

THE COVENANT VISION

Jul./Aug.

1986

Contents

ISSUE No. 8

Editorial.	...	...	...	...	...	1.
God Has a Good Plan.	...	...	...	...	...	5.
The Kingdom of God	...	...	...	...	...	9.
Questions & Answers.	...	...	...	...	...	17.
The Farmers' Dream.	...	...	...	...	...	21.
The Prophetic Ministry of Elijah.	...	...	...	...	...	26.
The Calling of God.	...	...	...	...	...	34.
Anti-Christ and The Man of Sin.	...	...	...	...	...	37.

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

THE COVENANT VISION.

Editor: F.W.Dowsett.

In presenting this little magazine, it is not our intention to start up another organisation. 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 return and appearing 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 that we can afford to waste it on such unproductive, and indeed destructive exercises. We are concerned ONLY with what 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 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'

(continued on inside back cover.)

Editorial

In Luke chapter 21, and verse 27, we read:

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Undoubtedly, this should be the greatest hope of every Christian. Unfortunately, it is not. To many, it is no more than a church doctrine. With them, there is no sense of urgency, nor feeling or thrill of expectation. All too many Christians today live and plan their lives very little differently to anyone else, with very little, if any thought for the most shattering and staggering event still to occur in human history - **THE RETURN OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**. One gets the impression that they seem to be quite happy just to 'go to heaven' when they die, whatever that happens to mean to them, and leave the present for God to handle.

Yet they retain this attitude in the face of absolutely irrefutable evidence to the fact that this great day is very literally about to take place. Take for instance the verse quoted above. It is actually quite a tremendous verse. It states the great fact the Son of Man - the Lord Jesus Christ - IS coming back. It also gives us the MANNER of His coming - in a cloud with power and great glory. It categorically states that He will be SEEN. This is no secret hole-in-the-corner happening, or just some special feeling we will experience in our hearts. The Bible knows nothing of any "secret" theory relative to Christ's return. This is to be truly a magnificent display which will far outrank anything which the human race has ever experienced, and **IT WILL BE SEEN!!** The Greek word translated in this passage as 'see' means, "To perceive with the eyes. It is used of bodily sight. It is never used without reference to the object which is looked at." (A Critical Lexicon and Concordance by Dr.E.Bullinger).

But the big question of course must be, WHEN shall the Son of Man be seen? Our verse also indicates the answer. We read, "THEN shall they see...etc." So obviously, the timing of this great event is related to some other incidents or circumstances. When we read the two verses preceding the one we have quoted we read:

"And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars. And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the seas and the waves roaring.

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25-26).

"And THEN shall they see the Son of Man etc."

Now it doesn't require somebody of outstanding mental capacity to read the above verses and come to the conclusion that the very circumstances stated above are actually with us today. There are increasing signs and discoveries of new things in the heavens and in regard to the stars that signal things that we can only imagine. Men's hearts ARE failing them. They ARE becoming fearful at the growing uncertainty of what is happening on this earth of ours. The powers of heaven, atomic or nuclear power, has been, and is being shaken, much to the ever-growing concern and fear of an ever-increasing number of people.

But an interesting circumstance also quoted is the "distress of nations, with perplexity". If one were to consider the meaning of the word 'distress', the answer would almost certainly be 'anguish' or something similar. But this is not the case in this instance. The original Greek word used here means, 'a meeting, a joining, or a holding together'. This, as you will recognise, is most significant in view of the all-out attempt to destroy national identity, especially that of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples, and substitute a one-world nationalism.

We are told that this 'meeting, joining, or holding together of nations' will cause perplexity which will resemble the roaring of the seas and waves. When we then find that the literal meaning of the word here translated 'perplexity' means 'to be at one's wit's end; at a loss how to proceed; without resources; not knowing what to do next', the picture is complete.

It is at his point that we are told, "THEN shall they see the Son of Man coming". Many people take this to mean that the return of our Lord will occur AFTER these things happen, which of course makes the timing of this great event rather nebulous and uncertain. But again, we must understand the meaning of the actual Greek word used here. In this instance, the word translated as 'then' does not mean 'afterwards', or 'that which comes later in sequence'. It means "at that time".

In other words, we are informed by the Holy Spirit, who inspired Luke to write this account, that the coming of the Son of Man in great power and glory would be seen, not AFTER these nominated events had occurred, BUT AT THE VERY SAME TIME IN WHICH THEY WERE HAPPENING! We have thus been clearly told that our Lord Jesus Christ will return at the very same time when we are at our wit's end as to how to proceed because of the turmoil caused by the meeting or joining together of the nations.

This is not something for which we look in the future.

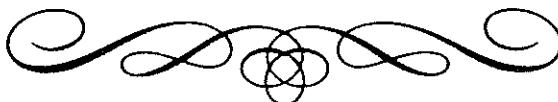
THIS IS NOW! !!

It is no wonder that God adds further knowledge for those "who have eyes to see, and ears to hear" when He says;

"And when these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.
And He spoke to them a parable.

Behold the fig tree, and ALL the trees. When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

SO LIKEWISE YE, WHEN YE SEE THESE THINGS COME TO PASS, KNOW YE THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NIGH AT HAND."



HISTORY IS THE WITNESS

Sir Francis Drake knew the identity of modern Israel . . .

We quote an excerpt from a letter by Sir Francis Drake, outstanding sea fighter of the era of Queen Elizabeth I, Armadas and the Spanish Main. Concluding the outline of an important naval victory, he wrote his preacher friend ashore:

"Wherefore I shall desire you to continue a faithful remembrance of us in your prayers that our part and our service may take that effect as God may be glorified, His Church, our Queen and Country preserved, the enemies of truth so vanquished that we may have continual peace in ISRAEL."

"From aboard Her Majestie's good ship the Elizabeth Bonadventure, in very great hast, 7th of April 1587."

Your loving and faithful sonne in Christ Jesus,
s/Francis Drake.

— Courtesy, Robert Thornton
Spokane, Washington

God has a Good Plan

FOR A GOOD LIFE FOR YOU!

By Rev. John W. Shenton

(Courtesy 'National Message')

The Man In The Street, looking at the world scene just now, may be forgiven if his impression is such as to make him smile at the idea that there can be any plan at all! To suggest that there is a **Good Plan For A Good Life** may make him laugh out loud. And let it be stated, this is not the first time men have laughed at the idea that there can be any Plan being worked out on Planet Earth.

This arises from a number of factors among which are that today we know almost everything about life except how to live it, certainly how to live it well. Much that goes under the name of the Christian religion, teaches us to withdraw from this world and get ready for life in the beyond in Heaven, thus robbing the world of some of the finest skills and efforts of thousands of men and women. All this is because of a misreading and misunderstanding of what the Bible really is, and really teaches.

The Bible is the best selling book in the world, the least read, and certainly the least understood! The generally accepted idea is that it is merely a spiritual book to prepare us all to get into Heaven above. The truth is that, taken as a whole, the Bible is probably one of the most material books, dealing with matter, material things, nations, the rise and fall of Empires, all kinds of creatures and man himself. As for all of us going away to Heaven above, the Bible is God's Revelation of His Plan and Purpose for Planet Earth and its peoples!

If these statements are doubted, happily they can be checked up. Just as we humans cannot find words which adequately explain 'God', so mere human words cannot fully explain the Bible, for the Bible is God's Revelation to man, given for a number of reasons. One is that we might live life in all its fullness and abundance, as God Himself intended. This is why we find Jesus saying, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God' (*Matt: 4:4*). The reader will note that Jesus states with simplicity and clarity: 'It is written'. Where? In the Old Testament Scriptures.

Note well another statement of Divine Truth: 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly' (*John: 10:10*). So the Good News is that Jesus came not to make us dull, miserable and quick to get out of this world, but to give us **Abundant Life**, Life to its fullest potential here on Planet Earth. This is not only 'Good News' but 'Shattering News' for this is what everyone needs and is seeking.

How?

Of course, the most important question is, 'How do we get this Abundant Life?', this 'Full-orbed Life', and is there a particular way to it? The truth is that there is a way, and only **One Way**. God has provided ample guidance for man in all the various circumstances of his daily living and circumstances as an individual, and as a member of a family, and a citizen of a nation. This information is in the book we have mentioned, '**The Bible**' which is '**The Word of God**', or God's Revelation to man. This means that in the Bible there are things that could not have been known unless God had made them known. He has made them known, so it behoves us to take very seriously what He has made known. Jesus did that, and so ought we.

Being a Revelation from Almighty God, the Bible is, like God, almost beyond human words to describe. We have to use language on our level of understanding to grasp its wonderful truths. Consider the Bible then, as a map by God for us who have to travel life's journey through 'Time'. Maps do not set out to prove but only state. For instance a map does not prove that there is a City of London, it only states its existence, and where it is. So the Bible reveals what God has said.

Secondly, we must have faith in the trustworthiness of the Map-Maker. For if some unscrupulous map-maker got to work, not knowing the details of a country, then following his kind of a map could lead to very serious and even fatal consequences. Of course, the Bible warns us beforehand, 'There is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof is death'. The self-chosen way seemed alright at first, but what about the end? There is the sting, for who thinks of ends, or consequences? So we can come to the Bible as the most reliable guide to help us in life's journey, and to explain certain truths to us along the way.

The first thing the Bible does, as we read it and study it seriously, is to give meaning and purpose to all things, and to human living. In fact, an understanding of the Bible as a Revelation from Almighty God is necessary, not only for holy living, but for genuine intelligent living. Without this Divine Guide, intelligent satisfying living is impossible: 'Thinking on how to live, I turn to Thy directions' (*Psalm. 119:59, Moffatt*). This, then, answers the 'How' of our quest. We turn to Divine Revelation in the Written Word of God—**The Bible**.

What?

When we turn to the contents of Divine Revelation we are impressed, as we ought to be, by their profundity and the variety of subjects mentioned. It is important that we should grasp this, because millions of people throughout Christendom have been put off the Bible by the erroneous idea that it is only a Spiritual Book! As a matter of fact, when one digs deep into this Divine Revelation, one discovers that it is the most material Book there is. This may come as a surprise, but the Bible is full of surprises, as we shall

discover. But to return to this discovery about the material aspect of Divine Revelation. It is bound to be so by its very nature, for if all things are of Divine Creation, then obviously all material things in the whole Universe were created by God, and kept in existence by Him every moment of time.

The Bible tells us not only what some things are made of, but what is more important, what they were made for. A chemist can tell what some things are made of, but only God Himself can tell us what they were made for. What was His purpose in creating, say Planet Earth, and what is more important to us, what was the purpose of creating man. You cannot understand what a thing or person is, until you know what they are for. So we must have a knowledge of Purpose, and this is what God has done. God, knowing man must have knowledge of purpose, has in His mercy given it, for without this knowledge there can only be a misuse and great damage and disaster, even death. So we come to the reasonable conclusion that if we want to know the purpose of our being here, we must ask **The Maker**, the Maker being God. This is why we must go to the Bible where He has told us what He wants us to know. Apart from God Himself telling us, we have no reliable way of knowing. Note the words 'reliable way'; all other suggestions are merely man's own ideas.

Intellect

Now there is a general idea abroad that looking into the Bible is alright for children and the unintelligent, or for those who do not think. This is gross error. There is no higher exercise for one's intellect than to direct it upon the ways of the Almighty and what He has been pleased to reveal. This will save us from guessing or mere theorizing. Surely the serious minded will desire Truth above all things, the pure **Absolute Truth**. For if we do not have absolute pure Divine Truth, then we are left to grope in blindness, and surely there is no virtue in blindness! Who in his or her right senses wants deliberately to be blind, that is blind to the highest and the best, blind to the true purpose of living to life's fullest capacity here on Planet Earth?

Hope

This view of the Divine Revelation not only provides us with a knowledge of the Purpose of our living here, it does, among many other things, provide us with the strongest Reasons for Hope. There is today a lack of hope and confidence gnawing at people's minds. They cannot find solid ground for reasonable **Hope** for the future. Yet when we come to study the Divine Revelation in the Bible seriously, we find every reason for sure and certain hope.

Accepting the Bible as God's Revelation to man, what does this mean? It means that God the Creator is not an idle Spectator far away in outer space. It means that He has not abandoned history to come to its own self-destructive climax, but rather that He has Himself entered 'Time' in our history, and is guiding it to a definite pre-determined glorious

consummation and goal. It means that God is the Lord of history. While He Himself does not originate the evil, it cannot in any way defeat His purposes, even though it may delay and thwart them. But God cannot be defeated. As we read the Divine Revelation, we must notice that it is always in terms of Divine Victory. This is a Divine Truth that even many Christians have failed to grasp.

It is with absolute Divine Confidence and certainty that the Bible declares that there is a time coming when 'every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue shall confess to God' (*Rom*: 14:11; see *Phil*. 2:11). So we know that all things, even though seemingly chaotic now, are yet under the control of Almighty God.

Plan

As we study the Divine Revelation, we see running all through it something else which gives us ground for Hope and Confidence. God not only reveals His general Purpose, He also reveals His Plan. Purpose and Plan are not the same thing. The Purpose is what God is going to accomplish, the Plan is how He is going to move through History to accomplish His Purpose. The Plan includes the instruments He creates, who and what the instruments are, and how God handles these instruments within our human history. The Bible is a Book of Divine Revelation, and because God has made His Purpose known in it, it is the most thrilling Book on Earth. It is a Book we cannot only live for, but what is more important, it is a Book we can live on. Jesus said: 'My Words they are Spirit and they are Life', and it is as we not only read the Bible, but assimilate it into our very being by Faith and Trust, that God's Spirit is conveyed into our life and we receive His strength for abundant living.

"Common sense is the most widely shared commodity in the world. for every man is convinced that he is well supplied with it."

— Rene' Descartes
1596-1650

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

By F. W. DOWSETT.

PART 5.

THE FORMATION OF THE KINGDOM.

1. Its Background.

I believe that it is absolutely essential for the student of God's Word to keep firmly in mind just what sort of a Book the Bible is. The majority of people see it only as a 'religious' book. The main reason for this is that they see Christianity itself as only a 'religion'. But Christianity is NOT JUST A RELIGION! 'Religions' set forth teachings which concentrate the minds and thoughts of their followers purely on a future life-style which is an automatic sequence, or development, or progression, of their present life. It is a form of religious evolution. But Christianity is vastly different. It is not restricted to just what happens to us in the hereafter, and most certainly does not teach an automatic evolution into a higher and better life simply as a result of death. It is vitally involved in what happens to us NOW. In other words, it is not just a belief.

IT IS A COMPLETE WAY OF LIFE.

And as such, it is not given the place that it should be given in people's lives. I am completely convinced that if people had been given more instruction on the application of God's Word to their present everyday lives and perhaps a little less emphasis on what's supposed to happen to them after they die, we would have a much different society today.

The Bible is not just a 'religious' book. It is primarily A HISTORY BOOK. But what a history book. It is the most comprehensive history book ever written. It is a history book with a real difference.

Man-made history books only deal with the past. By their very nature they are totally unable to deal with the present or the future. The interpretation of the present depends on the commentator's position in the political spectrum, his views on race, colour and creed, his denominational and school training, etc.. Therefore, everyone has their own particular opinion on the meaning of what is happening in the world today, based on all these factors.

Our understanding of the present is not derived from history books, but from the opinions of so-called experts and commentators.

As for the future, no historian or commentator would risk his reputation trying to foretell it.

But God's Word is quite different. It covers all three periods - Past, Present, and Future. It tells us HOW things have come to pass. It tells us WHY things have come to pass. And it tells us the FINAL RESULTS consequent upon these things.

It is not only complete in its coverage, but it is completely accurate and reliable. And why shouldn't it be? It's author is GOD.

We should always keep in mind that wonderful passage in II Peter 1:19-21;

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Yes, God refers to "the more sure word of prophecy". But although He places so much importance upon it, we don't seem to hear much about it today, do we. And the little we do hear is mostly based on the completely erroneous teaching of 'futurism', and that the present-day Jews are God's chosen people Israel.

"The prophecy" to which God referred is the "History" to which the Bible refers. Because PROPHECY IS HISTORY FORETOLD!

As we have already seen in previous chapters, the main subject of the entire Bible is THE KINGDOM OF GOD. It sets out its complete history, Past, Present, and Future. It covers its history from its very inception, through its various stages of development, right through to its final perfection under the righteous rulership of our Lord Jesus Christ, even to the time when Christ hands back the perfected Kingdom to His Father so that all things may be in Him. (I Cor. 15:24-28). I suggest that you turn to your Bible and read the Song of Moses, as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy chapter 32, and verses 1 to 47, for a beautiful cameo illustration of this principle.

B. God's Declared Intention.

The first thing that we should note is that the establishment of a literal kingdom here on earth was part of God's plan PRIOR TO CREATION! We read in Deut. 32:8-9;

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

For the Lord's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."

In other words, when God first planned the shape and disposition of the land masses, and the territories

which would be occupied by the various nations of the world, PRIOR TO CREATING THESE AREAS INTO EXISTENCE, He allocated certain areas of the earth's surface to the children of Israel, and deliberately and Divinely purposed that the other nations of the world would not encroach on these areas. The countries of Anglo-Saxon Israel were Divinely appointed as our land by God Himself. It was His Divine determination that they would not be possessed by others. They were strategic areas from which His people would be better able to spread abroad the knowledge of the love and mercy of their Great God. One only has to look back on history at the number of times in which the Commonwealth nations were not finally and permanently settled by the nations who originally discovered them. Australia is a wonderful example of this. Look at the teeming millions of Asia to the north who never came south to claim and settle this land. Think of the number of explorers who discovered Australia long before Captain Cook arrived, and yet the nations to whom these explorers belonged showed no interest in us. Thus was the hand of God made manifest in fulfilling His Grand Purposes, and this apparent anomaly can only be explained and understood in the context of the fact that the bounds of the other nations had been set by God Almighty, and they did not include the land of Australia, North America, or South Africa. These lands had been set apart for "the number of the children of Israel."

The knowledge of this important fact gives us what I believe to be a God-given insight into the basic cause of all the racial problems which have developed particularly within these three Israel countries. Satan, through his many and varied agencies, is desperately trying to deprive Israel of their heritage, and the only reason he has been so successful thus far is because of the continued sin of God's people Israel, and their continued refusal to recognise and accept both their identity and responsibility. God warned us very clearly. If we continued to be disobedient to His Laws, we would become the tail and not the head, and we would be ruled over by the heathen.

The results are plainly evident. Trying to appease or negotiate the present situation is a complete and utter waste of time. You can't cure any deep seated disease simply by treating the symptoms. **YOU HAVE TO TREAT, AND REMOVE, THE CAUSE!** And the cause of our present problems is that we have turned from obedience to the Law of God.

The cure is simple. All we have to do is nationally, as well as individually, REPENT, and turn back to God's Holy Laws. **THIS IS THE ONLY CURE!!**

The second thing that we note is that God declared His intention to form this Kingdom/Nation from the person of Abraham, and through his seed. In Genesis 12:2-3 we read;

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Now it is interesting to note two particular features regarding this statement.

1. The primary and basic promise which God made to Abraham was **THAT HE INTENDED TO FORM FROM HIM, (Abraham), A NATION.** The balance of God's statement described the blessings which would accrue both to Abraham and to all the families of the earth as a result of the fulfillment of this promise.

2. **ABRAHAM BELIEVED THIS STATEMENT.** Romans 4:17-22 (N.I.V.) tells us;

"As it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations.' He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed - the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said of him, 'So shall your offspring be'. Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead, since he was about a hundred years old, and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.

This is why 'it was credited to him as righteousness.' "

This is confirmed in James 2:23 which reads;

"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, 'Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.' And he was called, THE FRIEND OF GOD."

Let me repeat. The basic statement that Abraham believed was that God, in the face of impossible odds, was going to make from him A NATION. This was the basis for his righteousness.

This is 'the faith once delivered to the saints' as we read in Jude verse 3. And this is the faith which we are required to have.

But how on earth can we have this faith if we are prepared to believe that God changed His mind and decided instead, and in spite of Abraham's faith, to fulfil His promises through a substitute for Israel? No wonder our Lord despaired of finding 'the faith' upon the earth when He returns. (see Luke 18:8).

We must be very careful in regard to our faith. I would not deny for one moment that most Christians have faith. But we must ask ourselves, 'Is my faith a complete faith? Do I believe EVERYTHING that God has

said? Or do I pick out the bits that appeal to me most, and which best suit the circumstances in which I wish to serve God, or the doctrines of the particular church which I wish to attend? Do I have faith only in the promises of God which apply to me as an individual, or am I prepared to have full faith in the wider and grander promises of God that He made to the nation?

Remember friends. Incomplete faith can only bring incomplete blessings. After he proved his faith, God changed His servant's name from Abram, which meant 'mighty father', to Abraham, which means 'a father of a multitude'. In other words, God changed the emphasis from what Abraham WAS, to what Abraham WAS TO BECOME as a result of the power and faithfulness of God. That is what real faith does for us. Too many Christians today have the kind of faith which centres almost exclusively upon what God will do for themselves. It is a very introverted faith. It deals with themselves as they ARE. But what we really need is an extroverted faith. The kind of faith which sees God working not only on the personal level, but on the Kingdom-Nation level which can only be achieved when we realise and accept and believe, even against seemingly impossible odds, WHAT WE ARE TO BE.

It is not enough just to believe ABOUT God. It is not enough just to believe IN God. We must BELIEVE GOD!

That is what Abraham did. That was the secret of his righteousness. And as a result, he was called by what must surely be the most wonderful title in the Bible. He was called "The friend of God".

We too can achieve the same glorious relationship with God by exhibiting the same faith. It will not be a matter of us calling God OUR friend. When we truly BELIEVE GOD, Jesus turns to His Father and says, "See that person down there? Well he is MY friend."

And that is really something different again.



FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT AND INSTRUCTION.

Booklets by F.W.Dowsett.

PROPHETCY.

A short treatise on the basic principles of prophecy.
24 pages for \$1.00, or FREE with any two books below.

CAMEO STUDIES.

A collection of short studies of twelve sometimes controversial topics of the Bible, such as "The Gentiles," "The Bride," "The Church," "The Kingdom," "The Law," "The Jews," "Israel," "Israel's Feasts," "Tithing," "Christmas," "Easter," "The Resurrection." 74 pages \$2.50.

THROUGH JUDGMENT TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Discusses the root causes of our present individual and national position in the light of God's judgments as a result of our national disobedience to His Laws, together with an outline of the sure mercies and salvation of God for the ages to come. 55 pages \$2.50.

THE RETURN OF ELIJAH.

A new edition of one of the few books available today on this subject. It deals with Israel's great prophet both in the Old and the New Testaments, the ministry of John the Baptist, and whether we can expect only an 'Elijah-type' ministry or the actual return of the literal prophet.
52 pages. \$2.50.

Prices include postage within Australia.

Please order direct from:

COVENANT VISION MINISTRY.
97 Brisbane St.,
St. Marys. 2760.
N.S.W. AUSTRALIA.

Questions and ? Answers. !!

By F. W. DOWSETT.

We regularly receive questions from readers regarding certain aspects of God's Word, most of which are involved in some form of controversy, or differences of opinion. Similar questions are sometimes asked by several people. We also feel quite certain that there are many readers who ask themselves the same questions, but haven't got around to asking about them. So we have decided to commence a series of "QUESTIONS and ANSWERS" in which we will attempt to explain the various matters raised.

We ask however, that our readers appreciate that the views expressed in the various answers are our own considered and conscientious beliefs as we feel the Lord has revealed from His Word. We fully accept and respect the fact that not all will agree with us in some of our conclusions. All we ask is that what is offered be considered in the light of the Word of God, and not just on the basis of traditional beliefs. If there is any disagreement, please let us agree to disagree in Christian love. It is not our intention to enter into lengthy arguments, or cause division or disputes. There are already so many sounds from so many trumpets, and alas, so many differing followings for the differing trumpets. Truly has God's Word enjoined us, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?"

Our only intention and aim is to glorify our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, by expanding our knowledge and understanding of His Holy Word. But please don't accept everything I say just because it is I who has said it. Let us "examine all things" through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

That is our FINAL and ONLY guarantee of truth.

QUESTION NO. 1.

"Is the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph joined together in England and Scotland ?"

ANSWER.

The question arises from the following statement in Ezekiel 37:15-17:

"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying,
Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, 'For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions'. Then take another stick, and write upon it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' "

The understanding of this passage of Scripture depends entirely on our understanding of the subject of National Identity. Those who accept the teaching that God changed His mind in regard to His unbreakable covenants with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, applying them now to what they refer to as 'the church', cannot look forward to any literal fulfillment of this prophecy. For them, the entire passage has became one of 'spiritual speculation' and totally devoid of any significance or interest.

But to those who accept the absolute immutability of God's promises to the fathers, which our Lord Jesus Christ came to confirm, as recorded in Romans 15:8, the question becomes one of considerable importance in the understanding of prophecy and its fulfillment.

Let us have a clear picture of the situation. There are two sticks. One represents Judah and the section of the nation of Israel which comes under Judah's jurisdiction, and the other stick represents Joseph, or his son Ephraim together with the section of the nation of Israel which comes under his jurisdiction. These two

sticks, i.e., Judah and Joseph/Ephraim are to be joined together into ONE stick some time future to the time when the prophecy was given.

Let us list a few facts relative to this situation.

1. The two houses of Judah and Israel (represented by Joseph/Ephraim), were originally ONE HOUSE.
2. They became divided into TWO houses as a result of the direct will and purpose of God. Speaking of this division in II Chronicles 11:4, God said, "This thing is done of ME."
3. One of the reasons for this division was to enable the two houses, individually and separately, to achieve the purpose for which they were individually formed by God. This is stated in Psalm 114:2 which reads:

"Judah was his SANCTUARY, and Israel his DOMINION."

These two specific destinies of these two specific houses are clearly defined in the blessings of Jacob to his two sons Judah and Joseph as recorded in the 48th. and 49th. chapters of Genesis. Gen. 49:8-10 give the blessings to Judah, whilst verses 22-26 give those applicable to Joseph. Chapter 48 allocates Joseph's blessings to his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. These blessings are confirmed by Moses in Deut.33:7 regarding Judah, and 13-17 regarding Joseph. Please read them.

In short, Joseph and his descendants were to be the possessors of the literal, geographic kingdom or nation. They were to possess the territory, and all that this implied and included. On the other hand, Judah was to produce, and possess the Kingship over that kingdom.

In the light of these facts, let us now return to the prophecy of the joining of the two sticks. **WHAT IS ACTUALLY TO BE JOINED TOGETHER ?** To apply the fulfillment solely to the two houses of Israel and Judah as individual sections of the nation of Israel is to miss the whole point of the exercise.

I firmly believe that the important issue is the joining together of the destinies and purposes for which these two houses or sections of Israel were appointed by God.

And from our study thus far, these two separate destinies have been quite clearly identified.

Israel, through Joseph/Ephraim was to have the territory.

Judah was to have the throne, or line of kings which would govern this territory.

Thus, God has said that THE TERRITORY AND THE THRONE WOULD ONE DAY BE UNITED, and He symbolised this union in the parable of The Two Sticks.

I believe that this event happened in 1603 when James VI of Scotland became James I of Great Britain. This 'union of Jacob' has, from that time onward, been commemorated by the "Union Jack" which literally means, "The Union of Jacob." We daily declare this evidence of the faithfulness of God on our national flag, a realisation of which will give us insight into the reasons why certain people are trying so desparately to eliminate this feature from the Australian flag.

To look for some future NATIONAL amalgamation of the present nation of 'Israel' with the British Commonwealth, as many do, is in my opinion quite useless, and totally misleading. Don't forget that in Jeremiah chapter 19, God stated that Judah would never be a nation again! This only confirms the many other proofs that the present Zionist nation of 'Israel' is NOT Judah.

I submit that the prophecy of the joining of the two sticks has already happened. We can look back on its fulfillment as yet another evidence of the glorious faithfulness of our great God and Saviour.



THE FARMERS' DREAM.

Pastor Trevor Vincent.
New Zealand.

Oh to own one's land, freehold, to develop it as a business enterprise to its maximum potential, to have good returns for the products produced, and a way of life that is pleasing to both the farmer and his family.

To know for sure that the property is secure, to do with as you wish. That the grasping hand of government will not wrest it from you by crippling taxes, or from the family by high death duties.

Over the past two decades the call of government has been for greater production, diversity, more overseas funds.

Incentives were given to farmers to achieve these goals.

They did.

Production, and the value of that produce in all its forms has risen dramatically. Every man, woman and child in this land has benefited from the huge monetary increases, yet now the achievers - the farmers, growers, producers - are struggling, desperately, unfairly.

Why has this situation come about?

There are several reasons.

The government is unsympathetic, either by design or negligence, and the general public do not have a working knowledge of the complexities of the farming scene, and its enormous contribution to national wealth.

It seems ironic that although "food" is the world's most sought-after commodity, the absolute essential for life, the one thing everyone wants, the producers of this wonderful resource should be so lightly esteemed.

THE ANSWER.

Is there an answer to these problems? There is, and it would materially affect every farmer for good and profit if it were implemented.

The Laws of God produce the clues.

Unfortunately, the Laws of God have always been regarded in a negative, punative way. But this is not so. In actual fact, the reverse is true, for they, by their observance, lead to the highest form of liberty and freedom known to mankind.

Understanding of them is necessary to achieve their goals. But truth is not inherited. It is only achieved by painstaking instruction.

"Priests lips should flow with the knowledge of God, so that the people will learn God's Laws. The priests are the messengers of the Lord Almighty and men should come to them for guidance." That's a quote from Malachi 2:7, Living Bible.

Without doubt, the laws and administration set out by government have a major bearing and influence on the course of a whole nation.

Farmers have been pawns in the games of politics for too long, manipulated by the halls of power, providing vast amounts of overseas funds, carrying on their business by selling wholesale and investing back retail. Crippling interest rates and the like have taken their toll.

An ancient Prime Minister by the name of Joshua was once given this charge: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth". In other words, "This book of law when spoken, governs my people."

He then commanded the officers of the people. He literally gave clear instructions to his cabinet to administer Divine Law.

Under Divine Law, no provision is made for governments to create or enact new laws of their own.

Joshua stood for the keeping of God's Laws, and His government, and all governments should act only in an administrative and judicial capacity.

FREEDOM.

The reason? They are there solely for the greatest possible freedom and justice of the individual, or in a corporate sense for the liberty and blessing of the

peoples under their rule. The rights of the people must be protected.

God's Law makes no provision for governments to be in business in competition against their subjects, nor are they to hold vast tracts of land.

They are administrators, not businessmen. God places tremendous importance on the free enterprise of people.

Under Joshua's government the people owned the land and it was their inheritance, privately owned, privately run. This also holds true for all kinds of business endeavours. Private enterprise is high on the list of Divine purposes for people.

So highly is this rated that it was virtually impossible for a property owner to lose his land. Even though it was lost through mismanagement, it could be returned to him or the family after 50 years.

POSSESSIONS.

The Divine Law places great emphasis on the principle that an individual's freedom of ownership of possessions is a sacred right. Anything, or anyone, who infringes that freedom is stealing.

Where this timeless law is invoked, possessions become the true measure of true material wealth, for they are tangible and accountable.

It was said of ancient Isaac that he was blessed greatly, and became great, and was given flocks and herds, silver and gold, camels and asses, and in the context of that day, men and women servants.

If property, possessions, business, etc., are the standard of wealth, then the means to reach that standard must be by the goods and services of the people.

However, today money has been made the major commodity. Trading and speculating in money, with its associated high interest and lending rates, has detracted from true wealth.

So money makes money.

The rich get richer by using money as a commodity, yet of itself, it adds nothing to society but debt.

Goods and services, which are the real power to get wealth, do not attain to the prominence that is placed on money.

Divine Law is against high interest rates which it terms "usury". In modern language, it is just 'using' the people to speed up the process, to make them poorer and increase the national debt.

The farmer or grower is the worst off. The price paid to him has a ceiling. It's fixed, so that the only alternative is to work harder and produce more - and to stand still.

SILVER AND GOLD.

How can producers be helped to succeed?

King Solomon gives a good example of a working model of a kingdom applying the Divine Law.

Gold and silver backed all his currency. Gold and silver increased dramatically in volume by the ever-increasing goods and services of the free-enterprise system of his people. In fact, it says that gold and silver were as common as stones. This suggests amazing prosperity without crippling interest.

A visiting Queen was just left breathless as she reeled under the impact of the amazing prosperity of the nation. To other nations he applied the Divine Law, "You shall lend, but not borrow." Doubtless he charged high interest to other nations, and their wealth flowed into his treasury.

He achieved this amazing economy because he pegged the value of gold and silver.

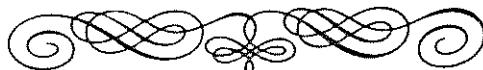
Now today gold and silver should have a fixed value in the same way that a kilo is a kilo now or in 20 years time, or a metre never changes its length. Time or circumstances do not shorten or lengthen it. Paper money issued to the value of these two tangible commodities would not change up or down either, but the quantity, or total value, of issued notes would rise as the gold and silver increased - due to the goods and services of the people.

What a boon and stimulus would this Divine method provide for in the total stabilising of costs, and the

assurance that forward planning and development would not be eroded away.

As a nation, we have amazing skills and technology, the know-how to get the job done, but a man-made system that throttles to death even the most skillful and dedicated of our producers.

Understanding the Divine Law can give a new perspective and direction.



COVENANT TAPE MINISTRY.

TAPE RECORDINGS BY MR. FRANK DOWSETT
NOW AVAILABLE.

Why not share further in the study of God's Word by joining our TAPE MINISTRY. There is no joining fee. All you have to do is ask.

Order your tapes from the catalogue already sent to you in Issue No.5, or send for a free copy.

Tapes may be purchased for \$4.00 each, including postage, or borrowed on a 'free will offering' basis.

Please forward your order to:

COVENANT VISION MINISTRY.
97 BRISBANE ST.,
ST.MARYS. 2760.
N. S. W. AUSTRALIA.

The Prophetic Ministry of Elijah.

By. F. W. DOWSETT.

PART 5.

THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

When we read the 18th. chapter of I Kings, verses 17 to 41, we find the account of what must rank as the most spectacular event in the life and ministry of the prophet Elijah. As a matter of fact, it would probably rank among the most spectacular events in the entire Bible. The sheer dynamic power that comes through the whole event, both from the negative forces of the prophets of Baal and the positive force of the prophet of God are quite remarkable. It is certainly a tremendous illustration of what the power of Satan CANNOT do, and what the power of God CAN do. It shows in no uncertain terms just what 'men of God' can do in the face of seemingly impossible odds. I wonder just how many of us would be game to even think of trying what Elijah did, let alone go ahead and do it. This was really faith in action. But it wasn't blind faith. It was a faith based on the firm belief and conviction of the righteousness of his cause. Elijah wasn't a fool. He knew better than to tempt God with a course of action which could be contrary to God's will and purposes, and which would only end in bringing disgrace upon the Name of God. And I think we should take a lesson from this. All too many people today don't seem to know the difference between having faith in God to do HIS will, and pounding their fist on the table before God demanding that He do THEIR will. I venture to suggest that herein lies the reason why so many times God doesn't seem to answer our requests. We need to constantly remember that God has promised us what we NEED, not everything we WANT. So when we come to Him in faith, make sure that what we ask is within the overall realm of what He has promised, not just within the scope of our own de-

sires. And of course the first step is to find out the full scope of His promises to us.

Elijah knew perfectly well the will of God in this matter, and so was able to proceed with every confidence in the knowledge that God would answer. Don't forget that he was not doing it for any self glory. In fact I'm sure that he already had a fair idea of what he was letting himself in for personally. No, he was doing it for no other reason than to ultimately prove the power and glory of God by totally discrediting, and even destroying, the supposed power of the false prophets and the false gods which had taken complete control of God's people.

I will deal with this event from three aspects. Firstly, we will study what preceded the event. What led up to it ? What caused it to happen ? Secondly we will deal with the details of the event itself. And thirdly we will look at the results of the event.

1. The Lead Up.

At the risk of repeating myself from our previous study, I will quote from I Kings 18:17-18;

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, 'Art thou he that troubleth Israel?'

And he (Elijah) answered, 'I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.' "

Obviously, Ahab recognised that his kingdom was in deep trouble. He can join the club. But in typical politician style he immediately tried to pass the buck by blaming Elijah. Does this sound boringly familiar? There is surely 'nothing new under the sun' as a certain wise man once said. But Elijah had no intention of having the blame placed at his door. He was there to bring judg-

ment upon Ahab and his evil ways, not to pamper him and commiserate with him for his bad luck. He had no intention of offering Ahab a clean handkerchief to cry into. He wasn't interested in any plea of innocence on the grounds of extenuating circumstances. Ahab had already been found guilty before the Throne of God, and like it or not, Elijah was there to tell him about it in no uncertain manner.

Speaking in the Name of God, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he turned to Ahab and said, "The reason Israel is in so much trouble is entirely due to the evil acts of both you and your fathers before you."

And what were those evil acts? They are summed up in one sentence. Elijah gave the reasons as:

1. "You have forsaken the commandments of God,"
2. "and you have allowed and encouraged the people to follow other gods." (note, not just idols).

Believe it or not, that single statement fully and completely explains exactly why we are still in a mess today. Perhaps we should think about the connection between the statement that our Lord will return as a consuming fire and what happened when God answered Elijah a little later.

Let us examine the first of these two reasons. I personally believe, and I know that I am by no means alone in this belief, that there has been what we can only describe as a catastrophic misunderstanding and mis-application of the words of the apostle Paul as recorded in Romans 6:14, "For you are not under law, but under grace." I have lost count of the number of times that I have heard speakers telling their congregations that on the strength of that statement the Law of God has ceased to exist, or no longer applies, and that they now do not have to worry about keeping God's Laws because they are now under grace. This is a classical example of taking a text out of its context.

Sin is "the transgression, or breaking, of God's Laws."

That is not necessarily man's definition of sin, but it is most certainly the Bible definition of sin. If that is new to you, or you have trouble accepting that fact, then read I John 3:4.

The progression is quite simple when we follow the subject through simply and logically:

- a). We break one of God's Laws.
- b). That act constitutes a sin. We are now a sinner. In Romans 3:20 and 7:7 Paul makes it quite plain that we only know sin because of the law.
- c). The penalty for sin is death. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death."
- d). As a sinner, we are now personally subject to that death sentence. Ezekiel 18:4 and 20 says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."
- e). God now steps in. He says, as recorded in Ezek. 18:23, "I have no pleasure at all that the wicked should die."
- f). God now goes a step further and puts that desire into operation. He sends Jesus to pay that death penalty for us, and on our own personal and individual behalf.
- g). Once Christ has paid that penalty, God then says to us, as recorded in Romans 6:14, "Sin now has no dominion over you." That is, we can now escape the death penalty which is the dominion, or lordship, of sin.
- h). We achieve this escape by accepting "the gift of God which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." See Romans 6:23.
- i). This "gift" of God is something which we cannot earn ourselves. It is offered to us as a totally undeserved and unmerited favour on the part of God. It is referred to as GRACE.
- j). We have now come full circle, and return to our original statement. It is now no longer necessary for us to be under the sentence of death

required by the Law. We can now come under the grace of God through which we receive eternal life.

Now there is much more to this subject than what has been said above, and I trust that the reader will realise the fact that the fundamental purpose of what I have said is to shew that the Law of God still operates, and to attempt to put our understanding of that fact into what I feel is its right perspective.

The only portion of God's Law which was superceded was the "laws contained in ordinances" to use Paul's expression in Col.2:14 and Eph. 2:15. These ordinances were replaced by the one final sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, which now eternally provides the "sin offering" whenever we transgress God's Laws as expressed in His statutes and commandments.

But quite apart from what we might conclude as to the personal application of God's Laws, the context of our study takes us far beyond this to the NATIONAL application of these Laws. It should be realised that God did not only give His Laws to individuals. Long after He revealed them to men like Abraham (Genesis 18:19), He codified them into a full system of national jurisprudence and gave them to His people Israel as a complete system of government by which they were to live both on the personal, national, and international level. This was the very heart of the Old Covenant, as set forth in Exodus chapter 24. As part of the terms of this covenant, the people of Israel said, "All that the Lord hath said, we will do." And so the Mosaic Covenant became operative. Under its terms, the nation of Israel was to experience what can only be described as unbelievable blessings provided she remained obedient to God's Laws which He had given them. This fact was clearly illustrated many years later when, during the reign of King Solomon, the Queen of Sheba visited him to see for herself firsthand the blessings and prosperity which the nation of Israel was enjoying. She was completely dumbfounded by what she saw, and even admit-

ted afterwards that the accounts which she had received were grossly understated.

But by the same token, Israel was to experience terrible suffering and curses if, as a nation, she turned from and broke God's Laws. People can argue from now till doomsday as to whether we should or should not, or whether we are or are not, still required to live according to the Law of God. God's Word sets out a fundamental principle when it says that we shall know a tree by its fruit; that you cannot obtain evil fruit from a good tree; nor get good fruit from an evil tree. In this instance, the fruit is here in plain view for everyone to see. It is that of suffering, and poverty, and sickness, and misery, and death. We have partaken of the tree of evil and death, whereas we should have heeded the call of God and partaken of the tree of good and life.

In Deuteronomy chapter 28 we read the promises of God's blessings and curses. Verses 1 to 14 contain 23 blessings promised by God provided we obey His commandments.

Today, as you read these words, we are not experiencing one single blessing as set out therein! ! ! If you think that is incredible, then just check them out. And don't make excuses to the effect that you may feel that we are enjoying small portions of some of these blessings. God never intended that we just experience sample hand-outs. His all consuming longing and intent for every one of us is that we experience His full and abundant blessings. He's not interested in extending to us 'part blessings' any more than we should be interested in offering Him 'part obedience'.

On the other hand, verses 15 to 68 contain 95 curses promised by God should we disobey His commandments.

Do you really and honestly think that it is just coincidental that today, as you read these words, we are suffering **EVERY ONE OF THESE CURSES** ? ? ?

Well, my friends, we might like to be naive about it all, but I can assure you that God certainly isn't.

But as I mentioned before, God's Word tells us that there is nothing new under the sun. What has been, is. And what is, has been. Israel, through its leaders, turned more and more from the Law of God, and accepted and obeyed man-made laws which robbed and spoiled them until the situation became so bad that God decided to step in and stop the rot.

And praise His Name, He is about to do the same thing again. At the time of which we are considering, during the reign of King Ahab, the condition of God's people Israel, morally, politically, economically, materially, and spiritually, had become so vile and virtually irreversible, that God sent His special messenger Elijah the Prophet to relieve the situation. But the next time, and very, very soon now, He is to send another Messenger, the Messenger of the Covenant, as promised through the prophet Malachi, (3:1), the Lord Jesus Christ, who will make the ministry of Elijah in those far off days look like a Sunday School picnic. He wont just relieve the situation. He is going to completely change it. Truly could the prophet Malachi say;

"But who may abide the day of His coming ?
And who shall stand when He appeareth ?

And I will come near to you in judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.

FOR I AM THE LORD! I CHANGE NOT!

Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."
(Mal. 3:2 and 5-6).

Thus we see that the position of Israel was brought about by the failure of their leaders to rule and govern them in accordance with the laws and statutes and commandments which God had given to them, the keeping of which would have brought them unbelievable blessings. God had made the conditions quite clear. They are recorded in Deuteronomy 30:15-20, where we read;

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;
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.
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 passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore chose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.
That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him.
For He is thy life, and the length of thy days."

Israel then, as now, have made the unbelievable choice of evil and death. It goes beyond anything that we could ever imagine. It shatters the mind to look at the suffering we have brought upon ourselves, when our loving God and Father only ever wanted us to have peace and joy and blessing all the days of our lives.

Truly, we have sown the wind. We now reap the whirlwind.



The Calling of God

FRANCIS THOMAS
Covenant Voice
England

In this study we are to deal with what may be termed our Faith in its practical aspect.

“For God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath given unto us his Holy Spirit”. (I Thessalonians 4:7-8).

The Thessalonian epistle was written both as a directive and a corrective. As a directive it was intended to stimulate the zeal of the Thessalonians and to encourage their faith in a time of hard persecution; as a corrective it sought to defend Paul's own position as a special messenger of Christ's Kingdom.

Heathen practices were common in Thessalonica with a result that human life and happiness was treated as an every-day affair, to be dispensed with at man's whim and fancy. This letter then, sought to instruct the Christians at Thessalonica who had turned from idolatry to serve the living and true God, on how they should live before the heathen.

The verses that form our text are worthy of deep consideration, for they declare in unequivocal terms the call of God. J.B. Phillips in his translation of the Epistles, “Letters to Young Churches” has translated these verses thus:

“The calling of God is not to impurity but to the most thorough purity, and anyone who makes light of the matter is not making light of a man's ruling, but of God's command. It is not for nothing that the Spirit God gives us is called the Holy Spirit”.

There is not greater nor more important truth for Christians to realise, understand and experience than this great Biblical doctrine of Christian practical holiness. We have to admit that everywhere in the Bible God is calling His people to live lives of holiness, and we have to admit, too, that this great doctrine — this practical experience — has almost been lost sight of. In consequence, many of God's people are not living in victory: their joy is not full, and as a result their witness is weak and insipid. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that witness of the Church is both ineffective and weak. This was the burden of the message of Paul, and He emphasised it to the Thessalonians.

Let us consider first the meaning of the holy life.

When mention is made about holy living, our thoughts are apt to wander immediately to the monastics and recluses who turn their backs upon the world and seek to serve God in solitude. But surely a holy life is not only lived in retreat! To preach that would be to charge the noble army of those who face ". . . the common round and the daily task" with failure and indict the majority of God's church with ungodliness. There is something very wonderful about those people who know the rigours of an industrious life with demands of an exacting nature — and yet they live holy lives!

A Holy life is, a life that is pleasing to God ". . . continue to learn more and more of the life that pleases God . . ." (verse 1, J. B. Phillips)

The only life that pleases God is a holy life. Undoubtedly, we all have a deep desire for such a life, and because of misunderstanding, ignorance and fear there are many sincere and earnest Christians who are in a state of spiritual frustration. Constant searching for what is good and continual repression of that which is evil has caused more havoc among Christians than I would care to calculate. I would give a word here to any who may be in the throes of such an experience: you are searching for the right thing to do and fighting against the wrong things that tempt you. Remember, friend, temptation is not sin; it is the yielding to temptation that constitutes sin. For example, I cannot stop birds flying overhead, but I can stop them nesting in my hair!

To live a life well-pleasing to God we should recall the example of Enoch: ". . . he had this testimony that he pleased God . . ." And why did he please God? Because he walked with God! To walk with God indicates real spiritual progress! One of the outstanding tragedies of this age is that when people turn to serve God and to live the Christian life they never seem to progress. There are Christians who can lay claim to 10, 15, 20 and even 25 years following the Lord Jesus — and they still call for milk, the simple things, from God's Word. They have a strong objection to deep teaching and have little or no time for holiness. That is why our prayer meetings and Bible studies are so small in numbers, and why our conventions are so crowded.

A holy life is a life of pleasure to God and progress with God! A life that is separate from evil: "God's plan is to make you holy . . ." (verse 3, J. B. Phillips)

Holiness means what it says; nothing more and nothing less. But holiness has no relationship with appearance; it has to do with real practices. Let us pause a moment to re-examine the Scripture before us: verse 3 calls for separation from fornication; verse 5 calls for separation

from "the lust of concupiscence"; verse 6 calls for separation from "defrauding a brother" and in verse 7 we are told to be separate from all uncleanness.

Now these are practical injunctions in a world of lax moral values, and at a time when the most illicit practices are being allowed and encouraged.

Separation is not only in the forsaking of what are called "the pleasures of the world". It is possible to be ensnared by the "blind alley" teaching of Christian perfectionists — to renounce every pleasure, even the legitimate pleasure that one can enjoy — and to boast of a standard of holiness that is above and beyond the other person and yet to be a slave to sin. If you entertain any unkind thoughts against a brother or sister — it is sin!

Let me go a step further: are you master over your own body, or is your body master over you? Yes, I know it sounds strange, but Paul speaks about this in this Scripture. Verse 4: "*That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour*". Do you have the mastery over your eyes, your ears, your tongue, your mind, your heart and will, your hands and feet? Do you arbitrate on what thoughts shall be entertained by your mind, or does your mind run riot? A holy life is a separate life — a life that is brought under control.

A life that is filled with love may be considered as the final summing-up of all the traits of a holy life. Whatever may be the other marks, and however pronounced they may be, unless love is the predominating force, the guiding principle, then all is vain. Notice verse 9: "*But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another*". The love of God is radiated in our hearts by the Holy Spirit; that is why we find it possible to love a person we have never seen before who becomes a Christian. There may be much about them that we don't like — their ways, their attitudes and their manners — but we love them!

Let me point out that love does not mean that we must be ever giving, or forever living in each other's homes! Indeed the Scriptures teach me: "*Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's dwelling, lest he weary of thee*". Love is often evidenced in a rebuke — but rebuke given in love! We should never be over-assertive or dogmatic; Jesus was always meek, and it is by doing like Him that people will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and that we have been called out of darkness into His marvellous light!



ANTI-CHRIST and THE MAN OF SIN.

by F. W. DOWSETT.

INTRODUCTION.

These titles are, without doubt, very familiar to every Christian. Many books have been written on the subject, and understandably, another article on the subject could be looked upon with a certain amount of unconcern, if not intolerance. When all is said and done, what is there left to be said?

It is my personal opinion however \that there is still a great deal to be said on this matter, and I can assure you that this series of articles will be dealing with the subject from a totally different point of view from that normally taught and believed.

When we look back on our Christian lives and experiences, it is surprising to realise just how much we believe as a matter of tradition. Very few Christians really study WHY they believe what they believe. We tend to accept so much without question, seemingly on no other basis than that it is the 'normal' thing to believe it that way. And there is no doubt about the sincerity of the people themselves. They obviously love the Lord very dearly, and would never dream of deliberately misunderstanding His Word. But let me suggest very kindly, that sincerity in itself is no proof of accuracy. We can be, and all of us are, in one way or another, very sincerely wrong. No one of us has all the truth, nor are any of us completely correct in everything that we believe. But it is this sincerity itself which so often creates the barrier to investigating anything that is at variance with our pre-conceived beliefs. And I am not suggesting for a moment that this attitude is necessarily

wrong. I would much rather a Christian with the courage of his convictions, than a 'spiritual butterfly' that jumps merrily from one idea to another without ever developing any real roots. God's Word tells us that we should not be blown about by every wind of doctrine, but it also tells us that we should examine all things. We are told very definitely in II Timothy 2:15 to;

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (or handling), the Word of Truth."

So as sincere Christians we just cannot afford to blindly accept everything. It doesn't matter how long a particular belief has been held, or how "theological" it sounds. These criteria in themselves do not prove anything. Of course, I am not suggesting for one moment that we throw away, or disregard, everything that we have previously been taught, or which we have previously believed. But I AM suggesting that as sincere believers in God's Word, we should not take everything for granted simply because it's the 'normal' thing to do, or because 'everyone else believes it.'

The subject of this writing is a point in question. I have yet to find a book written on the subject of The Man of Sin or Antichrist, nor have I yet heard a sermon on the subject, which does not identify these entities as being completely fulfilled in the Roman Catholic Church, and in particular, the Papacy.

Now I am afraid that I cannot fully agree with this conclusion. Don't misunderstand me. I am not for a moment saying that the Papacy has no connection with Antichrist or The Man of Sin. But I AM suggesting that it is NOT the full and ultimate, or even the major manifestation of these powers!

If this is correct, then what do we make of all our previous beliefs regarding the position of the Roman Church?

Almost without exception, the 'beasts' and the actual 'mark of the beast', of Revelation chapter 13, the harlot of Revelation chapter 17, and other similar passages, have been all associated with the Man of Sin and anti-Christ as though they were all synonymous and inter-changeable terms. I very seriously question the accuracy of this assumption. This is by no means an attempt to white-wash the Papacy, or the religious system over which it rules. And there is no doubt but that many of the attributes of both the Man of Sin and anti-Christ are found in that false ecclesiastical system. But I am convinced that this fact has been used by Satan to divert our attention from the real enemy by focusing that attention on what in reality is only a part or 'branch' of the enemy. By this means, Satan has deceived God's people into arguing among themselves almost exclusively about the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism, with Protestants expending centuries of their energies and resources on fighting against what they believe to be the "Papal anti-Christ", whilst all the time the real and more complete recipient of these titles is blatantly and openly proceeding with the systematic destruction of the very people whose Divine position in God they are trying so desperately to usurp.

To put these teachings in their proper perspective, we must realise that the outworking of the purposes of God have continued uninterrupted from the very time when He first pronounced them. And this is, of course, just how God intended it to be. Thus, HISTORY is nothing more than the fulfillment of PROPHECY, which itself is the pre-recorded statement of these Divine purposes.

It thus stands to reason that those who wrote of the Prophetic Word a hundred years ago could only interpret it in the light of history up to, and including, their own time. Anything in the then future remained within the sphere of 'prophecy', and subject to the usual human habit of interpretation and calculated speculation. In other words, those writers did the best, in most cases, with what they had, which was what God had

been pleased to reveal up to that time. I do not consider that we should condemn them as being wrong, as so many have the habit of doing, but that we realise that their conclusions were often based upon less complete information.

So as time has progressed, subsequent events have revealed new facts which had not previously been known by students of past generations. Thus, I believe, it is incumbent upon students of God's Word to regularly 'update' as it were, any of their beliefs which have been based upon interpretation of prophecy rather than upon historical events and established facts. Through the prophet Daniel, God revealed that in the last days knowledge would be increased. Nobody can surely deny the fulfillment of this fact in so many areas. But strangely, all too many Bible students have made no attempt to re-assess their beliefs in the prophetic sphere, nor to re-examine these beliefs in the light of this increased knowledge which God has been pleased to reveal in these last days.

The word of prophecy is given us to light our path. Let us then go forward with its light shining bright, not hiding it under an umbrella of pre-conceived ideas and traditional beliefs.

THE ENEMY IDENTIFIED.

A study of the Old Testament clearly shows and identifies the enemy of God's Israel Kingdom, and therefore the enemy of God, as ESAU/EDOM. The descendants of the Edomites at the time of our Lord's first advent were called Idumeans, which is simply the Greek form of the word 'Edomite'. These are the same people of whom Christ said in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil". These are the same people of whom Christ also said in John 10:26, "You believe not, because you are not my sheep." These people, and their descendants today, are the literal fulfillment of the

"seed of the serpent" prophesied of by God in Gen.3:15. The "seed of the woman", THE SONS OF GOD, which are found in Israel under the leadership of their Great Commander Jehovah/Jesus, ARE TODAY AT WAR with their mortal enemies, "the seed of the serpent", THE CHILDREN OF THE WICKED ONE, which are found in Edom/Jewry under the command of their leader, Satan.

This is a basic and fundamental fact which we dare not overlook in our study of God's Word, or in any attempt to study and understand world events which even now are escalating at a frightening pace to their inevitable and God-ordained climax.

So before going any further, it might be of considerable advantage to remind ourselves of some basic rules of Bible study in order that we will not be misled by pre-conceived ideas.

1. The whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments, has only ONE author which is GOD, and He does not contradict Himself.
2. The Bible is a complete Book, and there are no new doctrines introduced into the New Testament that are not already in the Old Testament. The New Testament expands our knowledge of what has already been stated in the Old Testament.
3. We must study all passages within their context in the Scriptures, and within the context of their subject matter.
4. We must study the meaning of the words used by God in their original language.
5. We must understand the original INTERPRETATION, not just popular applications.
6. God's purposes do not change. He does not introduce substitutes.

7. All things must be established by the testimony of at least two or three witnesses.

In the context then of our study of The Man of Sin and Antichrist, I wish now to refer to certain statements made by three of the main writers of the New Testament. They are Paul the Apostle, the Apostle John, and our Lord Jesus Christ who wrote, through John, the Book of the Revelation. As we read through the books of these three writers, we find a very interesting fact.

Each of these writers referred to a particular entity which was not referred to by either of the other two, nor by any other writer in any other book of the entire Bible!

I ask myself WHY?

Paul, in II Thessalonians 2:3, refers to an entity which he calls THE MAN OF SIN.

"Let no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and THAT MAN OF SIN be revealed"

This is the only place in the entire Bible where this particular phrase or title, THE MAN OF SIN, is used. There is no second or third witness as corroboration for it.

John, in his General Epistles, refers to an entity which he calls ANTICHRIST.

"Little children, it is the last time. And as ye have heard that ANTICHRIST shall come, even now are there many ANTI-CHRISTS." (I John 2:18).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?

He is ANTICHRIST, that denieth the Father and the Son." (I John 2:22).

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is that spirit of ANTICHRIST" (I John 4:3).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an ANTICHRIST." (II John 7).

Again, this is the only book in the entire Bible where this name ANTICHRIST is used. It is not referred to by any other writer.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in His Revelation, refers to an entity which He calls THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN.

"I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN." (Rev. 2:9).

"Behold, I will make them of THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN, which say they are Jews, but do lie; behold I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." (Rev. 3:9).

Once again, this is the only place in the entire Bible where this phrase, THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN, is used. It is not used by any other writer. Again, like the previous two incidents quoted, there is no second or third witness.

OR IS THERE??

All three statements were inspired by the one God. And it is certain that HE knew what He was saying. It is equally certain that He knew His own rules in accordance with which He inspired the various writers of His Word.

I suggest that there can be only one conclusion.

EACH WRITER WAS REFERRING TO THE SAME THING!

They were referring to the same enemy, but identifying this enemy by the use of different names, AND BY HIGHLIGHTING CERTAIN SPECIAL, DIFFERENT, AND PARTICULAR ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS WHICH GOD WISHED TO SHEW US, WHILST AT THE SAME TIME HIDING THEIR TRUE IDENTITY UNTIL THE TIME OF THE END WHEN THIS IDENTITY WOULD BE REVEALED TO THE WISE!

So now, when we put all this information together, we have an outstanding description, and EXPOSURE, of the identity of the enemy of both God and His people Israel, who is even now at work in our very midst; the enemy who, under the inspiration and leadership of their father the Devil, is doing everything in its power to destroy the Israel of God; the enemy who is identified in Revelations 13:11 as "the beast having 'two horns as a lamb', that is, representing himself as God's people Israel, but 'speaking as a dragon,' or under the influence of Satan."

In future articles in this series we will study in detail the above titles and expressions used by God in His Word.

In the meantime, **KNOW YOUR ENEMY!** The time is now far too short for God's people to continue to be deceived by the prince of deceivers.



which can only come through the infilling 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, THE RETURN OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The production, publication, and distribution of this magazine, THE COVENANT VISION, is being undertaken as a faith ministry. It is sent out without any charge, to all who wish to receive it. Naturally, it costs money to do this, and whilst we have dedicated our own personal resources to the continuation of this ministry, the support of those who read it, and are blessed by it, is vitally necessary for its continuance and growth. To this end we invite your prayerful consideration.

We also invite you, our readers, to send us the names and addresses of any whom you think could be blessed by receiving a free copy. In this way you can share in the proclaiming 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.

Frank and Betty Dowsett.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

COVENANT VISION MINISTRY.
97 Brisbane St.,
St. Marys. 2760.
N.S.W. AUSTRALIA.

"IF BECAUSE OF THE SABBATH, YOU TURN YOUR FOOT FROM DOING YOUR OWN PLEASURE ON MY HOLY DAY,

AND CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT, THE HOLY DAY OF THE LORD, HONOURABLE,

AND SHALL HONOUR IT, DESISTING FROM YOUR OWN WAYS,

FROM SEEKING YOUR OWN PLEASURES,
AND SPEAKING YOUR OWN WORD,

THEN YOU WILL DELIGHT IN THE LORD,

AND I WILL MAKE YOU TO RIDE ON THE HEIGHTS OF THE EARTH;

AND I WILL FEED YOU WITH THE HERITAGE OF JACOB YOUR FATHER.

FOR THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HATH SPOKEN."

(Isa. 58:13-14.)

Printed and Distributed by
COVENANT VISION MINISTRY
97 Brisbane Street.
ST. MARYS 2760
N.S.W. Australia
Phone 02 623 4691