

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The theme of the Bible is the kingdom of God. This statement is made in full recognition of the fact that Christ fills its pages, that He is the crown of its revelation, and that all Scripture points to Him. He is the personality set forth as the principal actor. He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Lord Jesus Christ of the New. Nevertheless, its main subject from beginning to end is the kingdom of God. This is its central idea, and the concept that embraces its total message. This is the truth that is found in one- form or another throughout the length and breadth of God's holy Word. To understand what is meant by the kingdom of God is to hold the key that will unlock its treasures.

Any book that makes sense, any book that conveys a message, must have a central idea, a theme, a plot. When men make the claim, as many do, that the Bible is a confusing book, and that it has no relevancy to the present time, it may be that they have missed altogether its central theme. As long as men regard it as being nothing more than a 'book of moral instruction, a compendium of religious observances, or a handbook of church customs and practices, it is bound to be a confusing book.

On the title page of my own Bible I have written, "The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God: This is what I believe it to be. And in this great revelation of the kingdom of God, we find Jesus Christ as its divine center.

The actual term "the kingdom of God" is not found in the Old Testament. But this does not mean the truth concerning it is not there. In fact, it is in the Old Testament that the thousand-and-one ideas are set forth that are later subsumed under the great designation, "the kingdom of God."

If we ask, When will Genesis 3:15 be fulfilled? When will He who is the seed of the woman overwhelm the head of the serpent and overcome all iniquity at its very source? there is only one possible answer. This is the initial act that brings the kingdom of God upon this earth. How else can

God's kingdom be a reality if He does not overwhelm all wickedness where it starts its flow? Yes, the very first promise in the Word of God has *to* do with the kingdom of which Jesus Christ is the divine center.

When the Lord Jesus "came **into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand**", (Mark 1:14, 15) He did not need to define this term. He was proclaiming something that was known and understood by every Israelite. He was announcing the immanency of that condition of things upon the earth that the prophets of old had already set forth. It was not a new concept. It was an ancient body of truth summed up in a neat descriptive term, "the kingdom of God."

The disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ were exhorted to give the kingdom of God first place in their lives (Matt. 6:33). It was the kingdom of God that Christ proclaimed when He began His public ministry (Mark 1:14). Its proclamation was the work God had commissioned (*apostello*) Him to do (Luke 4:43). It was the kingdom of God that He proclaimed and demonstrated in every city (Luke 8:1). It was the message that the twelve were sent forth to herald (Luke 9:2), and it was the truth that the seventy were told to proclaim (Luke 10:9). His disciples were taught to pray for its coming (Luke 11: 2). It was the hope and destiny of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets (Luke 13: 28). It was waited for by Joseph, that good man who arranged for the entombment of the Lord Jesus (Luke 23:50,51).

In the ministry of the Lord Jesus the kingdom of God is the subject of the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:19), of the tares among the wheat (Matt. 13:24), of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31), of the leaven (Matt. 13:33), of the hid treasure (Matt. 13:44), of the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:45,46), of the net cast into the sea (Matt. 13:47), of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1), of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22:2), of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1), and of the seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26).

The kingdom of God was the subject of the ministry of Jesus Christ in the forty days that elapsed between His resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3). It was the message of Philip when he first went to the Samaritans (Acts 8:12).

The Ministry of Paul

When all the facts are faced there can be no doubt but that the kingdom of God was the theme of Paul's ministry. It was the hope he held out to those whom He had brought to Christ (Acts 14:22). It was the subject of his ministry in the synagogue in Ephesus (Acts 19:8), and his entire ministry over the space of three years in Ephesus is described as proclaiming the kingdom of God (Acts 20:25). And it was because he had proclaimed it that he was able to say he had "not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). It also made it possible for him to say that he was pure from the blood of all men (Acts 20:26, 27).

The kingdom of God was Paul's message during the full day (from morning till evening) that he met with the chief of the Jews in Rome (Acts 28:23). It was at the close of this day that God declared by the lips of Paul the momentous words recorded in Acts 28:28. These words signal the beginning of God's administration of absolute grace. Nevertheless, the kingdom of God was Paul's message in the two years of which we have record after Acts 28: 28 (Acts 28:31). And here the proclamation of the kingdom of God is vitally linked up with teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, even as in Acts 28:23, and in Acts 8:12. In Acts 20:24 and 25, proclaiming the kingdom of God is equivalent to and is used interchangeably with testifying to the gospel of the grace of God.

Paul's words in 1 Cor. 6:9, 10, 1 Thess. 2:12 and 2 Thess. 1:5 make it plain that the kingdom of God was both the hope and destiny of those addressed in these epistles. Ephesians 5:5, Colossians 4:11, 2 Timothy 4:1 and 18 give witness to the truth that the kingdom of God remained the hope and expectation proclaimed by Paul until the close of his ministry.

Indeed, the kingdom of God is the grand central theme of all Scripture. So much so that the man who has no knowledge of the kingdom of God has no real knowledge of the Bible, no matter how many bits and pieces of the Word he may have collected. To make sense these bits and pieces must sooner or later be related to a central theme. If they are related to Christ, this is still not the end. If His glories' revealed in the Word are considered we will always come to the kingdom of God of which He is the divine center.

The one who is not instructed in the kingdom of God will never understand the parables, for this is what most of the parables is about. Furthermore, the one who does not study the kingdom of God is not studying the Bible, and he who is not preaching and teaching the kingdom of God is not preaching and teaching the Word of God. Those who fail to proclaim the truth concerning it are not declaring the whole counsel of God. They cannot honestly claim to be "pure from the blood of all men."

In view of the important place that the kingdom of God has in the Bible, one would think that this term would be often upon the lips of all whose lives have been shaped by God's book, and that it would have a very large place in the writings of those men who claim to be expounding and teaching the Word of God. But, alas, it is not. One can only be amazed at the small place that is given to this theme among believers, and the writings of many Bible-teachers will be searched in vain for any mention of it. The indexes to their writings will show that the treatment of it is meager indeed. This is especially true of those classed as dispensationalists.

Before me is the index of one Bible-study magazine that covers twenty volumes and represents twenty years of writing. In this the references to the kingdom of God can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and when these are traced out the material is so little that one can only conclude that the neglect was intentional. And the indexes to another Bible-study publication covering a period of fifty years show an almost total neglect of this subject. Lacking an index I have leaved through four years (24 issues) of another publication, but I cannot find any treatment whatsoever of the kingdom of God. It seems to be the policy of these Editors to keep the kingdom of God out of their written ministry, never mention it, treat it with scorn and contempt, ignore it and maybe it will go away.

In regard to this I would appropriate the words of James and say, "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Furthermore, there should be no such things as books that claim to deal with the parables which consistently ignore that the subject of these parables is the kingdom of God.

Careless Interpretations

Beyond all question, the Biblical doctrine of the kingdom of God has suffered greatly from the careless interpretation of many passages in which truth concerning it is found, by inadequate and erroneous definitions of Biblical terms, and by lines of teaching that are contrary to the revealed truth concerning it. These things are especially true among those classified as dispensationalists, for it has been these more than anyone else who have created much confusion by trying to differentiate between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. I believe the time has come when we must consider this with great care.

The position of those who make such a distinction is capably set forth by Lewis Sperry Chafer in his *Systematic Theology* (Vol. 4, page 26).

That form of interpretation which rides on occasional similarities and passes over vital differences is displayed by those who argue that the kingdom of heaven, as referred to in Matthew, must be the same as the kingdom of God since some parables regarding the kingdom of heaven are reported in Mark and Luke under the designation, *the kingdom of God*. No attempt is made by these expositors to explain why the term kingdom of heaven is used by Matthew only, nor do they seem to recognize the fact that the real difference between that which these designations represent is to be discovered in connection with the instances where they are not and cannot be used interchangeably rather than in the instances where they are interchangeably. Certain features are common to both the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, and in such instances the interchange of the terms is justified. Closer attention will reveal that the kingdom of heaven is always earthly while the kingdom of God is as wide as the universe and includes as much of earthly things as are germane to it. Likewise the kingdom of heaven is entered by a righteousness exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees (Matt. 5:20), while the kingdom of God is entered by a new birth (John 3:1-16).

I, for one, do not want to be guilty of riding on "occasional similarities" while ignoring "vital differences." Nevertheless, I have the firm conviction that the terms "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" are two names for the same thing and that they are identical in every respect. Furthermore, I believe there are sound explanations as to why the term "kingdom of heaven" is used only by Matthew. And I also know that there is no explanation as to why he is the only one who uses it if we accept the position that this term expresses something unique. Can it be that this term is a distinct truth of great importance on which no writer has anything to say save Matthew? Not in the least. Mark and Luke present the same truth under title of the kingdom of God.

Since the only proper approach to the New Testament is through the Old, it is illogical to interpret anything in Matthew without giving due consideration to revelations of truth in the Hebrew scriptures that directly bear upon the subject.

In Daniel 4 in connection with God's dealing with Nebuchadnezzar, we read "that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the 'basest of men.'" Dan. 4:17. The only kingdom on earth at that time was that of Nebuchadnezzar, and the most High determined to let him know that no matter how much liberty He permitted him, He still had the sovereignty and had set him over it. God took him off the throne, caused him to be insane for seven years, then restored him to it with greater majesty than ever before.

When Daniel interpreted the vision he reiterated the declaration "till you know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men", but as he continues he declares "after thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule" (Dan. 4:26). Later the declaration concerning the most High is repeated (4:32). Thus we have it in this one chapter:

"the most High ruleth" Dan. 4:17

"the most High ruleth" Dan. 4 :25

"the heavens do rule" Dan. 4:26

"the most High ruleth" Dan. 4:32

These four statements express identical truth. There is an easy change from "the most High" to "the heavens". This is because these two terms are identical. They can be used interchangeably. No matter what other meanings it may have, the term "the heavens" in the Old Testament is used as a descriptive title of the Deity. It is also used in this way in many places in Matthew's Gospel. There is no difference in meaning between the terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of the heavens" (as it always reads in the Greek).

In Matthew 4:12, 17 we are told that after John was cast into prison, "from that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mark, in reporting the same incident, says that He preached "the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). If these two terms are identical, then there is no problem. But if these terms describe two different concepts, it becomes necessary to ask which one is the true or most accurate report.

This is usually explained by saying that the kingdom of God is a universal sphere of which the kingdom of heaven is a definite part, that is, the kingdom which God will set up in Israel. But this explanation is fraught with serious difficulties. Let us consider two statements as an illustration: (1) He spoke of the rugged mountains in the United States. (2) He spoke of the rugged mountains in Colorado. Either one of these statements can be true, since Colorado is a part of the United States, but it still leaves the question-Just what mountains did he speak about? Which report is the most accurate?

In Matthew 5:3 the Lord Jesus said, **"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."** But in Luke 6:20 we read that He said, **"Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God."**

In Matthew 8:11 the Lord Jesus places Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Luke, in reporting the same incident, says that He placed them in the kingdom of God (Luke 13:28). There is no difficulty here if these two terms are identical, but it is careless reporting if they are not.

Matthew reports that when the Lord Jesus sent forth the twelve, He told them to "go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (10:7). Luke says He sent them to preach the kingdom of God (9:2). If these are two different concepts, one limited and the other unlimited, then which concept were they to proclaim.

Again Matthew reports that the Lord Jesus spoke of those who were "least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 11:11), while Luke reports that He said "least in the kingdom of God" (Luke 7:28).

Matthew quotes the Lord as saying that the parables have to do with "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 13:11), while both Mark (4:11) and Luke (8:10) say that they have to do with "the mysteries of the kingdom of God."

Matthew reports that the Lord said, "the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed" (13:31), while Mark says He declared it to be a likeness of "the kingdom of God" (4:30-32).

Matthew quotes the Lord as saying "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven" (13:33) but Luke reports the Lord as saying it is a likeness of the kingdom of God (Luke 13:20-21).

In all these passages, if these two terms are identical, if they mean the same thing, then there are no problems, but if they set forth two different concepts, they present problems that cannot be solved. I believe they are synonymous.

In one place the Lord used these two terms interchangeably. After His conversation with the rich young ruler, He said to his disciples:

Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Matt. 19:23, 24.

In this passage the two terms are dearly synonymous. We will do well to follow the example of our Lord and use them this way.

Why Two Terms

It is well known that the reverence of the Jewish people for God led them to avoid the use of the divine name as much as possible and to substitute other expressions. A very common substitute was "Heaven", even as it is yet today in English (note: "an appeal to Heaven", "Heaven help us", "Heaven only knows"). The prodigal son said, "**Father, I have sinned against heaven**" (**Luke 15:21**). The Lord Jesus asked the Jews "**The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men**" (**Matt. 21:35**). G. Dalman points out rabbinic usage in such phrases as "by the hand of heaven," "the name of heaven," "the word of heaven," "the mercy of heaven," and "the decrees of heaven."

Matthew, writing his gospel with the Jews primarily in mind, made use of this substitution in order to make his language as appealing to them as possible. We merely create confusion when we try to imagine differences of meaning in these two terms.

It is the suggestion of E. W. Bullinger in *The Companion Bible*: "that in all the passages where the respective expressions occur, identical words were spoken by the Lord, 'the kingdom of heaven'; but when it came to putting them into *Greek*, Matthew was Divinely guided to retain the figure of speech *literally* (heaven), so as to be in keeping with the special character, design, and scope of his Gospel; while, in the other Gospels, the figure was translated as being what it also meant, 'the Kingdom of God'."

The point of distinction raised by Dr. Chafer that "the kingdom of heaven is entered by a righteousness exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees while the kingdom of God is entered by a new birth" is a fatuous argument that is destructive of his own position. If the kingdom of heaven is a subdivision of the kingdom of God, can the lesser be entered without coming into the greater? Furthermore, the Lord was not telling His disciples that all it took to get them into the kingdom of heaven was a righteousness that exceeded that of the Pharisees. He is stating a preliminary condition. Even as if I should say, "Except a man be a natural born citizen he cannot be elected President of the United States." The same is true of "generated from above" (*gennethe anothen*) in regard to entering the kingdom of God.

Thus, after the most careful consideration in which no stone has been left unturned in the search for the truth in regard to this matter, it is my conviction and teaching that the terms "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" are identical in meaning and can be used interchangeably by the teacher of God's Word without harming in the least His revelation of truth. However, since I feel no need in my ministry of using a term that will not give offence to the feeling of the Jewish people, I habitually use the term "the kingdom of God" except in places where I am quoting Scripture verbatim.

The Meaning of Kingdom

The Greek word translated "kingdom" is *basileia*. This being true the problem to be solved is not what the word *kingdom* means, but what the Greek word *basileia* means. The word *kingdom* is a word 10 a living language that has undergone quite a few changes since it was enshrined in the King James Version over 350 years ago. The word *basileia* belongs to first century Greek, which has become a fixed or dead language, and its meaning must be settled by its usage at that time.

That the basic, fundamental idea in the word *basileia* is government is a fact that becomes increasingly obvious the more this word is studied. That it is an abstract word, not concrete, is another fact that must be accepted. If it is ever used in the concrete (and I question if it is) as denoting a realm governed, it is a figurative use. Such occurrences should not be used to determine

its primary meaning. (See Vol. XV, No. 4 of THE WORD OF TRUTH for a detailed study of *basileia*).

Thus, that which is called the kingdom of God in the *King James Version* is actually the government of God or God's government. This being true there are many things recorded in Scripture that can be properly called "the kingdom of God" when we understand this term to mean God's government. For example, when God set two great lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night (Gen. 1:17, 18) we have a clear example of God's government in action. The sovereignty of (the right to govern) the universe belongs to God, and He reserves to Himself the right to govern in all matters, even setting someone or something to govern or rule under Himself.

Later, after the creation of man we find Him declaring a certain prohibition in regard to eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is also God acting in government, exercising His sovereignty, and His act can be properly described as the government of God. And we could go on through the Old Testament and point out a thousand things such as these, all of which can be called the government of God.

In view of these facts, no objection can be raised if it is said that the government (kingdom) of God is the sovereignty of God, that it is moral, that it is universal, that it existed from the beginning, and will know no end, that it is over all and embraces all. However, this conception is not what Jesus Christ was proclaiming when He came into Galilee heralding the gospel of the kingdom of God. This is not what He meant when He said **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand"** (Mark 1:14, 15).

Every careful Bible student knows that this very term, which can have many applications, is applied to a definite time in history when certain conditions will prevail and the character of divine rule will be of such nature that this time above all other times is worthy of being called the kingdom (government) of God. No matter how much or in what ways God has governed (exercised His sovereignty) in the past, no matter what events in the past may be pointed out as evidences of divine government in action, a time is coming when God is going to govern this earth and men upon it in such manner that it will be unlike anything He has ever done before. Even as it is written:

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. Isaiah 64:4.

This is what Joseph was waiting for when he waited for the kingdom of God (Luke 23:51).

Thus to enter into the kingdom of God is not simply to come under God's sovereignty, for we are always under it and there is no place that man can flee to get away from it. However, even though we are under God's sovereignty we will err grievously if we adopt the idea that God is always exercising His sovereignty to the fullest extent over all things at all times. This is the view of many, and they are usually ready with a proof text from Ephesians which says that God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11). They insist that "all things" means everything, the evil as well as the good, but they steadfastly refuse to recognize the true meaning of *ta panta*, the meaning established by Paul himself in Colossians 3:8 where it manifestly means "all these" and has reference to things set forth in the context. The idea that everything is fully controlled and governed by God at all times is the great mental stumbling block that stands in the road of men seeing, understanding, and believing the truth that this world will yet be fully governed by God and that this time of divine rule is called the kingdom of God.

We need to remember that there are such things as sovereignty and the exercise of sovereignty, as authority and the exercise of authority, as power and the exercise of power. We have clear evidence of this in the words of Paul spoken in Lystra, that in times past God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways (Acts 14:16). He did not exercise His sovereignty once He gave them their freedom.

In Revelation 11:17 we read of the twenty-four elders saying:

We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned.

The King James Version here is somewhat inexact. The tenses are very important. A more accurate rendering of the Greek would be: **"For thou hast taken to thyself thy great power and you do govern" (ebasileusas) .**

To His disciples the Lord Jesus, after His resurrection, declared that all authority (*exousia*) had been given unto Him in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:19). Power (*dunamis*) is that which comes from authority that has been given. Thus we see in these passages the authority given, the power taken and both being exercised. The time will come when Jesus Christ will take to Himself His great power and will govern the earth and all men upon it. When He does, this will be the kingdom of God. And it is quite evident from the position of this in the book of Revelation that it precedes the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. This is one more reason why I believe in and teach the pre-advent kingdom of God, a long period of divine government which will come before the return of Jesus Christ to be personally present for a thousand years.

The old rabbis used a term to describe this, one that is quite fitting and which we will do well to adopt and use. They called this "the manifest kingdom of God", and linked it up with all the glorious promises found in their sacred scriptures.

This act of God in taking to Himself His great power and governing the earth was spoken of prophetically in Psalm 93. Let us consider its majestic words.

Psalm 93

THE LORD REIGNETH - Rotherham understands the Hebrew here to mean "Jehovah hath become King." Delitzsch understands it as "Jehovah is now King", and Kirkpatrick, "Jehovah hath proclaimed Himself King." Rotherham says this "tells of nothing less than an especial assumption of sovereignty by Jehovah Himself." Maclaren says this "describes an act rather than a state", and that He has "become King by some specific manifestation of His sovereignty." He shows the world by some definite deed that His government has begun.

HE IS CLOTHED IN MAJESTY - The Hebrew says "In majesty hath He clothed Himself." His coronation has been by His own hands. No others have arrayed Him in royal robes. The trappings of men will not suffice for Him. He clothes Himself in majesty, that manifest quality which inspires awe and reverence.

THE LORD IS CLOTHED WITH STENGTH, WHEREWITH HE HATH GIRDED HIMSELF - The inspired Psalmist repeats the important thought that Jehovah has clothed Himself, not only with majesty but with strength or power.

THE WORLD ALSO IS STABLISHED THAT IT CANNOT BE MOVED - This should read "He has founded the world, it shall not be shaken." Here we have one of the most important features of the kingdom of God, an established order. This is spoken of in Eph. 1:4 where we are told that we have been chosen to a place of special service in that order prior to its founding

THY THRONE IS ESTABLISHED OF OLD - This is literally "Thy throne is established from then," that is, from that moment that He assumes sovereignty and begins His manifest reign.

THOU ART FROM EVERLASTING - This grand climax really says, "From you is the flow (olam)" or it may be that the flow is personalized, "The flow is you." The kingdom is produced upon earth by God flowing out and flowing down.

THE FLOODS HAVE LIFTED UP, O LORD - The word floods here should be *streams*, and the idea is that Jehovah's streams are at flood stage. The prayer of Amos is being answered, judgment is running down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. (Amos 5:24).

THE FLOODS HAVE LIFTED UP THEIR VOICE; THE FLOODS LIFT UP THEIR WAVES - This should read, "The streams have lifted up their voice, the streams lift up their crashing." There is a testimony, a voice in all the outflowings of Jehovah. He makes known His salvation; His righteousness will He show openly in the sight of the nations (Psa. 98:2).

THE LORD ON HIGH IS MIGHTIER THAN THE NOISE OF MANY WATERS, YEA, THAN THE MIGHTY WAVES OF THE SEA - Rotherham translates this: "Beyond the voices of many waters, more majestic than the breakers of the sea, Majestic on high is Jehovah." He is the source of the mighty flow that produces and sustains all the blessed conditions that will prevail in the kingdom of God. The Source is always greater than the outflow. Maclaren feels that we see here "Jehovah's triumphant subjugation of rebellious men (breakers of the sea), which is one manifestation of His kingly power. The shriek of the storm, the dash of the breakers will be hushed when He says 'Peace', and the highest toss of their spray does not wet, much less shake, His stable throne."

THY TESTIMONIES ARE VERY SURE - or "Thy testimonies are confirmed with might."

HOLINESS BECOMETH THINE HOUSE, O LORD - Holiness is an attribute of Jehovah's house, and it will be to "length of days."

To Be Continued

WHAT IS AN *EON*

(Continued from Vol. XV, No.5)

In previous studies it has been set forth that the basic idea in the Hebrew word *olam* and the Greek word *aion* is that of flow, something flowing. However, it must be remembered that this is only a start, for any inclusive definition of these words is impossible. These are such complex words, and subject to so many applications that the basic idea set forth as a starting point may at first seem to add to the confusion rather than to dispel it. Some have taken the ideas of flow, flower, and flowing and have tried to insert them into the passages where these words are found, only to meet with disappointment. They do not seem to fit, so now they wonder what is wrong. The mistake they have made can best be set forth by an illustration.

The word *RED* in the English language means primarily a color. Since it is a noun it can be singular or plural, for there are many reds ranging from pink to crimson. Thus these three letters, *RED*, stand for a fundamental color which appears at the lower end of the visible spectrum. This definition of the word *red* cannot be questioned or disputed.

Even though this is true, if in the reading of books, magazines and papers we should try to carry this basic definition into all occurrences we would find ourselves in great confusion. Note the following sentences:

The reds backed down on Cuba (Communists).

He plays with the Reds (ball-players).

She wore her red (a dress).

He rode the big red (a horse).

Last month we were in the red (a loss).

His face was red (embarrassed).

His face was red (angry).

The ashes were red (an incandescent glow).

A country alive with reds (Indians).

The reds in the petrified wood of Arizona (tint).

Many more examples could be given, but of those above it can be seen that the basic definition does not suffice in understanding these sentences. However, these are derived and idiomatic usages of the word *red* and everyone of them can easily be traced back to the primary meaning of *red*, and only by so doing can these words be fully understood.

Even so it is with the words *olam* and *aion*. No matter how many derived and idiomatic meanings these words may have, they can always be traced back to the basic meaning of flow, flower, or flowing.

Most lexicons, one following another, tell us that *olam* means "concealed" and then by a quick bit of sleight-of-hand go on to add "duration", making it to mean "concealed duration." This is a gratuitous addition which has no basis in fact. For while it is readily admitted that *olam* has the idea of conceal or hide in it, there is no idea of duration that is automatic in its meaning. And it is not at all strange that this word should be taken to represent the great number of ideas that are related to something that is flowing.

When one sees a river, he sees only the part that is visible, and as his eye seeks to look backward to the source it becomes hid in obscurity. I have seen rivers from planes where it seemed that the whole system was visible, yet unperceivable were the innumerable drops of water from the sky or the thousands of springs from the earth that have combined to make this great flow of water. This is also true of an artesian well or a free flowing spring. The outflow can be seen and enjoyed, the source and channels are never visible. They are concealed.

It is only when we see this idea of flow or flowing in the word *aion* that we will be able to ferret out the reasons for many seemingly strange uses made of it by classical Greek writers. For example it is used of a persons lifetime, his period of existence. This is because he becomes a part of the great river of mankind, flows along with it for a period of time, then is removed from it. Considered over the whole, life flows on from day to day, and we are even as drops of water that fall upon and become a definite part of a great river. It is also used of a generation, but the reason for this is obvious when we think of men flowing on from generation to generation since the creation of Adam. It is also used of the spinal cord or the spinal marrow, and when we consider that the impulses from the brain flow down into the spinal cord and from this through other nerve branches out to every

extremity of the body, one can see that this description is most appropriate. In fact it would be quite proper and fitting to say that the head is a great eon because it flows out into the spinal cord in nervous impulses. Then the spinal cord becomes an eon because it flows out into other nerves which also can be called eons since they flow into still other nerves until they have reached their extremity.

One of the most important uses of *eon* in the Bible is as a name or designation for that condition of things and that character of things which will yet be manifest upon this earth which is commonly called the kingdom of God. In other words, the manifest kingdom, that which a theologian would call the eschatological kingdom, is in many places in the New Testament simply called "the eon." This is not strange at all since that condition of things is produced upon the earth by God in Christ flowing out and flowing down in many, many streams each one producing its divine beneficent effect upon the earth and those upon it.

This can be seen in two passages from the prophecy of Isaiah, the first of which describes conditions upon the earth in the day that God governs.

The whole earth is at rest and is quiet: they break forth in singing. Isa.14:7.

These words set forth the peace, the quietness, the security and the joy that will prevail when God governs the earth. And if we ask how this blessed condition is brought about, we find the answer in another passage which primarily concerns Israel:

For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream. Isa. 66:2.

That condition of life in all its manifestations which is yet to be upon this planet has many names, each one being a descriptive word or phrase.

It is called "the kingdom of God", for God will be governing the world as He has never governed it before.

It is called "**the regeneration**" (Matt. 19:28) for there will be a re-creation of the social order and the renewal of the earth.

It is called "**the judgment**" (Matt. 12:42) for God will show judgment to the nations and His judgments will be in the earth.

It is called "**the resurrection**" (Matt. 22:30) for it will be characterized by men coming forth from the dead.

It is called "**the day of Christ**", for He will be having His day.

It is called "**the day of the eon**" (2 Peter 3:18) for it is characterized by the outflowing of God in Christ.

And it is simply called "the eon" since it is produced by, regulated by, and maintained by all that flows out from God. It is the day when judgment will run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5:24), when peace will be as a river and righteousness as the waves of the sea (Isa. 48:18), when the skies pour down righteousness (Isa. 45:8).

Eon In The New Testament

At this point we are ready to examine every passage in the New Testament where the Greek word *aiōn* is found. In doing this the reference will be given, this will be followed by the exact Greek phrase in which the word is found, the King James translation will be given, and this will be followed by comments and a resultant version of the vital portion of the passage. For this to be of any value the reader will need to have his Bible open to each passage referred to.

Matt. 6:13. The Greek here reads *eis tous aionas*, and is rendered "for ever." This passage is of doubtful authority, not being found in the best of ancient manuscripts. At this point it will be well to note and examine the fact that out of 128 occurrences of the word *aion* in the New Testament it is found in vital connection with the word *eis* in 79 of these passages. This demands some consideration of the meaning of this word. That *eis* is a preposition used with the accusative case is a simple fact easily verified. Out of 1773 occurrences in the New Testament it is translated *into* 573 times, *to* 281, *unto* 207, *for* 140, *in* 138, and in many other ways. It has a great variety of applications and usages. That it means *into* cannot be questioned, but this puts upon us the task of finding what *into* means. In many places it means *for*, but this also demands that we know what *for* means. If any think these are simple words let him look up the word *for* in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and he will find that two-thirds of a column is given to it. Consider the following sentences:

He is dressing for dinner (as a preparation towards).
He is making plans for retirement (in view of).
He volunteered for the air force (having as a goal or object).
It was built for a home (to serve as).
An instrument for measuring speed (for the purpose of).
Write for a free catalog (in order to obtain).
My lawyer will act for me (in behalf of).
He shouted for joy (because of).
He was decorated for bravery (on account of).
He was a stickler for details (in regard to).
So much for that topic (in respect to).

Many more could be added but these are enough to demonstrate that we should not treat the word *for* as if it had only one simple meaning.

This is also true of the Greek word *eis*. Where it relates to time it can best be translated *for*, and where it deals with entering it should be translated *into*. However in all the places where it is used with *aion* it is not dealing with time or entrance, and should usually be translated "in respect to" or "in regard to:"

And we need also to recognize the causal use of *eis*, for just as *for* can mean "because of" even so can *eis*.' This use is seen in Matt. 12:41 where it is translated "at." The men of Nineveh repented at (because of, or as a result of) the preaching of Jonah.

In view of these facts if Matt. 6:13 is given a place in the text I would translate it, "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory in respect to the eons:'

Matt. 12:32. *Touto to aioni*, translated "this world:' At the time these words were spoken there was a definite flow of grace, mercy, forgiveness and blessing flowing forth from God through Christ. Nevertheless there was nothing in that flow or in the still greater flow to come that would bring forgiveness to those who committed this great sin. This should read "neither in this eon nor in that which is future:

Matt. 13:22. *Tau aionos*, translated "this world." This present flow of things, this evil eon, has its many cares and burdens, causing many anxieties. Even wealth, whether one has it or not can be very deceitful. It promises a satisfaction which it cannot and does not bring. This should read "the cares of this eon:

Matt. 13:39. Here we are told that the harvest is the *sunteleia tau aionos*, which is translated "the end of the world." At this point we will need to briefly consider the meaning of *sunteleia*, which is found six times in the Next Testament, is translated "end" in each occurrence, and is found each time in vital connection with *aion*. This word is formed from *sun* which means together, and *teleo* which means to finish—not in the sense of cessation but of accomplishment. The prefix *sun* does not weaken *teleo* in the least. It accelerates it, and gives the idea of a number of things coming together in accomplishment of a certain goal. It can best be translated "consummation."

The important thing to be noted in this passage is that it is not speaking of the present evil eon, for this will never have a *sunteleia*, that is, a consummation. Let no one misunderstand me here. This present evil eon will have an end, but it will never have a consummation. Even if it should go on another thousand years it will be the same old dreary flow of iniquity. It will flow on without meaning, without purpose, without result.

But the great eon that comes next is different. It will have meaning, purpose and result, and it will give meaning and purpose to the lives of all who live under it. It will consummate in a perfect condition that is ripe and ready for the personal presence (*parousia*) of Jesus Christ upon the earth.

To avoid misunderstanding, consider this illustration. The consummation of a woman's pregnancy is the birth of a living normal child. If it terminates in an abortion or miscarriage that would not be its consummation. Even so this present evil eon will terminate and cease to flow, but it will have no consummation. The next eon will consummate, and in so doing "it really never ends."

I would translate this passage "the harvest is the consummation of the eon."

Matt. 13:40, 49. The Greek in both of these passages reads *te sunteleia tau aionos* and is translated "the end of the world" but should read "the consummation of the eons." They both refer to the coming eon, for these are parables of "the kingdom of the heavens" and they are not parables about this present evil eon.

Matt. 21:19. *Eis ton aiona* which is translated "henceforward for ever", but should read "in respect to the eon." The action here toward the fig tree was intended to be a lesson to those in Israel who were producing no fruit. In order to be fruit-bearers in the coming eon they should have been producing fruit as the result of His ministry among them. The climate of His presence had made this fruit bearing possible even though it was ahead of season, but He found none. So they were doomed to be fruitless in respect to the coming eon, the kingdom of God that He was heralding. The kingdom of God was to be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. 21:43).

Matt. 24:3. The Greek here is *sunteleias tau aionos*. It is translated "the end of the world": but should read "the consummation of the eon." He had given them over a three year period extensive revelations concerning the eon of God's government, even revealing that under it they would sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. They would be rulers during that eon and carry great responsibility. As the visible symbols of God's government in Israel their responsibilities would greatly increase as the eon nears its consummation. They are asking about something they will need to know as the judges of Israel at that time. He fully answers their question, and we are permitted to listen in as He speaks to them. They ask not about two things, but only about one thing, the signs of His **parousia**, even the consummation of the eon. The eon of God's government consummates in the personal presence of Jesus Christ. His personal presence is the consummation of that eon. An enormous amount of work is required before the earth and its people will be ready for His presence. This work is accomplished by the outflowing of God during that period called the

kingdom of God.

The signs He gives them cannot possibly be signs of the close of this present evil eon. The twelve men who will see these signs and be guided by them are not even alive at present. We need to remember that these words were spoken to men who will be alive and upon the earth when these things take place. Nothing could be more direct than the personal pronouns used throughout this discourse.

Matt. 28:20. The Greek here reads *eos tes sunteleias tau aionos*. It is translated "even unto the end of the world", but should be read "until the consummation of the eon." This promise to be with them is not a promise of personal presence. Even in the Acts period when they went forth and proclaimed the word everywhere, the Lord was working with them and was confirming the word with signs following (Mark 16:20). And even so He will be with them in the kingdom eon when they do their great work of discipling all nations. These men are now in the state of death, and they will be raised from the dead if they ever perform the service that was promised unto them.

Mark 3:29. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona*, is ignored altogether by the translators, but should read "is having no forgiveness in respect to the eon." They will be excluded from all blessings that flow from God in that time.

Mark 4:19. Same as Matthew 13:22

Mark 10:30. *To aioni* is here translated "this world." The portion should read "and in the coming eon, eonian life." This is their portion in the coming eon, not just in that period of time, but under that condition of things.

Mark 11:14. Same as Matt. 21:19, which see.

Luke 1:33. The Greek here is *eis taus aionas*, is translated "for ever", but should read "in respect to the eons." If we should ask the question, "Who among the coming eons will be governing the house of Jacob?" we have the answer here.

Luke 1:55. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona* and is translated "for ever." Expositors have struggled with this passage for they have seen the impassibility of connecting "forever" with "He spoke." This problem is eliminated when it is properly translated "He spoke to our fathers-to Abraham and his seed in regard to the eon."

Luke 1:70. The Greek here is *apaionos* and is translated "since the world began." It should read "from *the* eon." It speaks of God's holy prophets who are from the eon, that is they were a part of the divine flow of truth. There is no definite article here before the word *eon*.

Luke 16:8. Here *aionos toutou* is translated "of this world", but should read "of this eon." The sons of this eon, that is, of this present flow of men and things, are those who are in full harmony with the present character of the world. Our hope is that we shall be sons of the earning eon and be in full harmony with the character of things produced by the outflowing of God.

Luke 18:30. Here *to aioni to erchomeno* is translated "the world to come" but should read "the eon, the one earning."

Luke 20:34,35. The sons of this eon (*aiones toutou*) marry and are given in marriage. These are purely human arrangements regulated by human governments. In many cases they do not work out, and produce little but sorrow. In this eon, under the present flow, marriages are not "made in heaven." They are made by men upon this earth, no matter how happy and successful they may be. But they who are accounted worthy to obtain that eon, (*tou atones ekeinou*) even the resurrection

from among the dead they will not marry and neither will they be given in marriage. This does not mean there will be no marital relationships. Men will become husbands and women will become wives, but this will not be based upon human arrangements. Marriages will then be "made in heaven", all unions will be at the permission and by the regulation of God's government, and men will know for the first time since Adam the total blessedness and complete joys of this divine arrangement. Remember, Adam never married, and Eve was never given in marriage, but they were husband and wife. Even so it will be under the eon to come.

John 4:14. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona*, and while it is commonly thought that this is translated by the word "never", a close examination of the text will show that it was simply ignored by the KJV translators. It should read "shall under no circumstances be thirsting in respect to the eon." However, this could mean "because of the eon." To thirst in regard to the eon is a true thirst, divinely created in the hearts of men. All men, except the depraved, long for those conditions that only God's government can bring. Jesus Christ will satisfy this thirst. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled. When righteousness comes down as a mighty stream, they will never again thirst in regard to the eon.

John 6:51. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona*, which is translated "for ever" but should read "in respect to the eon." Let us remember that the very eon which will bring life and blessings to many will also bring death to others. But he that partakes of Jesus Christ has the guarantee that he will live in respect to the eon.

John 6:58. This is also *eis ton aiona* and should read "in respect to the eon" the same as above.

John 8:35. There are two occurrences here, both read *eis ton aiona*, one is translated "for ever" and the other "ever." When the kingdom of God begins all men on earth come under God's rule. Those who qualify as sons of God will be given tenure and they will remain in respect to the eon. Those who are the slaves of sin have no promise of tenure. We are glad that God has predetermined us for a place as sons (Eph. 1:5).

John 8:51, 52. The Greek is the same in both of these. It reads *eis ton aiona*. The KJV translators have ignored this phrase in both passages. It is true there is a strong negative in both, but this is based upon *ou me* (not no) which they render "never", and I would render "under no circumstances." When the eon comes some men will be facing death in respect to it. This is their only prospect in regard to it. Jesus Christ promised that those who kept His word would not be facing death for the eon. We thank God for this word of assurance from His Son.

John 9:2. The Greek here is *ek tou aionos*, and is translated "since the world began", but should read "from out of the eon." The blind man knew that God in a measure had always been flowing out to man in many works of grace and mercy, and that many miracles had resulted. Yet he insists that there had never been one like this before, and this was evidence that the One who healed him was from God.

John 10:28. *Eis ton aiona* is again ignored by the KJV translators here. The Greek here may mean that they shall under no circumstances be perishing in respect to the eon, or it may mean because of the eon. Both are true, and my preference is toward the latter.

John 11:26. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona*, which is ignored by the KJV translators. It is evident they did not know what to do with this phrase. Some concordances are inclined to think that *aion* was translated "never" in these passages. But if this is so then what did they do with *ou me*? The promise here is that "everyone who is living and believing in Me shall under no circumstances be dying in respect to the eon." There is an ellipsis of thought in this passage which must be supplied from the context if it is ever properly understood. Martha said "I know that He will rise again in the

resurrection in **THE LAST DAY**" The term "the last day" is another name for the day of the manifest kingdom of God, another name for the eon. So in answer Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life: He who is believing in Me (when the eon begins) even if He should be dead, will be living: and whosoever is living and believing in Me (when the eon begins) shall under no circumstances be dying in respect to that eon." This is a hope that has no dispensational limits. It is the hope of every believer.

John 12:34. *Eis ton aiona* is here translated "for ever", but should read "in respect to the eon." The people said they had heard out of the law that the Christ is remaining in respect to the eon, meaning of course that He would be upon earth in respect to it. In this they were wrong, for He is not stationed on earth in connection with the coming eon. God has stationed Him at His own right hand among the most exalted, over above every sovereignty, authority, power, dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this eon but also in that which is to come (Eph. 1: 20, 21).

John 13:8. *Eis ton aiona* here is again ignored by the translators. What Peter actually said was that Christ should under no circumstances wash his feet in respect to the eon. I understand him to mean here "not even to gain the eon will I permit you to wash my feet."

John 15:16. The Greek here is *eis ton aiona*, it is translated "for ever", but should read "in respect to the eon", or, "in connection with." The promise is that the Spirit of truth will remain with them as a Paraclete (Advocate) in respect to the eon.

To Be Continued

*****8

THE INTERPRETATION OF EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS 1:11

. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: KJV.

In Him, in Whom also our lot is cast, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of Him who is executing all this according to the counsel of His will, TRV.

This is the passage that is usually pointed to as the epigrammatic proof of the idea that God is at present guiding, decreeing, and directing everything that happens in the entire universe. There is no such teaching in this passage, as we shall see.

IN HIM - The antecedent of this personal pronoun is "the Christ" of the previous verse. There it is "in the Christ", and here it is "in Him."

IN WHOM ALSO - This emphasis on the One all this is related to, continues to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. This is all in connection with Him, the One who is the center of God's great program.

OUR LOT IS CAST - This is the translation of one word in the Greek (*eklerothemen*, from *kleroo* which means to cast the lot). It cannot mean "we have obtained an inheritance." It could mean "we are given a lot", but the truth here is that we were assigned a lot (a place and portion) in Him, therefore, our lot is cast in Him. He is the One who will bring about a full knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the God of every grace, and our lot is cast with Him.

BEING DESIGNATED BEFOREHAND - This tells us that in that vast complex which will make up the eon to come and bring about the manifest kingdom of God upon the earth, we have been designated in advance as those whose particular service will be the extolling of the glory of His grace. We do not know all that this service involves, but we do know that it has to do with the revealing of the character of God. We are marked out beforehand for a place of service before God establishes His vast and complex order upon the earth.

ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF HIM - All this is harmonious with God's great purpose to establish a complete, divine arrangement or system upon this earth.

WHO IS EXECUTING - Or, who is operating.

ALL THIS - This is *ta panta*, which is a demonstrative expression, idiomatic in character, always referring to something that has just been mentioned or about to be mentioned. Here it refers collectively to all the works of God set forth in the context. If any prefer it could be translated "all these", as the translators have done in Col. 3:8.

ACCORDING TO THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL - The fact that *counsel* and *will* are used here side by side is proof that they are not synonymous. In all this that God is executing He follows a plan that rests upon what He has willed. No one has been His counselor. (Rom. 11:34).

EPHESIANS 1:12

That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ, KJV.

To the end that we should be for the extolling of His glory, the ones who have hoped in advance in the Christ, TRV.

Up to this point the plural pronouns have been numerous, but they have all seemed to be simple and presented no problems. However, since in the next statement there is a sudden unexplained change from *we* to *ye*, we are faced with a major problem that carries back into every passage preceding this one which contains a plural pronoun. These should now be noted: "Hath blessed US" (3); "hath chosen US" (4); "that WE should be" (4); "having predestinated US" (5); "made US accepted" (6); "in whom WE have redemption" (7); "abounded toward US" (8); "made known unto US" (9); "WE have obtained" (11); "That WE should be" (12).

As noted before these passages seemed to present no difficulty, but when suddenly without warning or preparation Paul changes from *we* to *ye*, thus eliminating himself from the statement that is to be made, a difficulty is created that backs up and touches many previous passages. Yet at first glance he seems to say of the "ye" in verse 11 just what he says of the "we" in verse 12. However, this may be so only at first glance. It could be if we probe deeper we will find distinctions that differ.

It needs to be carefully noted once again that this letter is addressed to "all the saints, the ones being and believing in Christ Jesus." This would seem to be a general designation, and it is evident that Paul includes himself in this group. However, when we come to verse 13 we find that this group with which Paul has included himself is not the general company of all believers since Pentecost, but a unique special company of believers whose outstanding difference is such that Paul cannot include himself with them in every aspect. We need to determine the exact nature of this difference.

There is a great unrecognized truth in the New Testament which is unknown to most interpreters, but which is of the utmost importance to its proper understanding. Ignorance of or rejection of this truth has resulted in great confusion, leaving in its wake many questions, problems, and difficulties that will never be cleared away until this truth is known.

The truth referred to is the sudden appearance on earth of a great new and different company of believers in Christ Jesus. This company is not of the same calling as the 120 which assembled on the day of Pentecost, nor of the 3120 that composed it before that day was over. It is no part of that saved remnant of Israel (Rom. 9:27) or of the complement of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:25) which were represented by the good olive tree in the Acts period (Rom. 11:25). It is no part of the "tens of thousands of Jews that believed" in the Acts period (Acts 21: 20), nor is it any part of the "Gentiles that believed" of whom James spoke in Acts 21:25, for whom the believing Jews decreed certain things, they being subservient to them.

The appearance of this company was not accompanied by any of the great drama that was produced by the miracles seen on the day of Pentecost. This is in keeping with its character, since their lives were hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). In fact we would hardly know this company existed if it were not for the fact that Paul addressed two very important epistles to them - the so called epistle to the Ephesians which we are now studying and the properly called epistle to the Colossians.

This company is the result of the salvation-bringing message of God being made available to the nations, without any priorities or restrictions. These people became believers solely on the basis of an inspired written Word, not upon the basis of an inspired spoken Word which was confirmed by signs accompanying it.

God laid hold of Paul to be the revelator of the unique truths concerning this new company. And as he set forth the glories of God's purpose in this new calling, he was generated by the Spirit of God to lay hold of that for which he had been laid hold of by Christ Jesus. He was led to cast his lot with this new company. This change and all the steps leading to it are recorded for our learning in Philip-pians 3:4-14. Most expositors take the great change set forth here to be nothing more than the change that followed Paul's initial meeting with Jesus Christ on the Damascus road. The careful student of the Biblical record of Paul knows that this cannot be. Throughout the Acts period Paul gloried in the very things he counts as refuse when he wrote the Philippian epistle.

It is to this new company of believers that the Ephesian epistle is addressed. They are saluted as being saints and believers, and this is all that they were. If they had been more than this, Paul would have given honor to whom honor is due and addressed them as such. Paul identifies himself with this new company in all the plural pronouns up to verse twelve. The reason for the change will be set forth in the exposition.

TO THE END - The preposition *eis* which usually means "in respect to" is used here to state the purpose and the end in view.

THAT WE SHOULD BE - The "we" here is Paul and those to whom the epistle is addressed.

FOR THE EXTOLLING OF HIS GLORY - Here, and in verse 14, the words "of His grace" are omitted. This is probably by way of abbreviation since all three statements are found in the same sentence. This is our goal. This is our privilege and service when God founds His order upon the earth.

THE ONES WHO HAVE HOPED IN ADVANCE - The Greek word which is translated "have hoped in advance" is *proelpikotas* an inflection of *proelpizo*. This is a simple and honest rendering of this word. It adds nothing and revises nothing. It is formed from *pro* which means "before" and *elpis* which means "hope." Thayer says this word means "to repose hope in a person or thing before the event confirms it." This word has been tortured by translators to make it say things it cannot possibly mean.

That state of mind and heart which we call *hope* is something that is based upon and grows out of *trust*, and in relationship to Christ *belief* must precede both of these. The order is believing, trusting and hoping. As a rule the word *hope* is used as meaning something in mind as more or less certain to happen or come about. The verb means little more than to wish, as when one says, "I hope it will come to pass." But if it is said, "I have hope it will come to pass", then it means we are more or less certain that it will. The New Testament word *elpis* means much more than this. We can illustrate its meaning by considering that a little child hopes in its parents. It fully expects that food will be there when it is hungry, that shelter will be there by day and by night that love will be there when it is needed. Thus it feels secure in its parents. The idea of being secure and feeling secure is paramount in the idea of hoping in Christ. However the little child is not hoping in advance of the events that confirm that hope. The almost hourly experiences of its life confirm the reality of its hope.

Here we have the case of men believing, trusting, and hoping in Christ before any event confirms its. This was not true of the Acts period when God always confirmed the belief of a man by manifest evidences. "These signs shall follow them that believe" (Mark 16: 17) was written over every day of that period. The security they knew to be in Christ had its beginning in evident miracles and it continued to be sustained by the same. But here we have men believing, trusting, and hoping in advance. They have nothing to show for it. And a new revelation which has been given to Paul which has no events that confirm it makes it possible for him to cast his lot with this company.

IN THE CHRIST - Our hope, our expectation, our feeling of security must be only in God's Christ, and not in any event that confirms it. In Matt. 12:21 and Rom. 15:12 we read of a time to come when the nations will trust, that is, they will feel secure in the Christ. Their hope will be parallel with the events that confirm it. Our hope precedes the events.

EPHESIANS 1:13

In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, KJV.

In Whom you also *have hoped in advance* upon hearing the word of the truth, the good message of your salvation, in Whom even upon believing, you were sealed with the Spirit of the promise the holy One, TRV.

IN WHOM - There is no verb after this, and this has led to many ideas in respect to what the construction of this passage should be. The KJV supplies the verb "trusted" from verse 12, but this is only a part of the verb there as is seen in their rendering "first trusted". And as we have already seen this verb does not mean "trust" but "hope". I have supplied the words "have hoped in advance". There is an ellipsis here and the idea that is omitted should come only from the immediate context.

YOU ALSO - These words indicate a change, setting forth a limitation and direction of that which Paul is about to say. This is a device constantly used by speakers and writers, especially Paul (note 1 Cor. 3: 9). Paul is going to ascribe to this company a unique faith which he cannot ascribe to himself. And, let it be carefully noted, this is not found solely in the words "hoped in advance", for this was also true of Paul. It is found in the complete statement, "hoped in advance upon hearing the word of truth, the good message of their salvation." Their hope was the result of an act of faith that was unique in divine history. They had not seen, they had no evidence, and yet they believed. Their faith, trust, and hope was based entirely upon hearing the word of truth. All before them who had hoped in Christ had done so as the result of both seeing and hearing.

Paul could not say that he had believed upon hearing the word of truth. Great acts of God were the basis of his faith. Thus he must divorce himself from what he is about to say concerning this company of people. This company is the result of the salvation bringing message of God being made available to the nations. They are the first of whom it can be said without qualification- "Blessed are you because you have not seen and yet you have believed" (See John 20:29). We are of this same company. Let us stay with it and not seek to leave it.

HAVE HOPED IN ADVANCE - As noted before, these words are supplied to satisfy the ellipsis by bringing forward the thought expressed in the immediate context. We were chosen in Christ before the founding of God's great order so that we might perform an exalted service in it. Now we are found securely hoping in advance of its establishment.

UPON HEARING - Their belief in Him and its result, their hoping in Him, is a miracle of grace based entirely upon what they had heard. Compare their simple experience with all that Paul saw and heard on the Damascus road.

THE WORD OF THE TRUTH - What this "word of truth" is is made plain by the appositional (definitive) phrase that follows.

THE GOOD MESSAGE OF YOUR SALVATION - The word *euaggelion* used here can be translated "gospel", but it has been literally rendered as "good message" to emphasize that it is a *message* and that it is *good*. And the word *good* here does not mean that it is good to hear (like, good news), but that it is right and proper. A good medicine may not taste good. It is not inferred that the good message is not pleasant, but that is not the idea prominent in the word *good*.

There is a gospel, a good message, that is vitally related to anyone's salvation, and Paul becomes quite specific here and speaks of the one related to theirs.

IN WHOM, EVEN UPON BELIEVING - The Greek here (*pisteusantes*) expresses a fact that can best be expressed by supplying the word *upon*.

YOU WERE SEALED - Paul reveals a truth to them here that they, and also we, will have to take upon naked faith in the Word of God. Throughout the Acts period God had always accredited the faith of every believer by means of signs that followed. This is not the portion of those whose lives are hid with Christ in God. In that same period no man received the Spirit of God without some visible, manifest sign to indicate it. This is why Paul could question the maturity of those disciples of John the Baptist in Acts 19:2. Furthermore, the Spirit was usually received following faith in Christ and was dispensed by those commissioned by God to do so. See Acts 8:12-17, 9:17, 19:6, Gal. 3:5. These addressed in this epistle received the Spirit upon believing and by this same Spirit they were sealed. They could produce no visible evidence of this sealing, and neither can we. It is seen only by God. It is a token of His ownership. The eye of faith knows that it is there.

WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE PROMISE - This description of the Holy Spirit is not easy to understand. The Holy Spirit is called "the promise of the Father" in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4. Thus this could mean the Spirit that was promised by God.

THE HOLY ONE - There is a special emphasis here. The adjective has an article and thus becomes a definitive appellation.

EPHESIANS 1:14

Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. KJV.

Who is the earnest of our full portion in relation to the redemption of that which has been purchased for the extolling of His glory. TRV.

WHO IS THE EARNEST - The word here is *arrabon* which means anything given from one party to another as a pledge that an agreement will be kept. It could be either a part of the price to be received or a part of the thing to be possessed, given as the assurance that the full payment or the complete possession will follow. The Spirit which we now have guarantees the full delivery of the Spirit He has promised.

OF OUR FULL PORTION - or full allotment, in contrast with the earnest or part.

IN RELATION TO THE REDEMPTION - God has placed Himself in the position of a debtor who has paid earnest money. He will surely pay the remainder in full. It is good to know that in regard to the exalted service we are to perform, we will have the fullness of His Spirit.

OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION - He has bought us. We belong to Him. We are a people in regard to which God has acquired special rights for a special service.

FOR THE EXTOLLING OF HIS GLORY - This declares the end in view for us, the service we will render to God when He founds His vast and complex order. We shall be His, for the extolling of His glory in the day when He sets His jewels. Weymouth renders this "to be specially His for the extolling of His glory." The highest position does not consist of being in a certain place. It consists of the service we can perform in regard to others. And so our examination of this long sentence is ended.

To Be Continued

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

on

THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE

The research that preceded the writing of the pamphlet on "This Do In Remembrance" required me to do a great amount of reading. It was important that I be familiar with the ideas of other men, especially those who had written in defense of this ceremony and who in so doing had criticized my position. I have been collecting books, articles, and pamphlets on this subject for thirty years and my file on it was bulging. Much of this material was of little value, and quite a bit of it has now gone into the wastebasket. Some of it was quite interesting, and I would like to have referred to it in my pamphlet, but there was no place for it in a study that deals solely with the Biblical record.

Among the books I read was one called "The Lord's Supper in Protestantism", written by The Rev. Elmer S. Freeman, a Congregational minister, whose theological position one would need to describe as somewhat liberal. His thinking is typical of that which prevails today in the liberal school of thought in regard to this ceremony. In this book he says:

Integral to most religions of the higher type are what are called sacraments -rites and ceremonies designed to assist in keeping open, so to speak, the channels of communication between man and. God. Christianity, as everyone knows, has two which are almost universally observed within its spiritual household-Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Page XVII

Dr. Freeman has some doubt as to whether the command "this do in remembrance of me" was actually given by our Lord, therefore, he says:

Even if we had no record that Jesus directed baptism, it is easily conceivable that that sign and symbol of Christian allegiance might well have been adopted by the Church. In the same way, even though all New Testament records were lacking, it is well within the bounds of probability that something not unlike this rite might have been devised by the primitive Church as a tangible memory of him who to many of its members had come to have what Bishop Gore once called "the values of God." Page 8.

Thus he declares that while it is quite nice to have some New Testament support for these ceremonies, the churches would probably be doing something like them even if there were nothing on which to base them. He then continues in a somewhat surprising declaration:

We say that the rite of worship which the Church calls the Lord's Supper is recorded in the New Testament. This is not strictly accurate. What is recorded in the New Testament is the *Last Supper*, the occasion shortly before Jesus' crucifixion when he met with the disciples in an upper room of a house in Jerusalem. The Lord's Supper as a Christian rite of worship is based on the Last Supper, but is itself no more than hinted at in the New Testament. Therefore we must examine with some care the accounts of the *Last Supper*, in order to see whether the act of worship which has grown out of it is validly grounded there. Page 9.

One cannot help but admire the frankness of the above statement, especially so since his entire book is written in favor of this ceremony. Dr. Freeman goes on to tell how this ceremony which is "no more than hinted at in the New Testament", rapidly crystallized and solidified into the Lord's Supper. Of this he says:

This is, of course, a process familiar to students of institutions. Beginning with or feeding upon a single event or a simple formula, the process of accretion proceeds apace. Ideas more or less harmonious with the original text are, as it were, magnetized to it, and once added are difficult to dislodge. Page 20.

This is indeed a familiar process. It is seen in so many things that make up that popular religion of the western world which is commonly called Christianity, but which bears very little relationship to that meek and lowly one who walked upon the soil of Palestine almost 2000 years ago. There are many religious errors that are based upon misread and misinterpreted passages of Scripture. Others grow up apart from Scripture altogether, then the Scripture is afterward perverted to support them. When its full history is objectively considered, the protestant ceremony which is now commonly called "the Lord's Supper" is one that grew up apart from Scripture altogether, and now every verse of Scripture that can possibly be perverted to support it is so used. .

The ceremony that is found in the New Testament is always Israel's passover. And even though the Lord changed the significance of two of its elements, it is still Israel's ancient feast. Furthermore, when Paul received from the Lord a revelation concerning this passover that made it possible for it to be observed with Christ substituting for the slain lamb, it was still Israel's passover. These changes made it possible for believing Israelites to observe a true Passover even though they were not in the land of Israel, the only place a passover lamb could be slain.

There is no history that tells us how the transition was effected from the time of the apostles to the time of the so-called church fathers, from Christianity as we see it in the New Testament to Christianity as we see it in the next century. But we do know that in this time many heathen rites, ideas, and ceremonies became a part of Christian worship. Among these was a ceremonial ritual

involving the use of bread and wine that came from the ancient mystery religion called Mithraism. In this religion new divine life was supposed to be nourished by a sacrament of bread and wine. It was this sacrament that became part and parcel of Christendom in the days of Constantine, and quickly developed in a century or so into the Mass of the Roman Catholic Church. This "Mass" was revised and reformed by the reformers (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli) and it was their revision and reformation of the Mass that produced that ceremony in Protestantism that is today called "the Lord's Supper."

After the Mass was reformed by the reformers, and then anglicized by the Anglicans, it was stripped of its formality by the Baptists. Later it was simplified by the Plymouth Brethren and given the mediatorial place as "the ground of gathering." Now all of them ransack the Bible for passages in support of it. However, most of the support they produce comes from passages that any honest reader can see are dealing with Israel's passover. Passover always has been "a feast of the Jews." See John 2:13; 6:4 and 11:55. With it we have nothing to do.

The End

THE MORMONS

There are two groups in the United States that claim the title of Latter Day Saints: The Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints with headquarters in Independence, Missouri. Both of these claim Joseph Smith, as their founder, and both are commonly referred to as Mormons. The name "Mormon" is now accepted and commonly used by the Utah group, but it is rejected by the Independence group.

Those who have tried to get information concerning either of these groups by reading *The Book of Mormon* have found themselves confused and bewildered. This book was written by Joseph Smith and it claims to be the history of two ancient civilizations on the American continent. He claimed that this history came to him written in "reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics" upon plates of gold. These he claims he was able to translate into English by use of certain supernatural spectacles (eyeglasses), to which he gave the Biblical name of Urim and Thummin.

To the careful reader and logical thinker *The Book of Mormon* is a book without purpose. He can find in it no reason as to why it was written or to what end. The Mormons claim that it is another witness to the truth of the Christian gospel, but the Bible student will soon discover that its witness is often in conflict with the Biblical revelation. Thus, it would make the Bible to be in error in many of its statements. As an example it states that **Christ would be born "at Jerusalem" while the Old Testament affirms He would be born in Bethlehem** and the New Testament declares that He was born there.

Many people are impressed by *The Book of Mormon* because it "sounds just like the Bible", but this is one of the strongest arguments against its authenticity. The reason our Bible sounds as it does is because it was translated from the Hebrew and Greek in the time of King James and thus it comes to us in what can be properly called King James English, the manner and mode of speaking that was common among educated people in England in 1611. If the preface to the King James Version is read, entitled "The Translator's to the Readers", it too will be found to sound just like the Bible, as would be expected. Joseph Smith made his greatest mistake when he failed to give his revelations in the good English in use **in the year 1830** instead of trying to clothe them in the English that was

used 200 years before. This mistake has caused educated Mormons no end of embarrassment for many years. In fact Joseph Smith even copied certain translational errors from the King James Version, thus providing positive evidence of his plagiarism.

The Book of Mormon claims to set forth the rise and development of two great highly-developed civilizations. It gives a list of about forty cities that were a part of these ancient cultures. It declares these people were great in number and attributes to them such advances as "fine workmanship of wood, in buildings, and in machinery, and also in iron and copper, and brass, and steel, and of gold, and of silver, and of precious stones, and of precious ores, which were in great abundance."

One of the peoples of this great civilization were called "Nephites", and there were supposed to have been annihilated in a great battle near the hill of Cumorah in Palmyra, New York, about 428 A.D. But Joseph Smith never figured upon the vast amount of painstaking archeological research that would take place upon the American continent ill the century that followed his revelations. For by all the laws of research, these civilizations should have left vast amounts of material to be later found and evaluated. But all archeological findings to date have shown that these cities were wholly imaginary.

The Book of Mormon has undergone extensive corrections and revisions since the first edition was published in 1830. Certain students have pointed out over 2000 changes that have been made in it over the past 135 years. These corrections and revisions have been necessary due to the anachronisms, contradictions, errors of fact, and false prophecies which the book contained in its original edition. These have been documented and they are well known to both Mormons and non-Mormons. In fact one wonders why, since so much revision and correcting has been done, they did not correct the monumental error that declares "**the Son of God. . . shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem**" (**Alma 7: 9, 10**). A glaring mistake such as this is sufficient to negate all claims to divine inspiration or revelation.

Like the Christian Scientists, Seventh Day Adventists, and Jehovah Witnesses, the Mormons prefer to ignore much of their early history. This has created much tension between the leadership of the church and the Mormon scholars and writers who specialize in their own church history. These scholars are asking the church to "deal with its history honestly, with no sentimental prettifying of the pioneers."

The Mormons have a tremendous drive toward college and university education, and their own schools have produced men and women who are able to think, to think logically, and to carry out researches in a subject until the last scrap of information is obtained and analyzed. Thus while the leaders continue to insist upon the impossible myths that underlie the whole system, their own scholars are producing works that reveal the true character of Mormon history. It is from the writings of these scholars that one can best learn the truth about the whole Mormon system.

Chief among these books by Mormon writers is "No Man Knows My History," by Fawn M. Brodie. This is a biography of Joseph Smith which is an amazing work of historical scholarship. It is an interesting treatment of early Mormon history up to the year 1844 when Smith was murdered by a mob in Carthage, Illinois. It is a readable book which in my judgment is the best book dealing with this subject. Mrs. Brodie was born and reared a Mormon. She received a B.A. degree in English literature at the University of Utah, taught for a year in Weber College in Ogden, and later earned an M.A. degree at the University of Chicago. I understand that she has fallen into disfavor with the Mormon hierarchy since writing this book. It was published in 1957 by Alfred A. Knopf, New York. My copy, which I have read three times, cost \$6.75. It can probably be ordered through any book-seller.

Another excellent book written by one who also was born and reared as a Mormon is "Kingdom of The Saints", by Ray B. West, Jr., who dedicates his book "To the memory of. my Mormon for-

bears, many of whom experienced the events portrayed in this book." This book passes hurriedly over early Mormon history in order to set forth in detail the story of Brigham Young and the events that followed after the death of Smith. Mr. West is not now a practicing Mormon. His book was published by the Viking Press in New York.

A third book that should be read by every student of early American history, especially the history of the West is "The Mountain Meadows Massacre" by Juanita Brooks, a devoted practicing Mormon, who took upon herself the task of making an evaluation of the guilt and innocence of those Mormons who participated in this massacre of 120 California-bound immigrants in 1857. This book was originally published by the Stanford University Press in 1950, but a new edition with numerous *addendum* was published by University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma in 1962. This massacre is a chapter in history that all Mormons would like to blot out, but their own historians will not permit them to do it. Mrs. Brooks' book is a careful examination of that event, a thorough study, although she charges in her book that the Mormon authorities withheld from her vital and necessary information which they have in their possession.

Numerous other books written by non-Mormons are too prone to smear and slander. Among those who refrain from such tactics are Walter R. Martin in his excellent book "The Maze of Mormonism" (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan), and William J. Whalen in a book just published "The Latter Day Saints in the Modern Day World" which is an account of contemporary Mormonism (published by John Day, 1964).

The End

THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS

****The articles on "The Kingdom of God" and "What Is An Eon" which appear in this issue are vitally related and one will shed light on the other. Be sure to read both of them,

****You will notice on the title page that THE WORD OF TRUTH is "issued at intervals," There has been an interval of one year since the last issue and many friends feel this is far too long. I am always glad to know that they want more written material. The subjects I am dealing with at present require on my part an enormous amount of study and development.

****This issue completes Volume XVI. Our plans to prepare a complete index of Volumes I to XVI and all other pamphlets and leaflets has bogged down and remains unfinished, The index to every Scripture reference is complete, but it is on file cards and still must be typed. An index of subjects must *yet* be prepared. We will keep working on it and trust that in time it will be complete.

****The past year has been routine. I have studied, taught, written, and traveled. The Spring and Fall Conference tours were made as usual. It was a major accomplishment to write and put into print the pamphlet on "This Do In Remembrance." I am happy about the reception given it by those who follow my ministry.

* * * *

**What, though the time be long
The battle grim
What, though the foes be strong
We hope, and are secure, in Him.**

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