

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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THINGS TO COME

Under this title the Editor plans to write, from time to time, on various subjects that may come under this heading. The same simple subject will be used for all articles. This will prove that it is possible to write upon prophetic themes wholly apart from sensational titles. In all of these studies the accuracy of the inspired Word will be recognized and exalted.

The study of things which must yet come to pass will always prove fascinating to the true student of the Word. By the term "true student" we mean one who turns to the Word for the sole purpose of finding the truth that God has placed therein. There are many who turn to the Word for sermon material or for a text to hang a sermon on; others go to the Word to seek support for some preconceived notion or belief which they hold. Such are not the true students of God's Word.

There is an interest in prophecy which is of, God, and there is an interest which is of the flesh. That fleshly desire to know what the future holds, which causes so many to go to fortune tellers, will also cause people to attend sermons and lectures on prophetic themes, especially if such lectures have a title such as: "What can be expected in 1937?" Many have found it materially profitable to pander to this carnal desire for a peep into the future; but the true servant whose one desire is to glorify the Word of God and the God of the Word will refuse to have any part in such ministry.

Several years ago the Editor was asked to speak at a service in a tent meeting in Chicago. Arriving at the service quite early, we passed the time in conversation with the custodian of the tent. When we asked him concerning the attendance at the services, he answered: "It's very good when we have prophecy, but very poor when we have the gospel. They don't know what you are going to give them so you should have a fair attendance."

We answered by saying: "It is a disgrace to believers and a stench in the nostrils of God that a message on the Antichrist will draw ten times as many people as a sermon on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is plain that the real interest today is in the wrong person."

It should be remembered that the glorious body of truth which centers in and around the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is recovered truth. That is, it was lost for centuries, and theological and religious books written between A. D. 500 and 1700 will be searched in vain for one clear scriptural statement concerning the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The truth was always in the Word of God, but it was hidden under the rubbish heaps of tradition. The great statements concerning the second coming were explained as referring to the death of a believer, the descent of the Spirit, or the destruction of Jerusalem.

But the time came, about 150 years ago, when certain men with courage that could only have come from above, threw off the shackles of tradition, defied what was then accepted as orthodox, and freed themselves for the purpose of uncovering and recovering the blessed truth of the Lord's return. These men became explorers and discoverers. They turned from the stagnant pools of tradition to the great fountain head of all truth. They suffered persecution, ostracism and excommunication. Epithets were hurled at them, opponents dipped their pens in vitrol and wrote against them. But such things moved them not as they persevered in their God given task of uncovering and recovering the truth of God.

**O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train**

These pioneers only began the work. They drew certain inferences from the Word, and it was the duty of those who came after them to take up the work of recovery where they were forced to leave off. But instead of this the inferences which they drew from the Word have been raised to a position of equality with the Word itself. And woe be to the man who dares to question the finality of these inferences,

Today, all exploration, research and discovery has come to a standstill as far as prophetic truth is concerned. Written and unwritten creeds on these subjects have taken the place of the open Bible, and that glorious body of truth which centers in and around the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is again being buried under the rubbish heaps constantly piled up by a stagnant, sensational and unbiblical ministry. And even those who avoid sensationalism seem satisfied that all the truth that can ever be known on the subject is contained in the five or ten stock sermons that they deliver to the people from time to time.

Rare indeed is the saint today who is able to distinguish between the false and the true in prophetic ministry. Even to suggest that all this preaching on Russia, Mussolini, Hitler, Communism, Fascism, Spain and Ethiopia has no connection whatsoever with Biblical prophecy and its ministry, is, to some people akin to blasphemy.

Prophecy can be perverted easily to form the foundation for a sensational ministry. This explains why so many superficial men have laid hold of it and made it their chief subject. Most prophetic sermons are a rehash of the yellow journalism of the secular press. Such messages can be, and many are, prepared without even referring to the Word of God.

A recent visitor to this country has analyzed the situation as follows: "It is said that heresy is contorted truth. I think that this axiom applies to the amazing racket of prophecy teachers in the States. There are certain men called of God for this ministry, endowed with insight into the wonderful prophetic scriptures. To these I say, God bless you in the ministry He has given you. But there are twice as many copyists, who tour the country preaching pet theories. Sometimes an evangelist gets out of touch with the Lord, and finds that he can no longer preach an evangelistic message with unction from above. He turns to prophecy, a subject of which he knows little. He then joins the great band of sensationalists who damage the cause of Christ. The predictions made by some of these false prophets are utterly childish." (J. Edwin Orr, in "This is the Victory").

It appears that when many men, who profess to be teachers, deal with prophecy, that the mind is not used, and the emotions take charge. A calm, deliberate, carefully studied presentation of prophetic truth is seldom heard. The message is usually fiery, emotional and sensational. Word pictures of the horrors of the Tribulation or the glories of His coming seem to be the chief stock in trade of those who deal with prophecy. Such is not the proper method to be used in dealing with things to come. These methods are carnal and not spiritual.

So, calmly and carefully, with the Word as our guide, we desire to present some studies on prophetic themes. These studies will present our findings after exploration, research and discovery. Many popular beliefs will be contradicted and set aside. We believe that some things presented will represent distinct advances in the recovery of truth. We desire that all we present shall be tested by the Word and the Word alone.

**"Through thy precepts I get understanding,
Therefore I hate every false way." Psalm 119:104.**

WATER BAPTISM--AND THE BIBLE

In the last issue, in connection with another subject, we called attention to an important principle in true Bible study. It was, that God gave the Word for the purpose of explaining to us things that He would have us know and understand. We do not need to explain the Word --as so many think and so many are doing- but to permit the Word to explain things to us. If we explain the Bible, we can make it to mean anything we desire it to mean. Thus men are able to attach manifold meanings to God's own Word.

The Editor recently sat in conversation with an intelligent and well informed Roman Catholic; and listened to him explain the Word of God. The Biblical statement, "**But he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire**"; was explained as referring to and teaching the doctrine of purgatory. "**Hear the Church**" (Matt. 18:17), was explained as supporting the right of the church to speak authoritatively in matters of doctrine and conduct. "**Confess your faults to one another,**" was explained in such a way that the Roman confessional appeared to be entirely scriptural.

Much that passes for Bible study today, is along the same line used by this Roman Catholic. Truth is not desired. Nothing can be the truth that in any way clashes with things always believed. The only reason the Bible is used at all is that there may be

attached to some passage a meaning that will force it to support some preconceived notion, some tradition, or some certain creed.

In the New Testament we find the divinely ordained ceremony of water baptism. Multiplied meanings have been attached to this ceremony, and numberless are the things it is supposed to signify. However, there is a divinely given meaning for this divinely given ceremony. In other words, God's Word takes up the ceremony of baptism in water, and tells just what it meant and just what it signified. We can take God's explanation or reject it. Some have no position to support and are free to take what He says, as He said it, without additions or subtractions. Others are not free and are forced to ignore the divinely given meaning, in order to attach to the ceremony another meaning which will fit in with denominational principles or generally accepted views concerning the matter.

Concerning water baptism, we have been to the Word. Our position on it is held from the Word and the Word alone. Nothing has been permitted to enter in to influence our beliefs on the subject, such as circumstances, friends, position or views of others. We have carefully checked and rechecked our position. We are willing to go over it all, again and again, with anyone who believes we are wrong, if the Word alone is permitted to settle things.

Therefore, we do not hesitate to take our stand upon the solid rock of God's Word and declare, that if we take what God says in His Word as to the meaning, purpose and significance of water baptism, we find that it is a ceremony which is out of harmony with, and will not fit into the present dispensation of the Mystery, the dispensation of the grace of God.

To go further, we will state that if a Baptist will take what the scripture says concerning the meaning, purpose and significance of water baptism, he will discover that it is a ceremony that has no more place in a Baptist church than does circumcision.

We noticed recently on the bulletin board of a Baptist Church that the sermon subject for the following Sunday was to be, "Water Baptism -What Saith the Scriptures." This was certainly a good subject, and we would liked to have heard the message. Even apart from hearing it, we are confident that the preacher declared without equivocation the generally accepted Baptist position on the subject, and then supported this position with the scriptures. We wonder what would have happened if he had told exactly what the scriptures say concerning it. There are seven verses he could have used, and these seven verses would have given his audience just what the scriptures say as to the meaning, purpose and significance of water baptism.

These verses are as follows:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," Matt. 3:11.

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" Mark 1:4.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16.

"And I knew Him not: but that He should be manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." John 1:31.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall: receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" Acts 2:38.

"And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16.

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the: flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 3:21.

These seven verses present the teaching of the New Testament concerning the purpose, meaning and significance of water baptism. There are many other verses that refer to it, there are parallel passages that present the same truth; but these are the verses wherein God explains to us what it meant and what it signified.

In view of these verses the Editor would like to ask the following questions of his former colleagues in the Baptist ministry.

Do you baptize unto repentance?

Do you preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins?

Do you proclaim that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, or have you rearranged this into he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized?

Do you baptize so that Christ shall be manifest to Israel?

Do you preach repentance and baptism for the remission of sins?

Does Acts 2:38 express your gospel, or do you find it in Eph 1:7?

Could you emulate Ananias and tell a convert to be baptized and wash away his sins?

Knowing you as I do, I can answer these questions for you, The answer is an emphatic NO to all of them, These verses do not express your position on water baptism, You have taken this ceremony, and ignoring and setting aside the divinely given meaning and significance, you have attached to it a different meaning and significance. You have attached to it a meaning, significance and symbolism which is beautiful indeed but you have not one line of scripture to support it, Your explanation of it is attractive and filled with fine sentiment, but it is contrary to the explanation given in God's Word.

These questions are asked in love. I do not seek to draw you into controversy but I would turn you to the Word. If you will dare to turn to the Word, accept what it teaches, and refuse all besides, you will find that many popular beliefs must be dismissed as sentiment. Receive what I have said in the same spirit as it is given. You cannot say that you have derived all your views purely and wholly from the Word of God. Circumstances, Friends, Teachers, Ministers and Books have all contributed to influence our opinions. Can you say how much is of man, and how much is of God, in the views you hold on this subject. Our one great aim therefore should be, not to try and maintain our own opinions, but to unceasingly test them by the Word of God, so that we may eliminate what we have received only from man, hold fast to that which is truly of God, and be ready to receive new light from the fountain-head of all truth.

Baptism in water was a divine ceremony, but, just like the divine ceremony of circumcision, it is out of harmony with, and will not fit into the administration committed to Paul in the Roman prison; that administration which had been kept secret, even the administration of the grace of God.

In order to make the ceremony *of* baptism in water fit into the present dispensation, it has been necessary to ignore all that the scriptures say concerning it, and then attach to it a new significance, To support this new significance, those passages which speak of the **death** baptism of Christ, and our identification with Him in His **death** baptism, have been ravaged of their truth, Thus the most glorious of all baptisms is set aside, and it becomes meaningless. The verses which speak of baptism into His **death** are as follows:

"But I have a BAPTISM TO BE BAPTIZED with; and how am I straitened (pressed) till it be accomplished," Luke 12:50,

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with? They say unto Him, we are able, And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and BE BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM THAT I AM BAPTIZED WITH," Matt. 20:22-23.

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," Galatians 3:27,

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST were BAPTIZED UNTO HIS DEATH. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even: so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:3-4.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." 'Eph. 1:5.

"Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead'" Col. 2:12.

Everything revealed in these verses has to do with, and belongs to that baptism which took place upon Calvary's cross when all the billows of God's wrath against sin, poured over the Lord Jesus Christ. We have God's word for it that we were there, that we died with Him, that we were baptized into His death. Anyone who steals a single line of this truth in order to apply it to baptism in water is guilty of tarnishing the work of the Cross.

Referring again to **Galatians 3:27** we read: **'For as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ.'** Now this can be made to mean anything one desires it to mean. Some have dared to say that "baptized into Christ" means "baptized in water," This we repudiate.

It is impossible to tell from this verse alone just what "baptized into Christ" does men. But in **Romans 6:3-6** the subject is taken up again and God tells us explicitly just what it means. It is explained, and faith will take God's explanation.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death."

There it is---so simple that it will shock the ecclesiastical mind. It is not our opinion, our interpretation or our explanation. It is God's own Word, that to be baptized into Jesus Christ is to be baptized into His death. Here is a rock upon which we can place our feet. Here is something fixed in all this raging sea of human opinions. Happy will be the one who believes it.

Many and devious have been the attempts to explain the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4. Most of these explanations are for the purpose of trying to make one, mean two. The popular explanation at present is that "Spirit baptism" is referred to in the words "one

Spirit," therefore, "one baptism" means water baptism. This explanation ignores altogether "baptism into His death"; and it destroys the unity of the Spirit.

Sir Robert Anderson spoke of certain attempts to interpret scripture as reminding him of "a jugglers attempt to place a ball at rest half way down an inclined plane. Ordinary folk would place it either at the top or at the bottom." We always think of this when we hear men try to explain "one baptism,"

If we are buried WITH HIM in baptism, then it was His death baptism. This is the only baptism that has any place in the dispensation of the Mystery. If we glory in it we will be glorying in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"CALL JOSHUA, THAT I MAY GIVE HIM A CHARGE"

By Wilfred C. Mills

Redeemed Israel in the wilderness were unbelieving Believers! True they had applied the blood in Egypt, and were saved from Egypt, but having reached Kadesh Barnea the flesh obtained mastery; they "believed not," were disallowed entry into blessing, and became wanderers, "with whom God was not well pleased." Nevertheless being saved they experienced preservation, provision and manifest tokens of grace, yet were overthrown in the wilderness. Not attaining, they entered not the promised land because of unbelief. Saved yes, but fleshly minded, self centered, stiff necked murmurers. Hebrews 3:19; 4:1. **"Now all these things happened unto them for types, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the end of the age is come." 1 Cor. 10:1 -5 and 11.**

Jordan was the divider between wilderness unbelief - -the walk of the flesh, "minding earthly things" and the walk of faith in "newness of life." Romans 6:4; 8:4. The Rock that followed them (Christ) had been all sufficient. God had never taken away the enjoyment of the pillar of cloud; the manna had been constant, and clothes had miraculously withstood the journey. The people might have pointed to all this Grace as a proof of their spirituality, even as Christians today esteem it a good work to attend service on Sunday, or to have received answers to prayer for their needs and their homes, by pointing out how God has blessed them. Truly "God is faithful" and faithful is the Divine record that Israel were overthrown in the wilderness, and with them God was displeased.

Salvation brings responsibility for believing God concerning separation of walk, the world, testimony, the honoring of His Name, to believe God concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

A remnant of the nation who were disallowed at Kadesh Barnea passed over Jordan to possess what had been given them by God - - Faith walk. The whole promised land was theirs, but city by city, nation by nation, were to be possessed.

So, and more also, for the Christian **"All the promises of God in Christ Jesus are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" 2 Cor. 1:20.** They are ours, and are to be possessed, apprehended by faith. The Christian may be satisfied with salvation,

and may glory in the fact that works are ruled out; he may also settle down without possessing for himself the promises of God in Christ, shun the conflict, and accordingly he will be saved so as by fire, suffer loss. 1 Cor. 3:15. How many Believers are idolaters? "Covetousness which is idolatry"-whose works will be burned up. How glorious is the land of promise to be possessed! Given of God to be apprehended, with the possessing there is the dispossessing of the Canaanite who was there. In like manner the old nature in the believer is to be fought and mortified; although it is a conquered foe, it will ever dispute the walk of faith, for it is not of faith, but of sin.

Corporate failure is typified in the words: "**they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer,**" **Joshua 16:10; 18:3.** All too eager to rest satisfied on the victories won during the life-day of Joshua the tribes of Israel did not obey God's Word to the full. Do we not see collective failure in the walk of faith in many assemblies of Christians today? Faith, rest and joy of believing God up to a certain point are the theme of most gatherings-the fathers, the godly men of a generation ago who led and taught the Scriptures, never desired that their recovery of Truth should be the final shibboleth of today. The best of them taught that the Holy Spirit would lead on to "All Truth." With failure manifest in Christianity corporate, individual faith rises into prominence. Caleb said "**But I wholly followed the Lord my God**" **Joshua 14:8**-the reason is given in verse 7, "as it was in mine heart"; he believed God, and his faith was stronger after the return from spying out the land than ever it had been before. We read "Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and possess; for we are well able to overcome." Mark how the same true believer later made request for the mountain stronghold of Hebron, the very place where unbelief sprang; "Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day." Compare Deut, 1:20, Joshua 14:12.

How different from the spirit which Caleb possessed, is that which moves assemblies whose witness is limited to the rules of gathering; to ordinances of the Epistles covered by the Book of Acts; when faced with the subsequent revelation in the later Epistles of Paul to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 2 Timothy.

Possessing what God had given, apprehending what God had revealed, Paul "fought a good fight and finished his course" even as the record stands of Caleb- "I wholly followed the Lord."

What Paul was commissioned to preach by the Holy Spirit he was inspired to write also, and he practiced what he preached and wrote, the Epistles to the Thessalonians, Galatians, Corinthians and Romans, conveyed glorious truth to the believing remnant, and the Gentiles saved and blessed in Christ-as prophesied in the Scriptures-awaiting the Hope of Israel; they contain nothing distinct from what the Prophets and Moses did write-more detail, but no new doctrinal fact, Acts 28:20; 26:22.

After Acts 28:26-27, when Israel was for the time set aside in blindness and hardness-the dispersion having heard and rejected the same Gospel as had been rejected in the land, and having also rejected the re-offer of a returning Messiah-God brought forth from His treasures of Grace the Great Secret, and through the Apostle Paul revealed for faith "all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ"; the believer blessed in the Holiest of All, above all heavens. Eph 1:3; Col. 1:12.

The Apostle speaks of this revelation as "made known unto me," because of his further knowledge and faith he was forsaken by assemblies who owed their salvation

through his testimony, his walk became lonely, he was misunderstood, and prayed for a door of utterance to preach the mystery of the Gospel. Eph.6:19. Paul was forsaken because of unbelief of Christians to whom the further Word of God was sent.

In like manner to Caleb, who by faith apprehended the mountain in Hebron, the place where years after God's chosen man David was crowned; the believer of the revelation of the mystery is to be with Christ **in** Glory. To meet Him at the commencement of His manifestation. Col. 3 :4.

Wherever sin entered and rebellion has touched, redemption in Christ Jesus cleanses and in each sphere the redeemed are placed, redeemed man. Satan the anointed cherub, had access to the presence of God--the sphere of God's abode--and his followers "wicked spirits" who have frequented this realm--still combat the believer through the instrumentality of fleshly tools. Ezek. 28:4; Job 1:6; Eph. 6:12.

There are three spheres of blessing and redemption mentioned in the Word:

(1) The Heaven of Heavens: translated Heavenly places, "Above all heavens." Here the Church of the One Body of the Secret is to be called, and is already blessed in their Living Head, Eph. 1:3,20; 2:6; 4:10.

(2) The Heavens: In which God placed the true tabernacle of which Moses received a pattern. Here the believing Remnant, the "Heavenly Calling"--believing Jews, and Gentiles blessed together with them--with faithful Abraham in Christ; the sphere of the Spiritual Priests; the Home of the Bride; the New Jerusalem.

(3) The Earth: Redeemed Israel is the Priestly Nation; a kingdom of Priests unto the Gentiles.

Salvation is by the Cross, through obedience of faith, and then in each sphere there is the apprehending of revealed Truth to make one's own what God has already given.

The Apostle to whom was committed the Word of faith concerning the present Headship of our Lord, even Paul himself, desired to lay hold of the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus" and the resurrection from among the dead and "that I may get to know Him." Phil. 3:10-11.

Salvation is certain to every believer but "eternal glory" is additional, this the Apostle desires for the elect "that they may also obtain." The believer is given "All Truth" for faith obedience, thereby shewing that it is possible to "believe not." 2 Tim. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:13.

Reader, as a believer you are in Christ saved by Grace, but in which sphere? Abraham believed God, not only concerning the land, but he looked for "the city," he believed God concerning further truth--a subsequent revelation. He could not have done so had God withheld revelation to that city. Do many believe God's distinct revelation concerning the exalted Lord, the Mystery which completed the Word of God? Col. 1:24-25.

The path of the believing Christian will be similar to that of the Apostle, lonely, outside man-made unities; but he will endeavor "to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" Ephesians 4:3; love all saints; seeking His face for opportunities of speaking the Truth; which is after Godliness, availing the out-resurrection from among the dead, the manifestation in Glory.

The presentation of the Secret is to "faithful men," 2 Timothy 2:2, opposition to this glorious truth will be certain, but patience is enjoined toward such "if, peradventure, God

will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" 2 Tim. 2:25, the context will show these to be unbelieving believers. God has revealed the Secret, kept from the ages, hid in Himself, not known nor typified before--the believer of His testimony has this truth as a "good deposit," 2 Timothy 1:14. After all, we must remember that the great Secret is like salvation, given to be received by the Grace of God, received on the principle of obedience of faith. Colossians 1:28; 4:12. This doctrine spoken of as "the excellency of the knowledge of **Christ Jesus, my Lord**" **Philippians 3:8**, is the crowning joy of the Christian, and although when he is initiated the walk becomes lonely, as Joshua and Caleb and Paul, yet the fellowship with our Living Head is unspeakably sweet, communion according to full knowledge.

God sends His Word to His own--His faithful children; and the call is to believe Him concerning our Lord. Consideration of Christian fellowship must be secondary. The flesh will argue as to "usefulness," "offending others," the trial of being forsaken by the majority of believers, difficulties in detail will be enlarged upon to try and negative the clear call of faith obedience.

Brother, Sister, the Word is:

The Mystery hid--now made manifest to His saints.

Colossians 1:25-29. "To whom God would make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ, among you, the hope of Glory."

1 Samuel 15:22. "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

NOTES ON 1 CORINTHIANS

1:16. Crispus was the chief ruler of the synagogue when Paul first arrived in Corinth. It seems that the power of the gospel made it difficult for the unbelieving Jews to keep this office filled. Crispus was one of the "not many noble" who was called.

1:17. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. In the commission given in Matthew 28:19-20 (erroneously called the Great Commission) the twelve are sent *to* disciple and to baptize. If Paul was working under that commission he could not truthfully have said that he was not sent to baptize. In the commission given in Mark 16:15-16, they are sent to preach the gospel but the burden of baptism rested upon those who heard it and believed. This is the commission for the Acts period. Paul was working under it, in harmony with it, but with his own unique gospel. He was sent to preach. Thus if he baptized only a few he was not failing in his ministry.

1:17. Not with wisdom of words. Paul was capable of doing this thing which he refused to do. His training, experience and travels made him a man who could hold his own with any who claimed to be wise. The Greeks sought after wisdom, worshipped it, and a few words of wisdom from the lips of Paul would have brought the Corinthians flocking to him. But Paul was conscientious and faithful. He believed that God required it of stewards that they be faithful--not successful. He was not a man pleaser, and would do

nothing to win the favor of these worldlings. His faithfulness gave opportunity to his enemies to point out his lack of eloquence, but this affected him not. He sought only the approval of God, and cared little for man's approval or disapproval. Neither their compliments or slurs affected him. He states his reason for putting all his worldly wisdom in the background.

Lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect. This is common today. Men do speak with wisdom of words, and the Cross is made of none effect.

1:18. Today it appears, even among those called fundamentalist, the preaching of the Cross is of no great importance. This important thing today is the attractive and sensational subjects; the sad, humorous and interesting anecdotes; the personal experiences of the speaker; the musical program; the appeal to the emotions; the invitation. Oh yes, the Cross is given a nod of recognition in these services, but it is given no important place, and the results which the flesh so desires can be secured wholly apart from it.

The writer is among those that believe that the "preaching of the Cross" is the thing God uses in saving souls. Such preaching will bring few of the public demonstrations that carnal Christians demand and delight in, but all results which are secured by preaching the Cross alone will be genuine. When the present day evangelist completes his meeting, no one can say that the results are the work of God. It is generally admitted that this cannot be said until the conversions have been tested by time. If our methods of evangelizing are God's methods, we can point to the results and say without hesitation, "This man's salvation is of God." True results are achieved by the preaching of the Cross. To us, this is the power of God.

1:19-20. Verse 19 is a quotation from Isa. 29. The entire passage there is highly illuminating. We quote it from the Rotherham version.

"Wherefore my Lord hath said-Because this people have drawn near with their mouth, And with the lips have honored me, But their heart have they moved far from me, And so their reverence of me hath become a commandment of men in which they have been schooled... Therefore, behold me! Again dealing wonderfully with this people doing wonderfully a wonderful thing, So shall perish the wisdom of their wise men, And the intelligence of their intelligent men shall vanish!" Isa. 29:13-14.

1:21 The translation here is bad. It is not true to the Greek, and it is not true to the truth. Preaching never saved anyone. **"God was well pleased-through the foolishness of the thing proclaimed to save them that believe." (Rotherham Version).** The foolish thing proclaimed was a crucified Christ. This verse has been used against a teaching ministry. If in our teaching we proclaim Christ crucified, God will use it to save those who believe.

1:22-25. The Jews asked for signs, the Greeks sought after wisdom. Paul could have satisfied both demands, but instead of playing to popular demand, he preached Christ crucified. To the Gentiles (correct translation) this was foolishness. To the Jews it was an occasion for stumbling, but unto the called of both Jews and Greeks, Christ was the power of God and the wisdom of God. God's foolish thing is wiser than men, and God's weak thing is stronger than men. This refers to Christ, whom the Jews looked upon as foolish and weak.

THREE SPHERES OF FUTURE GLORY

(Continued from Vol. I, No. 7)

We come now to a consideration of the words used in the New Testament which deal with the three spheres of glory. This study is based upon the full recognition of verbal inspiration and the marvelous accuracy of the Word of God. We believe that accuracy is imperative in the study of scripture. It has been called the portal of admission to the temple of truth. Man deals out words at random on the principle of "hit or miss," but God deals out His words by weight and measure on the principle of intentional selection. No word He has ever used is too heavy or too light. Here in our study the Authorized Version will be of little help to us. We are forced to turn to the Greek, and put to work the great fact of verbal inspiration in order to bring out the exact truth. The Greek word for heaven is OURANOS. It appears in both singular and plural. The singular is used in a twofold way. As a specific term it always refers to the sphere which is immediately above the earth, the sphere of the birds, clouds and stars. This is the same as the firmament (expanse) of Genesis 1; in which God made the birds to fly, and wherein He set the sun, moon and stars. We give a concordance to seven references where the word OURANOS appears in the singular number in the Greek. The word printed in capitals is the Greek word for heaven.

Matt. 6:26-behold the fowls of the AIR.

Matt. 8:20-the birds of the AIR have nests.

Matt. 16:2-for the SKY is red.

Matt. 24:30-coming in the clouds of HEAVEN.

Mark 13:25-the stars of HEAVEN shall fall.

Acts 7:42-to worship the hosts of HEAVEN.

Rev. 6:13-the stars of HEAVEN fell.

Space forbids a complete concordance, but the references given will show that OURANOS in the singular is used in referring to that sphere which is just above the earth, the realm of the birds, clouds and stars. But the singular is not only used as a specific term, it is also used as a generic or general term. When so used it may refer to a certain sphere (which is not designated) or to all the spheres above the earth. A concordance is given to certain passages where the singular is used as a general or generic term.

Matt. 5:34.-neither by HEAVEN; for it is God's throne.

Matt. 11:25.-Lord of HEAVEN and earth.

Matt. 28:18.-all power is given unto me in HEAVEN.

Acts 3:21.-whom the HEAVEN must receive.

Acts 17:24.-Lord of HEAVEN and earth.

1 Cor. 8:5 -whether in HEAVEN or in earth.

1 Peter 3:22.-who is gone into HEAVEN.

Only a few verses can be given here, but we have examined every passage in the Word of God where the word OURANOS appears in the singular, and have found nothing to contradict the statements already made; that heaven (singular) when used as a specific term always means the realm of the birds, clouds and stars, and when used as a general or generic term may refer to any or all spheres which are above the earth.

Meaning of "Heavens"

The next word we consider is the plural of OURANOS, or the word heavens. The plural appears over ninety times in the Greek New Testament. A consideration of every reference shows that it is always a specific term, and is the term used when speaking of that sphere which is above the heaven that is the realm of the birds and stars. At the present time this sphere (the heavens) is the abode of both fallen and unfallen angels. It is the sphere of the new Jerusalem, the location of Abraham's better country, the sphere of the heavenly calling, and the hope of those Jews and Gentiles who are blessed with Abraham. A concordance to ten passages is given, where the word OURANOS is plural in the Greek.

Matt. 5:12.-great is your reward in HEAVEN.

Matt. 5:16.-your father which is in HEAVEN.

Matt. 16:19.-shall be bound in HEAVEN.

Matt. 16:19.-shall be loosed in HEAVEN.

Matt. 18:10.-that in HEAVEN their angels.

Luke 12:33.-a treasure in the HEAVENS.

Acts 7:56.-Behold I see the HEAVENS opened.

2 Cor. 5:1.-eternal in the HEAVENS.

Eph. 4:10.-far above all HEAVENS.

Rev. 12:12.-therefore rejoice ye HEAVENS.

The second reference states that the Father (God) is in "the heavens." Just here we would state that in none of our teaching on this theme, have we ever tried to "localize" God to any sphere, as one accuses us of doing. We believe in His omnipresence, and verses can be given to prove His presence in every sphere-far above all heavens, the heavens, the heaven and the earth.

There are passages in which we find both the singular and plural appear. Matt. 24:29 is one of these. "And the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

Care must be exercised in distinguishing between general and specific terms. For example, Matt.18:18 states, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." The word here is general, and the thought is that whatever they bind on earth shall be bound above the earth, but no definite place as to where these things are bound is given. However, if we desire to know just where these things are bound, we can turn to Matt. 16:19 which is more explicit and the exact sphere is given. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in the heavens" (Correct Translation).

Taking these two verses together it would seem that "heaven" and "heavens" are simply two names for the same place. But this is not true. We use the term man in speaking of the human race. This term includes women, but it would be ridiculous to try to prove from this that there is no distinction between man and woman.

So to sum up we would say that heaven is a specific term meaning the realm of the birds and stars; it is also a generic or general term used in referring to any sphere or all spheres above the earth. The term heavens is a specific term and is used only in connection with that sphere which is above the realm of the birds and stars. Presented to the eye it is as below.

**FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS
HEAVENS
HEAVEN
EARTH**

(Continued , Vol. I, No. 9)

ABRAHAMIC OLD AND NEW COVENANTS

(Continued from Vol. I, No. 7)

If Israel had kept the law given at Mount Sinai they would have become a clean channel for the blessings of God that these blessings might flow through them out to all nations. This must yet come to pass, for only in this way can God fulfill His oath bound covenant to Abraham. It was always God's desire to bless them, and bless the world through them. So at Sinai He proposed a covenant, which if they had kept, would have made it possible for Him to fill the earth with His glory through them. This great fact is set forth in Numbers 14.

From the day the law was given, to the time of their arrival at Kadesh Barnea, they had failed God again and again. At Kadesh Barnea their unbelief rose to such great heights that they determined to return to Egypt. When Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb tried to dissuade them, all the congregation desired to stone them. But, before this could be done the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee, a greater nation and mightier than they." Num. 14:11-12.

But Moses would not hear to this because he felt that it would, in the eyes of the Egyptians, reflect upon the ability of God to complete the thing which He had begun . So he prays for their forgiveness.

"Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou has forgiven this people from Egypt even until now." Num. 14:19.

The Lord heard the prayer of Moses and pardoned once more the sin of Israel. But in connection with this He makes a statement of great importance. .

"And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word: But as truly as I live, ALL THE EARTH SHALL BE FILLED WITH THE GLORY OF THE LORD." Num.14:20-21.

God had promised before, that in blessing He would bless the seed of Abraham, and then all nations through this seed. To fill the earth with His glory apart from doing it through the seed of Abraham would violate His promise. But the seed of Abraham had failed miserably in keeping the covenant, and they are not a fit channel for His blessings to flow through. He would "kill all the people as one man," and then make a new beginning with Moses, and through him raise up a new seed of Abraham. However, in answer to the prayer of Moses, He forgives Israel, but states that as truly as He lives He will fill the earth with His glory. If He must do it through Abraham's seed, then He will bring that seed into such a state that they will be a proper channel for His blessings. How will He do it? Before Israel enters into the place of blessing (the Kingdom) she must pass under a rod of chastisement that will make her ready to accept her King. This rod of chastisement is the time of Jacob's trouble.

Now to return to our consideration of the Old Covenant, we find that when the law was given, the people answered with one voice and said: **"All the words which the Lord hath said will we do:" Exodus 24:3.** It has been taught that Israel made a serious mistake in accepting the law. But if we turn to **Deuteronomy 5:27 28** we discover that such teaching is erroneous.

"Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it and do it.

"And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: THEY HAVE WELL SAID ALL THAT THEY HAVE SPOKEN."

Yes, well said was all that they had spoken. If they could only have done all that the Lord said unto them, it would have made them a kingdom of priests to all other nations, and the channel for the blessings of God to all people. But there was one thing wrong, one thing stood in the way, one thing held up the whole divine program.

"O that there were such a HEART in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever." Deut. 5:29.

Here God puts His finger on the one thing that spoiled all. It was their heart that was wrong. Their hearts as individuals made up the heart of the nation. It was not in their heart to keep the law of God. If they ever keep it, if they ever become a kingdom of priests, if they ever become the channel of God's blessing, it will demand a different heart. And this new heart becomes the great theme of the NEW COVENANT. This we consider in our next issue

(Continued Vol. I , No. 9)

THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS

****Five hundred new names are desired for our sample list. We will send the magazine for three months to any names you send in. Be sure that you send correct and complete addresses. Third class mail is not forwarded, and no directory service is given by the Post Office.

****The address of Mr. Wilfred C. Mills is 112 Wick Hail, Hove, Sussex, England. We are sure that he will be glad to correspond with any of our readers concerning any questions his articles may bring to mind. He is the father of J. Eustace Mills.

****More requests have been received during this month than any previous month. We are glad to add Mexico, Bulgaria and Argentine to the list of countries where we have regular readers.

****The first article of the series on "The Pentecostal Administration" will be in the next issue.

****You are not presuming on our time when you write to us, and we are happy to answer briefly as we have time. We feel that it is important that we keep in touch with our readers, for in doing so we can learn your thoughts, questions and difficulties. Thus we can be of more help to all as we prepare the articles for the magazine.

****Back numbers (2-3-4-5-6-7) are available. Send at least two cents in stamps for each number desired.

*****The Fellowship of The Mystery* - - We are happy to bring to the attention of all of our readers the witness in West Allis, Wisconsin. Called the FIRST WARD MISSION, after the political subdivision in which it is located. It is not far from the heart of Milwaukee, and the hall can be reached easily by all who reside in the Milwaukee district. The address is 61 27 West Greenfield. Mr. Ed. C. Schattschneider is the energetic and faithful minister. He is known as a man who puts into practice that which he believes. We commend this testimony to the attendance of all in the Milwaukee district, and to the prayers of all everywhere who love the truth of the Mystery.

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