



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.

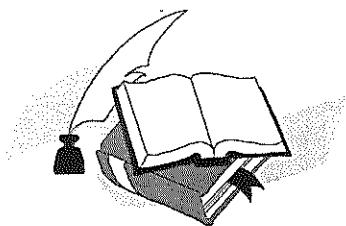
We are also convinced that never before in the history of our nation and people has there been such a need for the "Watchmen in Israel" to sound the alarm in order to awaken God's people to the urgent need to repent, and to return to God with all their hearts, and with all their minds, and with all their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



Editorial

THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN

¹Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit of the Antichrist*, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”

1 John ch. 4:1-3 (NKJV)

As we read the above scripture, we must pause for a moment to assess the situation in the world at this point of time. In this country alone our number two man is a member of this satanic organization and our number one not only is he a liar but is also displaying all the marks of being a member too. Not only has he deceived us he has also sold natural gas off the north west shelf to China for the next 30 years at 3 cents a litre, and that brothers and sisters is when many of us shall be asleep in our Lord, except if Christ comes first to rectify what these treasonous and treacherous politicians have done to God's people Israel.

As I write this, at this very moment in time, God has visited us and wiped out a lot of our crops in the far north of Queensland along with a lot of damage to homes causing millions of dollars damage. Cyclone Larry we called it. Well there is certainly 'Larry Dooley' now isn't there. While in deep discussion last week with a very deep practising Moslem he stated that "there is a lot of Moslems in positions in Canberra advising our Prime Minister in a lot of matters." Particularly in defence! Well, what God has said in Deuteronomy ch. 28:43-44 now is being proven true.

⁴³The foreigners who live among you will get stronger and stronger, and you will get weaker and weaker. ⁴⁴Foreigners will lend money to you, but you will not be able to lend to them. They will be like the head, and you will be like the tail.”

Some who are standing up to be counted against these agents of Lucifer, by denying the holocaust, are arrested and taken back to Germany to stand trial for Holocaust denial under a law set up in the U.S.A. by the enemies of Israel to examine cases all over the world.

At times, one must think that these enemies of Israel have started the celebrations and parties for the final act! Esau has finally bought back his birth-right, or so he thinks. You see, we have all read the full story and the end of the book, that is God’s Word – “The Bible.” To all our Brothers and Sisters out there in God’s Israel countries, we must all have that mark upon us **about which** God speaks about in the Bible, in His Law. Yes as mentioned over 114 times in Psalms 119 we must observe, carry out and follow his statutes, laws and commandments. We must be fervent in prayer, at all times be conscious of those around us. To teach them also of God’s law, let us remember what we read in Matthew ch.5:17-19...The Holy Bible, (NKJV)

¹⁷*“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Let us not worry about our Leaders for they will receive there justice as described in Ez.34, but, let us all live the good life as our Lord and Saviour wants us to. To all those men and women in Israel, the elderly (I know it gets quiet, with not a lot of fellowship) adhere to your faith, our faith, for we shall all have our reward with Him as he sits upon His Throne ruling over His beloved people Israel.

God Bless you all.

Gordon Symons..... Ed.

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

By Frank W Dowsett

Ask any Christian the question, "Who is the Bride of Christ?" and 99.9% will answer, "The Church."

Yet from Genesis to Revelations, throughout the entire Bible, NOT ONCE is this statement made. It is no more than a theological conclusion derived from inference and incorrect doctrine.

"The Church" is clearly identified in Ephesians 1:22 – 23 as "Christ Body." It is never identified as His Bride or Wife.

WHO THEN IS HIS BRIDE? The Bible, GOD'S Word, is quite clear on this point. For example; - **Jeremiah 3:12-14**

"Return thou backsliding Israel...Turn O backsliding children, saith the lord, **FOR I AM MARRIED UNTO YOU.**"

Isaiah 54:4-5

"Thou (Israel) shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For **THY MAKER IS THY HUSBAND.**" The Lord of Host is His name."

Revelations 21:9-12

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels....saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride, **THE LAMBS WIFE.** And he... shewed me the Great city, the Holy Jerusalem... (which) which had a wall great and high, and twelve gates... and names written thereon which are the **NAMES OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.**"

Hosea 2: 14, 19.

“Therefore, behold, I will allure thee (Israel),....and it shall be at that day saith the lord, that thou shall call me **HUSBAND**, and shall no more lordAnd **I WILL BETROTH THEE UNTO ME FOR EVER.**”

How then did this monumental theological mix-up occur? It happened simply because man substituted his own traditions and doctrines for the plain Word of God. Israel, the LITERAL nation of God’s covenants and promises, has been set aside, and replaced by something that they call ‘the church..’ Thus all the promises made to, or about Israel, as we have pointed out above, have been misappropriated to Israel’s alleged substitute, the Church. (That is, of course, unless they are bad or uncomplimentary, in which case they are applied to the Jews.)

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST IS ISRAEL. THE BIBLE SAYS SO.

The Church is His BODY. THE BIBLE SAYS SO. As such, it has an entirely different function, as we will see in our next Study.

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CHRISTMAS

By Frank W Dowsett

Most Christians now admit that December 25 is not actually the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ. But very few bother to find out why this date is used, or for that matter, where the whole concept of “Christmas” originated. We have

been taught for so long that this is the actual date of Christ's birth that we now accept it without question.

This is a classic example of the old adage, that if you repeat a lie often enough, it will eventually be accepted as truth.

It is also a good example of how truth can be contaminated by a lie, with the result that the truth is perverted and reduced to something far less than what was intended, if not completely obliterated.

So firstly; where did the date of December 25 come from? Believe it or not, it was originally the date of an ancient rite used in the worship of Baal. In the Bible, Baalism was the most condemned of all pagan worship. This date celebrated the birthday of the Babylonian sun-god Sol. But in addition to this, the birthday was not reckoned from the date of the actual birth, but rather from the date of conception, and was thus a part of the Babylonian sex-rites.

All authorities admit that the exact date of our Lord's birth is unknown, but if there is one date which could be considered as the most logical or probable date of His birth, it would be at the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles, which falls during late September and early October.

Secondly, "Christmas" itself, with all its trappings, is totally pagan. It appears to have originated in Egypt, and was subsequently taken over by the Roman Catholic Church. They re-named it, calling it the "Mass of Christ" during the fourth century.

But what of the "Christmas" trappings? Let us look at some of them.

1. SANTA CLAUS. This name originated from a Roman Catholic Bishop named 'St. Nicholis' who

lived in the fifth century. It has NO connection with Christ, or anything Christian.

2. **THE CHRISTMAS TREE.** Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah, founded the 'Babylonian System.' He was so evil that he married his own mother Semiramis. After Nimrod died she taught that his spirit survived, and was represented by the appearance of an ever-green tree that Nimrod visited each year on his birthday, and on which he left gifts. Yes you've guessed it. His birthday was on December 25!!
3. **THE MISTLETOE.** The death of the 'old sun' and the birth of the 'new sun' were celebrated by a night of debauchery which commenced with the practice of kissing under mistletoe.

There is much more that could be written, but surely the above is enough to convince the sincere searcher for the truth.

You may also wish to consider this. When you have a birthday, who gets all the presents? You or your friends? Then why is it that when we are supposed to be celebrating Christ's birthday, we give presents **to EVERYONE EXCEPT CHRIST?**

If you must spend your money, then why not try this for a change. Put aside **ALL THE MONEY YOU WOULD HAVE SPENT ON PRESENTS, CARDS, ETC., AND GIVE IT PRAYERFULLY AND CAREFULLY TO God's work.** Why waste it on this heathen commercialised custom which is planned to do nothing else but to keep you poor and in debt for the coming year, and to denigrate the name and glory of our precious Lord Jesus Christ.

THINK ABOUT IT!

CV NEWS

Brethren, once again welcome to our first issue this year and I would like to start by saying thanks to each and every one of you for all the support and encouragement over the last three months. I am sure the Lord will repay you all ten-fold for all your blessings and especially your prayers.

Back here at headquarters we have been busier than ever as we have been in full swing with the printing press, and now not only are Frank's books have been republished and back on the shelves but Allan Campbell's too. Which brings us to the next subject I would like to bring to your notice as from March 2006 a new book list has been prepared and some prices have changed and some books added, some have been cut altogether, so the old book list is now null and void. I will endeavour to get to every one of you a copy of the new book list as soon as possible.

As I write this we have just finished our first Sunday of the month meeting and normally it is lunch day, but this day was a special Sunday, as today Brother Frank ordained your editor in to The Covenant Vision Ministry as a full pastor. Frank has all but retired and has handed over the reins to myself fully. It was very humbling and to me quite nervous (even Frank admitted to me he was quite nervous) when he read out the many scriptures pertaining to a minister. It is a very big and responsible position – but one I accepted very humbly. With my lovely wife beside me down life's pathway, we can only go forward in the service of the Lord.

Since I was a teenager, I have served under some very notable servants of the Lord and the national Israel message. Firstly William (Bill) Carter previously of "Truth and Liberty", secondly I was associated with Doug Harrigan who at 84 years has shown many a heart to the Lord. Last but not least my greatest reward the Lord has given me in my time upon this earth, is to work along side one of God's great servants, it was once said of Frank, that he sets the bench-mark by which we all aim to achieve. To me it is a pleasure to have the man, not only as a brother but as a wonderful mentor, teacher and guide and of all the wonderful people in Christ I have met, he is the one I most respect of whom as he has been given and displays, all the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit. God Bless you all out there in Israel...Amen ...Ed.

Bush Qualm 23

(Written by a retired Methodist minister.)

Bush is my shepherd; I dwell in want.
He maketh logs to be cut down in national forests.
He leadeth trucks into the still wilderness.
He restoreth my fears.
He leadeth me in the paths of International disgrace for his ego's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of pollution and war,
I will find no exit, for thou art in office.
Thy tax cuts for the rich and thy media control,
They discomfort me.
Thou preparest an agenda of deception
In the presence of thy Zionist religion.
Thou anointest my head with foreign oil.
My health insurance runneth out.
Surely megalomania and false patriotism
Shall follow me all the days of thy term.
And my jobless child shall dwell in my basement forever.....

How Much Of This Also Fits Our Leaders...(Ed.).

Courtesy Dan Gentry

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A DELAY

It seems lately that I am apologizing all the time for being late. My apology as this edition of Covenant Vision goes out five weeks behind schedule. There are many things that need my attention and I can do only that which I can do in one day. I have an elderly lady who assists when I need her for book work or when the magazine is due, other than that I do the lot. Please have patience with me as I do endeavour to get things to all of you on time. As from next month I will try very hard to make sure you all receive your request on time. God bless and thank you. Also if your Books or Tapes are late then do not hesitate to contact me and tell me.....Gordon (Ed.)

RESURRECTION

CHAPTER 4.

THE RESURRECTION

This is the fourth in the series of our study on chapter 15 of I Corinthians, the 'resurrection chapter'. We have more chapters after Chapter 4 to go; we're not skipping through this. As I have said before, the idea is to learn it, not just hurry through it. Before we go into the verses that commence our study today, which is the 29th verse, I just want to read again to you the last few verses of what our brother Ray read in the 56th chapter of Isaiah.

It is strange you know when we started this, when I started the Corinthians 15, I just picked on a chapter and we've just been doing one chapter after the other in successive order. It is amazing how well they are working in to what we're talking about, because I just want to read these few verses again, as a lead in, to this particular study this morning.

It says, "His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; they sleep, they lie down, they love to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough; they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, everyone for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, they say, I will fetch wine and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

This I think is a very, very good illustration of what is happening today in Christendom as far as our basic beliefs are concerned, more particularly, with the study that we are having now on the resurrection. Because, as we found out in our previous studies, there are too many people who just don't seem to be interested in the resurrection. They will all talk about the 'secret rapture', and 'one day we are going to be called up in heaven and have a great old hallelujah time up there' or whatever it is going to be.

But they have absolutely no concept of where resurrection fits into the plan of God. So the servants of God, or those who claim to be servants of God, he says "they are blind". They have no idea of what's going on, because all they're interested in is their own gain. You know building bigger and better barns and churches, whatever word we like to apply to parallel the scriptures. They're interested in the prosperity message, they want to get rich quick, and they want to have a good job.

As a matter of fact, I know people who have joined the ministry simply because they were not good enough to get a job at anything else. So they said we'll be a minister, find a church that will pay them \$500, or \$600, or \$700, or \$800 a week, whatever, and give them a home to live in, and that's great. They have never been qualified to do a days work in their life. It is a last resort sort of a thing. Others go to the university and get a degree in theology. Goodness alone knows what they learn there! If it's anything like what comes out of most universities today on theology, it has nothing whatsoever to do with the kernel, as it were, of God's word. Without resurrection, we may as well give the game away, as we have read before.

I'm going to start off by just reading these first few verses from the 29th verse of I Corinthians 15, follow it through in your bible, but I'm going to read it from the Philip's translation, there are other quite good modern translations, I just picked Philip's, I think mainly because its an easy book to hold. But it also gives it in very, very good words.

It says in the King James, "Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptised for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ, Jesus our Lord, that I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Now isn't that what Isaiah has just been saying? Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die, exactly the same sentiment. This is how Philip's translates it, and he is very good at a lot of translation.

He says here further, "you should consider this, that if there is no resurrection what is the point of some of you being baptised for the dead, by proxy? Why should you be baptised for dead bodies?" Now, a lot of people don't realise it, there are groups around who engage in this, I think the Mormons are one. You can go and get baptised, if your father or mother or some relative dies, and hasn't been baptised, you can go along and be baptised in their name. That dead person is then considered to have been baptised. What in the name of fortune they think they are going to accomplish by this, I will never know. But this is what some people do. This is what was happening in those days.

We think we are so modern, don't we, in the sense of things happening today, and don't realise that the reason Paul is saying these things is that people were doing the same thing then. A relative dies. 'Oh! They haven't been baptised', so go and get baptised. 'No it's not for me, you are baptising not me, you're baptising Uncle Joe!' And he says what on earth are you doing this for when you don't even believe in a resurrection. Why are you doing this?

Then he goes on, "And why should I live a life of such hourly danger? I assure you by the certainty of Jesus Christ that we possess, that I faced death every day of my life, and if, to use the popular expression, I have fought with wild beasts here at Ephesus, what is the good of an ordeal like that if there is no life after this one? Let us rather eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." That is how Philip's translates it, and it's absolutely right. What is the good of all this, if there is nothing in the future for us? If, as I have said before, you know this friend of mine I used to work with, he was a communist and he believed when you die you just went into the grave and rotted, that was it. Finish. Nothing more.

What in the name of fortune would we be going through all this persecution and everything for, if that was the end of it? If we go over to II Corinthians and chapter 4, we read there in verses 7-10, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And just listen to this in connection to what Paul said, 'what is the use of me doing all this if

there is no future life'. He said, "We are troubled on every side, yet we are not distressed; we are perplexed, but we are not in despair; we are persecuted, but we are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we are not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." You have got to realise that persecution, distress, all the rest of it, is just par for the course for a Christian.

I only heard this morning of one of the young lads, who is here with us this morning. He just started school, is that right? In his first year of school,John? His parents have taught him, even at this early age, about the dangers of racial intermarriage and things like this, of retaining your purity, about racial purity. Not only ourselves, but all races. And do you know, at this age, how long has school started? A couple of weeks? He's already been bashed up twice by multinational kids, like crossbred kids, in the school. Is that right? Twice, he's been bashed up in the school. What is he? Five, six years old. We think we are getting persecuted! For goodness sake, from little tiny tots going to school they're getting bashed up already, just because they happen to stick up for what the Bible says. The thing that, I was going to say amazing, I don't mean in quite that sense, it's wonderful, is that a little kid will stick up like that for it. And the multinationals that are there, the crossbreed Chinese, come Malayans, come whatever they are, I don't know what they are, they have bashed him up already for it.

Now this is what Paul's saying. What is the use of going through all this, if there is no life afterwards for us? It's just a sheer waste of time and a waste of effort. He dies every day, he says, and we'll do the same, or we should be doing the same, and prepare to do the same. He says, "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners, awake to righteousness and sin not, for some don't have the knowledge of God, I speak this to our shame." I'm going to read that again from Philip's.

He goes on to say in the 33rd and 34th verse, "Don't let yourselves be deceived, talking about things that are not true is bound to be reflected in practical conduct." This is a basic principle of our Christian life. If we keep on talking about things that are not true,

if we keep on associating with people in a way that influences, I'm not talking about associating with people generally. I mean, we're in the world; we're going to meet people.

Doesn't matter what walk of life we're in, we are going to meet people, we are going to have to talk with them, and we're going to have to listen to their language and their expressions, and all the rest of it. But, if we start to let it take hold of us and become an influence on our lives, what we hear and what we say and what we mix with is going to control our conduct. Now that doesn't mean to say that we stop the world and get off. If that's what it meant, I would have expected Paul to put something in there, for this reason, like I'll just make this up. For this reason, 'I'm not going to do any more with you guys. I'm going to shift over to Malta, or some other place, where there is no one there, and live on my own, and I won't get contaminated with all this business'.

You know, people think it's a cop-out to stop serving the Lord, simply because people around them don't serve the Lord. How can we serve the Lord if we go away and leave them? I know people, there was someone, many years ago. They started a movement; I don't know what happened to them. I know the fellow's name, I'm not going to mention it because I don't know whether he's still alive or dead, but that doesn't matter. He got everyone to sell up and shift out somewhere west in N.S.W. They were going to start their own community, remember that? I don't know whatever happened to him, because they reckoned the Lord was going to come back in a certain time, and they went out there, and they are probably still living out there growing witchetty grubs or something, I don't know what they are doing.

But they went away. They said 'Oh no, we're not going to live amongst all this'. How in the name of creation are we going to witness to people if we shift out the back of Bourke, somewhere or other, and not contact people?

This is the work of watchmen. You can't be a watchman, warning people, if you remove yourself from the presence of the people that

you are supposed to be watching for? This is what he is saying here. Then he says in doing this, he says, be very, very careful of how you live among these people. Because if you are not careful, he says, then their badness, the things that they're doing, the things that they're talking about will be revealed in your own practical conduct. In other words, you will start living a life that becomes hard, it becomes harsh; it becomes more like the people you're criticising, than being Christ like. So serving Christ is not a matter of just getting away from the bad. It is a matter of being with evil, but not of the evil, and give a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is an old expression, I'm sure you've all heard it and read it, I remember it used to be up on a factory wall just as you were approaching Redfern, going into Sydney. It was there for many years, I used to read it practically every day when I used to go into work on the train, and even when I went to school there, because it used to go to high school down in central Sydney. "You are what you eat" it had there. It was an advertisement for some bread or something or other, it doesn't matter. But the great words on this big factory building, "You are what you eat". And we are what we eat.

Not just when you are eating Cornflakes or whatever, but whatever goes into us, whatever we're feeding on, we become. If we are feeding on evil, we will become evil. That doesn't mean to say you don't study what is going on. But we've had in our own lives, Betty said many times, that we read these books. You've got to read them especially when you are in a position of leadership and you're trying to tell others the pitfalls. You've got to know what's going on. But you get to the stage where you suddenly realised that you've spent so much time reading about these things, that your mind starts to thump, as it were, sort of thing, you know. It becomes full of the evil that you're reading, and you've got to shut the book up and put it away. Simply because the evil that you are reading about starts to overcome your own senses.

Now that's when you've got to watch. We can't allow that sort of thing to happen. We have to know what's going on, but only on the basis, as I have said many times before, of the military

intelligence rules you need to know, that's the rule. You'll only know as you need to know. You are on a need to know basis. Most Christians don't need to know much of the stuff that they try to find out, simply because when they find out they have no idea what to do with the information, and so it turns over, and over, and over in their mind and they end up going stark raving mad.

God reveals things to us on a need to know basis. If you are ministering for God, and I don't mean standing in the pulpit, I mean when you're talking with people. If you need to know something for that person, God will reveal what you need to know. That's a very, very good rule, as far as the scriptures and as far as working for the Lord is concerned. So he said don't be deceived in this. He goes on to say, "Come back to your senses. Don't dabble in sinful doubts, remember that there are men who have plenty to say, but they have no knowledge of God." And this is the secret isn't it?

There are men and women all over the place, they've got plenty to say, you've only got to listen to your radio these days, all these conventions and all the things that are going on. They'll talk to the top of their hat. It's strange that they're finding out things, through talking, that they never ever realised was there before, by the way. So it is doing some of them some good. But in the main people talk, and talk, and talk, but they don't have any knowledge of God. They are very knowledgeable in things of the world, like the foxes in the desert that we spoke of earlier, in a previous talk. But they have no knowledge of God. And he said, "You should be ashamed that I even have to even write to tell you this," he says to them.. You know, Paul is so up to date isn't it? Because it is just today. We should be ashamed that we still have to study these things, and be told or learn, whatever, how to conduct ourselves amongst this evil generation. Christ never walked out on the evil generation, He did everything and He ended up dying. That is exactly what we are supposed to do and what we are expected to do.

He goes on then of course, with the next question. He dealt with the doctrine, it's sure, it's conclusive. There's no excuse for anyone not understanding the doctrine of resurrection. Then he

goes on to say, "But some will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" now the rest of the chapter from here up to verse 58 deal with this. We are only going to deal with part of this, this morning and, God willing next week, or whenever I speak next, we'll do the final part of that. But I just want to spend a little bit of time now on this particular statement. "Some will say how are the dead raised up?"

Now he is not talking about what power raises them up. In other words, by what mechanism they are raised up. That's not what he means here. He's talking about here, about in what form are they raised? How are the dead raised up? What are you raised up to? In what form are we raised up to? This is the question that is being asked. Because this is what people say. They can't understand resurrection. The ordinary person in the street, you talk about resurrection to them and you may as well talk about Einstein's theory of relativity to most of them.. It's just a word.

They have no idea that some sort of theological statement that has been made somewhere down the line. You ask them a question about it; they have absolutely no concept of what resurrection is in full application now, in the Christian sense. You see we've got away from what is resurrection itself, and the doctrine, we're getting into the nitty-gritty now, of what happens when we are raised up. How are we raised up? To what level, in what way are we raised up? People don't even know, I'm sure, how to even ask the question properly. How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?

You know, are they like the reincarnationists? We mentioned that a few talks ago didn't we? Some you believe you are reincarnated; you come back in a different body. If the Lord carries and I happen to fall asleep in the Lord, I don't know what I'm going to come back as, but don't tread on any cockroaches or something like that, 'cause it might be me. It sounds silly, but this is what people believe. They really believe this sort of thing. They believe they come back as a cow. This is why some much in India, they won't kill cows, it's a sacred animal. Because it is a part of their religious belief.

People come back as cows, don't kill them; you're eating one of your grandparents, or something or other. This is the philosophy behind it. Others, you don't have to have a resurrection, as we've said before. You go straight to heaven when you die and you are alive again. So who wants a resurrection? Paul says, "How are the dead raised up?" This is the question that you've got to resolve. And he says, "You fool," he says. Paul really didn't pull any punches at times, did he? He says, "You fool, don't you even know the basic elements of science", as it were. He says, "That which sowest, is not quicken except it dies." And he uses an illustration that everyone would know. You plant a seed and what happens? That seed itself virtually dies, it springs forth, you don't reap that seed, you do nothing with that seed.

That seed is in the ground and it will shoot up a little plant out of it, and that plant will grow and you will get the food, or the fruit, the wheat whatever it is off that plant. You don't get anything off that seed. You get nothing off that seed. That seed is put into the ground, and it then develops into something else, which then you can reap. This is the illustration that he's giving us. "That which thou sowest, you sow not the body that shall be," you don't sow, you put the seed in.

You put a carnation seed in; you don't plant a carnation flower there. You don't put into the ground what it is going to become. You put in the seed so it will grow into what it has to be. This is what he is saying. You don't plant what it's going to become. He said, "this will bear grain, its wheat or some other grain, but God gives it body as it has pleased Him, to every seed his own body." In other words, you plant the seed, and whatever that is a seed of, if it's an apple seed it's going to grow into an apple tree. If it is a carnation seed, it will be a carnation. If it's a pumpkin seed, you'll get a pumpkin. This is what he is showing them in very, very simple terminology, but you've got to plant the seed. In other words, to be resurrected you've got to be dead. That's all there is he's saying to them. and people still cannot understand what the basic principle of resurrection is. As we've said before, they reckon you go to heaven and you're alive, and we ask the question

then, how are the dead raised up? If you're not dead, how are you going to be raised from the dead?

Paul had the same trouble nearly two thousand years ago, so he uses nature here to show them just how these things happen. Then he goes on, "All flesh is not the same flesh, because," he says, "there's one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." and he goes on. Now, he's got to say something here, or go back to something that's basic in our understanding of God's plan and purposes. I might just add a little thing here; I've got a verse that I didn't quote. As far back as Abraham, the people of God believed in resurrection. You read in Hebrews, "By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, because God had said, I'm going to do such and such, and such and such, through Isaac. Told him to go and kill Isaac, and why was he prepared to kill him? Because he knew God would bring him back from the dead. So right back from Abraham, there was a subject of resurrection from the dead. And it was a very, very important factor.

We would not have been here, today, if Abraham had not believed in the resurrection of the dead. Let us remember that. We would not have been here today like we are now. So we find there is one flesh, the fish, some of men, flesh of beasts, another of birds, all different types of flesh. We got back to Genesis. In Genesis 1, and verse 20, I'm going to read a few verses here, just this account.

I'll read then through quickly, but I just want to emphasise just one factor that comes through all of this. "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life, and fowl that may fly upon the earth and the open firmament of heaven." I'm reading from verse 20, by the way, if I didn't tell you. "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind; and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And God blessed them saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, and let the fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, creeping thing, beast of the earth after his kind."

Everything is after his kind. Cattle, creeping thing, beast of the earth, after his kind. Everything is after his kind. Cattle bring forth cattle. Cattle did not bring forth serpents. Serpents did not bring forth birds. Everything was after his kind. "God made the beast of the earth after his kind, cattle after his kind, everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" in other words after our kind. "And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

He created man in his kind, and gave them dominion over everything else that would propagate after their kind. "So God created man in His own image," after His kind, "in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." Now I want you to notice something here, and it's quite relative to what Paul was saying.

There is one flesh of man, there is another flesh of fish, there's another of beast, there's another of birds, whatever it is, they're all different. And when God created man he put every one of these under the dominion of man. And what have we done? Well we read it in Ecclesiastes, 7 an 29, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Is that true or not? You better believe it's true. What do they teach us today? We used to be crouched over like this, like a hairy ape or something. And then we gradually grew up, and stood up from all fours. The Bible tells us He created us upright. But people have formed many inventions. And that is exactly what

they did. They invented a new theory. That we haven't got dominion over all these things, we come from all these things. They are our forefathers. You couldn't get a worse invention as far as Christians are concerned.

Paul says, there are different types of flesh, and that's the secret, he said. You've got to remember this, and then he get onto men. Because he's not worried about resurrection of beasts. As much as I love animals. I'd like to think I would have had Toby and Snoopy there, in the kingdom when I got there, but I don't think I will. I don't think I'm going to be worried too much about it then, you know, we all have our little pets and we like them. But I can't find anywhere in the Bible where it say God is going to resurrect all the cats and dogs, and the animals. My goodness, how many galaxies is he going to need to put them all?

We're talking now about man. "There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial. But the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." Now what does he mean by that? You go out of a night, matter of fact, you can go out there now and you can see one of them. What do you see? You look up at the skies; you can see the sun, the moon, and the stars. We know all the planets are there. We've got these wonderful great telescopes you can see further today than any man has ever seen in the history of the world. Only God, I say this reverently, only God has ever seen more than what we can see in this day and generation. We look up to the Hubbell telescope and all the rest of it, and see these fabulous pictures of what's out there. All these celestial bodies. And he's talking about the resurrection.

Let's go down to verse 42 by the way. It says there, "So also is the resurrection of the dead." Keep it in mind. This is the key. This is why he's saying this. "There are bodies celestial." There are heavenly bodies, way up there in the distance that do all these wonderful things under God's control. And he says, "Then there are terrestrial bodies." And he said, "The glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." In other words, the celestial glory is different from the terrestrial glory. What is the terrestrial? Terra, of course, the word in the Latin means earth. It

is something that is confined to the earth. That has a particular glory. But then you have other bodies. He said, "Who are not confined to the earth, they are celestial bodies." This is what he is talking about. So is the resurrection of the dead. He's not giving an astronomy lesson. He is using it to illustrate the various levels to which we are going to be resurrected. We are not going to all just whiz up from here, up into glory, and sit down clapping our hands, and waving palm leaves and shouting hallelujah for millions of years, every one like a lot of clones. I don't know what people think we're going to do in the hereafter.

The whole passage here is talking about, these verses, and all the differences that are going to be in the resurrection... Do you know there are going to be greater differences, and more differences in those who are resurrected, than what there are national distinctions on this earth right now? And people will probably get a shock. They don't expect that sort of thing. But what does Paul say? "So is the resurrection of the dead." Some are going to be raised like celestial beings. Some are going to be raised as terrestrial beings.

In other words, some are going to be confined to this earth. You will still have eternal life; you will still have a resurrected body. And we will go onto that in the future, of what sort of body you are going to have. But you will be restricted to the earth. And it's not going to be too bad either I might add. But there is going to be another group. They're not going to be restricted to the earth.

They're going to be celestial types. Because the glory of the celestial type is different to the terrestrial type. Is it better or worse? It's obviously got to be better, hasn't it? Of course it does. And if you don't think that I'm, or if you do think I'm going out of my brain about emphasising this, I just want to read something. Hebrews 11 and 35, "Women receive their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain," if you read it, "a better resurrection." Now if there's only one type of resurrection, well how can one be better than another one?

If there is such a thing as a better resurrection, it's got to mean that some people are going to be on a better or higher level, than other people are going to be on. That's the whole point of the argument that he is saying here, try for goodness sake to aim for the higher calling. This is the whole purpose of his comment, in Corinthians. There is a better resurrection. It's not just the same for everyone. But then he throws a spanner into the works. He has said, you know, we've got a celestial type of resurrection, those who will go up in the stratosphere and all the rest of it, the planets. How would you feel like doing that? You know, the times we say this jokingly in a sense, but very seriously in another sense.

'Won't it be great', I can mention someone here, and I better not say the name because she'll hit me afterwards, but you know. Keeps on saying to me 'Jingo, I'm just dying for a time like I can take off from here and be over in Mars, or something like this, in a split second'. And what's wrong with that? Because that is exactly what we'll be able to do, if we are a celestial type resurrected body. If you are a terrestrial one, and you want to go and see Jenolan Caves and you don't want travel in the bus or train, you just, you know, you're just there or something. You can go anywhere on the earth. A celestial one can go anywhere in the heavens.

But then as I say, he makes it more difficult. He says, "There is one glory of the sun, there is another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: and even the stars different from another star in glory." How many different types of stars are there? So there's not only the sun and the moon and the stars, you've got all the different levels of stars. That's like saying, as I said a minute ago, that there are more levels in the resurrection than we've got national groups here on the earth. There are umpteen of them. What does God say about the various levels? You can go back on verses that are so commonly used, and read by us, and maybe we'll sort of think of this just with a little added light.

It says here in Matthew 5 and 19, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of

heaven.” And it goes on, “for I say unto you, That accept your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness off the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.” Our Lord himself said, there are the lesser ones, there are greater ones. He pointed it out quite clearly. So what’s this business of the sun? It’s interesting that in Matthew 13 and 43 our Lord said, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” The righteous. Who are the righteous? Righteous means lawful. If you are righteous, you are lawful.

In other words, you are obeying the commands of God. And you are righteous in the sense that those you’ve broken have been forgiven by the blood of Christ, and you are then righteous in God’s sight. Not in your own. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun. Proverbs 4, 18 says, “The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Daniel 12 and 3 says, “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” See he mentions both here. The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. What is the brightness of the firmament?

The firmament as we’re concerned, the brightness is all centered about the sun... If it wasn’t there, there wouldn’t be any brightness. So the wise are going to be a sun in brilliance. Those that turn many to righteousness will be as the stars. You’ve got all these levels. Matter of fact, it’s hard to think that there are going to be any two people on the same level, when you think about it. And what about the moon it mentions there? The glory of the sun is one, there’s another glory of the moon. What glory has the moon got?

You realise that the moon has no glory in itself? It’s a dead planet. It’s reflection. It reflects from the sun. So, you’ve got some who will be raised from the dead, who will be like the sun in righteousness. They will shine forth as the sun. The others who are raised from the dead, who will reflect the righteousness. They won’t necessarily have the same glory, but they’ll be like the moon. They will reflect that glory. But at a lower level than the one that

they're reflecting, just as the moon is at a lower level than the sun. Then you've got all the stars. All these things are different. So is the resurrection of the dead.

Now there's one thing that's come up a number of times, and we've mentioned this over and over again. The necessity to aim, not just for the resurrection. There's nothing wrong with aiming for resurrection, but we've got to go further than that. We have to aim for a better resurrection. What Paul said in Philippians. Let me read it. "Doubtless, I count all things but loss to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Doesn't matter what you've got. It doesn't matter what you've lost. Nothing compares with winning Christ.

And he said, "I should be found not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend," or catch hold of, "that for which also I am caught hold of Christ Jesus. Brethren I count not myself to have caught hold of these things: but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Now I'm going to stop there to emphasise this fact.

There are too many Christians today who get worried about what has happened in the past. Once you come to the Lord and you accept the Lord, you've got no past as far as Christ is concerned.

It says there, "I will cast their sins into the depths of the sea, and I will remember them no more." For goodness sakes stop all of us, and I'm not sort of speaking to any particular person here or who might be listening on the tape or videos later. There are so many Christians who are more or less just going out of their minds. I can think of a couple of people now, they're not here this morning;

they've come across our path in years past. They've almost destroyed themselves by worrying about how bad they used to be. He says you don't worry about how bad you used to be. He says I don't worry about, I don't think about it. I forget those things which are behind me, and I reach to those things which are in front of me. I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ, Jesus.

God's word has a lot to say about this high calling of God in Christ, Jesus. I'm just going to read out the passages from the Book of the Revelations we call the overcoming passages, the word overcometh simply means those who have overcome these things, and who have qualified for the high calling of God in Christ. Some of us are going to get a sun level, not too many by the way. There's only one sun in every solar system, so don't ever think that there's going to be, unless there's 15 million galaxies, well I don't know. I'm not going to start counting that. But I mean, you know, we tend to think in ourselves, 'Oh jingo, it would be lovely to be n the top rung of the ladder.' Well, it doesn't quite work that way. What we have to do is aim for it, as Paul said in another place, "we all run in a race, we all run to win, only one wins, but you've got to be in the race." That's the point.

We find there the messages to the seven churches, and I just copied out here the promises that were made to those who overcome. Now this didn't apply just to the people of that particular age or era. This applies to those who qualify in any of these church ages, as I pointed out in the book. The first one in Revelation 2 and 7, "To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." These are all promises to people who have pressed towards the mark of the high calling of God. Those who chose to seek a better resurrection.

This is the prize list. "I will give him to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." In Revelation 2, 11, these are all the successive seven churches, "He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death." That makes you stop and think. Because when you go over the book of Revelations, and you read about what happens there. It says those names that are not

found in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, that's the 14th verse of the 20th chapter. It doesn't say this is going to be the second chance of having life again. And it certainly would not have said that those people who overcome shall not be hurt of the second death. So the second death has got to be something that's hurtful to you. And you look up the word for hurt, and it means just that. It means real problems.

In 2 and 17, "To him that overcomes, will I give to eat of the hidden manna," or food, "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receives it." Now I'm not going to go into the full description here, because we've got it in our books there on Revelations, and you can read it in there later. I'm only listing those things which we can expect. That white stone represents approval or acquittal.

There are organisations today that use a white and a black marble. And if you want to vote for the person, you've got a white and a black marble, they're given to you. You don't have to put your name down; you don't have to put anything else down. If you want to vote for them, you put the white marble in the bag. If you want to vote against them, you put the black marble in the bag. No-one knows who puts the white ones, and who puts the black ones. But I can tell you what; if there is any black ones in there, that fellow is in trouble. He doesn't get in. It's a symbol of approval or acquittal.

"I will give him a white stone." In Revelations 2, 26, "He that overcomes, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nation." That's delegated authority over the nations. I want you to realise this. That those who overcome those who are part of the better resurrection that he is talking about, they will be given power over the nations. It doesn't say Christ has power over the nations. We know that he will. I'm not knocking that. But we tend to think, and most Christians think, that it's Christ that's going to have all this power. That it's Christ that's going to rule with a rod of iron. He is, but those that rule and reign with Him are going to do this as well.

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He says, "He shall rule them." That is the one that overcomes. He will rule with a rod of iron. "As a vessel of a potter they shall be broken to shivers." We are going to reign with Christ, with full delegated authority. We will have the rod of iron over the other nations. You know, this is going to be really something. This is what we've got to try to achieve. In Revelations in 3 verse 5, "The same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels." In the next, Revelations 3 and 12, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God." What's a pillar in the temple of God? What is the temple of God?

Israel is the temple of God. And if you are a pillar in Israel, what does it mean you are? You're one of the supporting features of the whole temple. You know, you build a temple, see any of the temples. Old heathen ones I don't care what they are. Take any buildings. I remember passing a place just out on the road along Elizabeth drive here, going over towards Liverpool. There is a place there, it looks lovely. There are all these Corinthian pillars along the front. What would happen if they took them down? The whole thing would collapse. The whole top story depends on those pillars being there. And the kingdom of God is going to depend on the pillars who are there supporting the temple, which should be you and I.

This is what he says. In chapter 3, verse 21, "I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am sat down with my Father in his throne." And how will that be? You try to imagine what it's like for the Lord Jesus Christ, what it looks like, to be sitting on the right hand of the Father. Whatever that glory is, we are promised that is what we will share in. We will be next in the cue, as it were. Jesus said He will be sitting on the right hand of the Father, and just as He has sat down with His Father in His throne, in other words, just as He has the delegated authority from the father, we will have the delegated authority from the son.'

"He that overcomes shall inherit all these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." This is what Paul is getting at here. The whole of the resurrection process is something which, I believe

even those of us as we study it here this morning, will still ponder about this to try to imagine the magnificence of what it is going to be.

And yet this is the very thing that we talk about, almost daily, and I'm sure I can say that about every one of us here. If we don't say it to someone, we think of it ourselves, because it becomes the kernel, the whole guiding thing of our entire life. Not just the return of Christ, because the first event in His coming is the resurrection. This is what we're waiting for. The redemption of our body. Bringing it back to what it originally was, and what was it originally? A perfect sinless body.

But Adam, there was only one of him, sort of thing. He had a perfect body. Spiritual body, literal body, in every way it was totally perfect. But, you know, when the Lord resurrects us we are going to be in a situation where we're going to go beyond what happened to Adam. We are going to have bodies like that, perfect, but at all these different levels. The celestial bodies, the terrestrial bodies, those differ from the sun and the moon and the stars; they will all have their own appointed positions.

And what we are commanded to do, in God's word, is to make sure we serve after the greater resurrection, the better resurrection. To search for and attain the high calling which is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And if we do that, we don't have to worry friends about what we're going to be, who we're going to be, how we're going to be, you know. Let's stop worrying about whether we think we're good enough. It's got nothing to do with what we think. It's got everything to do with how we strive to obey, and how we strive to attain the position that God has waiting for us. God makes the decision - not us.

So please, if anyone is worried about the fact that 'Oh, I'm not living a real good life', or 'I do this, or think that, or whatever it is'. For goodness sake, remember what Paul says. Forgetting those things, press forward to the future. And remember that the high calling of God is something which is totally beyond anything that we have, or even now, can fully appreciate. We won't know till it happens. And all we've got to do is make sure that we're well and

truly qualified in the sense that we have striven to the full extent of our capabilities.

We've all got different capabilities. Some can't do things that other can do. But then those who can do those things can't do some of the things that you can do. We've all got our place in God's plan, and He will reward us according to our faithfulness in that which he has given us.

* * * * *

Another Watchman less on the Wall OBITUARY

Last month we lost another watchman on the wall overlooking Israel. **Tony Pitt** finally succumbed to a life threatening illness and fell asleep for the last time in our Lord. Until the very last moment Tony fought for his beloved country to rid it of our common enemy and all the politicians who have, over the years sold us into slavery to the international finance boys. The fight will go on! When the last Trumpet is sounded Tony will rise again, along with the other men who during the struggle for **Our Israel** gave their lives for their country. Your editor had the privilege of communicating with him before he passed on and at that time he was still very passionate for his country, he passed on to me a wealth of information as to what the evil forces have done. Sleep well brother, for the next we meet shall be on that great and glorious day before the **Lord Jesus Christ and His Throne.....AMEN.**

A WALK THROUGH THE GOSPELS

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

PART 32

PONTIUS PILATE

The first hint that there is something curious about this story which is not directly disclosed by the narrative comes, strangely enough, not from the behaviour of the Jews, or even of the Prisoner Himself, but from the behaviour of Pilate. The disturbing element lay in the unsatisfactory alignment of Pilate's behaviour, as uniformly reported in the Gospels, with his known character and antecedents.

We know something at least about the previous history of this brusque and uncultured soldier of the Roman Empire. A tradition, which may not be very reliable, says that he was born at Seville in Spain. He came of a fighting family, and served for a time under Germanicus in Germany. During a prolonged stay in Rome he seems to have captured the affection of a Roman girl of very high connections, Claudia Procula, whom he was destined to marry, and of whom we shall hear more shortly. As the illegitimate daughter of Claudia, the third wife of Tiberius, Claudia Procula was the grand-daughter of Augustus Caesar. It is obvious from the sequel that this accidental connection with the ruling house served Pilate's personal interests in an unexpected degree. For in AD 26, on the recommendation of Sejanus, he was appointed Procurator of Judea, and in accepting the post he applied for and obtained the very unusual privilege of taking his wife with him. When we reach the ten critical years of his life with which history is chiefly concerned, light is thrown upon him from new directions. Three episodes stand out during that stormy decade. There was the affair of the Roman Ensigns; there was the affair of the 'Corban'; and there was the affair of the votive shields. To these may be

added the incident of the Samaritan imposture which occasioned his recall and ultimate banishment. Each of these episodes in its way illustrates and defines the man with whom we have to deal.

Morison says this. If anyone will read carefully and impartially the contemporary classical accounts of these events, paying particular heed to the *behaviour* of Pilate, as distinct from the motives ascribed to him, he will form a very definite impression of a somewhat coarse, rather tactless and very obstinate man. A man to whom authority denoted power to enforce his own will rather than responsibility and consideration towards others. There is not a trace of that tact in handling foreign and subject peoples which characterized Julius Caesar and certain far-seeing and high-born Romans. He was the embodiment of that personal aggressiveness with which men and women, thrust into a position of authority which exceeds their powers, so often seek to attain their ends.

THE AFFAIR OF THE ROMAN ENSIGNS

His obstinacy and complete lack of ordinary political insight come out very strikingly in the matter of the Roman Ensigns. We do not know what prompted him to send the ensigns and other insignia of the Legions into Jerusalem. But the fact that he did so at night suggests that he knew that there was going to be trouble. When the trouble came and he was practically besieged at Caesarea for six days and six nights, he made apparently not the slightest effort to arrive at a solution by discussion or argument. His only reply on the sixth day was to surround the deputation by armed force. When he found as a result of this belated test that he could only get his way by wholesale massacre (so fanatical was the objection to graven images in Jerusalem) he capitulated and the ensigns were withdrawn.

It is fortunate that we are able to compare the behaviour of Pilate in this matter with the handling of an almost identical

situation by another Roman Soldier, Petronius. The salient feature about this narrative is the manifest recognition by Petronius that there were deep-seated moral forces behind the native Jewish demonstration with which even the political might and statecraft of Rome must reckon. He tried to remove the obstacles by fair reasoning and private conference. He had an infinitely stronger incentive than Pilate to enforce his will, for he had been definitely commissioned by a mad Emperor to place the Imperial image in the Jewish Temple, and failure to do so invited unpleasant consequences. When he ran against the same unshakeable rock that confronted Pilate he wrote a report to Caius which not only stamps him as a very brave man, but unquestionably raised the prestige of Rome in the East. But the difference between Petronius' handling of this delicate affair and Pilate's action in closely similar circumstances is characteristic and deeply instructive. It marks the whole difference between the two types of mind, which were poles asunder. All Pilate's affairs were marked with the same lack of mental resilience and understanding.

Take, for example, the affair of the 'Corban', or sacred treasury. The Object for which Pilate took this money was a commendable one – the financing of an aqueduct from the Pools of Solomon to the interior of the City. The Jews were as much interested in a sure and safe water supply for Jerusalem as anybody. The problem had occupied successive kings and statesmen for centuries, and more than one exclusively Jewish attempt had been made to solve it.

The question of finding the money for this very necessary public work would not have been difficult if put squarely to the authorities. But Pilate must needs raid the 'Corban', a fund devoted exclusively to religious purposes. When the populace quite naturally revolted he provoked a needlessly bloodthirsty and fatal tumult by sending soldiers disguised as civilians into the mob.

THE VOTIVE SHIELDS

We get precisely the same characteristic and implacable cast of mind in the matter of the votive shields which Pilate installed in the Herodian Palace. There was apparently not the slightest attempt to understand or appreciate the deep-seated character of the religious objection to these tablets, or any desire to even discuss it. It was only when a letter from the chief men of the nation to Tiberius brought a strong reproof from the Emperor that Pilate gave way.

There is a hint, too, in the Gospels of an affair in which Pilate mixed the blood of certain Galileans with their 'sacrifices'. We do not know to what this refers, but it agrees pretty closely with what we know of his temperament, and bears a resemblance to his handling of the Samaritan affair as recorded by Philo.

Morison tells us that such, then, are the lineaments of Pontius Pilate as they emerge from the only independent and secular accounts we have of him. They are all amazingly self-consistent and true to type.

Now directly we turn to the Gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus by this man we get an immediate and unmistakable impression that the personality revealed does not lay four square upon the impression which we have previously formed of him. Somehow this does not seem to be the real Pilate – haughty, overbearing, and truculent – who is trying the Man of Death. He seems so remarkably anxious to conciliate the Jews, and yet so unaccountably reluctant to concede to their wishes. He gives the impression of a man being tugged between two opposite and irreconcilable forces. One feels that he had one idea paramount in his mind – to get *Christ acquitted*, somehow and at all costs. We see this motif running through everything – the attempt to shift the matter to Herod, the thrice-acclaimed innocence of the Prisoner, the washing of hands – the last desperate attempt to substitute Barabbas, as a sop to the insistence and

clamour of the people. It was only when the sinister cry, 'Thou art not Caesar's friend', began to make itself heard above the tumult that a new and greater fear triumphed over the one that had been gnawing at his mind. Why does Pilate, the tyrant of secular history, appear as Pilate the irresolute in the pages of the Gospel?

We shall never reach the true explanation of this phenomenon until we take into account various personal matters on the side of Pilate, and especially what took place in his own household on the evening before the trial.

You will remember that in tracing the causes of certain peculiar and otherwise inexplicable delays connected with the arrest of Jesus, we reached the conclusion that Pilate must have been warned of what was to take place, and the interview at which this was to be done could not have occurred much earlier than eleven o'clock in the evening. Strong as the evidence for this unreported interview with Pilate undoubtedly is, it is strengthened by one small but highly significant circumstance – the fact that Claudia Procula was in the Herodian Palace that night. It is an extraordinary thing that the only reference to Claudia in this particular connection that has survived the centuries should have told us that *she dreamed of Jesus Christ on the night before His death.*

So long as we think of the Roman trial of Jesus as developing along the traditional lines (so often inferred from the Gospels), by which the Jews without prior arrangement brought Christ on Friday morning to the bar of Pilate, the reference to Procula seems utterly illogical and its substance improbable. But directly we put these events in their natural sequence the truth seems to look us in the face.

Pilate was 'in town', not for a brief flying visit, but for the full ten days ordinarily covered by the feast. Pilate tells us this fact in one of the score or more letters to his friend Sejanus in Rome which have been preserved. The probability,

therefore, that Claudia came with him is very strong, even if we had not St Matthew's definite statement that such was the case. Their friends in the foreign capital were undoubtedly few. We shall probably not be very far wrong if on this particular night we imagine them sitting before the fire in one of the spacious apartments in their private suite in the Palace, for we know from Peter's warming his hands that the evening was chilly. To appreciate fully what then happened we must remember the peculiar limitations of time that the problem imposes. We know from the Gospel records that Pilate heard the case very early on Friday morning. The hurried visit of Judas to the High Priest's house took place probably between eight and nine o'clock, for the supper party lingered on after he had gone, and we still have two hours waiting in the garden to account for. If the decision to arrest Jesus was taken as a result of the information which Judas carried to the Priests, then Pilate must have been approached some time between nine o'clock and, say, eleven-thirty. How else could arrangements involving the personal movements of the Procurator early the next morning have been consummated?

As I have already suggested, there was probably only one person in Jerusalem who could safely intrude himself upon the privacy of Pilate's household at such a late hour, and then only upon urgent political grounds. That man was the High Priest himself. Therefore we may safely assume that some time between 9 o'clock and eleven a distinguished visitor presented himself at the Herodian Palace. Probably Pilate went out to an ante-chamber to meet him.

Then, in a few anxious minutes for the powers in Jerusalem, the outline of the impending event was disclosed. An important political offender was to be arrested that night. Would Pilate permit the Roman Legion at assist in the arrest? The trial would be consummated next morning, and a verdict involving the extreme penalty was probable. Would Pilate consent to review the case at an early hour so that the

necessary ratification might be given in time to secure death by sunset?

Probably also some conversation took place on the difficult question of defilement. It was not permissible for those charged with high duties in the Temple to enter the court of the stranger on this particular day. Yet the matter was urgent. The alternative to summary jurisdiction (having regard to the City's huge temporary population) was an insurrection. Would Pilate be prepared on this occasion to come out to the deputation who would present the Prisoner and the findings of the Jewish Court?

With the discussion of such questions as these from twenty minutes to half an hour probably went by, and with the departure of his visitor Pilate went back to his fireside. Now does anyone with personal knowledge of the immemorial characteristics of women suppose for a moment that an incident like this would pass without Claudia wanting to know something about it? She would not have been a woman if she had not been curious, and we may be practically certain that before they retired to rest that night some conversation took place upon the unexpected visit, the identity of the prisoner, and the reasons (satisfactory or otherwise) behind the arrest. Anything that foreboded trouble between her husband and the Jews had a special interest for Procula.

When, therefore, Claudia retired to her room in the late evening, it would be, almost certainly, with the thought of Jesus in her mind. And when she awoke next morning after a vivid and painful dream, to find that Pilate had already risen and left the Palace, she knew where he had gone and the delicate matter in which he was engaged. It was at this moment that, according to St Matthew, she sent him a message – almost telegraphic in its brevity and its urgency – designed to convey in the fewest possible words her own grave apprehensions and the course she thought he ought to take:

"Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

So far we have a logical and intelligible sequence of events. Is the sequence equally logical? We believe it is. The characteristic about Claudia's message to Pilate, as reported by St Matthew, is its *urgency*. The words are manifestly those of someone writing in great haste, and who wants to convey in the fewest possible words a message at once grave and immediate. She wanted to warn him primarily and above all else *not to touch this thing*. She seems to have been under something more than an impression that Pilate was going to commit Christ to his enemies and that at an early stage in the proceedings. Hence the need for her instant warning. The dream would not have had the instant terror for Procula, on awakening early the next morning, if she had not known, or had exceptionally strong reasons for suspecting that Pilate was going to hand over the Prisoner to His enemies.

"Have thou *nothing* to do with that *righteous* man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

The facts seem to point to one conclusion, namely that Claudia had reason to believe that Pilate intended to ratify the finding of the Jewish Tribunal without rehearing, or at any rate with a bare 'minimum of official formality. In other words that he had practically decided to confirm the Jewish decision, and had probably already given assurances to that effect over-night. One cannot help feeling that the principal thing that Caiaphas wanted to know before he sanctioned the arrest was whether Pilate would do this very thing. Thus the whole thing could be settled and done with before sunset. If not, then no one could tell what delays might take place, and it would be safer to postpone the arrest to a more convenient season. The fact that the arrest did take place according to plan seems to point to the Jews having received assurance upon this point.

If anyone will take the four Gospel records of the trial of Jesus by Pontius Pilate, and after putting them side by side, make a careful comparative study of them, he will find them absolutely unanimous upon one point. Namely that Pilate addressed to Jesus the question: 'Art thou the King of the Jews?'

Now this is significant, because the two earlier evangelists give no hint that Pilate had ever been told what the charge was.

Mark 15:1-5 (KJV)

1 *And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.*

2 *And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.*

3 *And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.*

4 *And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they witness against thee.*

5 *But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.*

It is perfectly obvious that this could not, in any circumstances, have been the *beginning* of these proceedings. Both these Synoptic writers have jumped over something which it is exceedingly important for us to know, namely, how this vital and rather peculiar question was led up to, and what it was that caused Pilate to ask it. Fortunately we can read the two independent versions by St Luke and St John. Two things stand out. First they offer a fuller and more intelligible account of what happened. Secondly and chiefly, Pilate's question comes, as we knew it must, after some preliminary interchange of argument with the Jews.

If we were left solely with the evidence and witness of St Luke, we should have to assume that immediately the priests brought their Prisoner to the bar they launched their general accusation thus:

'We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king.'

Let it be said here that, psychologically, this would have been a perfectly natural and satisfactory opening to the case, and if no other data were available, we should be justified, nay, even compelled, to assume that it began that way. But there is something in the version of the 4th Gospel that arrests attention, because it throws new light on the way in which the case was presented from the Jewish side. It is not that John contradicts what the synoptic writers have said. On the contrary he confirms it. But he seems to begin a little further back, and he supplies a link in the narrative that is missing from the other three.

He states first what on every ground we must regard as most probable, viz that when Jesus was brought to Pilate, the prisoner Himself was conducted into the Palace while the Priests and other accusers remained outside.

After a short interval, according to St John, Pilate came out and put the formal question to the Jews: 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' This was the definite opening of the Roman trial, for it was an essential part of the Roman system that a public accusation should be made, followed by the interrogation of the judge, and the reply of the prisoner. The reply of the Priests to this question is so significant and suggestive that Morison does not think that due weight has been given to it. The priests replied:

"If this man were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered him up unto thee."

Before we consider what this phrase means, let us look closely at **Mark 15: 1-5, Matthew 27: 2, 11-14, Luke 23: 1-5 and John 18: 28-38**. It is obvious that there is a gap in St John's version following the words *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death*. In no conceivable circumstance could Pilate have passed direct from this evasive and resentful answer to his leading question to Jesus: Art thou then a King? There must have been some intervening conversation to have led up to it. Fortunately the missing sentence has been furnished by St Luke, and so we may reconstruct the narrative.

RECONSTRUCTED NARRATIVE OF THE OPENING OF THE ROMAN TRIAL

Presentation of the Prisoner to Pilate

'They lead Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Palace: and it was early: and they themselves entered not into the palace, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.'

Pilate's demand for the Accusation

'Pilate therefore went out unto them, and saith, What accusation bring ye against this man?'

The Priests' obvious reluctance to produce a charge

'They answered and said unto him. If this man were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered him up unto thee.'

Pilate's rejoinder

'Pilate therefore said unto them, Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law.'

The Priests reply with an improvised charge

'The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.'

'And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a King.'

Pilate's question to the Prisoner

'Pilate therefore entered again into the palace, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?'

The first definite act of the drama of which we have historical record is the bringing of Jesus from the place of His confinement (probably the High Priest's house) to the place of trial. This occupied, perhaps, 20 minutes, but as it was still quite early probably few people witnessed the little procession as it made its way swiftly through the narrow streets of Old Jerusalem. The Procurator, himself astir early, was awaiting the deputation. On arrival at the gate of the Palace we must probably allow for a halt of a few moments for the examination of credentials, after which the Prisoner was conducted alone, under a Roman escort, to the presence chamber of Pilate. Meanwhile, the deputation and their attendants waited without.

After a brief interval, Pilate himself came out to the Jewish deputation and put the question: 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' As I have already said, this was an unmistakable indication that Pilate intended to re-hear the case, and it seems to have aroused intense resentment on the side of the priests. For their answer is not only lacking in proper respect for Pilate, who was acting fully within his duty, but points to their having a special grievance against him in this matter.

'If this man were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered him up unto thee.'

We can only assume that the Priests resented Pilate's sudden determination to re-hear the case. They were clearly under the impression that he would not insist on a formal

restatement of the case against Jesus, and they appear to have come without any prepared or public accusation at all. A broad but legitimate paraphrase of the statement might be: 'Can't you be satisfied with the finding of our Court, that this man is an evil-doer? Why re-open the case when we ourselves have found him worth of death?'

To this, Pilate made a very subtle reply: '*Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law.*'

The inevitable answer to this skilful counterthrust was a renewed demand for ratification: '*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*'

It would seem then that, realizing the hopelessness of getting what they wanted without the production of a case; '*They began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a King.*'

The mention of the words 'a King' at last gave Pilate something to work upon and he retired into the Palace to put the historic question to Jesus: 'Art thou the King of the Jews.' We should note that the manifest resentment and surprise shown by the priests when Pilate indicated his intention of rehearing the case, or at any rate of closely examining the Prisoner, points unmistakably to something resembling an understanding. They would hardly have made so insolent and pointed reference to ratification of their own sentence if they had not been led in some way to expect it.

But when we place this fact in juxtaposition with that other fact – the urgency of Claudia's reported message to her husband – its intrinsic probability is increased. We begin to see why Claudia was so anxious to get her message into her husband's hands before it was too late. For if events took the course which it seems they must have done, Claudia knew not merely the identity of the Prisoner when she retired to rest, but she knew also that Pilate was contemplating (if he

had not already promised) the ratification of the Jewish sentence. She wanted to tell him at all costs not to take that course. If Pilate actually received this message he must have done so shortly after his arrival at the place of trial, for highly-strung women are generally light sleepers and the whole tenor of the message suggests its hurried composition on waking. That Pilate had come down to the audience chamber intending formally to ratify the Jewish sentence seems certain. Before the deputation arrived, however, *something happened which caused him to change his mind.* But not only so. Pilate throughout his dealings with the Jews on this particular morning seems to have had one concern only – to shift the responsibility of the affair to others.

This fact is ineradicable from the pages of the narrative. We find it in his attempt to get the Jews to carry out their own sentence. We find it in the thrice proclaimed public acquittal of the Prisoner; we find it in the remission to Herod; we find it supremely in that tense moment, when, unable any longer to make himself heard above the tumult, he washed his hands as a sign that he would have no part or lot in it.

So in a member of Pilate's own household we discover the last factor in the psychological set of personal forces which brought about the death of Christ. The influence of Jesus upon the women of His day was profound, and of surpassing interest. He took Mary Magdalene from her native Magdala and made her His bond-slave forever. He took the sons and breadwinners away from women like Salome and Mary the wife of Cleophas, yet they would have died willingly for His cause, and did later endure unspeakable hardships on His account. He was the close and intimate friend of cultured women like Mary and her sister Martha. He had in Joanna a faithful and devoted follower in the very household of Herod. Must we add Claudia to the circle of His adherents?

In the sense of actual discipleship, no. But in the sense that in some mysterious way she had come under the impress of His moral influence and His commanding spiritual and

intellectual stature, I think we must say, yes. It was she who stiffened the Roman instinct for justice in Pilate, at a moment when he was tempted, from personal considerations, to humour the prejudices of the Jewish leaders, and commit Jesus on their recommendation alone. It was she who was the author of that resplendent phase when the tyrant was seen for a few hours in the guise of a patient administrator anxious to weigh the truth to the last ounce. Let us not belittle this glowing if transient chapter in Pilate's chequered life.

While the stimulus lasted his handling of this difficult and perplexing case was wellnigh perfect. No juster hearing could any man have asked or obtained in any court of that far-off day. The restraining influence of one who clearly believed that Jesus was innocent is obviously upon it. It was only as the stimulus faded against the grinding and growing opposition of the Jewish party that the threat of Caesar's intervention became paramount, and he ended as he intended to begin, by delivering the Prisoner into their hands.

So the battle of wills ended in the defeat of the Roman Procurator, and it was probably a sad and intensely irritated man who made his way back to the Imperial apartments of the Royal Palace. But we do not have to wait long for the repercussion.

A few hours later the Priests came back to him again. In his haste, or perhaps out of a coarse wish to turn the tables on his tormentors, he had written in three languages the immortal inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.' They wanted him to alter it. He refused. 'What I have written I have written' – the real Pilate came out at last, when the supreme moment of his own personal and individual crisis had passed.

(Next issue we continue with The Crucifixion following on from that we will deal with The Ascension this will then conclude this series – Bruce Homer)

PARADISE HEAVEN & HELL

CHAPTER TWO

THE DYING THIEF.

The first reference to Paradise is found in Luke 23:43;

**“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today
shalt thou be with me in paradise.”**

The thief who was a Zealot and a Galilean recognised Jesus as Messiah and called him “Lord”. He had faith that in spite of His hanging on the cross, He would yet be the King of Israel, and lawfully enter as Messiah into His Kingdom.

The above verse seems to suggest that both Jesus and the thief entered Paradise on that very same day. However it is contrary to Scripture. There is no way in which this could have happened. The Scriptures tell us plainly that Jesus “died”; and that he was “buried” He entered “a tomb, and “descended first into the lower parts of the earth,”

We read in Ephesians 4:8-10;

**“Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he
led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now
that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended
first into the lower parts of the earth? He that
descended is the same also that ascended up far above
all heavens, that he might fulfil all things.”**

Matthew 12:40 tells us;

**“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the
whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days
and three nights in the heart of the earth.”**

This is also confirmed in Mark 9:31;

“For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed he shall rise the third day.”

Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:4;

“And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

Peter said in Acts 2:24-28;

“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.”

He then appeared to Mary Magdalene after His resurrection. We read in John 20:17;

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and [to] my God, and your God.”

The punctuation of Luke 23:40-43 has been largely responsible for creating the false impression that Jesus and the thief both went to Paradise that very day;

“But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive

the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord; remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

This was what the thief requested in Luke 23:39-42;

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, if thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord; remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

However, there were no punctuation marks in the original Scriptures, these having been first introduced by a printer of Venice in the 15th Century. Division into verses first appeared in the Geneva Bible in AD 1560. There are many other examples of this manner of expression used in Scripture for very solemn emphasis; for example Deuteronomy 30:16;

“In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”

This is also in Deuteronomy 30:17-18;

“But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, [and that] ye shall not

prolong [your] days upon the land, whither thou
paskest over Jordan to go to possess it."

The same is found in Zechariah 9:12;

**"Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope:
even to day do I declare [that] I will render double
unto thee."**

The Septuagint Greek Bible has no less than 221 such references, all with the same meaning or inference, in 51 cases rendered "Today I say," and in 170 cases "I say today!"

We can also compare Christ's statement to the thief with such passages as Luke 4:21;

**"And he began to say unto them, This day is this
scripture fulfilled in your ears."**

The same applies in Luke 19:9;

**"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come
to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of
Abraham."**

These Scriptures do emphatically refer to something taking place on the same day as its narration, viz.:

**"Jesus said unto them, that this day is
salvation come to this house."**

Here the Lord Jesus included the word "that" (Greek "hoti") in His statement, to ensure the conveyance of the correct meaning. i.e., that the thing mentioned was to transpire on the same day on which reference was made to it. But in the instance of the thief on the cross the word "hoti" was purposely omitted, His statement being clearly understood by the thief as Christ's acceptance of his request to remember him one day in the Paradeisos. The definite article is in the original Greek text. Jesus did and could, however, promise him that he

would one day be with Him in His Messianic kingdom. The thief will thus be brought to life again, or resurrected, in the first resurrection before the Millennium, and the Lord Jesus will then remember the promise He made him on the cross:

“Thou shalt be with me in the paradiseos.”

Dr. Bullinger, one of Oxford's leading Bible scholars, who saw clearly from a correct understanding of the original Scriptures that the dead are dead, gives an analysed survey of this question of Christ's words to the thief, in his exhaustive and critical “Companion Bible,” Appendix 173. The definite article (the) is in the original Greek text of Luke 23.41. According to Dr. Bullinger, the interpretation of this verse depends entirely on punctuation, which rests wholly on human authority, the Greek manuscripts having no punctuation of any kind till the ninth century, and then it is only a dot (in the middle of the line) separating each word. The Verb “to say,” when followed by hoti, introduces the ipsissima verba of what is said; and answers to our quotation marks. So here (in Luke 23.43), in the absence of hoti = “that,” there may be a doubt as to the actual words included in the dependent clause. But the doubt is resolved (1) by the common Hebrew idiom, “I say unto thee this day,” which is constantly used for very solemn emphasis (see note on Deut. 4.26); as well as (2) by the usage observable in other passages where the verb is connected with the Gr. semeron to-day. *With hoti:-* Mark 14.30 reads:

“Verily I say unto thee, that (hoti) this day thou shalt deny me thrice.”

Luke 4.21 reads:

“And He began to say unto them, that (hoti) this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

Luke 5.26 reads:

“Saying (hoti = that), we have seen strange things to-day.”

Luke 19.9 reads:

“Jesus said unto him that (hoti), this day is salvation come to this house.”

2. *Without hoti*: - On the other hand, in the absence of hoti (that), the relation of the word “to-day” must be determined by the context. In Luke 22.34 we read;

“And He said, I tell thee, Peter, in no wise shall a cock crow to-day before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me.”

Here the word “to-day” is connected with the verb “crow,” because the context requires it.

It is the same in Luke 23.43:

“And Jesus said to him, Verily I say unto thee to-day or (this day), when, though they were about to die, this man had expressed so great faith in Messiah’s coming Kingdom, and therefore in the Lord’s resurrection to be its King now, under such solemn circumstances} thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.”

It is rendered “today” eighteen times in the gospels, Hebrews and James; but “this day” twenty three times (five times in Matthew, once in Mark; four times in Luke; nine times in Acts; once in Romans; twice in 2 Corinthians; and once in Hebrews). For, when Messiah shall reign, His Kingdom will convert the Promised Land into a Paradise.

It has no connection with Babylonian, Jewish, and Romish tradition, but is a direct answer to the malefactor’s prayer. It referred to the Lord’s coming and his Kingdom. The Lord’s answer was direct. The promise must have referred to that coming and to that Kingdom, and not to anything that was to happen on the day on which the words were being spoken. It is alleged that the Lord’s promise was a reply to the man’s thoughts, but this is an assumption for which no justification can

be found. Moreover, how can we know what his thought was, except by the words he uttered?

THE THIRD HEAVEN.

The second passage of Scripture is “Visions” and “Revelations” referred to in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4;

“It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

Paul was here speaking about himself, in the paradise of God. He was not caught away into space, but into time, to see a vision perhaps akin to that which Abraham rejoiced to see, John 8:56 reads;

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw [it], and was glad.”

Both Paul and Abraham rejoiced to see the future glory of the full Messianic Kingdom which was the Paradise. Scripture employs the term “heaven” in various ways to express things earthly, heavenly and even dispensationally. There are five different Hebrew words and four Greek words all translated “heaven” or “heavens.” They refer respectively to:

1. The Heaven of heavens where God dwells;
2. The skies or clouds.
3. The mid-heaven where the fowls fly;
4. The earthly heaven or terrain, as in Deut. 30:4-4,

“If [any] of thine be driven out unto the outmost [parts] of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed,

and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers."

5. The dispensational earthly "heaven."

We find a reference to this last dispensational usage in 2 Peter 3:5-13;

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, (pre flood) and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (post flood until the close of the Millennium) by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

**JESUS SAID UNTO HIM,
"VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, TODAY
SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN
PARADISE."**

(continued on inside back cover)

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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¹Don't be upset because of evil people.
Don't be jealous of those who do wrong,
² because like the grass, they will soon dry up.
Like green plants, they will soon die away.
³ Trust the LORD and do good.
Live in the land and feed on truth.
⁴ Enjoy serving the LORD,
and he will give you what you want.
⁵ Depend on the LORD;
trust him, and he will take care of you.
⁶ Then your goodness will shine like the sun,
and your fairness like the noonday sun.
⁷ Wait and trust the LORD.
Don't be upset when others get rich
or when someone else's plans succeed.
⁸ Don't get angry.
Don't be upset; it only leads to trouble.
⁹ Evil people will be sent away,
but those who trust the LORD will inherit the land.
¹⁰ In a little while the wicked will be no more.
You may look for them, but they will be gone.
¹¹ People who are not proud will inherit the land
and will enjoy complete peace.

Psalm 37:1-11

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