

# BIBLE STUDY FOR BEREANS

## OCTOBER 1935

*INSIDE FRONT COVER*

### **SEED THOUGHTS**

BY H. BULTEMA

Many seem to think that the Bible has been given for the sole purpose of making us wise unto salvation by faith in Christ. Thank God, that is the primary purpose, but it is not the sole purpose. There is a higher purpose closely connected with it. It is that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

When God enjoins the “right-dividing” of His word, this is presupposing the possibility and danger of “wrong dividing” and of garbling the truth. Israel and the Church, Law and Grace, Kingdom and Body, earthly and heavenly things, these have been mixed and Galatianism was the result.

If a hungry man wants to cook a good meal, he does not put potatoes, sugar, syrup, salt, sausage, beets and bananas in one pot. What a potpourri that would be, and how useless and tasteless but this man picturizes some who try to feed the hungry souls that belong to Christ.

Faith, and also stronger faith, comes not by PRAYING, but by the hearing, i.e. obeying the Word of God. Hear the Word as often as you can, act upon it and you will “grow up as calves of the stall.” Malachi 4:2.

Culpable ignorance! How we should dread it; for it brought Christ to the cross, it made Israel’s leaders misleaders (Matthew 22:24), it alienated from God (Romans 10:2); it made of a conscientious young student a blasphemer and persecutor (I Timothy 1:13).

### **TOLERANCE WITHOUT COMPROMISE**

Perhaps you too have heard this question; “why is it that Modernists in the churches seem to get along so peaceably in their fellowship and united endeavors whereas Fundamentalists seem to be fighting all the time; not only fighting the Modernists but fighting among themselves? “This is a question well worth considering. It is rather unfortunate that Fundamentalists can not dwell together in unity and labour together for Christ in perfect harmony, for it does seem that the cause of Christ suffers because of divisions and controversies among God’s people.

There are some most important doctrines concerning which all who are truly God’s children are agreed:

All saved Christians are agreed that all of the Bible is God’s Word.

All saved Christians are agreed that Christ is the eternal God.

All saved Christians are agreed that Christ's sacrificial death is God's remedy for sin.

All saved Christians are agreed that Christ arose from the dead and is now a Man in heaven.

All saved Christians are agreed that God has only one true Bible Church during this age.

All saved Christians are agreed as to the personality of the Holy Spirit and that that Holy Spirit indwells believers only.

All saved Christians are agreed that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

All saved Christians believe in the heaven and the hell of the Bible, and that there will be a separation of believers and unbelievers in the ages to come.

All saved Christians are agreed that the Lord expects His redeemed ones to walk worthy of their high calling; to live godly, righteously and soberly in this present world.

All saved Christians are agreed that many of the promises which God made to Israel and that many of the religious practices which He gave for Israel have no place in the program of the Body of Christ.

But then come the heart-aches and regrets, because of the disagreements among these saved Christians. They cannot agree as to the second coming of the Lord Jesus, Christ. The two main divisions are the Premillenarians and the Postmillenarians. How different are their views! They are so irreconcilably at variance that frequently a discussion concerning the difference ends in bitter controversy, in ungraceful and uncharitable criticism which destroys all Christian fellowship and unity. Inasmuch as they are saved by the gospel of Christ and are headed for the same heaven, this is deplorable.

What should be done in such a case? Certainly we should not expect servants of the Lord to sacrifice what they believe to be God given, Holy Spirit-directed convictions concerning the interpretation of the Scriptures. But on the other hand the Scriptures ask; "how can two walk together unless they be agreed?" We can see that there is a real problem if in the same assembly contrary views concerning the Lord's Return are taught. Therefore, we can see that these contrary views do not make for unity, but invariably create divisions. Generally unpleasant results follow where different doctrinal views are taught in the same assembly of saints.

Do you know of any outstanding Premillennialist among the Fundamentalist leaders who is keeping silent concerning the Lord's return because he does not want to create division? No; but you do know that these same men, who refuse to remain silent as to their convictions against Postmillennialism; Legalism, So-called Divine Healing, Sabbath-keeping, Arminianism, Eternal Security, Speaking with Tongues, Anointing with Oil, Church-membership, Denominationalism, Anglo-Israelism and Second Blessing, cry out with loud protests against their fellow Christians who disagree with them as to when the Body of Christ began or to which of the twenty, or more, water baptism practices is for that Body. They cry then, "mark them that cause divisions". They have been causing divisions for some time, but they refuse to mark themselves. It is all according to who causes the division and in whose assembly. They prove themselves inconsistent, and quite frequently insincere; for they delight to make a Premillenarian out of a Postmillenarian, an "Eternal Security" Christian out of a "Falling-from-Grace" Christian (or vice versa). They delight to take the anointing-oil bottle away from their fellow-Christian or put it into his hand as the case may be. They do their best to preach him into their particular denomination or preach him out of all denominations. They do not hesitate for one moment to get other Christians into second blessing, with tongues and divine healing, or get him out, as the case may be. Little do they care for unity until they discover that the unity of their own movement is being disturbed.

Then they have more than a conviction. They clear for action. There is conflict as well as conviction. They demand that the trouble-makers be castigated, disfellowshipped, branded as heretics, boycotted, because they create division among brethren. They use the tactics of Rome and Christian Scientists, urging their followers not to listen to their opponents.

Now the question: does the Lord want His servants to sacrifice convictions for the sake of Christian unity? We are unanimous in our answer, "not if the convictions are important". Then the question; is tolerance possible without compromise, if the differences of interpretation do not affect the Divine truths by which a believer is saved or hinder the spiritual walk of that believer? We would like to say "yes"; but the cases proving this affirmative are so rare and exceptional that we hesitate.

Those of us who are responsible for the messages which are printed in this Bible-study magazine state that our Fundamentalists brethren, whom we recognize as members of the One Body of the risen Christ to which we belong, cannot prove by the Word of Truth rightly divided,

1. That the Body of Christ began historically on the day of Pentecost.
2. That the nation Israel was set aside by God with their rejection of Christ before or at the time He was crucified.
3. That the sign gifts of Mark 16:16 to 18 and I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 are for members of the Body of Christ today.
4. That the Dispensation of the mystery (Ephesians 3:9) began on the day of Pentecost.
5. That there was no difference between the gospel of the circumcision given to Peter, and the gospel of uncircumcision given to Paul. Galatians 2:7 to 9.
6. That there was no difference between God's program for the Church in Paul's message after Acts 28:28 and before that judgment was announced.
7. That the One baptism of Ephesians 4:5 is water baptism.

Now, if agreed that these differences have nothing to do with salvation, why permit them to cause divisions, and even bitter controversies, among Fundamentalists? Here is the answer: We have a strong conviction in this matter, to which we must be true. Why the conviction? We have diligently, spiritually, prayerfully studied the Plymouth Brethren interpretation concerning these seven points, which interpretation has been accepted as Divine truth by our leading Bible schools, and have found them to be faulty interpretations, offering neither a satisfactory understanding of the Word of God for those who would rightly divide the Word of Truth nor the slightest antidote or Scriptural corrective for the fanaticism which is sweeping over the country leaving spiritual insanity and Satanic delusions and counterfeit religious practices in its trail.

We appreciate the fact that we are opposed by popular, organized Fundamentalism but we have not found one of their champions who is courageous enough to publicly discuss these seven differences with us or meet for prayerful consideration of them in the presence of a chosen group of earnest Bible students.—On the contrary, they have resorted to unspiritual tactics, maligning and misrepresenting God's servants and intimidating untaught students of the Scriptures with the cry of "Bullingerism", making false charges against Dr. E. W. Bullinger, a faithful saint of the Lord, who has gone to be with the Lord, an able expositor of the Bible, with some of whose interpretations all writers in this magazine disagree. But our method is to Scripturally examine a brother's teaching rather than discredit and condemn the teacher.

These differences will be discussed at our Berean Bible Conference to be held at North Shore Church in Chicago October 7 to 11. You are invited to attend.

# **GOD'S WORKMANSHIP**

## **UNTO GOOD WORKS**

All Christians appreciate that there is more to salvation than the blessed fact of Divine redemption from Divine judgment. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." "The wages of sin is death, but the (free) gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What happiness and peace should fill the soul of the sinner who has the positive assurance that he has been completely delivered from the wages, or the penalty, of sin, by the infinite grace of God and the once-for-all perfect work of the Lord Jesus Christ! The sinner has only to take God at His Word and receive Christ as his own personal Redeemer, by faith appropriating Him and His perfect work of redemption, to be forever saved from the awful penalty of sin, the after-death judgment, which is eternal separation from God, from holiness, from peace, from life, from light and from blessing; in hopeless despair.

This great salvation is altogether by grace. It is the free gift of God, undeserved and unearned by the believing sinner, who is declared righteous without a cause by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ. Romans 3:24 to 28: "Not of works lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8 and 9: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." Titus 3:5: "To him that worketh not." Romans 4:3 and 4: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Romans 10:9 and 10.

But as the believing sinner is saved from something he is likewise saved unto something. He is saved unto life eternal, unto heaven and glory with the glorified Christ. He is also saved unto good works. He is saved to be a temple of the Holy Spirit. The saved sinner is not his own: he belongs to Christ. He is not to henceforth live unto himself, but unto Him who died for him and is alive forevermore. He is not to serve sin. He is to yield himself unto God as one who is alive from the dead. He is to put on the new man. He is to reckon himself dead unto sin. He is to walk in newness of life. He is to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. He is to walk in the light; to walk circumspectly; to walk in love and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called. He is to be a shining light holding forth the Word of God. He is to show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness unto His marvelous light. He is to suffer persecution for Christ's sake. He is to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He is to be ready always to give a reason for the hope that is in him. He is to add to his faith, virtue, godliness, temperance, kindness, love. He is to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to be spiritual and not carnal. He is to contend earnestly for the faith once-for-all delivered unto the saints.

Yes, the believer is to have the mind of Christ and to seek those things where Christ is seated in the heavenlies; setting his affections on things above, keeping himself unspotted from the world. He is to bear the burdens of the weak brethren and not be a stumbling-block to them. He is to please God rather than men.

He is to walk in the Spirit and fulfill the righteousness of the law. We quote Romans 8:2 and 4. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"; "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

This Divine law, “in Christ”, is altogether adequate for the believer’s complete deliverance from the penalty of sin. It is likewise sufficient for his deliverance from the power of sin. The mighty power of God that raised Christ from the dead is available for the redeemed sinner, that he may know Christ in the power of His resurrection, and that he may be more than conqueror though Him who loved us.

Though the world may hate, criticize, condemn, ridicule and persecute the Lord’s people, they cannot answer the transformed life that manifests the Spirit of Christ. Beholding their good works some will glorify God in the day of visitation. Thus we see that good works have a very important place in God’s salvation. Good works cannot aid in the believer’s deliverance from the wages of sin, either before or after he experiences regeneration. Good works can never be a factor in the sinner’s salvation; but the fruit. The Lord wants fruit to abound in the life of the believer. God wants the believer to maintain good works; to always abound in the work of the Lord. To this end he provides his abounding grace. II Corinthians 9:8.

Surely one believer expects another believer to show evidences of salvation. Every believer who studies the Bible knows that God expects him to give forth a consistent testimony in his daily life. The world looks for something more than profession. It expects the Christian to be different from the sinner; to be honest, sincere, “unworldly”, gracious, godly, philanthropic, benevolent, Christlike.

But let us not confuse a spiritual life with religious works. God’s grace saves the sinner from religion as well as from sin. There was a God-given religion, which had a place in a former dispensation. But this is not the “dispensation of religion”; this is the “dispensation of grace”. This is not the “dispensation of covenants”; this is the “dispensation of the mystery.” Ephesians 3:1 and 2 and 3 and 9. We should be careful as to which of God’s programs we adopt. It is obvious we cannot walk with those who were under the law, because we are not under the law. Romans 6:14. We are not living in Israel’s Old Covenant “shadow” days. Hebrews 10:1 to 10. We are not living in Canaan under judges or kings. We are seated with Christ in the heavenlies. We are not guaranteed physical blessings and temporal prosperity. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. Ephesians 1:3.

We are not disciples on earth with Jesus of Nazareth, instructed to follow Him in kingdom discipleship. Our citizenship is in heaven from whence we look for our Saviour, Philippians 3:19 to 21. Our affections are set upon thing above. Our hope is laid up in heaven. We are in a kingdom of the Son of God’s love that differs from the “kingdom of heaven”, proclaimed by the Twelve. Matthew 10:5 to 8. Colossians 1:13 to 18.

Therefore, let us not try to appropriate, or misappropriate, the Matthew kingdom blessings of Israel. Let us leave Israel’s hope, Israel’s blessings, Israel’s calling, for Israel, and let us be wholly satisfied with our hope, calling and blessings, as members of the Body of Christ, and “walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called.” Ephesians 4:1.

As sinners saved by grace, we makeup with Christ, our glorified Head, the One New Man of Ephesians 2:15. We are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works that God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10. Our eternal salvation was foreordained by God. Ephesians 1:3. Our walk of good works was ordained also. Surely we desire to please the Lord in good works.

Our clear path is marked out for us in the Lord’s revelation for us through our Apostle Paul. Let us not fail to appropriate and apply every instruction given, concerning the believer’s walk, in the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation; but let us test the instructions in the light

of the Lord's high and holy truth for members of His Body, found in the message of grace and glory revealed to Paul, the prisoner of the Lord for Gentiles.

Many zealous earnest Christians are striving to please God by trying to carry on a mixed program, failing to test the things that differ, if not by mixing law and grace then by mixing Israel's kingdom program with the dispensation of the grace of God, confusing the hope and calling of Israel with the hope and calling of the Body of Christ.

## **THE GOSPEL, THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH**

BY CHAS. F. BAKER

The word "Gospel" is found one hundred and one times in our English Bible, although in the original the expression is found in both verb and noun form one hundred and twenty-eight times, the verb being translated "preach" or "preach the gospel". The word means "glad tidings", and is so translated in Luke 1:19. Out of the one hundred and one uses of the word, it is translated fifty-four times "the Gospel", and the remaining forty-seven references are divided into the following sixteen groups The Gospel of the Kingdom (5 times); The Gospel of God (7 times); the Gospel of Christ (13 times); The Gospel of the Circumcision (once); The Gospel of the Uncircumcision (once); My Gospel (3 times); Our Gospel (3 times); That Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles (once); The Gospel of the Grace of God (once); The Gospel of the Glory (2 times); The Gospel of Peace (2 times); The Gospel of your Salvation (once); The Gospel of His Son (once); The Mystery of the Gospel (once); Another Gospel (4 times); and The Everlasting Gospel (once). The faithful student of the Word of God finds his task in rightly dividing and applying these various aspects of the Gospel to the Messianic Kingdom, to the Acts transition, and to the Church which is the Body of Christ.

The command to "rightly divide the Word of truth" comes after the revelation of the "Mystery" or secret purpose of God during this age, which purpose was hid in God and never before revealed to man. Because of the danger of confusing this hidden secret with that which was before revealed and prophesied, God has enjoined us to be careful workmen in this respect. (II Timothy 2:15; Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:1 to 12). Any one who confuses the Body of Christ with the Old Testament saints or with the Messianic Kingdom, and imposes the laws and ordinances of these groups upon the members of His Body, is in some measure frustrating the grace of God.

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM had its roots in the Old Testament prophets, but was first preached by John the Baptist; for it was he who announced that in the person of the King, the Kingdom was at hand. The message of this Gospel was at first directed to Israel only (Matthew 10:5 and 6) and was not preached to the Gentiles until Peter proclaimed it to Cornelius (Acts 11:19; Acts 15:7), about seven years after Pentecost. It was concerning the earthly Kingdom, and presented Jesus Christ as Messiah and King (Luke 1:32 and 33; Matthew 21:5). For that purpose John came baptizing with water (John 1:31). After the rejection and crucifixion of the King by Israel, a new offer of that Gospel was made possible by Christ's intercessory prayer upon the Cross (Luke 23:34). On Pentecost and thereafter the Twelve preached that Jesus had been raised from the dead to sit upon the throne of David (Acts 2:30) and to be a Prince and a Saviour to Israel (Acts 5:31), and that upon national repentance of Israel God would send Jesus back to establish the Messianic Kingdom (Acts 2:20 and 21). After seven years of preaching to the Jews in their own land, God sent Peter to the Gentile, Cornelius.

A contrast between the Kingdom Gospel and the Grace Gospel is seen in what Peter preached to Cornelius; “God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins”; and in what Paul preached to Gentiles: “For by grace are ye saved through faith—not of works,” “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” As long as this Kingdom Gospel was preached, the order was to the Jew first and water baptism and other Jewish ceremonies were practiced (Acts 18:18; 21:20; 21:26). But after Paul had carried this message to the leaders of the Dispersion in Rome and they had rejected it (Acts 28:17 to 24), God definitely set aside the Jewish nation along with the Gospel of the Kingdom, and made known to Paul the full revelation of the Mystery and of the Gospel of the Grace of God which was to accompany it. The former was earthly and included signs, miracles, ordinances, gifts of healing and of tongues, and such like; whereas the latter is heavenly and is entirely dissociated from these externalisms. After God has finished His purpose with the Body of Christ and has called it on high (Philippians 3:14), then again “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end (of the age) come.” (Matthew 24:24). Christ will then return to earth and fulfill Acts 15:16 and 17.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD had its roots in God Himself. It was not preached by Jesus or by the Twelve, but it was a special revelation given to Paul (Galatians 1:11 and 12). It is called “the Gospel of the Uncircumcision” as contrasted with “the Gospel of the Circumcision” which Peter preached (Galatians 2:7); “My Gospel” (Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25; II Timothy 2:8) because it was a special revelation to Paul; for the same reason it is called “Our Gospel” (II Corinthians 4:3; I Thessalonians 1:5; II Thessalonians 2:14); “the Gospel of Peace” (Ephesians 6:15; Romans 10:15) because He is our peace who has made both Jew and Gentile one in His Body (Ephesians 2:14 to 18); “the Gospel of the Glory” (II Corinthians 4:4; I Timothy 1:11) because it concerns our glorious heavenly relationship with the Lord of Glory; and it is called “the Gospel of Christ” because He is the author of it.

It is this Gospel of Grace which is addressed to members of the Body of Christ today. If it were preached and practiced, it would free the Church from all externalism, legalism, and Judaism and would demonstrate to the world the power of the matchless Grace of God. But sad to say, most Christians are entangled with the yoke of traditionalism, and prefer it to the liberty of God’s grace.

THE GOSPEL OF GOD (Romans 1:1; Romans 15:16; II Corinthians 11:7; I Thessalonians 2:2, 8, 9; I Peter 4:17) is not identical with either the Gospel of the Kingdom or the Gospel of the Grace of God; but may be said to be the larger sphere which includes the promise of Salvation to the Gentile in uncircumcision and to the Jew in circumcision, without particular respect to the dispensation. According to Romans 1:1, the Gospel of God was something which God “had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.” This should be studied in conjunction with Romans 16:25: “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets (New Testament prophets), according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedient of faith.” Surely that which was “promised afore” and that was “kept secret” cannot be one and the same thing. The Gospel of God which was promised afore deals with the righteousness of God, and is the good news that God has found a way to be just and at the same time the Justifier of the ungodly. Faith is the only

human element needed, and propitiation or satisfaction of all of God's holy demands through the substitutionary death of the Son of God is the divine provision, This basic principle of justification by faith is the very heart of the Gospel of God, and the foundation of every form and aspect of the Gospel under the various dispensations.

THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS (CHRIST'S) BODY (Ephesians 1:22 and 23) is specifically said to have been a mystery hidden from the ages past and its truth first revealed to the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:1 to 9). This church is to be distinguished from the congregation of Israel (Acts 7:38), and from the church in existence when Christ was on earth (Matthew 18:17), and if it had its beginning at the time of the revelation of the Mystery, it is to be distinguished from the Church of God which existed during the Acts period. God has nowhere definitely stated when the Body of Christ began, but we do know that it was not before Pentecost, and that the full revelation of truth concerning the Body was not made until Paul reached Rome as a prisoner. The all important thing to know is that, as believers, we are members of His Body, made accepted in the Beloved and complete in Him, and even now seated with Him in heavenly places, that our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, and that we are called upon to walk worthy of this vocation wherewith we are called, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This can be accomplished only as we recognize our great seven-fold unity: one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all.

## **A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE IN TEN LESSONS**

### **LESSON NUMBER TWO**

#### **THE SERPENT AND THE CURSE—THE SAVIOUR AND THE CURE.**

“BUT I FEAR, LEST BY ANY MEANS, AS THE SERPENT BEGUILED EVE THROUGH HIS SUBTLETY, SO YOUR MINDS SHOULD BE CORRUPTED FROM THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST”. II Corinthians 11:3.

“AND THE GREAT DRAGON WAS CAST OUT, THAT OLD SERPENT, CALLED THE DEVIL, AND SATAN, WHICH DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD: HE WAS CAST OUT INTO THE EARTH, AND HIS ANGELS WERE CAST OUT WITH HIM”. . . Revelation 12:9.

“AND THE DEVIL THAT DECEIVED THEM WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHERE THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET ARE, AND SHALL BE TORMENTED DAY AND NIGHT FOR EVER AND EVER”. . . Revelation 20:10.

“HE THAT COMMITTETH SIN IS OF THE DEVIL; FOR THE DEVIL SINNETH FROM THE BEGINNING. FOR THIS PURPOSE THE SON OF GOD WAS MANIFESTED, THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL”. . . I John 3:8.

“AND NO MAN HATH ASCENDED UP TO HEAVEN BUT HE THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, EVEN THE SON OF MAN WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

“AND AS MOSES LIFTED UP THE SERPENT IN THE WILDERNESS, EVEN SO MUST THE SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP”. . . John 3:13 and 14.

“AND THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET SHORTLY”. . . Romans 16:20.



In II Corinthians, 11:13 to 15, we are told that Satan is transformed into an angel of light. In the fourth chapter of that same Epistle he is called the god of this age. When Christ was on earth He spoke of Satan as the prince of this world. Christ said to His disciples, as recorded in Luke 10:18—"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven". This may also have some reference to the future, as we may learn by reading the twelfth chapter of the Revelation; for Satan is yet to leave heaven and come to this earth for his deadly work during the period of the Great Tribulation. But, it likewise has reference to the past. Undoubtedly we have in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah and the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel the origin of Satan and sin. There we learn that the one now Called Satan, which means "adversary"; was perfect in the day that he was created. He was not satisfied with the creature's place, although he had a very exalted place in the government of God. He rebelled against the will of God, desiring his own way. In answer to his "I wills" God responded with His "I will" and God prevailed; and the anointed cherub was cast out. Thus we see that sin began with the "I will" of the creature who became Satan.

As an angel of light he appeared to Eve in the Garden of Eden, and through his subtlety she was beguiled. She preferred the lie of Satan to the truth of God. She gave the fruit to Adam and he also did eat. And as the result of their disobedience, God pronounced the curse, as recorded in Genesis 3:13 to 21. And in those verses we read of the curse upon the serpent, upon the ground, upon the woman, and these words spoken unto the first man:

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return". Genesis 3:19.

In pronouncing the curse upon the serpent, the Lord God, announced the Saviour and the cure. But before we speak of these, we shall first deal with the curses of the Bible.

## THE FOUR CURSES

We refer briefly to these curses:

First—The curse mentioned in Genesis 3:13 to 21.

Second—The curse mentioned in Galatians 3:10, which is the confirmation of Deuteronomy 27:26.

Third—The curse of Galatians 3:13.

Fourth—The curse of Matthew 25:41.

## CURSE NUMBER ONE

It is not difficult for any thinking person to see that ruin has come to creation because of sin. We behold the curse of sin. All about us we can see the confirmation of the statement recorded in I John 5:19—"The whole world lieth in the evil one."

As the result of the curse pronounced by the Lord God in the Garden of Eden we are told in Romans 8:20—"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope".

As the result of the transgression of Adam there is evident proof of the universal law of sin and death."

In connection with the four curses mentioned in the Bible there are three great laws mentioned, namely—the law of sin and death, the Law that was given by Moses and the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

As we have just observed, the universal curse which is upon the human race is here as the result of the disobedience of this first law.

### CURSE NUMBER TWO

“Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them”. . . Deuteronomy 27:26 and Galatians 3:10. This law that was given by Moses entered 2500 years after Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden. It entered that the offense might abound. . . Romans 5:20. “The law worketh wrath”... Romans 4:15. . . “They could not endure that which was commanded” . . . Hebrews 12:20. This law written on tables of stone was to the people the ministration of death and condemnation... II Corinthians 3:7 and 9. And therefore, “The Law made nothing perfect”. Hebrews 7:19. There was neither life nor justification in this Law of commandments. That Law could and did leave the sinner where it found him, under the curse, condemned.

### CURSE NUMBER THREE

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.” God’s Son was made under the Law. He was wholly obedient under that Law; perfect in character and conduct. The Law was holy; so was Jesus Christ. The Law was perfect; so was Jesus Christ. The Law demanded a sinless life. Christ lived a sinless life. He was altogether worthy of the title, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He came to deliver the human race from the curse. He came to put away sin and abolish death. On the cross He who knew no sin was made sin. He took the guilty law-breaker’s place He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Then He abolished death and brought life to light in the Gospel . . . II Timothy 1:9 and 10 . . . He had power to lay down His life and take it again. This He did, and established the third law to which we have referred; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This law completely nullifies and counteracts the law of sin and death, including the guarantee of incorruptibility on redemption day. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”. “They that are His at His coming”. The only place of security, salvation and blessing is “in Christ”.

Thus we see that in this third curse, the curse of God’s only begotten and well beloved Son, there is deliverance from the curse that entered by the disobedience of Adam as well as the curse that entered with the Law. And the acceptance of this curse is positively the only way of escape from the fourth curse. . . Read Romans 7:1 to 6: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.” He put away sin, abolished death, provided righteousness and obtained eternal redemption.

### CURSE NUMBER FOUR

“Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.”

We are here taught the truth that this place of punishment has been prepared for the Devil and his angels, for the one who is responsible for the curse upon the human race.

The Saviour who came from heaven to be made a curse on the cross of Calvary has provided complete redemption from sin and the consequence of sin. He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. In the shadow of the cross He said—“Come unto me and I will

give you rest". This message of grace is still offered to any and every sinner ruined in Adam. Whosoever will, may come". Those who refuse to respond to the "Come unto Me" will surely some day hear the same One say, "Depart from Me". All who refuse Christ as Saviour in this day of grace must some day meet Him as Judge, in the day of His wrath. It is for every one the choice between the cross of Calvary or the lake of fire, the second birth or the second death. Thus we see that the whole Bible is the story of "the serpent and the curse", and "the Saviour and the cure". The conflict is still raging, and the serpent who brought the curse is still actively engaged in his work of deception, is still transformed into an angel of light. He is still beguiling and corrupting. He uses every means to keep sinners from accepting the Saviour and the cure. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" by the blinding of the god of this age. II Corinthians 4:3 and 4.

### THE PROMISED REDEEMER THE SAVIOUR AND THE CURE

The gracious promise of the Saviour and the cure is right in the midst of the curse pronounced in Genesis 3:13 to 31. The Seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head. All of the Bible after the third chapter of Genesis is the unfolding of this exceeding great and precious promise. We are still waiting for the final consummation, knowing that God shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly. . . "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man". Hebrews 2:9. He became a partaker of flesh and blood to destroy the devil's death power. Hebrews 2:14.

But in connection with this verse we do find the consummation set forth in this language recorded in I Corinthians 15:24 to 26.

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

"For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

### UNDER THE CURSE

In the Book of Genesis we have the record of three sons that were born to Adam and Eve. These three were born under the curse. They were conceived in sin and brought into the world under the law of sin and death; but also under the promise of a Redeemer from sin and death. Doubtless many other children were born to Adam and Eve, for we remember that the Bible is a history of the Seed of the woman rather than the history of the human race; therefore, in the Record God has not given us the name of the wife of Cain, as the Seed of the woman was not to come through Cain. "Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth". "appointed another Seed instead of Abel" Genesis 4:25.

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

“And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

“And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; But unto Cain and to his offering He had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”

“And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another son instead of Abel whom Cain slew.

“And to Seth, to him also there was a born son; and he called his name Enos; then began men to call upon the name of the Lord”

“And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth.” Genesis 4:1 to 5—25 and 26—Genesis 5:3.

We remember that Adam was created rather than begotten. He was made in the image and likeness of God. Of course, this had no reference to any physical image. Neither is there any contradiction in the first and second chapters of Genesis as to man’s creation. The earthly house of his tabernacle had nothing to do with his image of the Creator. Inasmuch as Adam was created rather than begotten, it may be a debatable question as to whether or not he should be called a son of God, for we are sure he was created a full grown man. The record is; he became a living soul. There have been many controversies as to whether soul and spirit are synonymous. According to Hebrews 4:12, there is a distinction between man’s soul and spirit. And these words are found in I Thessalonians 5:23—“And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

As we turn to the New Testament Scriptures and find these words recorded in Hebrews 11:4—“By faith Abel offered unto God more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh.” And we quote these words found in I John 3:12—“Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil and his brother’s righteous.”

Undoubtedly both Cain and Abel knew God’s way of righteousness when Cain first went about to establish his own righteousness. Most assuredly he did not and would not submit to the righteousness of God, which is by faith, after that way was made plain to him. There are multitudes of very religious people who are still going in the way of Cain, and their end will be eternal separation from God. God’s way is a way that Abel took. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness”. Romans 10:10. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour”. Titus 3:4 and 6.

Abel was not saved because he was a better man than Cain. He was saved because of his better way of salvation. The thing that was between Cain and Abel is the same thing that was between the Pharisee and the Publican; who went up in the temple to pray. The same thing that was between the two thieves that died on the cross. The same thing that will be between the redeemed and the lost throughout eternity, namely: “the blood of the Lamb.”

After Cain killed his brother he built the first city, Enoch. Many have been troubled as to where he found a wife. Undoubtedly he married one of his sisters. He may have had many of them. With Cain and his descendants we have the beginning of civilization, but no mention of the worship of God among them.

When Adam was 130 years old he begat a son, and his name was Seth, which means “an appointed one or a substitute”. It was in his day that men began to call upon the name of the Lord. But how long this continued, we are not told in the antediluvian record.

We are told however, that great wickedness prevailed and so increased that every imagination of the heart was evil continually. And this solemn warning was pronounced by God, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” Genesis 6:3. And in Genesis 6:6, “And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.” In between these two verses just quoted we have this record “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”

Concerning these creatures called the sons of God, there has also been much controversy; some believing that they were fallen angels rather than human beings; while others believe that they were the depraved descendants of Cain, admitting that it was rather difficult to account for the title given them, “the sons of God”.

In the midst of that universal wickedness, God found a servant, a man who had found God, who had found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This man’s name was Noah which interpreted means “rest”. Concerning him we again refer to Hebrews 11:7.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir to the righteousness which is by faith.”

Thus we learn that Noah was one of the heroes of faith, and in preparing an ark to the saving of his house, he condemned the world.

God in Romans 5:13 to 14 tells us of the period “from Adam to Moses, when there is no law.” This period was about 2500 years. “From Adam to the flood” was a part of that period, about 1656 years. The flood was upon the earth about 1656 A H (year of man) or about 2344 B. C.

(Lesson number three in November edition.)

## **THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY**

By Vincent Bennett

For the “Dispensation of the Mystery” special Divine choice was made of the instrument for the revelation and this peculiar ministry was committed to the Apostle Paul. But it was not made known until the crisis was reached, in Acts 28, by the setting aside of Israel.

God has a definite plan and purpose for Israel on the EARTH and our God who cannot lie will yet fulfill the Covenants He has made with His people. The entire prophetic Word has its climax in the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of His Kingdom; and furthermore, we know who this King is, (Luke 1:32 and 33). We also know that when Jesus Christ came to His own “His own received Him not;” in fact, He was rejected and the crucifixion was Israel’s emphatic declaration that they would not have this Man to reign over them.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, like His Lord, still carried on with the message of the Kingdom, addressing his words to “ye men of Judea,” “ye men of Israel,” “all the house of Israel,” (Acts 2:14, 22 and 36). Peter’s astounding declaration was this, that Jesus Christ who had been raised from the dead, had been raised to sit on David’s throne (Acts 2:30) and had been

exalted to be “a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel.” Acts 5:31. Let us not anticipate later revelation concerning Gentile salvation, and we shall better understand the Lord’s message to Israel and His Kingdom program.

Israel did not repent; therefore Christ did not return. The promised Kingdom was not restored and the restoration of all things was postponed. Surely students of the Word should know the difference between Acts 3 and Ephesians 3.

It is truly a pitiful fact that because the Church today does not understand its distinct calling, preachers and teachers are trying with every conceivable plan and program to bring in an earthly kingdom of blessedness that is God’s purpose for Israel. How different are the blessings of Matthew 10:5 to 8 and Ephesians 1:3. Would to God that Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 1:19 could be answered in us today.

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling.”

The Church today, not understanding the Lord’s distinct calling, which is “heavenly”, in ignorance seeks to realize the vocation of Israel which is earthly, claiming, though not realizing the promised Kingdom blessings.

While the Kingdom is in abeyance and “blindness is happened to Israel,” (Romans 11:25) God, “according to His eternal purpose”, is making known by Paul a “secret” of which he “was made a minister”; and to him was committed the “dispensation of the mystery” which fulfilled or made complete, the Word of God. Ephesians 3:11; Colossians 1:25.

“Even the mystery which hath been hid from the ages and from generations but now is made manifest to His saints.” Colossians 1:26.

Let us distinguish between the whole counsel of God and the eternal purpose of God in Christ.

None of the prophets knew this “mystery”. Neither did John the Baptist nor the twelve apostles. Not until the glorified Lord revealed it to Paul, was the wisdom of God made known, that before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4) God had purposed the making of a new thing, whose nature, calling and destiny would be “heavenly”. Compare II Timothy 1:9 with Ephesians 1:3; 1:19 to 22; Ephesians 2:5 to 7 and Ephesians 3:8 to 11:

Paul was the minister of this truth which completed the Word of God. This concerns the making of the “One New Man” (Ephesians 2:15). “The Church which is His Body and Christ Jesus our Lord its glorious Head, is a different message and purpose than the King and the Kingdom. Ephesians 1:22 and 23; Colossians 1:18.

One day the “Body” will be complete. Then the last member will be added and then the saints will realize “His inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:16 to 22). When that day shall come our heavenly hopes will be realized (Philippians 3:20 and 21; Titus 2:13) and “Head and Body” will be joined in glory. After that God will deal with Israel again, for their blindness is temporary. They have not been cast away forever. Romans 11:27.

The Epistle to the Ephesians has a distinct message for this age; in it is found truth concerning “the Church which is His Body”. This is “Body truth” as distinct from “Kingdom truth” which is God’s message concerning Israel and the two must not be confounded for each is unique in calling, character and destiny. The Body has its relation to the Kingdom of God and there certainly was, and shall be, grace in the Kingdom Gospel, but we must test things that differ. Philippians 1:10 (R.V.)

The Church which is His Body was chosen “before” the foundation of the world and Israel “since” the foundation of the world. The sphere of blessing for the Church is “In the

heavenlies” and is our present position “in Christ” for “we are, seated together with Him. . .” Israel’s inheritance is the land of promise and the hope of a Kingdom set up on earth. The Church which is His Body is not an adjustment or a development of anything “Jewish”. The Body of Christ is not a continuation of the kingdom of heaven. Neither is it Israel, either real or figurative. In the Body there is an equality of membership. In the Body there are Jews and Gentiles; but they lose their distinction, as such, for God is creating something absolutely NEW. “For to create in Himself of the two, “One New Man”. . . so making peace. . . . Ephesians 2:15.

In this dispensation “hearings”, “tongues” and other sign-gifts have ceased. These passed away with the setting aside of the people Israel (Acts 28:25 to 28) and connected with this distinct message, we are enjoined to keep the sevenfold unity, Ephesians 4:4 to 6. “There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism; One God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all and in you all.” It is a great blunder to have Israel set aside before Acts 28:25 to 28 or to confuse the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 with Israel’s water ceremony. Water could never add a sinner to Christ.

In II Timothy 1:12 and 14 Paul speaks of this sacred trust committed to him. It was then passed on to Timothy and subsequently “to faithful men who should be able to teach others also”. II Timothy 2:2. Let us qualify, if possible to carry on the deposit. It is to this appeal that we desire to respond and we seek grace to “make known the fellowship of the “Mystery” and to preach The unsearchable (untraceable) riches of Christ.

Will you suffer with Christ to carry on with God’s message for today? Denominationalists and even Fundamentalists will persecute and malign, and use carnal weapons. But let us remember the sufferings of Paul and obey II Timothy 1:8.

## **MUSSOLINI—ETHIOPIA—AND US**

Many of our Premillennial Bible teachers seem to think that the very best way to convince Christians of a contrary mind concerning the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is to point to the doings of Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and even Roosevelt. They try to persuade themselves and others that Russia, Germany, Britain, Japan and Italy are now fulfilling certain prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures. Of recent months, of course, they must add Ethiopia to their list. Present-day political happenings, they declare, are the last political happenings that are to occur before the Lord Jesus comes for the two-fold purpose of removing His Church from the earth and establishing His Kingdom on the earth.

Rather than discourage any saint of God who believes that the Lord Jesus is coming soon, we would encourage them to look for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the Great God our Saviour Jesus Christ. But we would like to know that the expectation is on Scriptural grounds and to know whether or not the time of the call of the Church to be with the Lord is to be determined by certain happenings among the nations of Europe, Asia and Africa. Of course, this leads us to ask whether or not every political movement in Europe, Asia and Africa during the past eighteen hundred years has been in fulfillment of some definite Old Testament prophecy. In other words, if Cromwell, Bonaparte and Kaiser Wilhelm were not fulfilling Old Testament Scriptures, why are Hitler, Mussolini and Roosevelt? Perhaps you have been amused at the vain attempts of some Bible teachers to find the United States in prophecy. Hundreds of the Premillenarians have named Mussolini as the Beast, or antichrist, of the Scriptures. This, of course, would mean that the great tribulation of prophecy must be on earth during his lifetime.

This, of course, would fix the date of the rapture of the Church and the end of this present age some time before Mr. Mussolini's "lake-of-fire" judgment with his fellow-beast, in accordance with the closing verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, if he is either the man of sin or the other beast.

For some reason many Christians and non-Christians like to hear the present-day Premillennial prophets speculate as to the fulfillment of Bible prophecies in the political unrest among nations, which is almost universal today. Of course, this has been going on for some years and most of the hearers seem to forget when the prognostications fail and wait for a later prophet and another change in the political situation. God's people are disturbed when preparations for war are going on and especially when war is declared. They wonder whether the particular war declared, and the nations involved, are mentioned in the Scriptures; and with some Bible teachers it seems to be no difficult task to fit all wars into prophecy.

Concerning probable war in Ethiopia, prophets are now on hand to show how this war is to be in fulfillment of some definite prophecy. You too can get the same concordance and look up the verses concerning Ethiopia. Just read the verses concerning Ethiopia which are found in the concordance and decide whether the impending conflict is foretold in the Bible. Psalms 68:13; Psalms 87:4; Isaiah 18:1; Isaiah 20:3 and 5; Isaiah 37:9; Isaiah 43:3; Isaiah 45:19; Ezekiel 29:10; Ezekiel 30:4 and 5 and 9; Ezekiel 38:5; Jeremiah 46:9, Daniel 11:43; Zephaniah 2:12.

Concerning Rome, nearly all real Bible students are agreed that there is to be a revival of the Roman Empire, according to the prophecy of Daniel. They find some facts concerning the ruler of revived Rome in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. But Mussolini may rise and, with David, he may go the way of all the earth; and still this would not upset real students of prophecy or in any way invalidate, or disprove, that which is stated concerning the future of Rome in God's sure word of prophecy.

God's spiritual program, during this present age, is not mentioned in the messages of the prophets who wrote concerning the political conditions that are to prevail during the last days. God's purpose today, concerning the Church which is Christ's Body, is not to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures. There is no mention of it prophetically. Colossians 1:26 and Ephesians 3:9. Neither the first day of the Body of Christ on earth, nor the last day, is mentioned by Israel's prophets. Therefore, the time when the Lord shall call the Church to glory is not to be determined by what Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini or the Emperor of Japan is doing, or is going to do. The "last days" of this dispensation of grace and the "last days" of the age or period to follow are not the same "last days".

Both politically and spiritually we are living in "the times of the Gentiles". "The times of the Gentiles" suggest that these are not "the times of Israel". Governmental authority on the earth, by God's covenants and oath, rightfully belongs to Israel. But temporarily it has been transferred to the Gentiles. "The times of the Gentiles" began with Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, about 600 B.C. and continued until Christ came and offered to bring Gentile authority to an end. Luke 1:67 to 77; Matthew 4:17; Acts 3:19 to 21. But Israel chose Caesar in preference to their own King and Messiah, whom they slew and hanged on a tree. They made a great mistake and the wrong choice, as is proved by the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Rome, about 70 A.D. Of course we can join with Paul and say: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out" (Romans 11:33). Because the God of all grace sent salvation to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy The Gentiles obtained mercy through Israel's unbelief (Romans 11:30), and individual Israelites, since that time, have been given the opportunity to become members of the



Body of Christ, as sinners saved by grace; and some, down through the Christian centuries, have taken advantage of this opportunity, have accepted the crucified and glorified Christ as Saviour and have been numbered with the Gentile believers, identified in the One New Man with the Lord Jesus, in death, burial and resurrection. This is still the day of pure and unadulterated grace. The door of salvation is still wide open for any kind of sinner.

But what happened to Jerusalem and Israel about 70 A.D. and the desolation of that city, and the scattered whereabouts of that people, has certainly fulfilled Luke 21:24, which we quote Luke 21:24:

“AND THEY SHALL FALL BY THE EDGE OF THE SWORD, AND SHALL BE LED AWAY CAPTIVE INTO ALL NATIONS; AND JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED.”

After God’s purpose for this age has been accomplished, then there shall be the fulfillment of Isaiah 62:2 and 4, concerning Jerusalem and Israel: “And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.” “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.”

World political conditions and movements will fulfill Scripture after this dispensation of the Body of Christ has come to an end. This period, dating from the setting aside of Israel, after the close of Acts and the destruction of Jerusalem to the calling on high of the Body of Christ, is designated “The Mystery”. This period, with its Divine administration, special hopes and calling, is parenthetical, temporary, and not in fulfillment of prophecy, but purposed in Christ before the foundation of the world. We quote:

Ephesians 3:1 to 3:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to youward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words.”)

Ephesians 3:8 and 9:

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Colossians 1:26 and 27:

“Even the mystery, which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

It will prove interesting and instructive to compare these last Scriptures quoted with the statement concerning the times of the Gentiles in Luke 21:24.

1. The dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles.
2. The unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles.
3. The dispensation of the mystery.
4. The mystery among the Gentiles.

What high and exalted privileges are extended toward the Gentiles while Israel and Jerusalem are fulfilling Luke 21:24.

Why should we carry our hearers back to Israel’s program and hope in a former dispensation or cover up God’s message of grace and the truth concerning the hope and calling of the Body of Christ, by over emphasizing God’s program in a coming dispensation? All Divine

truth should be proclaimed but our emphasis should be on God's present purpose. Read Ephesians 1:16 to 18; Ephesians 3:9 and II Timothy 2:2.

## **SAVED BY GRACE AND FALLING FROM GRACE**

The Greek word "Charis", in the New Testament Scriptures, is translated "Grace" 128 times. Another form of the same Greek word, "Charisma," is translated "Gift" 18 times. The word "Charis" is translated in the New Testament Scriptures, "Favour" six times. This same word is translated in II Corinthians 1:15, "Benefit"; in I Corinthians 16:3, "Liberality"; in I Peter 2:20, "Acceptable"; in Acts 25:9 and 24:27, "Pleasure". In Ephesians 1:6 the believer accepted (is "Graced") in the Beloved; the Greek verb is "Charitu".

The word "Grace" is not found in Matthew and Mark; only once in Luke; and only three times in John, all three occurrences in the first chapter. The word "Grace" is found 79 times in Paul's Epistles. Inasmuch as the word "Grace" is used 22 times in the Epistle to the Romans and the other form of the Greek word "Charisma" is used several times in that same Epistle, we surely are justified in calling Romans "the Grace Epistle". Moreover, we can truly say, that Paul was the Lord's "Grace" messenger, although it was Peter who called God, "the God of all Grace". I Peter 5:10.

Perhaps the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews; but we are not so much interested in the human author as we are in that message from God, in the ninth verse of the second chapter. "Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He by the Grace of God should taste death for every man.."

In that wonderful fifth chapter of Romans where we have the comparison and contrast between the first man, who brought sin and death, and the Second Man, who brought righteousness and life, the climax is reached in that blessed Divine truth: "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (superabound)." Romans 5:20.

Thus we learn that God's grace is altogether sufficient for man's sin and man's sins, yea, for the sins of the whole world, by and through the death of the Second Man. And by careful study of the fifth and sixth chapters of Romans the Lord would have us learn that His superabounding Grace, through Jesus Christ can save the believer not only from the wages of sin, but also from the dominion of sin.

Many have been the controversies between different groups of Christians as to "falling from grace". Whether this expression has been used, or "the perseverance of the saints," or "once saved, always saved," or "the eternal security of the believer," or "the apostatizing of the saint," or "losing salvation," the arguments generally have been on this question, "Can one continue in Grace and also continue in sin?" In the Epistle to the Romans ten times the writer said, "God forbid." The literal translation is better, "let it not be."

"Let it not be" that the believer shall continue in sin that Grace may abound. Romans 6:1 and 2. "Let it not be" that a believer shall sin because he is not under the law, but under Grace." Romans 6:15.

### **CONTINUING IN SIN—FALLING FROM GRACE—LOSING SALVATION**

But here we do not have the answer to the question, "Will a believer fall from Grace if he continue in sin?" Is there in the Word of God the answer to this question? Whom would you con-

sider the more miserable: the believer who insists that once in Grace always in Grace and yet continues in sin, or the believer, who, because he has continued in sin, has lost all hope, has given up in despair, and insists that he has fallen from Grace and lost his salvation. We will admit that both are miserable enough and perhaps should be. But what saith the Scriptures?

“FOR THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGETH SALVATION HATH APPEARED TO ALL MEN, TEACHING US THAT, DENYING UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLY LUSTS, WE SHOULD LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY AND GODLY IN THIS PRESENT WORLD; LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE, AND THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD, OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, THAT HE MIGHT REDEEM US FROM ALL INIQUITY, AND PURIFY UNTO HIMSELF A PECULIAR (acquired) PEOPLE, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS.” Titus 2:11 to 14.

Here we learn Christ’s purpose in giving Himself for us. “That He might redeem us from all iniquity.” “Purify unto Himself a peculiar people.” “Zealous of good works.” And we learn that the Grace of God that brought us this salvation through Christ, would teach us how to live. The sinner saved by Grace is to live a righteous and godly life, a life of good works. For such a life, God’s Grace is sufficient. Hear what God says about it

“And God is able to make all Grace abound toward us; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” II Corinthians, 9:8.

And for the believer’s infirmity and temptation God again speaks in the same Epistle: “My Grace is sufficient for thee.” II Corinthians 12:9.

Coupled with God’s Grace is God’s faithfulness; and again we have the promise: “God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” I Corinthians 10:13.

“In a message through another Apostle, the sinner saved by Grace has his word from God: “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” I John 2:1.

In the light of these Scriptures, and many others, we say emphatically “no” to Romans 6:1: “shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound?” And we say emphatically “no” to Romans 6:15: “shall we sin, because we are not under the law; but under Grace?”

## NO BELIEVER ALWAYS SINLESS ON EARTH

Certainly we do not want to limit the possibilities of the Grace of God in the life and for the life of any believer. And while we are unanimous in our statement that the Word of God clearly teaches that God’s Grace is sufficient for every trial, every temptation and every God-given task, and is sufficient to keep the believer from sinning, yet we are likewise unanimous in our decision that no believer always does what is right, and always refrains from doing What is wrong. The question arises: “are we unanimous in our assurance that the Grace of God delivers from condemnation every believer who fails to do right and is guilty of doing wrong?” Wrong-doing is sin. Failing to do right is sin. The wrong-doings and failures of some believers are far more numerous than those of other believers, and perhaps the sins of some believers are worse than those of others. But we are agreed that all believers do continue in sin to some extent; and perhaps we are further agreed that there is a difference in being overtaken in sin and wilfully committing a sin; and we know that if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, that there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” Hebrews 9:26. Thank God, there does remain forgiveness, for not one of us believes that God’s grace is not sufficient for His full

pardon, cleansing and forgiveness for believers who sin, whether the sin be willful or otherwise. According to the Word of God, every believer needs that constant cleansing and forgiveness, whether wilfully sinning or not.

### HOW MANY SINS THE LIMIT?

Now this question: “Where do we have in God’s message of Grace the statement, that if a believer sins, he will fall from Grace?” If the believer who sins does fall from Grace, and by thus falling, loses his salvation, which, in the beginning was by Grace, this further question: “How many sins, and just what kind of sins, must the believer commit in order to lose his salvation, or fall from Grace?” There must be a line over which the believer must step in order to lose his salvation. Who is sufficient, besides God, to fix that line; and where in His message of Grace has He fixed that line? Our verdict that some believer who is guilty of wrongdoing has fallen from Grace so far that he has fallen away from salvation, does not make it true. What saith the Scriptures?

### SCRIPTURAL FALLING FROM GRACE

“Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from Grace.” Galatians 5:4.

The believer who knows that he is saved by Grace, knows positively that he is not justified by the law; and therefore he is not fallen from Grace; and we must apply some Scripture other than this verse. For here we rather have the teaching that some of those who would condemn their erring brothers and would teach them how to keep from falling from Grace, by doing or refraining from doing, might themselves be guilty of falling from Grace by the preventive they are offering to others.

Salvation is not for sale. Every child of God should know this fact. Salvation can neither be purchased nor earned. No man born of woman deserves salvation or is worthy of saving. In God’s message of Grace no truth is more clearly taught than the fact that salvation is never because of man’s good works or religious endeavors. The believer is saved to do good works, UNTO good works, to be zealous of good works, to maintain good works. But never by, or on account of, or because of, good works. Hear the Word of God

“IF BY GRACE, THEN IT IS NO MORE OF WORKS.” Romans 11:6.

“NOW TO HIM THAT WORKETH IS THE REWARD NOT RECKONED OF GRACE . . . BUT TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT, BUT BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY, HIS FAITH IS COUNTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Romans 4:4 and 5.

“FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; NOT BY WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST.” Ephesians 2:8 and 9.

If salvation is the gift of God, what must the sinner do to obtain that gift? The answer is, “through faith.” Even the faith is God’s gift. It is by Grace. God gives salvation to, believing sinners, but not to working sinners. There is a difference with God between working sinners and working saints. And it is not for us to criticize or change God’s saving message of Grace because some one, who claims to be saved by Grace, is not denying ungodly lusts and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The believer’s inconsistent behaviour does not change the truth concerning God’s Grace message of salvation. It is the man who supplements the Grace of God with works as the means of salvation, who frustrates the Grace of God. Paul

said, “I do not frustrate the Grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law (religion), then Christ is dead in vain.” Galatians 2:21.

A sinner is saved wholly, solely, altogether without any “if” or “and”, by the Grace of God, by faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. This is true whether or not the believer does right or wrong. You may condemn your fellowman now and say that his life proves that he does not believe, because he does not live the Christian life. You may be right; you may be wrong. “Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” “Who is he that condemneth?” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” Now, remember, we are perfectly agreed that every sinner saved by the Grace of God, should appropriate, by faith, the superabounding Grace for a consistent life of godliness, and, as James has written, he should show his faith by his works; but it is unscriptural and untrue to say that any man can be saved by Grace—plus works. Works can never be the factor in salvation, but invariably the fruit; And there should be, in every believer’s life, the fruit. But the fruit does not save him. The Grace that saved him will enable him to bear fruit; but he is saved by Grace without fruit.

There is perhaps no clearer message of Grace in all the Word of God than Romans 3:24 and 25: “Being justified (declared righteous) without a cause by His Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.”

Who is the happy man mentioned in this bit of Good News: “Happy is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” Romans 4:8. If that happy man is the man who never does wrong, then there is no happy man. Justified without a cause. Justified . . . declared righteous? How? Without a cause.” That is pure Grace. And pure Grace is the sinner’s only hope. It is not man’s work; it is Christ’s work; the death, burial and resurrection of that Perfect Man who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. From first to last, salvation is of the Lord.

The believer who would endeavor to pay for righteousness or salvation, after he has been saved by the Grace of God, is little better than the religious person who would not receive salvation as the free gift of God, but prefers to work for it.

However Christians, genuine or counterfeit, may use or abuse God’s Grace, no matter if some may give up in despair because they feel they have fallen from Grace by continuing in sin, or if others claim that they cannot fall away from God’s Grace, if once saved, even if they do continue in sin, let us not be guilty of preaching another gospel, a message of Grace and religion mixed. Neither let us endeavor to mete out the judgment to those who are unwilling to be taught how to live by the Grace of God. Rather let us always preach to ourselves, as well as to others, that salvation first, last and all the time is by Grace and Grace alone and every man who is in that matchless Grace and trusting in the work and depending upon the worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ is SAVED, and should day by day manifest his life in Christ Jesus by a spiritual walk, a consistent Christ-like testimony.

## **THE CLOSE OF ACTS**

ISAIAH 6:9 AND 10

A Bible Message by T. Leonard Lewis

A few years before Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, captured the City of Samaria, the capital of the ten tribes of Israel, Isaiah was called and commissioned to go to Judah with a message for the people of Judah and Jerusalem. He was given a vision of Jehovah of hosts and when he had been called to his task, his commission was:

“GO AND TELL THIS PEOPLE, HEAR YE INDEED, BUT UNDERSTAND NOT; AND SEE YE INDEED, BUT PERCEIVE NOT. MAKE THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE FAT, AND MAKE THEIR EARS HEAVY, AND SHUT THEIR EYES; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND CONVERT AND BE HEALED.” Isaiah 6:9 and 10.

This was to be the burden of Isaiah’s message. Shortly thereafter Judah was given to see in the experience of the ten tribes of Israel just what would be their fate, if they continued to reject the Word of God. They did not heed this lesson, and about a hundred years later Judah suffered a terrible judgment. Jerusalem was besieged, the temple desecrated and destroyed and God’s people were carried away into captivity at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Thus was political independence taken away from the Jews and governmental authority was vested in the Gentiles. Thus began, politically, the “times of the Gentiles.”

When the fulness of time was come God sent forth His Son. When Jesus appeared He came to fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures. He said, “the time is fulfilled.” Mark 1:14 and 15. He followed John the Baptist whose call to the Jews was: “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3:2. Jesus likewise began with the same message: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17. The kingdom of the heavens that He announced as being at hand was the kingdom prophesied by Daniel when he said: “the God of heaven Shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” Daniel 2:44. When the Lord Jesus had been approved by God in the midst of Israel by miracles and wonders and signs, when by fulfilling Isaiah 35:5 and 6 Jesus had proved that He was indeed Israel’s King, He sent His twelve apostles out with the same message: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 10:7. With the message Jesus gave His apostles authority and power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out demons. But the leaders of the Jews would not have the Lord Jesus as King. They rejected the testimony of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus and His apostles. The Lord then very significantly quoted the passage with which we are dealing. Isaiah 6:9 and 10: “Therefore, speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith

“BY HEARING YE SHALL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YE SHALL SEE, AND SHALL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THIS PEOPLE’S HEART IS WAXED GROSS, AND THEIR EARS ARE DULL OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED; LEST AT ANY TIME THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND SHOULD BE CONVERTED, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM.” Matthew 13:13 to 15.

In the Gospel according to John we have the record, of Jesus’ seven great signs given to Israel to show them His Messiahship. He turned the water into wine, healed the nobleman’s son, raised up the man at the pool of Bethesda fed the five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes, walked on the water, opened the eyes of the blind man, and lastly, He raised Lazarus from the dead. When he had performed these mighty miracles the chief priests and Pharisees “took counsel together for to put Him to death”. John 11:54. We then hear Jesus, just before He went to the cross, quote again Isaiah 6:9 and 10:

“THEREFORE THEY COULD NOT BELIEVE, BECAUSE THAT ESAIAS SAID AGAIN, HE HATH BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HARDENED THEIR HEART; THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM.” John 12:39-40.

Again after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as we turn to the Book of Acts, we find the Lord giving the Jews another opportunity to receive the Messiah and the Kingdom. Acts 3:19 to 21. The Holy Spirit now gave witness to the Jews of a risen, glorified Messiah who was willing to return and fulfill the prophecies, if the Jews would accept Him. But they would not receive the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Acts 7:51; Acts 5:26 to 33. For thirty years we find the message of the Holy Spirit going forth first to the Jews (during the “Acts” period) and they everywhere refusing the testimony. Acts 13:46; Acts 18:6. Finally Paul reached Rome and called for the Jews first. Acts 28:17 to 28. To them he spake concerning Christ as the hope of Israel (verse 20) and expounded to them out of the law of Moses and the prophets the things concerning Jesus and the kingdom of God. (verse 23). When they were not agreed Paul quotes for the last time Isaiah 6:9 and 10.

Acts 28:26 and 27:

“SAYING, GO UNTO THIS PEOPLE, AND SAY, HEARING YE SHALL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YE SHALL SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE IS ‘WAXED GROSS, AND THEIR EARS ARE DULL OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES HAVE THEY CLOSED; LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND SHOULD BE CONVERTED, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM.”

Paul declared this to be the word of the Holy Spirit and then he added (verse 28): “Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it”.

The Book of Acts very significantly closed at this place and then in the Epistles written after the statement of Acts 28:28, we find Paul explaining the Mystery, hid from other ages, but now made known: the Mystery among the Gentiles “Christ in you the hope of glory”; the mystery concerning the believer’s identification with the risen Christ seated in the heavenlies.

When “the times of the Gentiles” were ushered in, after Isaiah’s first usage of our passage, governmental authority was taken from the Jew and given to the Gentile. When Paul finally quoted it in Acts 28:26 and 27, spiritual authority was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles. Soon thereafter the judgment fell and Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and the Jews were scattered abroad in fulfillment of Luke 21:24; Matthew 23:37 to 39. We do seriously blunder to teach that Israel was set aside with the death of Christ. God gave them years of grace in answer to the Lord’s prayer on the cross. Compare Luke 21:20 with Matthew 23:38 and Acts 28:25 to 28 and decide whether Israel’s desolation took place in 33 A.D. or after 63 A.D.

A word of warning might well be added by application to Christendom today. What happened to the Jew is about to happen to Christendom because they have closed their eyes and stopped their ears and hardened their hearts against the Word of God and judgment is about to fall upon an apostate church.

## **DO WE WRONGLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH?**

FROM AN OPEN LETTER OF OTIS Q. SELLERS TO DR. H. A. IRONSIDE

By Otis Q. Sellers

Your teaching that Israel fell and was set aside at the cross will not stand up under the Berean test. I admit that Israel's sin (and all sin) reached its climax at the cross. Never was Israel so sinful as when she crucified the Lord of Glory. Truly here was the time and place where sin abounded. You teach that here where "sin abounded" judgment came and Israel was set aside, God's word tells us that "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Therefore the dying Saviour prayed for their forgiveness and God answered this prayer and for thirty-three years after the cross Israel is given, as a nation, the opportunity to accept their crucified Messiah. If they will, God promises that He will be sent back to them. (Acts 3:19 and 20.)

I have searched carefully the Four Gospels and the Acts to see if there is any difference between Israel's position before the cross and Israel's position during the Acts period. I have found no difference. You cannot point out any based upon clear Scriptural statements. In fact, if there is any difference, Israel is more favored after the cross than before. You say Israel is set aside and desolate; but you are contradicted by the Word of God.

An unbiased examination of the Book of Acts will prove that Israel did not fall at the cross.

#### CONCERNING THE ACTUAL WORDS OF CHRIST

You say: "Where do we get the actual words of our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly in the Four Gospels. There are very few actual words of our Lord Jesus Christ scattered through out the rest of the New Testament. Of course there is a sense in which all the New Testament is from Him, but the Apostle is clearly referring here to the actual spoken words of our Saviour, which have been recorded for the benefit of the saints, and which set forth the teaching that is in accordance with godliness and piety."

You do err, my brother, concerning the actual words of Christ, for you have ignored some very plain statements of Scripture.

In Deuteronomy 18:18 and 19 we read:

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put MY WORDS IN HIS MOUTH; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken UNTO MY WORDS WHICH HE SHALL SPEAK in my name, I will require it of him."

When the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on earth, He verified this many times.

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

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

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49 and 50).

"THE WORD which ye hear IS NOT MINE but the Father's which sent me." (John 14:24).

Now you say that the Gospels are the actual words of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord Himself says, "The Word is not mine." Either the Lord or you are wrong. I have already formed an unalterable conclusion as to which one it is. In speaking of the words written in the Four Gospels you say as follows:



“If a man refuses these words, whether on the plea that they do not apply to our dispensation, or for any other reason, the Spirit of God declares it is an evidence of intellectual or spiritual pride.”

Is it not true that when you became pastor of the Moody Memorial Church you discontinued the public use of the Lord’s prayer on the ground that it is the Kingdom prayer, therefore not for this dispensation? And you did this in spite of the fact that you had what you call “the actual words of Christ” commanding you “When ye pray, say, our Father which art in Heaven, etc.

Of course I agree with you that these words do not apply to the present dispensation, but why say of such a view that God declares this is evidence of intellectual and spiritual pride when you practice things in accord with this view yourself?

### CONCERNING MARK 16:16 AND THE PRESENT DISPENSATION

I shall not deal with your contention that Mark 16:16 is a message for this age. In spite of what you say I do not think that you believe that it is. Your writings tell me the opposite. You do not preach to lost sinners and say “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” I know exactly what you believe. You believe that “He that believeth and is saved should be baptized,” which is not what the Word says in Mark 16:16. I shall here give a quotation from your book, “Only Two Religions,” page twenty-nine:

“Remember: penances; wrought-up repentance, consisting in peculiar frames, feelings, and renunciations; intellectual acquiescence to the truths of the Bible, miscalled faith; baptism whether administered by Mormon elder or ordained clergyman; laying on of hands, or any other human rite or divinely prescribed ceremony, will avail nothing for you.

“Christ, and Christ alone is your only salvation. Discarding all else, fly, then, to Him. ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ Acts 16:31.”

### CONCERNING MIRACLES IN ACTS

I am confident, Dr. Ironside, that you must have felt sure that most of your readers would just take your word for it and not check your statements with God’s word or else you would have been more careful about some of the things you so boldly state in your articles. For example, your statement concerning miracles in Acts.

“However, it is perfectly plain that the nearer we get to the close of the Acts, the less we have in the way of signs and wonders.”

Let anyone make a list of all signs, wonders and miracles in the Book of Acts and he will discover at once that such a statement is contradicted by Scripture.

Even a casual review of the last chapters will show there is no lessening of signs, wonders or miracles.

In Acts 16 we read of a marvelous vision, a demon cast out and a miraculous earthquake. Acts 18 tells us of another vision. Acts 19 gives us the record of men who spoke in tongues and prophesied. This is followed by the record of the most marvelous healing miracles recorded in Scripture. Acts 20 speaks of the young man who fell out of a window whose life was restored by Paul after the young man was taken up for dead

Acts 23 tells of the Lord standing by Paul and speaking to him and the experience is duplicated in Acts 27; only here it is an angel who stands by him and gives the message.

Then when we come to Acts 28 which closes the book we have a final great display of wonders and miracles. Paul is bitten by a serpent but shakes it off into the fire and feels no harm. The father of Publius was very sick and Paul went in to him and having prayed laid hands upon him and he was healed. And when this was done others also, which had diseases in the island, came and were healed.

Thus your statement is proven to be wrong by plain statements of Scripture.

But how different it is after we pass out of the “Acts” period and into the “dispensation of the mystery”. Instead of a fading out and gradual lessening of miracles we find an abrupt cessation. I freely admit that I do not have a thorough knowledge of all that has taken place on earth since the days of Paul’s imprisonment, but I do know what God’s word reveals about it and His word reveals an abrupt cessation of miracles.

In Acts 19:12 we find that they brought from the Body of Paul aprons and handkerchiefs unto the sick and the diseases departed from them. In Acts 28:9 those who had diseases on the Isle of Melita were healed by Paul. Two years after this event Paul writes to his beloved son Timothy and tells him to take a little wine for his frequent infirmities (I Timothy 5:23.) The words translated sick, diseases, infirmities, is the same Greek word which shows that Paul was dealing with the same thing in all three cases. If this is the same dispensation as that of Acts, why did he not send Timothy a kerchief or at least promise him healing as soon as they came together again?

Why was Trophimus left at Miletum sick if Paul can still heal as he did in the “Acts” period? Certainly we must acknowledge that a new dispensation began with Acts 28:28 and miracles, signs and wonders ceased when Israel was set aside.

God does not require me to have a superb knowledge of church history or to explain all the supernatural things which have happened in heathen lands, at Roman Catholic shrines and among faith healers and Christian Scientists in our own land, but He does require me to believe and be guided by the record he has given. Therefore I wish to flatly contradict the statement you made at the close of your second paper, “It is not true that a definite limit is placed in Scripture upon the manifestation of sign gifts and that such gifts have never appeared since the apostles.”

I say it IS true that a definite limit is placed in Scripture upon the manifestation of sign gifts and such gifts never appear in Scripture after Acts 28:28.

## **GLEANINGS FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS**

### **Lesson Two**

As we begin the study of Chapter Two of the Book of Acts we emphasize several facts mentioned in this chapter. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come”; “There were devout men, Jews from every nation under heaven.” “Ye men of Israel, . . . Jesus of Nazareth was approved of God in your midst by miracles.” “This is that (concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit) which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” “In fulfillment of Scripture (by David) Christ was raised from the dead to take David’s throne.” “Let all the house of Israel know that God hath made this same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ.” “Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

By careful study of the first eight chapters of Acts we shall observe that as Jesus Christ was a servant of the circumcision during the days of His ministry on earth, sent only to the lost

sheep of the house of Israel, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, it is also to the lost sheep of the house of Israel that Peter and the Eleven proclaim the message of the resurrected Christ in those eight chapters. Romans 15:8; Galatians 4:4; Matthew 15:24; Acts 11:19. To Israel, in the temple at Jerusalem and in every house, they daily preached Jesus Christ. Acts 5:42. The Jews from every nation under heaven represented all the house of Israel. Those guilty of the rejection and crucifixion of Christ are referred to, in I Thessalonians 2:14, as “the Jews”, and in Acts 4:27 and Acts 5:26 to 32, “all Israel”. This is in agreement with the prophecy of Isaiah

Isaiah 8:14:

“AND HE SHALL BE FOR A SANCTUARY; BUT FOR A STONE OF STUMBLING AND FOR A ROCK OF OFFENCE TO BOTH THE HOUSES OF ISRAEL. FOR A GIN AND FOR A SNARE TO THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM.”

As we take up the study of the second chapter of Acts let us bear in mind that the Twelve Apostles were wholly ignorant concerning the revelation that the risen Lord afterward gave for the Gentiles, through the Apostle Paul, concerning the Gospel of the Grace of God and that truth concerning the Body of Christ designated in Paul’s closing Epistles, as “the Mystery “which was not made known to the sons of men in other ages, but rather hid in the mind of God. On the contrary we should have our minds saturated with the Old Testament Scriptures, especially the many prophecies concerning Israel’s kingdom and the confirmation ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, who was indeed a man in the midst of Israel, approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs. Acts 2:22.

It would be well to read about the Vine out of Egypt, mentioned in Psalms, 80:8 to 12 and the Vineyard of Jehovah mentioned in Isaiah 5:1 to 7. If we read these Scriptures concerning the Vine and the Vineyard together with the Parable of the Vineyard in Matthew 21:33 to 46, it will help us to understand the place of Israel in the Book of Acts and the ministry that the risen Lord gave to the twelve apostles for that Nation. And it will help us much to read carefully Galatians 2:7 to 9, which we quote.

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

“(For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

“And when James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”

If God’s Word plainly states that the Twelve were the Lord’s chosen messengers to Israel and that Paul was His chosen apostle to the Gentiles, let us bow to the authority of the Word.

## PETER AND THE ELEVEN

After the first chapter of Acts seven of the twelve apostles are never mentioned by name; only included in “Peter with the Eleven”. The death of James, the brother of John, is mentioned in Acts 12:2. John is mentioned in his ministry with Peter. And James, the Lord’s brother, is mentioned several times. That James, with Peter and John, seemed to be pillars of the church. Peter is mentioned fifty-seven times in the first half of the Book of Acts. His name disappears from that record about 45 A.D. Aside from Paul’s words in Galatians 2:7 to 14 the last mention of Peter is recorded in Acts 15:7, until he wrote his two epistles. In the last half of the Book of

Acts Paul is mentioned more than 100 times and all other disciples are mentioned in connection with Paul's ministry, from Acts 16 to 28.

According to the Acts record, none of the Twelve preached outside of the land of the Jews, though both James and Peter afterwards wrote to the dispersion, or the twelve tribes scattered abroad. James 1:1 and I Peter 1:1 and 2.

According to the same Record, none of the Twelve preached the gospel of the uncircumcision. Only one message was preached by one of them to the uncircumcision, and that was the "word" which God sent to Israel. Acts 10:35 and 36. That one message was preached to the household of a Gentile, who feared God, who loved Israel, who prayed to God always and who gave much alms to Israel. He was a just, devout man. Acts 10:1 and 2 and Acts 10:22.

Concerning the Book of Acts, Sir Robert Anderson, one of God's most gifted Bible teachers, declares, in his "Silence of God": "My contention is that the Acts, as a whole is the record of a temporary and transitional dispensation in which blessing was again offered to the Jew and again rejected." "The right understanding of the Acts of the Apostles . . . a Book which is primarily the record, not as commonly supposed, of the founding of the Christian Church, but of the apostasy of the favoured nation."

Let us not consider this learned brother as final authority, or his exegesis as infallible, neither let us be prejudiced by the teaching of any other so-called "big" Bible teachers who insist that the day of Pentecost ushered in the "dispensation of the mystery" mentioned in Ephesians 3:9, but let us receive their testimonies and search the Scriptures daily. It is rather difficult to believe that the "dispensation of the mystery", with reference to the untraceable riches of Christ among the Gentiles, began on a Jewish feast day before the Apostle to the Gentiles was converted and commissioned, even seven years before Peter was authorized, by the "sheet of unclean creatures", to preach the gospel of the circumcision to one respectable God-fearing Gentile, who apparently was an uncircumcised proselyte.

As the Law was committed unto Moses for Israel, so was the Mystery for the Gentiles that deposit which was committed to Paul's trust. It would be just as intelligent and Scriptural to believe that the Law was committed to Israel first and Moses chosen afterward, as to believe that the Mystery among the Gentiles was revealed before the Apostle to the Gentiles was chosen and commissioned.

The Law dispensation was temporary and parenthetical. Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 8:11 to 13. So also is the Dispensation of the Mystery. Ephesians 3:1 to 11; Ephesians 4:9 to 12; Colossians 1:24 to 28. There was an overlapping of the Law dispensation into the "Acts" period, during which period even Paul was authorized to become as one under the Law to those who were under the Law, while God's order was "to the Jew first." I Corinthians 9:20; Acts 13:46. This ceased with the revelation or the proclamation of the Dispensation of the Mystery.

This period of Divine Gentile favor will come suddenly to an end whether or not we can be certain that its beginning was sudden or gradual. With its close "the times of the Gentiles" will be fulfilled. Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25 and 26. At that time the gospel of the kingdom shall again be proclaimed and the kingdom shall be restored to Israel and David's throne will be occupied by Wonderful, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 and 7. Matthew 24:11 to 24.

## ISRAEL'S JUDGMENT

Read carefully the Parable of the Vineyard, Matthew 21:33 to 45, to which we have referred. We quote Matthew 21:38 to 41.

“But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him. When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?”

“They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him their fruits in their seasons.”

Judging from these words of Israel’s Messiah and His Words of Matthew 23:38, certainly we would anticipate the desolation and almost complete annihilation of Israel with the death of Christ. But that awful judgment was postponed for some years.

Matthew 23:38 and 39:

“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

But we should study these pronouncements in the light of Matthew 22:7 and Luke 21:20, which we also quote.

Matthew 22:7:

“But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city”

Luke 21:20:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies. then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.”

And all of these statements of the Lord Jesus should be carefully studied in the light of what actually took place during the 37 years following the rejection, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, until the destruction of Jerusalem about 70 A.D.

About 25 years after the day of Pentecost was fully come, Paul hasted to reach Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Acts 20:16. Most assuredly if Israel was celebrating their Pentecost in their temple at Jerusalem, in 58 A.D., preserved and protected by God under the covenants He had made with Israel, and if that nation was dwelling in their land and worshipping in their temple, enjoying the favor of the Roman government, God did not fulfill Matthew 22:7 and Luke 21:20 during the “Acts” period and did not begin that awful judgment until after Paul’s declaration of Acts 28:25 to 28. In that declaration Paul quoted God’s judgment pronounced by Isaiah. Isaiah 6:9 to 12.

## CHRIST—ISRAEL—GENTILES

Let us observe some facts concerning the Lord’s message to Israel during the years of Christ’s earthly ministry and during the years covered by the Book of Acts.

1. John the Baptist was to turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord. Luke 1:16; Luke 1:80; Acts 13:24.

2. John the Baptist baptized with water that Christ might be manifest to Israel. John 1:31.

3. God sent Christ to Israel; raised up a Saviour for Israel. Acts 5:30; Acts 13:23.

4. God sent His Son, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Galatians 4:4.

5. Christ was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matthew 15:24.

6. Christ was sent to redeem Israel from Gentile government, dominion and authority, in fulfillment of covenants made with Abraham and David, according to promises made by all of Israel’s prophets since the world began. Luke 1:67 to 80.

7. Christ was born to occupy the throne of David and reign over the house of Israel for ever. Luke 1:31 to 34.

8. Israel's house is to be desolate until they shall say: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matthew 23:39.

9. Christ on the cross prayed to the Father for Israel: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". Luke 23:34.

10. God offered to send Christ back from heaven, if Israel would repent. Acts 3:19 to 21.

11. God raised Christ from the dead to sit on the throne of David. Acts 2:28 to 33.

12. God raised Christ from the dead to give Israel the sure mercies of David. Acts 13:32 to 34.

13. God exalted the resurrected Christ to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:30 to 32.

14. As Israel rejected the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth, Israel likewise rejected the Holy Spirit's witness that the Son of Man was standing in heaven. Acts 7:51 and 52.

15. Israel's continued rejection of the witness of the Holy Spirit was the unpardonable sin of Matthew 12:31 to 34. Read Acts 13:46; Acts 18:6 And Romans 11:7 to 32.

16. Seven or eight years after the death of Christ repentance unto life was granted unto the Gentiles. Acts 11:18. This by the mouth of Peter. Acts 15:7.

17. Several years still later the door of faith was opened to the Gentiles by Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27; Romans 11:13; Romans 15:16; I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 1:11; Ephesians 3:1 and 3:8; and Colossians 1:24 to 28.

18. Salvation was being sent to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. Romans 11:11. Gentiles obtained mercy through Israel's unbelief. Romans 11:30.

19. With the close of Acts the Nation Israel was set aside and God then declared (about 63 A.D.) "salvation is sent unto the Gentiles" Acts 28:28. Salvation sent unto the Gentiles after the "Acts" period was independent of Israel's covenants and blessings.

20. It was after the "Acts" period that the Apostle Paul declared himself the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ, entrusted with the unsearchable riches of Christ for the Gentiles, the custodian of the "Mystery" among the Gentiles. To him for the Gentiles was committed the dispensation of the grace of God; to make all see the dispensation of the Mystery. Ephesians 3:1 to 11; Colossians 1:24 to 28.

## THE DAY OF PENTECOST

The regular annual feasts of Jehovah are set in order in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. The feast of Pentecost was set fifty days after the feast of first fruits. The day of Pentecost was fifty days after the resurrection of Christ, fifty days after He became the first fruits of them that slept.

The Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ went back to heaven, in fulfillment of the Lord's own words and in fulfillment of the words of Israel's prophets. So we should know that the two great events mentioned on the day of Pentecost in God's message to Israel, by the mouth of Peter, were, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled; namely the ascension of Jesus, the Son of God, and the advent of the Holy Spirit.

Concerning these two great happenings Peter quoted Joel and David. Both of these prophecies pertained to Israel and Israel's kingdom. Neither Joel nor David had any revelation or information concerning the Church which is Christ's Body, nor any light upon this parenthetical

age of Divine Gentile favor. Neither did any other prophet, priest or king. This period and program of the Body of Christ, designated after the "Acts" period as the Mystery, was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world but was not prophesied by all the prophets since the foundation of the world, as was Israel's kingdom. We do greatly err when we confuse the fact, the hope, the calling, the people and the promises of the Messianic kingdom and David's throne guaranteed to Israel and Gentiles with all that God purposed in Christ Jesus, concerning the Head and members of the Body before the world began. Ephesians 1:3 and 4; II Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 3:11; Titus 1:2.

God's purpose and program, declared in the second chapter of Acts, was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. God's purpose and program of Ephesians, Colossians and II Timothy fulfilled no Scriptures, for all prophets were silent concerning those truths which were hid in God. Ephesians 3:6 to 9. Colossians 1:24 to 28. This should teach us to obey Philippians 1:10, "distinguish things that differ?" (R.V.) The Church, which is Christ's Body was not the subject of prophecy. Several thousand Israelites, on the day of Pentecost, were added to the Church of God. Let us be careful, intelligent, and spiritual in the matter of separating in the ministries of Peter and Paul, that which was promised by the prophets and that which was unknown to the sons of men in other ages. Prophesied truths are generally identified with covenants. Who are Israelites? To whom pertaineth covenants?

### THE KINGDOM REPENTANCE MESSAGE

Then we compare the message of Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" with the repentance and covenant messages of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth, on the one hand, and the grace message of the second chapter of Ephesians, revealed by the risen Lord through Paul, and truly we have a contrast, things that differ. No grace messenger of today has Divine authority to preach to any one that God-given message of Acts 2:38 any more than he has to impose upon members of the Body of Christ the Kingdom program and message of Matthew 10:5 to 8 or Mark 16:14 to 18.

A comparison of the Third Gospel, written by Luke, with the Acts, written by the same Luke, will prove both interesting and profitable. Luke's Gospel closes with the statement that it behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead. These were the words of the Lord Jesus after He had said to two of His disciples, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written; Ought not Christ to have suffered and entered into His glory?"

In Acts 2:23 we are told that Christ was delivered according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

This causes us to ask the question, "how could Christ have offered in good faith, the kingdom to Israel before His death and resurrection, if His death was foreknown, foreordained, and foretold and therefore inevitable at a set time. He had said "For this cause came I unto this hour." John 12:27 to 31.

According to prophecy, the glory of Christ was to follow His sufferings; therefore it would seem that the kingdom should have been offered to Israel after the Son of man had fulfilled the Scriptures concerning His death and resurrection rather than before "they had fulfilled all that was written of Him and put Him in the sepulchre," Acts 13:37 to 31. And another question we might well ask is concerning the prophecy of Joel and Israel's Messianic kingdom. Could that kingdom have been established without the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the other promises mentioned in the second

chapter of Joel? According to the words of the Lord Jesus, His death and ascension were necessary before the Holy Spirit could come. John 16:7 to 9; John 7:39.

In closing let us suggest that we diligently search the Scriptures and carefully consider this question lest we thoughtlessly or hastily answer this question; “what new Divine movement began on the day of Pentecost?” Was it the birthday of the Church which is His Body? Was it the beginning of the dispensation of the grace of God, mentioned in Ephesians 3:1 and 2? Was it the beginning of the dispensation of the mystery? Ephesians 3:9. Was it the beginning of a new Jewish or Israelitish church or the continuation of the same church under a new covenant? Just what began on the day of Pentecost?

## **TWENTY YEARS IN THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT**

BY THOS. W. WELLARD

In the summer of 1910 I was engaged in mission work. I was in charge of the Sunshine Mission in Dundee, Scotland. We were very happy in our work for souls were being saved and the workers enjoying a blessed fellowship. We fought not over doctrinal differences but laboured together for the salvation of precious souls.

About that time the “tongues movement” started in our city. It was then that I was told unless I received “the baptism” and “spoke with tongues”, I would not be raptured when the Lord returned for His Body.

Finally I made arrangements with the pastor of that Pentecostal assembly to attend one of the tarrying meetings. I had heard of all the wonderful things that were being done and the spiritual manifestations. Therefore, I went there with the expectation of receiving some real spiritual blessings.

On the night I attended the church, with a friend, it was only twenty-five minutes after I arrived that I received, what they termed, my “baptism”, I came through, speaking in “another tongue”.

I really had an experience; but to me it seemed that at times I was floating about on air. Several times I went off into a trance and they told me that I was “under the power”. I was. But not under Divine power. It was quite a different power. It was not long until I had many misgivings regarding the manifestations. I felt sure the experience was not scriptural but was afraid to say it was not of God, for fear that I would be found speaking against the Holy Spirit. Thousands today are being held in the unscriptural movement by this fear. So I went on in the Pentecostal movement, ministering for twelve years as a Pentecostal preacher in Canada and the United States. Many times, when alone, I felt convicted and longed to be delivered from Pentecostalism. I began to read articles against the movement, written by many of the leading Bible teachers. And I would go to hear some noted preacher speak, but he would condemn and criticize and would offer no sound scriptural corrective. I wanted scriptural proof of our delusion but received none. They were able to prove that some of the leaders in the movement did not live up to their testimony. But I know that could be proved concerning the leaders in other movements. Because I became thoroughly disgusted with some of the things that I had witnessed I felt led to resign from the movement. May I say that I found some of the finest people of God speaking in “tongues”. But I was sure that the Spirit of God would not cause people to behave as many of them did who were supposed to be under the power. The Spirit surely was not responsible for such utterances and such confusion. Even separated from the Conference, I continued as pastor



in a Pentecostal Church, looking for light. One day I was called to visit a very sick man. I took with me my anointing oil, expecting that I would be asked to pray for him, according to James 5:14. But he never asked me. That was the beginning of many wonderful hours of prayer with that saint of God. He asked me to wait and have lunch with him, so that I could get a message over the air he wanted very much I should hear. I waited. For the first time I heard Pastor J. C. O'Hair give one of his messages. That day he was speaking on the Epistle to the Galatians. I listened attentively, and for the first time I heard the message that was the means of my deliverance from the Pentecostal delusion. I shall never forget those verses,—Galatians 2:7 to 9: “But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles”).

I had never noticed these words in Galatians. I thought he was reading from another Bible. If what that man is saying is true I am preaching “another gospel”. Oh, that all Pentecostals, as well as others who claim to be Fundamentalists, would only diligently and prayerfully read and understand Galatians 2:7 to 9. On returning home I took up my Bible; I looked up the passages and saw them in my own Bible. The light came to my soul. I was delivered. I studied the wonderful message of grace. I saw that I had been preaching the gospel of the kingdom. What a mixture I was giving out and expecting signs to follow. What deliverance, what blessed joy to be able to rightly divide the Word of truth and to preach the Unsearchable Riches of Christ, and the glorious message of redemption unfettered by Israel's religion or Christendom's traditions. There is only one cure for all such movements; and that is to “study to show thyself approved of God, rightly dividing the Word of truth”.

Our present-day program is neither the kingdom program of Matthew 10:5 to 8 nor that of Mark 16:14 to 18. Neither is it the program of Peter and the Eleven, in the Book of Acts. They were ministers of the circumcision, with the gospel of the circumcision. Our message is from Christ through Paul.