

Bible Lessons on First Principles

By

ROBERT G. HUGGINS

Lesson I

Introduction:

The Importance of Bible Study

I. HOW TO BECOME "BELOVED OF GOD"

DANIEL the prophet (Matt. 24:15) was both "grieved" and "troubled" because he did not understand the visions which God gave to him (Dan. 7:15). Nevertheless, he "kept the matter in his heart" (Dan. 7:28) as tenderly and affectionately as a mother keeps in her heart and ponders in her mind the incidents of her first born (Luke 2:19). However, when he "sought for the meaning," and like Peter, "thought on the vision" (Acts 10:19), then God said to Gabriel, "Make this man understand the vision" (Dan. 8. 15, 16). Jehovah then issued a commandment and dispatched Gabriel to make him "understand the matter" (Dan. 9:23); and from the twentieth and twenty-first verses it appears that God issued this angelic mandate "whiles he was yet speaking."

At the time this "commandment" was published among the angelic hosts, Daniel was in ignorance and perplexity as to the meaning of God's word, yet God gave to him these words of encouragement: "Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand . . . thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words" (Dan. 10:12). Like John, who "wept much" at his ignorance of God's book (Rev. 5:4), Daniel was "grieved" and "troubled" at his ignorance of his own visions. But when he "sought for the meaning" and "enquired diligently" into the significance of his prophecies, which the spirit of Christ through him revealed (1 Peter 1:10, 11), he became "greatly beloved of God" (Dan. 9:23), and was providentially shown "that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth" (Dan. 10:21). He was thus made "wise unto salvation" by faith in the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15), as he declares himself in Dan. 9:2: "I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem."

II. HOW GOD COMMUNICATES

WISDOM AND TRUTH TO MAN

The following quotation sets forth clearly and scripturally how God communicates wisdom and knowledge to man, and indicates the only way an understanding of the Bible can come to us. Ponder it diligently and prayerfully:

The scriptural way of getting understanding is sane and rational. "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients because I keep thy precepts" (Psa. 119: 98-100). The Psalmist got his understanding from God's word, from his "commandments" and "testimonies." God gives wisdom truly, but "thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies." "Through thy precepts I get understanding" (vs. 104).

In exactly the same way Daniel was made wise. He set his heart to get understanding (Dan. 10:12), and he obtained it through information supplied by books (Dan. 9:2). Since understanding is attained by using means to get it, the New Testament exhorts believers to attain it (1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 5:17). Christ imparted understanding to people by giving them instruction (Matt. 15:10), and complained when his disciples did not understand what he said (Matt. 15:16, 17). Now it is true that God gives understanding as well as faith; but it is by supplying the means to enlighten the mind, namely, his word. And men get what he supplies by giving their minds to attain it, like Daniel; by meditating upon it, like David. We attain to the understanding of any question by giving our minds to it, by studying it, by meditating upon it; and if it refers to the performance of duty, by having a disposition to practice it. The testimony of God—his word — "enlightens the eyes and makes wise"—imparts understanding and wisdom (Psa. 19:7, 8).—The Bible: Its Principles and Texts, pp. 28, 29.

III. WHY MANY "GOOD PEOPLE"

SEEK THE TRUTH IN VAIN

God gave Daniel knowledge and wisdom (Dan. 1:17; Jas. 1:5), but he went to school three years to procure these blessings of God (Dan. 1:4, 5).

"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain" (Isa. 45:19). In view of these words from Jehovah, it perplexes many, after they have learned the truth themselves, why many "good people" are ignorant of it. They reason that since God has not spoken "in secret," and no one asks without receiving, knocks without response, and seeks without finding (Matt. 7:7, 8); therefore that "good religious people" are in total darkness as regards gospel truth, is to them inexplicable. But that many would seek God's word and not find it, is clearly foretold in the Scriptures: ". . . I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (Amos 8: 11, 12). And the Savior solemnly declares: "Many, I say unto you, will seek (wrongly) to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24). Strenuous seekers, but not finders! And why are they not able to find God's truth? Why is it hidden from them (Matt. 11:25), and hidden so effectually, that with all their wandering, running to and fro, and seeking, they cannot find it? Why, with all their "goodness," are they left in outer darkness?

A divine explanation is given why they do not learn the gospel. God has written great things in his law, but as they are ignorant of the Scriptures (Mark 12:24), these "great things" are

“strange things” to them (Hos. 8:12; Acts 17:20). They say, “Lord, Lord,” but do not the things which he says: they preach in his name, cast out devils, and boast of being divine healers; they send missionaries to China, abound in works of philanthropy, are devoted to humanitarianism; they do “many wonderful works;” but they do not the will of the Father in heaven: they are so busy doing “wonderful works” they have no time to read and find out what the “will” of the Father is (Matt. 7:21-29). “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee” (Micah 6:8).

Having “showed” us what his requirements are, it is folly to devote ourselves to works of supererogation and to labor at “mighty works” which he has not required (Isa. 1:12). He has put a yoke upon us, admitted; but his yoke is easy, and his burden is light (Matt. 11:28-30): he has imposed commandments upon us, granted; but “his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3). He has required neither thousands of rams, nor ten thousands of rivers of oil, nor the first born (Micah 6:7), nor any other “great thing” (2 Kings 5:13, Jer. 45:5); but he has solemnly avowed that we cannot be brothers and sisters of Christ unless we do the will of the Father in heaven (Matt. 12:50). We must cease from our own works (Heb. 4:10), abandon all “dead works” (Heb. 6:1), and enter into the service of the living God (Heb. 9:14). To be found among the approved at last, and have a right into the city depends, not upon “mighty works” of our fabrica-

tion and invention, but upon keeping "his commandments" (Rev. 22:14). God has caused his will to be "written in the volume of the book" (Heb. 10:7); but instead of reading and seeking out "the book of the Lord" (Isa. 34:16), people spend their leisure time in poring over political newspapers and secular magazines.

Good as these people may be morally, they know not the voice of Christ (John 10:4), nor the voices of the prophets (Acts 13:27). They strive in a thousand ways to serve the Lord, but they do not strive lawfully, and therefore God cannot crown them (2 Tim. 2:5). These unlawful strivers are the ones we mistake for "good men." Remember that Christ, the sinless Son of God, refused to be saluted as "good Master" on the ground that God alone is "good" (Matt. 19:15, 17). Christ's repudiation of the title "good" should make us ashamed to use it in reference to men of whom it is said: "There is none righteous, no, not one: . . . there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10, 12). Christ emphatically affirms that harlots go into the kingdom of God before these "good people;" publicans before pharisees (Matt. 21:28-31; Luke 18:10, 14). Reader, these are serious declarations of truth from the lips of the Son of Man; consider them well.

IV. THE BIBLE AS REVELATION

The word "inspiration" means "a supernatural divine influence on the prophets, apostles, or sacred writers, by which they were qualified to

communicate moral or religious truth with authority; a miraculous influence which qualifies men to receive and communicate divine truth" (Webster).

It appears from this definition that inspiration is an "influence" exerted by one person upon another. The inspirer wields such an "influence" upon the inspired that he is dominated and "moved" to write the will and words of the inspirer (2 Peter 1:19, 20). It is self-evident, therefore, that inspiration requires at least two persons: one to act, and another to be acted upon. The first is the author of the statements spoken or written; the second is merely an amanuensis. The inspirer breathed "with authority" through the organs of the inspired, transmitting to him all his own authority (Matt. 10:5, 14, 15, 40).

Since the inspired writers and speakers wrote and spoke in the name of God and represented him officially, they are called in the margin of Hosea 9:7, and accordantly with the Hebrew text, "men of the spirit," because they were "overshadowed" with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), and "endued" (Greek, *endus*) "with power from on high)," or "clothed with power," as the Revised Version correctly translates the passage (Luke 24:49). Thus "overshadowed" and "clothed" with "miraculous influence," the sacred penmen spoke and wrote with the authority of God. Their own minds and wills were subordinated, and God's asserted (2 Peter 1:19, 20). "They spake not of themselves" (John 11:51). They were neither wiser (Dan. 2:30; 1 Cor. 1:25-29), nor holier than other men

(Acts 3:12). But by "the inspiration of the Almighty" (Job 32:8), "the God of heaven" (Dan. 2:28) has revealed his words, mind, and wisdom untainted with "the will of the flesh, and the will of man" (John 1:13; Gen. 41:16). The delectable "waters of life" have been poured out in "earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7). Weak erratic men, through whom God spake (Heb. 1:1), are called "earthen," because they are "of the earth, earthy" (1 Cor. 15:47); and "vessels" because they are not the authors and founders of the gospel, but simply instruments, vessels which contain the heavenly treasure, or holy deposit of God. And the philosophy of God, working thus through mortal men, is to make it evident to all discriminating minds that "the excellency of the power may be seen to be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7).

Therefore the Scriptures are "in truth the word of God" (1 Thess. 1:13); "not in word only, but also in power, and the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 1:5; Rom. 1:16). "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16) in such an absolute sense that the divine writers could not reverse the statements God "moved" them to make, try as they would. When the spirit of God came upon Balaam (Num. 24:2), although the prophet was a wicked man (2 Peter 2:15), yet he was put under the restraining "influence" of God completely. "Only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak;" "I have received a commandment to bless, and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it". (Num. 22:35; 23:20). In no instance

did the inspiration of God permit the minds of Bible writers to assert themselves (Num. 16:28; 2 Cor. 10:4, 5). The Bible reveals God's mind, God's will, God's wisdom, and God's words.

V. THE BIBLE AS AUTHORITY

Authority is a logical thought resulting from inspiration. The communication of moral and religious truth "with authority" is a fundamental idea in the word "inspiration," as Webster affirms. When the world, then, rejects the Scriptures as God's word, they reject the "authority" of God, and the only divine standard of right in the world (Luke 16:29). In its place, however, they substitute the traditions of men (Matt. 15:6), and many other false standards of righteousness. We can only mention here the following false standards to which the world renders devoted and loyal obedience:

(a) Their Hearts

From the rostrum it is now customary for ministers to "speak a vision out of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord" (Jer. 23:16, 21). Such preaching violates the divine charge, "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). Preaching their own "visions" leads the people to "walk after the imagination of their own heart" (Jer. 9:13, 14). Both ministers and people are under the curse appointed for those who trust in man (Jer. 17:5). Mised, culpable people! "He that trusteth in his heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"

(Jer. 17:9). If the human heart is so deceitful and wicked as this, is it safe to repose confidence in it? Will you give yourself over to the guidance of such a miserable master? Instead of trusting in our hearts, we should know that they are great depths of iniquity, out of which emerge all the blighting, ruinous, and voluptuous sins of men (Matt. 15:18-20).

(b) Their Thoughts

We are forbidden to trust in princes and the sons of men (Psa. 146:3). "We should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead" (2 Cor. 1:9). And our trust in God must be complete: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). The carnal mind must be crucified (Rom. 8:6, 7). What we think, and "verily think," may be wrong (Acts 26:8-12). Thoughts have been so perverted that "whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). Our thoughts, if we trust them, may lead us to commit murder, and then approve it! Our "thoughts" are among the things which God calls upon us to "forsake" (Isa. 55:7, 8). Every thought must be brought into subjection to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

(c) Their Ways

In describing a fearful declension in Israel during the reign of the Judges the following language is used: "They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way" (Judges 2:19). We all like "our own sweet way," but it is generally the wrong way. Having our own way is the tap

root of all sin. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). Then since our "own way" has misled us, it is discredited as a leader. "We have plowed wickedness, we have reaped iniquity; we have eaten lies." And why such a fearful harvest? The divine answer is: "Because thou didst trust in thy own way, in the multitude of thy mighty men." (Hos. 10:13). Our "own way", the "multitudes" and the "mighty men"—these have all misled us! These are "other lords" which we must disown, and say to Jehovah, "By thee only do we swear by thy name" (Isa. 26:13). And in taking our oath of allegiance to him he has reasonably and logically stipulated our pardon and reconciliation upon the following conditions: "Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6, 7).

(d) Their Wills

"We cannot do the things which we would," and do right (Gal. 5:17). Even Christ did not "please himself" (Rom. 15:3). "I seek not my own will," he said, "but the will of the Father which sent me" (John 5:30). "Not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me," was the motto of his life (John 6:38). His will revolted at Caivary, but his Father's will nailed him to the cross: and conflict of will in the case was settled in the beautiful words: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt;"

“Not my will, but thine be done” (Mark 14:36; Luke 22:40-42). And God’s will, about which Christ was so greatly concerned, and which he obeyed at the sacrifice of his own, he found, not in his own heart, thoughts, way, or conscience, but in **“the volume of the book”** (Heb. 10:7). To that volume, dear reader, betake thyself in imitation of Christ, and thou shalt find there, like him, **“the good, and perfect, and acceptable, and perfect will of God”** (Rom. 12:2).

(e) Their Conscience

Many have deified conscience into an **“infallible guide,”** and have supplanted the authority of God’s word with the authority of their conscience. See what the conscience of Paul led him to do. A self-confessed blasphemer, persecutor, and murderer (1 Tim. 1:13), he maintained that he always did what he **“verily thought he ought to do”** (Acts 26:9). Doing what he **“thought”** was right, but which in fact was wrong, he pursued his sinful course with a **“pure conscience”** (2 Tim. 1:3). He declared openly in the face of the Jewish council, even after his conversion: **“I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day”** (Acts 23:1). If a **“pure conscience”** and a **“good conscience”** led Paul into blasphemy, persecution, and murder, will your conscience lead you any better? Will you depend upon conscience to guide you aright, when this so-called **“inward spark of divinity”** led Paul astray? No reflecting person can believe in the infallible guidance of conscience when he considers the **“infinitely differing and con-**

flicting decisions which conscience, as judge, renders in precisely the same cases.

Nor is conscience a "creature of education." Education can improve faculties, but it can create none. There must be something to educate before education can commence its work. Conscience is a faculty among the original endowments implanted in man by the Creator—not to supplant God in the heart and destroy, by infallible leadership, the utility and supremacy of God's word in the mind. No; conscience rejoices in its dependency, and looks up with reverential humility for the word of God to prompt all its impulses and decisions. None of our other faculties are so prompt as conscience, when in a healthy state, to respond to divine appeals, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3:9). Conscience is an eye, but the eye needs light; conscience is an ear, but the ear needs sound. The best eye discerns nothing in darkness; the best ear hears nothing in silence. Conscience without light is like Samson without eyes. Instead of leading and guiding infallibly, it needs to be led and guided. It must have light.

Like all other faculties of our nature, it needs illumination. Locke gave the correct definition of conscience when he said, "It is the power of judging of the rectitude or the pravity of our own actions." Even so. Rectitude has respect to right rule, and pravity implies a departure from one. Obviously, then, conscience needs a rule to work by, a standard of judgment upon which to base decisions. If she "accuses" or "excuses"

(Rom. 2:15), her accusations and exonerations must rest upon fact and law. If she "witnesses" (Rom. 2:15; 2 Cor. 1:9), her testimony relates to conformity to a right rule, or to dereliction and disobedience. The conclusion is plain and unavoidable: There must be a rule or standard for every act of conscience; and that infallible standard to which conscience is subservient, is the word of God.

As showing how fluctuating and faulty conscience is as a standard of right, and how unreliable it is in itself as a guide, we observe that there is

1. **A sleepy conscience.** It suffers men to go on their sinful ways without shame or remorse. So callous is this faculty within some men that it is scripturally represented as "seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2). "Were they ashamed when they committed abominations? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (Jer. 6:15). Were they not "past feeling" (Eph. 4:19) they could not go on so cheerfully as they do in open sin and impiety. Then with many there is

2. **A partial conscience.** They discern what is wrong in others, but not in themselves: or they notice some evils, but not others. Herod would not violate his oath; but he would murder a prophet (Matt. 14:9). And the pharisees would not put into the treasury the money that was the price of blood; but they would persist in persecuting Jesus to death (Matt. 27:3-6, 20). Such a conscience many people have today; it would be clamorous

if they were to commit some flagrant enormity; while it bears no testimony at all against secret lusts, or against any evils which are current and popular in an ungodly world. With others there is

3. An erroneous conscience. Paul "thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus" (Acts 26:9), and he would have stood condemned in his own mind if he had not labored incessantly to extirpate the Christian name. And our Lord has told us that many would "think they did God service in killing" his faithful followers (John 16:2). Doubtless there are many who, both in civil and religious actions, are instigated by good principles, while yet a clearer view of their duty would represent those actions in a different light. And there is also with many

4. A scrupulous conscience. They both do and forbear many things from a sense of duty, when the things themselves are indifferent in the sight of God. Thus it was with those who were afraid to eat meats that had been proscribed by the Mosaic law (Rom. 14:2-6). Superstition may be less common in our day; yet wherever the mind is tinctured with it, there will arise many occasions of condemnation or acquittal in a man's own mind, when the sentence passed is entirely founded in an ignorance of Christian liberty and duty. Conscience then may, and often does, condemn when it ought to acquit, and acquits when it ought to condemn. The Scriptures alone are the infallible standard of right. To this touchstone

all the decisions of conscience must be brought for confirmation and final adjudication.

VI. THE BIBLE THE CRITERION OF BLESSINGS AND CURSES

All the blessings of salvation are conditioned upon an understanding and belief of God's word. To be "a man of God" and "approved of God" are both impossible attainments without the study and knowledge of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:17; 2:15). On the other hand, to reject Christ and his word is fatal; for the rejected Christ is to be judge, and his rejected word is to be the standard upon which his decision will be based in the day of judgment (John 12:48). That the rejection of the Scriptures involves a forfeiture of salvation and exposes to irrevocable penal retribution, the following testimonies solemnly and eloquently declare:

"They refused to hearken and stopped their ears: . . . therefore came great wrath from the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 7:12, 13; Prov. 1:24, 25).

"They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words . . . until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy" (Hebrew, healing, 2 Chron. 36:16).

"As the fire devoureth the stubble . . . so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 5:24).

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LESSON II

THE ABRAHAMIC and DAVIDIAN COVENANTS

I. The Adamic Inheritance

ADAMIC CONDITIONS which obtained before sin and which were lost by the sin of the first Adam, are to be restored in the righteousness of the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 1:26-28; Psa. 8:3-9; Gen. 3:17-19, 22-24; Heb. 2:6-9; Psa. 2:8; 72:8; Matt. 18:11; Isa. 51:3; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Micah 4:3,7,8; Matt. 25:34).

II. The Abrahamic Covenant

The Adamic inheritance was formally pledged by God to the righteous in the Abrahamic covenant in which he swore to Abraham concerning

(a) **The Inheritance Promise:** the earth with eternal life to enjoy forever (Gen. 12:7; 15:7,18; 24:7; 48:3,4; Acts 7:4; Gen. 28:13; 17:8; Rom. 4:13; Zech 9:10; Psa. 2:8; Matt. 5:5);

(b) **The Time of Possession:** at the resurrection of the dead (John 1:11; Heb. 11:17,19,22; Ezek. 37:1-14; Dan. 12:2,13; Gen. 28:13; Ex. 3:6; Luke 20:37; Acts 26:6-8);

(c) **And the Heirs of Promise:** Christ and those who are Christ's, called "Abraham's seed" (Heb. 11:9; Rom. 8:17; Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16; Gen. 13:15; 17:8; Gal. 3:7,9,27-29; Acts 7:5; John 1:11).

III. The Davidian Covenant

God has supplemented the Abrahamic covenant by another which he made with David in which he promised him a son, house, nation, throne, and kingdom forever. Temporarily suspended on account of Israel's sins, his kingdom and throne will be restored at Christ's second advent and be possessed by Christ and his immortalized brethren in the land bequeathed to them in the Abrahamic covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16,19; 23:5; Heb. 1:5; Psa. 89:32,39; Ezek. 21:25-27; Luke 1:32,33; Isa 55:3).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. THE ADAMIC INHERITANCE

BY "LOOKING away to the leader and perfecter of our faith, Jesus" (Heb. 12:2, Emphatic Diaglott), we obtain an infallible guide in the exposition of the Scriptures. Of him it is testified: "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). An author's name is often used for his writings; as, "Have you read Mark Twain?" "Moses and the prophets" means what is "written in the law of Moses and in the prophets" (Luke 24:44). By "Moses," then, we understand "his writings" (John 5:45-47); by "the law," what is "written in the law" (Luke 10:26); and by "the prophets," their written testimony. Therefore, when we give ear to what Moses and the prophets have "written" we are said to "hear them" (Luke 16:29).

Now, Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; the rest of the Old Testament was written by "the prophets." In expounding "the things concerning himself" in these Scriptures, Christ began "at Moses" (Genesis), according to the record, and then subsequently took up "the prophets" in the course of his exposition. In this lesson we shall follow hard after him, and let his right hand lead and uphold us all the way (Psa. 63:8).

"Beginning at Moses" we find some interesting facts about the Adamic inheritance both before and after sin. Man originally was made upright (Eccl. 7:29), in God's image (Gen. 1:26), crowned with kingly honor and glory, and was but "little lower than the angels" (Psa. 8:5). He was God's vice-regent on earth, and enjoyed universal sovereignty. "In that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him" (Heb. 2:8). But "by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12). By sin the first Adam lost the garden of Eden, his crown, the earth, his dominion over the earth, and his life. Primeval conditions passed away; the earth, cursed for man's sake, began to produce thorns and thistles, and man was driven away from the tree of life into a blighted inheritance, death-doomed and lost (Gen. 3:19, 22-24). He was now subjected to vanity, but, "in hope" (Rom. 8:20). Hope was the only star that shone in the darkness and disaster and ruin which sin had wrought. The seed of the woman was promised who

would crush the head of the serpent and destroy both the devil and "the works of the devil" (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8). He is called the second man and the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:47, 45), because it is his mission to save, by righteousness, that which had been lost by sin (Matt. 18:11). True, we do not now see all things placed under him; no, not "yet;" but we see him "crowned with glory and honor" for that very purpose; and when "the world to come" arrives (Heb. 2:9,5) he will have "the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Psa. 2:8). "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. 72:8; Zech. 9:10). Where thorns and thistles now blight the earth, because it was cursed for man's sake (Gen. 3:19), there will grow fir and myrtle trees "for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 55:13). Where waste places, wildernesses, and deserts now despoil it of its beauty and utility, there shall the Lord "comfort her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa. 51:3). The "whole earth" shall be filled with God's glory (Psa. 72:19), and a knowledge of that glory shall fill the earth like the waters cover the sea (Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14). "The first dominion, the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" when the Lord reigns there (Micah 4:7,8). For this glorious work of restitution Jesus is already "crowned," and when the Father "shall send Jesus Christ"

back to the earth from the heavens which now retain him, "the times of refreshing" (Greek, inbreathing) and "the times of restitution" will begin (Acts 3:19-21). He will "come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and then sit on the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). Then he will say to those whom he approves: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (vs. 34). There was no "dominion" before Adam; therefore "the first dominion" restored must be Adamic; there was no "kingdom" anterior to Adam; therefore "the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world," which the saints are to "inherit" when Christ returns, can be none other than the Adamic. The Adamic inheritance, then, including the earth and man's sovereignty on the earth, belongs to Christ; and if we become Christ's we shall share with him this rich patrimony: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Appolos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3.21-23).

II. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

(a) The Inheritance Promised

The promise in this covenant guarantees "land". *Erets*, the original word, means "land, earth, country." It is used nearly two hundred times in the book of Genesis. The demonstrative pronoun "this,"

five times used in conjunction with "land," ought to settle the matter and make assurance doubly sure. "To give thee this land;" "This land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 12:7; 15:17,18; 44:7; 48:3,4). Did any one ever hear of land and rivers in the sky? To the wicked Jews Stephen said, "This land wherein ye now dwell" (Acts 7:4). To Jacob it was described as "the land whereon thou liest"; and to Abraham as "the land wherein thou art a stranger" (Gen. 28:13; 17:8). In Heb. 11:8 we are told that Abraham actually went "into the place (eis ton topon) which he should after receive for an inheritance." Heaven was not "the place" into which he entered and sojourned as a stranger. The promise made him "heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13). The covenant says not one word about heaven, hades, "the spirit land," or conscious soul survival; but it does promise "the land," "the world," and "the earth" (Matt. 5:5; Psalms. 37).

And observe, the righteous are to "inherit the land forever" (Isa. 60:21; Gen. 13:15). They will "inherit substance" (Prov. 8:21) with life forever. Their inheritance is an "eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15). and their possession an "everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8). If the future life is endless the possession of the land is endless also, for the same words, "forever" and "everlasting," describe them both. Legally a man can only possess an estate while he lives; a dead man cannot hold property. To possess an estate "forever" requires life forever; an "ever-

lasting possession" of the earth cannot be held without everlasting life. Therefore the Abrahamic covenant guarantees "the heirs of promise" (Heb. 6:17) two things: first, an everlasting possession of the earth; and second, eternal life that it may be possessed and enjoyed forever. Life is an indispensable adjunct to the possession of property. Temporal life is requisite to temporal possession; everlasting life to everlasting possession. In the Bible God is uniformly represented as having promised eternal life in Adamic times and subsequently in the Abrahamic covenant. To illustrate: God's kingdom is said to "stand forever" (Dan. 2:44), and to have "no end" (Luke 1:33). Now flesh and blood cannot "inherit" such a kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50), unless changed from mortality to immortality (vs. 54). Inheriting the kingdom of God invariably means to inherit eternal life (Matt. 25:34; 19:29); to "enter into life" and to "enter into the kingdom" is exactly the same thing (Mark 9:45,47). And since this kingdom was "prepared from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34), eternal life was there and then promised. "The times of restitution" (inbreathing) to be introduced at Christ's second coming have been spoken of by "all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken" (Acts 3:19,24); yes, and farther back in antiquity still: "The times of restitution which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (vs. 21; Luke 1:70). Hence Paul wrote: "He hath saved

us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:9). The "grace" here mentioned was given to man in Gen. 3:15 in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and in Gen. 22:18, "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." In the promise of the earth for an everlasting possession and a kingdom from the foundation of the world, Paul found the promise of eternal life; he saw that the promise pledged deliverance from death and the grave and a "reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17). In giving the date when "the grace," whereby God "made us heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7) was promised, he says: "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). Macknight renders this, "Before the times of the ages," referring to "the ages" or jubilees of the Mosaic law, the method of computing time among the Hebrews. "Before" (prior to these), God "promised eternal life." His "purpose and grace" both required this; for if the saints inherit "the everlasting kingdom" (2 Peter 1:11), they must themselves be everlasting, and if they dwell on earth "forevermore" (Psa. 37:27), they must live "forevermore" (Rev. 1:18).

(b) The Time of Possession

Having now learned what "the land of the prom-

ise" (*tes epaggelias*) is (Heb. 11:9), the time when the inheritance is to be possessed next demands attention. Paul, in glancing at a long succession of heirs that had lived both before and during the law says: "These all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). They "sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles," not in permanent homes (vs. 9). Concerning Abraham, it is testified that the Lord "gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him" (Acts 7:5). And then of all the heirs whose death Paul reports, he says: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise" (Heb. 11:39). In the zenith of his personal ministry Christ confessed that while "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). Although Abraham was "the heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13), he had to purchase a grave for his wife (Gen. 23:17-20); and although Christ was the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16) "to whom the promise was made" (vs. 19), a friend had to provide a tomb for his burial (Matt. 27:60). "He came to his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). The reader will notice that in the Greek of this text the first "his own," *ta idia*, is of a different gender from the second, *hoi idioi*, implying a difference in

sense. Translated strictly in conformity with the Greek the text reads, "He came to his own land, and his own people received him not." Ta idia means "his inheritance" (Matt. 21:38) which is called "thy land, O Immanuel" (Isa. 8:8); and hoi idoi, the Jews.

Now, since all these heirs understood that the realization of the promise was "afar off" in futurity, and "died in the faith" of obtaining the inheritance sometime after death, the question is pertinent and interesting, When will they possess the inheritance promised? They knew and we know that an heir, "as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father" (Gal. 4:1,2). "The time appointed of the Father" when the heirs of the Abrahamic covenant shall become "lords of all" by personal possession, is at the resurrection of the dead. This appears from the fact that "he that had received the promises" (Heb. 11:17), Abraham, "accounted that God was able to raise the dead" (vs. 19). All the heirs looked forward to "a better resurrection" (vs. 35). "By faith" Joseph gave commandments concerning his bones (vs. 22), and "faith is the substance of things hoped for" (vs. 1). It is impossible to associate bones with faith and hope except by resurrection. "My flesh shall rest in hope" (Psa. 16:9, 10). To entertain "hope" of buried flesh would be impossible without a resurrection. By faith Moses suffered "reproach for Christ" and "had respect for the recom-

pense of reward" (Heb. 11:24-26, margin), the "exceeding great reward" promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:1), and which is to be given at the resurrection: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). That the promise "might be made sure to all the seed," Paul says, God "quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things which be not (being dead) as though they were" raised from the dead (Rom. 4:16,17). Here, as in many other places, the promise to Abraham and the resurrection are associated—the one involving the other. Not on the immortality of the soul but on that of "quickenings the dead" the future life is based. "I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel" (Ezek. 37:12)—resurrection and the inheritance of "the land" again inseparably connected. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" in Dan. 12:2 is followed by the assurance: "Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (vs. 13). The term "lot" represents inheritance; and the word *koom*, here translated "stand" is rendered "arise" in Isa. 26:19 and means resurrection, "Together with my dead body shall they arise." "Thou shalt rest (in the grave, Job 3:17), and stand (arise from the dead) in thy lot (inheritance) at the end of the days." The Bible always builds the doctrine of resurrection on the foundation of the Abrahamic covenant. The words of the covenant "I am the God of Abraham" (Gen 28:13), applied also to Isaac and Jacob after the same covenant had been made with them (Ex.

3:6), are used by Christ to prove that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be raised from the dead, for commenting thereon he said "Now that the dead are raised, Moses showed at the bush" (Luke 20:37). The ancient faith of resurrection by means of the covenants of promise is eloquently declared by Paul in Acts 26:6-8. The apostle here affirms his hope to be that "of the promise made of God unto our fathers;" and then in the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" he teaches that the hope could only be realized through the resurrection.

(c) The Heirs of Promise

People who believe they go to heaven when they die, or at any other time, disinherit themselves of the inheritance promised in the Abrahamic covenant by saying the Jews were the heirs, and the covenant was fulfilled under the law of Moses. Under Moses the Jews possessed the land of Canaan "but a little while" (Isa. 63:18), whereas the Abrahamic covenant gives an "everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8). During "the little while" they did possess the land they only occupied part of it, being forbidden to take the land of the Edomites, Moabites, and the Ammonites (Deut. 2:5 9, 19). They were only temporary residents of the land (Lev. 25:23; 1 Chron. 29:15; Heb. 11:9). Besides, the Bible distinctly says that the inheritance promised to Abraham was not of the law (Gal. 3:18); that the law,

added to the covenant four hundred and thirty years later, did not "disannul or make the promise of none effect" (vs. 17); that the promise "was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law" (Rom. 4:13); that the children of the flesh are not heirs (Rom. 9: 7, 8); and that "if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of none effect" (Rom 4:14).

Who, then, is Abraham's seed? Isaac and Jacob are "heirs with him of the same promise" (Heb. 11: 13). Abraham has personal interest in the covenanted inheritance; all others who are "heirs with him" have the same interest. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise" (Gal. 4:28). "He promised that he would give it to him (Abraham) for a possession, and to his seed" (Acts 7:5). "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made" (Gal. 3:16). Meditate on the word "and" in these texts; then consider the word "with" in the statement, "To thee and thy seed WITH thee" (Gen. 28:4), implying that Abraham and his seed will both possess the inheritance at the same time. The word seed is often used of a single person, being restricted to a principal descendant, one who by excellence is the seed; as, the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15), the seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:17), and the seed of David (2 Sam. 7:12). The pronoun "his," in the singular number, proves this. Paul's exegesis of the promise is grammatically correct: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to

seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, WHICH IS CHRIST" (Gal. 3:16). Since the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, we must become joint-heirs with them (Rom. 8:17) before we have any interest in the covenant. How this heirship may be obtained is clearly revealed: we must be "of faith" to become children of Abraham (Gal. 3:7). "The heathen," if they believe the gospel preached to Abraham, are justified and "blessed with faithful Abraham" (vss. 8, 9). There are two essential conditions to be complied with before we can become heirs of the promises made to Abraham and his seed: first, we must have "the faith of Abraham" (Rom. 4:16); and second, we must be baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27, 29).

III. THE DAVIDIAN COVENANT

"When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

David's throne and kingdom, according to this covenant, are to be established "forever" in the hands of his seed. Solomon was not that seed, for he was a young man when the covenant was made, and occupied the throne before David died; whereas the seed of the promise was to spring up "after thee," and "when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt

sleep with thy fathers.” David himself expected the covenant to be fulfilled in the remote future: “Thou hast spoken of thy servant’s house for a great while to come” (2 Sam. 7:19). Christ is the seed of David (Matt. 1:1; Acts 2:30). “He that ruleth over men must be just (Christ is the Just One, Acts 3:14), ruling in the fear of God (Christ, Isa. 11:3). And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth (Christ, Jno. 1:9, 8:12; Mal. 4:2) Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation and all my desire” (2 Sam. 23:5). “I will be his Father and he shall be my Son” are words quoted from the covenant and applied to Christ in Heb. 1:5—words too high to be applied to angels, to say nothing of applying them to Solomon.

After Solomon’s apostasy, David’s descendants degenerated until he visited “their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes” in the days of Zedekiah when he “profaned his crown by casting it to the ground” (Psa. 89:32, 39; Ezek. 21:25-27). Two great periods of prophecy are limited by the word “until,” and will end together: first, the absence of Christ in heaven “until the times of restitution” (Acts 3:21); and second, the down-treading of Jerusalem “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21: 24). Both these periods will end when Christ personally “returns and builds again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down” (Act’s

15:16), and reigns on David's throne forever (Luke 1:33). David will then be raised from the dead, behold the face of his Redeemer in righteousness, bear his likeness, and be satisfied forever. Thus will be fulfilled the hope he so ardently cherished and so forcefully expressed in his dying hour, "This is all my salvation and all my desire" (Psa. 17:15).

Such are "the sure mercies of David." But these mercies are not for David exclusively, for the same "glad tidings" are tendered to us also: "I will give you the sure mercies of David" (Acts 13:32,34). The Greek word *humin*, translated "you" in this text, is a plural pronoun. The singular in our version is "thee" or "thou." "I will give you the sure mercies of David" means that all believers are joint-heirs with Christ of the royalty promised in the Davidian covenant, as well as of the inheritance promised in the Abrahamic. These two covenants constitute the essence of God's saving message to man, and give future royal honors to the redeemed. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye! . . . Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with YOU, even the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:1-3).

Bible Lessons on First Principles

By

ROBERT G. HUGGINS

LESSON III

THE GOSPEL of THE KINGDOM THE ONLY TRUE GOSPEL

I. Meaning of the Word Gospel

THE WORD "gospel comes originally from "godspell," "god" being an Anglo-Saxon adjective for "good," and "spell" meaning "news." The gospel, then, both etymologically and scripturally, means "good news" or "glad tidings" (Luke 2:10; Acts 8:1; Isa. 61:1).

II. The Gospel is Preached in Both Testaments

The glad tidings of the gospel, instead of being limited and confined to the pages of the New Testament, as is generally supposed, are also published in the writings of the Old Testament. These were preached to

- (a) The antediluvians (1 Peter 4:6; 2 Peter 2:5);
- (b) Abraham (Gal. 3:8);
- (c) The Israelites in the wilderness (Heb. 4:1,2);
- (d) The contemporaries of David (Heb. 4:7);

(e) The people contemporary with John the Baptist (Mark 1:1, 14, 15; Luke 16:16);

(f) The house of Israel before the death of Christ (Luke 4:16-22; Mark 1:14; Luke 20:1); and

(g) All who received "the ministry of the prophets" prior to the birth of Christ (Hos. 12:10; 1 Peter 1:9-12).

III. Four Gospel Conditions Required of Sinners

God has conditioned the sinner's salvation upon

(a) Hearing (Deut. 30:10-20; Rom. 10:5-17; Matt 13:23.;

(b) Believing (1 Cor. 1:21; 15:1,2; Mark 1:14,15; 16:15,16; Rom. 1:16);

(c) Confessing (Rom. 10:8,9,10; 1 Tim. 6:13; Heb. 10:22, 23); and

(d) Obeying the gospel (1 Peter 1:22-25).

IV. Subject Matter; or the

Things Composing the Gospel

The gospel consists of "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Mark 1:14; Luke 4:18, 43; 8:1; 9:2,6; Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 30:31).

V. The Gospel of the Kingdom

the Only True Gospel

"The gospel of the kingdom," consisting of "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," is the only true gospel. A double curse has been pronounced against either man or angel who shall dare to "pervert" this gospel, or preach "any other" (Gal. 1:6-9).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. MEANING OF THE WORD GOSPEL

THIS WORD etymologically signifies a "good spell" caused by hearing a good report. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (Prov. 25:25). Scripturally the gospel is called "good tidings" (Isa. 40:9; 41:27; 61:1) and "glad tidings" (Luke 8:1). Not good news about health, riches, fame and many other temporal and worldly things, good and valuable perhaps in their place; not good tidings about anything; but "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1). Notice the definite article in this passage. "The glad tidings of the kingdom of God" contain "the good tidings of faith" (1 Thess. 3:6).

II. THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED IN BOTH TESTAMENTS

This proposition is pregnant with meaning and should be considered carefully and seriously. Many claim that the gospel consists merely of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; therefore they reason it dates from, and was first preached at, Pentecost. This leaves the world without the gospel from Adam until the death of Christ in A.D. 33. In direct contradiction to this idea are dozens of unequivocal Bible declarations which affirm that the gospel was proclaimed previous to the death of Christ. To see this, let us begin the evidence

with Christ himself. The whole of his ministry was before his death except forty days between his resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3). For three years and a half, dating from his baptism to his death. "he preached the gospel" (Luke 20:1). The affirmations which declare this are numerous, emphatic, reiterated and unmistakable (Mark 1:14; Matt 4:17; 6:33; 9:35; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:1; 13:22). In the beginning of his ministry he preached "the good tidings" of Isaiah 61:1 to the people of Nazareth, closed the book and said. "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). "He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek," found in Isa. 61:1, is changed in Luke 4:18 to read, "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor."

Now let us consider the ages prior to Christ and we shall find the gospel existed even then. John's preaching is called "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). As the "beginning" of a subject is a part of the subject, so "the beginning of the gospel" is a part of the gospel. "The law and the prophets were until John" (Luke 16:16). From John, who preached the gospel, "the law and the prophets" traverse the centuries back to Abraham, who was a prophet (Gen. 20:7). In all the centuries preceding Christ the people had the "ministry of the prophets" (Hos. 12:10). Their ministry was a ministry of the gospel. This is what Peter affirms, writing after the day of Pentecost, and alluding to that very day. He says the prophets

bore testimony to both the sufferings and the glory of Christ, consequently "they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. 1:11,12). "The spirit of Christ was in them" (vs. 11), they were sons of God (Rom. 8,9,14), heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (vs. 17); and were therefore "holy men of God" and "spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). They "preached the gospel with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" as literally and truly as the apostles did on the day of Pentecost and thereafter. Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5). He preached the gospel to the antediluvians with the spirit of God assisting and co-operating (1 Pet. 4:6; 3:19,20; Gen. 6:3; Heb. 11:7). And the gospel was current with Israel in the wilderness and during the reign of the law under Moses. "Unto them was the gospel preached as well as unto us" (Heb. 4:2). "The word preached," however "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (vs. 2). The same gospel, the same rest, and the same promise offered to them, and which they failed to obtain "because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19), are now given to us (Heb. 4). Paul has asserted that the gospel is older than the law of Moses, having been "preached to Abraham" four hundred and thirty years previous to its inauguration (Gal. 3:8, 16, 17). It is by adding baptism into Christ to these Abrahamic gospel-promises that

makes us "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:8, 16, 26-29).

III. FOUR GOSPEL CONDITIONS REQUIRED OF SINNERS

The Scriptures preach the gospel (Gal. 3:8). "The word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:25). When we recognize that the gospel is preached in the word of God, as these texts declare, and that the gospel proclaimed in "the Scriptures of the prophets" is the gospel "made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26), then we realize that the gospel is as old as the Scriptures themselves. As the gospel, then, has been contemporaneous with all ages, it follows that the conditions of the gospel are applicable to all men in whatever age they live. In their application to sinners these conditions may be summarized in four propositions, namely:

(a) Hearing the Gospel

Pointing to "this book of the law" (Deut. 30: 10) Moses says: "It is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say. Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we

may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. 30:11-14). "This book" (the book, the Bible) is "not hidden" from us. Were it up in heaven or over the sea it would be beyond our reach. In the providence of God it has been brought "very nigh" to us. Holding "this book" in our hands, it is criminal to be ignorant of it. After paraphrasing this Scripture in Romans the tenth chapter Paul goes on to say: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (vs. 14). Hearing first, then faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (vs. 17). Hearing God's word, that is, understanding it, always precedes belief of it. Speaking agriculturally, "the seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Amplified, the word of God is "the word of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:19). "He that receiveth the seed into good ground is he that heareth the word (of the kingdom), and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty" (vs. 23). The word of God is the incorruptible seed by which we are begotten (Jas. 1:18) and born again (1 Pet. 1:23-25). When farmers can raise corn without planting seed and wheat without sowing the grain, then, but not until then, will be believe that men and women can become Christians without hearing and understanding the word of God. Blessed are your eyes, dear reader, if they see: and your ears, if they hear (Matt. 13:16). "My mother and my

brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it" (Luke 8:21).

(b) **Believing the Gospel**

In his summary of the conditions of salvation Paul includes belief; "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" (Rom. 10:13,14). Belief must be added to hearing. God saves only believers (1 Cor. 1:21). Now before the gospel can be believed it must be learned. And after it has been understood and believed it must be kept in memory, or we will be "forgetful hearers" (Jas. 1:23-25) and will "have believed in vain" (1 Cor. 15:2). But believe the gospel we must before we can have any promise of salvation (Mark 16:15,16) The power of God to save is only exerted upon those that believe (Rom. 1:16). Where there is ignorance of the gospel there can be no belief of it; and where there is no belief in it there is no "power unto salvation." Ignorant as well as enlightened unbelievers are alike beyond the pale of salvation offered by God to mankind upon the condition of faith (Rom. 5:1). Belief is listed with repentance as a commandment (Mark 1:14,15), making both equally binding as conditions of salvation. Belief is called a "commandment" in so many words (1 John 3:23). Since only those who do his commandments have a right to the tree of life and an entrance into the city (Rev. 22:14), it follows that all unbelievers must be dest-

royed with the abominable "without" the city of life (Rev. 22:15; 21:8).

(c) Confessing the Gospel

Adverting again to Paul's summary of the conditions of salvation, we notice that as belief follows hearing in logical sequence, so "calling on the name of the Lord" or confession, follows belief. First a belief of the gospel; then a confession of that belief. When Paul speaks of the word which is nigh us, "even in thy mouth and in thy heart," he explains that he means "the word of faith which we preach" (Rom. 10:8). Notice, then, that the confession which the apostle proceeds to talk about is a confession of this "word of faith," not a confession of sin: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto (Greek, *eis*, for) salvation" (vss. 9, 10). We must not only believe the truth in our hearts; we must "acknowledge" it with our mouths also (2 Tim. 2:25). This acknowledgement or confession was made by Christ before Tim. 6:13). This confession on the part of Christ was a confession of "the word of faith," and related to the kingdom of God, and not to sin, as you may see by reading John 18:36, 37. He had no sin to confess (Heb. 4:15; 7:26). Observe also that he made it "before Pontius Pilate," that is, publicly;

and that Timothy made the same "confession before many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:12). "This commandment" is then passed on from Christ and Timothy to us to be kept "without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs. 14) Paul himself "called on the name of the Lord," that is, made his confession when he was baptized (Acts 22:16). And in keeping this commandment "without spot" it appears that all converts were required to make this confession in conjunction with their baptism: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, . . . and our bodies washed (baptized) with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our faith without wavering" (Heb. 10:22,23). "The confession of our faith," notice, not our sin. To confess our faith is to tell what we believe. And to meet the divine requirements in the case, this must be done "with the mouth" and "before witnesses." The "confession of faith" has been abolished today in a degenerate Christianity, for it is ignorant and has no "faith" to confess. Confession "with the mouth" has been superceded by revivalists who urge the people at blatant protracted meetings, "Only stand up"; "Just raise your hand"; "Sign this card"! Such evasions and nullifications as these of God's command to make a confession of faith with the mouth and in the presence of witnesses are too palpable to need refutation here.

(d) Obeying the Gospel

When an ignorant man hears the gospel he awakes to the fact that he is a sinner (Rom. 7:8,9); when he trembles and believes it, he does nothing more than a devil (Jas. 2:19); when he confesses it, he is still in his sins. What must he do then to be saved from his sins? The answer is, he must obey the gospel. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth," is the way an inspired apostle puts it (Pet. 1:22). Purification comes, not by hearing, not by believing, not by confessing the truth, but by obeying it. Obedience implies a command. The sinner is told to repent and be baptized "for the remission of s'ns" (Acts 2:38). Baptism is repeatedly called "obedience" in the sixth chapter of Romans, because it is a command (Acts 10:48). Because it is a divine command it is aptly called "the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26) and "the obed'ence of faith" (Rom. 16:26), because faith in the word which commands it moves the believer to obey. Thus it "saves us" (1 Pet. 3:21) by "purifying our souls" (1 Pet 1:22) in giving us the birth of water (John 3:3). Unless we are born of water as well as of the spirit we cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Unless born again we shall perish like the grass of the field and fade like its flowers (1 Pet. 1:21-25). Understanding that baptism includes confession, as we learned under "c," Acts 18:8 is most significant in the order of its statements: "Many of

the Corinthians (a) hearing (b) believed, and (c, d) were baptized.”

IV. SUBJECT MATTER; OR THE THINGS COMPOSING THE GOSPEL

We must hear, believe, confess, and obey the gospel. Before we can discharge these duties we must know what the gospel is. To ascertain what the gospel is we must learn what its subject matter is; or in other words, the things which compose it. Now since the word gospel means “good news,” what are the glad tidings about? We cannot go astray in answering this question if we look to the ministry of Christ, for he preached the truth (Rom. 15:8). Anointed to preach the gospel (Luke 4:18) he preached the kingdom of God (vs. 43). “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God” (Mark 1:14). “He went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God” (Luke 8:1). He sent his twelve apostles to preach the kingdom of God (Luke 9:2). “They departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel” (vs. 6). Whatever the kingdom of God is, it forms the subject matter of the gospel. The kingdom and the gospel are so interwoven that the one is the other. When the kingdom of God is preached the gospel is preached; and when the gospel is preached the kingdom of God is preached. There is no gospel apart from “this gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 24:14). “This gospel” is not so much

as mentioned in popular churches today, much less preached! They say the gospel consists exclusively of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Now it is a fact that originally these truths about Christ formed no part of the gospel" (Luke 9:6) with the sacrificial import of Christ's death left out. They were not aware that Christ had to suffer. He told them of his approaching death and resurrection, but "they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they perceived it not" (Luke 9:22,45; 18:32-34. They could not preach that of which they were ignorant. Since in this state of ignorance concerning the sufferings of Christ they "preached the gospel," it is positive proof that the gospel originally, and as preached by them, consisted exclusively of the kingdom of God.

Previous, then, to the death of Christ the crucifixion formed no part of the gospel. Subsequently, however, it came to be preached as a supplement to "the gospel of the kingdom." This distinction appears in the phrases by which the preaching of the apostles is designated at these two different periods. In the gospels, written before the death of Christ, the proclamation is described as simply "the gospel of the kingdom of God"; whereas, in the book of Acts, after his death, the phrase runs, "The things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12). This was not alteration; it was simply an addition. "The things concerning

the kingdom of God” were the gospel before Christ’s death; they remained the gospel after his death and resurrection; the only difference being that the “things concerning the name of Jesus Christ” were added to the kingdom as a means of procuring it (Acts 4:12). The gospel of the kingdom, however, remained the gospel notwithstanding this addition, and has the precedence, being always put first and the things concerning Christ second, as the following texts will show, since they were all written after the death of Christ:

“And when they believed Phillip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women” (Acts 8:12).

“He spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8).

“I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more” (Acts 20:25).

“There came many unto his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified (1) the kingdom of God, persuading them (2) concerning Jesus” (Acts 28:23).

“Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching (1) the kingdom of God, and (2) teaching those things which concern Jesus Christ” (Acts 28:30,31).

V. THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM THE ONLY TRUE GOSPEL

From the evidence now before the reader it is plain that the gospel of the kingdom was preached by Christ and his apostles before his death and likewise after his resurrection; therefore "the gospel of the kingdom" continues to be the gospel to this day. Christ spent forty days with his disciples after his resurrection "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). He then left them under a commandment to preach "the gospel of the kingdom in all the world" (Mark 16:15,16; Matt. 24:14). Thus before the cross the gospel was the kingdom; after the cross the kingdom is the gospel still. As summarized by Luke in Acts 8:12 and elsewhere the gospel is composed of two sets of "things" tied together by the cross and securely held fast by the conjunction "and" — "the things concerning the the kingdom of God, AND the name of Jesus Christ." "The things concerning the kingdom" are first; the things concerning the "name of Jesus Christ, second. To be ignorant of these "things" is to be ignorant of the gospel. As the jews only accept "the things concerning the kingdom of God," and these only in a carnal and corrupt form, so, the Gentiles only accept the things concerning "the name of Jesus Christ," and these they contemplate with perverted gaze. Both reject the gospel. There are many false gospels, but only one true one. Paul speaks of three

gospels in Gal. 1:6-9:

1. Another gospel;
2. A perverted gospel; and
3. "The gospel of Christ";

but the first two are false. "The gospel of Christ" is a descriptive phrase which clearly identifies it with the gospel of the kingdom which he preached before and after the cross. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Readers, preachers, even angels in heaven are warned not to pervert this gospel, nor preach another. To change "the gospel of Christ," or to substitute another for it, is a crime which will call down the curse of God upon the culprit.

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9).

Bible Lessons

On First Principles

By

ROBERT G. HUGGINS



Lesson IV

THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD



I. What the Kingdom of God is

THE KINGDOM of God will be a divine political dominion established upon the earth (Dan. 22:44; 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15; Isa. 32:1 11:9, 10; Hag. 2:22; Psa. 2:8, 9).

II. When the Kingdom of God will be Set Up

At the close of the times of the Gentiles God will send Christ in person to the earth to "set up" the kingdom of God (Acts 3:20,21; Psa. 102:13,16,21; 2 Tim. 4:1; Luke 19:12-16; Acts 1:9,11; Dan. 7:13-27; Matt. 25:31,34).

III. Where the Kingdom of God will be Located

The kingdom of God will be established on earth in the land bequeathed to Abraham for an everlasting inheritance. It will be the kingdom of Israel restored (Mic. 4:8-6; Amos 9:11.15; Ezek. 37:21,22; Jer. 23:3,8; Gen. 13:14-17; Heb. 11:8-9; Gal. 3:16; Lev. 26:42; Mic. 7:20).

IV. What Constitutes the Things

Concerning the Kingdom of God

"The things concerning the kingdom of God" are its component parts. Analytically collocated "the things" which compose the kingdom are:

(a) **THE KING:** Christ (Zech. 9:9; 14:9; John 19:19-22);

(b) **THE ASSOCIATES OF THE KING:** the saints of all generations, developed and immortalized by resurrection, if dead; changed to immortality "in the twinkling of an eye," if living when Jesus comes—both constitute, with Christ their head, the collective "seed of Abraham," in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Dan. 12:2; Luke 13:28; Rev. 11:18; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; John 5:28,29; 6:39,40; Luke 14:14; 1 Cor. 15:50-58; Matt. 25:31,34);

(c) **THE LAWS:** such as Christ and his associate rulers (the saints) shall make, and by which they will govern the world in justice and love (Isa. 2:3; 42:4; Zech. 14:16-19);

(d) **THE SUBJECTS:** both Jews and Gentiles; the Jews and Israelites (the twelve tribes) being "the first dominion," and the Gentiles the second (Isa. 11:12; Jer. 31:10; Zech. 8:7, 8; Mic. 4:6-8; Luke 1:31-33; Matt. 19:28; Zech. 2:11).

(e) **THE CAPITAL CITY:** "Jerusalem, the city of the Great King," and the metropolis of the whole earth (Matt. 5:34,35; Jer. 3:17; Micah 4:8; Joel 3:16,17; Isa. 24:23; Zech. 2:10,12; Psa. 48:1-8; 122:2-7; 132:11-18); and

(f) **THE TERRITORY:** Palestine primarily, and "the uttermost parts of the earth" finally (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 11:15; Psa. 2; Dan. 7:27).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. What the Kingdom of God is

A KINGDOM is "that over which a king bears rule; the territory or country subject to a king; the dominion of a monarch" (Webster). The kingdom of God is a government (Isa. 9:6) of the nations upon earth (Psa.67:4). Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were kingdoms (Dan. 2:39,40). They cannot be sublimated into mere spirituality, as many theologians do the kingdom of God. They were literal governments without even the semblance of spirituality. With an antithesis which none can mistake Dan. 2:44 reads: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." In this passage "the God of heaven sets up a kingdom" which is inimical to and destructive of, "all these kingdoms." When "set up" it first "breaks them in pieces," and then to complete their destruction, "consumes" them until there is "no place found for them" (Dan. 2:35). "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen" (Hebrew, nations, Hag 2:22). Here is plainly predicted the entire disruption of all human governments, the violent and complete suppression of "the powers that be." "All people, nations and

languages" are subjugated by the kingdom of God (Dan. 7:13,14,18,22,27). "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 19:15). "Set up" on the territory occupied by earthly governments, which are substantial kingdoms, called "the kingdoms of this world," the kingdom of God expands under the heavens into dimensions that fill "the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35). "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ" (Rev. 11:15). From this Scripture both the learned and unlearned reader will perceive intuitively that if "the kingdoms of this world," which are real, literal, political governments, "become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ," the kingdom of God when established will be a literal government occupying the same territory now occupied by "the kingdoms of this world."

II. WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE SET UP

The Lord has "a set time" to establish his kingdom (Psa. 102:13), namely, "when he appears in his glory" (vs. 16). "The times of restitution" are when "he shall send Jesus Christ" from heaven where he now is (Acts 3:20,21). Therefore the restoration of Israel's kingdom cannot take place until Christ returns (Acts 1:6). He is coming back from heaven "in like manner" as he went (vs. 9, 11). As he went visibly and personally, so he will return visibly and personally, "the Lord himself" (1 Thess. 4:16). "When the Son of Man shall come

in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). A king without a throne is not a king *de facto*. Since Christ "comes in his glory" before he sits upon his throne, he cannot be an officiating king until he returns. At his first coming his citizens hated him and said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). They banished him, and he is now an exile in heaven whither he has gone to "receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke 19:12). As Herod and his successor, and as all governors of outlying provinces, went to Rome to receive official jurisdiction from the Emperor (see Josephus); so Christ, the Nobleman, by analogy, has gone to "the far country" of heaven to be invested with royalty, "receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke 19:11,12). "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom," etc, (Luke 19:15). He did not "receive" the kingdom until he had "returned," notice. The veritable "Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven" before there is "given to him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom" (Dan. 7:13,14). If the kingdom is "given" to him then, he did not possess it previous to his coming. "His appearing and kingdom" are joined together by God himself (2 Tim. 4:1); and "what God hath joined together let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

III. WHERE THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE LOCATED

The kingdom of Israel was divinely constituted under Moses, and is declared to have been the

kingdom of God (1 Chron. 28 :5 ; 29 :23 ; 2. Chron.9 :8 ; 13 :8). On account of iniquity it was overthrown and scattered to the winds "until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it him" (Ezek.21 :25-27). Its temporary collapse, however, will be succeeded by its restoration through Christ (Luke 21 :24 ; 1 :33 ; Acts 1 :6 ; Matt. 19 :28). As the kingdom of God will be the kingdom of Israel restored. (Oba. 17,20, 21 ; Micah 4 :6-8). it will be located on the land bequeathed to Abraham and his seed. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6 :10). Where is the kingdom of God to "come"? Where is the will of God to be done as in heaven? In the sun, or the stars? In Mars, Venus, or Jupiter? We can offer no sublimer prayer, and none more consonant with the design of the Lord's coming than this—"thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We pray, not for our translation to the kingdom of heaven, but for the coming of the kingdom upon earth. Set up "on earth," the kingdom of God will ultimately become co-extensive with "the kingdom and the dominion, and the power over the kingdoms under the whole heaven" (Dan. 7 :27, Leeser's translation).

IV. WHAT CONSTITUTE THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the preceding lesson we demonstrated by the Scriptures that the gospel relates to the kingdom of God, and that an amplified definition of the gospel embraces "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8 :12). Therefore to find out what these

“things” are is to find out what the gospel is; to hear, believe, confess, and obey these “things” is to hear, believe, confess, and obey the gospel. The analysis of these “things of the kingdom” is made necessary by the fact that the kingdom of God is truly and literally a kingdom, with constitution and statutes; with a personal head, and many subordinate ministries; comprehending all nations, and enduring forever. A kingdom is not an abstraction. It is not any single thing; it is an aggregation of elements or parts which go to make it up. A king is not, in himself, a kingdom; neither is a country, people, capital, nor laws, separately: all these combined are required to make a kingdom. As a kingdom is composed of a king, an aristocracy, a people, a territory, a capital, and laws, these “things of the kingdom” must be defined and understood separately and in detail before we can “receive the kingdom” with comprehension and understanding. As the reader’s salvation depends upon his belief of these kingdom “things,” we ardently hope that he will study the subjoined analysis of them with the docility and simplicity of a little child; for whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein” (Luke 18:17).

(a) The King: Christ

The word “Christ” comes from the Greek word *Christos*, which means anointed. This quotation from a scholar of eminence is worthy of mention here:

"Christos, Christ, is the official appellation of the long promised and long expected Savior, denoting his kingly authority and mediatorial position as the 'Servant of the Lord.' Jesus was his common name during his lifetime, and he is generally so called in the Gospels, while 'the Christ' or 'Jesus Christ' is generally used in the Epistles" (Young's Concordance under "Christ").

The Bible discriminates between the words "Jesus" and "Christ," the former being used as a name and the latter as a title. Jesus is a name which means Savior (Matt. 1:21); Christ is a title, or as Young says, "an official appellation denoting kingly authority." Biblically the words "King" and "Christ" are convertible terms. "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" in Matt. 2:2 is emended to read in the fourth verse, "Where Christ should be born." Here the words "King" and "Christ" are used as synonyms. Now if the reader asks, "What must I do to be saved?" the answer is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 16:31). "Jesus Christ" is a name and a title combined. Since, then, "Christ" is a title referring to "kingly authority," and is synonymous with "King," to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" is to believe that he is King as well as Savior. These two words are distinguishable and are distinguished; separable and are separated. John makes this distinction apparent when he says: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). It is possible, then, to believe in Jesus and at the same time reject Christ; to believe in him as

Savior and at the same time reject him as King. Grammatically the definite article "the" cannot be used before a proper name; therefore when John says "Jesus the Christ" he is using a title equivalent to "Jesus the King." As "life through his name" comes to us by "believing" this, the reader must see that here is a matter demanding his serious consideration. The fact that the book of John was "written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ," shows the importance of the subject. "And Paul, as his manner was, went unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ" (Acts 17:2,3). Preaching that Jesus is Christ is explained as teaching "contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another King, one Jesus" (vs. 7). Therefore when Paul preached that Jesus was Christ he taught that Jesus would be King "contrary" to Caesar—that he would be King in the literal sense in which Caesar was King. And to intimate when he would exercise this "kingly authority" he said, "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness" (vs. 31). He calls this "appointed day" the "appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 6:14). Referring to his appearing as "his times" he declares that he will "show (Caesar and all other rulers) who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lords of lords" (vs. 15). Ethereal conceptions of Jesus' kingship, while eulogized as "spiritual," are but mock-fires

of the marsh "that lead to bewilder, and dazzle to blind," Why should there not be a personal manifestation and visible sovereignty of Christ on earth? Is this world, over whose birth the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:7); is this world to which angelic hosts have descended with embassies of heavenly love—is this world to be blotted out of being, or doomed to eternal sterility? One of the fairest productions of the creator, is the earth to be smitten from its place among the heavenly orbs by the hand that made it? A theology which requires such a frightful issue impugns the goodness and wisdom of God, and charges him with an abortive creation. That Christ is to "judge the world in righteousness," instead of degrading, glorifies him; and is one of the most gladsome truths of revelation. Reason and the word of God mutually embrace each other in saying that here on earth where Christ suffered is the place of his triumph, and that the objects of his redeeming love should be the subjects of his regal sway. Here on earth where Christ prayed, suffered, and died, where he was denied, derided, and killed is the place of his vindication. Where he has been denied he must be confessed; where he suffered he must triumph; where he was disgraced by humiliation is where he must be glorified and exalted; where he carried the cross he must wield the sceptre—here where he wore a crown of thorns is where he shall wear a crown of gold (Psa. 21).

(b) The Associates of the King: the Saints

The reward in store for the saints in the day of Christ's glory is a participation in "the glory honor; and power" of the kingdom in the sense of being his associates and coadjutors (as kings and priests) in the work of governing the world righteously. When Christ returns in glory and sits upon his throne (Matt. 25:31), instead of being alone he has ten thousands of saints with him (Jude 14). They "inherit the kingdom" with him (Matt. 25:34). As "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," the dead are raised incorruptible, and the living are "changed in a moment" from mortality to immortality (1 Cor. 15:51,52). The saints are thus regenerated (Matt. 19:28), made like Christ (1 John 3:2), and have "glorious" bodies of immortality (Phil. 3:21). They are now "equal to the angels and cannot die any more" (Luke 20:36). Endowed with everlasting life they have no successors, thus the kingdom is never left "to other people" (Dan. 2:44). Glory, differing like the glory of the stars (1 Cor. 15:41), is now added to their salvation (2 Tim. 2:10), its "weight," order, and precedence corresponding with the degree of suffering and loss endured for Christ (2 Cor. 4:17,18). The apostolic band comes first (Matt. 19:28), next the martyr company (Rev. 20:4), then the saints of all generations who are counted worthy of that age (Luke 20:35). These are all regenerated and given authority as judges in the kingdom of God (Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:17, 19). They sit with Christ in his throne as his

glorified Bride, his Queen-consort enthroned with him (Rev. 3:21; 2 Tim. 2:12). They wield "power over the nations" (Rev. 2: 26,27) as princes (Isa. 32:1), "take the kingdom," and possess its dominion and glory forever (Dan. 7:18,27). They execute the judgment written (Psa. 149:7-9), judge the world (1 Cor. 6:2,3), "sit down in the kingdom of God" with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and other distinguished heroes of God in everlasting comradeship (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28, 29), and shall reign on the earth as kings and priests (Rev. 5:10).

Dear reader, do not reason, logic, and fitness of things corroborate these declarations of the divine utterance? Heroic poetry, in its most presumptuous flights, has never conceived of such a vindication for defeated warriors as this—triumphing in a deathless and glorified body on the very field of battle where their leader was mutilated and entombed. It is certainly fitting that the place of Immanuel's sufferings should also be the place of his triumph. And it is most fitting that the saints should share the kingdom and the glory with Christ. Is it not according to logical thought and the fitness of things that those who have been partakers of his sufferings should be also partakers of his glory when it is revealed (1 Pet. 4:13); that those who have toiled in his service should enter into his rest (Heb. 4:11); that those who have fought under his banner should participate in the honors of his victory; that those who have borne the cross should be given the crown; that those who have bravely confessed him before men should be confessed of

him before the holy angels—that those who have cheerfully submitted to the loss of all things for his sake and the gospel should be rewarded an hundred-fold in this very world where, for his sake, they have been impoverished O reader, is it not consistent and fitting, logical and scriptural, that the purchaser should come and claim what he has purchased, gather home his exiles, fold his scattered sheep upon Mount Zion, and fulfill his gracious promise to reward their faithfulness, and gratify their hope of eternal life? Does it not follow that here, where he redeemed them, he should dwell with them forever; that here where he has abolished “the last enemy,” death, they should celebrate in his presence that glorious achievement of his power; that here where they are purified by his grace and disciplined by his providence, they should enjoy his eternal communion, and rejoice in his eternal beatitude; that here, where they sleep in the dust, and awake in immortality they should be permitted to remain in glorified bodies with him who is “the resurrection and the life,” amid the ineffable beauties of regenerate nature and in the delectable joys of paradise restored?

(c) The Laws

“The world to come” will be subject to Christ and his immortalized saints (Heb. 2:8). Residents of Jerusalem, the headquarters and metropolis of the kingdom, they will enact and enforce holy and just laws, and exercise lordship over the earth to the utmost bounds of the globe. The laws, wise-

ly and divinely administered, will work an intellectual, moral, social and religious reformation among the subject people, as witness the following testimonies:

"Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations.....neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:3,4).

"The isles shall wait for his law" (Isa. 42:4; see also Zech. 14:16-19).

(d) The Subjects: Israelites and Gentiles

The Jews, now scattered and afflicted, will be gathered from their dispersion and re-instated in Palestine as the subjects of the kingdom. However, the subjects include Gentiles also, with this difference: "The kingdom of God" is distinct from "all people, nations, and languages" which it rules (Dan. 7:14), just as the kingdom of Great Britain is distinct from its colonies. The Jews will be the highest subjects of the kingdom, just as Englishmen are in England; the Gentiles, like her colonial possessions, will form "the dominion" and constitute dependencies of the kingdom, like the "dominion of Canada," New Zealand, etc. Jews and Gentiles are both subjects, but the Jews are "the first dominion"—subjects in a proper and exclusive sense. These distinctions are made transparent in the following Scriptures:

"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27).

"Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people" (Zech. 2:11).

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Micah 4:8).

(e) The Capital: Jerusalem

As the gospel radiated from Jerusalem during this dispensation (Luke 24:47), so this city will be the center of activity in the kingdom age, being the resident city of the King and his Queen-consort. It has been selected as the capital city of the world because it is "beautiful for situation," as the following testimonies declare:

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King" (Psa. 48:2).

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord" (Jer. 3:17).

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." "And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again" (Zech. 2:10,12).

(f) The Territory: Palestine

Palestine, which God repeatedly calls "my land" (Ezek. 36:5; 38:16; Jer. 2:7; 16:18), and of which Moses says, "It is a land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11:12), will form the territory of the kingdom in a primary and exclusive sense. Finally, by subjugation and

conquest, the "uttermost parts of the earth" are added to the dominion of "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Such is the plain import of the Scriptures following,

"I will remember the land" (Lev. 26:42).

"Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people" (Joel 2:18).

"This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden" (Ezek. 36:35).

"I will give thee the heathen (Hebrew, nations) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:8).

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. 72:8).

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Bible Lessons on First Principles

By

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Lesson V

Setting up the Kingdom of God A Destructive And Constructive Work

I. Setting up the Kingdom of God is a Destructive Work

WHEN CHRIST returns to establish the kingdom of God the earth is baptized in judgment-fire (Isa. 66:15, 16; Psa. 50:3-6; Mal. 4:1,2; Jer. 30:23,24; Psa. 21:9; 11:6; Jer. 25:33).

II. Setting up the Kingdom is Also a Constructive Work

Nevertheless in wrath God remembers mercy. The outgoings of his wrath are destructive, deadly, and extensive, but not universal (Hab. 3:2; Gen. 6:7,8,17,18; 7:23; 8:1,18,19-22; 9:1; 2 Pet. 2:5; Isa. 34; 35; Jer. 4; Zeph. 1; Acts 2:19-21; 3:19-23).

III. A Scriptural Definition of the Subjects of the Kingdom

In mercy God also remembers justice. The outflowings of his mercy are constructive, rehabilitating, and magnificent, but circumscribed.

(a) The subjects of the kingdom consist only of a "remnant," a residue composed of the meek, willing, and well-disposed of mankind (Isa. 1:19,20; 24:6; 11:11,16; Zeph. 3:12; Zech.14:16; Micah 4:1-7; Ezek. 39:2; 20:33,38).

(b) These "remnant" subjects are composed almost entirely of infants and children (Deut. 1:39; Psa. 8:2; Matt. 21:15,16; Psa. 22:30,31; 102:18,28; 127:3; Isa. 11:6,8; Zech. 8:5; 13:7,8,9; Luke 18:16).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. Setting up the Kingdom of God is a Destructive Work

In the last lesson we learned that it is God's purpose to "send Jesus Christ" to the earth (Acts 3:20) to destroy all the kingdoms which now exist, and to set up a kingdom of his own (Dan. 2:44). We come now to consider the circumstances which will attend this prodigious political transformation. Will Christ creep upon the nations secretly and decimate "the powers that be" quietly, or will he come when wars are prevalent and troubles are rife? Instead of coming to redeem a saved world, according to the misconceptions of orthodox missionary propagandists, he comes in harmony with scriptural representations, to baptize the earth in judgment-fire.

The change from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ (Rev. 11:15) will be attended by "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1). "Evil shall go forth from nation to nation" (Jer. 25:32,33). God has a controversy with the nations, and directly pleads with all flesh (vss. 30,31). To natural, political, and military troubles, without a parallel in history, which cause "men's hearts to fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:26), will be added God's visible, judicial operations upon the nations. Natural and national perplexities will be supplemented by miraculous retributions. Vengeance of a most deadly kind overspreads the earth. Multitudes perish by war and pestilence; thousands more fall victims to the fire which will descend after the manner of the judgments upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Ezek. 39:6). "A fire shall devour before him" (Psa. 50:3-6) which falls "with pain upon the head of the wicked" (Jer. 30:23,24). Revealed in "flaming fire," Christ comes to take vengeance upon sinners, and to destroy them with an "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1:8,9). To give some idea as to the extent of this advent-destruction the prophets write: "The slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isa. 66:16); "The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth" (Jer. 25:33). Out of

this world-wide destruction comes this exhortation and warning: "Take heed to yourselves lest . . . that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:34-36). If God's own loved ones must "watch and pray always" to be "accounted worthy to escape" this snare that springs upon "the face of the whole earth" at Christ's advent, what chance of "escape" do you see, dear reader, for the world which neither watches, nor prays, nor believes in the coming of the Lord? "They shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3). If God's own dear ones, after watching and praying without intermission, "escape" with the skin of their teeth (Job 19:20); if "the righteous scarcely be saved" (1 Pet. 4:18), are not Russellites, Restorationists, and Universalists in a precarious business when they promise the world "escape" from this world-wide "snare"; and then having escaped, another chance for life after the Lord comes? "With lies ye make the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising life" (Ezek. 13:22). Instead of "strengthening the wicked" to continue in his wickedness by a "promise of life" and a "fair chance" in the coming age; instead of giving the world Russellite

opiates to put them to sleep in sin, and stereotyped arguments of Universalists to make them feel safe in iniquity, "the man of God" (2 Tim. 3:17) must proclaim the word of God in stentorian voice: "Before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness. seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger" (Zeph. 2:2,3). Seeking the Lord, righteousness, and meekness "before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you" is here twice categorically commanded. Even after we have "wrought his judgment" the promise of our safety is only conditional: "It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Russellism pledges to all men an unconditional and non-forfeitable "chance" in the coming age. This false and seductive system of religion promises all who have neither sought the Lord, righteousness, nor meekness, that they shall all "escape"; it therefore promises more to the world unconditionally than God has promised to his own sons and daughters conditionally. The impudent doctrine of a "fair chance" for all men, both dead and living, in the kingdom age, is the most fallacious dogma that has been invented since theological quacks began to temporize with the word of God.

II. Setting up the Kingdom

is Also a Constructive Work

In wrath God remembers mercy. Inasmuch as human governments are overthrown, the Papal and Protestant systems of religion abolished, and the reprobates of the earth expurgated at Christ's coming, in connection with the establishment of the kingdom of God, the reader who has been led thus far kingdomward will no doubt be ready to ask in anxiety: "Who, then, are 'hid in the day of the Lord's anger'; who are to 'escape' the devastating judgments of God which accompany the Lord's advent, who are to enjoy the benign reign of Christ as subjects of the kingdom of God?" This question is easily answered when we understand that in wrath God remembers mercy (Hab. 3:2). This arrangement permits the prudent to foresee the evil and "hide" themselves; but "the simple pass on and are punished" (Prov. 27:12). Setting up the kingdom of God is both a destructive and constructive work. To some minds these two words, "destruction" and "construction", and the ideas represented by them, are mutually exclusive. But they are not antagonistic: in fact, they are the best of friends. They are placed in successive chapters of the Bible, the one following the other logically and consistently, to show their amity. The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is full of stalking destruction; the thirty-fifth overflows with permanent construction when "the desert shall blossom as the rose." And as further

suggesting the friendliness of these terms, they are placed side by side in the same texts. Thus in Dan. 2:44 the God of heaven is said to "set up a kingdom" which is a work of construction, upbuilding and restitution. In the same verse this kingdom is said to "break in pieces and consume all these (other) kingdoms," which is a work of demolition. To those who think clearly "the restitution of all things" in Acts 3:21 is in admirable harmony with the destruction of the rebellious (vs. 23). Destruction and construction, restitution and demolition, then, are not incompatible and mutually exclusive terms and ideas.

These discriminative observations help us to understand and appreciate the dual nature of the kingdom as found in the work of destruction and restitution. God's judgments are fully released at the return of Christ, for he comes to take vengeance (2 Thess. 1:8); they are destructive, deadly, and extensive, but they do not totally exterminate mankind. World-burners believe that the earth will be depopulated at Christ's advent, while others, more extreme still, think the globe itself will be annihilated. Both theories dishonor God and his word (Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Isa. 45:18; Eccl. 1:4; Psa. 104:5). Both give to a heated imagination the wings of a wild goose. The first is content in the thought that the kingdom of God will be set up on an ash bank, and that Christ and the saints will reign over a pile of cinders; the second is satisfied with Christ's kingdom and Lordship exercised over

vacuity! Such unmitigated judgments as these ideas represent have not happened since the world began. During the course of God's dealings with man, extending over many centuries, his judgments have been almost numberless; but in no instances have they exterminated mankind entirely. The depopulation of the earth by universal destruction when Jesus comes has not one precedent in all divine history to sustain it. Take the flood as an illustration of God's most astringent judgment. Mercy shines even in that opaque catastrophe. If we are told God destroyed "man and beast" (Gen. 6:7), this modification is immediately added, "But Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord" (vs. 8). If "every living substance was destroyed" (Gen. 7:23), the pronouncement is mitigated subsequently in the words, "God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark" (Gen. 8:1). "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:37). Since a remnant of men and animals were spared from death during the deluge in Noe's day, and the coming of Christ is compared to that day, are we not within the confines of Scripture, logic, and analogy in saying that a remnant will be preserved through advent-judgments? As some "escaped" with their lives from Sodom's destruction (Gen. 19:17-23), so at Christ's coming some are to be saved from death notwithstanding the conflagration (2 Pet. 2:6-9). As the spared remnant in Noe's day survived the

flood, and afterwards made a burnt-offering, "and the Lord smelled a sweet savor," and blessed them in fruitfulness and multiplication, and commissioned them to exercise dominion in the new earth (Gen. 8:20,21; 9:1-3), so will it be when Christ comes. This conclusion is not reached through a prolix process of dubious reasoning; it is explicitly declared in the word of God. Out of the darkness of the flood twinkles this star of promise: "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, . . . neither will I again smite any more every living thing as I have done" (Gen. 8:21). Granting, then, that in the flood there was maximum destruction, here is the pledge of the Almighty never to "smite again" to the same extent. Here is "comfort" concerning "the ground which the Lord hath cursed" (Gen. 5:29, margin). To show how world-burners nullify this promise and comfort of God we will quote from "Bible Readings," a Seventh-day Adventists work, page 219:

"In what condition will the earth be after the coming of Christ? 'I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.' 'I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger' (Jer. 4:23,26; Isa. 24:1-3).

"Will any man be living on the earth at that time? 'I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of heaven were fled' (Jer. 4:25; Zeph. 1:3)."

This quotation shows that world-burners understand and teach that advent-judgments are astringent, depopulating the earth, and reducing it to chaos.

It also exhibits how surreptitiously they handle the word of God. On page 220 of "Bible Readings" the writer says through stress of necessity, "The saints are taken to heaven at the coming of Christ." If he has correctly interpreted Jer. 4:23, which he quotes to prove that the earth will be "without form and vo'd," heaven will also be involved in this chaotic condition: "And the heavens, and they had no light." It cannot be an enrapturing prospect for the saints to be taken to heaven—a place where there is "no light"! Such prattle as this cannot stand the steelblue light of reason. The fact is, the texts cited in "Bible Readings" are garbled instead of quoted. They are historic, not prophetic; and the judgments which they enunciate are expressly qualified and hedged about with ameliorative features. Jer. 4:23,26 applies to Judah and Jerusalem (vss. 3, 14), and the 27th verse, which the author of "Bible Readings" did not quote, reads: "The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end." Destruction and preservation, justice and mercy, are both in this passage; and although world-burners have two eyes they can see only one thing: justice, destruction. They are blind in one eye. Isa. 24:1-3 is misquoted, too. "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled" (vs. 3) are words that catch the eye of world-burners every time; but they are totally blind to the effulgence of heavenly light which shines with a halo of glory in the 6th verse: "Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they

that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Again, Zeph. 1:3 is quoted to prove the depopulation of the earth, "I will consume man and beast." Before the prophecy concludes, however, mercy is mixed with wrath in these words: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity The Lord will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:12,13,17). These readings show that the very Scriptures which are quoted to prove that the earth is without inhabitants after Christ comes, when closely read, declare that God does not "make a full end"; that a "few men are left"; and that "an afflicted and poor people" survive as a "remnant" whom God loves, and over whom he rejoices and sings. God made the earth to be inhabited (Isa. 45: 18), and world-burners cannot annul his purpose. While it is true that God puts away the wicked like dross at the coming of Christ (Psa. 119:119), the heart-building truth remains: "Yet will I leave a remnant that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations" (Ezek. 6:8). To this sublime truth this divine assurance is added: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: for out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal

of the Lord of hosts shall do this" (Isa. 37:31,32).

III. A Scriptural Definition of The Subjects of The Kingdom

In mercy God remembers justice. Doubtless the reader now sees with a clear vision that the theory which burns up the globe, depopulates the earth, and translates the saints to heaven when Christ comes is an error which utterly subverts the word of God, since it declares that "the righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth" (Prov. 10:30). "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth" (Prov. 11:31). World-burning destroys entirely the kingdom of God, for it leaves no subjects to be governed by it. While these allegations are serious and true, to maintain equilibrium we must also recognize, on the other hand, that the out-flowings of God's mercy are limited like the shafts of his justice. God is just as well as merciful (Rom. 3:26). At the expense of his justice Russellism proposes to raise all men from the dead, and then give them a "chance" for eternal life as subjects in the kingdom of God. But the Savior has closed the door in the face of Russellism by these words: "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28). The subterfuge often employed by "fair chance" advocates, that God will be propitious to

those who suffer "damnation," amounts to a parody upon the words of our Lord. To change *krisis*, "damnation," to a trial for life, is precluded by a contrast in the description of those who are raised: "They that have done evil" versus "they that have done good." Those that have "done evil" embrace all the wicked—Balaam, Judas, etc. What "damnation" means for one who has "done evil," it means for all. Therefore if damnation means a chance or trial, Judas and all other evil doers are raised from the dead to be given a "chance"—none are punished with condemnation! Again, "the resurrection of damnation" stands opposed to "the resurrection of life." What is the opposite of life? Not a trial, not a chance; but death! The Savior says only two classes are raised from the dead—"they that have done good," and "they that have done evil"—and he says that "all who are raised get one of two things, corresponding with what they have "done" in a previous life: they either procure "life" because they have "done good," or they receive "damnation" (death) because they have "done evil." Destiny at the resurrection depends upon what we do in our lifetime; what we sow now we shall reap then. There are only two classes and two destinies spoken of in the Scriptures in connection with the resurrection. Those who "have done evil" have sown to "the flesh" in Pauline phraseology; those who "have done good" have sown to "the spirit" according to the same authority; the "damnation" of which

Christ speaks Paul calls "corruption"; and "the life" which our Lord mentions is "life everlasting" in Paul's interpretation (Gal. 6:7,8). The opposing destinies of these two classes are called "everlasting life" and "shame and everlasting contempt" by the prophet Daniel (Dan. 12:2). These contrasts in the character and destiny of those who are raised from the dead leave not an atom of room, not a space thin as a hair line, for a third class who are said by Larger Hope apologists to emerge from the grave to undergo curative discipline during the millennium. The agricultural law of "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7), is entirely set aside by these errorists who teach that if we sow nothing we shall reap something! Something is reproduced from nothing! Constitutional passivity blesses all its helpless subjects with a resurrection which is followed by alluring and saving chances and opportunities! The Scriptures, on the contrary, are clear as a trumpet blast that there is no third class raised from the dead who have done neither good nor evil, who have sown neither to the flesh nor spirit; and whose destiny is neither "life" nor damnation." No one is given a "chance" to be saved after being raised from the dead. The subjects of the kingdom are taken out of the living people at the coming of Christ. They are selected from the "neutrals" of the time. The word "remnant" means "few of many" (Jer. 42:2) and is often applied to the subjects of Christ's reign. Every time the Bible

uses this word world-burners and Russellites are both rebuked. The first say there is not a man on the earth during the reign of Christ. There can be no "remnant" of nations where there are no nations. The second say there are unnumbered hordes of the vile and ignorant raised from the dead and put on probation during the millennium. A "remnant" does not mean a horde. Neither have any use for the word "remnant." The reader will therefore perceive in the propositions hereto appended, and which are amplified and sustained by the word of God, a complete refutation of both the world-burning and "fair chance" theories—two dogmas which have been invented by the flesh and made popular by the traditions of men.

(a) The Subjects of the Kingdom Consist of Only a "Remnant" of Mankind

"Few are left" (Isa. 24:6)

"The left of the nations" (Zech. 14:16).

"I will leave but the sixth part of thee" (Ezek. 39:2).

"The remnant of his people, which shall be left" (Isa. 11:16).

"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people" (Zeph. 3:12).

"With fury will I rule over you: . . . I will purge out the rebels, and them that transgress against me" (Ezek. 20:33,38).

"I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them" (Micah. 4:7).

Bible Lessons

On First Principles

Lesson VI

The Thousand Years' Reign of Christ and the Saints

1. The Purpose of Christ's Reign is to Subdue "All enemies"

THE MISSION of Christ's reign is to extirpate "all enemies" from the earth, which is now "subject to vanity" (Rom. 8:20). The specifications of evil here given as vanquished by his reign are representative only:

(a) All human governments will be abolished (Isa. 24:21-23; Rev. 19:11-20; Isa. 17:13,14; Psa. 2:4,5; 110:5,6; 1 Sam. 2:10; Dan.2:44; 7:13,14; Psa.72; 74:20; Rev. 11:15).

(b) There will be but one kingdom "under the whole heaven"; the kingdom of God (Psa.2:1-12; 72:8; Dan 2:44; 7:27; Num.24:17; Rev.11:15; Zech. 14:9; 9:10).

(c) There will be but one religion, the true one; the religion of Christ and his government (Isa.45:23-25; 52:1,7-10; 66:17-23; Zech. 14:16; 8:23; 9:7; Rev. 5:9-14; Zeph. 3:9; Mal. 1:11).

(d) All idols and idolators shall be destroyed (Isa. 2:18; 42:17; Psa. 97:7; Zech. 13:2).

(e) War "shall cease to the ends of the earth" (Psa. 46:9; Isa. 2:4; 9:5; Hos. 2:18; Zech. 9:10; Ezek. 39:9,10; Rev. 20:1-3).

(f) Premature death will exist no more (Isa. 65:20-23; Zech. 8:4,5).

(g) The land of Israel will be transformed from barrenness to fertility, being made beautiful, fruitful, and glorious (Isa. 35:1; 41:18,19,20; Amos 9:13-15; Isa. 60:13; 65:17-25; Zech. 8:3-8,12).

(h) The city of Jerusalem will be built again, broadened, enlarged, and adorned by the "precious things" of all nations (Psa. 72:10; Isa. 26:15; Revised Version: Zech. 14:20, Revised Version; Isa. 33:17, Revised Version; Jer. 31:38; Isa. 60:10-18; Hag. 2:6-9; Jer. 3:17).

(i) The Jews and Israelites will become fast friends and a united nation, with whom the Gentiles will join to yield a national and happy obedience to the King of kings, Lord of hosts and ruler of the whole earth (Zech. 8:23; Jer. 3:17,18; Rev. 15:4; Isa. 25:7,8; 2:2,3; 45: 14-25; Ezek. 37:21-24).

(j) There will be a sevenfold increase of light, both solar and lunar (Isa. 4:5; 30:26; 60:19; Zech. 2:5; 14:6,7; Rev. 21: 11,18,22-26; 22:5).

(k) The earth and its animal inhabitants, to a large extent, will partake of the blessings of the times (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25; Hos. 2:18; Ezek. 34:25,28; Rom. 8:19-23; Rev. 22:3).

II. The Reign of Christ a Transitional Period

The subjects of the kingdom of God, the remnants of the Jewish and Gentile nations who "find grace" (Jer. 31-2) and survive as "the left of the nations" (Zech. 14:16) at the coming of Christ and the setting up of the kingdom of God, multiply rapidly with the pangs of child-birth mitigated. They soon develop into numerous and strong nations. Some of the

16) at the coming of Christ and the setting up of the kingdom of God, multiply rapidly with the pangs of child-birth mitigated. They soon develop into numerous and strong nations. Some of the people are righteous, and some of them are wicked. Sin and death continue among both classes in a modified form during the reign of Christ (Gen. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:15; Ex. 1:19; Isa. 66:7-9; Lev. 23:10-20; 1 Cor. 15:23-26; Mal. 3:18; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:1; 5:10; Ezek. 44:22,25; Isa. 65:20; Zech. 8:4; Isa. 60:21).

III. There is a "Little Season" of Judgment After the Thousand Years Expire

During this "season" the just and the unjust of that age, including both the living and the dead, are judged. The righteous are approved and immortalized; the wicked are rejected and consigned to shame and the second death. Mortality has now been abolished by salvation and destruction, and death, "the last enemy," destroyed (Rev. 20; 21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

IV. The Supremacy of Christ Ends; God's Direct Supremacy Begins

With the abolition of "all enemies" from the presence of the Lord and from the face of the earth, there comes a change in the administration of the kingdom of God. With all the wicked "cut off," none remain but the righteous, who are redeemed, glorified, and immortalized, and who inherit the earth forever. Christ's work as Prophet, Priest, Savior, and King is now finished; and he presents a redeemed earth and a glorified people to his Father, who takes the kingdom into his own hands and reveals himself without mediation (Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 11:3; 15:23-28; Eph. 1:10,22; Heb. 2:5-9; Rev. 21:1-7; 22:3).

Synthetic Remarks

I. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S REIGN IS TO SUBDUE "ALL ENEMIES"

THE KINGDOM of God is designed for gracious ends. Its establishment means the destruction of the wicked, the salvation of the righteous, and the emancipation of the nations from the thralldom of sin. "All the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Psa. 82:5). The riches of the earth are "cornered" by the opulent and hoarded away in the palaces of a surfeited few. In a world of plenty the masses of humanity, through "man's inhumanity to man," misrule, and oppression, are forced to eke out a miserable existence, weltering in poverty, ignorance, and squalor. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Psa. 24:1); but his liberality has been selfishly monopolized by the covetous and fraudulently squandered by the prodigal. The earth is filled with a surplusage of God's goodness which he has lavished upon the sons of men (Psa. 33:5); but his bounty has been rapaciously plundered by pirates and "food sharks" and doled out at exorbitant prices to famishing millions. We are sorely in need of a Savior, a Great One; and God has provided him whom he will soon send to deliver us (Isa. 19:20; Acts 3:20). "Jesus is the One." When he comes he will cure the world's ills by setting up the kingdom of God. It is through the

kingdom of God and the reign of Christ that "all rule and all authority and all power" are subdued to God. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15:24-26). So completely will all things be "gathered together in one in Christ" and put under his feet that God alone is "excepted" from the otherwise universal subjugation (Eph. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:27). "All enemies" includes evils as well as personal adversaries, which is apparent from the fact that "death" is catalogued as one of them, and is said to be the "last" one destroyed. All evil on earth is to be extirpated by the kingdom and reign of Christ. Evils and enemies are literal, and they must be literally destroyed or cured by a literal Judge and Redeemer. They cannot be literalized into times that are past, nor spiritualized into the history of Christianity, nor celestialized into heaven, nor allegorized into the perfect state after the millennium, nor idealized into oriental abstractions. "All enemies" comprehends more than can be computed; but the representative ones definitely specified in the lesson as among the "vanquished" may be taken as an epitome of them all. Synthetic remarks upon them here would be superfluous.

II. THE REIGN OF CHRIST

A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

As the first coming of Christ was followed by the Christian dispensation, so his second coming

will be followed by the millennial age. When the kingdom of God is inaugurated and the reign of Christ is in process of administration, adequate machinery will exist on earth for the control and final extermination of evil. In the procedure of extirpating evil from the earth, however, we must let God lead us every step of the way, and depend entirely upon what he has said in lucid and perfect statements. When we read that "many people," "many nations," and "strong nations afar off," which were formerly "scattered" at Babel (Gen. 11:8), now become unified and "flow" to Jerusalem "like a river" (Isa. 66:12), to participate in national and international concerts of prayer before the Lord in Mount Zion (Isa. 2:2; Micah 4: 2,3; Zech. 8:22,23; Jer. 3:17; Rev. 15:4; Isa. 25:7,8; 45:14-25), we must recall the fact that these peoples and nations are raised up from a "remnant" which was spared in the conflagration attending the coming of Christ (Micah 4:7; Zech. 8:6; Lesson 5). Magnificent, national, international, and millennial statements like "all nations shall serve him," "all nations shall call him blessed" (Psa. 72: 11,17), must be qualified in harmony with antecedent advent judgments. They are so qualified in the same chapter where the statements are made. Blasts of judgments: storms, both terrific and destructive, attend the re-establishment of David's throne under Christ (Rev. 4:1-5). These destroy the majority and discipline "the remnant." Psa. 72:6,7 records this element in the case clearly: "He shall come down like the rain upon

the mown grass : as showers that water the earth. In his day shall the righteous flourish ; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." "Surely the people is grass" (Isa. 40:7). To mow down the grass means to mow down the people. Observe, then, that "the righteous" are to flourish, not sinners ; and that the millennial rain descends "upon the mown grass." All the sons of Belial are "thrust away" like thorns when David's son takes his throne (2 Sam. 23:6). Instead of the Sodomites and others, "lewd fellows of the baser sort", (Acts 17:5), who have lived in the past, and who were so abominably mean when they did live that God killed them for their iniquity (Gen. 18: 20 ; 13:12) ; instead of these being raised from the dead* and given "a chance" as subjects during Christ's reign, as Russellism teaches, the wicked who are living at the time are mowed down like the grass, and cast into the oven (Matt. 6:30). At that time "the righteous," and the righteous only, "flourish." It is after the grass is mown that "he comes down like rain" to "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die" (Rev. 3:2) ; it is after the storm of judgment at Christ's coming has passed over that "the sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2) breaks through the dispersing clouds "like the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the

*Who are raised from the dead, when they are raised, for what they are raised, and many other interesting questions relating to the resurrection are discussed in lessons V, IX, and X.

Bible Lessons on First Principles

By

ROBERT G. HUGGINS

Lesson VII

The Father and Son

I. There is Only One God, the Father

The "ONE God" of the Old Testament is revealed as "the Father" in the New Testament. The popular doctrine of the Trinity confuses the revealed relations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and destroys monotheism to make room for polytheism — supplants Christianity to establish Paganism (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29-32; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; John 17:3; Isa. 55:5).

II. Jesus Christ is the Son of God

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, having been begotten of Mary by the Holy Spirit without the intervention of man (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:20; Isa. 9:6; Acts 2:22; John 14:10; Acts 10:38; Matt. 3:16,17; John 3:34,35; 5:30; 14:28;7; 16; Matt. 19:17; Mark 15:34).

III. Jesus Christ is Mediator and Advocate

Notwithstanding the miraculous manner of his conception and his subsequent anointing with the Holy Spirit, Jesus was made of our nature. He died, was buried, rose again, and ascended to heaven where he is now an officiating mediator be-

tween the Father and sinners who come to God by him, and an advocate for his own house, the church of God (1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14; Gal. 4:4; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 15:21,45; Rom. 5:15,19; Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14,15; 8:1; Luke 24:31; Acts 5:31; 15:14; John 17:9; 1 John 2:1).

IV. Posthumous Probation Unscriptural

Christ's mediation for the world and his advocacy for the church provide adequate means for the salvation of all in the world and in the church who make their calling and election sure. Probation for both, therefore, is limited to this life (Isa. 38:18-20; Psa. 88:01-12; Eccl. 9:5-10; 6:3-6; Hos. 13:14; 2 Cor. 6:1-3; Luke 1:19; Psa. 69:13; Isa. 55:3,6; Heb. 3:6,7,13,15). Posthumous probation* is exceedingly reprehensible, as it either represents the means of salvation which God has provided as insufficient, or repudiates Christ's mediation for the world altogether. The following indictments of the doctrine are sufficient to show its anti-scriptural nature:

(a) Posthumous probation belittles angelic ministration (Psa. 68:17; Dan. 7:10; Psa. 103:20; 34:7; Matt. 2:13, 10,20; 4:11; 26:53; 18:10; Exod. 23:20-23; Heb. 1:14; Acts 8:26-39);

(b) It slurs the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:6; 16:7-14; Rom. 8:26);

(c) It emasculates the word of God (Acts 13:44-48; John 17:19,20; Acts 18:10,11; Isa. 55:10,11; Heb. 4:12; Jer. 23:28, 29; Num. 11:23):

* By "posthumous probation" in this lesson is meant probation in purgatory immediately after death, as taught by Roman Catholics, the "intermediate state" of renovation as taught by some Protestants, and also the post-resurrection opportunity to be saved as taught by Russellites.

(d) It denies the sufficiency of Christ's mediation (Luke 23:34; Acts 2:23,37-41; John 1:46-49; Acts 5:31; Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 2:18; 4:15,16; 5:2; 7:25; Rom. 8:26-28, 32-39); and

(e) It charges God with incompetence (Gen. 21:17,20; 1 Sam. 2:18,26; 3:1,7,19; Isa. 45:1,4; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:15; Gal. 1:16; John 423; Acts 8; 10; Isa. 45:19; 59:1,2,3; 55:6,7,10,11).

V. The Destruction of the Devil

The death of Christ was a necessary sacrifice for sin in order that the law of sin and death, introduced into the world by the disobedience of the first Adam, might be nullified through the obedience of the second Adam who obtained a full discharge of its claims by a temporary surrender to its power. Thus, immortality by resurrection was acquired in his own case, and through him will also be acquired by all believers in harmony with the law of obedience. In Christ sin is taken away, and righteousness is established. The devil, a word which is used interchangeably with "sin," has been abolished in the person of Christ; and its power will also be abolished so far as his people are concerned when he redeems, immortalizes, and makes them like himself (John 1:29; Heb. 9:26; John 3:16; Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14; Acts 10:43; Rom. 3:25; Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:3,4; 2 Cor. 13:4; 6-9; Eph. 1:20,21; Heb. 2:14; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:26; 12:4; John 13:2; 6:70; Acts 5:3,9; Jas. 1:14, 15; Eph. 2:2; 1 Tim. 5:14,15; Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33; Luke 4:8; 1 Thess. 2:18; Rev. 2:10, 12,13; Psa. 68:21; Jer. 51:20).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. There Is Only One God, the Father

IN LESSON VI we concluded our study of "the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 8:12). The latter part of this passage adds to these kingdom things "the name of Jesus Christ." Now this "name" comprehends "those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:31). Equally with the things of the kingdom, these things which relate to Christ and his name are integrant parts of the gospel. We are, therefore, confronted with the imperious duty of finding out what these things are. We begin our study of them by observing that one of "the things which concern our Lord Jesus Christ" is that his Father is God, and God alone. The doctrine of the Trinity which is so prevalent today is a contradiction of the word of God. The word "God" is used no less than one thousand three hundred and twenty-six times in the New Testament alone, and is always written in the singular number. By noting particularly the subjoined testimonies you will see how clearly, unmistakably, and unanimously the writers of Holy Writ teach the unity of God:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4).

"To us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor. 8:6).

"There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6).

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

". . . . that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

"There is no God beside me" (Isa. 45:5).

"I am God and there is none else and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning" (Isa. 46:9,10).

The indivisible unity of the Deity thus stands upon a very broad scriptural foundation. The Trinitarian formula, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," is a Pagan fiction and conceit—a doctrine which presents a contradiction in terms as well as in sense. "God the Father" could not say, "I am God, and there is none else," and tell the truth, if there were two other gods—the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Son, if he were "God the Son," could not say, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God," and make a truthful statement, if he and the Holy Spirit are gods too—unless they are false gods, self-confessed! "God the Father" is a scriptural expression; but we never meet with this phraseology in the Old Testament. After Christ's birth the one God of the Old Testament is described in the New as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:14). The reason for this change in diction is obvious: God could not be "the Father," nor could Christ be "the Son," until Jesus was born. This leads us to affirm that

II. Jesus Christ Is The Son of God

The term "Son," which is so often applied to Christ in the Scriptures, implies derivation; and derivation implies subordination and inferiority (Matt. 16:16, 17). He is declared to be "the only begotten Son of God" (John 1:18; 3:16). The personal pre-existence of Christ and its inseparable concomitant doctrine, the Trinity, vanish into the Pagan illusions from whence they came, before the blazing lights of these divine statements. He that is "begotten" cannot have existed from the same point of time as the one by whom he is begotten. A son cannot be the father of himself, neither can he be as old, nor equal to his father. Christ cannot be God himself unless he is his own Son and his own Father! "God the Son" is a misnomer and an impossibility; "the eternal Son" is eternal nonsense; for then we would have to conceive of a Son who was never begotten! Then again the term "Father," which is so frequently applied to God in the Sacred Writings, implies priority of existence, precedence, antecedence. As the mists vanish before the clear shining rays of the sun, so the Trinity is chased away like a vision of the night at the first approach of these scriptural terms and expressions. Christ is not "the second person" of an eternal Trinity of gods, neither is he the manifestation of a pre-existent and "eternal Son"; but he is the manifestation of the pre-existent and eternal God (1 Tim. 3:16) who is from everlasting to everlasting (Psa. 90:2), who is "above all

and through all" (Eph. 4:6) and "out of whom are all things" (Rom. 11:36). God is the only underived and self-sustaining being in the universe, "the fountain of life" which feeds all steamlets (Psa. 36:9; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Acts 17:18; 1 Cor. 8:6). Now the Son of God is "out" of the Father (Rom. 11:36) in a literal and important sense. He was begotten of the Father by the Spirit (Matt. 1:20), and was "therefore" his Son (Luke 1:35): by the same Spirit he was later filled "without measure" (John 3:34). "The image of the Son" (Rom. 8:29) therefore became "the express image of his (Father's) person" (Heb. 1:3); the two being so similar that to see the one is the same as seeing the other (John 14:7-11). Still the Father is "above all," and is expressly declared to be "the head of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:3). The reader now must see in the repetitious phrases "the Father" and "the Son" an implication that God is one, and that the Son had his origin "out" of the Father, to whom he was subordinate in a sense which contravenes Trinitarian equality. "This day have I begotten thee" (Heb. 1:5) are words which point unmistakably to a commencement of days. John 5:26 affirms that the "life" of the Father, called "the life of God" in Eph. 4:18, was "given to the Son." His existence and life were both derived from God. All the works, doctrine, and even the words of Christ, were from God, as the Savior himself frankly acknowledged. Let the following Scriptures suffice to show the derived, subordinate, and dependent relation of Christ to God:

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him" (Acts 2:22; 10:38; Luke 4:18).

"I can of mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30).

"My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16).

"The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John 14:10).

"The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jno. 12:49).

"I can do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8:28).

III. Jesus Christ Is Mediator and Advocate

Mediator, "mesites" in the Greek, means "middle man" (Young); a "go-between, an internunciator, a reconciler" (Strong). The word applies to a person who endeavors to reconcile parties at variance. In its application to Christ it denotes that he is a "middle man" between God and man for the purpose of bringing about peaceful relations. Since this transpired "while we were yet sinners" (Rom. 5:10), his mediatorship is exercised in behalf of sinners and the world. But after reconciliation has been effected Christ becomes our advocate, "parakletos," which word means "an intercessor, consoler, comforter (Strong). The Latin word "advocatus" has the same meaning, as Cicero bears witness. In agreement with the etymology of the word, John limits the of-

office of an advocate to the church when writing to his "little children" (not sinners), by saying they have "an advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1). As a mediator Christ pleads with the world and reconciles them to God, exercising the office of a "middle man"; as an advocate he intercedes, consoles, and comforts the church, performing the functions of a priest.

IV. Posthumous Probation Unscriptural

Lexicology shows, then, that God has made ample provision for the salvation of those in the world as well as for those in the church. Believers in posthumous probation admit that when a man learns and obeys the gospel he is inducted into the church whose Head and Priest is Christ. It is further admitted that he has a "fair chance" now, and enjoys adequate means of salvation, and that his probation in the church under the priesthood of Christ is complete and final. For him no posthumous probation is claimed. But in reference to the world we are asked to believe that God has been negligent and improvident. Since God has failed to provide for them the saving means of the gospel now, to be fair, they argue, he must grant them probationary opportunities hereafter. Now it is true that many people do not know the gospel and that they have no means of learning it (Matt. 11:25; 13:11; 2 Cor. 3:4). God does forbid the preaching of the gospel to many (Acts 16:6, 7). The withholding of the gospel from people, how-

ever, instead of being fortuitous, transpires according to Christ's mediatorial functions. Even judicious men will not commit great riches into the hands of anybody (Luke 16:11); think you, then, that God will commit in trust "the glorious gospel" to the riff-raff of the world (1 Tim. 1:11, 12)? Any "good thing toward the Lord God of Israel" in any man, though it be small as an atom, is seen and properly credited (1 Kings 14:13). Infinitesimal germs of goodness have saved many a sinner from summary destruction (2 Chron. 12:12). God acknowledges "every good thing" in every man (Philemon 6). As he gladly gives credit to whom credit is due, let him explain why so many people in the world, although provided with the means of salvation, are not saved. While he is no respecter of persons he is a respecter of character (Acts 10:34). "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him (vs. 35). "Neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness" (Isa. 64:4, 5). If any man in any nation under the sun is not "accepted with him" it is because he does not obey the conditions required. "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1, 2).

God is within his right when he has "mercy on whom he will have mercy," and "compassion on whom he will have compassion" (Eccl. 8:3; Dan. 4:35; Rom. 9:15). To whom, then, will he extend "mercy," and to whom will he show "compassion"? In "every nation" those who "fear him and work righteousness are accepted of him." This is the assurance for him that "waiteth for" the Lord — "thou meetest him." From all who obey not these reasonable requirements he "hides his face." He only honors those that honor him (1 Sam. 2:30). He cannot bestow honor in advance of humility (Prov. 15:33). He "resists the proud" (1 Pet. 5:5, 6). He only draws near to those who draw near to him (Jas. 4:8); he only "makes known" the truth to those friends in whom he can confide (John 15:15); he only whispers the secrets of his covenant into the ears of those who fear him (Psa. 25:14). To a man that is "good in his sight" he always gives "wisdom, and knowledge, and joy" (Eccl. 2:26). What about others whom he leaves without "wisdom and knowledge"? They are not "good in his sight"; he "lightly esteems" them (1 Sam. 2:30). They are dogs to whom he will not entrust his "holy" truth; swine to whom he will not cast gospel "pearls" (Matt. 7:6,7); the lost from whom he "hides" the gospel (2 Cor. 4:3). They do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, and consequently are not filled (Matt. 5:6). They have never asked for the truth, so it has not been given to them; they have never sought it, so they have never found

it; they have never knocked so the door of knowledge has never been opened to them (Matt. 7:7). "For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Matt. 7:8). The promises of God which avouch that they shall find him who seek for him "with all the heart" (Jer. 29:13), place the advocates of the impeccability of all who do not "find the knowledge of God" (Prov. 2:1-5) in a most serious predicament.

For the enlightenment and warning of the innocent who have not fathomed the anti-scriptural depths and ramifications of posthumous probation; for the sake of those who have not perceived the disparagement, derogation, and odium which this dogma casts upon God, his ways, and his means of salvation, besides its disguised denial of Christ's mediatorial office, we say briefly:

(a) Posthumous Probation Belittles Angelic Agency

"Thousands of angels" (Psa. 68:17), "ten thousand times ten thousand" (Dan. 7:10) are about God's throne ever in readiness to obey his commandments (Psa. 103:20). They have a deep, abiding, and joyful interest in the salvation of sinners (Luke 15:7,10), and are "sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). If under this celestial ministry any "who shall be heirs of salvation" fail to get a chance, surely the angels are not to blame.

(b) It Slurs the Work of the Holy Spirit

"He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). The plea of frailties and infirmities.

which is so often and eloquently dilated upon as affording reasons why we must have a posthumous probation, is a slanderous libel on the ministry of the Holy Spirit which "helpeth our infirmities" (Rom. 8:26). In the light of Matt. 12:32 it would seem best to hesitate before speaking against the Holy Spirit.

(c) It Emasculates the Word of God

Indited by the Holy Spirit the word of God is "quick and powerful" (Heb. 4:12). Powerful as fire and a hammer (Jer. 23:29) it never returns to God void. "It shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11). Received, it is always "able to save" (Jas. 1:21).

(d) It Denies the Sufficiency of Christ's Mediation

Christ is in the throne-room of heaven as a "Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). Invested with "all power in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18), with "angels and authorities and powers made subject to him" (1 Pet. 3:22), he has unlimited saving power for all who are worth saving. "He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18), give mercy and grace to all that "need" (Heb. 4:16), "can have compassion on the ignorant" (Heb. 5:2) — the very people for whom posthumous probation is claimed, because, it is alleged, they have been shown no "compassion"!; and is "able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him" (Heb. 7:25) *Panteles*, here translated "uttermost," means "perfect, complete" (Young). "*Eis to panteles*," says Adam Clark, "means to all intents, degrees and purposes; and always, and in and through all times, places, and circumstances; for all this is implied in the original word: but 'in' and 'through' seems to be the particular meaning here because of what follows, 'he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' " Must some people have a more "able" intercessor and one whose mediatorial prerogatives reach farther than "the uttermost," in order to have a fair chance?

(e) It Charges God with Incompetence

The God who hears the cry of little babes (Gen. 21:17,20) and in whose favor little children bask before they know the Lord (1 Sam. 2:26; 3:7); the God whom no one ever sought in vain (Isa. 45:19) and who himself ardently seeks worshipers (John 4:23); the God who sees and cares for the ones he wants on earth, even if there be but one in the whole world (Isa. 66:1, 12)*; who purges his floor (Matt. 3:12) and destroys kingdoms without losing the "least grain of wheat" in all these national and stupendous judicial inflictions (Amos 9:8,9) — can any one complain against this God who has never, in a single instance since the world began, failed to "respect the lowly" (Psa. 138:6)? Could posthumous probation give a better angelic ministry, a more powerful word, a more efficacious mediator, a more competent and efficient God?

V. The Destruction of the Devil

Christ was "made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4) was in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3), and was finally crucified through weakness (2 Cor. 13:4). In partaking of "flesh and blood" Christ came into contact with the devil, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). In the Scriptures the devil always stands related to flesh and blood." The word

* "To this man, even to him," etc.

“devil” comes from the Greek word “diabolos,” which means calumniator or accuser (Cruden). And of “satan” Cruden says: “This is a mere Hebrew word, and signifies an adversary, an enemy, an accuser.” Neither of these terms allude to an immortal, personal being apart from man, as is commonly imagined. Christ’s acquaintance with the devil came through his partaking of “flesh and blood”; and he destroyed the devil in himself “through death” (Heb. 2:14). If the devil were a being separate from “flesh and blood,” how could Christ’s participation in that nature have anything to do with him? All sin proceeds from the desires of the flesh, and originates in the heart of man (Matt. 15:19; 1 John 2:16; Gal. 5:19, 20; Rom. 8:7). Deny that the proclivities and gravitations of human nature are earthwards and you are unable to explain how the immolation of “flesh and blood” on the cross in the person of Christ destroyed the devil. If the devil were a strong, immortal, personal being distinct from man, it needed the angelic nature, not “flesh and blood,” to cope with him; it needed life, not “death” to defeat him; it required strength, not weakness, to destroy him. Besides, if the devil were an immortal being he is as indestructible as God himself, and his physical extinction would be an impossibility. The devil Christ destroyed “through death,” spoken of in Heb. 2:14, is explained to be sin in two ways:

- (a) To "destroy the devil" in this text is called the sacrifice of sin in equivalent passages (Heb. 9:26; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 3:5).
- (b) "Him that hath the power of death," the equivalent of "the devil" in Heb. 2:14, in interchangeable passages is declared to be sin (Rom. 5:12,21; 1 Cor. 15:21,56; Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:15).

Bible Lessons

On First Principals

By Robert G. Huggins *

Lesson VIII

I. THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS DIVINE POWER

THE SPIRIT of God is not a distinct person from the Father, but his radiant power and energy in universal diffusion (Gen. 1:2; Psa. 139:2-12; Job 33:4; 26:13; Psa. 104: 30; Judges 14:6; Num. 27:18; Nehe. 9:30; 2 Peter 1:21).

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD'S POWER OFFICIALLY MANIFESTED

The Holy Spirit is God's "free spirit" gathered up, concentrated, and focalized for the work of creation, the bestowal of miraculous gifts, and the accomplishment of divine results (Psa. 51:11,12; Luke 1:35; Acts 10:38; 1:5-8; 2; 11:15,16; 8:17-19; Micah 3:8).

III. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WERE TEMPORARY INVESTMENTS OF DIVINE POWER

The gifts of the Holy Spirit which were bestowed upon the official members of the church in the days of the apostles, accomplished the purpose for which

they were given and, accordant with reason and revelation, they ceased from the earth, and will not appear again until the kingdom of God comes. That they were only temporary gifts and powers appears from the considerations following:

(a) The gifts of the Holy Spirit are "the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:4,5).

(b) When they were bestowed upon men in the past, they were given in a limited and measured form, except in the case of Christ. They were but foretastes, first-fruits, earnest, and prophetic intimations of the feast of heavenly powers which we shall enjoy in full when the kingdom of God shall come (Matt. 10:7; 12:28; Luke 9:1; 11:20; Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13,14).

(c) Christ excepted, they have been seldom possessed and rarely exercised in the past (1 Cor. 12:27-30; Eph. 4: 8-12; 1 Sam. 3:1; Luke 4:23-28; John 10:41).

IV. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE NOT EXTANT TODAY

The following arguments are conclusive on this point:

(a) When the gifts of the Holy Spirit were possessed they were employed punitively in association with their benevolent uses (Ex. 4:6-8; 6:13,17,29; Num. 12:10,13; 2 Kings 5:14,27; Isa. 38:1,2; Acts 5; 8:20,24; 13:9-11).

(b) The design and purpose of God in giving them was fulfilled in a confirmed word and completed revelation. Spirit gifts now are superfluous, and if they existed they would discredit the word of God (John 14:26; 16:12; Eph. 4:7,8,11-16; 2 Cor. 13:9; 1 Thess. 3:9,10; Col. 2:10; Acts 20:17-23; John 20:30,31; 1 John 5:10-13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jude 3, Greek).

(c) The prophetic word requires the cessation of miraculous powers now; and existing facts corroborate the prophecy (Psa. 74: 7-10; Micah 3: 6-12; 1 Cor. 13: 8-13).

I. THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS DIVINE POWER

THOU SHALT have none other gods before me" (Deut. 5:7). To those who believe in the personality and deity of the spirit, usually called "God the Holy Ghost," it does not seem to occur that such a belief contravenes this divine prohibition and commits them, in spirit and in word, to idolatry. A moment's reflection upon the meaning of the words used would show that "the spirit of God," which he calls "my spirit" (Gen. 1:2; 6:3), cannot be God, and that "the spirit of the Lord" (Acts 5:9) cannot be the Lord himself. The spirit "proceedeth from the Father" (John 15:26), and is therefore an emanation from God. The spirit is effluent from the Father, fills all space, and gives to God the attribute of omnipresence (Psa. 139). It is the influence and affluence of the Almighty; the instrument by which he works in creation, providence, inspiration, and miracle; his divine, radiant, and universally diffused power. "The spirit of God moved (brooded) upon the face of the waters" in creation (Gen. 1:2), renewed the face of the earth (Psa. 104:30), garnished the heavens (Job 26:13), created man (Job 33:4), and imparted life to him (Gen. 2:7). Instead of being another god or a distinct personality from God, the spirit is the breath of life in universal diffusion and sustains all animal life while it is retained (Psa. 139: Job 34:14,15). It is called God's "free spirit" (Psa. 51:12) because it is in

spontaneous and universal diffusion. "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3). If "the spirit of God" were a personality and a god, "the nostrils" would be a singular place for his habitation! "The spirit of God" in this Scripture is so obviously interchangeable with "the breath" in the first part of the text that we deem further comments upon the passage unnecessary.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE POWER OF GOD OFFICIALLY MANIFESTED

Now when, under the fiat of God, this radiant outflowing, spontaneous, and "free spirit" which is universally diffused in nature, becomes concentrated and focalized to inspire men (2 Peter 1:21), to beget Christ (Matt. 1:20), to perform miracles, to bestow supernatural gifts, or to execute any divine behest that may "come forth" from God (Dan. 9:23), it is then called "Holy Spirit" (Psa. 51:11,12). The word "hagion" here translated "holy", means "separated, set apart". In essence "free spirit" and "Holy Spirit" are the same; the difference in them lies in relationship. The Holy Spirit is the same power in another aspect, "free spirit" being the operation of God's power in the domain of fixed law, while the Holy Spirit is the same power exercised independent of natural law. The following text by Paul throws much light upon the subject and should be studied carefully by the reader; he should also impartially consider the four obvious deductions subjoined:

"God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?"

even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:10-13).

Four Obvious Deductions

(a) "The spirit of God" is the same as the "Holy Spirit";

(b) It bears the same relation to God that "the spirit of man" does to man;

(c) "The Spirit of God" is opposed to "the spirit of the world"; and

(d) As neither "the spirit of man" nor "the spirit of the world" are distinct from the individual or individuals who manifest them, so "the spirit of God" is not a distinct personality from God himself.

Divinely guided by the authority of inspiration we are brought to see that the spirit of God is his invisible energy, and that it forms the medium of his omniscient perceptions and is the vehicle of his omnipotent behests — in a word, the Holy Spirit is the power of God in various manifestation. Power is not a person, but the manifestation of a person. That God's power is meant by his spirit, and not "the third person of the adorable Trinity," is forever settled by the following sample testimonies of God:

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee" (Luke 1:35).

"Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye

be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

"Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:19).

"I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3:8).

III. GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WERE TEMPORARY INVESTMENTS OF POWER

Since the spirit of God is the power of God, and the Holy Spirit this power in official manifestation, we can see that for cause God may display his power, and in the absence of cause, hold it in abeyance, Scripturally speaking. these two attitudes of God are expressed as "stretching forth thine hand to heal" (Acts 4:30) and as withdrawing it to his bosom (Psa 74:11). Therefore we find God consistently active at one time, and silent at another; doing miracles in one dispensation, and not in another. For centuries past God's attitude has thus been described by himself: "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself" (Isa. 42:14). To speak accurately, partaking of the Holy Spirit is an enswathement in "the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:5). These "powers" belong to "that world" (Luke 20:35), not this; there, not here. Paul's "world to come," to which Holy Spirit "powers" primarily belong, is widely different from modern theological imaginations on the subject. With those who know not the gospel of the kingdom it is a "world to go to" rather than a world to come. The conventional conception of "the next world" is associated either with regions astronomical or subterranean — the hea-

ven or hell of pulpit discourse, in neither of which is there use or place for the gifts of the Holy Spirit in prophecy or healing. But readers of these lessons know that "the world to come" begins at the resurrection of the dead. Then "this world" ends and "that world" begins (Luke 20:34,35), Our bodies are then made like Christ's own glorious body "according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21). The saints are thus made permanent embodiments of God's "mighty power" (Eph. 1:19) and, surcharged with "the powers of the world to come," they proceed to assist Christ in subduing all things under him (2 Cor. 10:6).

Now in advance of this "world" and the enjoyment of its "powers," some believers in the first century were "made partakers of the Holy Spirit" in a limited sense. They are said to have "tasted the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:4,5). They were given "power and authority over devils (demons), and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1), and were sent out to proclaim, "The kingdom of God is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead," etc. (Matt. 10:7,8). How did the healing of diseases and the raising of the dead show that the kingdom of God was at hand? When devils were cast out by the spirit of God, "then," says Christ in Matt. 12:28, "the kingdom of God is come unto you." Again he asserts: "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Luke 11:20). Since the gifts of the Holy Spirit are "the powers of the world to come" when the spirit of God was present in Christ and his apostles and was exercised to cast out demons, heal the sick, and raise the dead, the kingdom of God, so far as its "powers" were con-

cerned, had "no doubt come upon" that people. Remember, however, that Christ excepted, who had the spirit "without measure" (John 3: 34), "the powers of the world to come" have only been given in a premature, measured, and limited way. "Of his fulness" the apostles only received a part (John 1:6). While the fulness of God's spirit raised Christ from the dead and perfected him in "eternal salvation" (Rom. 8:11; Heb. 5:9), only "the firstfruits of the spirit" were given to his disciples, which left them in pain, to suffer, groan, and travail; "the redemption of the body" being deferred to the future, when "the world to come" arrives, and the sons of God are given "glorious liberty" (Rom. 8:18-24). Until then we are only children and heirs (vs. 17), saved by hope (vs. 24). "Subject to vanity" like sinners and "the whole creation" (vss. 20, 22), we have nothing more than they except "the spirit of adoption" (vs. 15), heirship, and hope of "the glory which shall be revealed in us" when the sons of God are manifested in "the world to come." In commercial transactions, when confidence is mutual, a property is purchased, the principal is agreed upon, and then a small amount of the principal is advanced as "earnest money" to ratify the contract, which satisfies both parties until the principal is paid. So it is with "the gospel of our salvation:" after we believe it God "seals us with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance" — for how long? "Until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13,14). "Ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19,20). God has purchased us, has paid down "the earnest of the spirit" (2 Cor. 5:5), which binds the contract "until the redemption of the purchased possession" takes place in "the world to come." To clamor now for

more than these firstfruits and earnest of the spirit, as divine healers and others who claim miraculous endowments of the spirit, is a reflection upon the probity of the Almighty, and an unconscious confession by the claimants of their lack of faith in God. "The firstfruits of the spirit" left Paul with "infirmities" (2 Cor. 12: 5), in groans, travail, and pain (Rom. 8: 23). It left Timothy in weakness and "often infirmities" (1 Tim. 5:23), and Trophimus it "left at Mile-tum sick" (2 Tim. 4:20). It seems clear from this evidence that Paul and prelatie Christians were only given a "taste" and "firstfruits of the spirit" — an "earnest of the spirit," not the principal. The unseemly claims and pretensions of modern healers are here justly and scathingly rebuked, for the claim to cure all maladies, heal all diseases, and do all kinds of supernatural prodigies. In a word, they claim to have more of the Holy Spirit than Paul and other church dignitaries of the first century. While they had only a "taste," modern healers pretend to have a full meal; while they had only "firstfruits," modern curists claim to have the harvest; and while they were content with "the earnest of the spirit," latter day fanatics boast of having the principal! They have yet to learn that when "the powers" of the spirit were here that only "some" believers possessed its gifts (1 Cor. 12:27-30; Eph. 4:11), and that the greatest prophet ever born of a woman (Matt. 11:11; Luke 7:28) performed no miracles at all (John 10:41). And the few who did possess the gifts of the Holy Spirit rarely exercised them. Those who claim to do so much healing now need to be told that there were "many widows in Israel in the days of Elias. . . . but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in

the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" (Luke 4:25-27).

IV. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE NOT EXTANT TODAY

In the days when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were actual possessions and not empty pretenses as now, they were seldom possessed and rarely exercised by God's people. But today they were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" and her emissaries down to the lowest form of fetichism — all claim to speak in tongues, heal the sick, prophesy, or do something of a wondrous nature by the power of the Holy Spirit. Apostolic miracles are tame things compared with the arrogant pretentions of these modern fanatics. * The Bible condemns them totally. It says the gifts of the spirit were given as a "sign" (1 Cor. 14:22). Of what were they a sign? In Christ they were a sign of the "greater works" he will do when he comes from heaven to raise the dead (John 5:20,21); in the apostles they were tokens of the "greater works" they shall be able to do in "the world to come" — greater than even Christ did when he was here (John 14:12). These two aspects of the Holy Spirit gifts are beautifully illustrated by "the former rain" (Joel 2:23), which was followed by the abundant harvest when "the floors

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* Pretenders of divine healing have formed the unfortunate habit of abusing both medicine and doctors. They need to be told that in the Bible medicine is said to "do good" likt a merry heart (Prov. 17:22). Luke is affectionately referred to as "the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14).

shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil" (vs. 24). The downpour of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and the miraculous gifts of the spirit manifested in the first century came as "the former rain," and were "the firstfruits of the spirit," "the earnest of our inheritance." It effected the mental and moral nature of those upon whom it was bestowed; but "the latter rain" of the spirit will be the harvest and "overflow" of the preceding "earnests": it will be such an inrush, upgush, and infusion of divine power into our substance as to change every atom of this "vile body" physically, and make it "glorious" like Christ's body, and we can "die no more" (Phil. 3: 21; Luke 20: 36). The "greater works" promised are then wrought by the saints. But mark: In the interval lying between the firstfruits and the harvest, the earnest and the principal, there are no gifts of the Holy Spirit at all. Attend, please, to the evidence which is now submitted in behalf of this proposition:

**(a) The Gifts of the Holy Spirit were
Used Both Punitively and Benevolently**

The use of the power of the Holy Spirit in both these ways and often at the same time accords with God, from whom all power flows. "The Lord killeth" is in the same chapter where it is said "and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2:6). The "to the grave" is in the same verse in which it is said, "and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2: 6). The same text that says he will heal and bind us up also says, "He hath torn; he hath smitten" (Hos. 6:1). "I form the light," says Jehovah, "and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (Isa. 45:7). He makes the dumb, the deaf, and the blind (Ex.

4:11). He put "diseases" upon the Egyptians (Ex. 15:26), smote the Israelites "with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart" (Deut. 28:27,28). "Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee" (vs. 60). He smote Jehoram "with an incurable disease" (2 Chron. 21:18,19). Will divine healers claim — can they cure "an incurable disease"? And let them remember that the same power that cured in the word of God also afflicted; the spirit that healed disease, inflicted the disease. The same God who cured Moses' hand of leprosy, inflicted it with leprosy (Ex. 4:7,8); the same uplifted hand that stayed the plague of frogs, made the plague (Ex. 8:6,13); the same power that cleansed the land of lice, made lice (vss. 17,29); and the same God-given power that stopped the hail, thunder, and lightning, caused them to be sent forth (Ex. 9:22,29). The God who healed Miriam of leprosy, placed leprosy upon her (Num. 12:10,13). Jehovah who healed Naaman of leprosy said to Gehazi: "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow" (2 Kings 5:14,27). The spirit of God in Christ healed one man, but at the same time it killed a whole herd of swine (Mark 5:15,13); the Christ who blessed many, cursed a fig tree and "it withered away" (Mark 11:21); He who raised Lazarus from the dead, deliberately planned that he should die (John 11:25,43,46). And while it is true that the shadow of Peter healed the sick (Acts 5:15), it is equally true that his word struck others dead instantly (vss.

5,9). Paul's handkerchiefs did make diseases depart from the afflicted (Acts 19:12); but "filled with the Holy Spirit" he only looked at Elymas and said: "The hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness" (Acts 13:9-11). Now in all the fuss and feathers raised today by claimants of the Holy Spirit, none claim judicial and punitive power — not one. Their "testimonies" relate solely to benevolence — the cure of leprosy, consumption, cancer, and other fatal maladies. It is a very suspicious circumstance that they never give us "testimonies" of their power to afflict people with leprosy, infect them with "incurable diseases," smite with blindness, and kill instantly with only a word! No; this kind of "power" is not in demand, therefore is not sought or claimed.

(b) The Purpose of God in Giving

Holy Spirit Gifts has been Achieved

Christ left the earth with an unfinished ministry (John 16:12), and he sent the spirit primarily to complete that ministry: "Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth" (vs. 13). "He shall teach you all things" (John 14:26). Notice, "all truth," "all things;" not some truth and some things merely. Now as he sent the spirit to do this work and serve this purpose, we affirm it came and perfected the saints, edified the body of Christ,

brought it "into the unity of the faith," and that it grew up unto him "in all things" — attained to a "perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:7,8,11-16). Imperfect faith was perfected by a completed The apostles were sent into all the world to revelation (2 Cor. 13:9; 1 Thess. 3:9,10). The church was "complete" in Christ (Col. 2:10). preach the gospel: assisted to speak with other tongues "as the spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4), they completed their ministry and "declared all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:17-32). "Signs confirmed the word" (Mark 16,20). It "WAS confirmed . . . God also bearing them witness, both with signs, and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Heb. 2:3,4). One of two conclusions must be reached from the evidence now before us: either

(a) The Holy Spirit did not come and do what Christ said it would (which would discredit the word of Christ and blaspheme the Holy Spirit); or

(b) It came and fulfilled the purpose for which it was sent (and if so, it is no longer needed).

Admit that the Holy Spirit came and revealed "all the truth," and then there is no truth for it to reveal now, and its possession would be superfluous. The spirit having completed its work, the word of God is all-sufficient, which obviates clerical and priestly interference and interpretation, both of which are arrogant and presumptuous. To the dishonor of God and the Holy Spirit curists and spiritists ask us to believe, without a scintilla of proof, that the apostles failed to exe-

cute the commission of preaching the gospel in all the world, as they were commanded; and that the Holy Spirit failed to reveal "all the truth," as it was sent to do. Therefore to them the word of God is incomplete and inadequate. This position is a virtual repudiation of the word of God. Every sect which claims present gifts of the Holy Spirit has so discredited and dishonored the word of the Lord that they themselves feel the need of another Bible; and acting consistently enough, they have each invented or manufactured one, to wit: the Catholics, the popes and councils; the Mohammedans, the Koran; the Mormons, the Book of Mormon; the Russellites, Studies in the Scriptures; the Seventh-day Adventists, Mrs. White's Testimonies; the Christian Scientists, Science and Health, etc. "O man of God," beware! "There is death in the pot" (2 Kings 4:40).

**(c) Prophecy Requires the Cessation
of Miraculous Gifts Now**

Read "the sure word of prophecy" (2 Pet. 1: 19), and see for yourself how the cessation of prophets, visions, prophecies, and tongues was foreseen and predicted (Dan. 9:24; Psa. 50:21): 21):

"We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet" (Psa. 74:9).

"Night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then

shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God" (Micah 3:6,7).

"Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (1 Cor. 13:8).

BIBLE LESSONS ON FIRST PRINCIPLES

By
ROBERT G. HUGGINS*

LESSON IX

THE NATURE OF MAN

I. The Soul

“Soul” as used in the Bible means primarily a creature or person, and is employed to express the variety of aspects in which that creature can be contemplated such as person, life, mind, disposition, etc.; but in no instance does it express the idea of immortality (Gen. 1:20, 24,30; Job 12:10; Num. 31:23; Isa. 29:8; Prov. 6:30; Jos. 11:11; Jer. 2:34; Job 7:15; Psa. 105:18, margin; Judges 16:30; Acts 3:23; Isa. 38:17; 53:11,12; Matt. 10:28; Rev. 16:3).

II. The Spirit

“Spirit” as employed in the Bible signifies breath, life, energy, mind, disposition, etc.; but it is never used to express the idea of an immortal principle in man (Gen. 6:17; 7:15; Eccl. 3:18-21; Psa. 104:29,30; Jas. 2:26; Jos. 5:1; Gen. 3:8, margin; 8:1).

III. The Ghost

“Ghost” does not refer to an immortal entity in man, but to the expiration of his life (Gen. 6:17; 7:21,22; 25:8; Mark 15:37,39; Luke 23:46).

IV. Man Is a Creature of the Dust and Mortal Because of Sin.

- (a) Man is expressly declared to be mortal;
- (b) Man is affirmed to be unconscious in death;
- (c) Immortality is a conditional gift offered to man through Christ;

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(d) Man obtains immortality at the resurrection; and

(e) After he obtains immortality he enjoys it on the earth.

(a) Job 4:17; Rom. 5:12; Gen. 3:19,22,23; 1 Cor. 15:22; Psa. 49; 89:48; Gen. 7:22; Isa. 2:22.

(b) Psa. 6:5; Eccl. 9:5,6,10; Psa. 146:3,4; Isa. 38:18,19; Job 3:11-17; 14:10-12; 10:18,19; Psa. 39:12; Acts 2:29-34; 13:36; Gen. 15:15.

(c) 2 Tim. 1:10; John 6:40; Rom. 2:7; 6:23; 1 John 2:25; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:2; 3:7; Rom. 8:24,25; Gal. 6:8; Mark 10:30; Luke 20:35,36; John 17:2; 1 John 2:17.

(d) Dan. 12:2; John 5:28,29; Luke 14:14; John 6:39,40,44; 11:24; 1 Thess. 4:16; Isa. 26:19; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:13,14,42-44,51-53; Job 19:25-27; Phil. 3:8,11,20,21.

(e) Prov. 10:30; 11:31; Matt. 5:5; Psa. 37; Rom. 4.13; Heb. 11; Rev. 5:10; Dan. 7:27.

V. The Irresponsible of Mankind Are Not Raised From the Dead

Those of mankind who are ignorant of the gospel are not eligible to either reward or obedience or punishment for disobedience post-resurrectionally. They are irresponsible, and they pass away in death as though they had never existed.

(a) They are irresponsible, mortal, and comparatively worthless.

(b) Their existence terminates forever in death.

(a) Psa. 39:5; 103:14-17; 144:3,4; Isa. 40:6,7,8,15,17; Dan. 4:35.

(b) Isa. 26:13,14; Jer. 51:39,57; Prov. 21:16; Ep^h. 4:17,18; 2 Cor. 4:3; Psa. 49; Isa. 43:17; Psa. 17:14; 73:22; 88:4,5; Amos 8:11-14; Oba. 16; Job 3:11-19; 10:18,19; Eccl. 6:1-6.

SYNTHETIC REMARKS ON THE LESSON

I. The Soul. There are three Hebrew words translated "soul": *nedibath*, *neshamah*, and *nephesh*. *Nedibath* in Job 30:15 and *neshamah* in Isa. 57:16 are both rendered "soul"; but with these two exceptions in every other instance in the Hebrew *nephesh* is the word that is translated soul. It occurs seven hundred and twenty times

in the Old Testament, being translated "soul" four hundred and sixty-six times. One hundred and nine times it is translated "life," and in all other occurrences it is translated "ghost," "breath," "desire," "lust," "appetite," "heart," "self," "person," and about twenty-seven other ways. The idea of immortality, however, is never associated with the word. Instead of teaching the current fiction of "the immortality of the soul" the Bible teaches its mortality by affirming that

(a) **The Soul Can Die.** "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek.18:4,20). Samson prayed, "Let me (nephesh, my soul, margin) die with the Philistines" (Judges 16:30). Balaam also prayed, "Let me (nephesh, my soul) die the death of the righteous" (Num. 23:10). Death in these passages cannot be explained away as "spiritual death" or as a punitive "death that never dies." Neither death is a thing to be prayed for. Neither can be meant in the death of Sampson's soul, for he is put among those who "obtained a good report through faith" in Heb.11:32,39. Nor can "spiritual death" or a "death that never dies" be intended by the death of Balaam's soul, for it was the "death of the righteous" he was desiring and praying for. The man who "feared God and eschewed evil" (Job 1:1) says: "My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life" (Job 7:15). He could not have "eschewed evil" if by the death of his soul he meant a deliberate choice of infinite evil and despair, dying a death which never dies! Rather he meant literal death, followed by quiet, undisturbed sleep until the resurrection. And as further showing that the soul is mortal the Bible says that

(b) **Animals Have Souls Equally With Men.** In Gen. 2:7 nephesh chayyah is translated "living soul"; in Num. 6:6 nephesh chayyah is rendered "dead body," literally a 'dead soul.' Before man was created God said, 'Let the earth bring forth the nephesh chayyah after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so.' After Adam was made

a "living soul" the Lord caused the animals to pass before him to see what he would call them: "and whatsoever Adam called every nephesh chayyah, that was the name thereof" (Gen. 1:24; 2:19). In these two texts our version says "living creatures"; but in the Hebrew the words are nephesh chayyah, the identical words that are translated "living soul" in Gen. 2:7 and applied to man. Nephesh is once translated "breath" and attributed to a sea monster. His breath (nephesh) kindleth coals" (Job 41:21). In Job 12:10 we read of "the soul of every living thing," which proves that every living thing has a soul. "A righteous man regardeth the life (nephesh, soul) of his beast" (Prov. 12:10). "This text shows that a beast, as well as its owner, has a soul. Since nephesh, "soul," and nephesh chayyah, "living soul," are both applied to beast as well as to man, to maintain the immortality of the soul he who advocates it is logically committed to a belief in the immortality of animals. The Greek word translated "natural" in 1 Cor. 15:44 is made up of psyche, soul, and ikon, our adjective suffix "-ical": psych-ikon, psych-ical, soulical. In English a noun which is used as a prefix becomes an adjective; psychi-kon soma is therefore a "soul body." Men of education are beginning to see that the immortality of the soul is a dangerous and unscholarly doctrine, so they are evacuating the fort of the soul and are entrenching themselves behind the fortress of

II. The Spirit. But their stand here is no more secure than in the case of the soul. There are three Hebrew words translated "spirit" in the Old Testament: ob, neshamah, and ruach, and two Greek words, namely, phantasma, and pneuma. Ob occurs sixteen times in the Hebrew Scriptures, and is the only word rendered "familiar spirit" and, in the singular or plural, is so rendered fifteen times. Neshamah occurs twenty-four times and is translated "breath," "blast," "spirit," (Isa. 57:16), "inspiration," etc. Ruach occurs three hundred and eighty-five times. Phantasma occurs twice (Matt.

14:26; Mark 6:49), while *pneuma* is found four hundred and four times, being the only word that is translated "spirit" in the New Testament except *phantasma*.

Now what we have said regarding the soul is equally true concerning the spirit. Spirit is not man's peculiar possession. Not a beast roams over the earth, not an insect crawls upon it, not a fish swims in the waters that does not possess the same spirit which man enjoys as a gift from God. In Gen. 6:17 God describes the impending flood in these words: "Behold, I do bring a flood of water upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath (Hebrew, *ruach*, spirit) of life from under heaven." If the claim is made that "all flesh" here includes only man, Gen.7:15 corrects the mistake for, speaking only of animals it ascribes to them "the breath of life" the same as Gen. 2:7 and Gen. 6:17 ascribe it to man and all flesh. In Psa. 104:29,30 David describes the creation and death of the lower creatures thusly: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit; they are created." "Thou hidest thy face: they are troubled: thou takest away their breath (*ruach*, spirit), they die, and return to the dust." The wise man includes man and beast in these words: "As the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath" (*ruach*, spirit) (Eccl. 3:19). Leeser's translation reads, "Yea they have all one kind of spirit." Words cannot be stronger and plainer than these. The preacher as frankly speaks of "the spirit of the beast" as he does of "the spirit of man" (vs.21). In the fact that the beasts have spirit, and "the same kind of spirit" as man, lies the strength of the statement, "So that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast" (ver. 19). To claim "that spirit of man" is an immortal entity (being) is to make the absurd claim that the beasts have the same "kind of spirit," and that they, too, possess an immortal principle—an absurdity to which no reasonable man will commit himself. As the words "soul" and "spirit" fail to support the current dogma of man's present immortality the advocates of the theory make their "last stand" on

III. The Ghost. This is their final resort to save

the immortal soul from a disastrous overthrow. The word "ghost" occurs eleven times in the Old Testament. It is translated twice from nephesh (Jer.15:19; Job11:20). Nine times it is translated from the Hebrew verb gava by such phrases as "yielded up the ghost" and "gave up the ghost." In commenting upon Gen.25:8 Adam Clark says: "Here and wherever the original word (gava) is used the simple term 'expired' would be the proper expression." The Douay version reads, "And decaying he died in a good old age." In the New Testament the phrase "gave up the ghost" occurs eight times. Three times it is translated from ekpneo, ek meaning out, and pneo, to breathe, blow, to breathe out (Mark 15:37,39; Luke 23:46). It is also translated three times from ekpsucho, which is derived from ek, out, psuche, to breathe (Acts 5:5,10; 12:23). In all six instances the simple meaning is "expired." Word analysis makes this meaning clear. Ex means out, and spiro to breathe; therefore the word "expired" is the exact representative of these two Greek words. The two other occurrences relate to Jesus (Matt. 27:50; John 19:30). "The ghost" in these two texts is to pneuma, which means to breathe. Any attempt to prove the immortality of any part of man by citing passages where "ghost" occurs in the Bible is as manifest a failure as the resort to soul and spirit. As we found that these two terms applied to the animals, so likewise is gava used to express the death of fowl, cattle, and creeping things: "Every thing that is in the earth shall die (gava)" (Gen 6:17). "All flesh died (gava) that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and cattle, and of beast, and of every thing that moveth upon the earth, and of every man" (Gen. 7:21). There is no immortal soul in gava, ghost—unless the beasts have such a soul. It means simply to expire, breathe out, to die; and applies to both man and beast.

IV. Man Is a Creature of the Dust and Mortal Because of Sin

(a) Man Is Expressly Declared to Be Mortal. In Gen. 7:4,23 God says, "Every living substance that I have

made will I destroy (margin, blot out) from off the face of the earth." He then says of man, cattle, fowl, etc., "And they were destroyed from the earth." Here is a plain announcement that man shared the same fate as cattle, creeping things, and fowls in the flood. The word "destroy" is applied to them all, and therefore means the same for all. No twist of argument, no metaphysical refinement, no subtlety of logic, no ingenuity of reasoning can evade the force, or neutralize the meaning of the word "destroy." Man "perished like the beast" in the deluge (Psa. 49:20), or like "mere animals" as an apostle puts it in the Revised Version (2 Peter 2:12). Now reader, since man dies like the beast (Eccl. 3:18-20), and is destroyed like the beast, and perishes like the beast, and after death is in the same condition as the beast—"mere animals"—he must have the same nature as the animal creation. They are conceded to be mortal even by orthodox immaterialists, and we do not hesitate to say, in the light of the Scriptures now before us, that man is mortal even as they. The word of God teaches us the mortality of man by express affirmations. "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" (Job 4:17). Enosh, the Hebrew word here translated "mortal man," first occurs in Gen. 4:26, and is used as a proper name: "He called his name Enos (Enosh); then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Adam and Eve were led into sin by believing the serpent's lie, "ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). In accordance with the custom in Bible times of giving names to children significant of the circumstances in which they lived, Seth named his son Enos (Enosh), which signifies frailty, mortality. The seeds of sin sown in the transgression of Adam and Eve began to bear fruit in the days of their grandson Enos, and as experience and observation drove home the mortal nature of sin, the thought was embodied in the name of Enos, and attached to this is the significant supplement, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." In grasping at the idea of an immortal soul, in aspiring to be gods, man brought him-

self under the power of death and the shadow of the grave. Driven out of the garden, his access to the tree of life cut off, he was given over to death (Gen. 3:22-24). When these facts became stamped upon his consciousness "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." It is natural for the weak to rely upon the strong, the mortal upon the immortal.

The word enosh is simply translated "man" in Job 7:1,17; 9:2; 10:4,5; 13:9; 2 Chron. 14:11, either because the translators thought it superfluous to prefix the word "mortal," or because such a translation would be embarrassing to the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul. "Of course the body is mortal," is an evasion often resorted to, but it is a poor makeshift to avoid the truth. What sense would there be in the question, 'Shall a man's mortal body be more just than God' (Job 4:17)? Are justice and purity qualities of the body, or of the "immortal soul"? To be just or unjust requires intelligence, and by "man" the Scriptures mean the whole man as an intelligent being. That a part of man is mortal and another part immortal is an idea of which the word of God knows nothing. It affirms that man is born of "corruptible seed" and is mortal and perishable (1 Pet. 1:23,24). This is not asserted of "only the body" in the popular and distinctive sense understood by immaterialists; for the next phrase in the verse, "all the glory of man (is) as the flower of he grass," shows that whatever is glorious about man is included in the statement as well as the body. The expression "all the glory of man" includes whatever is excellent or valuable in man and therefore the immortal soul, if he had one. Standing in contrast to the "uncorruptible God" he is declared to be "corruptible man." As God is completely and entirely incorruptible, so man is, by parity of reasoning corruptible. Not one-half of man mortal and the other half immortal, but he is 'corruptible man.' in the same sense, degree, and extent as "birds, and the fourfooted beasts and creeping things" (Rom. 1:23).

(b) Man Is Affirmed to Be Unconscious in Death.

Since man is entirely mortal, it follows that when he dies he is simply a body deprived of life, and is as unconscious as if he had never existed, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest" (Eccl 9:10). Ponder how these words are multiplied—"work, knowledge, wisdom." Could you add another to them without redundancy? The following passages are such decisive proofs that the death state is one of unconsciousness, they are submitted without annotations:

"In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave (sheol) who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5).

"For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything....." (Eccl. 9:5).

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psa. 146:4).

"His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, and he perceiveth it not of them" (Job 14:20,21).

"The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth" (Isa.38:18,19).

(c) **Immortality Is a Conditional Gift.** Instead of being an inherent and natural endowment, immortality is a conditional gift offered to mortal man by Christ in the gospel.

"Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 John 2:25).

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7).

"He shall receive,-----in the world to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:30).

"And the world passeth away and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 John 2:17).

(d). **Man Obtains Immortality at the Resurrection**
 As immortality is life manifested through an incorruptible body, it is dependent upon the resurrection or change of the body. The resurrection, practically annulled by the immortality of the soul, is thus restored to its fundamental place in the gospel (Heb. 6:1,2). Both rewards and punishments are contingent upon, and are contemporaneous with the resurrection.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2).

"And shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29).

"And they shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14).

"And this is the Father's will which he hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:39).

"Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19).

(e) **After Man Obtains Immortality He Enjoys It On the Earth.** Immortality is not only manifested through an incorruptible body, but it is to be enjoyed on the earth. Ascending to starry regions at death, "going to heaven," and all such kindred ideas, are Pagan and poetic fiction. The earth is the destined inheritance of the saints.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5).

"Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner" (Prov. 11:31).

"For evil-doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (Psa. 37:9, 11,22,29,34).

Additional testimonies: Prov 10:30; Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:8; Rev. 5:9,10; Dan. 7:27; Psa. 115:16; John 3:13; Acts 2:29,34; John 13:33.

V. The Irresponsible of Mankind. For an elaborate exposition of the basis of responsibility the reader is referred to Lesson X. Here we only purpose to show its valuable and illuminative bearing upon the subject of man's nature by proving that

(a) **The Irresponsible Are Mortal and Comparatively Worthless.** The doctrine of the immortality of the soul gives an inflated value to poor, worthless, mortal man. His soul is often spoken of as "precious, and worth ten thousand worlds like this." "The dignity of man," so much prated about by theologians, is antagonistic to scriptural sentiment. The Bible estimate of human nature may be seen in the passages here instanced:

"Every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psa. 39:5).

"As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth" (Psa. 103:15).

"All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing" (Dan. 4:35).

"All flesh is grass-----the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: all nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity" (Isa. 40:6,15,17).

(b) **Their Existence Terminates Forever In Death.** Consonant with man's mortality, finiteness, and worthlessness, where ignorance obtains among men they have none of the responsibilities of the rejectors of the gospel and neither do they have any of the privileges of enlightened and obedient believers. They cannot be punished without outraging justice; they cannot be saved without violating every condition of the gospel as well as every divine principle. According to the dictates of logic and reason, and on the strength of the following solemn declarations of the Almighty, we submit that they are exempt from responsibility, and that they will never see the light of resurrection. **Their existence terminates forever in death.**

"If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (2 Cor. 4:3).

"Alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts" (Eph. 4:17,18).

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead" (Prov. 21:16).

"They shall not rise" (Isa. 43:17); "They shall fall, and never rise up again" (Amos 8:11-14).

"Men of the world have their portion in this life" (Psa. 17:14); "They have their reward" (Matt. 6:5).

"They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore, thou hast visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish" (Isa. 26:13,14); "They shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts" (Jer. 51:39,57).

"Why died I not from the womb?-----With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places (tombs) for themselves; or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver: or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light" (Job 3:11-16).

"Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the spirit, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave" (Job 10:18,19).

"If a man beget a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good-----I say, that an untimely birth is better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known anything: this hath more rest than the other" (Eccl. 6:3,4,5).

This lesson may be obtained by addressing the Author. Three cents for one copy; twenty-five cents per dozen.

Bible Lessons on First Principles

By

ROBERT G. HUGGINS

Lesson X

The Resurrection of The Dead

I: Resurrection: the Term Defined

RESURRECTION is a future awakening to life and consciousness of people who are dead and in the dust of the earth (Job 14:13,14; 19:26,27; Psa. 17:15; 49:15; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 15).

II. The Subjects of the Resurrection

Those who are raised from the dead consist of two classes only: the just and the unjust, the righteous and the wicked, both of which have enjoyed the privilege of a knowledge of the gospel (John 3:18,19; 9:40,41; 15:22,24; Jas. 4:17; Rom. 4:15; Acts 17:23,30,31; Luke 12:47,48).

III. The Reward of the Righteous

The righteous are those who have learned, believed, and obeyed the gospel. They come forth at the resurrection invested with immortality (in company with "the changed"

among the living, 1 Cor. 15:50-54) to reign with Christ as joint-heirs of the kingdom, co-possessors of the earth, and joint-administrators of God's authority among men in everything. The kingdom of God is the inheritance to which they are called by the gospel, and it is that which is presented as the object of hope (1 Thess. 2:12; Luke 12:32; Jas. 2:5; Matt. 25:34; 2 Pet. 1:11; Luke 13:29; John 3:5; 1 Cor. 15:50; 6:9).

IV. The Destiny of the Wicked

That class which is called "the unjust" embraces apostates and all others who have known the gospel whether they have believed it or not. They come forth at the resurrection and, in company with the wicked who are alive at the time, are

(a) Cast into hell (Mark 9:43; Isa. 66:24; Matt. 10:28; Jude 7; Isa. 34:8-10; Matt. 3:12; Psa. 21:8,9; Heb. 12:29; Mal. 4:1-3; Rev. 21:8; Rom. 1:32).

(b) Where they are consigned to death with attendant circumstances of shame and suffering (Psa. 37:10,20,34; 2 Thess. 1:9,10; Job 20:5-8; Psa. 145:20; 104:35; Job 21:30; 2 Cor. 2:10; Prov. 13:13).

V. The Resurrection of the Righteous and Wicked is Simultaneous

Both classes have

(a) A simultaneous resurrection (Dan. 12:1,2; John 5:28,29; 1 Cor. 15:51,52; 1 Thess. 4-16; Rev. 11:15,18); and

(b) A simultaneous execution of judgment. Matt 10:32,33; Mark 8:38; Rev. 21:7,8; 22:12-15; Matt. 16:24-27; 7:21-23; 25:10,14-46; 13:38-43; John 5:28,29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:5-16; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; 4:5; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 1 Cor. 3:12-15; Col. 1:28; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 2:19,20; 1 John 2:28; 4:17; Rev. 3:5; 1 Tim. 5:24, 25; 2 Tim. 4:1).

SYNTHETIC REMARKS

I. Resurrection: The Term Defined

THE WORD "resurrection" is translated from three Greek words in the new Testament: *egersis*, "arising," *anastasis*, "a standing or rising up," and *exanastasis*, "a standing up out of" (Young.) Resurrection raises him who has fallen down, and restores to him the life which he has lost. It means the living again of the same man who once lived (Job 14:13,14). It awakes the dead (Psa. 17:15), redeems the soul from death (Psa. 49:15), and restores the dead to life again (Isa. 26:19). "The resurrection of the dead," a phrase of repeated occurrence in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, shows that "the dead" are revived by resurrection instead of the liberation of an immortal soul from prison at the death of the body. Those who are asleep in the dust of the earth shall awake to life and consciousness by resurrection (Dan. 12:1,2). The Psalmist said, "I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being" (Psa. 146:2). This singer of God's praise foresaw a temporary pause in his songs and said, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. 115:17). The "silence" here spoken of is not a silence of the body only, but of the soul also; for "unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence" (Psa. 97:17, Revised Version). When David's "being" is restored by resurrection the long pause in his melody will be over and his psalmody will resound forever (Isa. 26:19).

II. The Subjects of the Resurrection

The theory of man's natural immortality necessitates universal responsibility. The monster-fiction of the immortality

of the soul makes all men amenable to God by nature with a heaven of bliss or a hell of woe the only alternatives. The Bible tells a different story. With the truth of man's mortality discerned there opens to the mind the fact that human responsibility arises from human capacity to discern good and evil, and power to act upon enlightenment. Beasts may kill and devour men without committing murder because responsibility rests upon circumstances and capacity. That amenability to God's law is conditioned upon knowledge, and is limited in its scope of operation, the Scripture explicitly affirm:

"Where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).

"If ye were blind (ignorant), ye should have no sin" (John 9:41).

"The times of this ignorance, God winked at" (Acts 17:30).

"Man that is in honor and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Psa. 49:20).

"This is the (ground of, Greek) condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19).

With the immortality of the soul out of the way we can understand conditional responsibility and appreciate the varying shades of accountability that correspond to the degree of light enjoyed. The divine principle is that responsibility Godward is only created where contact with divine law begets understanding. Responsibility is always commensurate with knowledge. "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Luke 12:47,48). The logic of this statement is apparent to any mediocre mind; and elaborated it stands thus: To whom much is given, much is required; to whom little is given, little is required; and to whom nothing is given, nothing will be required. As illustrating these graduations of responsibility from the greatest to the least, which is nothing in this

case, we may start with Israel, to whom "much was given." Their responsibility originated in natural constitution, supplemented by the obligations of election. This relation to God was special and privileged, and involved resurrectional responsibility (Ex. 24:3,7; Amos 3:2)..

From them we descend to a lower amenability among those nations who lived contiguous to Israel and who came into direct contact with them and the oracles of God of which they were the custodians (Rom. 3:2). As they were only given "little," temporal punishments satisfied temporal accountability (Ezek. 28:13,14; 26:2,3; 25:3,4,8,11,12,13,15,16). Lastly are others to whom nothing was given who, "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them" (Eph. 4:18), perished in Adam without law, inheriting death without resurrection. As they had neither the privileges of saintship nor the responsibilities of enlightened rejectors of the gospel (John 12:48), at death they perished in the bottomless profound to which the law of Eden consigned them. Like the animal creation in their ignorance of God, his law, and will, they were "as a beast before God" (Psa. 73:11), and have no more to do with a future state, either for weal or woe, than the vegetation which chokes the forests this summer and then passes away forever with the winter (1 Pet. 1:22-25).

III. The Reward of the Righteous

The righteous are composed of those whose faith is counted to them for righteousness (Rom. 4:9; 1 Cor. 1:30). There is no recompense for them until the resurrection (Luke 14:14); they do not even possess life until "the resurrection of life" (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29). In addition to life they shall then be given the kingdom of God, the inheritance to which they are

called by the gospel, and the thing presented as the object of hope. Of course this proposition destroys the current idea of "going to heaven" and of enjoying "kingdoms beyond the skies." Its scriptural foundation, however, cannot be questioned in view of the following evidence:

"God hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:12).

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas. 2:5).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:11).

"And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29).

IV. The Destiny of the Wicked

The law applies to people who are under it (Rom. 3:19). "Where there is no law there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15). Light is the ground of responsibility (John 3:19). "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). Before the sins of a sinner are imputed to him, and before he incurs resurrectional responsibility, he must become an enlightened transgressor of the gospel. "Sin is not imputed where

there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). Both the living and the dead who belong to this class, at the coming of Christ, are

(a) Cast into Hell

The only Hebrew word rendered "hell" in the Bible is sheol. It occurs sixty-five times, and is translated "the pit" three times, "hell" thirty-one times, and "the grave" also thirty-one times. The following facts concerning sheol are given for the study and consideration of the reader:

1. Sheol does not mean a place of torment for the wicked, for the righteous dead are in it (Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29,31; Job 1:1; 17:13; 14:13).

2. Sheol is not a place of reward and happiness for the righteous, for the wicked dead are in it (Psa. 31:17; Job 21:13; Psa. 9:17; Job 24:19; Psa. 49:14).

3. The righteous and the wicked in sheol are neither in happiness nor torment, for they are in the grave in utter unconsciousness (Eccl. 9:10; Psa. 6:5).

There is another class of texts, however, in which the word "hell" does refer to the fiery receptacle into which the wicked shall be cast for punishment. We refer to the word Gehenna which occurs twelve times in the New Testament (Matt. 5:22, 29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6). Gehenna is a corruption of two Hebrew words, *Gai*, a valley, and *Hinnom*, the name of a person who possessed it. In this valley Sennacherib's army was destroyed (2 Kings 19:35). In this place judgment also came upon the armies of Assyria because they oppressed Israel (Isa. 10:5,24,25; 30:31-33). And when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven "in flaming fire" the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) will become again the scene of divine judgments: for it is the place where many of the unjust will perish along with the nations who come

up against Jerusalem (Matt. 25:32-44; Zech. 14:2,3; Joel 3:2,12). Under Israel this valley was used for Molock idolatries, and on this account it came to be regarded as a place of abomination, and was made a receptacle for the offal of the city. Perpetual fires were kept there to prevent pestilential effluvia. We also read of worms existing there as well as fire. They fed upon the portions of carcasses which were not consumed by the fire. "Hell fire" is mentioned three times in the Bible (Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:47), and means Gehenna fire; and in Mark 9:48 is added, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." This language is quoted from Isa. 66:24 where the student who will turn and read will find that the objects burned in the fire, instead of being immortal souls, as he has been deceived into believing, are "the carcasses" of the wicked! *Pegerim*, translated "carcasses" in Isa. 66:24, is rendered "dead bodies" in 2 Chron. 20:24,25. "A carcass," says Webster, "is a dead body of an animal, the decaying remains of an animal." The Greek word *skolex*, translated "worm" in Mark 9:44,46,48 means a maggot (Young), a scavenger that acts only upon dead bodies. Maggots never prey upon immortal souls. Now to express the certainty and completeness of the destruction, the worms and fire are said to outlast the carcasses. "Shall not die," said of the worms, means they do not die miraculously by the judgment under which the wicked succumb. Bible usage indicates this meaning of the words. Thus: "There shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel" meant it should not die by that plague; not that the cattle would never die (Ex. 9:4). The promise to Shemei, "Thou shalt not die," meant, "I will not put thee to death with the sword" (2 Sam. 19:23; 1 Kings 2:8). "There shall be no loss of any man's life among you," meant by the special peril which then threatened their lives (Acts 27:22). In analogy with these texts "their worm shall not die" means that the judgment which slays the

wicked shall not kill the worms; that they are agents of destruction and "shall not die" until that destruction has been completed. While the good and the bad alike go to sheol the righteous in Scripture are never said to go into Gehenna. The wicked only are cast into it

(b) Where They are Consigned to Death

They enter bodily—with eyes, hands, feet, and "the whole body" (Matt. 5:29; Mark 9:43,47). How different this is from the orthodox idea of going into hell at the death of the body, bodiless! The wicked are destroyed in hell "both body and soul" (Matt. 10:28). They are consumed into smoke like stubble, chaff, the fat of lambs, are burned up root and branch, and become "ashes under the feet" of the righteous (Psa. 37:10, 20; Matt. 3:12; 13:40-43; Mal. 4:1-3). They shall be silent in darkness (1 Sam. 2:9), suffer destruction (Job 21:30), be devoured (Psa. 21:9), come to an end (Psa. 37:38), be torn into pieces (Psa. 50:22), slain (Psa. 62:3), blotted out (Psa. 69:28), ground to powder (Matt. 21:44), and shall be as nothing (Jer. 10:24).

V. The Resurrection of the Righteous and Wicked is Simultaneous

There are certain current platitudes, based upon distorted and misunderstood Scriptures, to the effect that the righteous are raised from the dead at the coming of Christ, and the wicked a millenium afterwards. To support the idea that the resurrection of the just and the unjust is a thousand years apart we are pointed to certain chapters, like 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thess. 4, which treat formally of the resurrection of believers and make no mention of the wicked. Then we are reminded that the resurrection of believers is called a "resurrection from among the dead" (exanastasis) which, to them, implies that

others—the wicked—will be left in the grave when the saints rise. Again it is affirmed that the resurrection “from the dead” is the pre-millennial resurrection of the saints, and “the resurrection of the dead” is the post-millennial resurrection of the wicked. Our reply to these fallacious allegations is very simple. The wicked are excluded from certain chapters like 1 Thess. 4 because the writer is speaking words of comfort to brethren concerning their deceased loved ones (vss. 13,18)—certainly not a seasonable time to speak of judgment of God upon the wicked.

Again, the wicked are excluded from such chapters and passages, not because they will not rise at the same time with the saints, but because they will not rise on the same principle. Believers indeed rise alone, on a principle peculiar to themselves, and in a company amongst whom the wicked find no place. But this is not saying that the wicked do not rise contemporaneously with them. Paul strove “if by any means” he might attain the resurrection (Phil. 3:11). He desired and was striving to attain a resurrection peculiar to believers—a resurrection exclusively theirs—exclusive we say, not as to the time of it, but as to its nature, accompaniments, and issues. He makes this explanation himself in the latter part of the same chapter, where all its peculiarity and desirability is made to lie in the thing itself—not in the time of it: “From heaven we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself” (vss. 20,21). And the distinction made between “the resurrection from the dead” and “the resurrection of the dead” is without foundation in fact. “The resurrection of the dead” is a phrase that is not only applied to the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked (Acts 24:15; 17:31,32), but is specifically descriptive of that resurrection

which is peculiar to believers (1 Cor. 15:12,13,21,42), and even to the resurrection of Christ himself (Mark 9:9,10; Acts 10:41; 13:31; 26:23, Greek; Rom. 1:4, Greek).

"The blessed and holy that have part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6) are not blessed and saved because they are raised from the dead before the wicked are raised; for *prote*, the Greek word here translated "first," has the sense of dignity of persons, chief, principal (Parkhurst). *Prote* is rendered "chief" and "best" in these texts: 1 Tim. 1:15; Acts 13:50; Matt. 20:27; Luke 15:22; Acts 17:4; 25:2; 28:7,17. In this sense the resurrection of the just is the first because it is "the better resurrection" (Heb. 11:35). "the resurrection of life" (John 5:29) Two classes are raised from the dead; the resurrection of one is to life, the other to condemnation (Dan. 12:2). This is why they are spoken of as two resurrections (two in one); but they both occur at the same time, as we shall now see. The just and the unjust have

(a) A Simultaneous Resurrection

Dan. 12:2 speaks of these two classes and their resurrection from the dust; and the first verse affirms that they awake at the same time—"at that time." John 5:28,29 also declares that two classes are raised, and describes them as embracing "they that have done good," and "they that have done evil." Both hear the voice of the Son of Man and "come forth" in the same "hour." In this text judgment and resurrection are joined together, the one being represented as necessary to the other. The length of time occupied by the phrase "and at that time," and by the word "hour," is not the question: the unity of period and action alone are indicated. One class "at that time" awake, and in that "hour" come forth from the grave to life, be the time long or short; the other during the same

“time” and “hour” are raised to condemnation, whenever that time may be. The sophist who makes the phrase “at that time” and the word “hour” elastic enough to stretch over a thousand years, retards the resurrection of the saints for a millennium as surely as he does that of the wicked. The same voice and trumpet that raises the good at the coming of Christ, awakes the wicked also (John 5:28,29; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 11:15,18). And they are not only raised at the same time, but the Scriptures expressly teach that they are to have

(b) A Simultaneous Execution of Judgment

The wicked are rejected and punished at the same time the righteous are accepted and rewarded. Whosoever confesses Christ before men shall be confessed before the Father in heaven. “But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 10:32, 33). Mark 8:38 tells when this acceptance of one class and rejection of the other takes place: “When he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels.” To limit those who are disowned “when he cometh” to such as shall be found alive when Jesus returns, is a positive contradiction of the words, “Whosoever shall deny me.” And if the “whosoever” is limited in its application to only such ungodly as are living at Christ’s coming, it would have to bear the same limitations for those who confess the truth—which would leave out all dead saints along with the ungodly who are dead! “Whosoever” embraces the righteous and wicked of every age. Rev. 21:7,8: 22:12-15 show that the admission of the one class and the rejection of the other is the immediate sequel of Christ’s “coming, and his reward with him, to give every man (of both classes and ‘at that time’) according to his works.” There can be no mistake in this exegesis, for Matt. 16:24-27, after specifically naming the saved and the lost when “the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father,” says, “And then (tote) shall he reward every man according to his works.”

Matt. 7:21-23 says he will receive and reject, admit and exclude, "in that day." "The judgment of the quick and the dead" is a thrice-repeated expression in the New Testament: once in connection with the person who is to judge (Acts 10:42); again in connection with the nearness of the judgment (1 Pet. 4:6); and lastly, in connection with the time of it—"who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:1). "The kingdom" here spoken of is to be set up "at his appearing;" and at the same time Christ is to judge "the quick and the dead"—not "the quick" (living) at his coming, and "the dead" a thousand years thereafter! "Judge nothing before the time," Paul warns, and then to indicate "the time" of judgment he says, "Until the Lord come" (1 Cor. 4:5). Rom. 2:5-16 speaks of the righteous and the wicked, links them together in judgment; the first is given honor, immortality, and eternal life, the second wrath, tribulation, and anguish—"in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And finally, Paul's instructive words in 2 Thess. 1:6-10 put the issue at rest by infallible decision. He speaks of some as "suffering" for the kingdom (vs. 5); he says those who thus suffered trouble shall be recompensed by God with "rest" (vs. 7). Having spoken of two classes, the troubled and the troublers, he declares to the one God will give "rest," and to the other "tribulation," When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven" (vs. 7).

Now when are those wicked persecutors to be given "tribulation"? "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven . . . taking vengeance." The infinitive "to recompense" is used once (vs. 6), and two nouns are governed by it: "tribulation" and "rest." The adverbial clause "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed" modifies "to recompense," and shows the time when both "tribulation" and "rest" are to be recompensed. Both parties are to be recompensed at the same time—the troublers with tribulation, the troubled with rest—

“when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven.” This statement of the time is repeated again and again. “Revealed from heaven with his mighty angels . . . taking vengeance.” As if to remove all doubt it is added, “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe;” and as if this were not clear enough he adds after a parenthesis, “in that day.” If emphatic reiterations such as these, in every form of language the most vivid and lucid, be not sufficient to convince the understanding, it seems impossible to conceive of words to express the truth that would be considered sufficiently conclusive.

NOTES

Bible Lessons

On First Principles

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Lesson XII

The Commandments Of Christ

I. The Commandments of Men Must Not Be Observed

“The commandments and doctrines of men” are legion (Col. 2:22). In this lesson we have only space to mention

(a) Keeping the Sabbath in this dispensation:

(b) Ceremonial footwashing; and

(c) Numerous annullments and emendations relating to the Lord’s supper.

(a) Gal. 3:8,17; Gen. 2:3; Ex. 19:18; 2 Kings 18:11,12; Lesson 3:3,4; Deut. 5:2,3; Nehe. 9:13,14; Gal. 3:4; 2 Cor. 3; Col. 2:16-22; Acts 15:28,24.

(b) John 12:1-3; 13:1-16; 1 Tim. 5:9,10.

(c) Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:24; 10:16; 11:26,28; Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:14; Acts 15:29.

II. The Commandments of Christ Must be Obeyed

(a) After baptism our final salvation depends upon keeping the commandments of Christ.

(b) The commandments of Christ include those which he gave by his apostles.

(a) Matt. 28:20; John 15:14; 13:17; Matt. 7:21; John 15:10; 1 John 2:4; Rev. 22:14.

(b) 1 Cor. 14:37; Luke 21:15; John 16:7; 15:26; Matt. 10:19,20; Acts 2:33; 1 John 4:6; John 20:21; Matt. 10:16.

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III. The Breaking of Bread is a Commandment of Christ

(a) From the observance of this ordinance the Church of God must debar the world, exclude adherents to false religions, and excommunicate its own members for doctrinal and moral transgressions.

(b) Its observance on the part of baptized believers is essential to acceptance with God.

(a) Matt. 18:17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:8-11; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10, 11; Gal. 5:9,12; 6:14.

(b) Psa. 116:12-14; Cant. 1:12; John 6:53-56; Matt. 26: 26-28; Ex. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7,8; Heb. 10:22-29,38,39; 1 John 1: 6-10; 2:1-3; 5:3-6.

IV. The Breaking of Bread is an Institution Which Requires Weekly Observance

(a) The Church of God is the house of God.

(b) In the house of God there is always the table of the Lord.

(c) The breaking of bread includes the drinking of the cup as part of the institution.

(d) The breaking of bread is a weekly memorial of the Lord's death, and is an indispensable

part of worship in all stated meetings of the Church.

(a) 1 Cor. 3:16,17; 1 Pet. 2:5; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 10:21.

(b) 1 Cor. 10:21; Ex. 25:30; Lev.24:5-9; Heb. 3:6.

(c) Matt. 26:27; 1 Cor. 11:25; Iliad 2: lines 381-399; 8:53-66; Acts 2:46; 1 Cor. 10:16; Acts 2:42.

(d) Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; 11:20-26; 10:16; Matt. 26:29.

SYNTHETIC REMARKS ON THE LESSON

I. The Commandments of Men Must Not be Observed

There is a great deal of vain religion in the world (Jas. 1:26). Thousands are beguiled and spoiled "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:4,8). Rejecting Christ as Head (vs. 19), they proceed to render a "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind" (vs. 18). The "fleshly mind" is restive under God's law, which it cannot understand, and which it cannot love nor obey (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7). The presumption which rejects "the one lawgiver" (Jas. 4:12) soon dares to make "ordinances" to suit itself (Col. 2:20). These ordinances which emanate from "the fleshly mind" are called "the commandments and doctrines of men" (vs. 22), and those who obey them are said to offer "will-worship" (vs. 23). "In vain they do worship me," our Lord avers, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). Like Nadab and Abihu, such people offer "strange fire before the Lord, which he com-

manded them not," and for their "puffed up," arrogant usurpation of the divine prerogatives they are doomed to the death penalty (Lev. 10: 1,2). The ordinances imposed by men upon the gullible are legion, but here we can only refer to a few which the reader must take as specimens of all.

(a) **Keeping the Sabbath in This Dispensation.** Sabbath observance has never been a part of the gospel in the past, nor is it today. The gospel is four hundred and thirty years older than the law (Gal. 3:8,17). Twenty-five hundred years after creation God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from all his work (Gen. 2:3). He blessed and sanctified the Sabbath day at Horeb, and made it a part of the Mosaic covenant, which was both a national and a new institution (Ex. 19:8; 2 Kings 18:11,12). During the twenty-five hundred years from Adam to Moses the gospel was current among the people (Lesson 3:3,4), while the Sabbath was unknown (Deut. 5:2,3; Nehe. 9:13, 14). The law of Moses, of which the Sabbath was a part, lasted for about sixteen hundred years. Then Christ appeared and abolished the Mosaic covenant and brought into vogue the new covenant (Gal. 3:4; 2 Cor. 3). In it there is no commandment to observe the Sabbath day. That requirement, along with meats, drinks, holydays, and new moons, is today only found among the commandments of men (Col. 2:16-22). To Sabbath agitators we say in the words that "seemed good to the Holy Spirit" (Acts 15:28) when rebuking them over nineteen hundred years ago: "Forasmuch as certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep

the law: TO WHOM WE GAVE NO SUCH COMMANDMENT" (vs. 24).

(b) **Ceremonial Footwashing.** Footwashing, when observed as a church ordinance, is another invention of men. The Lord's supper was instituted by Christ in Jerusalem at the close of the passover (Matt. 26), while he washed his disciples' feet at Bethany six days before the passover (John 12:1; 13:1). "There they made him a supper" (John 12:2), and there, "supper being ended" (John 13:2), he washed their feet at a festival in the privacy of a home. In the practice of the apostles, as reported in the New Testament subsequent to the footwashing in John 13, there is no mention of its observance except in private home life, where it is catalogued with hospitality and other domestic duties (1 Tim. 5:9,10). Footwashing, if done as a church ordinance or ceremony, is a "voluntary humility"; and those who do it act without authority from God.

(c) **Numerous Annulments and Emendations of the Lord's Supper.** From the testimonies following it appears that the breaking of bread and the drinking of the cup are brought together and constitute one ordinance, which is usually and scripturally called "the breaking of bread": "Jesus took bread and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body" (Matt. 26:26). The breaking of the bread is an essential part of this significant ceremony; "take eat" is another necessary item of the ordinance. "And gave it to the disciples." The distribution of the bread is another fundamental part of the sacred rite. "Take eat; this is my body, broken for you" (1 Cor. 11:24). "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (Cor. 10:16). 1 Cor. 11:26,28

reads in the Greek and Vulgate texts, corroborated by the "Codex Alexandrinus" and the "Codex Claromontanus": "As often as ye eat this bread and (kai) drink this cup"; "Let him eat of that bread and (kai) drink of that cup." The bread and the cup are both indispensable parts of the Lord's supper. But man presumes to divide what God has joined together (Matt. 19:6); he dares to change, annul, and amend God's law! The Romish priests refuse to break the bread, and give their votaries instead a consecrated, unbroken wafer! Of the cup Christ says, "Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:27); but they withhold the cup from the people! To these annulments and emendations they add the doctrine of transubstantiation, which makes the bread and wine the literal flesh and blood of Jesus Christ! All this is in defiance of the word of God which says, "As often as ye eat this bread." Three times in as many consecutive verses the substance eaten is declared to be bread (1 Cor. 11:26,27,28). The wine is called "the fruit of the vine" and "the blood of grapes" (Matt. 26:29; Gen. 49:11) instead of the blood of a person. We are forbidden to partake of the blood of either man or beast (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:14; Acts 15:29), but we are commended to drink the sacramental cup (Matt. 26:27). In the Catholic mass where, by the magical power of the officiating priest, as he believes, the bread and wine are transubstantiated into the literal flesh and blood of Christ, the people partake of the first and the priest of the second. Both are guilty of cannibalism every time they solemnize the Lord's supper, if transubstantiation be true!

II. The Commandments of Christ Must be Obeyed. While the child of God rejects every annulment, emendation, and excrescence which the

traditions of men have manufactured, he is under sacred obligation to obey the commandments of Christ. The orthodox doctrine of "justification by faith only" has obscured the principle of obedience as a condition of salvation, and has reduced the commandments of Christ to a practical nullity as a means of attaining a justified standing before God. A disobedient saint will be as decisively rejected by Christ as an unjustified sinner. After baptism our final salvation is suspended upon obedience. "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" (Matt. 28:20). Read John 15:14; 13:17; Matt. 7:21; John 15:10; 1 John 2:4; Rev. 22:14; Jas. 1:22, and you will see that friendship with God, love to Christ, and final acceptance with God depend upon doing the commandments of God.

To give intelligibility to the arguments which are to follow, it is necessary to remark here that "the commandments of Christ" include the commandments of the apostles. Christ indorses and owns what they have said as of equal authority with his own word. This appears from the following passages:

"Let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

"It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:19, 20).

"He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (John 13:20).

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 4:8).

“When ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13).

III. The Breaking of Bread is a Commandment of Christ. From the foregoing testimony it is plain that our ultimate acceptance with Christ depends upon doing his commandments. “Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20) extends the obligatoriness of “whatever” he has commanded, either by himself or through his apostles, to all who are baptized (vs 19); not in the weak, convenient sense of suitability, but of imperative obligation. Now there is an ordinance concerning which he has said, “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). As this is one of “the all things” which he has commanded us to “observe,” we must trouble the reader by expounding to him the requirements of this mandate concerning the Lord’s supper.

First, as to Who May Legitimately Partake of the Communion. “Open communion” means unconditional communication; “close communion,” conditional participation. The first is lawless, but agreeable and popular in the churches of the apostacy; the second is scriptural, and is the method which obtains in the Church of God. The Lord’s people are forbidden to celebrate communion with the world, the devotees of false religions, or even with their own brethren and sisters when they become corrupt in either faith or morals. No other doctrine is so cordially repudiated, detested, and persistently assailed by the world and spurious Christians as conditional

fellowship. Their objections to it have been reiterated with an audacious boldness and insisted upon with a pertinacity almost transcending human credence. The logical jugglery they use to destroy the doctrine, however, only makes it stand out in bolder relief. Passages of Scripture which debar the world, devotees of false religions, and disobedient brethren and sisters from the Lord's supper are here given in part:

"Let him be to thee as an heathen man and publican" (Matt. 18:17).

"Mark them avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous . . . ; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11).

"Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13).

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6).

"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10).

"If any come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10,11).

"I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of

the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor. 10:20,21; Eph. 5:6-13; 2 Cor. 6:18).

"And this food is called among us the Eucharist, of which no one is allowed to partake but those who believe the things we teach are true, and has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sin, and unto regeneration (baptism), who is living as Christ" ("First Apology of Justin Martyr," page 64; see also "Denying the Faith," pages 14-20).

Second, the Importance of the Communion.

Bread and wine were elements sacramentally used in the days of Abraham when Melchizedek "brought forth bread and wine" and blessed him (Gen. 14:18,19). Christ, of the Melchizedek priestly order (Heb. 5:6), likewise "brought forth bread and wine" and blessed them as elements of communion (Matt. 26:26-30). In all the intervening time between Melchizedek and Christ, although largely, if not entirely prophetic the golden hues of the eucharist were visible and even luminous. David took "the cup of salvation," and called on Jehovah's name saying, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people" (Psa. 116:13,14). Solomon's spikenard was fragrant to the King as he sat "at his table" (Cant. 1:12). "The table of the Lord" was spread in festive joy by the faithful few in the closing days of the Old Testament (Mal. 2:12,13; 3:16,17). All this and much more is said prophetically of "the Lord's table" before Christ came. When he appeared he gathered up these scattered rays of prophecy and concentrated them in one focused sunbeam when he said: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life

in you" (John 6:53). Here is meat and drink indeed (vs. 55). In mandatory accents he said, "Take eat"; "Drink ye all of it"; and then subjoined the sufficient reason: "For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28). Like the passover, which ended in the eucharistic institution (Mat. 26:26), if any forbear to partake of it without legitimate impediment, "that soul shall be cut off, that man shall bear his sin" (Num. 9:7-11). "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," and we are charged by one who had apostolic authority, "to keep the feast" (1 Cor. 5:7,8). Where a man is so obdurate and daring as to ignore and disobey this divine law, he "shall bear his sin." Forsaking this "feast" of the Lord's bounty is Paulinically declared to be trampling under foot the Son of God contemptuously, treating the blood of Christ as an "unholy thing" sacrilegiously, and doing "despite unto the spirit of grace" fatally (Heb. 10:29). Of all the sins which have dishonored God, debased Christ, nullified the new covenant, and degraded man, none can be greater than this. Wilfully committed, the offender draws back into perdition, and exposes himself to the fearful prospect of a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries" without mercy (Heb. 10:39, 27,28). Only by fellowship with each other, and with the Father and the Son in eucharistic communion can believers walk in the light and be cleansed from "all sin" and "all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:6-10). May those who have heretofore disparaged this holy ordinance of God consider these solemn truths, and others that will be disclosed in the next section of this les-

son, and never be guilty again of calling the Lord's supper "an unholy (common) thing" (Heb. 10:29; Acts 10:15).

IV. The Breaking of Bread is an Institution which Requires Weekly Observance. The following arguments are submitted as sufficient to convince the candid reader that weekly communion is a requirement of divine law:

(a) **The Church of God is the House of God.** In allusion to the temple under Moses, the community of believers is called "God's building," "temple," and "habitation" (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:19,20). The holy place adumbrates the church of God. The common priests went always into the holy place, and the High Priest once a year into the most holy. Christ is our High Priest, and has gone into the holiest of all, "heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). While he is always there a High Priest we are always here "a spiritual house, a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). Again and again the church is called the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 10:21). The church, then, being the house of God, and its members all anointed under-priests, they correspond to the holy place between the outer court and the holiest of all.

(b) **In the House of God there is Always the Table of the Lord.** "There was a tabernacle made: the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread" (Heb. 9:2). On this "table" there were placed every Sabbath

day twelve loaves, which were on show or exhibition during the whole week, and hence were called "shew-bread" because always on show before the Lord. On the succeeding Sabbath they were replaced by twelve fresh loaves (Ex. 25: 30; Lev. 24: 5-9). Apart from antitypical and analogical interpretations, we are told by one who knew, that in the house of God on earth, called the church of God, there is "the table of the Lord" as part of its furniture: "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor. 10:21). "The cup of the Lord" and "the bread" are the furnishings of this table to which every believer may come with kingly and priestly rights (Rev. 5:10). They all have access to it rightfully, and even "boldly," as children of God (Heb. 10:19). Speaking in a style only possible of things usual and recurrent, Paul says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). Not the cup which we have received with thanks, nor the bread which we have broken, but which we do break. If in the typical temple of the Mosaic dispensation, as we have seen, there were always displayed twelve large loaves, even in the wilderness, appropriate emblems of Jehovah's bounty and grace, can we stoop so low as to believe that in the house of God today, over which Jesus is a Son (Heb. 3:6), there is rarely spread a repast for the royal priesthood of saints? In both dispensations the Lord's table is in the Lord's house. Is the Lord so impoverished now as to be

less generous than formerly? Is the giving of an annual banquet the only use to which the Lord's table is now put? Is a quarterly refreshment enough? Is a monthly feast all he can afford? Is he so poor or churlish he can provide no better; or is he too parsimonious to furnish it for those who love him and whom he loves?

(c) The Breaking of Bread Includes the Drinking of the Cup as Part of the Institution.

Romanists and many Protestants have stolen from the people "the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20). They give them bread to eat, but no cup to drink! It looks as if there had been a conspiracy between them to rob the table of the Lord. The Protestant argument is largely Catholic in origin and may be stated in this way: The communion is called "the Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20), and "supper" is an evening meal, and may not include "the cup" at all! Communion, to them, only means a feast in the evening, with no cup on the table! This is the very custom which Paul unsparingly condemns in 1 Cor. 11:22. Those who make this argument are certainly not burdened with a ponderosity of intellect, or they would know that the breaking of bread was instituted and eaten after a supper (Matt. 26:17-26). Not in the sense of one of the meals of the day can communion be called breakfast, dinner, or supper; for it takes the place of no meal. *Deipnos*, the Greek word which is translated "supper" in 1 Cor. 11:20, represented breakfast in the days of Homer (*Iliad* 2: lines 381-399; 8:66). In the time of Demosthenes *dieipnos* meant a feast. Now the gospel is often called a feast. Jesus said, "If any man open to me, I will (*deipneso*) take supper with him and

he with me" (Rev. 3:20). "The Lord's supper" in 1 Cor. 11:20 stands opposed to their "own supper" (vs. 21), and doubtless refers to the communion. Since *kuriake hemera* means "the Lord's day" in Rev. 1:10, *kuriakos deipnos* in 1 Cor. 11:20, or the Lord's supper, is applicable to the eucharist. The Lord's day, the Lord's table, the Lord's cup, and the Lord's supper may all be used rightly in the church of God; for in his house these are all sacred to him.

Another argument advanced by those who would take "the cup" from the church, is to the effect that the term "the breaking of bread" omits to say that the cup was used in observing the eucharist. Now while the term "to break bread" was often used among the Jews — the ordinary sense of partaking of food (Acts 2:46), it is also frequently used for communion which includes, according to Paul, both the cup and the bread (1 Cor. 10:16)*. Luke calls the communion emphatically *te klasei tou artou*, "the breaking of the bread" in Acts 2:42; "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers—praising God." In Acts 20:11 an ordinary meal is spoken of as "breaking bread" because it is used indefinitely, and because he that eats is in the same number with him that breaks bread; but when an established usage is referred to, the article or some definite term ascertains



* There is no previous mention of any such ordinance as the breaking of bread, separate from the cup, ever having been given by our Lord. "The breaking of bread" is, therefore, of necessity, an abbreviated form of referring to the eucharist.

the communal sense. In Acts 2:42 it is "the breaking of the bread"; in Acts 20:7 it is "the breaking of the bread" again. 1 Cor. 10:16 in the Greek reads, "The bread which we break." Any one who understands the generic meaning of words and terms can see the force of these remarks. In accordance with these observations and in conformity with universal usage in laws and institutions, that which is first or most prominent in them, designates and names them. *Habeas Corpus*, *Fieri Facias*, *Nisi Prius*, *Capias*, and *Venditioni Exponas* are a few illustrations selected at random.

(d) **The Breaking of Bread is a Weekly Memorial, and an Indispensable Part of Worship in All Stated Meetings of the Church.** Breaking bread, then, includes the cup; and that this sacramental ordinance was a weekly memorial of Christ's death, and formed an indispensable part of worship in the assembly of the primitive believers, appears from the fact that thirty years after the eucharist was instituted, the church in Jerusalem, which was constituted and presided over by the apostles, celebrated the Lord's supper in their ecclesial meetings as "steadfastly" as they did all other parts of public worship. Hear Luke's account: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). When the word "steadfastly" is made to mean annually, quarterly, and when you please, the "doctrine," "fellowship," and "prayers" suffer equally with the eucharist. Logically such theorists should only preach "the apostles' doc-

trine" annually, and should only indulge "in prayers" quarterly!

So important is the apostolic idea of the communion, and so conspicuous a place did it hold in their meetings, that they are never said to hold a meeting for any other purpose than to break bread. "And on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). Those who have any regard for the meaning of words must concede that the meeting of the disciples and the breaking of bread are here expressed in the same terms so far as frequency is concerned. If the one was weekly, so was the other. If they met every first day, they broke bread every first day; and if they did not break bread every first day, they did not meet every first day. The fact is they did both. If Luke had said they met on a first day and partook of the eucharist, the annual, semi-annual, quarterly, and monthly communicants might be able to explain away weekly communion. In all languages that have a definite article, it is prefixed only to stated and fixed times. "The first day of the week" is not merely definitive of one day, but expresses a fixed day. Notice, then, how accurately and significantly Paul writes in 1 Cor. 16:2: "Upon the first day of the week"; "On the first day of every week"; *kata mian Sabbaton*. Macknight and the Emphatic Diaglott correctly render these words, "On the first day of every week." All men of education admit that *kata polin* means "every city"; *kata menan*, "every month"; *kata ecclesian*, "every church"; therefore by following the same usage *kata mian Sabbaton* means "the first day of every week."

The primitive Christians, then, did meet "the first day of every week." This conceded, we re-

mark that they broke bread at these weekly meetings to show forth the Lord's death till he come. "When ye come together into one place," says Paul, "this is not to eat the Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20). When the teacher reproves a pupil for squandering time, she cannot do it more forcibly than by saying, "When you waste time like this, you do not come to school to learn." See, then, the purport of Paul's words: "When you assemble thus, it is not to eat the Lord's supper." The saints of Corinth met "every first day of the week," and when they assembled "in one place" it was to eat the Lord's supper — a declaration of their practice as explicit as could be given, and differing only from a categorical commandment in the form in which it is expressed. There cannot be found in the pages of the New Testament, after the eucharist was instituted, a church meeting on the first day of the week for any other purpose than to break bread. If an commandment for us to preach the gospel on the first day of the week, hold a Sunday school, or do anything under the sun except to break bread and attend to the means of edification and comfort which are accessory to the Lord's supper (Heb. 10:21-25). To "Forsake the assembling of ourselves together" for this purpose wilfully, is a sin which there is no sacrifice (vss. 25-29).

Finally, "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup" (1 Cor. 11:26) are words used in connection with the communion from which some have inferred that there is no commandment touching the frequency of the Lord's supper; consequently they say there is no condemnation

for a partial or even a total neglect of it*. The words "as often" they refer to frequency, whereas they denote manner. "Always do it in remembrance of me" is what they mean. The context of the words refers to the manner and design of the ordinance, not to frequency; and it is destructive of all admitted rules of interpretation to infer another matter from them which is not in the purview of the writer. If the words "as often" leave it optional and discretionary with the church how often, she would be blameless if she never but once in all time showed forth the Lord's death by observing the Lord's supper. Such an absurd interpretation makes the communion an observance without reason, law, precedent, or obligation. "This do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24) is a commandment, if there is any meaning in words; and it lays upon us the obligation to "do" it in some times and in some places. Was there ever a commemorative ordinance, in any age, in any clime, under any religious economy ordained by God, which had not a fixed, definite time for its observance? If so, where and when? Was it the Sabbath? the Passover?

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* Those who are guilty of this pernicious reasoning should consider 1 Cor. 11:27-31. If we do not partake of the sacramental symbols of the Lord's death, and eat and drink them worthily, we join hands with those who "killed the Prince of life" (Acts 3:15). We are guilty of murder because we "are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." We crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame (Heb. 6:6). For this nefarious crime God gives over the offenders to both temporal and eternal "damnation." Compare 1 Cor. 11:27,29,32.

the Pentecost: the Feast of Tabernacles? the Feast of Purim? circumcision? baptism? We repeat our question with emphasis: Can you name one commemorative ordinance, the meaning and frequency of which is not laid down in the word of God, either by precept or example? You cannot name one of a social character! If the Lord's supper be not a weekly institution: if it is only a commandment without a definition of the time, place, and manner of its observance, then the lawless observers of the eucharist must be confounded by the circumstance that it is a thing *sui generis* — an anomaly, an institution unlike all others of Jehovah's appointment. May the reader avail himself of the communion of the body and blood of Christ with fellow believers now (1 Cor. 10:16) that he may be among those with whom Jesus will "drink it new in the Father's kingdom" when he comes (Matt. 26:29.) excommunicated" (Erskine's Dessertations, page 271). In A. D. 506, at the Council of Agatha, it was decreed that "none should be esteemed good

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A POSTSCRIPT

**..Showing When, By Whom, and in What Way..
Communion Degenerated into an Annual
Observance**

For the first three centuries after Christ the church broke bread weekly (Pliny's Epistles, book 10; Justin Martyr's Second Apology; Tertullian's De Ora., page 135). The weekly communion was practiced in the Greek church till the seventh century; and by one of their canons, "such as neglected three weeks together were Christians who did not communicate at least three times a year — at Christmas, Easter, and

Whitsunday (Council of Agatha, Can. 18). In about six hundred years, however, the carnal crowd grew tired of even three communications in one year; and the infamous Council of Lateran decreed auricular confession, transubstantiation, and that "an annual communion at Easter was sufficient." Thus in the hands of the most ignorant and abandoned Papists the simple and weekly communion service degenerated into a pompous and annual sacrament at Easter. How the weekly observance of the Lord's supper was supplanted by the infrequent administration of the ordinance is told by Mr. John Brown as quoted in "The Christian System," page 320:

"The Eastern hermits, retiring from the society of men, had taken up their residence in deserts and mountains and, being far removed from the places of its administration, seldom attended. This neglect, though really the effect of their sloth and distance, they pretended to arise from their regard and reverence for this most holy ordinance. It being easy to imitate them in this imaginary holiness, which lay in neglecting the ordinances of God, many of the Eastern Christians left off to communicate, except at such times as superstition had rendered solemn, such as at Pasch; and contented themselves with being spectators on other occasions. On account of this practice, we find the great and eloquent Chrysostom, once and again, bitterly exclaiming against them as guilty of the highest contempt of God and of Christ; and calls their practice a most wicked custom."

Finis

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