

63

ERDEAVOUR

MAGAZINE

p 3
Review of "Incarnation
& Myth", last part



1981 / 1

30p

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

No.63

1981/2

IN THIS ISSUE

	Page No.
Editorial	1
Review - Incarnation and Myth	3
Sikh Religion and Biblical Influence	13
Theology - Paul II	18
..... the Widows and Orphans	19

COVER ILLUSTRATION - SIVA A HINDU
SYMBOL OF 'THE HIGHEST'

EDITORIAL

What is Religion ?

The great rowing coach Steve Fairbairn said "Rowing, like everything else, is a religion". He illustrated this idea by telling a story of a Scottish minister who played golf. One day he played a very bad round and the next day, finding that his form was even worse, said "It's nae guid, I maun gie it up". His friend, shocked, asked "What, gie up the gawf?" and he replied "Nay, nay, gie up the meenistry". You may think the story blasphemous, bigoted, racist and unfair to presbyterians, but perhaps it is worth thinking about. The same idea is found in Matt. 6:24, - No man can serve two masters. That is an assertion with which we can all agree.

Certainly you can serve one master, but is it possible to serve no master at all? Many thoughts about this question come to mind. There is the old scientific maxim that nature abhors a vacuum (though modern science teachers are too pompous to say anything so simple). There is the evil spirit (Matt. 12:44) who finding his former home swept and clean returns to live in it. And was it Isaac Watts who wrote "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do?" But what do you find when you consider the people in the world around you? It seems as if for each one there is a religion, that is, an idea that gives purpose to life. Some people have for their religion a political party, for them morality means just what benefits the party. One of the great religions of today is what might be called vandalism - the love of destruction. Some of the devotees concentrate on material things like telephone boxes, some on the reputations of prominent people and some concentrate on trying to destroy the system by which we live together. Any idea or activity carried to its extreme limit becomes a religion, for instance rowing or golf in the Steve Fairbairn story.

There are three 'religions' which Christians are warned against; the world, the flesh and the Devil (This phrase is in Anglican and other baptism services. It derives from Luke 4:3-8 and 1 John 2:15-17.)

'The flesh' means the enjoyment of the 'good' things such as food, drink, sex or music. 'The world' means the urge to win the approval of other people. 'The devil' is a more subtle form of religion; if you manage to resist the temptation of the flesh, that is to enjoy your food and other good things in decent moderation, and if you can resist the pressures of the world then you will become capable of much. You may do the work of the devil or the work of God, and the testimony of the saints is that it may be hard to tell the difference, for the Devil uses many disguises. (Those readers that love to demythologize must pardon my mediaeval terminology, which when you understand it is so much easier than the modern jargon).

The twentieth century may well go down in history as the Age of Religions. But which religions are going to survive into the twenty-first?

Basil Rennie,
Queensland,
Australia.

REVIEW

Incarnation and Myth

Edited by Dr. Michael Goulder (SCM £3.50)

The review of Incarnation and Myth is completed in this issue of Endeavour in the hope that some readers will then contribute to the discussion, either by putting their own view or criticising the views expressed by the essayists or their opponents.

We come then to the 5th Section of the discussion.

Is the New Testament Evidence Clear or Ambiguous ?

Professor Charles Moule identifies three points at which the authors of the 'Myth of God Incarnate' conflict with their more orthodox brethren.

(1) The claim that incarnational language constitutes a threat to personal values

Charles Moule states that the authors and the late Prof. Lampe^{*} agree in believing that the language of incarnation.....is not only unsatisfactory but actually fatal to a realistic and fully personal account of Jesus.' He defines incarnation (Latin for 'enfleshing' - Greek 'ensarkostis') as a unique and distinctive identification of God's 'Word' - his 'logos' or self expression' - with Jesus.

Inspiration is not the same. Inspiration denotes God's breathing into a person - the entry of the divine Spirit into a human being. But inspiration, even if raised

* 'God as Spirit' - See Endeavour 1980/2 for review.

to the highest degree, is not synonymous with incarnation as that word has been technically used in christological debate. Into prophets and seers - and, for that matter, into poets and artists - God may enter as Spirit or as Wisdom or as Logos. But in Jesus, if we use the language of incarnation technically, the Logos became a man of flesh and blood.

ii) The claim that 'ontological' christology is due to fantasy

Ontology - the study of 'being' - provides terms which can be used to demonstrate the difference between Christ and a human being - such terms as essence or substance. Thus if Christ has divine essence he can be considered as the same 'substance' as God and 'uniquely one with God'. But, say the authors of the Myth, these ideas can be explained as the doctrinal elaborations that followed the death of Jesus. It is a simple progress of the imagination from a real man of history to a fictitiously divine figure.

Professor Moule says that this hypothesis does not fit the facts and points to the early confession that 'Jesus is Lord'. Secondly he distinguishes Jesus from the prophets as Jesus was given the office of mediator between God and Man.

(iii) The soteriological issue.

Professor Moule maintains that if Jesus were just a man - "By what unique circumstances was he declared a 'Saviour'?" (Gk. Soter).

He concludes that the contributors to the Myth occupy a position of Unitarianism and if they reply that we (the non-Mythers) occupy a polytheistic position our reply is 'no' we maintain a 'balance of a trinitarian doctrine and a carefully maintained paradox.'

In addition the Professor refers to his book The Origin of Christology, where his arguments are made in greater depth.

Dr. Michael Goulder replies that he has read Professor Moule's book and agrees that Jesus applied to himself the titles 'Son of Man' 'Christ' and 'Son of God' but he reaches a different conclusion to Professor Moule. The point at issue he says is, whether the titles of Jesus the corporate personality concept and other elements in the New Testament imply divinity.

Michael Goulder takes the titles in turn - Son of Man he says is an echo of Daniel 7 where one like a 'son of man' stands for the suffering loyal people of God. He agrees that Jesus thought of himself as Messiah (Christ) while ignoring the normal political overtones and re-interpreting it in a creative and spiritual manner.

He agrees also that Jesus thought of himself as 'Son of God'. It is one of the characteristics of Messiah (Ps. 2:80-89). He did not take the title formally Goulder points out but experienced God as his Father. He agrees also that the term 'Lord' can have human or divine overtones.

Michael Goulder's point is that Jesus accepted Messiahship but that the Jews never think of the Messiah as divine or pre-existent.

INCARNATIONAL CHRISTOLOGY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Graham Stanton postulates - that to ask whether the Doctrine of the Incarnation is to be found in the N.T. is to ask the wrong question. The reviewer asks - 'If we are not to ask this question of the N.T. where are we to go or what question should we ask?' Stanton's objections seem to be based on the implication that the N.T. writings were conditioned by their 'cultural' pattern. They expressed concepts in patterns that were familiar to that generation. Though this is probably true it does not preclude asking the questions if we are prepared to make allowance for the cultural milieu. May be in a monotheistic milieu it would be difficult to argue for a second God, but surely there is no particular difficulty in arguing for a pre-existent Messiah, which would at least take us some way down the road to Chalcedon. In other words the N.T. must give us a lead if we are not to accept a teaching church as of equal authority.

In conclusion, Stanton says he is prepared to follow the lead of the 1st Century Christians - I should think so - as they / Paul for instance / was able to speak to Peter and James. Stanton starts off with a quotation of Paul's in the letter to the Galatians:

Our starting point is one of the most striking passages in the Pauline epistles, Galatians 4:4f. 'When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoptions as sons.' Paul uses 'Son of God' much less frequently than 'Lord' but statistics are often misleading. 'Son of God' is found in a number of passages in which carefully phrased theological statements concerning the relationship of Jesus to God are being used. It is not coincidence that 'Son of God' or, more often, 'his Son' is nearly always used immediately after a reference to God.

No one doubts that all N.T. writers saw Jesus as Son of God. Stanton admits it does not necessarily imply pre-existence. But, he says, as it is implied elsewhere by Paul 'we may presume that this is the case here'.. Not a strong argument. Later Stanton remarks - 'What Paul does not say is almost as important as what he does say'.

"Very little is said about the pre-existence of Jesus and little about the precise relationship to God" Later "Did Paul consider Jesus to be divine?" Stanton says he would not use the phrase 'his Son' if he did not. Stanton's final appeal is to the parable of the Vineyard - God sent his son. He states however that pre-existence is not 'even hinted at' here.

This really is all that the essay can produce.

Don Cupitt endeavours to counter this incipient incarnational view from an early Christian Document - Clement Homilus (16:15), where Peter tells Simon Magus:

'Our Lord neither asserted that there were Gods except the Creator of all, nor did he proclaim himself to be God, but he with reason pronounced him (i.e. Peter himself) blessed who called him the Son of that God who has arranged the universe.' And Simon answered: 'Does it not seem to you, then, that he who comes from God is God?' And Peter said: 'Tell us how this is possible; for we cannot affirm this, because we did not hear it from him.'

Don Cupitt remarks that in a world in which Augustus had been called 'God of God' what is really impressive is how slow and cautious Christians were.. Don Cupitt distinguishes -

There is in fact a considerable distance between these two positions:

- (i) Jesus is a pre-existence heavenly being close to God, whom God has sent into the world; and
- (ii) Jesus is God incarnate.

'Professor Stanton supplies evidence that (i) was believed by some from early times. But I suggest that he does not sufficiently emphasise the difference between (i) and (ii). I agree that the New Testament says (i), but (ii) is much less certain. The question is rather whether (ii) is the correct translation, or a possible translation, or a mistranslation into larger language of what the New Testament says.'

He points out that John the Baptist was said to be 'a man sent from God'.

In reference to Col. 1:15- Don Cupitt says it may be possible to interpret the passage in line with later orthodoxy.....but that the natural sense of the passage, in line with the rest of Paul's theology, is that Jesus is pre-eminent among all creatures.....God's perfect man, the goal of all things....the first born - the creator' that mirrors God perfectly.

It is said that Jesus Christ emptied himself - Not that God did.

He is the perfect Man; God's faithful Son, given to the world and now glorified as the one in whom God is 'all in all'.

The Reviewer feels that that is the plainest statement so far of a Myth author on the person of Jesus.

Stanton comes back - 'While it is true that Paul does not seem to have reflected on the ontological status of Jesus, it is not quite accurate to claim that the N.T. nowhere says the Son of God is God of God. Stanton says that such language is avoided but Rom 9:5, Heb.1:8, Titus 2:13, John 1:1 & 18, 1 John 5:20 imply that such an assumption is to be supposed.

Stanton observes that Don Cupitt presses the distinction that:

- 1) Jesus is a pre-existent heavenly being close to God whom God sent into the world.
- 2) Jesus is God incarnate.

He agrees that the N.T. does not speak explicitly of Jesus as God incarnate.

Stanton goes on to illustrate how the N. T. emphasises the superiority of Jesus to 'his brethren'.

The reviewer feels that Stanton fails to recognise that the Mythers do not accept the N.T. writer's concepts but only their witness to what happened and that even this cannot be unambiguously interpreted.

THE FINALITY OF CHRIST

Dr. Francis Young of Birmingham University in this essay comes to grips with the central problem. The essay is not a response to any particular participant but quite clearly expresses her interpretation of the N.T. statements regarding the person of Jesus.

Dr. Young's thesis in 'The Myth' is that the N.T. represents Jesus as the embodiment of all God's promises brought to fruition rather than an incarnation or the incarnation of God.

The theme of this essay is 'Finality' and Dr. Young examines most of the references to the Greek words Tilos(end) and Eschatos (last) and their derivatives.

One example of each must suffice.

'Behold we are going up to Jerusalem and everything written of the Son of Man by the prophets must be fulfilled' (Luke 18:31).

'It is his will that I should not lose even one of all that he has given me, but raise them all up on the last day.' (John 6:39)

To quote from the essay:

The numerous texts relate strongly to

- (i) Expectations of the end of the World.
- (ii) The fulfilment of prophecy.

To what extent is this sense of 'finality' linked with Jesus asks Dr. Young? Later she states that for Paul Christ is 'final' - not as 'God incarnate' but is the 'last Adam'. She agrees that 'John' is nearer to incarnational ideas but poses the question - 'Is it true that the basis of Christ's finality is to be found for the author of John's Gospel in a doctrine of divine incarnation. Dr. Young agrees that John's Gospel gives a portrait of Jesus which considerably 'heightens his supernatural character'. She does not hesitate to tackle the prologue of John's Gospel and her comments are worth quoting:

'The Logos doctrine...placed at the opening of the Gospel inevitably sets the tone of the whole, and demands from the reader that he see the significance of Jesus in cosmic terms. But does it say anything clearly about divine nature?

The answer to that question depends upon the degree of personification intended in the passage, and its implications. It is quite possible to render the word 'Logos' as 'meaning' throughout, and understand 1:14 as simply stating the God's meaning was embodied in Jesus Christ (rather as we might speak of the Queen embodying British sovereignty) so that men had

access to it through him. I doubt whether that is quite all that is implied, largely because of the background. It is highly likely therefore that the author of John's gospel intended some kind of pre-existent 'being' who acted as God's agent and was in some sense derivative from God. Yet it is extremely difficult to ascertain how concretely this 'being' may have been conceived. The paradoxical statement 'The Logos' was in God's presence and the Logos was God' is indicative of the uncertainty and lack of clarity about the situation.

Dr. Young observes that the author of John's Gospel by identifying Jesus with 'The Word', this pre-existent attribute of God - was making it personal and stimulating further development towards an incarnational doctrine. She continues 'Whatever the situation it is hardly God himself who was understood to be incarnate, it was an agent or instrument of God.

Francis Young acknowledges the Father/Son relationship stressed in John but this she says implies distinction as well as a unique relationship.

If any orthodox Christian doubts whether Francis Young can claim to be a Christian - let us quote her final statement:

Jesus Christ as the one through whom God has confronted us must surely continue to play a central role in Christian theology, for it is an essential element in Christian consciousness. We have to stick with the problem of christology, not abandon it or reduce it.

A SUMMING UP OF THE MYTH OF GOD DEBATE

Professor Mitchell as a philosopher may have refereed the match well but in his summing-up of the admittedly complex set of essays he has missed, in the reviewer's view, many of the crucial issues probably because the philosophical issues appeal to him more than the theological ones.

He starts with three philosophical questions:

1) By what process of reasoning can we hope to decide such a question as whether to retain the 'traditional' doctrine of the incarnation?

2) To what extent, in endeavouring to answer such questions, are we inevitably subject to cultural conditioning, or - if this is different - influenced by underlying presuppositions? Is there any way in which presuppositions can be tested, so that we can decide whether or to what extent to continue to be guided by them?

3) Does it follow from the answers to 1 and 2 (or is it independently true) that we can only with difficulty understand, and rarely, if at all, make our own the thought of previous ages?

Professor Mitchell remarks that there is reasonable agreement between the two sides - The 'mythographers', he says, argue that the doctrine of the incarnation is unintelligible, or at the least highly paradoxical, it cannot be found in the N.T. and would be at least of equal value if it were regarded as a myth rather than literal truth. The 'traditionalists' reply that although paradoxical it cannot be shown to be logically incoherent and to regard it as mythical weakens its spiritual and moral significance.

Professor Mitchell continues:

In discussing presuppositions Leslie Newbigin accuses the 'mythographers' of taking for granted an 'evolutionary world view' which often runs counter to the view that God, at times, acts decisively in history. Professor Mitchell notes, with surprise, that neither side stress the importance of revelation to bolster their arguments. He wonders if this is due to their general acceptance of 'evolutionary world view', which is thought to rule out divine intervention. If so he says this will give the 'Mythers' an advantage.

Professor Mitchell asks whether it is necessary to have a doctrine of the incarnation something like its traditional form to give 'Christianity its full coherence and significance'. This issue was he points out, discussed under the heading 'The Moral and Religious Value of the Incarnation' - But he asks why should moral and religious values determine whether a Christian Doctrine is right or wrong? The answer must be in our concept of God. Brian Mitchell continues - If, as Christians believe, it was through the life and death of Jesus that God chose to redeem mankind and bring men into communion with Him, then we are bound to prefer the interpretation which is the more congruent and in line with His character and purpose.

The Mythographers agree that God was involved in the suffering of Jesus but they say he is with all men and to insist that He was 'in a special way' involved in Jesus' suffering then this would detract from the moral and religious value of Christ's death and consequently the doctrine. The traditionalists reply that although in Christ God is involved in a new special way nevertheless in Christ all can share in a new pattern of communion with God.

Professor Mitchell seems to regard this as the foremost criterion for judging the discussion. He refers to it as the 'heart of the debate'. His judgement appears to be that here both sides agree that God suffers with his creation. The Mythographers say yes with all his creatures including Jesus while the trads say he became man to do this effectively. Professor Mitchell says he inclined more to the traditional view.

If we may go back to Michael Goulder's analogy of the 'Seven-a-side Rugby' match then the referee might have prevented the players fighting but he certainly has not proclaimed the result at the final whistle. In the reviewer's opinion Michael Goulder's 7 heads in the introduction should have been used as the criteria of judgement as these were the issues specifically debated.

J.H. Weaving.

SIKH RELIGION AND BIBLICAL INFLUENCE

by D. Pitt-Francis.

Many of the United Kingdom's Asian immigrants are either Buddhist, Muslim or Hindu. The previous article described the Buddhist religion and examined some of its known associations with the Bible. Hinduism would be difficult to describe and examine in one article, because it is, in fact, a whole complex of different religions ranging from the worship of the Aryan nature gods of North India to the more idolatrous branches of Hinduism in the south. Though some Westerners are attracted to Hindu religion, the attraction lies mainly in the philosophy behind Hinduism (in writings, such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads), in much the same way as Greek scholars are attracted to Plato and Aristotle rather than to the Greek myths, but usually find themselves having to learn Greek religion as a background to Greek philosophy.

Hindu religion presents distasteful features, such as (i) the caste system, which forbade outcasts even to read the Hindu scriptures; (ii) the practice of human sacrifice until modern times; (iii) the horrid rituals of Kali; (iv) the morality of some of the Hindu gods; and (v) the ceremony of 'suttee' which compelled a widow to burn herself to death on her husband's funeral pyre. Most Indian immigrants in Britain, of course, reject these unsavoury aspects of Hinduism as strongly as we do, and some of them adhere to a reformed kind of Hinduism, no older than the fifteenth century. They are the Sikhs, distinguished often by their turbans, and by the name 'Singh' (lion). Recently they have achieved some prominence because of problems of traffic wardens and bus conductors being allowed (or forbidden) to wear turbans on duty. Do we have any common ground with these people? What are the dangers in their religion? What are their beliefs and practices? Finally, what lesson can we learn from them?

Common Ground

Even in the case of Islam, despite its use of names from both Old and New Testaments, there is only a superficial resemblance between Islam and the religion of the Bible. Sikhism is entirely different in this respect. The religious book of the Sikhs, the Adi Granth (first collection) - or Guru Granth Sahib, does not claim association with the Bible in any way, and yet has borrowed indirectly from the Bible via the pre-Sikh 'sants', or 'holy men' of North India, one of whom is even believed to have been of Jewish origin.

But this 'borrowing' is a confused partial one, very like the religious 'mix-up' described in 2 Kings 17, though there is much common ground that can be found when talking to present-day Sikhs.

In the first place, there is acceptance of the authority of a book rather than a living mortal human authority. Unlike Roman Catholics, we do not believe that there were successors to the apostles, as such, but that the Bible is the source of knowledge about God. Similarly the Sikhs believed that their religious book has replaced human authorities. There were during the Indian reformation movement ten successive Gurus, alleged to have written under divine inspiration from Nanak (1469-1539) to Gobind Singh (1666-1708), but afterwards the Granth (the Sikh scriptures) was crowned as the eleventh guru, and the only authority.

Secondly, Sikhism is a reform movement, which flourished like Protestantism between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, and there is much resemblance between the reformers. Both groups viewed with disdain the large amount of ritual that tended to obscure the search for God. In the Catholic West there were pilgrimages, the veneration of images and the collection of relics, and in the Hindu East, a large number of ritual religions with unsavoury practices.

Thirdly, like ourselves, and even in contrast both with Protestant Trinitarian fundamentalists and with the Hindu teaching of the Bhagavad-Gita, the Sikhs do not believe that God can become incarnate in an absolute personal sense. There are three acceptable associative ideas about God, that He is Guru, or 'enlightener' from 'gu' (darkness) and 'ru' (light) that He is Nam (or 'name') as, for example, used in the Old

Testament about the Yahweh and the New Testament about the Name of Jesus (compare Isa.45:23 with Phil.2:10) and thirdly, that He is Shabd (or 'Word') as in John 1. But these three are not separate persons in a Trinitarian sense. Nanak's first poetic utterance, the Mool (or 'basic') Mantra states:

"There is one God
Eternal Truth is His Name
Creator of all things, and the all-
pervading spirit
Fearless and without hatred."

Fourthly, unlike Islam, Sikhism was originally a religion of conscientious objection, but the situation changed during the reign of the Mughals, when the Sikhs armed to defend themselves.

Dangers and Differences

Yet, despite this common ground, there are stark contrasts, that expose the dangers of considering only Sikhism's profound teaching about God, at the expense of other things. For example, Sikhs accept the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation (many lifetimes) with all its dangers of not having to progress spiritually in this life very far, because there are many other lifetimes in which to do it. This acceptance of reincarnation is because Sikhism did not begin as a separate religion, but as an attempt to reform Hinduism of idolatry and malpractice, to present a united front against conversion to Islam. Though Nanak, the first guru, went to Mecca, he did not borrow from Islam any teaching about man's destiny. Because of belief in reincarnation, Sikhs had no difficulty in accepting the doctrine of karma, a number of Hindu myths, and some recognition of the caste system early in their history to a small extent. When Sikhism became a separate religion, it attempted to become universal, preaching to all nations, like Christianity (Matt.28:19), but there is no sense of urgency or immediacy about Sikhism. There is a belief in a future age, but it is not yet. There are four ages of decline and a fifth age of harmony, resembling the teachings of Hesiod, the Greek writer, the Parsee Dinkart, and to a small extent, the second chapter of Daniel. The present 'dark age' (Kal Yug) is the fourth period of history, and when it ends an age of harmony will come, but it is a very long way off, for Kal Yug is assumed to last for 432,000 years.

The Granth is mainly a book of praise and poetry. It does not attempt to prophesy the future as does the Bible. At least, the Sikh scriptures are uniform, there are no differing versions. But this is because there is only one 'official' edition, written in Gurmukhi script, and containing 1,353 pages. It consists of 31 sections, each containing in order some of the works of the first four, and ninth gurus and of some pre-Sikh poets, such as Kabir. The orderliness of the Granth contrasts markedly with the disorderliness of the Koran, which was composed only eight hundred years previously. Yet, the Granth cannot stand up to the two tests of Deuteronomy 13 and 18. For it does not forbid the worship of other gods, nor are there fulfilled prophecies about men and nations, as there are in the case of the Bible.

Fives, Finery and Festivals

The Sikh belief in 'five ages' bears some resemblance to Daniel 2. It is a religion of 'fives', not because of the belief in the 'five ages' mentioned earlier, which is given little emphasis, but because of rituals involving five, which developed in Sikhism, even though it began as a protest movement against the ritualism of Hinduism and Islam. Sikhism originated in the Punjab, the land of 'five rivers'. The original members of the Khalsa (or Sikh brotherhood) were five, and were called the Punj Pyares (five beloved ones). The Sikh ceremonially wears the Punj Kakke (five K's). These are (i) the kachcha (short trousers); (ii) the kangha (comb); (iii) the kesh (uncut hair) usually covered by a turban; (iv) the kara, a metal bangle on the right wrist; and (v) the kirpan (sword). There is also a Sikh initiation ceremony involving a coconut and five coins, representing the world and its five elements. There are five principal evils that must be avoided. There are, of course, a great many ceremonies including an initiation ceremony, involving the drinking of amrit, - (sweet water), and a large number of gurpurbs (anniversaries) and melas (festivals). Indeed, though Sikhism started as a protest against rituals, (Nanak even going on pilgrimage to Mecca, and refusing to worship towards the Kaaba) the religion accumulated in less than 500 years a larger number of ceremonies than Islam, which has been in existence nearly three times as long. Though worship is simple, and centred around the gurdwara, (a building that must have a copy of the Granth installed, and a kitchen for serving meals) there are now many ornamental trappings, including days in which martyrdoms are celebrated and lengthy readings of the Granth have to be carried out.

The Great Lesson

Sikhism is a great paradox. It started in a 'pacifist' way, but became militant. It started objecting to ceremonials, believing that God could not be found in temples made with hands, but in the hearts of those who tremble at God's Word, but after less than four hundred years produced some very ornate gurdwaras and a whole calendar of ceremonies and 'saints days'. Its great lesson for us is that communities can change very quickly, and though some change is good because it adapts to changing needs and conditions, it is possible that change can rid a body or community of the ideals for which it originally stood. There lies a lesson for us. In a hundred years we have changed as a community. Some of the change has been absolutely necessary, and it is to be hoped that most of it has been dictated by changing needs, so that the essentials for which we stand could be accommodated to the changing demands of the world in which we live, without losing their value or importance.

D. Pitt Francis.

AN APPEAL

Nutritional Scheme in India

The Nutritional Scheme in India is run by Bro Tim Galbraith who is based in Hyderabad. This scheme is named The Sun Scheme and aims to give poor children a nutritious drink on a regular basis. There are a total of 14 distribution centres in three towns (Moinabad, Tenali and Cadium) and in all 6000 children are covered. Three drinks a week give all nutrition required in terms of protein and vitamins and helps balance their limited diet which is too high in carbo-hydrates. I have firsthand experience of this scheme as I visited Bro Tim last July and saw for myself the work he is doing along with others. Basically the work is financed by several Australian Ecclesias and more recently 'The Meal a Day Fund', which is a British Fund have also sent contributions.

Enquiries and contributions to:

P. Greenall (Mrs)

c/o The Endeavour Magazine, 150 Chessetts Wood Rd Lappworth,
Solihull, Warwickshire B94 6EN.

THEOLOGY - PAUL II

by D.Lines.

For Paul, the whole creation suffered and awaited in hope of being liberated - itself being subject to corruption:

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now." (Rom.8:22)

"For the creation was subject to futility...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay." (8:20-21).

Consequently, the creation too, along with the Christian, was awaiting a hope of liberation.

Paul was aware that Christ had replaced the Law (Gal.3:24, Rom.10:3) The Law almost became demonic for Paul. According to Caird the Law was similar to Satan in the following examples:

- (i) it became the accuser (Rom.2:12, 3:19)
- (ii) it carried out the death sentence (II Cor.3:6f)
- (iii) it gives strength to sin (I Cor.15:56)
- (iv) though the Law is good when it combines with sin it becomes deadly (Rom.7:9f. , 8:2)
- (v) it becomes the tempter (Rom.7:7f.)

In Colossians Paul uses two vivid metaphors to describe the liberation of Christ. Christ, like a conquering Caesar made an open show of the 'princes and generals' (principalities and powers) (2:15), whom he had defeated in battle and taken prisoner, in the triumphant procession through his capital city.

Combined with the victory over these powers is the victory over the legal code.

"....having cancelled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands, this he set aside, nailing it to the cross." (2:14).

"A bill of servitude or of a debt (often a man was sold into slavery for debt) is nailed up for all to see that it has been cancelled, and that therefore the slave or the debtor is free" (Richardson 4), to enter the joyful procession of Christ the conqueror. We are forced to assume that either the Law is to be understood as one of these powers - now made impotent, or that Paul had in mind the angels that ordained the Law (Gal.3:19) In Galatians, where Paul fights his greatest anti-Judaistic battle, Paul equates becoming 'subject to the Law' with returning to the control of the powers .

"....how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits whose slaves you want to be once more ? You observe days and months etc." (Gal.4:9-10)

It is likely that Paul does not mean the Law to be equated as an evil angelic power; 'the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just and good' (Rom.7:12); but rather Paul sees the actual continuance of the Law in spite of the "revelation of the 'Righteousness of God'" (Rom.1:17) as the work of spirit powers retaining the veil of blindness associated with Judaism (II Cor.3:12-18). The permanence of the Torah as reflected in Jewish orthodoxy was the work of an angel regime. As angels ordained the Law (Gal. 3:19 Jubilees 1:27, Acts 7:53, Heb.2:2) so spirit powers preserved it at the cost of crucifixion of the Christ.

In summary we may conclude the following: Christ has won the victory over the principalities (Col.2:15), Christ's present reign is the 'interim' period where he continues his battle winning over further powers (I Cor.15:24), he is exalted over all powers (Eph.1:21) because they have become weak and beggarly (Gal.4:9), and reduced to shame (Col.2:15); the Christian must not be deceived by the god of this aeon (II Cor.4:4) which is presently working in the disobedient sons (Eph.2:2), his enemies are not flesh and blood (Eph.6:11-12) and he has the confidence that these principalities cannot separate him from Christ's love (Rom.8:37-39); finally, in the end time every power will be destroyed even death (I Cor.15:24-26) every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth (the spirits of the Underworld, Phil.2:10-11). Finally, there is even the possibility of reconciling the powers themselves to Christ (Col.1:20, Eph 1:10, the Church's task ? - Eph.3:10).

By bringing about the crucifixion, the rulers acted in ignorance (I Cor.2:8). Their very defeat was brought about because in exercising their attributed authority by giving death - the wage of sin- to Christ, they effected an injustice as Christ was without sin. Consequently their only authority was taken from them, the grave could not hold him. The resurrection was the victory over these powers (15).The victory was achieved by Christ's selfless obedience of humility(Phil.2:1-11). The Kenosis hymn (16) does not say that Christ emptied himself to become a man;

"...who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but stripped himself (kenoo) taking the form of a slave." (Phil.2:6-7 Beare) (17).

Rather, he chose the form of a slave - a slave to what ? Did he not become a slave of those very same principalities which enslave the rest of mankind ? He deceived even the power and principalities of his true identity not by accepting a particular rank within humanity but in accepting humanity itself - in order to deliver man from his fate.

Caird illustrates this concept with his interpretation. Christ, he says, was able to absorb all that the powers could do to him and to neutralize it by his obedience. 'Evil propogates itself by a chain reaction.' It is like a bad coin, which is passed on from one person to another until it reaches someone who will put it out of currency by absorbing the loss. If one man injures another, there are three ways in which evil can win a victory and only one way in which it can be defeated. If the injured person retaliates, or nurses a grievance, or takes it out on a third person, the evil is perpetuated and is therefore victorious. Evil is defeated only if the injured person absorbs the evil and refuses to allow it to go any further. " (18) This is how Paul describes Christ as having died to sin (Rom.5:10), and dying for our sins (I Cor.15:3). Jesus befriended the publicans and sinners and drew to himself the hostility of the leaders, and by cleansing the Temple and expelling the traders from the court of the Gentiles he drew upon himself all the hostility which had accumulated down the centuries between Jew and Gentile when he pronounced the Jewish Temple as his house of prayer for all nations. In choosing the path of the cross he offered no retaliation - this the Christian must emulate (Phil.2:4.5).

Although Paul offers no systematic scheme of Principalities and Powers, and his references to them are quite incidental to his main line of argument, nevertheless, they are too common to reject as insignificant. It is difficult to deny that Paul accepted quite literally the existence of "spiritual beings" and that to interpret them as figurative expression on the part of Paul is to do injustice to the texts. This language is very strange to the modern reader and we need to return to this problem in the conclusion. However, it must be recognised that the liberation from the spirit powers does not constitute the main theme of Pauline salvation. Christ has delivered man from sin. We will examine this more closely in the continuation of this article.

D. Lines.

THE ENDEAVOUR MAGAZINE

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Great Britain £1 per annum, Students 50p (plus 30p postage - Total £1.30). Canada, USA & Australia \$2.50 (air mail \$4.00). South Africa R1.50. Great Britain, Europe & South Africa (also articles and correspondence) to The Endeavour Magazine, 150 Chessetts Wood Road, Lapworth, Warwickshire. England.
Canada, & USA, The Endeavour Magazine, 108 North Orchard Road, Linthicum Heights, Maryland 21090 USA.
Australia & New Zealand, The Endeavour Magazine, 2 Kilorn Avenue, Kilsyth, Victoria 3137, Australia.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Saturday 25th to Wednesday 29th July 1981

College of Ascension

Selly Oak - Birmingham.

Themes include

'Death, Resurrection and Immortality'

Ron Coleman

'Israel between the Testaments'

Wilfred Lambert.

Fully details from - Ian McHaffie, Moray Lodge, 176 Granton Road,
Edinburgh EH5 1AH.

..... to visit the Widows and Orphans

Jas. 1:26-27

by George McHaffie

James is concerned in the above quotation to establish the difference between a form of worship based on elaborate and flashy rituals and the christian position based on the outcome of a renewed heart. Before the rise of government welfare services widows and orphans with no income were entirely dependent on charity derived from religious bodies, relations or friends. Throughout most of the christian centuries magnificent church buildings, priestly vestments, church furnishings and vast ceremonies have taken precedence to welfare. The decline in religion has, however, been matched by a substantial drive on the part of governments, particularly in the United Kingdom, to provide welfare. Since the Second World War the National Health Service, Social Security, Unemployment Provision, child care and services for the old have been an accepted fact of British life.

The left wing of the Socialist parties are moving towards the view that the State should provide and in consequence regard provision of services by voluntary agencies as something to be tolerated only until the State has all provision required. Work traditionally carried out by churches and other voluntary bodies is therefore facing an uncertain future.

Provision for the old is increasingly in demand and is likely to continue that way for some decades ahead and certainly well into the next century. Discussion on the role of the State and the voluntaries in the caring for the elderly is likely therefore to be postponed for some time yet. There have, however, been substantial changes already in providing for the needs of children.

Just over 100 years ago Dr. Barnardo's Children's Homes were undergoing rapid expansion. These Homes met very basic needs of warmth,

shelter, clothing and training for abandoned children. The same need was felt throughout Britain at the time and other foundations built homes, some on the lines of children's villages, with small units to give a more natural family background. At the same time adoption agencies were set up by churches and voluntary bodies. Fostering was also widely practiced and in this century payments from the local authorities became normal.

It is only in the last 5 years or so that a break down in the arrangements has happened. The local authorities have assumed greater powers and interest in adoption and voluntary work in this field has been substantially reduced. While more time and care is now taken over placing children for adoption it is not always the case that the moral and religious upbringing of the child is so well safeguarded as when churches were involved in the procedures.

The decline in the number of children in Britain and the increasing willingness of single girls to keep their babies has reduced to a very small number the babies available for adoption. It has also reduced to a large extent the need for places in Children's Homes. There has also been a substantial change in the philosophy of local authorities in dealing with homeless, rejected or parentless children.

The large Children's Homes with up to 500 children inevitably were somewhat impersonal. With a highly dedicated staff, as they often were, some of the unsatisfactory lack of emotional warmth towards the children might be avoided. In recent years there have been staff shortages, rapid turnover of staff and a general unwillingness of staff to take up residential work. As working conditions have improved the hours of work and holidays of the staff have shortened. This is inevitable and necessary. It does however, lead to a highly unsatisfactory way of providing young children with the warmth and consistent love which they require. The National Children's Bureau considers that a child must have a steady mother for the first three years of life. This need not be the biological mother. In the larger children's homes the shift system of houseparents can mean that the person who puts the child to bed at night may not be there for the child's rising in the morning. Communal children's living may also have the child miss out

on such ordinary matters as watching food being prepared, shopping and family outings. The Israeli Kibbutz with communal upbringing of children based largely on a communist principle of no ownership of a personal kind, even of children, has revealed similar problems. While the original communist idea has apparently broken down as unworkable the children who have been through the system show marked effects. They are susceptible to group discipline and make good soldiers, but in other respects appear to lack creativity and capacity to make firm emotional bonds with other individuals.

In Britain moving children around from one home to another in accordance with the type of child in which the home may specialise or indeed from one foster parent to another for much the same reason can and perhaps always does in a young child lead to a fear of getting too involved with anyone in case the loved person leaves. The purpose of these changes would be entirely lost on very young children.

The cost of providing children's homes has risen steeply with inflation. This factor alone has made its mark on local authority thinking and they have been all the more ready to seize on cheaper alternatives such as fostering. It is nevertheless fairly evident that fostering leading to legal adoption is a far better option for a young child than being placed in a home. It gives the child a natural setting, avoids the child being different at school and provides, or should, all the warmth and love which is so necessary for the emotional and spiritual growth of children.

The impact of this thinking has had a severe effect on both voluntary and local authority children's homes.

One large complex in Scotland which has places for about 500 children has in the course of the last few years been reduced to 150 with little or no promise of further placements by the local authority. This is the combined effect of fewer children in the population and a move towards fostering for children whose parents are inadequate.

In earlier years many large houses in country districts were bequeathed to charities and became children's homes. In retrospect this is not

regarded as good practice in child care as it isolates the children from the wider community. With the closure of such homes, a major problem lies with the charitable bodies in finding an alternative use. Where possible these houses are being put to alternative use. Old people's homes are one such possibility though old people may not wish to be isolated from the community either. Severely handicapped children or adults are another possible use but even here the numbers and demand is not so great. In any event staffing the isolated houses can present a major problem.

The nature of society in Britain today is such that many children will continue to require an upbringing away from their parents. In so far that fostering and adoption are the favoured methods by local authorities the fear of undue official and impersonal handling of young lives is reduced. Foster parents who bring up a child from early years have as much influence as a natural parent.

While local authorities are wary of the motives of foster parents and particularly against those who have an evangelical or proselytising motive, there is clearly a role for christian husbands and wives in offering their services to local authorities.

The success of those families who took in Jewish refugees during the Second World War is an indication of what can be accomplished. There are now numerous children who would respond to the love, concern and disciplined upbringing of christian homes and a direct service can be offered here to those whom life has delivered a harsh beginning.

George McHaffie