

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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THE KINGDOM APPELLATIVES

In the final two chapters of the Bible we read of a period of time to come called the new heaven and new earth. It is proper to refer to this as a period of time since it has a beginning; nevertheless, it is an everlasting state. This does not mean that there is no progress in that glorious time, but it does mean that there will be nothing in it that needs to be purged, abrogated, abolished, or conquered. The beings and the things, which enter into the new heaven and new earth will be in it forever. It is indeed an eternal state.

There are those who believe that this eternal state is the next thing in order in God's program and purposes. This position is not new, although at the present time there is a resurgence of this view that has assumed sufficient importance in the theological world that it cannot be ignored. This is called the **amillennial** position, which in simple language means that there will be no transitory period called the millennium, but a coming of Christ to raise the dead, judge the world, and to introduce the eternal conditions of the new heaven and new earth. Those who hold this position labor to place the thousand years back into the past and therefore something no longer to be anticipated in the future. They contend that Satan is bound at present, at least in relationship to believers if not in regard to the rest of the world.

In direct contradiction of this amillennial theory is the **premillennial** theory. Those who hold this position believe that a thousand year period follows the second coming of Christ and that this precedes the eternal state of the new heavens and new earth. This position is probably familiar to all who read these lines, and it represents the position of this writer. He believes that there will be in due time the second coming of Christ, that this will be followed by the millennium of Revelation 20, during which Satan will be absolutely bound, and that this will be followed by the new heavens and new earth.

This makes the writer to be an avowed premillennialist, although it does not mean that he accepts all that is held by the dispensational premillennialists. In fact he insists that the present position of the dispensational premillennialist is untenable and impossible when an induction is made of all Scripture bearing upon the subject. If God does not intervene by His Spirit before the second coming of Jesus Christ, then the destruction described in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 will be so great that no nations or men will be left upon the earth for the millennial period.

In fact, this very argument is used by the amillennialists to prove that a millennium is impossible. They reason that if God suddenly removes all who know Him (as is taught in present popular premillennial theology) then all who are left must be classified as "those who know not God." Since these are to experience "everlasting destruction," how then, they ask, can there be a nation of Israel, or other nations left to fulfill the prophecies which premillennialists usually assign to the thousand years.

The usual answer given to this objection is that "a remnant" of Israel and the nations remain after this drastic punishment, and that "under the renewed blessings of a purified earth, it may be that decimated populations will greatly increase in numbers." In answer to this it can be said that after taking into full consideration all that God has said about a remnant, the truth remains that the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament concern Israel and the nations, not a remnant.

The premillennialist does not need to abandon his position because of the difficulties he faces in connection with the details of interpretation. All he needs to do is accept the Scripture teaching that there will be **TWO** great transitional periods before the eternal state of the new heaven and the new earth. The **first** of these transitory periods is the **kingdom of the heavens**. In this the Holy Spirit will be the chief actor and agent. This is based entirely upon the first coming of Christ, and it will be a time of physical and spiritual blessings, righteousness and peace. A beginning of this was seen in the Acts period, but it is now suspended and in abeyance. The time will come when this suspension will be lifted, and then Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God will witness His enemies being made His footstool.

Through the greatness of thy power thine enemies submit themselves unto thee. All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee, they shall sing to thy name. Psalm 66:3, 4.

This will not be of short duration. At its end God puts mankind to the test by loosing the controls, which He has placed upon them. This makes possible for men a higher righteousness, which can be obtained by obedience that is based upon love rather than law. The result will be that some will "fall away" and enter into a revolt against God's government. "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," will be their rallying cry (Psalm 2:3). This brings about the **second** coming of Christ, in which He ruthlessly puts down this revolt against God's kingdom. It is then that He takes vengeance on all who know not God and all who obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ. In that day those who know not God will be those who gave up their knowledge of God. Those who obey not the gospel will be those who "believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This concludes that eon, and those who remain (the overwhelming majority) will make up the subjects of the millennial kingdom. This millennial kingdom is also transitory, even though it endures for a thousand years. Every divine blessing that men enjoyed under the kingdom of the heavens will be intensified a hundredfold in the millennium.

The kingdom of the heavens, that which is next in God's program and purposes, has many aspects. In setting forth the truth concerning heavens' government the Spirit of God has seen fit to use numerous appellatives or descriptive titles. Each one of these declares and emphasizes a distinct truth in regard to the character of that time to come when the heavens will rule, and they are worthy

of the most careful study. Some of them have been arbitrarily misapplied, and this has been so commonplace that the "average person who "takes his views for granted" will have difficulty in reconstructing his thoughts in regard to some of these appellatives.

The first and one of the most important of these descriptive titles has already been dealt with in numerous studies in these pages, but it will be included here in order to add some additional details.

The Kingdom of the Heavens

This phrase occurs only in Matthew's Gospel where it is found thirty-four times. The Greek reads in every occurrence *he basileia ton ouranon*. Thus the definite article (the) occurs twice and "heavens" is always plural. This makes it to read "the kingdom of the heavens," or to be still more accurate "the government of the heavens." This appellative tells all men what the future is to be, what the world can expect when God intervenes. **It will be heavens' government in place of human government.** It will be government of the heavens and by the heavens; but it will be for the glory of God and the benefit of men upon the earth.

Since the present mythological conception of heaven, which is universally held is also imposed upon and read into the Word of God, it makes it almost impossible for many to have any proper understanding of the term "the kingdom of the heavens." Men are quick to reject any suggestion that their habitual modes of thought in regard to heaven need to be reconstructed; therefore, they refuse to be taught by the Word of God. The professing Christian holds the same thoughts as the world, even though he makes the claim that his thoughts come from the Bible.

In the Scripture God Himself is called "Heaven." The prodigal son is quoted by the Lord Jesus as having said, "I have sinned against heaven;" which can mean nothing else but that he had sinned against God. The Lord also said, "The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven, or of men?" Here "heaven" can mean nothing else but God. In fact the word *heaven* when properly understood makes a very fitting name for God. *Heaven* is a contraction of *heaved one*, meaning the exalted one or the high one. God as the Most High is properly called "the Heaved One" or "the Heaven." But the sons of God, cherubim, seraphim, angels, principalities and powers are all "heaved ones" or "lifted up ones" and are properly called "heavens." This word in- Hebrew, Greek, and English can also be applied to heaved things as well as heaved places. Did not God call the firmament "heavens?" And, most glorious of all, men can also be heaved of lifted up by God in position, and thus as men take their place among the heaved ones, or heavens. An exceedingly rich vein of truth awaits the digging of men in regard to the full meaning of the word *heaven*.

The next experience for this world is government by and of the heavens. Since this phase occurs only in Matthew, some insist that this limits the kingdom of the heavens to Israel, but all such arbitrary limitations must be refused. Matthew does deal with heavens' government in relationship to Israel, but this in no manner limits it to that people. It is also true that Israel under heavens government is to have a very special and exalted place. Daniel 7:27 reveals this, which is quoted in a more literal rendering.

And the government and authority and the majesty of the government under all the heavens is granted to the people of the saints of the most High. The government is an eonian government and all authorities shall serve and hearken unto it.

It was Nebuchadnezzar, a Gentile king, who was forced to learn the lesson that "the heavens do rule" Daniel 4:26.

The Kingdom of God

In the parallel passages of Matthew, Mark, and Luke it will be found that where Matthew uses the term "the kingdom of the heavens," Mark and Luke use the term "the kingdom of God." The simplest basic definition that can be given of the kingdom of God is that it is God's government. Therefore, anything that we can point out that is the direct result of God governing, ruling, or controlling can be called the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ said to the Pharisees:

But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Matthew 12:28.

These Pharisees could see God's government in the defeat of Satan as each demon possessed person was delivered. Thus in these matters the government of God was not coming, it was already there. But the proclamation of the Lord Jesus revealed that the government or kingdom of God was to come in a manner and to an extent that had never been seen on earth before. There are three parallel passages, which shed much light on this.

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death; till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom. Matthew 16:28.

And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. Mark 9:1.

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God. Luke 9:27.

The first of these passages is commonly interpreted as meaning the second personal coming of Christ, but it cannot mean that as the other two parallel passages will show. This promise of the Lord was not related to His second coming. The promise was that some of them standing there would not experience death until they saw the Son of man coming in His government.

If words mean anything, then the passages quoted above reveal that the kingdom of God was not there when the Lord spoke these words, that it was still in the future, that it was coming, and that some of the twelve disciples would live to see its coming. This promise was fulfilled to the letter when Jesus Christ arose, when others were raised and were seen in Jerusalem (Matthew 27:52, 53), and in the marvelous events seen on and following the day of Pentecost. As has been said before, the kingdom of God was present in a stage comparable to the blade stage of growing grain in the thirty-three years covered by the book of Acts. It was suspended at Acts 28:28 when the salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles. It is now in abeyance during this dispensation of the grace of God, but it will be resumed when our God has completed His great demonstration of the graciousness of His character.

Every statement made concerning the kingdom of the heavens and the kingdom of God in the New Testament is directly applicable to that time which is next on God's calendar, that time of blessing for Israel and the nations which precedes the second coming of Christ. It is from these direct statements that we learn the true character of that time of blessing. A true understanding of the kingdom of God is essential to true understanding of the dispensation of the grace of God. This explains why Paul, after Acts 28:28 preached the kingdom of God and taught those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ for two whole years. See Acts 28:30, 31. And this present writer offers this as the reason why he has labored so diligently to fully comprehend all truth concerning the kingdom of God. The grace of God can never be properly understood by those who neglect the great truth of God's government.

The real difference between the terms "the kingdom of the heavens" and "the kingdom of God" is that the first emphasizes those exalted ones to whom God has delegated or will delegate authority. God is among the heavens. The heavens are the exalted ones, God being the most exalted. He will ever be the highest of all the high ones. These will govern with God and under God, and their association with Him is expressed in the title "the kingdom of the heavens."

The Regeneration

This descriptive title of the coming period of blessing is found in **Matthew 19:28**.

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

If any reader holds the childish idea that a throne is a massive and ornate chair upon which a king sits, he is going to have difficulty understanding this passage. Heaven is said to be God's throne (Matt. 5:34) and heaven is not a chair. Heaven is the seat of God's government. Furthermore, if any think that "the throne of His glory" is to be somewhere in Jerusalem, they stand in need of the correcting ministry of Scripture. A throne is the seat or center of government, and the throne of His glory is now in heaven and will remain there until He comes again.

The Lord's throne is in heaven. Psalm 11:4.

The Lord has prepared (established) His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. Psalm 103:19.

In the quotation given above from Matthew "the regeneration" is seen to be at the same time as when the Son of man "shall sit on the throne of His glory," and at this same time the twelve apostles are to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 25:31 sets forth the transfer of this throne from the heavens to the earth. He comes with power and great glory. Matt. 24:30. One of the contrasts between the kingdom of the heavens and the millennium is that during the first the throne of His glory is in heaven and during the second it is upon earth. The throne is inherent in the person of Christ from the time of His resurrection.

The Times of Refreshing

In his second great message to the men of Israel, Peter called upon them to "repent and be converted" (Acts 3:19). This was a call for them to submit to God's government and to be turned unto God. They were to do this with the end in view that their sins would be blotted out. If they did this, then direct from the Lord would come "the times of refreshing." Following this He would send back Jesus Christ. In these words a divine order is established which some teachers have become expert in ignoring.

The fulfillment of this promise is not possible in this the dispensation of the grace of God. It will be renewed and fulfilled when the salvation of God returns to Israel. Israel will then submit. Israel will be turned to God. Israel's sins will be blotted out. The times of refreshing will come from the face of the Lord. Then, and not before, God will send back Jesus Christ.

The Times of Restoration

This title appears in the same passage as does "the times of refreshing. "

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (restoration) of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21.

The "times of restoration" and the "times of refreshing" are concurrent. Many interpret this passage as meaning that Jesus Christ will remain in heaven until the time comes for all things to be restored, then He will descend to the earth and do this great work. However, in Matthew 17: 11 the Lord declared, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things." Furthermore, if this is examined in the light of Acts 15:15-17 it will be seen that these passages harmonize in describing a work which precedes the millennium. It should be noted here that this "restoration of all things" is limited to those things "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets."

The Day of Christ

In Scripture we read of "the day of man" (or, "man's day") even though this phrase is lost to the reader of the King James version. It is found in the Greek of 1 Corinthians 4:3. The time in which we live is part of man's day. The day of man reaches its greatest height in this the dispensation of the grace of God. Since grace offers no restraint, man is having his unhindered day.

The day of man is to be followed by the day of Christ. This world will yet see a time when the ascended Christ will have His day. The result will be that Satan's head will be crushed and Jesus Christ will see the outcome of His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. In His day He will see His enemies become His footstool. The day of Christ is followed by the day of the Lord, and this is followed by the day of God. The day of Christ precedes the second coming.

The Last Days

The outstanding occurrences of this term are found in Isaiah 2:1.4; Acts 2:17.21 and Micah 4:1.7. An honest and unbiased reading of these passages will reveal that this period of time called "the last days" is predominantly a period of rich blessing for Israel, and from Israel it will flow to the world. It will also be seen that "the last days" precede the day of the Lord. Compare Acts 2:17 and 2:20.

This title has been dealt with in the writer's pamphlet under title of *The Last Days* also in other articles in *The Word of Truth*. Lack of space makes it unwise to repeat this material in this study.

The Last Day

In Micah 4:1 we read "But in the last days it shall come to pass;" and in Micah 4:6 we read "In that Day." Both of these terms refer to the same period of time. In the New Testament we find the designation "the last day" six times in the Gospel of John. John is the only writer who uses this title.

In John 6:39 our Lord declared that of all, which the Father had given Him, He would lose nothing but would raise it up again in the last day.

In John 6:40 He declared that all who saw the Son and believed on Him should have everlasting life, and that He would raise him up in the last day.

In John 6:44 a similar promise is made. Those who came to Him would be raised up in the last day.

In John 6:54 the promise is repeated; "I will raise him up in the last day."

In John 11:24 Martha declared that she knew that her brother would rise again in the resurrection in the last day.

In John 12:48 the Lord warned that the word He had spoken would judge the one who rejected it in the last day.

In all these occurrences the Greek never varies. It is *en te eschate hemera*, mid this means *in* the last day, not *at* the last day.

Matthew 10:7, 8 reveals that under heavens' government it was to be expected that the dead would be raised.

Under the benevolent rule of the heavens the righteous dead will live again. This period of time is called by the Lord "the last day." This does not mean a final period of twenty-four hours. It means the resultant day, a period of time characterized by light and truth.

The Day

This title is used by Paul in **Romans 13:12**. **The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.**

These words were written by Paul a few years before the close of the Acts period. His expectation then was that the kingdom would soon move into its next great stage, as revealed in Mark 4:28. Paul calls this "the day." But "the day" did not come. In harmony with the good pleasure of His will, God saw fit to suspend His government and bring in an administration of grace. "The day" has only been suspended. It will come to Israel and to the world when God has completed His present demonstration of grace.

The Day of Judgment

In Isaiah 42:4 it is declared of the Lord Jesus Christ that He would "not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth." When this is accomplished it will then be the day of judgment. In **Matthew 12:36** the Lord Jesus said:

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

This passage is commonly taken to mean that at some remote future day men are going to be called into court before God to give an account for the idle words they spoke during their lifetime. But the day of judgment is the day of God's due order, and even words which violate that order will make a man liable before God for disorderly conduct. The "day of judgment" is the time when God's judgments are in the earth (Isaiah 26:9). In that day the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. In that day no man can be angry with his brother without a cause, no man can say to his brother "Raca," no man can call his brother a fool. Matt. 5:22.

The Bema of Christ

In Romans 14:10 Paul told his fellow believers that they would "all stand before the judgment seat (*bema*) of Christ." In 2 Corinthians 5: 10 he declares that "we must all appear before the judgment seat (*bema*) of Christ." In both of these passages the words "judgment seat" are one word (*bema*) in the Greek. In Romans 14:10 there is no doubt but that the reading should be "the *bema* of God," but

in the second reference given it is "the *bema* of Christ." These two are the same since all judgment has been delegated by God to Christ the Son (John 5:22).

In Acts 7:5 we are told of Abraham that of all the land of Canaan God gave him "none inheritance in it, no, not so much as a *bema* for his foot." This occurrence of the word *bema* is usually ignored, but it does more to reveal the meaning of this word than any other passage in which it occurs. In Scripture that which is "under the foot" is under control or jurisdiction. In 1 Corinthians 15:25 we read that Christ must reign "till He hath put all enemies under His feet." God by decree has already put "all things under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:27). His enemies being made His footstool" is an extension of this figure.

In the land of Canaan, Abraham could not even put his foot on the ground and say, "This is under my jurisdiction." God gave him no *bema* for his foot.

The time will yet come when all men upon earth will find themselves standing before God's jurisdiction or government. Romans 14:10-12. Human government, the rule of men by men, will be a thing of the past. Men will be under the rule of God. When this is true the *bema* of God and Christ will be present.

By a figure of speech the symbol of a man's jurisdiction was also called the *bema*. This is even as the sovereignty of a king and the symbol of that sovereignty are both called thrones.

The so-called "judgment seat of Christ" somewhere in the air before which believers must stand to have their works judged and receive their rewards has no solid basis in Scripture.

The Resurrection

This descriptive title of the coming kingdom of the heavens was used by the Sadducees in Matthew 22:28, when they asked the Lord concerning a certain woman, "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be?" The Lord made use of this term in His answer when He declared "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." Matthew 22:30.

Since one of the greatest things that will occur under heaven's government will be the orderly resurrection of the righteous dead,' it is quite significant that this time should be called "the resurrection.

The Day of the Eon.

This title of the coming period of blessing is found in the Greek of 2 Peter 3:18. A more accurate rendering would be, "To Him be glory now, and for the day of the eon." An exposition of this title would lead us into a study of the meaning of the word "eon." Sufficient to say here that Satan is the eon of this world. This fact is clearly stated in the Greek of Ephesians 2:2 where the word "course" should be translated *eon*. The Holy Spirit is to be the eon of the world to come. The personal presence of Christ is to be the eon of the millennium. And the presence of the tabernacle of God, the fact that God dwells among men is to be the eon of the new heavens and new earth. Many years of consideration given to the word *eon* has brought the conviction that an eon is much more than a period of time.

In Conclusion

We have considered twelve appellatives or titles. Each one of these refers to a period of time. It is the conviction of this writer that they all refer to the coming period of blessing when human government must give way to heavens' government. Each of these twelve terms are worthy of the most careful study. The writer has recorded his understanding of them for the help of all who may be interested.

The End.

***STUDIES IN ACTS* - - Chapter 9**

The conversion of "Saul, who also is called Paul" is the most dramatic of any recorded in the Word of God. It has individual and exceptional features that are not duplicated in any other conversion. Nevertheless, the essentials of his experience will be duplicated a million times over in that day when God converts and restores the seed of Abraham, the people of Israel to himself. Saul, or Paul, was "one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15:8). Concerning this the *Scofield Reference Bible* says:

Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come, nationally, so that his conversion by the appearing of the Lord in glory was an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel.

As we consider this chapter it will be well to note that Paul was brought to submission and faith wholly apart from the preaching of the gospel. Many will argue that Paul had previously heard the gospel, but there is no record of this in the Word, and if he had heard it he could hardly claim to have been in ignorance (1 Tim. 1:13).

In this historical account by Luke, and in the two subsequent chapters where Paul tells of conversion in two addresses (Acts 22 and 26) no credit for his conversion is given to anything that happened before that moment when the great light shined on the Damascus road. If Paul had seen Christ in the days of His sojourn on earth, if he had heard Peter, if he had heard others, it had been without effect upon his life. In all the records Paul begins his dealings with Christ and Christ's dealings with him with that moment when the great light "shined round about him." If he had heard anything before, it was neither a "savor of life" nor a "savor of death" to him (2 Cor. 2:15, 16). The Holy Spirit had preserved him for that supreme moment on the Damascus road.

These facts make him all the more an illustration or pattern of the future national conversion of Israel. When Ezekiel 20:35-38 and Hosea 2:14-17 are fulfilled for that people it will not be through the preaching of the gospel, but by the Lord acting from heaven through the Holy Spirit upon earth, just as He did in the case of Paul. Paul was converted by means of an *apokalupsin* of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was unveiled to him. Paul is the pattern of Israel's future conversion.

It should also be noted that God visited Paul in love, not in wrath. If Paul had not responded to this great display of love he would have been purged by God as a rebel, but speculations concerning his failure to respond are of no value. The fact is he did respond. "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," was his witness before Agrippa.

That Paul is a pattern or illustration of the future national conversion of Israel will be demonstrated as we consider this chapter. However, one thing needs to be emphasized. If any insist, as some do, that a pattern must be identical in every respect with that of which it is a pattern, then this exposition will be of no value to them. The pattern of a suit may be of paper and it is never stitched together. The suit may be of wool and must always be stitched together. Nevertheless, the suit must follow the pattern. In Paul we see a true preview of the future national conversion of Israel.

9:1,2. And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

Luke, the writer of Acts, here resumes the thread of the narrative, which he broke off at 8:3. Saul had given hearty approval to the murder of Stephen, and he seems to have become the leader in the

persecution that followed Stephen's death. As a result Jerusalem was emptied of all the out-called ones except the Apostles. Saul was implacable in his hatred, and his every breath was a threat of destruction for the disciples of the Lord.

Nothing that has happened either before or since Paul first appeared (7:58) as an actor in the great drama recorded in Acts has abated in the least his ardor for persecution of the disciples of the Lord. In this we see the first point of comparison between him and the people of Israel.

All that has happened to Israel since the crucifixion of Christ has never changed in the least the attitude of that people toward Him. All that they have suffered has not abated the scorn and contempt in which they hold Him. And they will continue in this attitude until a great light comes to them from the Lord who now sits in the heavens.

There are many who believe that the next experience for Israel is "the great tribulation." They hold that this unparalleled time of trouble will bring them to their senses and turn them to Christ. But if all the troubles they have passed through in the past 1900 years has not changed their attitude, there is no evidence that a new and greater trouble will open their eyes. It would not have changed Saul of Tarsus if God had suddenly plunged him into great tribulation. But it did change him when a great light shone from heaven.

9:3-5. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

From this we learn that Saul at the time of his conversion was outside of the land of Israel when suddenly a miraculous light flashed out of heaven and enveloped him. From his later testimony (22:6) we know that it was noon, but this light was brighter than the sun. Yes, even here for Paul the sun was "turned into darkness" by the presence of a greater light.

This light was not a single momentary flash. Even though it came as a flash, it shone around Paul for a time. The effect upon Saul was immediate. He fell to the earth and while prostrate there he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" These duplicates can be traced out in Scripture (Saul, Saul- Martha, Martha - Jerusalem, Jerusalem), and in every occurrence they express great concern and intensity.

This miraculous light and the Lord's question forced Saul to examine himself in regard to his attitude toward the despised Nazarene. He cried back in great intensity, "Who art thou Lord?" And the Lord identified Himself at once by saying, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." This was the exact moment to which Paul referred later, "It pleased God. . . to reveal (*apokalupto*) His Son in me that I might preach Him among the nations." See Gal. 1:15, 16.

In all of this the pattern of Israel's future conversion is clearly seen. Israel will be converted while she is still in the dispersion and will be restored to the land as a people who know God. If some of them should be living within the borders of Palestine when God begins that gracious work that will bring them to Himself, it will neither aid nor hinder His work. While they are still in their attitude of rejection the Lord will speak from heaven and decree that there shall be light for Israel. I believe this light will be spiritual, but it could be material as well. God is not bound. When this light shines, His word will also be impressed upon them. This will cause them to inquire as to who it is that is dealing with them in such strange and miraculous manner. And the answer will be granted. The one dealing with them will be the historical Jesus, the one whom their ancestors crucified and whom they have persistently rejected ever since. This will be the revelation (*apokalupsin*) of Jesus Christ to Israel. It is not the second coming.

9:6. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

These words mark the real surrender of Paul to Christ. He does nothing except to submit and await instructions. Paul's question shows his complete submission to the Lord, and it reveals how readily the Lord answered in those days before the kingdom was suspended and the heavens became silent. He is given one single and simple command to perform. This command did not even alter the course of his journey, but it greatly altered its purpose.

In that day when the light comes to Israel and they cry out in great distress and say, "Lord, what do you want us to do?" the answer will most certainly be, "Arise, go back to your land, and it will be told you what you are to do."

9:7-9. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

In Acts 22:11 Paul declares that he "could not see for the glory of that light." Being blinded by the light, he is blind to everything but the light. This will be Israel's condition in the day when they arise at God's direction to return to their land. Their eyes will be single to the light that God has given them, to the fact that God has spoken and told them to return. They will then be blind to all they have ever valued or treasured. The world will be amazed in that day to see the seed of Abraham turning their backs upon all material possessions and setting their faces toward Palestine. Today we see Israelites turning toward Palestine because of the unbearable and unfavorable situation they face in the lands where they sojourn. The world will yet see them turn their backs upon favorable situations and conditions in order to return to their land. Today they do it to escape suffering. Then they will do it to obey the command of God.

We cannot be dogmatic about it but there are good reasons for believing the three days of Paul's blindness, during which he fasted, has a symbolic relation to the truth declared in Hosea 6:1-3.

9:10-12 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

As this passage is read the truth that the Acts period does not belong to the time of the silence of God is dramatically impressed upon our minds. Ananias saw a vision of the same Lord that Paul saw on the Damascus road. The Lord spoke only his name, and he being swift to hear answered "Behold, I, Lord," meaning that he is giving heart and ear to what the Lord has to say. He received the most explicit orders and directions. He is told where Saul is, what he is doing, that he is expecting him, and that he knows what he will do.

It was after Paul had been in Damascus for three days that Ananias, a divinely sent human agent entered upon the scene. This corresponds to the ministry of Elijah to Israel in a future day. "Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things," is the specific promise of Christ in Matthew 17:11.

9:13, 14. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

The reader cannot help but be fascinated with the simple openness of Ananias as he tells the Lord what he has heard from many about this man Saul. Saul's reputation has preceded him to Damascus

The "many" from whom Ananias had heard this were probably the fugitive Christians who had fled from Jerusalem. Ananias has no knowledge of Paul's conversion, so in his ignorance of the true facts he sees in him only the man of evil reputation.

9:15, 16. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake.

Here we may draw another comparison between Paul and Israel. Paul was a chosen instrument unto God, and Israel is a chosen instrument. Israel is to carry the truth concerning God's name before the nations, and Paul was to do the same.

The Lord told Ananias that He would show Paul the great things we would suffer for His name. There is no doubt but that the time soon came when God gave him a preview of the whole course of his life. Then He caught him away to paradise, to the third heaven, and allowed him to hear and see unspeakable things, which were not lawful for him to utter. This caused him to see and to know the purpose and the goal of his sufferings.

9:17-19. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou earnest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples, which were at Damascus.

In this record, Luke the writer of Acts, gives only the pertinent facts. For this service, which he was to perform Ananias acts as the apostle of Jesus Christ. Every element required to make a man an apostle was present in the case of Ananias. When this work was finished, he ceased to be an apostle. We should note this in order to realize that whatever he did, he did it as one commissioned by Jesus Christ.

Ananias laid his hands upon Paul's head. Then he speaks the words that acknowledge Paul as a brother and reveals what the Lord had commissioned him to do. Paul's sight is to be restored and he is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. These words were no more than spoken than Saul received his sight. Following this we are told he was baptized:

If we believe baptism to be the sprinkling of water upon the person we will probably take this to mean that Paul stood before Ananias who then sprinkled some water upon him while speaking some ritualistic words. If we believe baptism to be immersion we will probably imagine Saul and Ananias starting off for the Abana River where after speaking the ritualistic words, Ananias plunged Saul into the water. But if we see in the word baptism something far more than a water ceremony, if we see in this word the truth of being identified with Christ, we will see Ananias acting upon the full authority that was his from the risen Lord and identifying this man with Jesus Christ.

If any ask how Saul became identified with Jesus Christ, the simple answer is, Ananias identified him. If any ask further "But what did he do?" the answer is that we do not know. John identified with the repentant ones of Israel by means of a water ritual that God has given to him. There is no evidence that Ananias used a water ritual in identifying Paul with Christ. The fact remains that at that moment in the house of Judas, Paul was by Ananias identified with the Lord Jesus Christ.

9:20, 21. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them hound unto the chief priests?

Very little time passed before Paul began his ministry. He heralds Jesus Christ in the very city where he had planned to do an entirely different work. He does this in the synagogues, and his proclamation caused great amazement among all who heard him. The whole thing seems incredible to them. His message is in advance of anything that has been spoken before. Peter had already proclaimed Him as the exalted Messiah, but Paul now gives testimony to His personal glory as the Son of God.

9:22-25 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took council to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

As Saul preached he increased in power. His message was conclusive and silenced all opposition. The "many days" of verse 23 seem to comprise about three years. Paul's visit to Arabia probably occurred in this period. Gal.1:17. When he returned to Damascus and resumed his activities there, the Jews took council to kill him. They decided that this was to be his fate and they settled upon a course of action. But Paul learned of their plot, and it seems that he may have gone into seclusion, waiting for an opportunity to leave the city. The gates were watched day and night so departure was impossible. In Paul the Lord wanted a worker, not a martyr. His escape was effected in a very simple manner. Some of the houses that adjoined the wall around the city had windows that were higher than the wall itself. From one of these windows Paul was lowered in a basket.

9:26-29. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and. that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

The disciples fear of Paul is most natural. They remember what he was doing the last time he was in Jerusalem. They had probably heard of his conversion, but none believed that he was the disciple he now claimed to be. They may have thought that he was pretending in order to get in with them and do greater damage. It was Barnabas who brought this unhappy situation to an end. He took Saul and brought him first to the apostles, recounting to them the remarkable story of his conversion. He lays stress on three points. Saul had seen the Lord. The Lord had spoken to him. He had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. Thus a true relationship was established between Saul and the apostles. Saul continues to be a bold herald of the Lord Jesus, now directing his testimony especially to the Greek speaking Jews. His testimony to them did not meet with much success for they plotted to kill him.

9:30, 31. Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. The word translated "churches" here is singular in the Greek. It means the out-called. We should think of these as men and women, not as congregations, assemblies or organizations. These out-called of the Lord now had rest, they were edified, they walked in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit. And these out-called ones were multiplied.

(To be Continued, Vol. XIII, No. 4)

GOD'S REMEDY FOR CHAOS

. The opening verse of The Word of God sets forth the original creation of the heavens and the earth. We know very little about this, but we can rest assured that in splendor and glory it was worthy of its Creator. The original creation was perfect.

In the next verse we find a condition of things that is far from perfect. The earth is waste and empty and darkness is upon the face of the deep. Confusion, chaos, waste, desolation, and darkness is written over this entire scene. However, in this same passage we see God acting to bring order out of chaos, and to banish darkness by light. If we trace out the divine steps we will learn how God does this and we will see His great remedy for confusion, chaos, and darkness.

The first move recorded is that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The second move is that God speaks decreeing that there shall be light. The result is that there was light. Thus we learn in the opening verses of the Word of God that His sovereign remedy for confusion, chaos, and disorder is the work of the Holy Spirit, and His remedy for darkness is to give light. It should be noted also that this chaos and darkness was the result of divine visitation in adverse judgment; therefore, nothing was to be gained by any further visitation in a new or greater punishment. So God intervened in love, and order, light, and restoration were the results.

The words chaos, confusion and disorder are the only ones that properly describe the world scene at the present time. No arguments or facts need to be presented in proof of this as it is admitted on every hand. We are in a great world crisis that is so serious that many believe that if we do not find an adequate solution to our problems civilization is doomed. Thousands of remedies are suggested, all of which have been tried before. Some of these are good but it is plain that the application of them would only add to the present chaos. If order is ever established, then God must intervene.

All who believe the Bible to be the word of God, believe that the time will come when God will intervene and put forth His power to bring an end to the present universal darkness and chaos. They believe that He can do it, they believe that He will do it, but they differ greatly as to how it is going to be done. They do not agree on what the divine course will be when God puts forth His power to insure the triumph of good and the defeat of evil.

It is almost universally held that when God does intervene, He is going to intervene in wrath and pour out frightful punishments on the human race. The most popular teaching today is that God is going to bring an end to all this chaos by suddenly removing from the earth all who are related to Him, following which He pours out His wrath upon those who remain. It is further held that subsequent to this Jesus Christ comes to earth in person and deals in justice with those who have survived this outpouring of wrath, after which He establishes His government and divine order in the earth.

Even though much Scripture is quoted in support of this, it is usually texts taken out of contexts. The writer of these lines does not believe that this is the divine program revealed in the Word. Neither does he believe that such a program would be fair or just. This theory makes those of one or more generations to suffer a visitation of divine wrath, which about eighty generations that came before them never experienced. In other words they experience divine wrath because they lived at the wrong time. They were born about a hundred years too late to miss it. This is neither fair nor just.

Many will argue otherwise. They will show how one generation suffers a war that was brought upon them by the mistake of preceding generations. This is true but it has no bearing upon our discussion. We are speaking of visitations of divine wrath, and not of the destruction and misery that is the outcome of human mistakes.

Others will point out that those who perished in the flood, experienced a visitation of divine wrath which sinners who died before them did not experience. This argument is false since those who perished in the flood were the very ones who committed the sins for which they were punished. Longevity characterized men at that time. It was not then a case of one generation constantly passing as a new one arrived to take its place. Those who imagine little babes and innocent boys and girls perishing in the flood had better check their imaginations. The race that perished in that besom of destruction was a hybrid race. Hybrids do not reproduce.

And there may be those who point to Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51 to prove that one generation may be punished for the sins of all generations. This argument is also false, for the teaching in these passages is that the generation to whom the Lord came would commit sins that would make them as guilty in the sight of God as if they had committed all the murders of previous generations. They did this when they murdered the Son of God.

While it is true that one generation may reap the bitter fruit that is produced by the sins of generations that have gone before them, it is not true that God piles up His wrath for many generations then suddenly pours it out upon one. The terrible wrath poured out upon men as described in the book of Revelation is poured out upon the very men who committed the sins that are being punished. See Revelation 9:20, 21. These are the apostates who join in the revolt against God's government after they have enjoyed His blessings of light and truth. While men insist that God is going to intervene in wrath in order to bring an end to the present chaos and confusion, the Bible insists that He is going to intervene in love. All that is needed today to bring order out of chaos, to dispel confusion, to banish darkness is for the Holy Spirit to move upon mankind and for God to decree that there shall be light. This, God has promised He will do. Peter declared on the basis of Joel's prophecy:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh. Acts 2:17.

This great act of God was symbolized in Genesis 1:2. The time when God will "pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh" is declared to be "in the last days" and "before that great and notable day of the Lord comes." However this is not all. The day will yet come when mankind will be enlightened. The world still waits for the fulfillment of the promise spoken by our Lord in **John 16:7-8**:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. And when He is come He will reprove (enlighten) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

Let the reader carefully consider and answer the following questions. What would be the result, what difference would it make, how would it change the world if God would fulfill His promises to:

1. Pour out His Spirit upon Israel, put a new spirit within them, and give them a new heart. Isaiah 44:3; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 11:19.

2. Pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh. Joel 2, Acts 2. .

3. Enlighten (or, reprove, convict, or convince) the world in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. John 16:7, 8. Psalm 97:4.

4. Draw all men unto Himself. John 12:32.

God has promised to do everyone of these things. When He fulfills His promises, the result will be glorious. Psalms 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101 and 102 describe the glories of this time. May God speed the day when His Spirit shall move upon mankind with the end in view of establishing His government upon the earth.

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION PROPHECIES

(Continued from Vol. XIII, No. 1)

Ezekiel 36:24-28

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

This majestic prophecy of the future of Israel is a challenge to the faith of all who read it. Do we believe that God is going to do this? Or does it seem so impossible that we are willing to settle for something less than this, then insist that the present migration of certain European Jews to Palestine is the fulfillment? This writer believes that God is going to do exactly what He declares here. The plenary fulfillment of this prophecy is still future. The characteristic word of this entire portion is "I will."

If we insist that we believe God is going to do all this even as He has said, then the important question arises as to whether He will do this before "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels" or afterward. It is most obvious that it cannot be fulfilled afterward since the very people to whom this is promised could not survive the catastrophic purging that accompanies the return of the Lord to the earth. 2 Thess.1:7-10. This prophecy will begin to be fulfilled the moment that the truth declared in Acts 28:28 is reversed. Then the salvation of God will return to His people Israel, and the long suspension of God's kingdom purposes will be at an end. This will mean rich blessings for Israel and blessings for the nations through them. Every word of this prophecy must be fulfilled before the second coming of Christ. It is a prophecy of blessing for Israel and the nations in the kingdom of the heavens, not the millennium.

To fully appreciate this prophecy we need to carefully consider the entire chapter. The first part deals with the restoration of the land of Palestine (verses 1-15), and the second part deals with the restoration of the people of Israel (verses 16-38). The restoration of the people will synchronize with the restoration of the land even though they are dealt with separately in this chapter. The reader who desires further information on this portion will find it in Volume X, Number 6 of *The Word of Truth* under title of *Not For Your Sakes*.

Ezekiel 37:21-25

And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

This quotation is rather long, but even though a large portion has been quoted it will still be obscure unless the entire section from verses 15 to 28 is read. ..

The prophet Ezekiel was commanded to demonstrate a great future blessing for Israel by a symbolical action. He was to take a stick and write on it "for Judah and for the children of Israel his companions." On another stick he was to write, "for Joseph, the stick of Ephriam, and for all the house of Israel his companions." Then he was to join them to one another and they were to become one stick in his hand. This act set forth the reunion in the house of Israel with the house of Judah. The Lord then tells how He will do this in the portion of Scripture quoted above. When this is done, then the nations will come to know that it is Jehovah who has sanctified Israel. See Ezek. 37:28, also 36:26. All of this takes place before the second coming of Christ. At that time those destroyed because "they know not God" will be destroyed because they have given up a knowledge that God graciously gave to them.

In this connection the reader is asked to carefully consider Ezekiel 39:21-29.

Hosea 2:14-23

This important passage has already been dealt with in these pages. See Volume X for an exposition of this portion.

Joel 2:18-32

This portion is too long to quote, but its importance is great. Peter quotes a part of it in Acts 2:17-21, and this portion has been dealt with in our pamphlet *The Last Days*, pages 4 to 6.

Amos 9:11-15

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they possess the remnant of Edom, and of all heathen, which are called by name, saith the Lord that doeth this. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.

This passage dealing both with the restoration of the land of Israel and the people of Israel is of great interest due to the fact it was used by James in his great message recorded in Acts 15. There he revealed that God was visiting the Gentiles (nations) to take out of them a people for His name, The visit of God began at Acts 10 when Peter was sent to the house of Cornelius, and the visit had not yet ended about twelve years later when James spoke these words. However, this visit was to come to an end and then the Lord was to return to Israel and complete His great work. This "return" is not the second coming of Christ. It is His return to Israel after His visit to the nations. The stage was set for this return at the close of the book of Acts, but instead of the Lord returning to Israel, He suspended His kingdom purposes and remained among the nations for His great work of demonstrating the graciousness of His character and calling those who are to extol the glories of His grace. When this

is complete He will return to His people Israel, build again the tabernacle of David and complete the great work set forth in this prophecy.

Micah 4:1.8

This majestic portion deals more with the blessings and glory of restored Israel than it does with the actual restoration. This chapter sets forth the hope of Israel. The nearness of this hope was announced by John the Baptist and the Lord when they proclaimed that "the kingdom of the heavens is at hand." Every blessing recorded in this chapter was made possible through the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Christ. He does not need to come again to bring these blessings. They will be realized step by step when the present suspension of God's kingdom purposes are lifted.

At this point it is suggested that the reader should consider Micah 7:7-20 and Zephaniah 3:14-20.

Malachi 4:5.6

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

When this prophecy is linked up with the declaration of our Lord in **Matthew 17:11**, "**Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things,**" it becomes one of the greatest prophecies having to do with the restoration of Israel. That the work of Elijah is limited to Israel is most evident. However, Israel cannot be blessed without the world being blessed in turn. God called Israel to be a channel, not a container. See Genesis 12:2, 3; Romans 11:15.

Thus the final word of the Old Testament is a prophecy of the future restoration and blessing of Israel. Elijah the prophet is to play a prominent part in this. His mission and work is to precede the coming of the day of the Lord. It is to precede the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have now examined the major prophecies that tell of the restoration of Israel. Not one of these predict a return in unbelief. Not one of them sets forth Israel returning to the land in an unconverted condition. The pattern of Israel's conversion was established by the experience of Saul of Tarsus, better known as Paul the Apostle. This is dealt with in another article in this issue.

THE END

THE SILENCE OF GOD - - Book Review

This book by Sir Robert Anderson is again in print. Mr. Robert Kregel of *Kregel Publications* in Grand Rapids, Michigan is to be congratulated for having reprinted this book, for having published it in very attractive format with large readable type, and for having made it available at the very reasonable price of \$2.00 per copy.

I have quoted from this book many times in the pages of *The Word of Truth*, and have acknowledged that it was this book that gave me my start in the full dispensational truth, which I hold and teach today. I say it "gave me my start" since I have followed out the intimations of truth set forth in this book to many logical conclusions into which Sir Robert did not go at the time he wrote this **in 1897**.

Copies of this book may be obtained from us at the price quoted above. I urge every reader to get one of these and give it a permanent place in his library.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

QUESTION. What is your opinion of "expose" as a translation of the Greek word *elegcho*?

ANSWER: If you will refer to *Webster's New International Dictionary* and read the seven possible meanings of the word *expose* that are given there you will see that not one of these definitions will fit *elegcho*. This is the translation used by A. E. Knoch in his *Concordat Version*, but I do not feel that *expose* represents in the least the Greek word *elegcho*. However, Mr. Knoch in his lexicon and concordance defines *expose* as meaning "make the facts known." I agree fully that *elegcho* means "to make the facts known," but I deny that *expose* means this. In my opinion *expose* is wholly inadequate as a translation for *elegcho*.

QUESTION. Would you comment on the difference between *elegcho* and *photizo*;

ANSWER. My studies in these words have led to the conviction that *elegcho* means to enlighten a person by making the facts in the case known to him. This must be done in such a way that understanding is imparted. *Photizo* means to illuminate. The time will yet come when the Holy Spirit will make the facts known to the world in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. When this takes place if any man seeks to act upon these facts, the facts will be illuminated. An illustration of this is seen in 2 Corinthians 4:4. There Paul speaks of those who had heard the glorious gospel of Christ. They were in possession of the facts declared in this gospel. But the god of this world had blinded the minds of those who did not believe, lest the light (*photismos*, meaning illumination) of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. I feel that *photizo* is the complement of *elegcho*.

QUESTION: In the preface to his book on *The Apocalypse or the Day of the Lord*, Dr. E. W. Bullinger declares that in the book of Revelation "the word 'Heaven is always used in the *singular* number and *not* once in the plural." In Volume XII, Number 6 of *The Word of Truth* you say that the word *heaven* occurs 54 times in the Greek and that it is in the singular number 53 times and the plural once? Will you comment on this?

ANSWER: Dr. Bullinger was wrong. The one occurrence of the plural of *heaven* in Revelation 12:12 has never been questioned so far as I know by any textual critic. It is plural in all manuscripts.

QUESTION: You fail to recognize that the Greek word translated "lifted up" in John 12:32 means "exalted." It is only when Christ is exalted in our ministry that he draws men to Himself. Our failure to do this is the reason why so few are drawn today.

ANSWER: No, I did not in the least fail to recognize this as I was not dealing with the meaning of "lifted up," but with the facts in the case (Vol. XII, No. 4). It makes no difference whether you translate it "lifted up" or "exalted" the fact remains that Jesus Christ declared that after this became an accomplished fact, He would draw all men to Himself. I reject altogether the idea that this means "exalted in our ministry" for the Greek says "exalted out of the earth" (John 12 :32, 33). We cannot

exalt or lift up Christ out of the earth by our preaching. Since He spoke these words "signifying what death he should die," He did not speak to them concerning how men would preach Him. He is speaking of His return to heaven and the manner of death by which this return should be effected. The Jews who heard Him understood it this way, for in their answer they made a contrast between being "lifted up" and "abiding forever" (John 12:34). Therefore when we truly understand these words of our Lord we find that He was telling Philip and Andrew that when He returned to heaven by way of death upon the Cross He would draw all men to Himself. Acts 2:33 and 5:31 shows that his exaltation is an accomplished fact, but at no point in the history of mankind since that time have "all men" been drawn unto Him.

I reject altogether the childish belief that "all" here means every man who has ever lived since the ascension of Christ. These words promise a universal drawing, not a universal salvation. This promise will be fulfilled to the letter when there is a universal and unlimited drawing of all men at one time. I reject the idea as being unscriptural that to draw is the equivalent of salvation. No one ever comes to the Father until they are drawn, but men can refuse to come after they are drawn. The fulfillment of this promise has been postponed for 1900 years. It will be a positive reality when God resumes His kingdom purposes. He will then intervene in love, not in wrath. Those who reject this display of love will taste of His wrath.

THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS

My time from April 13 to May 26 of this year was spent in travel and in ministry in various places. Meetings ranging from one to eight messages were held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Chicago, Rockford, and Peoria, Illinois; Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Kalamazoo, Michigan; Buffalo and Greenwich, New York; Paterson, New Jersey; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Fifty-two messages were given in this time, and it total of 6500 miles were traveled. The response to my ministry and the opportunity of fellowshiping again with tested and true friends brought much joy to my heart. The studies presented on "Grace and Government" and, "The Glories of Grace" brought many expressions of appreciation from the friends of this ministry. I hope that these studies which attempt to demonstrate the true basis for right division and the real purpose of God's present calling will in time be available in printed form. I am convinced that they represent a great advance in the recovery of that transcendent truth which Paul calls "the secret."

Another such trip for ministry is being planned for this fall. I expect to be in the Mid-west and East from September 10 to October 26. This time I will travel by automobile and Mrs. Sellers will accompany me. An itinerary such as this must be worked out far in advance. In fact our departure from Los Angeles will be on September 1, so all advertising must be prepared and printed during August, even though it is mailed after we leave. Tentative commitments have already been made for every day except three days that are still open while we are in the Chicago area.

****We are now able to furnish a tape recorded ministry to any group or individual if they have or will secure the necessary equipment to reproduce these recordings. These messages average about fifty minutes in length, they are seven-inch spools, two messages to each spool, and are to be played at 3% inch speed. They will be issued on the average of one each week and a number of copies of each message will be made. These will be sent in a circuit by those participating in this ministry.

The equipment for playing these tapes can be purchased from any dealer who sells recording equipment. Appliance dealers will also order them for you if they do not carry them in stock. The model we use in making these recordings is Revere-Model T.70163. The same machine that makes the recordings is also used to play them. However, if you are interested, better correspond with us before buying any equipment, as we may be able to help you.

****My associate in this ministry, Mr. Herbert H. Baudistel, spent the month of June in the East. This gave him opportunities to minister to the fellowship in Evanston, Grand Rapids, and Philadelphia

****I have just been reading a magazine that comes to me from England and in it I find a very caustic and unfair criticism of Mr. C. H. Welch, Editor of *The Berean Expositor*. The writer of the criticism declares that his friends inform him "that the wheels of Mr. Welch's appcart are waxing stiff and frail, and it may collapse suddenly any day now, just like a house of cards." I doubt very much the truth of this. A ministry such as that carried on by Mr. Welch is not subject to sudden collapse. Mr. Welch may lose "followers," but that certainly could not be a new experience, for I am sure this has been the constantly recurring experience of his entire ministry. He may lose the material support of one here and one there, but if so he will probably cut his garment according to the available cloth and go right on.

****You may have heard that my own ministry is collapsing, that my friends have abandoned me, and that it will fold up any day now. This could possibly be true, but if it is I am not aware of it. It is true that some who were formerly friendly are now vigorously opposing me and my ministry, but this is not a new experience. In a ministry such as this, difficulties of this nature are chronic, not spasmodic. That is why I never permit any man or any group of men to get hold of the pilot wheel of *The Word of Truth Ministry*. When they get tired of sailing with me I do not want them to be in a position to steer my ship straight for the rocks. This often happens in a meeting or an assembly. It happened in our local fellowship here in Los Angeles. But it cannot happen to *The Word of Truth Ministry*. Anyone can abandon ship whenever they care to. But they cannot wreck the ship before they leave.

****Lack of binding cloth of the type we use caused a long delay in getting Bound Volume 12 ready for delivery. The binder had to order it as a special run and when it came it was the wrong kind and color. This caused another long delay. But they are now in our hands and have been shipped to all who have ordered them. Copies are available at \$2.00 each.

****The Editor desires to express his thanks for the many expressions of appreciation that he has received for his latest pamphlet *Sorting Prophetic Material*. We sought to give this the widest possible distribution, and the correspondence we have received reveals that it has set many to thinking. Copies are available at thirty-five cents per single copy, or four copies for \$1.00 if you desire them for distribution.

End, Vol. XIII, No. 2