

A. Description of attack. Partial.

The Trumpets:

1. Earth.
2. Sea.
3. Rivers.
4. Heaven.
5. Armies bringing darkness.
6. They advance towards Palestine.

Pause: Judgment awaits.
An assurance.

7. Time for judgment come.

B. A picture of the three great foes.

The dragon,
the beast,
the false prophet.

The Vision of Glory

C. Description of judgment. Complete.

The Vials:

1. Earth.
2. Sea.
3. Rivers.
4. Heaven.
5. Darkness inflicted on the leading country.
6. They break through to their destruction.

Pause: The gathering by the three foes.
Warning of Jesus Coming.
7. Open vengeance.

OXFAM'S HELP

FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

OXFAM has now given £53,000 in grants for the emergency in the Middle East. Our first grant of £10,000 to UNRWA, made on 13th June, was the first emergency assistance that they received from any source. A further £5,000 was given, together with £5,000 from Christian Aid on 20th June. These sums were given for whatever purpose UNRWA regarded as most urgent. In addition £1,000 was given to Youth Aliyah in Israel for the care of stray children, and Pastor Schaffert (see Broadsheet, 29th June) on his trip authorised a grant of £1,000 to Yoon Cu Lee, a Korean Quaker working with the Near East Christian Council.

As donations flowed into the radio and television appeals of the Disasters Emergency Committee, allocations were made to each member agency. £1,890 was allocated nominally to each member which was then repooled and given to War on Want for the purchase of tents (£9,450 worth). And a further £6,000 allocation to OXFAM was given to the International Red Cross and UNRWA for more tents. As further funds were raised by the appeal another £18,000 was allocated to OXFAM. This is being used—£16,000 for three YMCA projects, and £2,000 towards a £5,000 grant we have made to the Palestine Hospital at Amman. Two of the YMCA projects will help some of the many Jordanian students studying abroad who have been cut off without support—some in Beirut, and others in a transit hostel being set up in Amman. The YMCA has also been asked by the Jordan Government to provide four social workers to run four of the 11 tented camps that they are setting up for refugees. The people selected will be Palestinian refugees (from the 1948 war) who have been trained under the YMCA leadership courses (supported by OXFAM in the past). Here OXFAM is helping with salaries, equipment and supplies for their new work.

If you wish to send donations, or make a covenant, write to OXFAM, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford.

[This report dates from July]

(Concluded)

Let Him Be To Thee A Heathen and a Publican

by Alfred Green

WHEN JESUS SPOKE to men 19 centuries ago His word was in essence simple, direct and intensely personal. Only those who paused to think out, who "had ears to hear" the implications of the message, and were drawn by the rightness and harmony of word and conduct could become disciples.

There was not the slightest suggestion that the salvation He offered might be achieved by formal adherence to an orderly system of religion. While it is possible to draw out of His teaching a list of doctrines of greater or lesser importance any attempt to systematise His message is to rob it of its power.

It is equally true to say that He did not set up a system of rules to govern this new community He was in process of bringing to life. Again it is possible to use His answers to special problems, and His comments on some of the practices of the age, and draw up a code we could call the Commandments of Christ; when however this is done a unique feature of the teaching of the Master is destroyed, its gift of freedom from the bondage to law, and immense privilege to live in harmony with Divine justice, mercy and faithfulness. All about Him was the evil effect of righteousness based on a code of law expanded into an elaborate system of negative and positive rules. Written on the countenances of the spiritual leaders, who from day to day challenged His word, were the consequences of such a philosophy: pride, spiritual blindness, intolerance.

Life in all its fullness was, by His word, dependent on one thing: it was expressed in many and varied ways but all of them are summed up in one simple phrase. "He that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Jesus was not therefore a man with a new religious philosophy to replace Judaism, he was himself the message to men, any interpretation therefore of the thoughts expressed by him must of necessity find complete harmony with the man himself, he was "grace and truth" in perfection worked out in human relationships.

This then is our initial approach to the problems aroused by the illustration used by Jesus in dealing with "offences" between brethren. Most of us are familiar with the formal use of these instructions. An offence having been committed in word or behaviour, the first most directly affected must make a personal visit in an attempt to resolve the matter. If this fails, then another official visit is made with other brethren present. If the offender remains unmoved, the arranging brethren of the "ecclesia" now officially step in. If, perhaps after several visits and discussions, the individual remains obdurate, the ecclesia takes formal action and withdrawal takes place, what the Churches of the world call excommunication. All the proprieties having been observed, he is then treated as "a publican and a heathen." It is a neat orderly system, and in spite of the genuine mental suffering on the part of those taking part in the distasteful procedure, there is at the end a sense of a duty correctly discharged.

But does this kind of thing truly interpret the Lord's mind in these matters?

A noted Greek scholar, W. Barclay, expresses what appears to be the opinion of a number of learned men in saying that the story "does not ring true." And on that basis he is of the opinion that in its present form it was not spoken by Jesus, that perhaps in later years leaders of the Church seeking for authority to deal with the

human problem took an illustration spoken by Jesus and reshaped it to suit their purpose, so bringing to the question of internal discipline the authority of the words of Jesus himself.

The present writer is no scholar and not qualified to debate with the learned, but nevertheless is of the opinion that this approach to resolving difficult statements in the Gospels is a destructive one, that unless evidence is decisive, that a certain passage is an interpolation, as for example I John 5:7, the wiser practice would be to seek an answer in harmony with the Lord's own perfect example of justice and mercy.

Matthew 18: 15 reads (in Weymouth): "If your brother acts wrongly towards you, go and point out his fault to him when only you and he are there." What is at once apparent, if our reading is perceptive, is that the problem is one involving only two brethren; others may be involved if the injured brother so requests; the ecclesia may or may not be brought into the matter but only on request. It should be obvious therefore that the offence is not against the ecclesia, and the final advice, "Let him be to thee an heathen man and a publican" is to the individual brother. Quite apart from any other explanation of the affair, there is therefore no warrant for the use made of this illustration by 20th-century brethren.

A further point. It is in the context of this story that Jesus makes the unusual comment that binding decisions by them would receive heavenly approval and be equally binding in heaven. It must be surely obvious that this did not then, or now, convey a sort of divine right to men to sanctify any decision made by them, because they were in positions of spiritual leadership in a Christian denomination, whether Christadelphian or otherwise. For "heaven" to sanctify any decision made by men, the action taken would of necessity be made in complete harmony with heavenly principles; this would seem to be the intent of that other saying of Jesus, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst." The same essential truth is found in other words, "If a man loves me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

Where men seek to resolve personal

differences in harmony with all that is comprehended in the "name"—His perfect expression of the mercy and faithfulness of the Father—then His presence will bless and heaven join in the act to sanctify it.

Did the Lord then intend that His followers should treat with contempt and loathing the one who had not responded to persuasion? (In that period of history this was the attitude of the Jew to the following classes of human beings: all Gentiles, and those Jews engaged in the distasteful occupation of tax-collectors for the Roman authorities.) Surely not! The Lord's most scathing condemnation was not for the sinners and publicans but for the supposedly correct and righteous, scribes and pharisees. His attitude toward those proscribed classes was revealed in His ironic comment, "They that are whole need not a physician, I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13). He saw them not as pariahs to be avoided, but as spiritually sick whom by His loving example and patience He could heal and bring to Himself. Of the Gentiles one has only to consider the significance of the words, "The son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).

The words, then, "Let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican," become not a formal command to justify the final harsh cutting off of those who differ from traditional standards and teaching, but a subtle reminder of the qualities of love, patience and truth, which He exemplified in His own life and sought in His own disciples.

We find therefore a complete consistency in the teaching of Jesus. He gave no instructions that in any way could be interpreted as guidance either to the formation or to the internal workings of a community of believers. The one identification of a Christian community still remains the same. "By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). Let us remember as we read these words that He had already defined the kind of love He was referring to: "to love one another as I have loved you."

"He that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" still remains there-

ON GIVING

'God loveth a cheerful giver'

Human nature is never quite without a redeeming feature. When confronted with a collector holding a box to receive contributions for some good cause, hardly any one will argue the merits of that particular good cause with the collector. We may either give or we may move over to the other side of the pavement ("pass by on the other side" in Biblical language) so as to avoid direct confrontation. The contrast between our going to the shops, or home, and someone else's freely giving his or her time to collect for those in need, results in a moral inferiority on our part, and cowardice does the rest. We either give, or we pass by pretending not to see, or to be in a hurry. But when we reach home, and there is no collector in the room, and no collecting box in sight, then our courage returns and with it a rationalisation of our action. "What real use is the contribution we can make to the vast areas of poverty in the world?" "Of course it is a mere drop in the ocean. We would do better to concentrate our limited resources on preaching. Spiritual food is what we are in a position to give."

This line of reasoning has some

currency in our community, and we should not attempt to pass judgment on those who express it. There may be some who are giving their time and resources to the preaching of the gospel so liberally that nothing remains for other purposes. Christ will judge them and us as to whether we have used our talents in His service. But the argument has one logical flaw. The greatest possible contribution of any one person is of course in most cases quite trivial in relation to the need, but small regular contributions from a large number of people soon add up to large sums, and those in direct need live so simply that even a little money goes a long way compared with our standards. This point has been well grasped by an organisation in Australia (see their advertisement on p. 15 of the present issue), which is encouraging small regular donations. Readers in Australia may find this a convenient way of giving, but they will of course not give just because of the logic of an argument. They will give as Christians who, having had their hearts touched by the love of God, desire to show their love to those who are less fortunate than themselves.

fore the ultimate in the Lord's requirements, and His example and word the only standards by which we judge ourselves and others.

The principles of mercy and faithfulness shown in their fullness in His life must never be superceded by ecclesial law, tradition or custom. To

the disciple has been given the "glorious liberty of the sons of God," a precious privilege carrying with it heavy responsibilities so that he will endeavour in every set of circumstances to make his decisions and render his judgments as if the Lord were Himself there, to bless and to sanctify.

The Endeavour Summer School took place as planned in August, at Fircroft College, Selly Oak, Birmingham.

A report will be included in the next issue.

The Letter of Paul to the Romans

by Ralph Lovelock

Part three — The Church at Rome

THE CONTROVERSY which has raged for centuries concerning the primacy of Peter over the whole Christian Church, and the claims made by the Roman Catholic Church to a monopoly in ordination, has tended to obscure the facts concerning the early Church in Rome. There is very little definite information outside of the New Testament concerning that Church during the first century, but controversy during the second and third centuries led to the rise of much which was not accurate in support of positions taken for other reasons, and the task of sorting out the certain from the doubtful is difficult at this distance in time. An attempt will be made here to summarise the position as far as can be ascertained, but the published works on this subject are voluminous, and have been written against a background of live controversy.

The City of Rome

We can be as certain as we can of any New Testament date that the epistle would have reached Rome in the year A.D. 58, and although it may possibly have been written towards the end of the previous year, it is to the condition of Rome in this year that we should look. Rome was the administrative centre of the large empire which she ruled, and the frequency with which officials travelled between her and all parts of the world gave rise to the later proverb that "all roads lead to Rome." The paucity of information concerning the early Church in that city would lead to the assumption that it was not one of the key centres until later in the century, but despite this, the constant journeyings to and from the city would carry news of events in Rome to all parts of the Christian world. It is probably on this account that

Paul writes (1:8) that "all over the world they are telling the story of your faith."

We know that Paul was, in measure, proud of his Roman citizenship; proud of it as something which he had by birth, in contrast to those who had bought it. This we gather from his complaint to the commander of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem (Acts 22). It was a privilege which he did not hesitate to use, both at Philippi (Acts 16) and also before Festus (Acts 25) in addition to the incident at Jerusalem. His readiness to use the privileges of citizenship are in alignment with the value which he places upon Rome as a site for a Church, and with his desire to participate in its growth. Realising the advantages which could accrue to the public image of Christianity if a strong and flourishing Church should be known within Rome herself, he writes to them (1:9-10) "God knows how continually I make mention of you in my prayers, and am always asking that by his will I may, somehow or other, succeed at long last in coming to see you." So also Luke records (Acts 19:21) that this object ranked in his mind alongside that of bearing the alms to Jerusalem, so that he could say, "After I have been there, I must see Rome also." We have already seen that the visit to Jerusalem was no mere personal desire, but a long matured plan to unite the warring factions within the Church, and the association of the plan to visit Rome with this other activity within the mind of Paul would indicate that his visit to that city was concerned with the greater good of all the Church, and not with any private yearning to see the architecture, or yet merely to enjoy the private fellowship of its few members.

For a few years, then fortunately past, Rome had known the rule of men who were mentally unbalanced, but for most of her history as head

of the empire she had been wisely and justly governed. This epistle was written at the beginning of the reign of Nero, before he had begun to exhibit the excesses which marred the end of it. Paul had already enjoyed the protection, as citizen, of the Roman justice, and so could write (13:3-4) "For government, a terror to crime, has no terrors for good behaviour. You wish to have no fear of the authorities? Then continue to do right and you will have their approval, for they are God's agents working for your good." The contrast between the equable public rule during much of his reign, and the gross vice of his personal life, is well brought out in the life of Nero written by Suetonius, and it was only towards the end, when vice had wrought its full work, that government declined, and Nero was condemned to death.

While the machinery of government was just however, public morality within the city was low, and vice in all its forms was generally practised, and overlooked rather than condoned. It was the love of luxury and the unusual which opened the door to Christianity within the city. Leaders, both in science and art, came from the Orient, and with them a large retinue of attendants entered into the Roman polity. Slaves also were drawn from the east, and later became freedmen and entered into Roman society. The city swarmed with men of all races, and it was through these foreigners that new religions entered and prospered. It was through such channels, and not through Roman officials, that Christianity will have entered the metropolis.

The Jewish Church

The Jew was scattered throughout the empire, and in large measure was devoted to trading even then. Rome therefore exercised a great attraction to many Jews, and when this epistle was written they had had a synagogue there for more than a century. For a few brief periods during this long time they had been subjected to a mild persecution, and the most recent, as also the sharpest, had been about six years ago. This is the persecution mentioned by Luke (Acts 18:1-4), which took Priscilla and Aquila from Rome to Corinth.

The Roman historians who have recorded this persecution under Claudius leave us a little uncertain

as to its cause. It may have been only a burst of excitement attending the rise of a false Messiah, but it is equally possible that it may have been an insurrection of the orthodox Jews against the Christians. Since the Romans speak of no wholesale expulsion of all Jews, but only a curtailing of activities, but Luke records it as an expulsion of which the two Christians were victims, it seems very probable that the cause of the trouble was a Jewish opposition to Christianity. If this is indeed so, it would explain why Paul chose to devote his introductory epistle to the Church there to the relationship between Moses and Christ.

When Paul arrived in Rome he came as a man whom the Jews in Jerusalem had charged with blasphemy, and who had appealed to Nero against them. As soon as he had arrived therefore he called together the local Jewish leaders (Acts 28) and explained that he was suppliant to Nero by force of circumstances beyond his control, and not with any intention of accusing the Jews. They replied that they had heard nothing to his discredit as a person, but that concerning the Christians "all we know about this sect is that no one has a good word to say for it." The outcome of his presentation of Christianity to them would appear to have been antagonistic however. Luke records their reactions. "Some were won over by his arguments; others remained sceptical. Without reaching any agreement among themselves they began to disperse." Paul gave the usual warning about the results of obduracy in Old Testament times, and commenced to teach the Gentiles. There is no record of the results, but it is certain that the same bitter antagonism as resulted at Ephesus would arise, and they were probably a source of trouble to the Christians from time to time.

It might appear difficult to reconcile the probability that the persecution under Claudius arose from a controversy between Jews and Christians, if those in Paul's time knew so little about Christianity, and about himself. This is quite possible however because of the peculiar organisation of synagogues in Rome. Drawing his information from the many inscriptions in cemeteries of Rome, Schurer writes (2:2:247). "From the Roman inscriptions we gather, in the first place, that the Jews living in Rome were divided

into a large number of separate and independently organised communities (synagogues), each having its own synagogue, senate and public officials. Of the existence of anything in the shape of a corporate union of the whole Jews of Rome under one senate there is no trace whatever." Thus it is unlikely that a group in one district would be aware of trouble in another, and it is even likely that it was the local Jewish community as well as the Christians who were expelled at the time, and hence were not present as a faction when Paul arrived. A contemporary writer summarised the position of Jews in Rome in these words: "Though their privileges were often curtailed, they increased to such an extent as to force their way to the recognition and toleration of their peculiar customs."

The Christian Church

The Christian community in Rome to whom Paul wrote was of mixed Jewish and Gentile composition. Many phrases favour the presence of Jews there, but the wording of chapter seven proves the point. Here, he contrasts his position when under the Mosaic Law with that in which he found himself under Christ. In this connection he writes to those who were under that same Law, but had died to it when they became part of the body of Christ. Thus, some, at least, of those to whom he wrote had been orthodox Jews, and had joined the Christian Church.

Equally certain is the presence of Gentiles within the Church, for he says (11:13), "But I have something to say to you Gentiles." When however we ask whether the Church in this city was predominantly Jewish, or predominantly Gentile we have to rely on implication rather than direct statement. In several places we may infer that the Gentiles were the predominant factor in the Roman Church, and the strongest of these in 15:14-16. Here Paul excuses himself for wanting to work in a Church he had not founded as an apostle; he claims that he has a general mission to all Gentile Churches, and thus, by implication, they are to be considered as a Gentile community.

There can be no doubt, that contrary to tradition, the Roman Church was not founded by an apostle. The strongest passage bearing on this

question is that in chapter 15. Here Paul says that "It is my ambition to bring the Gospel to places where the very name of Christ has not been heard." It is because there were so many places nearer to him that he had not been able to find occasion to visit Rome until then, because at Rome the name of Christ was already known. Now, however, he proposes to visit Spain where it was then unknown, and to call and visit them on his way. He says also, however, of building within an ecclesia, "for I do not want to build on another man's foundation." He does say, however, in the first chapter, that he did hope to build at Rome: "I have often planned to come, though so far without success, in the hope of achieving something among you, as I have in other parts of the world." We may assume therefore that Rome was a place between Jerusalem and Spain at which Paul hoped to work while in transit, because although a Church, it was not a foundation of another apostle, but was one which had grown from Christians visiting Rome in the course of their everyday business.

This assumption as to its origin is made more probable from the large number of members whom Paul knows personally. Thirty distinct persons known to Paul are named in the final chapter of the epistle, together with many others not individually named. That such a large number of Christians from other parts of the empire, who were already Christians before they went to Rome, should be among those there, increases considerably the probability that the Church came into existence through Christians who migrated to Rome, both Gentile and Jewish, and consoorted in that city.

There would seem therefore to be three main reasons why Paul addressed such an epistle to the Church at Rome. First, there had been, a few years ago, a violent controversy between Jew and Christian, and if Paul intended now to visit them with the purpose of "building," i.e. preaching throughout the city, it was certain that such controversy would start again, as it had in every major city where he had ministered. Secondly, his own person was a subject of bitter difference of opinion within the Jewish Christian community, and with the object of preventing such a division from developing within the Church at Rome when he visited it, he laid in advance

the foundations upon which he built. Thirdly, he was even then, as he wrote it, engaged in a last desperate effort to reconcile the Church at Jerusalem to his newer Gentile communities: his full dissertation on this in the 15th chapter proves how major an issue was this in his mind at the moment. There was a natural tendency in any case therefore to write upon this subject which so filled his mind, and for which he was deliberately about to risk his life. These three reasons therefore would seem to have worked together to give them, and us, one of the greatest treatments of Christian fundamentals that has ever been written.

* * * * *

The Latest News of Forthcoming Publications

The N.E.B. Old Testament

Progress can be reported in that the work of translation is now finished and a systematic check has begun. If everything goes according to plan the checking should be complete by the end of 1968, and then printing and binding should take two years, so that by the end of 1970 copies should be on sale. Unfortunately delays are quite possible, so that patience must be exercised. (The need for patience when it appears will be still greater, since virtually every English translation of the Bible has been launched to a torrent of abuse from some quarters.)

A New Version of the Flood Story

The connexion of the account of the flood in Genesis with a Babylonian version has long been known. The Babylonian text, now available in the paperback translation of A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels* (Chicago University Press, Phoenix Books), is based on both Babylonian and Assyrian tablets no older than 700 B.C. There is also a Sumerian version on a tablet of about 1600 B.C., but this is only one-third preserved, and is very brief. Now a Babylonian version in some detail written on tablets also of about 1600 B.C. is available. The original cuneiform text was published by the British Museum in 1965, and a full edition with translation is now ready for the printer and should be available in 1969. Further details will be given in due course.

Are Carbon-14 Dates Reliable?

A Letter from John Burton

I HAVE READ WITH INTEREST J. H. Weaving's contribution on "The Fossils"—a subject I know very little about. The brief summary of what has been dug up has filled in a background I lacked. I am by no means persuaded however (as you seem to be—or do I misunderstand you?) that we, or rather the scholars, have all the pertinent data necessary to sift and accurately interpret this factual material. It is difficult enough, as you will know only too well, to evaluate measurements which we can make now on repetitive physical phenomena in the laboratory. When we come to analyse the processes of radio-active exchange and decay over periods of thousands of years, the underlying assumptions of uniformity are somewhat difficult to accept.

The other thing that bothers me is the reliability of men in general, and therefore of the experts. Let me give you an example:

Antiquity XXXIII No. 132 (December 1959)—

"It is very important to realise that doubts about the archaeological acceptability of radiocarbon dates is not obscurantism, nor another chapter in the battle of Science versus the Arts. It is an attempt to evaluate all available evidence.

"We are at a moment when some of us at least are uncertain how to answer the question: When is a Carbon-14 reading an archaeological fact? We certainly need reassurance beyond all reasonable doubt at the present moment that scientists know all the variables involved, that Elssasser, Ney and Winkler are wrong in supposing that there was variation in the intensity of cosmic-ray formation and that others are wrong in supposing that there were fluctuations in the original C-14 content."

Dr Glyn Daniel,
editor of *Antiquity*,
concerning Carbon-14 datings.

[These comments are preceded by an article by Dr Piggott describing how two recent cases of C-14 computation have yielded dates known to be in error upwards of 30 per cent.]

Note the date—December 1959—six months later (June 1960) Dr Glyn Daniel went into print again in his Pelican book (for the layman—you and I) *The Idea of Prehistory* he writes:

"Even more exciting has been the development since 1945 of the technique of *exact dating* by Carbon-14 analysis. This remarkable technique, first discovered by Libby at Chicago as a by-product of research into atomic physics, enables organic substances to be *dated in calendar years* by the quantity of Carbon-14 they contain."

Now either we assume that the technique of C-14 dating was greatly improved in six short months, that Elssasser, Ney and Winkler's suppositions were successfully discounted (actually I would suggest that their suppositions are not amenable to scientific proof anyway), or we have to conclude that Dr Daniel is not being entirely fair with his uninitiated readers.

To summarise then, how do you and I, as men not trained in this field, pick our way through the vast body of factual material which has been reported (we do not always hear of inconvenient factual material) and sift the deductions of the experts, with their various shades of truth and half truth? The simple answer of course is that we do not have to—I think Job 38 should adequately silence our hankering and expectancy for any precision in human interpretations of the past.

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? . . . Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

At the same time I recognise that this will seem a very inconclusive answer to our young people fed on the science teaching at school. It was this very problem that made Dr Gerald Kerkut (Southampton University) write his book *The Implications of Evolution* (I can thoroughly recommend this if you have not already read it), in which he exposes the real limitations imposed on us when we indulge in such speculation.

Brother Weaving Comments

Brother John Burton raises the very relevant question. Can we trust the experts? Well, like ourselves, they are human and not free from bias. We should therefore examine their evidence critically. We may find ourselves able to accept only some of the evidence and not perhaps their deductions. When we are not experts ourselves we can look at the opinion of other scientists. Most scientific papers are followed by critical discussion. In particular he questions statements made by the archaeologist Dr Glyn Daniel relating to Carbon-14 dating. Firstly, Dr Daniel though an expert archaeologist is not an expert on Carbon-14 dating. Secondly, though I should have to read more of his work than I have done to be certain, it is a fact that many archaeologists have been slow in accepting C-14 dating, as in many cases it upsets previously held datings of archaeological sites by other methods. I am therefore inclined to think Dr Glyn Daniel gained confidence in C-14 because of the greater evidence that accrued and thereby convinced him in the period between the two articles quoted. In fact this particular editorial by Dr Daniel is followed in the next issue of *Antiquity* by an article by a Dutch archaeologist who states: "Dr Daniel has constituted himself the spokesman of those archaeologists who feel increasingly uncomfortable . . . with regard to C-14 dating. . . . Let me illustrate by quoting a more optimistic view." (Here follows a list of C-14 dates compared with dates by alternative methods.) Finally, he concludes "In the opinion of the author the strongest argument in favour of C-14 dating (with due regard to inherent

restrictions) is the fact that the C-14 method produces dates agreeing with De Geer's varve chronology."

Brother Burton next cites Dr Piggott, a comment at the same time, 1959. In 1967 Dr Piggott states in a B.B.C. talk—"The New Chronology"—(*Listener*, 16th March 1967):

"But in a number of instances, the radiocarbon dates were seriously at variance with those arrived at by traditional archaeological means. . . . But there was a third group of scholars, myself among them, who were wary of the new method. When divergencies between certain archaeological and radiocarbon dates became obvious, I even wrote

laboratories are or have been engaged on the complex process of assay."

To convince myself of its value I visited the C-14 Dating Laboratory at the National Physical Laboratory and was very impressed with their care and critical approach.

There is indeed some small variation of the C-14 content in the atmosphere over the years as has been found by C-14 tests on tree rings, but this fluctuation is very small. Evidence for its general reliability may be obtained by comparing radiocarbon age with the age of objects that can be accurately dated by other means. Examples* are as follows:

Sample	Expected age B.P.†	Radio-carbon age
Oak from Viking ship (A.D. 800)	1,160 age of timber	1,190 ± 60
Wood from coffin (A.D. 698) of St Cuthbert, Durham Cathedral	1,270 age of timber	1,333 ± 50
Carbonised bread from Pompeii, A.D. 79 eruption of Vesuvius	1,880	1,830 ± 50
Wood from Roman ship of the Emperor Caligula, A.D. 37-41	1,920 age of timber	1,980 ± 70
Last 100 rings of a giant Redwood, California	2,878-2,978	3,005 ± 165

an article in *Antiquity* in which I spoke of carbon dates which were "archaeologically unacceptable." Others came to a similar conclusion, even though, and perhaps because, we only had a few dates at that time. Perhaps I had a particular reason to feel cross. In the early 1950s I had published a book on the first agricultural communities—the neolithic culture—of the British Isles, and worked out a chronology for them, without of course radiocarbon dates. When these began to become available a few years later, it became increasingly clear that my scheme was out by many hundred years—and perhaps nearly a thousand. With these reservations and others, radiocarbon dating is now accepted as a valid working hypothesis: it is used by the majority of geologists and archaeologists to whom the method can be of value, and over 70

When this is said, it is quite possible for a specimen to be polluted by adjacent organic matter and this has brought discredit on the method. The difficulty can usually be overcome by obtaining another sample and in general by taking several samples from a site.

I am glad Brother Burton calls attention to Dr Kerkut's book. I had read most of it and agree that it is a humble and much more reasonable approach to the biological evidence available. Unlike many books on evolution it does not assume as proved theories which are only plausible.

John Weaving.

* Details of the method of radiocarbon dating and other examples are given in the article "Dating the Past," in the *Endeavour* Magazine, Summer 1964.

† B.P. Before Present.

Current Literature:

Meshech and Tubal

SINCE ITS FIRST APPEARANCE in the 1920s, the *Cambridge Ancient History* has held a position of world-wide respect. With the progress of archaeology in the Near East the first two volumes have long been quite out of date. Thus some decades ago the Cambridge University Press decided to replace these two volumes, and, as before, experts were invited to write chapters. There is a sad tale of editorial delay which need not be gone into here, but these chapters were kept in cold storage for about a decade, and were in fact already out of date when new editors were appointed to salvage the scheme. An emergency plan was formed: the authors were invited to revise their chapters and were told that they would then be published separately with all speed, and finally they would be issued together as completed volumes. This plan is well on the way to fruition, since almost 60 chapters are now in print. The most recent one to appear is: *Phrygia and the Peoples of Anatolia in the Iron Age*, by R. D. Barnett (1967). Despite the seeming irrelevance of the title, this is of value for the study of the Bible. The people called Phrygians by their Western neighbours, the Greeks, were known as Mushku and Tabalu to the Assyrians, and Meshech and Tubal to the Hebrews.

The occurrence of these names in Ezekiel 38 is well known, in an apocalyptic context, and any who wish to interpret the verses should read Barnett's chapter for necessary background. Meshech and Tubal are first known in the Near East c. 1200 B.C., when the Hittite empire fell, and over a number of centuries they were a problem on Assyria's western boundary. There is no evidence that these people were ever in Russia. Tradition and archaeology suggest that they entered Asia Minor from the Balkans. This chapter does not make exciting reading: the material is not of that kind, but it is the only adequate presentation of the facts in any language, and a mine of information at 3s. 6d. or 75 cents.

W. G. Lambert

A NEW PAMPHLET REVIEWED

N. J. Smart, *The Grounds of Faith*, Christadelphian

Publishing Association, Birmingham, 1967, 1s. 6d.

PRINTED FROM THE TEXT of an address given earlier this year at the Watford Ecclesia's Easter Gathering, this pamphlet has been widely circulated throughout the community together with a strong commendation from the publishing committee. It presents a coherent set of views which are apparently coming to be accepted in the "establishment" of the community and which, if more widely accepted, will present a most powerful and insidious threat to our individual and communal faith.

The pamphlet sets out to identify the more significant influences currently thought to be threatening our community and to present "the positive, constructive, and only saving way of meeting the challenge which faces us." These challenges are seen as stemming principally from "scientific rationalism" and "affluent materialism."

The direction of most scientific investigation of the Bible and most scientific approach to the Bible is condemned as being in effect, if not always by intention, anti-Christian and damaging to faith. The scientific approach to the examination and interpretation of the scriptures is further said to have had the effect of "undermining faith in the inspiration of the scriptures in any distinctive and meaningful sense." In a meaningful sense to whom? Quite clearly many scientists can and do fully accept the inspiration of the scriptures and in a world in which the scientific mode of thought is quite rightly accepted it is precisely these people who should be leading our preaching efforts. If instead we allow ourselves to be led by those who denigrate science or who accept only those scientific ideas which happen to be compatible with their own preconceived notions we

will be seen simply as a group of reactionary ostriches and we will deserve the disintegration of our community which will inevitably follow. Any Church which insists on answering the questions of 50 years ago rather than those of today and which fails to make its message relevant to the age in which it exists will wither away in the wilderness of deserved indifference of its own creating.

Science does no more than tell us the truth about the material universe in which we live. If we believe God to be the creator and sustainer of that universe what have we to fear? Let us rather rejoice at the great blessings which science has brought us. Let us give thanks for the relief of suffering which we have through modern medicine, for our greater understanding of the glory of creation and for such help as science has given us in demonstrating the authenticity of Bible records. But, above all, let us not be hypocrites. If we accept all the blessings of science let us also be prepared to face honestly such difficulties as science presents us, certain of nothing but that answers exist which will ultimately build up rather than belittle our faith.

As a Church whose great merit has been its ability to see beyond the first glance interpretations of scripture adopted by others, it is sad that we should be going through this present period of mental stagnation. Let us by all means stick to our conviction that the Bible is wholly inspired but let us at the same time recognise that our interpretation of it need not be. Let us be as prepared to reconsider our traditional beliefs as we expect other Churches to be to reconsider theirs.

Much of what the pamphlet has to

say about our current affluent situation is true—the dangers are obvious enough. Here again, though, the pamphlet is purely negative in its approach. We are gravely warned of the dangers of becoming too concerned with our material well-being to the detriment of our spiritual life. No mention is made however of the positive advantages that stem from our new-found affluence. Should we not react positively, giving thanks to God for such material blessings as we and those around us have received? Can we not use our increased wealth as easily for good as for our own self-gratification? We are warned of the pernicious influence of much of the mass media and particularly of the arch-demon Television. Here again can we not be thankful that our easier systems of communication have made our opportunities for preaching so much easier? The same presses which are used to churn out cheap pornography can equally be used for the production of cheap Bibles. If we have increased leisure can it not be used as much for preaching, for study and for Christian service as for purely selfish pursuits?

It is on the subject of Christian service that the pamphlet makes its most disturbing proposals. While it is conceded that "it is the inevitable outcome of true discipleship of Jesus that the Christian should do good to all men" there follows a severe warn-

ing against becoming too involved in charitable activities lest we should find ourselves "being influenced by the essentially non-Christian, humanistic philosophies and moralities from which as often as not they draw their inspiration." Has not God promised that our faith will be our shield against all temptation? To say then that we should be wary of carrying out good works in conjunction with unbelievers for fear that they might convert us, demonstrates a lack of faith in the saving power of God which should surely have no place in the committed Christian. Rather let us seize every opportunity open to us for charitable work, and particularly where such work enables us to work side by side with unbelievers confident that our faith and zeal will show that what they do from a sense of vague idealism, we do with real conviction and purpose.

As one would expect the pamphlet is written with great skill and is all the more insidious for its appearance of impartiality and balance. There is running through it however a pure seam of reaction—a harking back to a golden age of Christadelphianism when everyone did their readings, when the evening lectures were packed with strangers and never a split occurred. All we have to do is ignore science, condemn television and, above all, avoid all contact with the real world for this golden age to return. If this golden age ever existed we

have about as much chance of recalling it by these means as we have of bringing back the glory of the British Empire by riding penny-farthings and wishing long life to Victoria.

The second part of the pamphlet is given over to setting out the means by which the harmful influences which threaten us may best be countered. It is suggested that this can be achieved by reaffirming our fundamental beliefs in God, in Jesus, in baptism, etc. While one readily assents to the need to preach these things it is difficult to see how this alone will solve the problems referred to. Such doubts and difficulties as have strained our fellowship in recent years have arisen not from these fundamental beliefs, but from attempts by a few brethren to impose acceptance of their own particular views on a whole series of fringe beliefs quite beyond these fundamentals. If it is the intention to imply however that we should place greater emphasis on the basic beliefs that unite us, while at the same time dropping our insistence upon the fringe beliefs that are both doubtful and divisive, this would be a different matter. It is doubted however that this is what is meant.

If there are dangerous influences at work within our community it is the reviewer's opinion that they stem not from science or materialism but from apathy largely resulting from
(Continued at foot of next page)

caad

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buys a goat to provide the
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nourished children of a Korean
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Alan Smith, GIVE Secretary, CAA,
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to help the 'have-nots'
of the world. These cents
soon make dollars that
give farmers seeds and
fertilisers, dig wells,
start small industries,
buy books, build schools
and improve health
services.

(Continued from front page)

The man who is just in the ordinary sense is most careful to treat all who have dealings with him fairly. The spiritual man does the same, but he does more besides. He does not spurn the ordinary kind of justice, but he goes much further than it requires. Throughout Scripture the relationship of God and man is constantly spoken of in legal metaphors. "The Lord hath a controversy with his people," poorly renders the Hebrew, since law-suit is what the prophets meant. When Paul wrote that "we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ" he used a word referring to the Roman magistrates' official seat. Obviously we cannot be too just, and by substituting terms in the phrase quoted ("our overdeveloped senses of righteousness") one sees how wrong it is. If only it were true!

Christians are certainly instructed by Paul not to seek any kind of benefit by litigation. A totally false rider is often (perhaps unconsciously) added to this, that the whole process of settling disputes in formal session is wrong, since judgment belongs to God. Paul says no such thing, in fact the opposite. He was much more practical in everyday matters than some are inclined to believe. In Corinth Christians had gone to law, and to make it worse with other Christians! Paul did not just hold up his hands in horror at such goings on. He knew that disputes between members of the Church would arise, and that the good of the Church would not be served by letting them wait for Christ's judgment at the Last Day. He wrote:

If one of your number has a dispute with another, has he the face to take it to pagan law-courts instead of to the community of God's people? It is God's people who are to judge the world: surely you know that. And if the world is to come before you for judgment, are you incompetent to deal with these trifling cases? Are you not aware that we are to judge angels? How much more, mere matters of business? ... I write this to shame you.

1 Corinthians 6:1-4 (N.E.B.)

In other words, Christian righteousness should equip a person to handle disputes without difficulty. In our com-

munity it usually falls to the Arranging Brethren to deal with difficult issues that arise, and the Ecclesia is then asked to approve what has been done. There was no similar group in the Church of Corinth, but we may wonder if Paul's judgment of our set-up would be essentially different from that on the disorganisation of Corinth. Our constitutions express the Pauline ideal, but without the practical sense that he displayed. The Arranging Brethren are given powers of judge, jury, prosecutor and executioner all in one, and anyone sentenced by them may have no kind of appeal. This is hardly an improvement on the procedure of courts of law in most countries today. The difficulty is not the lack of Arranging Brethren anxious to be fair, but the lack of concern for justice as an abstract quality that requires impartial hearing by those not personally involved.

This brings us to the last point, the subordination of justice to what is considered as "contending for the faith". Communists avowedly engage in something similar. They should willingly commit even the most terrible deeds if the furtherance of communism depends on them. Also in the Soviet Union persons have been executed under laws enacted retrospectively to deal with their cases. That is, the persons had done things which, at the time, were not punishable under the law, but the potential harm to communism was judged so seriously that laws were thereupon enacted and the offenders put to death. That kind of defence, whether for a real or imagined harm, is not available for Christians. It is not only what is done, but also how it is done, that must be considered in contending for the faith. The Gospel cannot be defended by unjust procedures, because justice is part of the Gospel. To try to do so would be "doing evil that good may come", the outcome of which needs no repeating. The history of Christendom is full of terrible examples of those who, in striving to achieve one good, used evil means. But the Gospel cannot be halved or otherwise sundered, and today, instead of condemning people of past ages, we should look to our own conduct. "For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged."

Wilfred Lambert

THE GROUNDS OF FAITH

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uninspired leadership and from attempts to impose precisely the reactionary solutions hinted at in this pamphlet. The cure for apathy in this field as elsewhere is constructive hard work. We might start with a national building campaign to ensure that every ecclesia had a building from which to preach of which the community can be proud. Many of our "lightstands" are buried beneath bushels of dust and neglect and are about as inviting as undertakers' offices. While we are at it let us also scrap the bulk of our literature and replace it with material that is attractive to look at, interesting to read

and, most important, relevant to the problems of our own generation. Let us also try to create a climate of opinion in which those who have problems to raise or solutions to propose may state them openly, confident of a sympathetic hearing and genuine discussion.

As to our attitude to the churches around us, could we not concentrate a little more on the beliefs which we hold in common with them, and a little less on those which divide us? And if we must criticise, could we not make sure that we know what their beliefs are so that we avoid making fools of our community by attacking heresies which they hold only in our imaginations?

Above all, let us be optimistic,

certain that all things will work for our good if we have faith. In essence the Christian situation has not changed for if we have new obstacles to faith we also have new means of overcoming them and if we have greater responsibilities we also have the means to discharge them. If we try to shut ourselves off from the world and those in it, we will be shutting ourselves off from God, from His creation, and from His children. We will have buried our talent. Let us rather go out into the world confident of God's help and protection and so build for ourselves a faith a little less like that which needs protection from the real world and a little more like that which will move mountains.

Michael Noar.

The

Endeavour

Magazine

A CHRISTADELPHIAN REVIEW

TWO SHILLINGS

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DOCTRINE OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

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THE BASIS OF FAITH

IN Victorian England Christian faith in some form or other was a national heritage. This faith was often tied to the general optimism of the period, with Britannia ruling the waves and the progress of the white races conspicuous in many parts of the globe. Other faiths received no serious attention, and it was enough to dismiss their adherents as "heathen" or "infidels". The few professed atheists and agnostics were the exceptions that proved the rule. Yet our Victorian forebears were far from indifferent to the dangers besetting their faith, and books and pamphlets of Christian apologetics were freely produced and read. But there was something unreal about all this verbal battling in defence of the faith. The age itself was one of double standards. The veneer of respectability often bred hypocrisy and covered up an iniquity, compared with which the loose social standards of today seem less black. Also the shocking condition of the poor, as exposed by Dickens, revealed a less sensitive public conscience than a knowledge of the Gospel should have permitted. Against a background of such conditions defence of the Gospel tended to be theoretical, consisting of arguments about matters of fact. Often, quite fundamental points were hardly touched upon, because at the time virtually every person able and willing to speak out on these matters was already committed.

The Christadelphian community shared in this environment and showed a similar bent for justifying itself by argument. What separated us from the churches was nothing so fundamental as differences on whether Jesus was Lord, but doctrines of the last things, of the nature of man, and so forth. Conversions were made not (usually) from unbelief to belief and trust in God, but from belief in the inherent immortality of man, to belief in his natural mortality, and other similar points. In an age when the Bible was generally accepted as the Word of God, reasoning from the Scriptures was the obvious method of preaching, and the parallel with the methods used by Peter and Paul when arguing with the Jews was not missed. Yet any technique of preaching, no matter how good and proper in its place, can, by receiving too much prominence, produce side effects which are harmful. In this case the harm was that a body of people passionately devoted to converting others to their ways of thinking by these methods, often acquired the impression that true Christian faith arises from, and can be justified by the application of human reason to the Bible. "A reasoned approach to the Scriptures" is a phrase used to describe the way in which the claims of the Bible are stated, and then justified by reference to fulfilled prophecies, to the total harmony of all parts of the Bible, despite their diverse origins, and to other similar lines of reasoning. So long as it is recognized that all arguments of this kind are properly for use with those outside the community, then it can be said that their usefulness depends on whether they appeal to the outsider or not. But it cannot be stated too emphatically that the faith of the committed Christian does not depend on mere arrays of human

(Please turn to back page)

The Letter of Paul to the Romans

By Ralph Lovelock

Part Four—Gentile and Jew—Their Position before God (Chapters 1-3)

PAUL IS DEALING in this epistle with the position of Jew and Gentile before God, and the basis on which they were both called to fellowship in Christ. The first three chapters therefore deal with the problem of the Jewish objection to the inclusion of Gentiles based on the ritual uncleanness of the Gentile under the Law. Having addressed them formally as was common in those days he proceeds to lay down the foundation on which his Gospel was built:—"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." This is the position from which he will argue again and again as he proceeds, that faith is the sole requisite for approach to God through Christ, and although the Law was indeed the Word of the Living God, it was but a means of generating faith in Israel; it was the living faith which mattered, and if generated in the Gentile without benefit of the Law it made him as acceptable in God's sight as the most Law-abiding of the Jews.

Having stated so great a heresy in the ear of a Jew, he protests that he is not saying that wickedness is acceptable to God, but that "the righteousness of God is revealed through faith"; it is because faith is able to work that righteousness within man which the Law was unable to generate, that faith rather than Law is the vital necessity; and far from wickedness being acceptable, it is "He who through faith is righteous shall live." He then states the second great principle on which his Gospel is founded:—"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men." From this second proposition he will now argue that wickedness, whether in the unclean Gentile, or in the clean Jew, is equally unacceptable to God, and their record on the pages of history testifies that "none is righteous, no, not one."

The remainder of the first chapter is given over to an examination of the Gentile position. All the uncleanness with which the Jew charged them is frankly acknowledged, and as frankly stated to be detestable to God:—"We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those that do such things." He then turns to the Jew, who has received such favour from God under the Law, and claims that the Jew also is as wicked in the sight of God as is the Gentile, even though his wickedness be of a different kind. The favour of God is not theirs by right, it is not a wage earned under the Law, it is a manifestation of the patience of God intended to give opportunity to repent. That very pride in their favoured position is working exactly the opposite in their lives:—"By your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself." It is the life which a man leads which will form the basis of his final judgment by God:—"All who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law."

The Jew boasted that he was separate from all mankind, he was under covenant to God and lived a life which was truly cleaner than that of the Gentile, and as a seal on his covenant and entrance to the family of God he had been circumcised in obedience to the specific command of God. When he demanded that every man who approached to God should be circumcised, Moses was the direct mouthpiece of God, and to ignore wilfully this command was a rebellion against God. Because the Gentile was uncircumcised, the Jew claimed on the direct authority of God's Word that he was unacceptable to God, and because the Jew was circumcised he felt assured that he was an acceptable member of the divine family. Paul proceeds to say that a conformity to the direct command of God made no difference to a man's position before Him, and, like the ordinance of the Sabbath, circumcision had been given for man's

sake, not God's; it was because of that which ritual might do to a man's way of life that it mattered, and ritual conformity was of no import one way or the other. "Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the Law; but if you break the Law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?"

This staggering idea, so contrary to every religious principle of their God-given Law, would immediately provoke in their mind the objection that the Law would never have been given unless it was of supreme importance. This valid objection Paul now considers in chapter three. "Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision?" He admits at once that there is much advantage to the Jew, but it is an advantage of opportunity, not of acceptability to God. The Jew had received the revelation of God, was constantly reminded at every turn of the nature and existence of God, and in this position would find it much easier to develop faith which might grow within him into righteousness, than his much less fortunate brother among the Gentiles. But the mere conformity to the Law had no other advantage than that of personal exhortation, and so far as present relation to salvation was concerned mattered not one jot. "What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all; for I have already charged that all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin." The true salvation had no dependence upon ritual, and the ritual was but a means of revelation:—"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from Law, although the Law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction."

Finally, in this third chapter, he summarises the whole argument up to that point, and then will proceed in the next chapter to develop the details of such salvation. Those who are covenanted members of the divine family will only be saved because, and if, that opportunity has been used to nurture faith within the individual, and if, through some unlikely chance, the Gentile outside the covenant should have

developed faith, then that faith will be quite adequate to place him on equal terms with the Jew before God:—"He will justify the circumcised on the grounds of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith." It is the faith which alone can work that righteousness without which salvation is not possible, and in the remainder of this epistle he will examine in detail the many objections which such a principle raised. Before we follow him in his argument, it will be as well to consider the application of these principles to ourselves so that we, equally with them, may correct any misconceptions we may have had, and learn from this apostolic exposition the basis upon which we also stand before the throne of grace.

This epistle is of such great importance to us because Paul is not here arguing that the Law of Moses was specifically destined to last for a while and then be superseded. It is true that the Law was so destined, and that was the main argument in the Epistle to Hebrews. We must be careful however not to transfer that argument to this place, for Paul chooses to discuss, not on the basis of the particular, but of the general. It is not from the nature of the Law as designed to be transitory that he argues, but from the universal principle of acceptable approach to God: a principle which springs from the very nature of God, and which in consequence is valid for all time because God is eternal and changes not. It is obvious as we read his words that they apply not merely to the Jew, but to all men who would approach to God. When he says, "For there is no distinction," he is not merely saying that the Jew cannot despise the Gentile, but that both stand in similar position before God, and hence, what he is saying now to the Jew, applies equally to the Gentile should he in turn come to argue privilege before God on the basis of his conformity to command and membership of the covenant.

The Jew was a separated man, separated to the service of God and to be a witness of the divine grace to the nations. Unless he conformed to the command of circumcision he could not be a Jew, and could not appear before God in His sanctuary. Nevertheless, despite these very real privileges, the Gentile barred from the sanctuary because of ritual

uncleanness was in person just as acceptable to God on the sole basis of a personal faith. We, in our turn, are spiritual Israel, with our own covenant, with our own seal of membership into the family of God, and with our own peculiar sacrament. The principle still applies, however; we now have the advantage of the "oracles of God", yet we also are acceptable before God, not because we have been baptised, but because we have used the advantages which are ours to develop a faith which has changed our way of life into conformity with the "righteousness of God". It was the same Jesus who left the command to be baptised who also gave the sign by which His disciples should be known; baptism would make them a nominal member of the family of God, but "by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Unless we have that "living faith" described by James which transforms our life, our baptism is in God's sight as though we were unbaptised. And, unlikely as such an eventuality may seem, if another has such faith and shows in his living that righteousness of God which is by faith, he is acceptable before the God of all men, and his unbaptism will "be regarded" as baptism. Paul was not arguing that a Jew ought not to be circumcised, and there is no basis in the application of the principle to ourselves to argue that we need not be baptised. There is a challenging parallel between the words of Paul in this epistle, and those of Peter in his:—

"He is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal."

"Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Both were God-appointed, both had their place in the divine plan, both were intended to assist a man to develop faith. But it is the faith which is all important, which is the divine agent for the development of righteousness within man, and it is to the nature and purpose of faith in the divine working that Paul now turns in this epistle.

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New Light on the Early Church

CHRISTIANITY began as a sect of Judaism. Largely due to Paul's influence, Gentile converts were admitted to the Christian community without their submitting to the Mosaic ordinances, so that they remained Gentiles while professing Christ. After the fall of Jerusalem all Jewish sects save the Pharisees gradually disappeared. Meanwhile Christianity spread rapidly among the Gentiles and became a non-Jewish religion. Thus little is known about Jewish-Christian communities, though they are extremely interesting as descendants from the original pre-Pauline community in Jerusalem.

A new source of information on one of these communities has been announced by Shlomo Pines in *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* for 1966. A tenth-century Arab author, Abd al-Jabbar, in a work entitled, *The Establishment of Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Mohammed*, cites copiously from an otherwise lost Jewish-Christian work, perhaps written in Syria in the 5th or 6th century. This source is strongly anti-Pauline and knows the view that Jesus was son of Joseph. So far only excerpts of the Arab work have been given, but when the whole text is available it should throw much light on this obscure branch of the early Church.

The Meaning of Words

by Gordon Hunnings

WHAT IS THE MEANING of a word? This is a disarmingly simple question which it seems to be easy to answer. Behind the question there lurk a whole nest of troublesome problems which have puzzled thinkers for generations. For example, what is the relation of language to the world? Just how do our words connect up with facts and how can we account for determinate meaning in language? Our first reaction might be to say that this simply comes down to the problem of finding explicit definitions for our words. If we make our definitions rigorous enough this alone will guarantee that our language has significance. But where are we to find these definitions? Are they of the same type as those found in dictionaries? If so, then these will not link up our language with the world. Consider a simplified model to illustrate this point. Suppose I were to use the word "forgive" and someone were to ask for a definition and in reply I use the word "pardon." I could then be asked to define this word too, and in reply I might use the word "annul." If further pressed I might mention "remit" and so on until I get back to a definition which used the word "pardon." But this is a circular definition and not what we want at all to ensure that our language engages with reality. It is a type of definition having the form: a is b, b is c, . . . m is n, n is a. Plainly circular definition of this kind gets us no further. If our verbal definitions are not circular are they infinite? Do they have the form a is b, b is c, . . . m is n, . . . to infinity? If so then we can never know the meaning of our words, because requests for definitions that resolve our difficulties can never be given; our language is condemned to be indeterminate.

In the early years of this century

these difficulties gave rise to a philosophical theory of language known as Logical Atomism, which was associated with the name of Bertrand Russell. According to this theory, some words in language are basic and indefinable; they cannot be further analysed or defined. These are the logical atoms of language, so called after the indefinable, unanalysable atoms of ancient physical theory. The only way that such words can be defined is by ostensive definition, that is, by pointing to a thing of the kind in question and saying, "That is a so-and-so." Thus the names of logical atoms *mean* the objects that they denote. The most convincing examples of logical atoms are the names of colours. If I use the word "red" and am asked to define it I can only point to a thing that is coloured red and say, "That is red." No other definition is possible or necessary. This theory entailed that the objects that were ostensively defined are objects of logically private experience. That is to say, my sensation of redness may be qualitatively different from your sensation of redness; there is no way that we can compare them. You cannot experience *my* sensations nor I *yours*. But the gap between private experience and a common language was held to be bridged by ostensive definition. Although our respective sensations of redness are inaccessible to others we can point to things in the world and agree to call them by the common word "red."

For some time this account of language was widely accepted and some very interesting logical problems together with their solutions were propounded. In his early days the great pupil, colleague, and later rival of Russell, L. Wittgenstein accepted the broad outlines of logical atomism. He wrote a brilliant and influential book

developing in detail his own version of this theory. Later he became critical of it and then rejected the theory entirely and worked out a new philosophy of language which dominates the Anglo-Saxon world today. Wittgenstein asked us to imagine a simple and logically primitive kind of language used between a builder and his assistant and consisting of only four words: "slab," "block," "beam," and "pillar." Suppose now that the builder points to one of the blocks of stone and shouts to his assistant, "Slab!" Does the ostensive gesture of pointing unambiguously define the meaning of the word "slab" in the language? Well, what does he mean by shouting this word; does he mean "bring it," "break it," "sit on it," "worship it," "jump over it," "anoint it," . . . ? The point is that before such a command, represented by shouting "slab," can have any meaning we need a language in order to explain the significance of our pointing action and the use of the word. That is to say, the builder would have to be able to say to his assistant, "When I call out the word 'slab' what I want you to do is. . . ." Thus it is not ostensive definition that fixes the meaning of language but language that fixes the meaning of ostensive definition. We already need a language in which we can communicate before ostensive definition can be employed. Wittgenstein also asked if the objects to which language refers are private, how did we ever learn to use language? You cannot show me your private objects; I cannot show you mine — our language fails to communicate. The common connections on which a common language depends cannot be logically private sensations.

This led Wittgenstein to a new theory of language. Language is essentially social and is related to human

behaviour. If we found ourselves in a strange land where the natives spoke a language we did not understand we should determine when they were giving orders, asking questions, or saying prayers, by watching their behaviour. That is to say, that the framework of reference within which language has meaning is the common behaviour of mankind. It follows, therefore, that for a large class of words the meaning of a word is the use it has in language. If we want to determine the meaning of particular words or sentences we must differentiate their language with respect to their activities. Language is not something with a fixed logical form that is rigidly defined; it is infinitely varied and complex, so complex that when we misunderstand the way our language actually works we generate spurious philosophical problems by detaching words from their normal use and setting them in an artificial context. In order to resolve these problems what we must engage in is linguistic analysis. We must analyse the way we use our words and the context of their use so that we may command a clear view of our work and not misunderstand their application. Language is a form of life.

This grossly over-simplified account of the work of a great thinker will have to serve as an introduction leading on to something of great importance about religious language. This is a development that has not yet begun to take place but will doubtless follow in time. The point is that many theories of language were invented not so much to account for what we could say, but to rule out certain areas of language as forbidden territory. The idea was to construct a model of language-meaning which enabled you to rule out *a priori* areas of language such as metaphysics and religion. Since religious discourse, for example, did not conform to the model of language-meaning which was held to be the paradigm form of significant language, it could be dismissed as meaningless without further examination. Frequently these paradigm forms were taken from among the propositions of the natural sciences. What Wittgenstein has done is to show on philosophical grounds what has always been felt by Christians on other grounds, and that is that religious language can be removed from the Index; it is no longer forbidden because it does not conform to some over-simplified model of meaning. We

have been the victims of a confidence trick in that "meaningless," when applied to religious language, means only "not in accordance with this particular theory of meaning" and not "nonsensical." For the purposes of the theory "meaningless" has been given a technical definition and then used in its ordinary sense as a derogatory term.

Let me emphasise that Wittgenstein himself did not deal with the problems peculiar to religious language. He was fully occupied with working out his own views about language and the religious implications have yet to be developed and assessed. In what way could linguistic analysis be of service to our understanding of religious language? The occurrence of anthropomorphic expressions in the Bible has long been a source of philosophical embarrassment. The reason for this is that such expressions seem to depend upon the ascription of bodily parts to the Godhead. As it is unthinkable that God should have a human form we have tended to replace anthropomorphic expressions by philosophically more respectable terms like "Supreme Being," "The Absolute Reality," and "Ultimate Existence." The trouble has been that this tends to lose us in a maze of abstractions and such expressions have a curiously unsatisfactory ring to them. It is easy to pray to the Father of our Lord, but less easy to address The Absolute Reality. Perhaps where we were mistaken is in the unconscious assumption that anthropomorphic expressions contained a descriptive content. What we need is a clear view of the actual function of such expressions in religious language: a function which is perhaps not only satisfactory but in which the notion of being a kind of description of God is irrelevant. If this is correct, then we may continue to use expressions like "the hand of God," "the face of God," and "the eye of God" in performance of their proper function without ascribing bodily parts to God as the price we must pay for using them.

However, we must also realise that this reinstatement of religious language raises fresh problems which will also have to be considered. In order to understand language we need to relate it to the social and cultural context which gave it life and meaning. This entails that words do not necessarily retain a fixed and unequivocal meaning throughout the history of their employment. We are familiar

with the shift in meaning of the word "Messiah," for example. "Messiah" had a different meaning for Jesus than it had in popular Jewish expectation. This fact made it impossible for him to give a simple "yes" or "no" answer to the question, "Are you the Messiah?" The only possible reply would be to say, "In my sense of 'Messiah,' yes I am; in your sense of it, I am not." This is why we see Jesus first leading his disciples to recognise that he was the Messiah, and having achieved this, leading them to a reinterpretation of the concept of Messiahship. What other examples might we not find of this kind of thing in the Bible? Perhaps we need to distinguish different uses of words like "sacrifice," "redeemer," and "sin-offering" and differentiate them with respect to the cultural and social context of their various uses. Few today would want to insist that the only way of viewing the cross of Christ is through the entrails of a goat. Perhaps, too, the source of our persistent disputes about the atonement is the view that there is only one doctrine of the atonement which is absolutely identical throughout the whole of the Bible. What the disputants get hold of is an aspect of different ideas about the atonement which they can then interpret as the only aspect.

Here then is a new field for work which may free us from the tyranny of defending to the last the fossil language-forms of last century exegesis. Our task may be conceived under two heads:

(1) To relate different parts of the Bible to their cultural and social contexts in order to elucidate the meaning of its message for the times in which it was given. This is the task of historical scholarship.

(2) To reinterpret the Bible so that its message is relevant for our situation, and its forms of expression find new use and significance today. This is the task of Christian witness.

Of course these tasks will lead to disagreements about the meaning of parts of the Bible and differences in the assessment of its relevance, but this is no reason for not attempting them. After all the view that the Bible has a fixed and unchangeable meaning has not been conspicuously successful in producing unanimity even within our own community. In Christ God has spoken his last word to men; our problem is what is the application of that word *today*?

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

ONE OF the sources of modern debate and criticism surrounding religion has come from the discipline of psychology. Psychology is that knowledge which has been and is being built concerning the intricacies of human nature, looking at both a person as an individual personality and as a person in society. In other words psychology is that subject which asks itself the questions: What makes a man tick? Is the behaviour of a man affected by the fact that he has to live with other people? It has long since established itself as a respectable field of study and there are few other fields nowadays in which the effects of psychology are not felt. Education, economics, history, political science, sociology, psychiatry, social care and welfare, medicine—to name some—base a great deal of their present knowledge on information and conclusions made by psychologists. The increasing tendency will be for this process to continue and expand.

Two Irreconcilable Forces?

It has been the attempt to apply psychological principles to the field of religion which has created a great deal of re-thinking and heart-searching among people of all religious persuasions in recent years. We are often presented with the picture of psychology and religion as two

opposing forces. Psychology is on the one side with its ability and readiness to explain the inconsistencies in the behaviour of the human race; its tendency to treat man's inhumanity to man as at root a social evil and, above all, its optimistic message that, with increased understanding and knowledge, man will be in a position to lessen and perhaps eliminate those evils which act as cankers in our society. On the other side it is alleged we have the God of the Bible, man a woeful slave of his sinful tendencies, and a message which states that it is our duty to accept our present existence with its trials and temptations because ultimately God is the final physician to cure the 'world's ills.

It is maintained that we have here a picture of two irreconcilable forces which in their very natures are incompatible, that to reach out for this "human wisdom" is to begin on a downhill process, that to accept some of the conclusions of psychology would be to strike at the very root of our faith and to question our need for God. This I feel is perhaps an overdrawn picture on my part but it serves to illustrate the feeling of quite a few people. They admit the help that psychology has been in shedding light on perplexing issues. Racial prejudice is an example. Why are

certain groups in our society accepted and certain groups rejected? The notion of a scapegoat is to be found in very early history and is reported in the Old Testament. Periodically the sins of a tribe were, with the relevant ceremony, transferred to a goat which was driven off into the desert. The innocent goat was made to suffer for the sins of the people. The practice of finding a victim upon whom to blame our troubles and, in most cases, to make the object of our aggression, either physically or mentally, is a familiar one which we can easily perceive today because this simple mechanism in our personality structure has been brought to our notice. The child may retaliate against a pet when frustrated by parents or school-friends. Hitler found it convenient to blame the Jews for Germany's plight. This particular and very simple example illustrates the contribution that psychology can make. When a particular process in our thinking has been explained and understood then the possibility in the evils resulting from that way of thinking have surely to some extent been lessened. (Obviously one is not saying that here we have an overnight remedy for racial prejudice.) But many are rather worried about the effects which acceptance of psychological truths might have on their faith in God. This way of thinking I feel is wrong and is based perhaps on a misunderstanding of what psychology is about.

What I should like to attempt in this article is to indicate the sort of thing that psychology can teach us and how this information can benefit our religious sense of values. Psychology can lay the basis for a fuller and more meaningful life. It can give us strength and courage to remain faithful to our ideals. It can, in a very positive way, lead us to a truer and fuller understanding of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps most of all it can show how relevant is this teaching for our day and generation.

The Place of Psychology

Psychology cannot and does not attempt to explain religion away. To dismiss religion as mere wishful thinking and a method of escapism from reality is not the task of a psychologist, and for him to do so would be a step outside the realms of science into that

of value judgment. Undoubtedly as W. E. Sargent says, "psychology has done much to separate the true from the false religious experience and has helped to rid religion of much cant and humbug. Its final aim is not merely to state how man thinks, feels and acts, but how he can do these things much better and more in accordance with the Divine purpose that lies at the back of all things; how he can adjust himself, and make some personal contribution to the whole of his environment, physical, social, economic, matrimonial and religious."

It is partly the message of psychology which has enabled the Bishop of Woolwich to make his penetrating criticism of the false and shallow religion by which many are surrounded. Psychological investigation has overwhelmingly shown that many people do seek in religion an escape from the harsher realities of life, that too often the answer "It is the will of God" is used when we wish to save our own conscience. The point that the Bishop has been at pains to explain is that conventional religion tends to shield one from the real message of the Gospel, that we have a responsibility to our fellow men which must be faced. He feels that the time has come when man must cease treating God as a peg, or a refuge, or a compensation for miseries which he should be fighting. What we must return to, maintains the Bishop, is the New Testament "teaching of 'sonship' which stands as a figure and should convey to our minds the man who has passed out of his minority and come of age".

Surely insofar as this type of knowledge can help us to return to the foundations of our faith with increased understanding and appreciation then this knowledge will be of value to us. The whole calling of the New Testament is to a mature manhood in Jesus Christ, to a new conception of things which makes us realistic in our approach to the world.

"You must therefore be like men stripped for action, perfectly self-controlled" (I Peter 1: 13).

It is the idea inherent in the words of Paul to the Ephesians (4: 13-17).

"So shall we all at last attain to the unity inherent in our faith and our knowledge of the Son of God—to mature manhood, measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ. We are no longer to be

children, tossed by the waves and whirled about by every fresh gust of teaching, dupes of crafty rogues and their deceitful schemes. No, let us speak the truth in love; so shall we grow up into Christ."

How Psychology Can Help

If we take religion to be the attitude which involves the personal belief in a divine power, together with some modification or determination of conduct in the light of this belief, in what way can psychological knowledge help us in our understanding of the religious attitude and the various phenomena in the individual which arise from such an attitude? The field of psychological investigation is a wide and complex one. Psychologists are interested in every facet of our make-up as an individual, and they make extensive use of knowledge from other fields such as biology and physiology. They consider how we think, how we feel, how we perceive the world around us, intelligence, personality and its development and the effect of social and cultural factors on our perception of the world. They attempt to trace the growth of a personality from conception to the death-bed together with all the effects which go to produce an individual organism.

An example of one field of psychological knowledge where perhaps the conclusions reached are more immediately obvious for our understanding of our fellow-men (and ourselves) is perhaps the field of personality. Narrowing the field a little more, let us look at that area of personality which psychologists call the area of "conflict and adjustment." We are born into the world with a life-or-death commitment to maintain our body state. We need food, drink, constant body-temperature, oxygen, etc. A great deal of the rest of our lives consists in satisfying these basic needs (motives).

This is perhaps not telling us anything that our own common sense has not already pointed out to us. It does not in itself tell us very much about adult behaviour. It can however help to make the concept of frustration easier to understand. Whenever one of these basic urges is unsatisfied it produces "frustration" and we will resort to different courses of action to satisfy the urgent need. When all goes well a motive initiates

behaviour which leads to satisfaction. Frustration is that state of a person when the satisfaction of the motivated behaviour is difficult to obtain. Just as this is true of the physical plane so it is true of the social plane. We find the more primitive societies are much more concerned with satisfaction of physical urges than social motives. Conversely, for example, meal times in this country are much more a social convention than the satisfaction of primary needs. As the society becomes more civilised its motives become more socialised (as one would expect). Living in a complex and close society such as ours many of our social needs have to do with other people. One modern psychologist describes them very briefly as follows: "safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualisation".

Social motives like biological motives can be frustrated. The principal sources of frustration are (a) other people who are a tremendous source of frustration; (b) social standards and norms (e.g., new immigrants will often find new ways puzzling and perplexing); (c) physical defects (e.g., our bodies are only capable of a certain amount of activity); (d) conflict of motives usually between biological urges and social motives (e.g., The Concept of Ambivalence of Carl Jung. He pointed out from his clinical studies that ambivalence, conflict between two motives, is very often characterised by the presence of excitement. On this view romantic love is a state of ambivalence where one has a conflict of desire and a moral code to uphold.)

How do we solve our frustration? Three courses of action are open to us. If we recognise our frustration then it is perhaps best to treat it primarily as an intellectual problem and using all facilities available we can perhaps resolve it. We can, on the other hand, have highly emotional impulsive reactions during which we often lose our sense of direction, e.g., outbursts of temper. The most common way of reacting to frustration is however one that we have been taught since childhood. One which is so universal that we accept it as commonplace. One which society has taught us. One which we all resort to. It is called a "defence mechanism" in psychological terminology. Our use of

defence mechanisms tends on the whole to be an unconscious use. They are methods used to protect the individual against excessive anxiety and to maintain his self-esteem as an individual. Let us look at some of these and see if we can recognise them.

Deception by "Defence Mechanism"

Compensation This refers to a reaction of feelings of inferiority based on real or fancied defects. The reaction is an attempt to overcome defects in a compensatory way. One can redouble one's efforts as did Demosthenes. One can redouble one's efforts in an alternative field to compensate for lack of ability in one area. The most common form of compensation tends however to be of an over-compensatory nature, e.g., boasting, bellowing of one's ability, etc.

Repression This refers to a reaction in which a person tries to repress from full awareness, impulses that he would prefer to deny. An excessive feeling of guilt is very often an indication that unconscious motives are being repressed. A man's feeling of guilt may actually be relieved by confessing to himself or others his "sin." Repression is a common way of reacting to embarrassing situations. A whole section of our memory surrounding some disagreeable event can actually be repressed and amnesia (forgetfulness of the event) result.

Displacement. This is the reaction of switching feelings from a person on whom they cannot be expressed to a person on whom they can be expressed. We have the classical story of the man who is an underdog at the office but takes it out on his wife on returning home. The reaction of displacement is commonly out of proportion to the normal requirements of the situation (e.g., Scapegoating: Jews in Germany). It usually applies to the emotions of anger, hate and fear.

Regression In the main this refers to a reaction in which we deteriorate from a higher level to a lower level of behaviour in the face of frustration, e.g., the adult who at times resorts to childish behaviour.

Rationalisation In general this is a process of offering socially acceptable reasons instead of the real ones. Rationalisation does not mean "to act rationally"; it means to so justify conduct according to

motives which are personally desirable that we *seem* to have acted rationally. In the search for the "good" reason rather than the true reason for what we do, we can bring forward a number of excuses. These excuses are usually plausible and the circumstances they justify may be true ones; they simply do not tell the whole story. Look at some examples:

(a) "Liking" or "disliking" as an excuse: The girl who was not invited to a party said that she would not have gone if asked, because she did not like some of the crowd.

(b) Blaming circumstances or people: Mother failed to wake me. My tools were not sharp. I can't seem to find enough time, etc.

(c) Procrastination as an excuse: I was just going to ring you (or write you).

(d) Comparison with others as an excuse: If Harry can do that, why shouldn't I do it too?

Rationalisation is seldom a conscious deception. We often believe in the reasons we are giving. It is a way of reducing tension by changing our way of looking at things. It requires a reorganisation of our perception. The important thing about rationalisation is that the deception can become so complete. Today's rationalisation about a course of action in which, say, feelings pull one way and intellect the other, may become tomorrow's reason. If at first I do something impulsively and then rationalise about it, I may end up by doing it deliberately for the very reasons that furnished the good rationalisation. Rationalisation is a social requirement in Western culture often rather than truth. We prefer good, more socially acceptable excuses and reasonings, rather than the truth.

Projection This is a reaction we use to preserve the individual from guilt and blame feelings by projecting them on to other people, e.g., the stingy person who thinks others are like himself. It is a common, pervasive and subtle mechanism. When one sees a person more than ordinarily critical of another then the first is most probably using a projection reaction, protecting himself from recognising his own undesirable qualities by designing them in exaggerated amounts to other people.

Phantasy The psychological form

of reacting to frustration by withdrawing from the situation mentally. Our thinking becomes unchecked by reality. At all times we tend to day dream but under periods of stress we find this tendency increasing and all sorts of fanciful ways of solving our problems present themselves to us. Escape into phantasy is quite a natural feature of life — a commonplace way of escaping reality (e.g., money problems are "solved" by the dream of finding a pot of gold).

Sublimation This allows us to express in socially sanctioned ways impulses which if expressed directly would be condemned. It is a substitute form of behaviour, e.g., in our society aggression is prohibited in direct form but is permitted in debates, verbal arguments, etc.

Surely with concepts such as the defence mechanisms, psychology has provided us with a body of information which increases our knowledge of ourselves? The very common device of defence mechanisms has really two purposes: to protect the individual against excessive anxiety (or frustration), and to maintain his self-esteem. In serving these purposes they reduce our tensions by means of self-deception, the denial of impulses and the disguise of motives.

Many personal problems can be solved rationally (as we mentioned earlier) by taking into account the alternatives available and the consequences of the various courses of action. But clear logical choice in solving personal issues is difficult for two reasons: (a) the person's own emotions and prejudices often get in the way of such a choice; and (b) the future is always unknown, so that there are always uncertainties, and risks have to be taken. Here defence mechanisms enter in and psychology by its examination of these mechanisms can offer us some practical help. When defence mechanisms are employed in moderation and do not exclude a more realistic facing on our part of the problems which have to be solved, they may increase our sense of well-being and so serve a useful purpose. But the point is that, at best, they are face-saving reactions and can only ultimately protect a person until he reaches a realistic solution of his problem. Psychology has come to the conclusion that actions based on defence mechanisms can

never be genuinely satisfying because they are impelled by motives which are extrinsic.

The Message of Christianity

There can be no doubt about the ultimate message that we have here. All that detracts or deviates from the fundamental issues and basic problems which we have to face day by day can in the long run lead to no true satisfaction. Here psychology leads us back to the truth that the Bible expresses. The less self-centred our lives become and the more we are *genuinely* concerned for others (not using them as mere pegs for our own progress)—the less likely we are to suffer from maladjustment, neurosis, depression and similar modern ills which all reflect in varying degrees a preoccupation with self.

The good news of the gospel is not that we should be good. That is not good news at all. It is bad news. For the fact of the matter is that none of us is god. Jesus Himself declared that none is good, save God. The good news of the gospel is that God loves us in spite of the fact that we are unlovable, that God forgives us in spite of the fact that we are unforgivable, that He accepts us in spite of our unacceptability. When this truth is seen and grasped in the depth of a man's soul, he has become a new creature. He gives up his anxious and fretful attempts to save his own life and loses it—to God. He finds his life by losing it. In becoming a captive he is set free. He is liberated from all the concerns of the world. He loves God Who has spoken to him the saving word in Christ and trusts utterly in Him. The spirit of Christ is now the determining power in his life and there is no longer a strenuous struggle with his inner lusts desperately striving to hold them in check. Rather his inner desires are transformed. Where previously he sought out of his own emptiness selfishly to use others as a means of reassuring the self or augmenting the self, he now seeks to serve, to give—not out of his own resources but out of what has been given to him in Christ. He is no longer a pauper, impoverished and grasping. To him have been given the riches of Christ and he has become a philanthropist, scattering the coins of God's goodness in prodigal extravagance.

Back to School from a Holiday in the Slums

(A report available from "Shelter,"

86 The Strand, London W.C.2.

1s 6d post free)

THIS REPORT BY "SHELTER," the national campaign to aid the homeless and those living in slum conditions, spotlights the detrimental effect that bad housing has on a child's education and development. Through photographs and quotations from teachers and social workers, the report takes us into the lives of people living in "twilight" conditions virtually unknown to most of us.

Children—and it is reckoned that 1,420,000 of them are living in overcrowded environment—are affected throughout their infant and teenage lives. Lack of space limits them in every way. No room to play. No room to have peace and quiet. Children cannot do homework with younger members of the family playing in the room or with the television set blaring. There is no space to keep schoolbooks safely, and any work done is likely to be destroyed by the other children in the family. The children go to bed too late—they can't sleep with the wireless or television as a background, or with older ones in the family moving about in the same room.

At school they are too tired to work. Their attendance records are bad because of frequent illness, which in such overcrowded conditions quickly spreads round the whole family. A teacher in Kensington spoke of one of her pupils:

"George was an interesting boy. He was bronchitic, and had a fearful attendance record. Through contact with the welfare department I learned, quite by chance, that he had to sleep by the Ideal boiler in the kitchen/living room in a basement. There was one other room in the "flat", and this, with a screen in it, served as bedroom for his two teenage sisters and his parents.

When he used to fall asleep in the class room, as he often did, I used to think of the previous evening, of the boy waiting for his parents to retire to their overcrowded room, so that he could himself get some rest—and I let him sleep."

Bad accommodation makes the children nervous and unable to concentrate. Often the parents move from

house to house trying to find better conditions. This makes life even worse for these children who usually have to change school too frequently to be able to settle down to any consistent lessons. The turnover of children at a Paddington primary school is about 40 per cent a year.

Some children manage to overcome these disadvantages by staying at school after hours to do their homework. If they are fortunate they may escape from the ghetto, but too often their full abilities are cramped and even the chance of going to university has to be turned down because of the need to help the family. "When you know their background," said a Birmingham grammar school mistress, "there are some that you cannot really advise to stay on at school."

Rehousing in proper conditions makes a marked improvement, as one social worker reports:

The children are much better for the move. When they were living in poor, overcrowded accommodation they were insecure, could never settle and were always quarrelling among themselves. Now they are quieter and more polite. They are also cleaner; they have a bathroom now. Previously their only washing facilities were a kitchen tap.

Shelter has done much since it started. *Shelter* groups all over the country have been drawing attention to the need, and mass-media coverage has been good also. The television film "Cathy Come Home" attracted considerable public concern, and has now been shown on networks abroad. Royalties from the film are being donated to the campaign.

Every pound given is multiplied by loans and grants, so that £325 can give a home to a family for life.

Even so, in terms of quantity, this success scratches only the surface of the problem. *Shelter* is doing valuable first-aid, while keeping the problem before public attention. But ultimately the government must take over. It's dynamite that's needed—but dynamite doesn't go off without a fuse.

Ian McHaffie

Endeavour Summer School

1967

An
Informal
Report



Fircroft College from the air

ON SATURDAY, 29th July, the second Endeavour Summer School commenced in the serenity of Fircroft College, the same venue as last year. Fresh faces mingled with those who were eagerly looking forward to joys of study and fellowship experienced the year before.

This year there was only one central study while more time was devoted to studying a wide variety of interesting topics. This main study—The Gospel According to John—led by Brother Wilfred Lambert—occupied us for one of the two morning sessions each day. In the other morning session members of the School introduced a variety of subjects for discussion, ranging from "Modern Preaching Methods" to a debate on voting and standing for election to local and national governments. Speakers concentrated on putting forward ideas and points of view not commonly heard among us together with the evidence supporting them. Certainly much fresh thought

was provoked and the broad prospect in which our faith was seen was much welcomed.

As last year, the afternoons were devoted to private study and recreation, while the evening session was devoted to discussing further topical issues. Each evening was concluded by a short devotional meeting.

The School was brought to a close on Saturday, 5th August, by a fraternal in which Brother Ron Coleman spoke on "Maker of All Things—Maker of Ill Things?", and Brother Wilfred Lambert on "Freedom and Authority."

The Gospel of John

Stressing the need to come to an open Bible in a time of change, Brother Lambert introduced the study by noting some of the portions which distinguished John from the other three gospels. Much of the material in the Synoptics is set in the Galilee region, the scene only moving to

Jerusalem at the end, whereas most of Jesus' teaching in John is set in Jerusalem. The Synoptics record a far greater number of events, the teaching of Jesus being given in short, epigrammatic form, whereas the fourth gospel concerns itself with drawing out the significance of a small number of events in detail. Often one finds the sayings of Jesus merging into the commentary of the evangelist without a break. E.g., does Jesus end his discourse in John 3:12, 13 or 15?

Three of John's key-words—Love, True (Truth), Life (Spiritual)—occur far less frequently in Matthew, Mark or Luke whereas the three Synoptic key-words—Kingdom, Repent (Repentance), Parable—occur rarely if at all in John.

Only in John do we find the reason for it being written (stated in 20:30): a selection of things Jesus did and said is recorded so that we may (a) believe that he is the Christ and (b) believing, have life.

Regarding authorship, the earliest title is simply "According to John." The Gospel makes reference to "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and distinguishes him from Simon Peter although John's name is not mentioned. The writer was himself a witness of the things recorded, including the crucifixion. Chapter 21:24 implies that the thoughts of John were used in a compilation made by the Church (the "we").

Independent historical evidence was considered and found useful in establishing the date, but inconclusive concerning authorship.

Brother Lambert suggested:

(a) The question of authorship was not so important. What did matter was the value of the book's witness.

(b) It could well have been the teaching of John, the son of Zebedee, written up by someone else.

(c) As there were a number of close similarities between John and Mark the writer of John knew Mark's gospel and had been influenced by it.

(d) Unlike the Synoptics and Paul, John (and Hebrews) is concerned, not with building a church, but with preserving an existing one. The physical absence of Jesus was being felt and reassurance was needed that this did not mean total absence.

(e) That the gospel was written early in the second century.

The structure of the book is as follows:

1. Prologue
2. Events in the Life of Jesus
3. Jesus' discourse to the disciples (just prior to his physical departure)
4. Crucifixion and resurrection
5. Appendix

It was pointed out that a knowledge of one of the other gospels was necessary to understand John (confirmation of the later date). E.g., there is no account of the Last Supper or of Jesus' baptism, but there are allusions to both.

Also, there are two "levels" of understanding ideas, unique to John.

Resurrection	(I) Now, for every believer	(II) At the last day
Second Coming	(I) Jesus, in the Spirit	(II) At the last day
Spirit (<i>Pneuma</i>)	(I) Wind	(II) The Spirit of God
Bread, water	(I) Physical	(II) Spiritual
e.g.	(I) Feeding of Multitude	(II) The Bread of Life

Thus it was seen that important lessons were drawn from selected

incidents "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ" and "that believing, you may have life in his name."

There is little background information provided in the Prologue. The other gospels have to be referred to in order to answer questions of geography and parentage. The writer is concerned rather with the things of eternal significance. Thus, he does not even give a date, but "In the beginning." The allusion is to the creation story in Genesis, where also there was "darkness" or chaos, when God's Word went forth, "Let there be light," and "light" came into the world.

Logos is impossible to define accurately as it has so many meanings. It can mean (a) the spoken word including the idea of a discourse and also the whole message of God, (b) a purpose associated with reason. The following usages also add to our understanding:—

1. It was a fundamental doctrine of pagan Greek philosophy. In Stoic philosophy it corresponded to the purpose behind the universe.

2. In the Old Testament creation was by the Word of God. An associated idea is that of Wisdom (Proverbs 8:22-30), which God created and through which creation took place. This is Hebrew poetry personifying wisdom (skill) as God's means of operating.

3. In Jewish circles this idea of Wisdom also prevailed. Philo of

- Chapter 1:1-18
Chapter 1:19-Chapter 12
Chapters 13-17
Chapters 18-20
Chapter 21

Alexandria expressing Hebrew thought in Greek used "Word" to convey the concept.

In Chapter 1:7 we meet one of the themes in John, that of testimony or witness. It is found again in vs. 15. Verses 11 and 12 are similar to Paul's teaching that the gospel is for all who have faith.

the question of Jesus' pre-existence was mentioned. Although early Church writings seemed to support this, there is no support from the Old Testament or Hellenistic or Hebraic Judaism. The law was called the "Daughter of God"—God's purpose and essence were summed up in law.

When John the Baptist is introduced in vs. 19 no account is given of his baptism. Emphasis is not laid on his greatness, but only on his value as a witness. The main emphasis is on Jesus as Messiah. The prophet in vs. 21 was someone of a Messianic character mentioned in apocryphal writings, but not the Messiah himself.

In verse 29 the idea of a sacrificial lamb taking away sin would probably not have been understood at the time as it was not until the Last Supper that this idea was established.

The miracle of changing water into wine in Chapter 2 establishes Jesus as Son of God. It follows the building up of the witness found in Chapter 1. The cleansing of the Temple again emphasises Jesus' Messiahship. The significance of the resurrection teaching (vs. 19) was not then seen by the disciples (vs. 22).

The dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus represents one between the gospel and Judaism. Nicodemus would understand being born again of water as baptism was well known. However, Jesus has to explain re-birth of the Spirit, an example of two levels of understanding: *Pneuma* means "wind" and "Spirit". Although the wind cannot be seen, its presence is unmistakable. So must we be born again with the new life that is God's. Jesus is the first to be able to teach these things, for no one else has descended from heaven. The Jews would understand this plainly to mean Jesus had received this new teaching from God and not as a literal descent. The dialogue merges into the comment of the evangelist at vs. 16 (?) and the teaching of God's love and salvation follows.

John the Baptist is again introduced in such a way as to show his relative insignificance compared to Jesus.

The account of the meeting at the Well in Chapter 4 illustrates the transition from the natural to the spiritual plane—this time with the subject "water" and "water of life," and later with the idea of a spiritual harvest. In verses 39-42 we have further "testimonies":—that of the Samaritan woman and then those of the villagers.

In dealing with John's use of spiritual language and ordinary narrative.

The miracle of the healing of the man waiting for the troubling of the waters is used to bring in the discourse on the Sabbath to which the conflict with the Jews gave rise. To appreciate the reply Jesus gave in vs. 17 one needs to be familiar with the teaching in the other gospels on this subject. When the disciples had been plucking corn on the Sabbath, Jesus argued that the Sabbath had been ordained for man's benefit and not *vice versa*. At the time of writing this was a dead issue in the Church, and what is now stressed is Jesus' relationship with the Father: "My Father worketh and I work." The Jews take exception and in the discussion which follows their witness is rejected (vs. 34). Verse 25 speaks of the first resurrection (at baptism, now) while vs. 28 only deals with the latter.

Similarly in Chapter 6 the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 leads into the theme of spiritual bread out of natural bread. In vs. 31 Jesus teaches, in answer to the Jews, that the true bread of heaven is given only by God, and then that He is in fact the Bread of Life. His uncompromising teaching was totally unacceptable to the Jews, first, that he was from heaven or the Father, and secondly, that they must eat his flesh and drink his blood (the doctrine of the Last Supper). Many even of his disciples deserted him.

In Chapters 13-17 one is aware of mounting tension between Jesus and the Jews, especially after the raising of Lazarus. In the Last Supper (13-17) Jesus is aware that the end is imminent and is preparing the disciples for

what lies ahead. The air of tragedy is clearly conveyed but there is no mention of the bread and the wine. This is because their significance has already been dealt with in Chapter 6.

Of great importance is the example of humility shown in the astonishing washing of the disciples' feet by their master. Also, the coming betrayal to his crucifiers is set forth as a victory and not a defeat—the glorification of the Son of Man and Son of God in fact. The physical departure of Jesus would herald the sending of the Comforter. They will not be left alone and leaderless. The disciples are left with the command to love one another and are told to expect persecution.

The Father's house with its many rooms quite plainly refers to the temple and the rooms where the priests lived and stored their equipment. The disciples are to be part of a spiritual temple with Christ as corner stone and the apostles as foundation.

The parable of the True Vine is taken from Is. 15. Following the prayer of Jesus in Chapter 17 the next two chapters deal with the events leading up to the Crucifixion. Again the aspect of victory is stressed. The witness then appears again in Chapter 19-25.

Concerning the problem of what is meant in Chapter 20:17, Brother Lambert offered two possible solutions—

(a) in accord with the theme of Jesus' physical departure being followed by his spiritual coming as the Comforter, Mary was being told not to cling to his physical presence, but

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to accept the new state of affairs.

(b) if the R.S.V.'s "do not hold" (although it is not the usual Greek word) is accepted, Jesus could be telling Mary that she should rather be concerned with going to the brethren and spreading the resurrection news. The end of Chapter 20 is a perfectly fitting conclusion to the book.

The thrice repeated question concerning Peter's love in Chapter 21 would recall his three denials. No significance is to be laid on the use of different words for "love" as the two words are used interchangeably in other places. The chapter ends with what appears to be a demonstration that the disciple whom Jesus loved, as well as Peter, received a special commission from Jesus and his witness is thereby confirmed.

The evening sessions were taken up with considerations of the following subjects:

1. Christian Ethics
2. The Meaning of Existentialism
3. Concept of the Death State
4. How Can We Understand Prophecy?
5. Can an Evolutionist be a Christian?
6. Trends in Modern Religious Thinking

Each address aroused considerable interest and gave rise to much lively discussion.

Everyone left with a profound sense of gratitude for the richness of spiritual food and fellowship enjoyed during this uplifting week. Readers will be thrilled to hear that it is proposed to hold yet another Summer School next year (D.V.).

Peter Powell.

SUMMER SCHOOL 1968

SATURDAY, 27th JULY-SATURDAY, 3rd AUGUST

Our Study Week will again be held, God Willing, in the house and lovely grounds of Fircroft College, Birmingham. The course will be run on similar lines to last year and will have the Book of Isaiah as the main study.

The cost of the week will be about £11 0s. 0d. Special terms for families and students. It is important to know the approximate accommodation required, and those wishing to attend should write as soon as possible to our business address:

The Endeavour Magazine, 104 Lady Byron Lane,
Knowle, Solihull, Warwickshire.

Those Teenagers—700 Years Ago

THE WORLD is passing through troublesome times. The young people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint. They talk as if they alone knew everything and what passes for wisdom with us is foolishness with them. As for the girls, they are foolish and immodest, and unwomanly in speech, behaviour and dress.

Peter the Monk, in 1274.

The Doctrine Of The Holy Spirit

The Present Day

By George McHaffie

IN THE SPRING issue of the magazine, the background to the New Testament teaching about the Holy Spirit was explored. Difficulties of various kinds appear, however, when we try to relate the teaching to the experiences of today's world. We live in a matter-of-fact age. Now any claim is suspect if it does not conform to a world view which sees every effect following from an ascertainable and examinable cause.

There are two main religious attitudes to the Holy Spirit. One tends to explain away possible present-day applications on the grounds that the Holy Spirit ceased with the close of the apostolic era. A conclusion which is often drawn is that inability to perform miracles is proof enough that no Holy Spirit works now. The other attitude, most faithfully represented by the Pentecostal churches, becomes so keen to claim the Holy Spirit that it is ready to declare that no one can be a Christian unless some manifestation of the Spirit such as "tongues" is in evidence. One may suspect that the various stands adopted in relation to this are by now well hardened and that it will be difficult to find unprejudiced thinking on the part of many exponents.

From Paul's description of the church in his day it does not appear that every believer either spoke with tongues or performed miracles.

In each of us the Spirit is manifested in one particular way, for some useful purpose. One man, through the Spirit, has the gift of wise speech, while another, by the power of the same Spirit, can put the deepest knowledge into words. Another, by the same Spirit, is granted faith; another, by the one Spirit, gifts of healing, and another miraculous powers. . . . (1 Cor. 12: 7-10, N.E.B.)

Are all apostles? all prophets? all teachers? Do all work miracles? Have all gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues of ecstasy? . . . (1 Cor. 12: 29-30, N.E.B.)

From this we may conclude that the more obvious manifestations of the Spirit are no necessary part of the life of every Christian. By the same reasoning it is unwise to conclude that the absence of miracle working power invalidates a belief in the present operation of the Holy Spirit.

If we examine the teaching of the New Testament on the continuance of the Holy Spirit, certain firm conclusions can be reached. The promises concerning the Spirit seem to be unbound by considerations of time.

Is there a father among you who will offer his son a snake when he asks for fish, or a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you, then, bad as you are, know how to give your children what is good for them how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11: 11-13, N.E.B.)

Any ordinary parent would quickly repudiate the attitude described by the opening of this quotation. Yet it is on the same grounds of parental love that God will give the Holy Spirit to those who pray to Him for it. Failure on His part would put Him in the position of the parent giving a stone for bread. The promise is therefore rooted in the moral character of God. So long as He continues a loving heavenly Father, so long will He give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. There is clearly no limit of time to this promise.

Peter's statement on the Day of Pentecost follows closely the lines laid down by Jesus. Peter commanded the people to repent and be baptised.

Then he says,

... you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God may call. (Acts 2: 38-39, N.E.B.)

Again this is quite unlimited — as many as are called, the far off, all who are called. It is most likely, too, that Peter has in mind the words of Isaiah 59: 20-21 (R.S.V.).

And he will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the Lord. And as for me, this is my covenant with them says the Lord: my spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth or out of the mouth of your children, or out of the mouth of your children's children, says the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore.

From which we glean the everlasting nature of the promise which Peter carried, "My spirit . . . shall not depart out of your mouth . . . or of your children or of your children's children . . . for evermore."

The gift was also expected by Paul to last until the return of Christ. In 1 Cor. chapter 1, verse 7 he says,

There is indeed no single gift you lack, while you wait expectantly for our Lord Jesus Christ to reveal himself. (N.E.B.)

True love of God is developed by the Holy Spirit.

Such a hope is no mockery, because God's love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us. (Rom. 5: 5, N.E.B.)

Do you not know that your body is a shrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the Spirit is God's gift to you? (1 Cor. 6: 19, N.E.B.)

It is the grounds of his assurance that he has fellowship with God.

Here is the proof that we dwell in him and he dwells in us: he has imparted his Spirit to us. (1 John 4: 13, N.E.B.)

With which we might well recall the words of Ezekiel 36: 27.

Not only then does the promise of the Spirit show no conditions as to time but the language of the New Testament in describing the individual and the community make the gift of the Holy Spirit an essential relationship with God.

In our modern times it may be frequently concluded that there are no miracles, no healings and no gifts of the Spirit. There are certainly striking differences in this respect between the gospel preaching of today and that of the 1st Century. Yet few would go the length of saying that there were no instances in their lives where they could feel that God had acted in them, through them or with them. All would pray for the sick to be healed. We generally describe this as "believing in providence," "the hand of God," we talk of things happening "for the best" because we believe God has arranged it so. It is also tacitly agreed that our faith is rather feeble in these matters, and we lack true confidence in God. We tend also to have, though little admitted, a recognition that if our faith were otherwise these experiences of providence would be more frequent. This appreciation of providence is surely the beginning of an understanding of the Holy Spirit. It is generally stifled, however, by the belief that the Holy Spirit is no longer given, nor indeed intended to be, in our day because it was withdrawn at the close of the apostolic age. We therefore do not read the promises about the Spirit with any close attention. In this way, also, our understanding of what being possessed by the Holy Spirit really meant for the 1st Century Christians is often inadequate and faulty. How often do we hear the stock remark about anyone believing in the present day possession of the spirit, "Well, can you raise the dead or perform a miracle?" a question which could have been asked of hundreds of 1st Century believers, and receive in turn only a negative reply.

In considering objections which are made, some heart searching as a preliminary is worth while. There are scriptural warnings about the matter. In II Tim. chap. 3, where Paul expounds the characteristics of the last days, he describes some people as "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The power which makes for godliness is none other than the Holy Spirit of God, which, when active in man, "causes" him to walk in God's statutes (Ezek. 36:27, and compare Eph. 1:19). A form of godliness will clearly have the outward signs of the religious life. It may show itself

in the shape of the man pictured as a possibility in I Cor. 13, who knew all mysteries, was eloquent and showed great faith. He may be one who can talk at length on scripture, be diligent in ecclesial functions and anxious for converts. Yet true cleansing of the spiritual life is not obtained. Much of the work may, for instance, be done with wrong motives.

Empty religious piety and outward show was one of the great sins of the Jews, and Stephen said to them "Ye do always resist the holy spirit" (Acts 7:51). They were in fact "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken." In this they may have modern counterparts "slow of heart" to believe the promise in Ezekiel and Jeremiah, the prophets, about the giving of God's spirit to renew the heart and bring holiness to the life. In scripture we are exhorted not to "quench" the Spirit, "grieve" the Spirit or "despise" the Spirit, but rather to desire spiritual gifts.

It should therefore be a matter of sober reflection as to how the arguments against the possession of the Spirit today arise. Are they really genuine attempts to obtain light on the subject, or are they pegs on which to hang our resistance to the plain meaning of the promises?

The main arguments against the present day possession of the Holy Spirit run as follows. It was only a temporary possession until the possession of knowledge of God's purpose was complete; that is, when all the books of the New Testament had been written. The complete Bible is then the "word of God" for us today (it is sometimes called a "spirit-word"). It can be absorbed by reading and study and in this way it is the equivalent of the possession of the Spirit. Possession of the Holy Spirit is then compared to childhood, but possession of the New Testament books is compared to "manhood" and "perfection" having no need of the childish gifts. A further line of argument is that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of hands of the apostles, and when all the apostles were dead the gifts would automatically cease, there being no one to pass them on.

This system of reasoning seems to presume that Holy Spirit possession was solely for the imparting of knowledge of the purpose of God. Once this had been done in the completion

of the New Testament it is considered that there is no further need of the Holy Spirit. It can be appreciated of course that the person who considers that knowledge (usually defined as assent to the propositions of a detailed and accurate creed) is the criterion of the true Christian will not look much beyond for the work of the Spirit. It is also true that one phase of the Spirit's work was to bring truth to light — "the spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth" (John 16:13), and it would "teach you all things and bring to remembrance" (John 14:26). But possession of a Bible gives no surety of knowledge of the purpose of God. The number of sects all claiming their foundation to be the inspired Bible, yet who are hopelessly divided as to the nature of God's purpose, is evidence enough that the "spirit of truth" to guide into all truth is as much needed today as ever.

The production of the New Testament was completed at a time when the faith itself was being swallowed by apostasy and the written testimony does not appear to have brought stability. The Holy Spirit certainly appears to have ceased, or have been reduced in activity to vanishing point after the apostolic age, but the result was not "manhood" or "perfection" but declension. Neither is there any hint in scripture that the books themselves would be sufficient for the reader to maintain the truth, rather do we read in one of the latest books, "Keep before you an outline of the sound teaching which you heard from me . . . Guard the treasure put into our charge, with the help of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us." (II Tim. 1:13,14 N.E.B.)

As has been previously shown, the primary aim of the Spirit is holiness in the believer. To take up the position, therefore, that the Spirit is not required after the book of knowledge has been delivered is to approach the position of the humanists who maintain that what is wrong with man is lack of education, and that by the supply of knowledge the immorality of man will go.

When we read the Bible we come up against such exhortations as "Be ye filled with the spirit," ". . . desire spiritual gifts," and we are told that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. These statements

take us outside the benefits which will come from devotional reading or moral instruction. Above the knowledge of the will of God and understanding of His purpose we need power to walk righteously. The Holy Spirit is that power.

The Christian possessed only of a written book has, in fact, regressed in God's purpose to the position of those under the old covenant. The Jews had an inspired book able to make "wise unto salvation" (I Tim. 3:15). Paul, however, points the difference between the two covenants in his second epistle to the Corinthians chap. 3:3, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone but in the fleshy tables of the heart." The first covenant was "written with ink" or after the earlier fashion (and in allusion to Ezek. 36:26) "in tables of stone" (inspired writings nevertheless). This is all the old covenant gave. But the new covenant is "with the spirit of the living God" and it is His activity in "the heart."

The texts quoted to support the contrary opinion are examined below.
1 Corinthians 13

This is a well-known passage, and there is no need to quote it. It is contended that Paul is here arguing that love is superior to Spirit gifts, that the gifts would fail and only faith, hope and love would continue: that the "perfect" which would come refers to the books of the New Testament: knowledge, which while the gifts were in being was only "in part", i.e. held only by certain members as gifts of knowledge and prophecy, would cease as unnecessary when all had complete and perfect knowledge in the possession of the books of the New Testament.

The grounds for stating that the "perfect" is the complete series of

New Testament books will not be found. The emphasis, too, seems to be on academic knowledge, but what of the other gifts such as miracles, healings, church government, preaching, helps and so on? The books of the New Testament can certainly supply knowledge but there is more to the Spirit gifts than simply contributing to knowledge. In an uncomplicated reading "the perfect" would suggest the coming of the kingdom of God. Can we yet say that we now "see face to face" and "know even as we are known"? Surely if Paul could say that he saw only as a reflection in a mirror (and was his knowledge lacking?) we can hardly claim more. In the beginning of this epistle, chap. 1:7, Paul evidently considers that the gifts would continue until the return of Christ "so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." The Holy Spirit is also a seal until we obtain the inheritance (Ephes. 4:30).

Paul is certainly teaching the superiority of love to the other gifts, but the failing of the gifts may be no more than a manner of speaking such as Jesus used when He said "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." The gifts were a sharing in the "powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:5), which suggests that they will still be very much in evidence in the kingdom itself, though we can well see, for example, that, when there is ultimately no more disease, gifts of healing will vanish away. Paul is mainly concerned to show that love must be at the root of the true manifestation of the Spirit gifts. Love is the supreme gift of the Spirit. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the holy spirit which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). Even, therefore, if all other gifts are lost, the possession of the Holy Spirit would still be required to produce love.

Unless it is contended that the gift of prophecy was for the sole purpose of completing New Testament knowledge of the purpose of God, the gift is not one which we can consider obsolete. The gift as seen in, for example, the Acts of the Apostles, was of value in the particular circumstances of the time, as of famine (Acts 28:11) or the circumstances of Paul's life (Acts 21:11). Such prophecy is equally necessary today in addition to the knowledge of the purpose of God.

Ephesians chap. 4

The point made here is similar to that of I Cor. 13. The expression "perfect man" of verse 13 is considered to be the completion of the New Testament. Once the purpose of the Holy Spirit in cleansing the heart and purifying the life of the believer is understood, we can see that the gifts of the Spirit in the church were for the moral perfecting of the saints till they all and individually grew to be perfect men (compare "the spirits of just men made perfect" Heb. 12:23) and attained unto the measure of the (moral) stature and fulness of Christ.

This Spirit operation in the church was according to Paul "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. . . ." The possession of a Bible carries no guarantee against being carried about with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14) as again it might be said that the number of different opinions all "based on the Bible" give witness. We need something to guide in these matters and the spirit was promised to those ministering the new covenant to lead us to "the new man (compare "perfect man") which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24).

(to be continued)

THE TRUTH, which is mentioned again and again in the New Testament, seems to us too good to be true. We labour and strive and pray as though Christianity were a difficult *performance*. Theoretically we would agree with the notion of the "indwelling Christ," but most of us for most of the time act as though we did not. We have lost sight of the fact that Christ is *in us*, both willing and doing. Consequently we lack that joy, confidence and spontaneity which rightly belongs to the sons of God. This does not, naturally, make our path smooth and free from trouble—neither Jesus nor Paul lived that kind of life. But it makes a whole world of difference when we believe that God, the whole unimaginable power, love and wisdom behind everything, is not merely on our side but actually at work in our hearts and minds.

J. B. Phillips.

(Continued from front page)

reasoning. Too little attention has been given to the words of Paul: "... we are interpreting spiritual truths to those who have the Spirit ... a man who is unspiritual refuses what belongs to the spirit of God; it is folly to him; he cannot grasp it ..." (I Cor. 2:13-14, N.E.B.) The true standards of Christian Faith are on a different plane from human reason. Their justification does not rest on arguments spun out of the human brain. They are part of an experience in life and justify themselves.

To some this may appear to be removing any real basis for faith, and to put the whole matter on the plane of emotion and feeling. No doubt we have all heard attempted defences of Christianity by those who put forward their own experience as the ground of faith, and were promptly massacred by atheistical debaters. To argue in this way is to show up the error to which we are drawing attention. The mature Christian's faith is concerned with standards quite foreign to those of a worldly person. He should not expect a statement of these standards to mean anything to the outsider, nor should he advance them as arguments in a rational debate, since they will not be understood. A recent convert may be excused for putting too much weight on arguments in justification of his newly-found way of life, but if the more mature believer constantly seeks proofs and arguments, his faith is weak or non-existent. Faith is really trust, and even on the human level real trust in a person is not

much concerned with facts and arguments. The essence of faith and the kind of argument used to justify it to outsiders are two different things. When addressing the cultured Greeks in Athens, Paul quoted the Greek poet Aratus to justify a point he was making. But Paul's faith did not depend on the Greek poets.

Even over the past generation the transitory character of arguments used to "prove the Bible" has been obvious. At one time the historicity of Jericho's fall to Joshua was said to have been proved by archaeology, but further excavations have shown that the earlier interpretation of the finds was wrong. The occupation of Palestine by British troops was formerly cited as fulfilment of prophecy, until they left. Real faith can never be built on arguments of this kind, since such a faith will be constantly subject to the cold blasts of new knowledge and changing circumstances. True faith is trust in God, and in His Son; it is itself a gift of God, which grows, not on a fallible system of human argumentation, but on the spiritual standards of this fellowship. The very resurrection of Christ cannot be proved once and for all by study of the gospels as historical documents. So far as human reasoning is concerned, the unbeliever is free to dissent.

Has, then, all the argumentative evangelising of the last century been to no purpose? Has our cause been defended in vain? No; it is not the arguments as such that we are criticising in the present context, but the weight put on them. The ultimate realities of faith are sure and do not depend on human reasoning. But that

is not to say that reason has no place in our faith. It is a faculty given by God, and, like all others, it should be used in His service. Since in the world of today intellectual objections to Christianity are raised at all levels of intelligence, human intellect should be used to repel them. An argument erected against the gospel can be demolished in turn by arguments against it. The shallowness of anti-Christian polemic can be exposed by Christian apologetics. We can show that the gospel can stand up to all that may be said against it. We can also build positive arguments in support of our position. All these things are good and necessary, so long as it is recognised that they are apologetics: defence of the faith, and not justification.

To avoid misunderstanding it must be said that the purpose of the present editorial is to encourage true Biblical faith, not to discourage Christian apologetics in our community. Indeed, at the present time there is great need for much more hard work to be done in defence of our faith. For a world engrossed in new problems and with new standards the old answers we used to give are in many cases no longer relevant. To adjust our preaching to current ways of thought requires profound application to fundamentals, and not just a trotting out of traditional clichés. One article in this issue concerns meanings of words, a theme, like many others, not usually given much attention among us, yet one which has served as a base of much anti-Christian thought. With adequate understanding it is one on which faith can be very adequately defended.

W. G. Lambert.

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