

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

OTIS Q. SELLERS, Editor, SEPTEMBER, 1936

Vol. I, No. 4

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## *ARE YOU LOST OR SAVED*

The writer is saved and very thankful because of it. Once I was a lost sinner, now by the grace of God I am a saved sinner. Once I was without hope, now I have a positive hope of being manifested with Jesus Christ in glory. There is a real personal relationship existing between this sinner and the Lord Jesus Christ. Seventeen years ago I was a sinner needing to be saved. Jesus Christ was a Savior who desired to save sinners. The combination was perfect, so we entered into partnership. He became my Savior, I became His sinner, and now through these years I have been a sinner saved by grace. I have a wife and this fact makes me a husband; I have a daughter and this fact makes me a father; I have a Savior and this fact makes me saved. Just because I have a Savior I am saved. He belongs to me, and I belong to Him. He is my Savior and I am His sinner. I have never tried to exchange places with Him. I am proud to own Him as my Savior; He is not ashamed to claim me as His sinner. He has proven to be a good, capable and all-sufficient Savior. At one time my sins stood between me and the Lord Jesus Christ; now the Lord Jesus Christ stands between me and my sins. What a Savior!

"He did not come to judge the world,  
He did not come to blame;  
He did not only come to seek

It was to save He came:  
And when we call Him Savior  
We call Him by His name."

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## ***NOTES ON I CORINTHIANS - INTRODUCTORY*** **NOTES**

To know the exact year in which 1 Corinthians was written is not of major importance; although, we believe, that the year can be definitely established. To know the time or period (dispensation) in which it was written, is of major importance and this can be established from internal evidence. In 1 Corinthians 16:5-8, Paul tells the Corinthians that he will come to them when he passes through Macedonia. He states that he will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. This sets the time of writing as being at the close of Paul's three year residence in Ephesus, just before his departure for Macedonia. Acts 19 tells of Paul being in Ephesus, and Acts 20 tells of his departure into Macedonia. It would be well for the student to mark in his Bible at the beginning of Acts 20; "1 Corinthians written."

Thus, 1 Corinthians was written during the Acts period; under the Pentecostal administration. It belongs to that group of epistles. written **before** the dispensational boundary of Acts 28:28, and takes its proper place with 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Romans. If we would understand this epistle these facts must be kept continually in mind. **1 Corinthians gets its character from the "Acts administration," and not from the "administration of the Mystery."**

Sir Robert Anderson has said, "We must needs recognize the intensely Jewish character of the Pentecostal dispensation." And again, referring to the book of Acts, he says, "To the Jew first is stamped upon every page of this book." Now, the book of Acts does not have one character, and 1 Corinthians a character which is entirely different. The same divine administration which dominates the book of Acts will also be found to dominate 1 Corinthians. In Acts we read of tongues, signs, miracles, miraculous gifts, healings, death judgments, feasts and baptisms; and in 1 Corinthians we find the same things. This shows the complete identification of this epistle with the administration that was in force during the book of Acts."

The writer hesitates to make statements, without furnishing at once the detailed proof. However, in this case we desire to make certain statements concerning the time in which 1 Corinthians was written, and we will furnish the detailed proof as we expound the book:

### **1 Corinthians was written:**

1. In the Acts period, when the gospel of the crucified and risen Messiah was being preached to all Israel, and mercy being held out to them. A remnant was believing and being called out to form the Israel of God. Rom. 10:21, Rom. 11:5, Gal. 6:16.
2. While Israel was still in her God - given place of privilege and priority,. Israel had

privileges and promises which raised them above the balance of mankind. This was just as true during the Acts period, as it was during the Old Testament. Rom. 3:1-2, Rom. 9:4-5.

3. When there were two distinct bodies of believers and a distinct walk was given for each body. These two bodies were called, ".Jews which believe"; and, ".Gentiles which believe." The Jews which believed were also called ".the Israel of God." These two bodies were ".one body" because all had been baptized in one Spirit. Acts 21:20-25. 1 Cor. 7:17-24, 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 6:16.

4. At a time when a Jew believed and remained a Jew. Today, the Jew is an unbeliever. The moment he believes he ceases to be a Jew and in the sight of God is denationalized. This was not true in the Acts period. Then, a Jew believed and remained a Jew. See Acts 21:39; 22:3; Rom. 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:22. Paul boasted in these things during the Acts period. When he wrote Philippians, he was counting them as refuse. Phil. 3:4-9.

5. When God was confirming the preaching of the gospel by signs following Mark 16:15-20, Heb. 2:3-4, 1 Cor. 1:6-7.

6. When the Gospel was to the Jew first, and the Gentile was blessed with Israel's spiritual things. Rom. 1:16, Rom. 15:27.

7. When the Tribulation was at hand, before it had been postponed by the revelation and bringing in of the dispensation of the Mystery. 1 Cor. 7:29.

8. Before the revelation of the Mystery. Read Acts 26:22. These words were spoken after 1 Corinthians was written.

### **Paul at Corinth**

The student of the Corinthian epistles should be very familiar with the account of Paul's ministry in Corinth. This is found in **Acts 18:1-17**. Here we discover that when Paul came to Corinth he found ".a certain Jew" and his wife, Aquila and Priscilla by name. These were ".Jews which believed," and Paul being such a one himself, found a place to lodge with them. Wherever Paul went it was his custom to go to the synagogue on the sabbath day (Acts 17:2), and this he did in Corinth. He reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath and sought to persuade the Jews and the Greeks. We are not told what he preached to this mixed group, but we are told that when Silas and Timothy arrived in Macedonia, Paul was pressed by the Word and began to bear full witness to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. Upon hearing this, the Jews began to oppose and blaspheme, and Paul turned to the Gentiles. This action seemed to get more results than the preaching, for we read, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." Acts 18:8

These Corinthians which believed were not necessarily Gentiles. Corinth was a city and not a nation, and the word Corinthian does not describe nationality, but a resident of Corinth. Corinth had a large Jewish population. Paul remained in Corinth for over one

and one-half years and during this time, Sosthenes, who was probably the successor to Crispus", believed. It was to those who believed in Corinth that the two Corinthian epistles were written. In a later article we shall prove that these were overwhelmingly "Jews which believed."

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## ***IS IT PROPHECY OR POLITICS ?***

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is admonished to "hold fast the faithful word" (Titus 1:9). We must ever be awake to the fact, that evil forces are always at work, to take from us by stealth that which we have in the written Word of God. We cannot be too careful or too alert in this matter. These evil forces work subtly and many good and sincere men are ignorantly aiding them.

The late William Jennings Bryan once said, that we do not need to fear the man who comes in while we are reading, blows out the lamp and plunges us into darkness. We would recognize him at once as an enemy who was bent upon destroying our light. However, we do need to fear the man who comes in to us, posing as a friend, telling us that the light is too bright, turning it down; saying it is too close, moving it farther and farther away until it becomes a vanishing speck in the distance.

We have been watching for several years certain movements and tendencies which are stealing the Word away from those whose responsibility is to hold it fast. The minds and hearts of the people are being turned from the Word of God to the daily newspaper. These things, we have judged to be "the unfruitful works of darkness". We can have no fellowship with them and feel it is our duty to reprove them. We accept, without qualification, that it is our ministry to preach the Word and also to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Several weeks ago in the city of Chicago we passed by a certain well known liberal church. We noticed on the bulletin board that the subject for the next Sunday morning was to be, "Roosevelt, Landon and Lemke." Of course, this is to be expected in such churches where the so-called social gospel is preached. They call it a message on "civic righteousness" but we are sure that all our readers would brand and condemn this as being just "politics in the pulpit."

When we returned to Grand Rapids, we noticed on the church page of the Saturday paper, that in a certain well known fundamental and pre-millennial church, that the subject to be discussed by a special speaker was, "Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin." Of course such subjects have become common in fundamentalist churches. They call it a message on prophecy and the listeners have been tricked into believing that it is just that. However, a close examination will prove that it is just "politics in the pulpit."

Maybe some one from among our readers can explain to us why a message on "Roosevelt, Landon and Lemke" is "politics in the pulpit," but a message on "Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin" is not politics but prophecy. What difference does it make whether these men are on this side of the Atlantic or the other?

## Are Dictators A Sign

Someone may explain by saying, "But these men are Dictators, and Dictators are a sign of the times." We have heard this so much that we becoming wearied with it. Our answer is that Dictators are said to be signs by those who are preaching on Dictators, but there is not one syllable of Bible authority for any such statement. The true Biblical sign would be KINGS and not Dictators. The Word of God discloses that King's will be very much in evidence at the time of the end.

Daniel says, "**And in the days of these KINGS (not Dictators) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.**" (Dan. 2:44). Again he says, "**And the ten horns out of this kingdom are TEN KINGS THAT SHALL ARISE: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.**" Dan. 7:24.

God's Word cannot be broken and it will all come to pass just as He has said. So in the time of the end, the leading parts in that great drama of "the day of the Lord," will be played by Kings and not by Dictators. So before the conclusion of this age the world will see a resurgence of Kings.

These present Dictators are not the subject of prophecy and have no place in a true prophetic message. The word "King" has a definite meaning and that meaning is established by its use in the Word of God. The Dictators are not Kings. So we must designate all present day preaching on present day Dictators as "politics." The editor of the Word of Truth has never meddled into politics at home and does not intend to meddle into politics abroad. By such things believers are being robbed of their portion of the Word of God. Let us all, who minister publicly, resolve anew to give those who are listening to us, that which we find in the Word of God and not that which we find in the newspapers. Let us turn the interests and affections of our hearers toward those things which are above, and away from things which are on the earth. May the people see that we have delved into the pure water of the Word, rather than the putrid polluted sewer of the average daily newspaper.

## Spain

At the time this is being written the papers are filled with news concerning the revolution in Spain. News so, confused, colored and inaccurate that the papers confess that little is known about the situation. You will notice that when any thing reaches the headlines It soon after reaches the pulpits. This has been true of the civil chaos in Spain. Several weeks ago, the newspaper carried the advertisement of a fundamentalist church, announcing the sermon subject as, "Spain in the Light of Prophecy:" One week later a liberal pastor of a modernistic church was advertised to speak on "Spain-Can it Happen Here?" The first was represented to be a message on prophecy; the second made no such claim and was listed as a "Labor Day Message." The facts in the case are that neither was obeying the command to, "preach the Word," both were speaking on Spain, both were dealing with earthly things. However, honor should be given where honor is due, and the liberal pastor deserves credit for not attempting to cover up his political message with a thin veneer of the sacred Word.

## Ethiopia

Some months ago, Italy began her campaign against Ethiopia, and news of the Italian-Ethiopian war began to fill the papers. Inasmuch as Ethiopia is mentioned in the Bible, certain preachers felt led to take advantage of the public interest and give messages on the subject. Most of them seemed to be like Peter for they "wist not what to say" about Ethiopia. Many ridiculous things were said by men who should have known better. The fact that the Ethiopian emperor had decreed a week of prayer was presented as a fulfillment of Psalm 58:31. As Italy pushed her way through Ethiopia and swallowed up the Ethiopian kingdom, the matter was dropped from the papers and just as quickly dropped from the pulpits.

Now, why did not these preachers who have so much to say about prophecy being fulfilled under our eyes, go on to preach on this subject and admit that the outcome of the Ethiopian fracas was not according to prophecy? For, according to Scripture, Ethiopia as a nation, will for a time be in league with the Antichrist. Ethiopia as a nation will be a part of that unholy alliance of nations described by Ezekiel. The land of Israel will be invaded by "Gog, the chief prince of Meshec, and Tubal" and allied with them will be the nations of Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. (See Ezek. 38:1-5). So, before the end time Ethiopia must throw off the Italian Yoke and become an independent nation again. However, even though Ethiopia will be part of this evil confederacy, yet in the end Ethiopia will be converted and is set forth as one of the nations that will submit to the reign of the King of Kings. (See Psalm 68:31-32).

## Our Hope

For a number of years men have been interpreting the Bible in the light of a certain system of prophetic interpretation. The writer has also, been guilty of this. But now we have reversed the order and we are examining all systems of prophetic interpretation by the Word of God. **"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20.**

C. H. Mackintosh has said. "Let the spiritual man who, finds himself in the midst of all this sad and heart sickening confusion, remember the following simple principle: every system of prophetic interpretation which would connect the church, in any one way, with the world, or the things of the world, must be contrary to the Spirit and principles of the great mystery developed by the Holy Ghost in the Apostle of the Gentiles."

We have not hesitated to speak boldly upon this subject. This is not the time for smooth words. We are utterly convinced that Russia, Germany and Spain have no connection and nothing to do with our hope. Our hope is not related in any way to, the doings of Mussolini, Hitler or Stalin. Our hope is not connected in any way with this world. Our life, our hope, our position is all heavenly in the very highest sense of that Word. Any system of doctrine which would turn our minds towards earthly things must be condemned as an unholy influence. Let us not be robbed of the written Word. Let us repudiate, rebuke and condemn every attempt to, take from our hands the God breathed Book. It is the faithful Word, let us hold it fast

## ***ABRAHAMIC OLD AND NEW COVENANT***

The Word of God opens with the majestic statement, "**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**" Here we see creation in all its glory, in all its beauty. All God's work is perfect and there was nothing imperfect in the whole sphere of creation, the heavens and the earth.

However, as we read on from this point through the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis, we discover that we have traveled all the way from the heights of divine creation, down to the very depths of human degradation. God had created the heavens and earth perfect, He had made man upright, but evil has entered upon this scene. The results of this is that the heavens are not clean in God's sight (Job 15:15), the earth and its inhabitants are under a judicial curse, and man has gone down until we find him reveling in the very depths of unspeakable immorality. This is described, a few chapters later, where we read of the Sodomites (Gen. 19).

God had made a new beginning, at one time, by placing Noah and his family in a purged earth; but ere long we find the descendants of Noah building the tower of Babel. This was an impious attempt to cut loose from God, be independent of Him, and make a name for themselves.

The divine description of the moral and spiritual state of the human race, at that point in history marked by Genesis 11, is set forth in detail in the first chapter of Romans

**"Because that when they knew God,  
(1) They glorified Him not as God,  
(2) Neither were thankful,  
(3) But became vain in their imaginations,  
(4) And their foolish heart was darkened,  
(5) Professing themselves to be wise,  
(6) They became fools,  
(7) And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Rom. 1:21- 23.**

Here we see seven steps downward; seven steps away from God; a sevenfold giving up of God, It began with "they knew God," which was certainly true of the first pair-true also of the eight people who came out of the Ark. This God given knowledge of Himself, could have been retained, developed, increased and passed on by the descendants of Noah. But they did not like to retain God in their knowledge (Rom, 1:28), and the end is that they lose all knowledge of Him, Their ignorance became so complete that they likened Him to four footed beasts and creeping things, As the result of this sevenfold giving up of God by man, we go on to read of a threefold giving up of man by God.

**"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. For this cause God gave them up to vile affections; . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."**

### **Rom. 1:24-28.**

Thus the sevenfold giving up of God by man, is followed by a threefold giving up of man by God. The tie that bound the Creator to his creatures is broken, and the creature took the initiative in breaking it. Man became God's enemy, God has withdrawn. He has broken connections, the severance is complete. When we come to the closing verses of Genesis eleven, we know that the heavens are unclean, the earth is under a curse, man has become vile and is cut off from his Creator. However, the giving up of man by God, was really His first step in redemption, It paved the way for the beginning of the outworking of His, purposes to redeem, purge and fill the heavens with His glory; to redeem, purge the earth, bless its inhabitants and fill it with His glory.

### **God's Purpose for Abraham's Seed**

This purpose begins to unfold at Genesis 12, and it centers in and is built around the promises to and the Covenant which God made with Abraham. From Genesis 12 this Covenant has a bearing on every portion of Scripture, except the epistles of the Mystery. Therefore, it is important, if we are to understand Scripture, to be familiar with the truth of this Covenant.

**"Now the Lord had said unto, Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shalt all families of the earth be blessed. Gen. 12:1-3.**

At the time this was spoken all the families of the earth are under a curse, but God here reveals that it is his purpose to, bless all families of the earth. However, this will be done, this can only be done through Abraham and his seed. The divine statements must be carefully noted and the divine order must be preserved. It is as follows:

1. I will make of thee a great nation.
2. I will bless thee.
3. Thou shalt be a blessing.
4. In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

This divine order God will never violate. He has spoken and His word cannot be broken. When the curse is lifted from the earth and its inhabitants, and enjoys the blessing of God upon every family, it will have been accomplished by God blessing the seed of Abraham, making them a blessing, and blessing all the families of the earth in them. Thus it is plain, that the call of Abraham, the promises to him and the Covenant with him, had to do with God's purposes to redeem, bless and fill the earth with His glory.

### **The Land Promised**

We are told that Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him, and in due time arrived in the land of Canaan. Here the Lord appeared unto Abraham and made some important additions to the praises already given. These additions are set forth in two, passages.

**"And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this**

land. "Gen. 12:7.

**"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so, that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also, be numbered." Gen. 13:15-16.**

There are many important elements in this passage, and each one must be clearly fixed in the mind of the student of God's Word. God here promised the land of Canaan to, Abraham's seed, then it is promised to Abraham and his seed forever. This land was the actual land seen by Abraham. This promise cannot be spiritualized, it is literal. We must not fail to notice that the land is promised to Abraham's seed. Not to some distant portion of his seed which would live in remote centuries, but to his seed. Everyone born as the seed of Abraham was born with a claim upon this promise. They were born in the covenant; born with a claim upon the covenant. All they need to do, is to meet the divine conditions which God imposed upon them. These will be considered later. If they fulfill the conditions God will keep His word to them and give them the land with all attendant blessings. This was their hope. If it was not fulfilled in life, it would be fulfilled in resurrection. God does not break His word, and death has no effect on His purposes or promises. He promised them the land, and they will receive the land if they were born, lived, and died in that Covenant made to Abraham and his seed.

### **The Star Seed**

The next appearance of God to Abraham brought forth an additional revelation and addition to the promises.

"And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to, number them: and he said unto, him, So, shall thy seed be." Genesis 15:5.

In the former passage, God promised Abraham a seed like the "dust of the earth." Here God takes the eyes of Abraham of the earth and turns them toward the heavens. Abraham is to have not only a seed like the dust of the earth, but, one like the stars of the heaven.

It may seem to, many that these references to "dust seed" and "star seed," refer only to, the number of Abraham's descendants. However, there is more than that, for there is a secret connected with this promise of a "star seed" that is not unfolded until we came to the early epistles of Paul.

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## ***THE THREE SPHERES OF FUTURE GLORY***

The Bible is a book which provokes study. Most believers are continually promising

themselves that some day they are going to study this book. The overwhelming majority live and die without fulfilling this promise and never come to any personal knowledge of God's book. Those believers who have taken up the study of the Bible, soon find that it baffles study, and they retire from any serious effort to master the contents of the sacred writings. If such a thing comes to pass, there is nothing left for such believers to do but select some favorite teacher or writer, and follow him. Then if this teacher says a thing is right, it is right and if he says a thing is wrong, then it is wrong.

The true and sincere believer, who desires to know the Word and enjoy its contents will welcome anything that will act as a key and unlock portions of the Word of Truth. Careful Bible students discovered long ago that there is a key to everyone of the sixty-six books in the Bible, and that this key is usually found to be hanging on the door. This has been found to be true of the separate books, and we believe that it is also true of the Book as a whole.

A key is of no value if it is hid away in some remote corner of the house. Most of us have experienced the embarrassment that comes upon discovering that we are on the outside, and our keys are locked on the inside of our dwellings. Thus, if there is a key to the Word of God as a whole; to be of any value it must be found at the very entrance hanging on the door for the use of all who would enter God's great temple of truth.

It is our conviction that the key to the Word of God is the recognition of the fact that there are three spheres of future glory, three spheres of blessings, three spheres which are the subjects of God's purposes. This great fact of three spheres is set forth in the very first verse of the Word of God.

### **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."**

In this verse we have set before us the Creator and the sphere of creation. The sphere of creation is set forth as being the heavens and the earth, but before there was ever the sphere of creation there was the sphere of the Creator. Inasmuch as God existed before the beginning, it is legitimate to ask; Where was God before he created the heavens and the earth? If we ask this question we will not seek in vain for an answer. The heavens and earth do not make up the entire universe; there is yet a third sphere, the sphere of the Creator, a place that is far above all heavens.

Thus in the very first verse of the Word of God we are brought face to face with three distinct spheres. It is a fact that God would have us recognize first of all. We should learn this ere we go on, for this fact of three spheres has a bearing upon every portion of the Word of God. It is the first truth that we learn when we open God's book, and we must not forget it, we carry it with us as we go on in the study of the Word.

That one and one makes two is one of the first things taught to a child who would learn mathematics. This does not seem of great importance, but let a child fail to learn it, or let him learn and then forget it and all future study in mathematics will be hopelessly confusing. He must carry this simple fact in his mind as long as he deals in the realm of mathematics.

This is also true of the fact of three spheres. It is the first thing we learn and we must carry it with us, we must never lose sight of it. To do so will confuse the purposes of God, for He has a purpose for every sphere; it will confuse the work of God, for at different times He is working on different spheres; it will confuse the callings of God, for

there is a distinct calling for every sphere.

### **Further Proof from Ephesians**

If Genesis 1:1 was all the proof we have for the three spheres it would hardly be established; but there is more, much more. There is one verse that speaks so plain that it settles the matter beyond all question. Let the reader admit that Eph. 4:10 is in his Bible; let him admit that it is the inspired Word of God, and he has admitted that there are three spheres. In that verse we are told, "**He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things.**" (Eph. 4:10).

That there is a sphere called earth cannot be denied; that there is a sphere "far above all heavens" is here plainly stated. Now if there is a sphere "far above all heavens," then there has to be heavens for it to be above; so again we have the truth of three spheres; the earth, the heavens, and the "far above all heavens."

### **An Unrecognized Truth**

This important truth of three spheres has not been recognized by the great majority of past and present day Bible teachers. It finds no place at all in their doctrinal systems. The writer does not believe that there are more than ten teachers in this country who recognize the fact of three spheres, and give it a place in their testimony. And these men are not prominent teachers, but men who are little known. The popular Bible teachers of today only recognize two spheres, and this has led to great confusion. They see no difference between the destiny of a faithful *Jew* in the Old Testament and a member of the Church which is His body. Let the humble student recognize the truth of three spheres, and he will find that a new day has dawned for him with his Bible, obscure passages will become clear, difficult verses will be explained, and he will find an enjoyment in the study of the Word of God that he never knew before.

### **A Witness from Deuteronomy,**

It may be that these three spheres are brought together in Deut. 10:14. "Behold the heavens and the heavens of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is" (Deut. 10:14 Corrected Translation). However, we are inclined to believe that in this verse "the heavens" refers to the realm of the birds and the stars, and "the heavens of heavens" refers to the sphere above that. We cannot see how the term "heavens of heavens" can refer to a place which is "far above all heavens." The sphere "far above all" is never called heaven, only when it is included in the generic term heaven as meaning everything above the earth. These thoughts would seem to suggest four spheres, and it is true that they do. However, we are not interested at the present moment in that sphere which belongs to the birds and the stars, but in the three spheres which are the subject of God's purposes in redemption.

There is another verse which is closely connected with Deut. 10:14, and we give it here, with a corrected translation so that the reader may have all before him for consideration. **This verse is 1 Kings 8:27, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heavens and the heavens of heavens. cannot contain thee."**

Let the student keep in mind that we are not presenting these two verses in definite

support of our teaching concerning the three spheres. They may set forth the three spheres, but we are inclined to believe otherwise. They are used by our brother, J. Eustace Mills of England in his excellent chart on the "three spheres of blessing." He interprets the term "heavens of heavens" as referring to the highest sphere. However, our present study in preparing these articles, has convinced us that these two verses do not refer to the three spheres of future glory - "the earth," "the heavens" and "far above all heavens." We state our reasons in the next paragraph.

### **The Firmament**

Genesis 1:1 tells of the creation of the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:2 describes the condition of the earth after the overthrow. Peter describes this as, **'the world that then was, being over flowed with water perished'** (2 Peter 3:6). The balance of the first chapter of Genesis tells of the restoration of the earth after this catastrophe. On the second day of this week of restoration, God made the firmament and called the firmament heavens. This should not be confused with the heavens which God made in the beginning. God set the sun, moon and stars in the firmament of the heavens. He made birds to fly in the open firmament of the heavens. Now with this fact before us, and the fact of the clear distinction made in Deut. 10:14, we can begin at the top and work down as follows.

FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS  
HEAVENS OF HEAVENS  
HEAVENS  
EARTH

That sphere called heavens, just above the earth, the realm of the birds and stars is not included in the subject of our present study, yet we must notice it or we will be in difficulty when we come to consider the Greek words epouranion (above heavenly), and epouraniois (above heavenlies).

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## ***THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY***

(Continued from Vol. I, No. 4)

In our preceding article upon this subject, we attempted to set forth that at the close of the period covered by the book of Acts, God made a break in the steady flow of events which were fulfilling prophecy, and brought in an administration which was not the subject of any prophecy. Under this administration "the Church which is His body" has its beginning, outcalling, formation, completion and translation.

The truth of "the Mystery" is so transcendent, has so many angles, that those who write concerning it find themselves embarrassed by the wealth of material. The present writer finds it difficult to decide just what should be presented next, in order that the truth might be presented in orderly arrangement.

Our last article set forth the "dispensation of the Mystery" as beginning at the close of the 33 year period covered by the books of Acts. Of course, this excludes the Acts period from the Mystery, and it is just here that we come upon a matter which is in dispute and the subject of much controversy. Therefore, we feel that this is the logical place to deal with the "Pentecostal Administration," and show that it forms no part of the "Administration of the Mystery."

### **The Acts Period and The Mystery**

That God means what He says and says what He means is an excellent principle of interpretation. Of the present administration (dispensation) God has said such things as:

**"the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men";**

**"the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God;"**

**"the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints."**

In view of these statements, there is only one possible conclusion, and that is that the 33 year period covered by the book of Acts forms no part of the present administration, the administration of the Mystery. The events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles are the fulfillment of certain definite prophecies. Not one of them was the unfolding of the secret (mystery) hid in God.

### **Searchable Riches**

A good dog can follow a trail as long as there is a trail to follow. A student of the Word can take up the trail of events which fulfill prophecy, and beginning with John the Baptist, can follow through the 33 years covered by the four Gospels. In the Gospels every event is the fulfillment of prophecy, and the trail is not broken as we pass from the Gospels into the Acts period. The book of Acts opens with prophesied events and closes with prophesied events, and everything that takes place in between is in fulfillment of some Old Testament prediction.

If the dispensational position of the book of Acts is recognized; if the truth of its dispensational setting is followed out to all its conclusions; Acts will glow with light and glory, not manifested before. Peter will no longer appear to be a bigoted Jew whose nationalistic pride kept him from going to the Gentiles; Paul need no longer be charged with temporizing, compromising and backsliding. The Spirit's record of Paul will be seen to be true in every detail of his life; that he "fought a good fight," that he "kept the faith."

### **Acts, Its Own Witness**

The book of Acts gives testimony that it covers a period of time which is no part of the "dispensation of the Mystery." Every major event there recorded is the fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy. It was a prophesied period from beginning to end.

In the first chapter we have the record of the choice of a successor to take the place of Judas. Even this small detail was in fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy. **"For it is written in the book of Psalms, let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell**

**therein: and his bishoprick let another take." Acts 1:20.**

The second chapter gives the record of events which happened on the day of Pentecost. There came from heaven a sound as of a rushing mighty wind; cloven tongues like as of fire appeared unto them; they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in the languages of fourteen or more nationalities. The people were amazed; they were in doubt; they asked one another, "What meaneth this?"

It is good that this question was asked, for it is one that needs to be and is being asked today. An answer was given, and this answer by the Spirit filled Apostle Peter, will satisfy those who desire truth above all else. It may not satisfy those who treasure tradition and opinion above the Word of God, but we are not among that number.

Peter states emphatically, **"This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel"** Acts 2:16.

How simple; how plain; how explicit. Come- - all who say, "This is the birthday of the Church which is His body"; Come-all who say, "This marks the beginning of the dispensation of the Mystery"; Come, and stand corrected by the Spirit - filled Apostle Peter as he declares, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" Here is one thing fixed; here is one matter settled; here is a rock of truth upon which we may safely place our feet. This statement alone is sufficient to prove that the events of Pentecost had no connection with the Mystery of the Church which is His body. Joel did not, he could not speak of the great secret (mystery) which was hid in Gad.

#### **Quotation from C. H. M.**

Just here we would quote from the writings of that beloved man of God, C. H. Mackintosh. Concerning the message, given by Peter, on the day of Pentecost, and its relation to the Mystery he says as follows;

**"The Apostle Peter, in his address to Israel, offers them the kingdom, 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.'"**

"Have we here the development of the mystery? No. The time had not yet arrived for this. The doctrine of the church was yet to be, as it were, forced out as something quite extraordinary-something quite out of the regular course of things. The church, as seen in the opening of Acts, exhibits but a sample of lovely grace and order, exquisite, indeed, in its way, but not anything beyond what man could take cognizance of and value. In a word, it was still the kingdom and not the great mystery of the church. Those who think that the opening chapters of Acts present the church in its highest aspect have by no means reached the divine thought on the subject."

To all this we breathe a fervent "Amen," and thank Gad for the light that was given unto C. H. M. And the year ? **1850.**

#### **All the Prophets Have Spoken**

In the third chapter of Acts, we discover another emphatic declaration, which puts the period covered by that book outside of the present dispensation.

The occasion is Peter's second sermon. In the course of his message he declares, **"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Acts 3:24.**

. In view of this, can we say that the days of the third chapter of Acts are part of the dispensation of the Mystery? The answer is, "Emphatically, NO." The prophets knew nothing of the mystery. They did not- they could not speak of the present administration. It was "hid from ages and from generations."

### **The House of Cornelius**

The tenth chapter of Acts gives us the record of God turning to the Gentiles, to take out from among them a people for His name. This was also in fulfillment of prophecy and no part of "the Mystery." When this matter was discussed at the Jerusalem conference, as recorded in Acts 15, we find the following statement. "Symeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; And I will build again the ruins thereof, And I will set it up: That the residue of men may seek after the Lord And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, **who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world."** Acts 15:14-18. R. V.

### **C. H. M. Again Quoted**

We do not wish to buttress our teaching with quotations from men. However, in the hope that some who question our views, will see that the teaching here expounded is not something new which we have originated, we again quote from C. H. Mackintosh.

"We infer, therefore, that the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles by the mouth of Peter was not the development of the great mystery of the church, but simply the opening of the kingdom, agreeably to the words of the prophets, and also to Peter's commission in **Matthew 16. 'And I say also, unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shalt be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shalt be loosed in heaven.'**

. Note: it is 'the kingdom,' and not 'the church'. Peter received the keys of the kingdom, and he used those keys, first too open the kingdom to the Jew, and then to the Gentile. But Peter never received a commission to unfold the mystery of the church. Even in his epistles we find nothing of 'the mystery.' "

(These words by C. H. M. are forceful indeed. In our next issue we will reprint the greater part of the article from which these two, quotations have been taken.)

(Continued, Vol. I, No. 5.)

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## ***ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS***

\*\*\*Mrs. E. F. W.- PENNA. When I first began to, study the truth of the Mystery, I realized that the revelation of the Mystery was a progressive revelation. There was not one ward about it before Acts 28:28, but after that the revelation is progressive. During the past two, years, I have studied to discover the order of the last seven epistles of Paul. All external evidence has been ignored and I have worked to find the order from the internal evidence alone. I now believe that the order of the epistles of Paul, written after Acts 28:28, is as follows. 1 Timothy, Titus, Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians and 2 Timothy. The evidence for all this will be set forth in future issues of The Ward of Truth, in a series of articles titled, "Progressive Revelation-and the Mystery."

\*\*\*O. R. S.- N. Y. If, as you say, "Colossians and Ephesians are the only books referring to the Church which is His body"; then what is the "holy calling" of 2 Timothy 1:9. The ward **holy** means separate, and the apostle here is referring to, "the separate calling." Everyone saved from Genesis 12 to Acts 28:28 were called as the "seed of Abraham." This includes the Gentiles of the Acts period. The outcalling (church) which is His body is the only calling that can be referred to, as a "separate" calling. The "heavenly calling" of Hebrews 3:1, was the star seed of Abraham.

\*\*\*H. M.- New York. Yes, I am familiar with the teaching of those who say that the dispensation of the Mystery began with the destruction of Jerusalem. They cannot support this with Scripture, because there is no record in Scripture of the destruction of Jerusalem. As far as we know, from God's word, Jerusalem was never destroyed. I refuse to go outside of God's Word too find a point to begin the dispensation of the Mystery. We must ever stay within the Word or we will get into hapless confusion. The events of Acts 28:28 are recorded in Scripture. The destruction of Jerusalem is not.

\*\*\*Mrs. S. B.-KANSAS. When I use the term "Old Testament," I mean the first 39 books of the Scripture; those written in Hebrew. When I use the term "New Testament," I mean the last 27 books; those written in Greek. These terms are well established by common usage and when used their meanings are not misunderstood. It is true that a "testament is a "will." However, when we speak of Old Testament, no one ever thinks we are speaking of an Old Will. So, we will continue to use these familiar terms.

\*\*\*"W. P. T.- CALIF. In quoting the Authorized Version, I always quote it exactly as written. Therefore I use the words "Holy Ghost" when it appears in the Authorized version. I prefer the term "Holy Spirit," and use it as a rule, but cannot change a quotation if I am quoting.

### **GRAND RAPIDS-SPECIAL CONFERENCE**

One night only, Wednesday, October 14, beginning at 7:30. Speakers, Carl Elleby and Otis Sellers. Music in charge of W. O. Miller. All who love the truth of God's Ward are invited and urged to be present.

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## **THE EDITOR-TO HIS FRIENDS**

\*\*\*\*The August and September numbers of THE WORD OF TRUTH have been twelve pages in size, so that we could send the first four issues to all names on our sample list. We now feel led to increase the size to sixteen pages, and (D.V.) this will be done beginning with our October issue. An average of fifty personal requests for the magazine have been received for the past sixteen weeks, and this number is now increasing. We expect to have 3,000 personal requests by the end of the first year. If your copy of the magazine is stamped SAMPLE COPY, it means that your name is not on our regular readers list, and you should send in your request for the magazine at once.

\*\*\*\*There are no copies of the June number (No.1) available, but we still have quite a few of July and August on hand. These will be sent out upon request while they last.

\*\*\*\*We desire to say a word about our silent partners in the work of publishing this magazine. Apart from these the magazine would not be possible. We refer to the believers who make up the Gospel Fellowship of Grand Rapids, Michigan. This group provides us the major portion of our income, and makes just as little demand as possible upon our time. The administration of the work of the Gospel Fellowship is committed to five men and these carry the burden of administering the work. Thus we are free to study and write, and to carry on our ministry to that great group of scattered believers who are hungry for the Word.

\*\*\*\*The increase in the number of pages, beginning next issue, will mean an increase in expenses. Our expenses are limited to bare essentials; printing, envelopes and postage. The editor's work is a labor of love. This is our fourth issue, and we trust that the magazine has commended itself to the readers as being worthy of mate

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