



THE COVENANT VISION.

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**“Heaven and earth shall pass away: But
My words shall not pass away.”**

THE COVENANT VISION.

CHIEF EDITOR: *Pastor Frank W. Dowsett. J.P.*

In presenting this magazine, it is not our intention just to indiscriminately add to the number of Christian journals already available. Our only purpose is to present the Word of God in its fullness as we feel God has revealed it to us, in order that the God of our fathers Abraham; Isaac and Jacob may be glorified.

It is our firm conviction that we are living in the very last days prior to the appearing and return of our Great God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are also convinced that never before in the history of our nation and people has there been such a need for the "Watchmen in Israel" to sound the alarm in order to awaken God's people to the urgent need to repent, and to return to God with all their hearts, and with all their minds, and with all their strength.

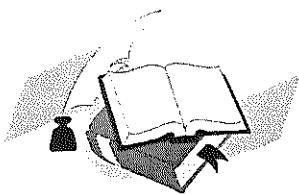
Denominational doctrines and differences are not our concern, and it is not our intention to enter into such arguments. There is not enough time left to waste it on such unproductive, and indeed, destructive, exercises. We are concerned ONLY with what we believe the Word of God says and teaches:

We proclaim the absolute necessity for all people to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour, as the only means to Eternal Life.

We proclaim the absolute necessity for the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic people to recognise their identity, their inheritance, and their responsibility, as the literal descendants of God's people Israel.

We proclaim the absolute necessity for all who would faithfully serve God to 'receive the power from on high', which can only

(continued on inside back cover)



Editorial

Babylon at its Best! Or Satan at his Worst?

Malachi 3:5 (NCV)

⁵The LORD All-Powerful says, “Then I will come to you and judge you. I will be quick to testify against those who take part in evil magic, adultery, and lying under oath, those who cheat workers of their pay and who cheat widows and orphans, those who are unfair to foreigners, and those who do not respect me.

Thus we find here what God has planned for the above sinners in the last days. It has been brought to the attention of us here at the Ministry, by some wonderful Christian criminal lawyers and barristers of just how evil our legal system really is. A lot of completely innocent people are in our goals, all on the say so, of in most cases one person. Let us look at 2 examples I have had privy to learn about.

Case one: A gentleman spent two whole years in goal for a crime he did not commit, all on the say so of one person. The penalty for lying under oath under Babylon's system.....Well?

Case two: A lady we shall, at this time call Mary, has been in goal 6 months of a 20 year sentence all because of one person lying. Rest assured readers I have been told by these Christian lawyers that she is innocent. The point I am trying to make is that under this Babylonian system the penalty for perjury depends on the prosecutors and they leave a lot to be desired.

Under God's Law, well let us take a look at what God has to say about witnesses in The Holy Bible:

Deuteronomy 19:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵“One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

When God saw Cain kill Abel he did not take Cain's life in retaliation, for if he did, he would have been breaking his very own law. Let us see exactly what the penalty is for committing perjury under God's Law by reading further on in Deuteronomy in the Holy Bible:

Deuteronomy 19:16 (NCV)

¹⁶If a witness lies and accuses a person of a crime, ¹⁷the two people who are arguing must stand in the presence of the LORD before the priests and judges who are on duty. ¹⁸The judges must check the matter carefully. The witness who is a liar, lying about a fellow Israelite, ¹⁹must be punished. He must be punished in the same way the other person would have been punished. You must get rid of the evil among you.

Well it is a different kettle of fish now isn't it? If we had stuck to God's Law instead of Babylon's law a lot of innocent people (and I am reassured by these Christian Lawyers that the percentage is very high) would not be in our gaols. There is a movement under foot to try and rectify this problem by a group of sincere Christian people in our Law system and with prayers and God's blessings they might just be on the road to rectify this matter. Let us look at what the final outcome will be for all these evil people as we read The Holy Bible:

Galatians 5:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ^oadultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, ^omurders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

This is why we pray in our prayers to our Lord "THY KINGDOM COME" to rid ourselves of this evil system where the poor are down-trodden and because innocent people are finding there is no comeback against the powers of evil that run all our Anglo Saxon countries.

COME LORD JESUS!

*Gordon Symons J.P.
EDITOR*

THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*by Howard B Rand LL.B
Courtesy - "Destiny" Magazine
October 1948*

Paul informs us that the carnal mind is hostile to God and not willing to yield to the requirements of the Law of the Lord. Because this is so, those who are enslaved to the desires of the flesh cannot please God. Referring to the true followers of our Lord, Paul states they are not sensual but spiritual, if indeed the Spirit of Christ dwells within them. In order to emphasize this Paul declares that anyone who does not possess the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him (Rom.8:7-9). Thus, the body of the individual who is a Christian is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Christian's body is not his own to use and abuse at will. Because it has become the Holy Spirit's dwelling, it is consecrated to the service of the Lord and every Christian must so command his body that it may become a fit place for the Holy Spirit to reside.

Consecrated Things

A perfect analogy exists in the dedication of inanimate objects to the service of the Lord. Men construct buildings for different purposes: some for homes, others as a place of trade where commercial transactions are carried on, still others are devoted to entertainment and pleasure. But cathedrals, temples and church edifices are set apart from other structures made by men so that they may be consecrated to religious services. When such a place is used for secular purposes, it is considered to have been desecrated or profaned. Even the ungodly recognize this so Soviet Russia has turned buildings formerly used for the worship of God

into every kind of use that would degrade and desecrate them in the eyes of Christian people.

The misuse of temple furnishings and sacred vessels is considered a desecration of those articles. The classic example of such desecration is furnished us in the scene at Belshazzar's feast when he brought the sacred vessels of the Temple into the banquet hall. Thus, a building and its furnishings which have been dedicated to the service of the Lord are set apart or holy unto Him. The Bible abounds with evidence to sustain this assertion. One instance will suffice to demonstrate this point. Then two hundred and fifty men who had offered incense before the Lord were destroyed by fire because of their rebellion, the Lord gave a command to Moses:

*"Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest,
that he take up the censers out of the burning,
and scatter thou the fire yonder; for thou
are hallowed."* (Num.16:37.)

Set Apart

Out of the metal of these censers broad plates were made for a covering for the altar. The account states that because they had been offered before the Lord they were hallowed or sacred. If this can be said of an inanimate object like a building, vessels in the building and those censers, how much more can it be said of an individual who has consecrated himself to the Lord by becoming a Christian. Such a one has set himself apart to serve the Lord first and in so doing is consecrated to his work whatever it is. This should be the position of all Christians, whether in business or other secular pursuits or in the specific work of proclaiming the gospel for, having accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, they

are consecrated to His service. Furthermore, when the Spirit or the Lord takes up His abode with them, their bodies become the temple of the Holy Spirit. This is very important and it would be well if all Christians, without any reservation whatever, would recognize the tremendous importance of their responsibility to God as a result of the new relationship to Him when His Spirit dwells within them. The worldly man does as he pleases with his body, often to his own damnation, but the Christian must use his as a vehicle of expression for the Spirit who dwells within so that the purposes of the Lord may go forward. Paul had in mind the importance of keeping the body undefiled when he said:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

(1 Cor. 3:16-17.)

Defiling the Temple

Words could not be stronger or their meaning more clear, yet thousands of the members of our churches seem to be wholly unacquainted with this admonition, for in many of the things they allow themselves to do they are daily defiling the temple of the Holy Spirit. It cannot be argued that because the Spirit of the Lord is not dwelling within certain specified persons they are free, therefore, from the charge of defilement. From the inception of the creation of man, God's ultimate objective has been that all persons may eventually become vehicles of expression through whom the Spirit of the Lord may operate. The fact that certain ones have not become the abode of His Spirit indicates that they have so defiled the temple that the Holy Spirit cannot take up His residence with them. The Spirit of the Lord will not enter a defiled temple or, having

taken up His abode there, remain long when that dwelling place becomes unfit for His further habitation.

Abstinence Required

What, then does God require of men and what constitutes defilement of the temple of the Holy Spirit? One thing is certain: every Christian who has accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour is required to so live that he may have continued health, keeping his body free from all defilement through excesses of any kind or the use of stimulants, drugs and narcotics. Anything that will in any way impair or destroy the normal, healthy functions of the body, or that is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of the individual, must be avoided if the temple of the Spirit is to remain undefiled. Even in the things we are bidden to do, there must be moderation in their use:

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” (1 Cor. 9:24-27.)

Excesses of all kinds are harmful and there are some things which are by their nature harmful regardless of the degree of indulgence. It is impossible for one to be temperate in breaking the law, or moderate in taking poisons into his system. Every degree of law violation is subject to judgment and the use of poison in any form to stimulate the body or

mind defiles the temple of the Holy Spirit. Yet we have heard men excuse their harmful habits, contending they are moderate in their indulgences, wholly failing to realize they are destroying their health just as surely, even though they do it by degrees over a period of time.

Dedicated to Service

God needs individuals who possess physical vigour, mental alertness and abounding health, who are the recipients of the Holy Spirit, through whom He may carry out His purposes. These individuals, having dedicated themselves to His service, will prepare their bodies to be a dwelling place for the Spirit. In order to make that preparation complete, it is essential to take all the teachings of the Scriptures into account:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (11 Tim. 3:16-17.)

Let it be noted that Paul says *all* – not just the New Testament – so instructions in righteousness would include a knowledge of the law and its requirements, which is given first in the Old Testament. Under the law definite rules are laid down for our health. No genuine Christian can afford to ignore these rules of health if he desires to keep his body from being defiled. Moses said to Israel:

"Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing." (Deut. 14:2-3.)

Abominable Things

Surely all those who wish to be without condemnation must be as particular about their diet as God required of our Israel forefathers. Following the statement that we must eat no abominable thing are lists of the meats, fowl and fish we are permitted to eat and forbidden to eat. While these laws do not directly pertain to personal salvation, their observance does directly contribute to a healthy body, making it a fit temple for the indwelling Holy Spirit. Daniel was specially blessed because he refused to defile his body by eating abominable things and the story of Daniel's life reveals that he secured an even greater reward than bodily health for, having successfully met the test he was subjected to by living in Babylon's court, he became a man greatly beloved and received marvellous revelations from God. The laws of diet were given by God so that His people might be free from sickness and suffering of the peoples around them. Even a moderate violation of those laws is prohibited. Not only has He given us laws pertaining to the meats we may and may not eat but other laws are given covering hygiene, sanitation and other matters related to health, all of which are essential to our physical and mental well-being.

A Living Sacrifice

It is not the purpose here to list all the modern indulgences that would come under condemnation as injurious to health, which impair normal bodily functions to the extent that they defile the temple of the Holy Spirit. With hardly an exception every individual is fully aware of the injurious effects of the indulgences he permits. Popularity in such pursuits in no way detracts from the serious effect they have upon a person's health, the curtailment of mental alertness and the dulling of spiritual perception. However, high on the list of these

modern indulgences, and showing a tremendous universal increase in their use in the last two decades, are intoxicating liquors and tobacco. It is useless for their advocates to try to defend their use, for every unbiased report definitely shows their harmful effects upon the human system. All who indulge in their use, and are enslaved by them, will, if truthful, admit this fact to be true. Modern advertising, misleading and dishonest, seeks to beguile the public into believing otherwise. But Paul's words should be remembered when passing upon such habits. He said:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.)

A sacrifice, in order to be acceptable to God, must be perfect, entirely without blemish. It is this standard of perfect obedience that Paul sets before the Christian and to which he must attain in order to have the full blessing of the indwelling Spirit. Continuing, Paul declares we are not to conform with the world and be moulded by its opinions. Instead we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and thus be able to understand the will of God and know what is good, acceptable and perfect in His sight.

We are reminded of an incident related to us by the late Dr. William Pascoe Goard. He was taking one of his early morning walks through St. James Park in London, England, one day when a man came up to him and said, "I am Jesus Christ." This man was one among many similarly deluded individuals who today are laying claim to being what they are not. Dr. Goard, looking the man straight in the eye, replied. "When I meet my Lord and Saviour He will not be smoking a cigarette!" The man, repulsed, slunk away. Dr. Goard's

appraisal of our Lord's refusal to indulge in habit-forming vices detrimental to individual health brings to mind the Biblical instructions that as Christians we should strive to be like Him, following Him as our example in all things we elect to do.

Presumptuous

Do not misunderstand; we are not saying that those who do these things cannot be saved. But we are certain that when the facts are borne home to them, and they become definitely aware that what they do is injurious to the health of body, mind and spirit, they must immediately rectify the situation. This can only be done by refraining from such indulgences. The alternative is to become presumptuous by refusing to do so when the knowledge of the ill effects of their self gratification upon the temple of the Holy Spirit becomes known. Then, too, it is well to remember that we are admonished to build upon the foundation laid by Jesus Christ and that if any man's work abide which he does build thereupon he will receive a reward. But if that work is worthless, it will be lost, though he may himself be saved, as Paul puts it, "*ye so as by fire*" (*1 Cor. 3:15*).

Crucifying the Flesh

It is an easy thing to drift with the crowd but it takes character and a will controlled by the Spirit of God to stem the tide toward futility where one's own personal life is concerned.

Jesus said:

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and

whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matt. 16:24-27.)

Paul clearly summed up the situation for every Christian when he said:

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:24-25.)

Because of the urgency for everyone to heed the admonition to keep and obey God’s Commandments, Paul declared:

“Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.” (Rom. 14:22.)

Greatest of all Rewards

The prize for which we strive is so great that the essential costs which must be paid for its attainment are infinitesimal in comparison with the glory which will be ours if we win the race set before us. Thousands of men and women who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are still unmindful of the greatest of all prizes. Eternal life if given all who believe on Him, for this is the Divine promise. But above and beyond the attainment of eternal life is the reward of immortality to be given to the overcomers only:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." . . . (Rev. 3:20-21.)

Few in comparison to the many who attain to eternal life will secure this greatest of all rewards. This is reserved for those who have overcome the world and its temptations and evils. Then, pressing onward, they have engaged in the greatest of all struggles and have gained the victory over self. While the individual who is a Christian will secure citizenship in the Kingdom of God, it is the overcomers who will reign with the King in His Kingdom. This is confirmed by Jesus Christ in His message through John:

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."
(Rev. 21:7.)

How foolish indeed, in the light of Scriptural revelation, are multitudes of church members who are failing to strive that they may attain to this preferred position. Jesus informs us that in the Kingdom there will be many who will occupy places of obscurity (Matt. 5:19) because they let slip from their grasp the supreme heritage. Those who find themselves in possession of the greatest inheritance of all will be glad they were "tried" and "purified" (Dan. 12:10). Though at the time the way seemed difficult and the testing almost approached the limit of human endurance. Let us, nevertheless, strive to be masters of ourselves so that we may not miss this higher calling.

CV NEWS

Well here we are again; another issue and another new book out by Frank called "The Heroes of Faith." When we all thought Frank was taking his retirement, he has had a second wind as they say. Two issues ago we put out "Gog and Magog" and in this issue no.110 we are making available his latest book, "The Heroes of Faith". There is seemingly no end to the books that are coming. Let me give you a list of some of them that are in the pipe line:

Paradise Heaven and Hell	Epistles of Peter
Heritage of Israel	Epistles of James
Epistles to the Galatians	Day of the Lord
Resurrection	He That Hath Ears to Hear
and last, but not least Songs of Moses	

Frank certainly has been busy and God willing there might be a few more in the pipeline! So far he has written 37 books, all with copyright. He told me the other day it all seems to come so fluently and is so interesting when he is doing it. For a while now we here at headquarters have been battling postage, and so from this month the annual contribution for The Covenant Vision has now officially been increased to \$20 per annum for delivery in Australia.

My wife; Lorraine was after a long series of illnesses and stays in hospitals diagnosed with thyroid cancer since the last C.V. After 2 operations she is as yet to go into hospital again for radiotherapy. But she is on the path to a complete recovery. To see God's healing spirit upon her and uplifting her brings lots of praises and thank you from us both, along with all the prayers of the loved ones here at the church we are all very grateful.

God Bless you all.....Editor

RESURRECTION.

CHAPTER 2.

OUR BELIEF.

by Pastor Frank W Dowsett J.P.

This chapter will continue our study of the 15th chapter of the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. We will not be studying it from the point of view of a doctrine, but as that of our belief. Previously we studied it as the 'Resurrection' chapter, and we covered all the aspects of it down to verse 11 from the point of view of the historical evidence.

I would point out one thing before we proceed. This is not just a study of the first or the second resurrection as such. This is a study of the overall doctrine of resurrection. If we don't know that there is going to be a resurrection, or even that such a thing as a resurrection exists, then we can forget about the first, second, third or any other numbered resurrection. We are now studying the effect that it has on our belief and on our faith.

There are little issues that crop up from time to time in the studies of any subject. This is pretty normal in Bible study, because the deeper we get involved in God's Word, we'll find that it mentions something at which we need to have a more attentive look in order to strengthen the belief in the subject we are actually studying. So we're going to do this from time to time as we proceed.

When we come to the 12th verse we find that Paul realises there's a bit of a problem. He says;

“Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?”

Other translations put it this way;

“Now if the rising of Christ from the dead is the very heart of our message, how can some of you deny that there is any resurrection?”

Paul is pointing out a very important factor. We need to realise that in verses 12 to 19 he is now dealing with the problems associated with people's approach to the subject. In the succeeding verses, 20 to 28, he continues to outline the correct understanding of it.

Somehow we don't understand how people cannot see fundamental issues. I say fundamental in the sense of the doctrine's relationship with the Christian faith. There are certain fundamental things which are totally necessary for us to understand if we're going to ever comprehend the fullness of the Christian message.

How many Christians really believe in their heart, let alone know anything about resurrection, other than that it is mentioned in the Bible? Just have a think of it for a minute. I assure you that at times we hear some very queer ideas.

Some years ago we had a couple from England stay with us. He was very well known in Israel Identity circles and has written several books. He went over to India and he corresponded with me quite regularly. The whole of the correspondence was based entirely on his ministry to the Indians over there. He returned not having converted the Indians fully to Christianity, but quite convinced of some of their beliefs!!! He now believed in reincarnation. One of them had mosquito bites all over her arm but wouldn't kill the mosquito because it might have been someone from a past life. That's what reincarnation is. If you're a bad person, you come back in some lowly form. But if you're a good person

you come back as somebody else. But it's amazing how most of these people, when they talk about reincarnation, have in a previous life always been a princess or a prince or some great person. They were never the local cleaner, or the garbageman or something like that. They were always someone of very high social standing.

So where's the resurrection in this kind of belief? You keep on going from one life to another life, and then on to another life. It just goes on interminably. There is no such thing as resurrection in that sort of a belief, despite how much emphasis is being placed, not so much on the death of Christ **but on His resurrection.**

Without resurrection we have nothing. But what happens these days according to modern theology?

How many of us have been to a funeral service, with a casket in front of us, and the minister says 'our brother or sister is not dead.' And you scratch your head and think 'then why on earth are we here? They're not dead. They're alive. They're up in heaven. They're walking around, talking with the Lord and the Archangels and their mother and father and grandparents, having a great old time up there. They're not dead after all!'

Why do we need a resurrection if we're not dead? Resurrection means being raised from the dead. Too many people don't bother to think about the consequences of what they believe. **You have to be dead to be resurrected.** Paul appeared to have this same problem. The people listened to the Gospel, the very heart of which was the resurrection, and yet they didn't believe in such a thing. Today we have exactly the same situation. People will believe or disbelieve to suit themselves. It's not the done thing to believe in resurrection. Who ever heard of resurrection? Let us look at the circumstances of the resurrection of Lazarus.

He was raised from the dead after being four days in the grave. One might ponder as to the reason for the "four" days.

The commonly held belief at the time was that the soul didn't leave the body until four days had passed after death. The Lord, being quite aware of this, deliberately waited for the four days to expire so as to circumvent any arguments as to whether Lazarus was in fact legally dead. So He said, "He sleeps." The disciples didn't understand Him, thinking he was having a good rest, and He said, "Let me tell you plainly, he's dead." This was a miraculous bringing back to life.

It's of more than passing interest to read of what happened to Lazarus after being brought back from the dead. On page 188-189 of his excellent book, "The Coming of the Saints", the author, J. W. Taylor, recounts how he personally attended a Eucharistic Service in Marseilles, and heard the priest speak of Lazarus as "The First Bishop of this City". His name is recorded in the annals of this church as verifying this fact.

Lazarus did finally die. What he had experienced was merely a bringing back to life. He was not resurrected from the dead as this would have involved returning in a glorified state. It was more like a resuscitation process.

Then we read the account in Matthew's Gospel regarding those who came out of the graves at the resurrection of Christ. One of the methods used in those days was to bury the dead in a cave. You could get up and walk around if you were raised from the dead. It was a local event which the power of Christ caused to happen to a local group of people, who probably only died very close to the time of His own resurrection. They lived their life and just finally died again. These were isolated incidents because of the power of God which operated in that particular time and place. There would not be many, if any, who would not be familiar with the account of Daniel in the lion's den. The king sentenced Daniel to be cast into the lion's den as a means of execution, but it certainly did not turn out that way. God's Word tells us that under Kingdom conditions, lions eat straw, not people. So what did the Lord actually do? He simply applied "Kingdom conditions" to the situation! If the king had

thrown down a bale of straw to the lions, they would have had a great feed.

I am personally convinced that this was the method which the Lord used in the performance of every one of His miracles.

But when we're referring to resurrection we're speaking about a resurrection to eternal life.

And these people had to be convinced that there was such a thing as resurrection. It was unknown. The Sadducees were one of the major groups of teachers at that time. They taught the people that there was no such thing as a resurrection. **The people believed them because they were the teachers.**

Now it's quite amazing how people will accept half-truths, when in fact, there is no such thing as a half-truth.

We have to differentiate between the word true, and the word truth. They're not always the same thing. People might argue with that, but personally, I don't believe the word true can be equated with the word truth.

We have a system in our legal profession where you go into court, and contrary to public opinion, you don't promise to tell the truth. **You promise to tell the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.** You promise not to add or subtract anything from your testimony. You can tell what you might perceive to be the truth, but it may not end up being true.

If you speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth the result will always be true. I well remember an incident many years ago when the minister speaking at an open air meeting made a particular statement which, quite frankly, I couldn't understand. After he had finished speaking, I went up to him to explain his statement. He asked me whether or not I believed everything in the Bible. I answered, probably somewhat naively, that I did. This

minister really railed me because I said I believed everything that was said in the Bible. And he said, well that means you've got to believe that there's no God, because there is a statement in the Bible which includes the phrase 'there is no God'.

Is that true or not? Is it true that there is a statement in the Bible that says, 'there is no God.' YES. But it's not the truth because it only a part of the truth. He didn't say the whole truth which was, "**The fool hath said in his heart** there is no God."

But as amazing as that sounds he really had a go at me in front of the rest of the audience for the fact that I believed everything that was in the Bible. The phrase 'there is no God' is in the Bible' so therefore I had to believe there is no God. So the statement that the words were there is true. The literal words are there, but it is not the truth.

And this is what we find when we start studying the word of God and all the varying aspects that are put forward to us. We have to realise that there may be an element of truth in what is said, the statement may be true to a point, but when you analyse it and put it into the whole context of the word of God you'll find that it is not the full truth of God's word.

Never depend on half truths Once you mix error with truth, it doesn't become half truth. It becomes an error, because you've totally misrepresented the truth itself.

This is what Paul had to fight against. The very heart of his message and the Christian faith was his belief in resurrection. These people found it hard to believe that fact. In his epistle to the Romans, he says;

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

You'll be put into a place of safety (which is what the word "saved" means) if you believe both of those, not just one of them. We have to believe both. This was the importance of the message that Paul was trying to get across to the people in those days. And the principle still applies today. We must be very careful that we do not accept what appears to be truth. It might be a half truth, or part of it might be right, but we've got to be very careful how we apply these principles in our studies and understanding of the word of God, and especially its application to our own lives.

But from verse 13 we find a very interesting situation developing. He says;

"But if there be no resurrection, then is Christ not risen."

Let's just pause here for a moment. A few verses ahead Paul mentions seven different factors that become involved. These are factors which become very seriously affected if we do not believe in resurrection.

The first one in verse 13, **"If there is no resurrection, then Christ is not risen."** One of the major problems we have in our Christian countries generally, or any country if you like, is the fact that whilst they might accept that Jesus Christ lived, they refuse to believe in His Resurrection. We certainly can't deny that He lived, because it's an historical fact that's been proven so many times that not even the heathens argue about it.

The Mohammedans, for arguments sake, accept the fact that Jesus Christ actually lived. But they accept Him as a good prophet, a good man. He was a prophet of God, but only one prophet of God. Mohammed was the main prophet of God according to them. They don't mind believing in the historical life of Christ. They'll believe that He lived and died. It's a historically proven fact. But when it comes to resurrection, that's where the problem begins. It is the resurrection of Christ that is the sticking point at all times. And if there is no such thing as resurrection, then "Christ is not risen". He was

just a good guy. And that is what so many people prefer to believe. You won't find any opponent of Christ telling you that Christ was a bad man. You'll find them admitting that He was a good man, doing a lot of good. They will go that far, but never to the extent of admitting that He was raised from the dead. That sort of thing just doesn't happen according to them. So if there's no resurrection, Christ did not rise from the dead. So here's the first thing we have to realise.

The second thing is recorded in verse 14,

“But if Christ is not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”

I'm going to take those two aspects separately, because they are two very distinct phases. We have a progression here. If there is no resurrection, then firstly Christ is not risen. Secondly our preaching is vain. What does the word vain mean? The word vain as used here means to be empty as to contents. In the Greek it's the direct opposite of the word full. Your preaching has absolutely no content in it whatsoever. In other words, if we're teaching the word of God, whether from a pulpit, or in a Bible study, or talking to our mates, if there is no such thing as the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, then we are just wasting our time. There is nothing in what we're saying. Our preaching is absolutely empty. Nothing. Just all wind. Now this makes one think. If it's true, as so many claim, that there is no resurrection, look at all the thousands of people who have wasted their lives, and wasted everyone else's time, by the way, preaching about Christ's resurrection, when in fact they should never have even worried about it. All they should have been doing was telling everyone what a good guy He was, and about all the good things He did, and leave it at that. Responsible preaching doesn't only cover personal salvation or the personal message. It covers everything in the word of God.

Think about the 54th chapter of Isaiah. It commences with “Sing, O barren, that did not bare.” It ends up with, “every weapon that is raised against thee, thou shall condemn.”

That's our heritage. Can we understand how we could logically even read the words, let alone explain them, if Jehovah Himself, the very One who inspired Isaiah to write them in the first place, did not do what was necessary for it to be accomplished in the long run?

No resurrection???

All our preaching of even the Old Testament would be totally useless. It wouldn't mean a thing other than to get advice from the Proverbs and the Psalms on how to live.

This is what the Judeaisers do. They'll pick on things out of the law, such as how to live righteous and good lives, how to look after yourselves, how to look after your families. And yet how many times do you find them referring to the resurrection of our Lord?

I've been thinking back at the number of people that I've listened to, whose articles I've read, to whom I've spoken to personally, who never seem to mention the resurrection. Now I'm not saying for a moment that they don't believe in resurrection. But they're certainly not all fired up about it.

You have those who believe that it happened prior to A.D. 70, so there's nothing to worry about. You have others that believe that it happens when we are converted, that the day we accept the Lord Jesus Christ is the time of our resurrection. You have nothing to look forward to in all this. And so it doesn't give you any incentive to do anything about it.

Your preaching becomes 'vain' if you don't preach on the resurrection and its affect not only on the whole of our lifestyle, and the future not only of ourselves, but of our entire nation. This future depends on the resurrection of Christ, not only on his death alone. A dead Christ would have achieved nothing.

So our preaching is 'vain'. If our preaching is vain, or empty, what does that make us? We become false prophets. False prophets are in fact false witnesses, because they are witnessing to things that are false. So if we are teaching something that's false and empty, we are false witnesses. We have to be very careful of what we do and say.

This leads on to the next aspect. That the faith of people listening to you, depends largely on what you teach them.

I'm not talking about your faith in the Lord, or what you might believe. What I teach you is what I believe. You might not accept all of it, but that's the whole principle of studying.

You have a teacher to teach. You have people to listen and learn. That's the whole principle of teaching and learning. So the person who is doing the teaching has to be very careful of what he is doing, because it affects our faith. And if what we are preaching is empty, our faith will also be empty. Not only is our preaching vain, but our faith also becomes vain. Our faith becomes vain or empty because we are following empty teachings. So we see how important it is that we correctly understand the word of God. It is based so much on this subject of resurrection. Resurrection is that which actually confirms everything in the overall plan of God.

I'm not talking about changing it from what He intended, but changing it to what He intended. He will never accomplish anything of His final plans and purposes for you and me as individuals, for fellowships, for countries, for nations, for Israel, without resurrection. His entire plan depends on this one thing.

Resurrection.

What's the next thing we find? I've already mentioned it. In Verse 15 we read;

**"We are found to be false witnesses of God;
because we have testified of God that He raised**

up Christ; whom He didn't raise up, if there's no such thing as the dead being raised."

Let me reiterate it. If we are preaching empty things, then we are false witnesses to God.

If we believe empty things, we are following and accepting false witness. So we can see how important it is to really saturate ourselves with the word of God. Those who have teaching roles must make sure, to the fullest extent possible, that they are teaching the truth of God's word. Otherwise they are going to be found to be false witnesses.

What happened to a false witness? A false witness came under as much condemnation as a person who had committed a crime. As a matter of fact, the punishment for a person who deliberately rendered false witness is that he received the same punishment as had been, or would be, exacted from the person against whom he witnessed falsely.

How then would we be witnessing falsely? This is both literally and spiritually a matter of life and death. We're all going to die one day if the Lord tarries, but we look forward to eternal life. And if you turn out to be a false witness in a matter of life and death, what's the penalty? If you've led that person into a death situation, you're liable for exactly the same penalty. DEATH!! Now that sounds a bit rough doesn't it? I would like to think that a lot of ministers would take this to heart and probably walk out of their pulpits and leave it to someone a little bit more qualified to do what they're supposed to be doing. Because all they're doing is leading people, not in the paths of life, but in the path of death. They are then subject to the same penalty. They have become false witnesses. So we'd better be very careful how we teach the word of God because of the penalties we're likely to incur. The truth is of course, "**that if the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised.**" If we're teaching anything to the contrary, we are guilty of bearing false testimony or false witness.

But then we have another problem. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." We see what happens if we start off with a wrong doctrine or a wrong concept. We start to get a lot of consequences that we never realised or intended. There is a natural progression. It always has an effect on our beliefs further down the line.

"If Christ be not raised," then what about those who have fallen asleep in Christ? It's interesting to note that Paul uses the terminology that's prominent right throughout the whole Bible. He refers to death as 'falling asleep'. Folk simply fall asleep. They sleep as Christians with their hope in the resurrection.

But those people who don't have any belief in anything happening after death do not realise that if there's no such thing as resurrection, then that's exactly what's going to happen. Everyone, whether in Christ or not in Christ, are going to go nowhere. Finish. That's it. There's no hope.

And how does that affect us? One of the great hopes of the resurrection is that we will see our loved ones again. Betty and I have often mentioned in our conversations together, how it will be the first time in our lives that we'll have ever seen her dad with two legs. He lost one in the First World War.

Now I'm sure that in the resurrection the Lord's going to give him his other leg back again. He won't be hopping around on a wooden leg or cane or crutches in the Kingdom. Now we can look forward to these little things. If there's no resurrection, forget it. We're never, ever going to meet them again.

Where then does hope come into the picture? We see how one error compounds into other errors. Those who are fallen asleep are going to find themselves just nowhere. They will never know anything. They'll just pass into oblivion.

"If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

This hope that we have is something which is not possessed by any other religious belief in the world.

This is what distinguishes Christianity from every other religion.

In all the other religions, and I don't care what it is, the founder has eventually died and the people then will even take up military arms to preserve the teachings of their revered leader. Take the teachings of the Muslim. They became, and still are, one of the most potentially violent groups of people in the world today.

Now whatever we might say about the Crusaders as to whether they were good, bad or indifferent, they were fighting an enemy that really was imbued with some sort of faith in a leader who was dead.

We can't find the strength to fight like that for a leader who's alive.

See what the Japanese did during the last war with their Kamikazes as part of their Shinto religion. They went through all their paraphernalia before and were blest, and had candles burnt to them. They'd go out and deliberately crash their plane - blowing themselves to smithereens - because they believed that the minute they died, they'd be in some sort of heaven somewhere with a great harem at their disposal.

There's neither incentive nor hope for us as Christians if we don't believe in a future resurrection. Why then has it so much importance for the future if we don't believe it?

It brings to mind something that depends entirely on the doctrine of resurrection. In Romans 8:14 we read;

"For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

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Now what was the purpose of the sons of God? We read in verse 16;

“The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children (or the sons) of God: And if children, then we are heirs; we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Then in verse 19 we read;

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, and not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.”

In verse 24 we read, **“For we are saved by hope.”** What is this hope? The hope is in the revelation or manifestation of the sons of God. Now how are the sons of God going to be revealed if there is no such thing as resurrection?

Perhaps we should at this stage establish who were originally the sons of God? We're told in the Bible that Adam was the (or A) son of God. Now what was the initial condition of Adam? What ever it was, it's that for which the whole creation is waiting to happen. Nothing further can develop in the plan of God until the sons of God are revealed in their original pristine perfection.

This is God's plan. The whole earth, the whole of creation, is standing on tip-toes, as the Philips Translation tells us, waiting for the sons of God to become manifest. We're going to get back to the situation of Adam in his pristine condition, the condition he enjoyed before his fall. We're certainly not going to revert to his position after he fell, because it was then that the wheels fell off everything.

We must revert to his condition prior to his fall. How are we going to do that? We can only do it by being raised to eternal life. That's the only way it can possibly happen.

The sons of God are to be manifest in order that God will use them to carry on His plans for the rest of creation. The only way they're going to do that is to be raised from the dead, or resurrected.

Sometime in the future, we're going to come to a situation where people will question the basic doctrines of their beliefs. And if our minds are not saturated with TRUTH, if our mind is not totally programmed in the Word of Truth, we would most certainly be in grave danger. Mind programming today is satan's chief weapon against us.

Today we're being programmed for all the evil things in the world. So why not allow our minds to be programmed for some of the good things. Why not allow our minds to be programmed to what God wants us to be thinking, and about what He wants us to be teaching and doing.

The only way we'll do this is to understand the fullness and magnificence of the teaching itself.

Once we understand this, we'll understand the progression of what will happen if God is not faithful in what He promised regarding resurrection.

Firstly "Christ will not be risen from the dead", secondly what we're preaching about will be empty. Thirdly the people's faith will be empty. The next thing is that we will be found to be false witnesses because we've taught the wrong thing.

"Those who have slept in Christ" are going to perish. They're not going to go anywhere. And finally we'll have absolutely no hope at all. You see how the progression goes downhill all the way. One thing leads to another, until when you get to the

end you find yourself in a cul-de-sac from whence there is no escape. We will have no hope left.

So it's important that we not only realise what we believe, but that we understand the importance of the entire subject. It is not something we can look at and off-handedly say that it doesn't matter that much. It does matter. It is one of the great fundamentals of our faith. We must understand the importance of resurrection. It's the one thing that is going to change this earth. Don't ever let anyone convince you to the contrary.

Some people might argue about this, and say the one thing that's going to change this earth is accepting Christ. But you can't accept Christ unless you accept Him as a resurrected Christ. He had to be resurrected. We have to be resurrected. The whole plan of God depends on this event of resurrection. Otherwise Christ wouldn't have been raised, we're not going to be raised, there is no hope for anyone, and there would certainly be no hope for the world in the future. And that possibility really scares the living daylights out of me.

When you think of what's going on behind the scenes and when you see the antics of politicians all over the world, and where we see that almost daily we're getting into a situation where we know something has got to happen, can you imagine anyone fixing up this mess without something like a resurrection happening? No! That's not what we're destined for.

We're destined to be raised from the dead, or translated, whichever it happens to be. We will be a part of the plan of God for the future of this world, and indeed, for the whole of creation, and it will all depend entirely on the doctrine of resurrection.

That's the key factor!

*series continues
next issue*

A WALK THROUGH THE GOSPELS

By Bruce Horner D.O., D.C., N.D.

PART 31A THE TRIAL

As usual, I am indebted to other minds than my own for what I have to say. If anyone has not read Frank Morison's famous classic *Who Moved The Stone?* then they have missed out on one of the finest detective stories of all time. I, for one, could not have arrived at the understanding that I now have without his aid. Nor for that matter, without the aid of F F Bruce, Dr William Pascoe Goard, Dr Bullinger, and a gentleman named Herman L Hoeh. Morison's book was first published in 1930, and his in depth studies have been necessary reading for all serious students ever since. Yet he does miss a few points, and these I have found from the works of Bruce and company just mentioned.

THE REAL CASE AGAINST THE PRISONER

The crucial question is: 'What was all the trouble about? What did his accusers bring against him?' If, as is the case here, several charges appear to have been preferred against the Prisoner, we must then ask what was the *real* case against the Prisoner? It will help us to understand these things if we consider the very singular character of the trial itself. For not only did it take place at an unprecedented hour for such proceedings, but it was marked throughout by peculiarities of a special kind. Consider in the first instance the vital element of time.

All historians agree that the arrest of Jesus took place in the Garden of Gethsemane at a late hour on the evening immediately preceding the day of the Crucifixion, and there is strong justification for believing that it could not possibly be earlier than 11.30 pm.

This estimate is based upon the amount of time required by the recorded events between the breaking up of the Supper Party, probably in a house in the Upper City, and the arrival of the armed band in the garden at the foot of Olivet. We add to this the fact that it is generally understood that the armed band was composed only of the Temple Guard and a few stragglers. However, we have the word of F F Bruce that the Roman Legion was involved. This would have necessitated a visit to Pilate for permission as well as the time taken to call out the Roman soldiers; although with disciplined troops this would not have taken very long.

Three things point to the hour being late:

1. The disciples were manifestly tired, and even the sturdy fisherman Peter, accustomed to lonely vigils on the deep, could not keep awake.
2. Both St Matthew & St Mark refer to three separate periods of slumber, broken by the periodical return of Christ from His prolonged communing under the neighbouring trees.
3. The fact that it was quite dark, and that owing to the use of torches, Christ was able to discern the approach of the arrest party a considerable distance off. (See *Mark 14:42: 'Arise, let us be going: behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand.'*).

No one can read the record of this extraordinary episode without realizing that this particular visit to the Garden was different from that of any of those previous visits to the same spot hinted at by St John. These men were being held there by the will of Christ long after the time when they would ordinarily have been in their beds at Bethany. They were waiting at his bidding for something for which He also was waiting, and which was an unconscionable long time in coming. Assuming the supper to have been over at 9.30 pm and the Garden itself reached as early as 10 pm, the arrest could hardly have been effected much

before 11.30 pm. This fixes for us with some certainty the hour of the preliminary trial. There were two routes open to the arrest party. One was to follow the course of the Kedron Valley to the foot of an old flight of steps which descended from the Upper City to the gate leading to the Pool of Siloam at the south-eastern angle of the City wall. It is mentioned by **Nehemiah** (3:15): '*The stairs that go down from the city of David*'; and again (**Chap 12:37**): '*By the fountain gate, and straight before them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall.*' From thence they would proceed to the High Priest's house. The other was to take the main Bethany road into the new town and thence by the Tyropaeon Valley to the Priestly quarter. Even if tradition had not strongly indicated the former, it is clear that to have conducted Jesus through the populous quarter of the Lower City would not only have been inexpedient, but would have necessitated a detour by which valuable time would have been lost. And in this strange nocturnal business time was a very important factor.

There are two things that stand out very sharply from the records of this trial. The first is the peculiar nature of the only definite charge brought against Jesus. The second is the admission upon which his conviction is based. We shall make a very grievous mistake if we assume that everything the priests did that night was illegal. Of course there are aspects of the affair, which on any reading of the case, must be considered definitely, and even flagrantly, to be at variance with the Jewish Law.

It was illegal, for example, for the Temple Guard, acting officially as the instrument for the High Priest, to effect the arrest. But we concede now, that the Roman contingent was indeed present for this purpose. Nevertheless it should have been left to the voluntary action of the witnesses. It was illegal to try a capital charge by night. Only 'trials for money' could be

conducted after sunset. It was illegal, after the testimony of the witnesses had broken down, for the judges to cross-examine the prisoner. They should have acquitted Him, and if the testimony given was demonstrably false, the witnesses should have been sentenced to death by stoning. But beneath this there lies a strong undercurrent of almost meticulous observance of certain minor points of law.

This fact emerges as we study the singular way in which the very ground of the accusation shifted during the course of the trial. There were three main charges:

1. That He had threatened to destroy the Temple.
2. That He had claimed to be the Son of God.
3. That He had stirred up the people against Caesar.

The third of these can be dismissed instantly. It was framed solely for political ends. The Roman Law took no recognition of the offences for which Christ was condemned to death, yet without Pilate the death could not be consummated. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, to find a political charge to justify before the Roman procurator the extreme penalty that they had already tacitly imposed. They chose the charge of conspiracy against Caesar because it was the only kind of charge that would carry weight with Pontius Pilate, or indeed with any representative of the Roman Power. Even that almost failed, and would have failed completely had the procuratorship been in stronger hands. The thing we are concerned with very deeply is what the *real* charge of the Jews was against Christ.

According to a long-established Hebrew custom, the accusers in a Jewish criminal trial were the witnesses. No other form of prosecution was legal. The first clearly defined act in the midnight drama, after the Prisoner had been brought before the Court, was the calling of witnesses as the law demanded.

St Mark says: '*Many bare false witness against him.*'
St Matthew says: '*Many false witnesses came.*'

And St Mark affirms that the evidence of these witnesses did not 'agree together' and was therefore overthrown.

Considering the subtleties of Jewish jurisprudence and especially with its orientation in favour of the prisoner, it may seem curious that, having been at considerable pains to secure witnesses for the prosecution, the Court should have proceeded forthwith to *reject* the evidence. It should not have been difficult to harmonize their stories in advance. The very fact that the Court did reject the testimony proves that in this fundamental matter of the witnesses even Caiaphas himself was under some compelling necessity to follow the traditional and characteristic usage in a 'trial for life'.

It is clear, therefore, that whatever may have been the subject matter of the preliminary witnesses referred to by the two Evangelists, it did not get beyond the second or provisional stage. This can only mean that it was either demonstrably contrary to the experience and knowledge of the Court, or it was invalidated on technical grounds. St Mark's statement that it did not 'agree together' strongly indicates the latter.

But now comes a very curious thing. When this preliminary and unsatisfactory witness had been cleared away, two men came forward with a very definite and circumstantial piece of evidence.

St Mark says: '*There stood up certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another which is made without hands.*'

St Matthew, who is probably drawing upon another ancient source, confirms it by saying: '*But afterward came two, and said, 'This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'*'

Whatever else took place, therefore, on that memorable night, it seems that two men came forward and, with the torchlight falling full on the face of Christ, accused Him of having used words similar to these. Now the thing of immediate importance is to know whether these men were deliberately inventing this charge or were merely perverting for their own purpose an actual and somewhat similar saying of Christ.

These men had heard Christ make a resounding statement in the Temple courts, and there was no more deadly thing they could do than to give a distorted and misleading version of it at His trial. And yet, if what they said was substantiated, it involved the double offence of sorcery and sacrilege. The penalty for sorcery was death. The penalty of sacrilege was stoning and exposure of the body. A more fatal charge could hardly have been laid. *Yet the testimony was overthrown.* Now why was that?

If the testimony of the two men was an invention, or if it originated in the scheming brain of Caiaphas, there surely would have been no bungling of the affair in this naive and exasperating way. After all the witnesses only had a few words to say, which could easily have been agreed upon in advance, and the case have gone swiftly to a conviction.

But we do not find that kind of situation at all. We find a situation in which the Court, despite the illegality of its sitting at this very late hour, has wasted a great deal of precious time upon a process that carried it nowhere. At the end of all this elaborate hearing of witnesses, Jesus Christ was virtually an unaccused, and certainly an

unconvicted man. The entire proceedings threatened to break down upon a vital point of Jewish Law. Two things emerge from this historic fact. In the first place Caiaphas was clearly not all-powerful to work his will in that assembly. There were evidently very strong influences in the Council Chamber in favour of a rigorous observance of the law, particularly in the crucial matter of the witnesses. It must always be remembered that the judgment of this tribunal was not final. Whatever these men did that night had to pass muster the next morning before the Great Sanhedrin in plenary sitting. There had apparently been trouble once before when Nicodemus, a member of that body, had protested against condemnation without a fair hearing. They could justify the illegality of the night hearing on the ground of high political necessity, and the near approach of the feast. But any serious flaw in the accusation might easily have led to the compulsory release of the Prisoner at a moment when immense multitudes would unquestionably have flocked to His side. This sifting of the evidence must also have implied a corresponding cautiousness of the witnesses themselves. The Jewish system was weighted to lean in favour of the accused. It was a dangerous thing to be a witness in a 'trial for life'. The penalty for a false witness was death. Hence the number of these trials was few.

The inference from all this is that if the evidence was not pre-concerted, and if its disagreement both exasperated and disconcerted the high priest, it is clear that it was at least *bona fide testimony* and bore some relation to the facts. Indeed, according to the evidence Christ only claimed the power to do this, but it was never put to the test. We know, of course, that He was making a claim that was even more remarkable still. He said in effect: 'If you kill me, I will rise again from the grave.'

There was one other outstanding feature of this remarkable trial. Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to

death, not upon the statement of His accusers, but upon an admission extorted from Him under oath. It is clear that after the hearing of the witnesses, and the final rejection of their testimony, the whole conduct of the case began to take an unquestionably illegal form. The illegality consisted in the President of the Court attempting to supply, by direct questioning of the Prisoner, the necessary grounds for a conviction that the witnesses themselves had been unable to produce.

This was, of course, directly contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the elaborate judicial code by which the Jewish Law sought to protect the life of the citizen. The power of accusation in a Hebrew 'trial for life' was vested solely in the witnesses. It was their business to effect the arrest and bring the accused man to the Court. It was the duty of the Court to protect the interests of the Prisoner in every possible way, while seeking to arrive at a just and impartial judgment on the evidence submitted. That this judicial protection was not extended to the Prisoner in the present case is clear from even a superficial reading of the narrative. It comes out in the tone of marked exasperation with which the High Priest addressed the Prisoner when the last of the long line of testimonies had broken down.

'Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?'

In itself this question was perhaps not objectionable. As an accused man Christ undoubtedly had the right to bring forward any facts or explanations in His defence. Hitherto He had maintained complete silence. It was appropriate that He should be asked if He had anything to say bearing on the evidence. It is the unveiled hostility to the Prisoner that is so significant. For, in the next moment, the High Priest seems to have thrown all pretence at legality to the winds.

Standing in his place, in the centre of the tribunal, Caiaphas applied to Christ the most solemn form of oath known to the Hebrew Constitution, the famous Oath of the Testimony. '*I adjure thee by the living God*' (**Matthew 26:63**). To this, Christ, as a pious and law-abiding Jew, had no alternative but to answer.

"If" (says the Mischna) "one shall say, I adjure thee by the Almighty, by Sabaoth, by the Gracious and Merciful, by the Long-suffering, by the Compassionate, or by any of the Divine titles, behold they are bound to answer."

Stripped of the peculiar phraseology with which the Hebrew mind of the period invested the conception of the Messiah, the question which Caiaphas, the High Priest, put to Jesus was a direct and simple one:

'Art thou the Christ? Dost thou claim to be He that shall come?'

The reply of the Prisoner was not less direct. Here are the three versions:

'I am' (**Mark 14:62**).

'Thou hast said' (**Matthew 26:64**).

'Ye say that I am' (**Luke 22:70**).

The experts tell us that these answers are really identical. The formula 'Thou hast said' or 'Ye say that I am', which to modern ears sound evasive, had no such connotation to the contemporary Jewish mind. 'Thou sayest' was the traditional form in which a cultivated Jew replied to a question of grave or sad import. Courtesy forbade a direct 'yes' or 'no'.

Christ therefore said this very considerable thing with great definiteness and emphasis. The satisfaction of Caiaphas at obtaining by a single stroke this tremendous

and (from the Prisoner's standpoint) very dangerous confession is obvious. One can almost hear the ring of triumph in his voice as he swung round upon the assembled rabbis and exclaimed:

'What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?'

This sudden rising of the case to its dramatic climax is full of interest. Why did the trial suddenly take this pronouncedly unconstitutional form at a relatively late hour in the proceedings, after much valuable time had been occupied in sifting the evidence of the witnesses? If the compulsory affirmation of the Prisoner was sufficient to secure conviction, why were the witnesses heard at all?

The answer to these questions lies undoubtedly in the peculiar nature of the tactical and judicial problem that confronted Caiaphas. That the powerful Sadducean family to which the High Priest belonged had fully determined to get Jesus out of the way is obvious, and nothing but the death penalty would satisfy them. Yet, strangely enough, even an indisputably proven case of blasphemy or sorcery was not sufficient. Caiaphas had to look beyond the purists of the Great Sanhedrin and the provisions of the Mosaic Law to that far more formidable barrier, the power and tolerance of Rome.

None knew better than Caiaphas what were the personal and political consequences of the coming of the real Messiah in the flesh. That it involved some definite kind of Kingship, with Jerusalem and the Holy Places as its Court, is obvious. It involved, further, an immediate clash with the Roman garrisons throughout the land. It meant a vast uprising of the people, and the certainty of a punitive expedition, led by a Roman leader of resource, such as that which forty years later laid the city in ruins. Caiaphas, as the acting High Priest, had made an

exceedingly acute observation in political statecraft when he had said:

'It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not' (John 11:50).

The prospect of the Nazarene carpenter stepping into this unique and unparalleled seat of national power must have been profoundly disturbing to certain men who had an unquestioned interest in maintaining the *status quo*.

The problem, therefore, was to bring a conclusive case that was not only proof against possible criticism by the Seventy-one, but which also gave indisputable grounds under the Roman Law.

The whole prosecution was thus obviously on the point of breaking down when the alert brain of Caiaphas conceived an expedient for saving the situation. It was illegal; but it was the last desperate throw of a man pushed to the very edge of endurance by the miscarriage of his plans. He applied the Oath of the Testimony, to which even silence itself was an unforgivable offence. It succeeded probably beyond his dreams, because in that fearless reply, 'I am', there flashed out the long-sought base of the deadliest of all charges before the Roman Procurator.

Caesar might be indifferent to the somewhat eccentric utterances of an itinerant preacher. He could not be indifferent to the claimant for a throne. In the silence of the Court as the solemn words of the affirmation fell from the Prisoner's lips, certain other words were probably already forming in the mind of Caiaphas: *'If thou lettest this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend.'*

*series continues
next issue*

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE

by Howard B Rand LL.B

Courtesy -"Destiny" Magazine

July 1947

The birth, life and history of many of the men whose activities are recorded in the Sacred Record are prophetic of things to come. As an illustration, the "time of Jacob's trouble," to which Jeremiah refers (Jer. 30:7), defines a period in the experience of the people of Israel in the last days and is a description of the troubles which would overtake them as the age draws to its close. But this period of trouble has its pattern in the difficulties Jacob himself experienced during his lifetime and this is the specific reason it is called the "time of Jacob's trouble."

Our Lord referred to Noah and to happenings in his generation which would furnish a pattern of events to just precede the close of the age and His triumphant return. In the days just preceding the coming of the Son of man the Lord said that conditions upon earth would be cited to show the prophetic significance of the lives and activities of men of old. A study of the many parallels between their lives and present-day events will shed much light upon the fulfilment of prophecy in modern times.

TRANSLATION

Among the men whose lives are recorded in the Bible, those of Enoch and Elijah are of special interest because neither of these men saw death. Both were translated.

Elijah was translated in 3108 A.M. and 888 years later, in 3996 A.M., Christ was born and His name was called Jesus. Now 888 is the numeric of the name Jesus and He was born 888 years after the ascension of the prophet Elijah who is a type of those who shall not taste death but be translated at the time of the second appearing of Jesus Christ. Elijah appeared with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration when Peter, James and John were eyewitnesses of the coming of the Lord in power and glory (II Peter 1: 16-18).

LAW OF MOSES

The message Elijah gave is associated with the warning which was to go out just before the great and terrible Day of the Lord.

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. 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." (Mal. 4:4-6.)

As a prototype, a study of the times and events in Elijah's day, his ministry, the message he gave and the acts he performed, plus the ending of his sojourn upon earth by translation, throws much interesting prophetic light upon these days in which we are living.

ELIJAH'S APPEARANCE

Let us review the life of Elijah as it is revealed to us in the Scriptures. We find that in his day a foreign ideology had so undermined the spiritual stability of Israel that the nation was in mortal danger from the activities of the enemy within, supported by Jezebel, the wife of Ahab the King. Elijah suddenly came upon the scene and vanished from it as abruptly as he appeared. *Young's Analytical Concordance* says of him:

"The grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced. 'Elijah the Tishbite of the inhabitants of Gilead' is literally all we know of his parentage."

DROUGHT PREDICTED

The name Elijah means "My God is Jehovah," or "God Himself." In the year we first hear of this prophet, Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, had reigned nine years in Jerusalem and Ahab, King of Israel, twelve years in Samaria. Elijah suddenly appeared on the scene with a message for the King of Israel:

"And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew nor rain these years."

(1Kings 17:1.)

James informs us that the actual length of this period of drought was three and a half years (James 5:17; see also Luke 4:25).

GOD VERSUS BAAL

Israel had apostatized, the people having turned away from the worship of Jehovah, the God Israel, to embrace Baalism which was flourishing in the land under the patronage of Jezebel, wife of King Ahab. The conflict was between Jehovah and Baalism, with Elijah sponsoring the cause of the Lord and Jezebel that of the false prophets and idolatrous worshippers. Jezebel had sought to murder all the prophets of the Lord and while she had killed many she had not succeeded in destroying Elijah for he suddenly appeared before Ahab and announced that a judgment of drought was to afflict the land. This drought was not to end until the people acknowledged Jehovah as the God of Israel. Immediately following that announcement, Elijah disappeared and though Ahab sought for him in all the surrounding nations, he was unable to find him.

Elijah was not a prophet of peace; his messages were of judgment and his mission was the destruction of heathen worship and judgment upon Israel if the people refused to heed God's injunctions as the Prophet warned them of their evil ways. Ever since the days of Joshua a conflict had been in evidence in Israel between the forces of good and the powers of evil. The question continually before the people was whether they would follow Jehovah or accept the heathen god Baal. A crisis had now come in that conflict and Elijah represented the forces of righteousness and Jezebel the power of evil.

JEZEBEL'S INFLUENCE

Jezebel exerted a tremendous influence over the affairs of state, though holding no office herself. As the wife of King Ahab, her influence in the land was very great.

The King himself was definitely under her power in conducting the affairs of state. Jezebel was personally responsible for importing the worst and most debasing form of the idolatrous practices of Baalism from Phoenicia and in her zeal instigated persecution of the followers of Jehovah.

Many of the things Jezebel desired to do, and was able to accomplish, were contrary to the Israel law and to the policies of the predecessors of Ahab. Strong-willed and popular to an extent, at least with those whom she favoured, she became a tremendous power behind the throne, even to securing her husband's consent to the acceptance of the anti-God teachings of a foreign politico-religious system. These anti-God teachings of a foreign power were repugnant to the God-fearing men and women in Israel but, in spite of their opposition, Baalism was protected and cultivated and finally became well entrenched in the land under Jezebel's tutelage and with the consent of Ahab. The leaders, teachers and supporters of these anti-Israelitish beliefs were accepted, pampered and entertained by Jezebel, and she saw to it that they lacked nothing in so far as she could provide for their needs, even to eating with her at her table.

Jezebel's powerful influence (with a personality which enabled her to carry out her will) and her control through Ahab over the affairs of state were detrimental to the well-being of the nation; her sponsorship of a political and religious concept foreign to Israel's constitution and purity of worship brought upon the nation the very evil which Elijah had announced to Ahab would come upon the land – a great drought. The idolatrous worship of Baalism produced a political

deterioration and moral decadency, and exerted a most dangerous influence upon the policies of those who governed the nation.

With this background it is fitting that the name Elijah means "My God is Jehovah" or "God Himself," for the conflict had reached a climax and the tests were about to be made to see whether the people would serve God or continue to worship Baal. While Ahab was King, back of him was Jezebel and the trial or test of strength was between Elijah and Jezebel though the Prophet appeared to Ahab and announced God's judgment to him.

THE PROPHET MIRACULOUSLY SUSTAINED

Jezebel would have sought to kill Elijah through direct command or by treachery, so immediately following the pronouncement by the Prophet that there would be no rain in the land, the Lord directed him:

"Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." (1 Kings 17:3-4.)

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia says:

“Elijah’s ‘ravens’ may indeed be converted by a change of vowel-points into ‘Arabians’; but in spite of the fact that Orientals would bring offerings of food to a holy hermit, the whole tenor of the narrative favours no other supposition than that its writer meant ‘ravens.’”

Ferrar Fenton, in his translation of this text, suggests Arabs instead of ravens with the following footnote:

"The word Arabim, was erroneously translated 'ravens' by the Greek versioners, and the blunder, as usual, has been repeated since. It means Arabs, as I have translated in my text."

Regardless of how this text is rendered, God saw to it that Elijah was supplied with bread and meat:

"And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook."

(1 Kings 17:6.)

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

The brook finally failed as a result of the continued drought and the Prophet was instructed to go to Zarephath in Zidon where he would find a widow with her son and he was to dwell there. Elijah departed and found the woman gathering sticks. He spoke to her:

"Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand."

(1 Kings 17:10-11.)

The woman replied that she had only enough meal and oil to make a cake for herself and her son, after which they expected to die. But Elijah told her not to fear but to make a cake for him first and afterward make cakes for herself and son:

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." (1 Kings 17:14.)

The woman obeyed Elijah and the barrel of meal did not become empty, nor was the supply of oil exhausted during the remaining years of the drought.

During the time that Elijah stayed with the widow, her son was stricken ill and died. She mourned her loss in Elijah's presence and he took the child to his chamber and interceded with God that the spirit of life might return again to him. The child was revived and Elijah delivered him to his mother. The widow then testified:

"Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." (1 Kings 17:24.)

ELIJAH SENT TO AHAB

After many days had passed the Lord commanded Elijah in the third full year of the drought to go to Ahab. Commenting upon the length of the drought, a footnote in *The Companion Bible* has this to say concerning the statement in 1 Kings 17:1:

"These years (not three years). No definite period stated. 'Years' is pl., not dual. In Luke 4:25 and James 5:17 'three years and six months.' These six months must be reckoned before the three years, not added at the end because of 'the third year,' i.e., the third full year."

The famine was very severe in the land and Ahab and Obadiah, the governor of his house, were out hunting pasture in order to save the lives of the king's horses and mules if possible. Obadiah had gone in one direction and Ahab in another.

OBADIAH MEETS ELIJAH

When Jezebel sought to slay all the prophets of the Lord Obadiah hid one hundred of them in a cave, supplying bread and water to sustain them. It was at that time that Elijah met Obadiah and the latter exclaimed, "Are you here, my lord Elijah?"

The Prophet told him to go inform Ahab that he was there but Obadiah was fearful that while he went to tell Ahab, Elijah would again disappear. He told the Prophet that there was not a kingdom or nation where Ahab had not sought to find him and he had even taken an oath from those in the places where he sought Elijah to positively confirm the fact that they did not know his whereabouts. Obadiah told Elijah that if he informed Ahab that the Prophet was in the vicinity and Elijah again disappeared Ahab would slay him. Obadiah reminded Elijah that he had saved the lives of a hundred of the prophets when Jezebel sought to kill them. At the conclusion of Obadiah's plea Elijah reassured him that he would be there and would meet Ahab that same day. Obadiah did as he was instructed and Ahab came to meet Elijah. When he saw the Prophet he exclaimed: "*Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*"

But Elijah answered:

"I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the

commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." (1 Kings 18:18.)

A CHALLENGE

Elijah wasted no time in coming to the point and, with the boldness that marks the true prophet, disregarded himself as he lashed out against the false beliefs of the people and the idolatrous religion sponsored by Ahab's wife. Elijah immediately challenged Ahab to arrange a test. He demanded that all Israel be gathered at Mount Carmel and with them four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, besides four hundred of the prophets of the Shrines of Baal who dined at Jezebel's table. Ahab complied with the Prophet's request and when all Israel had gathered at Mount Carmel Elijah addressed them:

"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal then follow him." (1 Kings 18:21.)

But the people did not answer him. Consequently Elijah, after asking that the prophets of the Lord be separated from those of Baal, proposed that the following test be made. Two bullocks were to be brought and the prophets of Baal were to offer one on an altar while Elijah, the Prophet of the Lord, would place the other on an altar. No fire was to be applied. The prophets of Baal were to call upon their god and Elijah was to call upon his God. The one who answered by fire would be the one true God. The people all agreed to the plan

*to be concluded
next issue*

Father's sins

by P.C. Slough

A farmer, making excuses for not attending church said, "I have to feed my animals. You know, parson, animals don't know the difference between Sunday and Monday."

The farmer didn't realise he was stating the real difference between human beings created in God's image and the lower animals of God's creation.

The animals on his farm didn't know the difference between Sunday and Monday because they only had appetite for material things.

Man is a higher creation and should seek after things spiritual.

When a man lives only for the material he has slipped to animal level.

What a man does on Sunday can affect the whole community.

This truth is borne out by results of investigations by Dugdale, who traced the Juke family through five generations.

Max Juke, born 1720, strayed from observing and worshipping God. He married an equally worthless woman. Up to 1877 there were five

generations with approximately 1,200 descendants among whom have been traced the following types of persons: 310 paupers, seven murderers, 60 habitual thieves, 50 prostitutes, 1,430 convicted of crime, 300 died in infancy, 440 physical wrecks through debauchery. Only 20 learned a trade and ten of these learned it in prison.

What a cost to society!

We see how "the iniquity of the parents is visited upon the children."

A contrast with this lineage is the one of the Jonathan Edwards' family. Mr. Edward chose the path of "Sundays for God" and became a noted old time preacher.

From this Godly family in about the same period 1,400 descendants have been traced. Of these: 120 were Yale University graduates, 14 college presidents, 65 college professors, 100 ministers or missionaries, 75 Army and Navy officers, 60 Authors, 30 U.S. Senators, 30 Judges, and one Vice-President of the U.S.A.

All these came from a family which loved the Lord and kept his commandments.

It paid Mr. Edwards well to observe Sunday as the Lord's Day.

come through the infilling, baptism, and ministry of the Holy Spirit within us.

We proclaim the absolute necessity for our nation to return to full obedience to the Law of God as the only way by which we can receive the full blessings of God.

We proclaim the absolute necessity for each and every individual Christian to prepare themselves for the greatest event yet to be witnessed on this earth, namely,

THE RETURN OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Whilst the production, publication and distribution of this magazine is undertaken as a faith ministry, it is totally dependant on the tithes and offerings of our readers. We are happy to continue sending it freely to all who wish to receive it but genuinely cannot afford to contribute in any way. However, we do request an offering to at least cover the cost of postage, especially for overseas readers. But in order to be faithful stewards of the offerings sent to us, at the end of each year we will be obliged to remove the name from our mailing list of anyone who has not contributed or contacted us within the past year. The financial assistance and prayers of those who read it, and are blessed by it, are therefore vitally necessary for its continuance and growth.

We also invite our readers to send us the names and addresses of any whom they think would be genuinely interested in receiving a sample copy. In this way you can share in the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified.

It is our fervent prayer that you will be blessed and lifted to higher planes of joy and blessing as you study and learn of the wonders of God's Word, and of His boundless and merciful love for each of us.

With our Christian love,

Frank and Betty Dowsett.

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Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the law of the Lord!
Blessed are they that keep His
testimonies,
Who seek Him with the whole heart!
They also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.
You have commanded us
To keep Your precepts diligently.
Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!
Then I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.
I will praise You with uprightness of heart
When I learn your righteous judgements.
I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

Psalms 119:1-8

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