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**MONTHLY NOTES**

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**A NEW YEAR**  
**A FRESH BEGINNING**

Lord Jesus Christ, grow thou in me,  
and all things else recede!  
My heart be daily nearer thee,  
from sin be daily freed.

Each day let Thy supporting might  
My weakness still embrace,  
My darkness vanish in Thy light,  
Thy life my death efface.

In Thy bright beams which on me fall,  
Fade every evil thought;  
That I am nothing, Thou art all,  
I would be daily taught.

Make this poor self grow less and less,  
Be Thou my life and aim;  
O make me daily through Thy grace  
More meet to bear Thy Name!

H. B. Smith

# CONSECRATION

***"Consecration: The act or ceremony of separating from a common use to a sacred use, or of devoting and dedicating a person or thing to the service and worship of God." - (Webster.)***

We are, no doubt, all familiar with the 19th century hymn by Frances Havergal which begins:

*Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.*  
It is a hymn of total dedication of body, mind, talents, and substance to the Lord Jesus Christ and His service. Words are easy to sing but it is not easy to maintain such constant dedication. However, *dedication, devotion and consecration* form an important part of Biblical teaching.

Abraham and Sarah were chosen by God to be the progenitors, through Isaac and Jacob, of the *nation* which God would *separate* for His service (1 Ki. 8:53) and use to accomplish various aspects of His purpose, not only in the short term, but into eternity. They were destined, ultimately, as a *consecrated* People to show forth His praise.

**So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will show forth thy praise to all generations (Psa. 79:13).**

The Judah Kingdom would be the custodians and preservers of the sacred Scriptures of the BC centuries (Rom. 3:1-2). The Israel Kingdom would form the nations in the AD centuries who would disseminate the Gospel of Christ throughout the world and demonstrate for a time, although imperfectly, the efficacy of a society built upon the teachings of the inspired Word of God as contained in the Christian Bible (Matt. 21:43).

Though enduring many vicissitudes throughout its spiritual life God's Israel is appointed to become eventually -  
**a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.**

(Refer: Ex. 19:5-6; 33:15-16; Isa. 61:6; 66:20-22).

That the Lord specially formed Israel to be *consecrated* to His service is highlighted in Isaiah chapters 43 and 44.

**43:1 But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.....**

**3 I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour .....**

- 10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, **EVEN I, AM THE LORD**; and beside me there is no saviour.....
- 12 ....ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that **I AM GOD**.....
- 21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.....
- 25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.....
- 44:1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:
- 2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.
- 3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.....
- 21 Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.
- 22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.
- 23 Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

This cannot be realized, however, until the Israel Peoples, as a body, believe, obey and serve the Lord in faith, sincerity and total *dedication*. (Ref. Jer. 31:27-40)

*The Aid to Bible Understanding 1971*, makes the following comment.

[Quote] "The Hebrew word *ne'zer* meant the sign or symbol of holy *dedication* worn as a crown upon the sanctified head of an high priest, or on the head of an anointed king. It also meant a person with a Nazarite vow.

At Aaron's installation as **High Priest**, a turban made of fine linen was placed on his head. Fastened with a string of blue thread on the front of this turban for all to see was 'the holy sign of dedication (the *ne'zer*)' - a shining plate of pure gold engraved as a seal with the words, '*Holiness belongs to Jehovah*'.

The holy *anointing oil* was next poured upon the High Priest in the installation ceremony (Ex. 29:6-7; 39:30-31; Lev. 8:9-12). Consistently the High Priest had to be careful to

avoid doing anything that would profane the Sanctuary, 'because the sign of dedication, the *anointing oil* of his God, was upon him.'

Similarly, the word *ne'zer* had reference to the '*diadem*,' an official headpiece worn by the **anointed Kings** of Israel as a symbol of their holy office (2 Sam. 1:10; 2 Kings 11 & 12; 2 Chron. 23:11).

When an individual took the *Nazarite* vow to Jehovah he was not to cut his hair or shave his beard as long as the vow was upon him. So his long hair became a crowning sign of his Nazariteship (*ne'zer*) (Num. 6:4-21).

In personifying Jerusalem as one who had broken her sacred vows of holiness to Jehovah, the prophet Jeremiah exclaimed: '*Shear off your uncut hair*' - literally, 'dedicated hair', '*and throw it away*' (Jer. 7:29) [End quote]

## THE NAZARITE (Heb. *Nazirite*)

The term *Nazarite* derives from the Hebrew word *na-zir*, (from the same root as *ne'zer*) meaning dedicated, separated, singled out - one who is separated from others and consecrated to God.

Nazarites fell into two classes - those who *volunteered*, and those who were *Divinely appointed* as Nazarites, viz., Samuel, Samson and John the Baptist (Ref. Jud. 13:4-5; 1 Sam. 1:11; Luke 1:15).

The regulations for volunteer Nazarites are found in Numbers ch. 6. Both men and women could take a special vow to Jehovah to live as Nazarites for a selected period of time. However, a father or a husband could cancel the vows of a daughter or wife if they did not approve.

The three main restrictions laid upon those taking the Nazarite vow were to refrain from intoxicating beverages; eat no product whatsoever of the grape vine; and touch no dead body - even that of the closest relative. Their hair also was to remain uncut for the duration of the vow.

These restrictions impressed upon the dedicated Nazarite the importance of *self-denial and complete submission to the Will of God*. The institution symbolized a holy life - a life devoted to God and separated from all sin. This set the standard for which the dedicated believer should aim in both the BC and AD eras. We should not take our salvation lightly but realizing at what great cost it was obtained, we are advised:

*work out* (fulfil, fashion, perform) *your own salvation with fear and trembling...*

*Do all things without murmurings and disputings:*

*That ye may be blameless and harmless,*

*the sons of God, without rebuke.....* (Phil. 2:12-15)

The Nazarite vow was *symbolic and prophetic* of the Life of the Son of God which was lived in holiness and total submission to His Father's will and purpose.

The voluntary Nazarite vow, which lasted usually between 30 and 100 days, was governed by certain regulations involving offerings and sacrifices, as was the conclusion of the vow. In our Lord's day the Jews made it possible for wealthy individuals to provide the necessary sacrifices, as an act of charity, for persons of little means who desired to take the Nazarite vow. This is what is referred to in Acts 21:20-26 in the case of the Apostle Paul, who was alleged by false rumour to be teaching against the Jewish customs. It was suggested that he demonstrate his respect for the Law by joining in the purification ceremony of four other men who were to conclude their Nazarite vows, and paying their expenses for the final ritual requirements.

Those who were appointed Nazarites by the Lord for life were singled out for special service. They took no vows but were under special requirements. **Samson**, a lifetime Nazarite appointed by God before conception was not to cut his hair, but was not prohibited from touching dead bodies. (Ref. Judges chs. 13-16) In the case of **Samuel** it was his mother who made the Nazarite vow setting apart her as yet unconceived child, promising that no razor would come upon his head and that he would drink no wine nor strong drink. (1 Sam. Ch.1) Both Samson and Samuel were Judges in Israel. **John the Baptist**, the forerunner of our Lord, was to "drink no wine and strong drink at all". ( Luke 1:11-15).

Though a Judahite the **Prophet Amos** prophesied in and against the **Kingdom of Israel** which, because it despised the Law and Commandments of the Lord, was oppressive, impure, luxurious, and idolatrous.

Writing not long after 800 BC the Prophet Amos (2:9-12) records God's complaint against the Kingdom of Israel:

Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

And I raised up of your sons for PROPHETS, and of your young men for NAZARITES. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD.

But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not.

As a nation disregards, ignores, despises, corrupts and rejects those who are dedicated to God's service it becomes increasingly apostate, materialistic and impure. Is this not evident today?

Matthew chapter 5 records what has become termed the "Sermon on the Mount" in which our Lord Jesus Christ details the standard of personal conduct fit for His Kingdom. The dedicated believer is encouraged by verses 11-12:

**Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.**

**Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

But he is expected to continue with his witness and work for the Kingdom.

**Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (v. 13)**

## THE RELEVANCE OF SALT

The white crystalline compound, Sodium Chloride, is known as Common Salt. Vast deposits of rock salt, in places up to several thousand feet thick, occur in various places under-ground. The world's oceans contain 2.7% sodium chloride in solution - a cubic mile of sea water containing around 124 million tons of salt. Though inexhaustible supplies of salt do occur in the world, wars and revolutions have been fought for it. In ancient China salt was second to gold in value, and wives and children have been sold into slavery just for salt. Caesar's soldiers received part of their pay in salt. This was termed the *salarium* and is the basis of the English word "salary".

The Bible refers to salt as a seasoning for food:

**Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?  
or is there any taste in the white of an egg? (Job. 6:6)**

Under the Ordinances of Worship anything offered on the Altar had to be salted, because salt represented freedom from corruption or decay (Lev. 2:11, 13; Ezek. 43:24), and large quantities were stored in the Temple grounds for this purpose (Ezra 6:9; 7:21-22). It also has healing and antiseptic values, and newborn babies were sometimes rubbed with salt at birth (Ezek. 16:4).

However, the Bible uses salt in a figurative sense also. Ye are the salt of the earth: a preserving influence on others, preventing spiritual putrefaction and moral decay. The Gospel message was to preserve life.

..... but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

In eastern countries the salt mostly was impure. Being found in veins or layers in the earth it was considerably contaminated with vegetable and earthy substances. When exposed to the sun and rain it eventually lost its saltiness entirely. The residue was only useful as gravel on paths.

Because salt prevented decay it became a symbol of stability and permanence. Often when covenants were made the participating parties ate together (eating salt together) denoting perpetual loyalty and fidelity to one another in the covenant relationship. A *covenant of salt* was considered very binding. (Num. 18:19).

The Lord made a *covenant of salt* with King David and his sons which meant that the covenant with David's line for the kingship over Israel would stand forever.

And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? (2 Chron. 13:4-5)

Our Lord also said: For every one shall be salted with fire.... (Mk.9:49). This means purified and cleansed by God's Word which 'burns up' all falsehood and error (Jer. 20:8-9; 23:29) Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? And the fire of persecution (1Pet. 1:6-7; 4:12-13), tests and purifies one's loyalty and devotion to the Lord.

Finally, we are instructed in Colossians 4:6 that our speech should always be in good taste, appetizing and having an appeal to its hearers, and should tend toward preserving the lives of those who heed it.

Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

As we face another year may we rejoice that we still have the privilege of serving our Great God and Father, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of playing a small part in spreading the Gospel of the coming Kingdom on earth. May we consecrate afresh our lives, minds, talents and substance to the service of the King of Kings. (Ed.).

## SECULARISM vs CHRISTIANITY

Anti-Christian bigotry and persecution has reached the ridiculous in recent times. Examples quoted in *Faithworks*, 26.06.05, include primary school children banned from reading Bibles during recess after complaints from *atheist* parents; Nativity scenes and Christmas carols banned from schools and kindergartens; a high school brass band prevented from practising tunes that mention "Jesus" even though their execution is only instrumental; Gideon Bibles removed from bedside tables in hospitals in case a patient might not be Christian; a man sacked from a Government position for wearing a cross on his lapel as it could offend non-believers; students at Stirling University voting to ban the Bible from the halls of residence in case it bothers those of other religions, and so on and on.

The "spiralling anti-Christian discrimination", however, has come from *politically correct secularists* rather than from other religionists, as has "the idea that it's legitimate to base your politics on anything except religion. You can say that your politics are based on the views of Karl Marx or Ayn Rand or Jane Fonda and that's OK, but as soon as you say your world view is based on the Bible, that's considered an illegitimate basis for ..... political views."

Public ignorance of true Christianity has been fostered by pseudo-historical publications such as the *Da Vinci Code* which, like Gnostic writings of the early Christian centuries, have bred many doubters. *Faithworks* ponders why so many *secularists* are upset by the presence of Bibles and why the Name of Christ offends so many: he suggests it is because it is such a powerful Name. He quotes Tolstoy as saying, "Christianity with its doctrine of humility, of forgiveness, of love, is incompatible with the State, with its haughtiness, its violence, its punishment and its wars."

The most secularized area of the world now is reported to be Central and Western Europe, where both Protestant and Catholic Churches are struggling to recruit clergy, attendances are low and finance is scarce. The Christianity, which in England and Wales has formed a backdrop to people's lives and moral decisions for hundreds of years, as well as to the government and social life of the country, has practically vanished. Without an ethical framework for people's lives the obvious collapse in morality will continue. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge [i.e., the knowledge of the Lord God and His Law]**



Because thou hast rejected knowledge [of Me], I will also reject thee,..... seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame. (Hos. 4:6-7)

Another *Faithworks* article in the *Sunday Herald Sun*, 18.12.05 was entitled *Fast-food Faith Leaves us Hungry*. It discussed a British reality show on TV in which “spiritual seekers” sample practices from different religions. The author doubts that you can find the truth by dabbling here and there and adopting a bunch of half-truths, and whether such a show could inspire a real positive change in people. However, he felt that though “our attachment to formal religions may be waning, our yearning for spiritual fulfilment is growing.”

He comments, “Religion has been transformed into esoteric self-help - a fashion accessory for people living in high-pressure societies.....The truth is that many of us do not take the road less travelled, the one that requires discipline.” We don’t stand against evil for fear of being called “paranoid, moralistic, uptight or irrational.”

“The essential difference between *New Age* thinking and *Christian* thinking is that Christians say, “Of myself I can do nothing”.

New Age generally teaches that there is a personal power within us that, if properly tapped, will permit us to do anything. There is no reality outside what we determine. Salvation is seen as *cosmic enlightenment* rather than as a personal relationship with the Living God.” [It is directly opposite to Biblical teaching and in line with the Serpent’s lie to Eve - “Ye shall be as gods”.]

A further article in *The Age*, 23.02.06, titled *Megachurches Offer Shallow Faith* and written by Andrei Khalip, Brazil, reported the World Council of Churches General Secretary, Samuel Kobia, as saying that Megachurches - huge Protestant churches with charismatic pastors, lively music and other services - mostly ran on a business model to make worshippers feel good and were shallow in their theology.

Megachurches, which pack in thousands for rousing Sunday worship services, are popular in suburbs in the United States. Most are evangelical or Pentecostal, with few or no ties to mainline churches such as Anglicans or Lutherans. Dr. Kobia said the megachurch movement....broke down borders among denominations with a populist message. “It has no depth, in most cases,

theologically speaking, and has no appeal for any commitment..... The megachurches simply wanted individuals to feel good about themselves,” he said.

“It’s a church being organised on corporate logic. That can be quite dangerous if we are not very careful, because this may become a Christianity which I describe as two miles long and one inch deep.”

The largest US megachurches attract about 20,000 worshippers every Sunday. In the US 1210 megachurches draw more than 2000 worshippers (the official minimum for a megachurch). The movement has spread to Australia, South Korea, Britain, Canada and other countries.

If believers are to be “salted with fire” (Ref. Col. 7 above) a committed study of the Word of God would seem appropriate, rather than entertainment and trying to make individuals “feel good about themselves”. An understanding of sin and the workings of evil is necessary if we are to appreciate the Holiness of our Great God and His requirement for Righteous living and behaviour.

We need to repent continually of our wrong doings, and experience deep gratitude for the immeasurable Sacrifice which was made, to enable the great gap between our Holy God and sinful man to be bridged. It was the Jews of Berea who were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily (Acts 17:10 & 11).

May believers learn to know God through His Inspired Word. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.  
(1 John 2:5)

How can we keep His Word if we are not familiar with it?

There have been recently, however, encouraging, though small, items of news. *Time to Advance God* appeared in the *Sunday Herald Sun*, 13.11.05. It called for a reference to God to be inserted in our Australian National Anthem to reflect the Nation’s Christian values and to be in line with New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S. Liberal MP Slipper told Federal Parliament that the “importance of God”, Australia’s Christian foundations and its roots in the Christian faith, deserved to be recognised in our Anthem. That other Parliamentarians voted support is encouraging. It was encouraging also that Prime Minister John Howard gave outspoken support for Carols, Nativity scenes and other symbols of our Christian heritage to be used in schools, kindergartens, shopping centres, etc. at Christmas, and that this was supported by an *Age* editorial. (Ed.)

## AT REST

It is with sadness that we relate the passing of Mrs. Ruth Lewis in November 2005, after only a short illness. Ruth was an active member of our Branch for 34 years and served on our Council from 1972.

In July 1975 she accepted her appointment as Pianist thus relieving Mrs. Slater and Miss Seehuson who had shared this duty for many years. Ruth faithfully fulfilled this appointment alone until assisted in the later years by Dr. Neil McLeod.

Our condolences are with her husband Ken, and children Deborah, Daniel, and Steven and Brett and their families. (Ed.)

## BOOKROOM NOTICE

Those of you who enjoyed the first three volumes of the series by Steven Collins will be pleased to know that copies of **Volume 4** are now available in the Bookroom. Title: *Israel's Tribes Today*, 296 pp; 140 maps, charts & illustrations.

This book identifies the modern House of Israel as those nations descending from the Goths, Saxons, Germans and related peoples who migrated into Europe from Asia after the fall of Parthia and Scythia.

It identifies the descendants of each tribe in the modern world using as evidence Biblical prophecy and secular history.

## GAZA IN THE HISTORY OF PALESTINE (Part. 1)

Gaza (Heb. Azzah - strong) is one of the oldest cities in the world and was in early times remarkable for its importance as the chief centre of great commercial traffic with Egypt. Situated 80 km. SW of Jerusalem and separated from the Mediterranean Sea by 5 km. of rolling sand dunes, Gaza lies in a well-watered region long known for its olive groves, fruit and sycamore trees, grapevines and grain. However, its position on the main road linking Egypt with Palestine has made Gaza, through many centuries, a *gateway* for caravans and for military traffic.

Its earliest inhabitants were the Avvims, who were displaced by the Caphtorims, a Philistine tribe (Deut. 2:23; Jos. 13:2-3) prior to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. Gaza marked the southern limit of Canaan at its point on the coast. It formed part of Judah's allotted territory but

continued to be a Philistine city, although it was subject to King Solomon c. 1000 BC (1 Ki. 4:21, 24).

In the previous century Gaza had been linked with the exploits of *Samson* who fought against the Philistines (Jud. Chs. 13-16). After being betrayed by Delilah, Samson was captured, blinded and imprisoned at Gaza bound with fetters of brass. However, the princes of the Philistines had gathered together at the house of Dagon to offer a great sacrifice for Samson's capture. This was a pillared building the roof of which could accommodate 3000 or more people. But the blind Samson, taken there to provide entertainment for the people, his strength surprisingly restored and clasping the two middle support pillars, collapsed the house. This resulted in his own death, but it destroyed the Lords of the Philistines and their followers.

After the death of Samson the Philistines captured the sacred Ark of the Covenant which had been taken into battle impiously by Israel. But after seven months during which the five leading Philistine cities, including Gaza, suffered from bubonic plague and emerods, the Philistines returned the Ark to Israel, together with a *Trespass Offering* of five golden mice and five golden emerods.

From the 8th century BC Gaza is frequently listed among Assyrian conquests, e.g., Tiglath-pileser III captured it in 734 BC and Sargon in 722 BC. Then Pharaoh-necho of Egypt captured it in 606 BC. Gaza was taken by Alexander the Great in 332 BC after a siege lasting five months. It was finally desolated, as had been prophesied by the prophets *Amos* (1:6-7), *Zephaniah* (2:4) and *Zechariah* (9:5), when taken by the Jewish leader Alexander Jannaeus in 96 BC.

Then in 62 BC the Roman General Pompey took Gaza from the Jews and made it a free city, but in 57 BC Proconsul Gabinus rebuilt Gaza on a new site to the south of the old city and nearer the sea. However, it was to the old desert Gaza with its 15 wells, and situated on the trunk-road to Egypt, that the angel directed Philip (Acts. 8:26) so that he would meet the Ethiopian eunuch who was chief treasury official for Candace, Queen of Merge (in Ethiopia).

**And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.**

Today, the site of ancient Gaza lies within the modern city and excavations have shown that it was occupied in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. Remains show it to have been a place of importance in both Greek and Roman times.

Emperor Constantine made Maiuma, the Port of Gaza, into a separate city called Constantia, because its inhabitants were Christians. Gaza itself was a stronghold of paganism and it was not until AD402 that the temples by special imperial order were demolished and a church built.

Famous names associating Gaza with warfare throughout the centuries are :

Ptolemy I - a general of Alexander the Great who was victorious in the Battle of Gaza in 312 BC. He became king of Egypt upon Alexander's death in 323 BC.

The Maccabees - a family of Jewish leaders who strove against the Hellenizing influence of the Syrian kings in the 2nd century BC, and sought to gain religious and political freedom for the Jewish Nation.

Khalif Abu-Bekr - c.600 AD - was the 1st Caliph of Islam. He was Mohammed's father-in-law, produced the official text of the Koran and conquered Syria/Palestine.

The Templars - distinguished fighters in the successive Crusades of the Middle Ages who fought to free the Holy Land from Islamic occupation, and to protect pilgrims to Jerusalem.

Saladin - Sultan of Egypt who conquered Palestine in AD 1187 and fought against the Crusaders of the Third Crusade led by Richard 1 of England.

Kleber - A French general who was Napoleon's second-in-command in Egypt. Gaza was taken by him in AD 1799.

In the 13th century Palestine, in common with the rest of Asia, suffered from the devastating incursions of the Tartars (Tatars), and in the beginning of the 15th century from those of the Mongols under Tamerlane. The following centuries saw the country settle into a state of decay under the rule of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I who had annexed Syria/Palestine in AD 1516.

A renewed interest in Palestine occurred at the end of the 19th century, both on the part of the Jews under the Zionist movement, and through the political ambitions of European powers. Following the 1894 Dreyfus trial in Paris, Viennese journalist Theodore Herzl laid the foundation of Political Zionism with his book *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question*.

This was followed in 1897 by the first Zionist Congress which opened on August 31 at Basel, where Herzl aroused support for his dream of a Jewish homeland in Palestine that would provide a refuge for oppressed Jews worldwide. He obtained an appointment with the Ottoman Sultan

Abdul Hamid offering to buy up the Turkish national debt in exchange for Jewish rights in "the Promised Land", although he had scant financial backing at the time.

On November 2, 1917, the British Foreign Secretary, A.J. Balfour, issued the famous "Balfour Declaration" which stated that the British Government favoured:

**"the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of that object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."**

This was not carried out as stated and the Zionists' efforts to seize God's Land for themselves by terrorism and violence has resulted in the sorry situation which has developed since and, as yet, remains unresolved.

**However, the year 1917 was to prove a beacon in prophetic history.**

### PALESTINE'S TROUBLESOME FUTURE FORETOLD

Leviticus chapter 26:1-13 lists the wonderful national blessings which would be enjoyed if the Israel People continued to reverence the Lord their God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, i.e., obey the Law given at Sinai.

**Blessing and national prosperity would follow the observance of the law, as its reward; but cursing and national calamity would follow the transgression of the law as its punishment, until the People returned once again in obedience to their Divine King.**

Clear warnings are given as to what the results of apostasy and disobedience would be. The Israelites had early been warned that their failure to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan as commanded by God (Ex. 23:20-33; 34:11-17), would lead to their adopting the debased religious practices of the Canaanites. This would result in the Lord's disfavour and His abandoning them to their enemies.

**(Read: Lev. 26:14-17).**

The history recorded in the Book of Judges demonstrates clearly this principle in action. But it also shows the Lord's power to save, His long-suffering, His mercy, undeserved kindness and justice, as well as the faithfulness of those consecrated individuals whom He raised up to lead His People on specific occasions (Heb. 11:32-34).

As the history of the Israel People ran its course and succeeding generations became either more, or less, faithful to the Lord, which attitude mainly stemmed from their leaders, the working out of the principles of reward and punishment became obvious and, indeed, are evident even today.

Leviticus 26 verse 18-20 appear to mark the beginning of the next phase - that of the Israel Monarchy. The warning is given thus:

- 18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you SEVEN TIMES more for your sins.  
19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:  
20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.

### THE 'SEVEN TIMES'

The mysterious reference to "seven times" has been explained by Bible researchers to mean a time period, viz.,  $7 \times 360 \text{ years} = 2520 \text{ years}$ . (*Ref. Monthly Notes Nov./Dec. 2005, final article*) This meant that a period of national adversity lasting for 2520 years would begin as described above. But when did this begin?

Early Israel's greatest period of pride and power was at the time of the combined Kingdom under the rulership of Kings David and Solomon.

Sadly in his declining years Solomon turned away from God, taking many foreign wives, tolerating the idolatrous worship of Ashtoreth and Milcom, and building high places for the disgusting things of Moab and Ammon. (1 Ki. 11:1-8) consequently, the wealth, power and splendour of the Kingdom diminished.

The pride of their power was finally broken when, in 970 BC, the Kingdom of Solomon split into two rival sections: the House of Israel (ten tribes) in the north under the leadership of a military leader, Jeroboam, who substituted the idolatry of the Golden Calves for the Temple Worship of Jehovah; and the House of Judah (two tribes) in the south who also became idolatrous under Rehoboam, son of Solomon.

The land of Judah, and the treasures of the Temple and the King's palace were then plundered by Shishak, King of Egypt. The tribes of Israel were invaded by Ashurnasirpal, the King of Assyria (928 BC), who slaughtered many and took much treasure, and many people into slavery.

After the accession of King Ahab, who adopted Baal Worship officially and nationally for Israel (10 Tribes), and his marriage to the idolatrous Jezebel of Sidon, Israel was struck by earthquake drought and a great famine c.900 BC. (Ref. vs. 19 & 20 above; 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 41-45)

So the FIRST "Seven Times" period of punishment had begun to run its course between 970 and 900 BC. It would thus terminate 2520 years later - from AD 1550 - 1620. This period was to see the Book of Common Prayer written and published (1549-1552), Elizabeth 1 ascend the Throne of England (1558), great wealth from free trade and dominance on the seas, public relief for the destitute (Poor Laws), the sinking of the Spanish Armada, the union of the British and Scottish nations under the Throne of David (James VI & I - 1603), and the voyage of the Mayflower to religious freedom in a new land (1620).

The undergirding blessings of the Everlasting, Unconditional Abrahamic Covenant (Gen.22:16-18) came back into operation, and Israel People were given, once again, the opportunity, nationally, to be faithful in the worship and service of the Living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The warning of "Seven Times" of punishment is given FOUR TIMES in Chapter 26 of Leviticus.

The SECOND is stated in verses 21 & 22 and involves the period c. 863-721 BC.

- 21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring SEVEN TIMES more plagues [slaughter, wounds, blows] upon you according to your sins.  
22 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.

During this time the LORD began to cut Israel short (2 Ki. 10:32). War with Hazael King of Syria (863 BC) saw Israel's army cut from 2000 chariots to 10, and her 10,000 horsemen to 50. Israel was forced to pay tribute to Pul or Tiglath-Pileser III, the first of a succession of brutal tyrants who attempted to conquer Egypt via Syria and Palestine. Invasion and warfare diminished Israel's numbers, causing an increase in the wild animals, and deserted highways.

The final destruction of the northern Kingdom of Israel occurred in 721 BC when Sargon II of Assyria besieged its remaining inhabitants in the capital, Samaria. After its fall he deported the 27,290 survivors to Assyrian territories. The Israelites of the territory of Samaria were replaced by non-Israelites from Babylon and Mesopotamia.(2Ki.17:23-33)



A "Seven Times" period from 863-721 BC would end c. AD 1657-1800. The era of Constitutional Monarchy in Britain began after the death of Cromwell in 1658. During the reign of George III great prosperity followed the American Declaration of Independence in 1783. New territory and population greatly increased and religious revival spread under John Wesley (1703-91). The period culminated in AD1801 with the union of Great Britain, Scotland and Wales, with Ireland.

The THIRD and FOURTH warnings of "Seven Times" of punishment apply to the southern Kingdom of Judah which alone remained in the Promised Land. The people of Judah, too, were guilty of idolatry and of continually breaking their covenant with God.

The THIRD mention is in Leviticus 26:23-26:

- 23 **And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;**  
24 **Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet SEVEN TIMES for your sins.**  
25 **And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.**  
26 **And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.**

In 710 BC, during the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah, Sennacherib, King of Assyria came against Judah taking their 40 fenced cities and leading away captive 200,156 of Judah's inhabitants to Assyrian territories. Lachish, the best fortified of the frontier fortresses was besieged and destroyed. However, King Hezekiah prayed for God's help while Sennacherib's army was besieging Jerusalem and that night 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp died. Sennacherib fled.

Near Lachish a mass grave of over 2,000 skeletons which had been hastily buried, is evidence of an epidemic. It is not known whether these people were Sennacherib's men, or people of Lachish, but God had warned of pestilence and crowded cities - obviously during times of siege.

During the 20 years of peace that followed the cities were rebuilt. However, the next king, Manasseh, (698 BC), whose reign was marked by the reintroduction of Baal worship with all its vices, cruelly persecuted and killed

those who were faithful to Jehovah, including the Prophet Isaiah, and tried to banish the true worship from the land altogether.

Manasseh's son Amon was also an evil king but he was followed by Josiah of whom it was written that he "sought after the God of David his father". He tried to rid the land of idolatry which for 70 years had been, unofficially, the State Religion of Judah. He repaired the Temple which had become very dilapidated. During his reign the lost original copy of the Law, the Pentateuch written by Moses was found. Alarmed by what he read of coming judgment Josiah organized the celebration of the Passover. He died in 608 BC after a just rule and was greatly mourned by his people.

God had warned of the coming judgments through the words of Huldah the Prophetess (v.14), but these would not fall until after the death of King Josiah (Rf. 2 Ki .ch. 22).

The THIRD period of "seven times" is introduced by the date 608BC, the death of King Josiah. It would thus terminate from approximately AD1810 - 1880 allowing for the 70 years of national idolatry under Manasseh and Amon (Ref. 2 Ki. 23:26).

In AD 1810 victory in the Napoleonic wars prevented the invasion of Great Britain while in the mid and late 1800s religious revival took place under the preaching of Sankey and Moody in both Great Britain and America.

It is to be remembered that numbers of the people of **Judah** had been taken captive by Sennacherib and, with their brethren of Israel, became "lost" in Europe during the 2520 years period of punishment.

While the beginning of this THIRD "Seven Times" brought idolatry and religious persecution for the righteous, invasion, defeat and transportation, the end of the period brought victory in battle, freedom from invasion and widespread religious revival.

Sadly, the next kings of Judah returned to the idolatry of King Manasseh and the FOURTH warning became a reality, with the devastation of the Temple, Jerusalem, and the Promised Land. Lev. 26:27-35 graphically records this:

27 And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

- 28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.
- 29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.
- 30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.
- 31 And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours
- 32 And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.
- 33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.
- 34 Then shall the land enjoy Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy Sabbaths.
- 35 As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

By this time the Assyrian Empire had fallen. Together the Medes and Babylonians had conquered and divided the empire between them - Palestine going to the Babylonians in 604 BC. Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian Crown Prince came to take possession and was victorious. Jehoiakim, King of Judah, was taken captive to Babylon, together with certain of the king's seed and of the princes, such as were "skilful in wisdom and cunning in knowledge and understanding science..... whom they might teach the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans." (Dan. 1:3-7) *Daniel and his three companions* were among these.

[This date, 604 BC, marked the beginning of the sovereignty of the Gentile Powers over God's Land and the mount Zion which he loved. It began what is elsewhere termed the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), and was to continue throughout the 2520 years of the fourth and final "Seven Times" of punishment upon the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob.]

*Jehoiakim* was allowed to return to Jerusalem, but only as a vassal king. During the next year the Prophet Jeremiah caused the prophecies to be read in the court of the Temple by Baruch the Scribe. *Jehoiakim* then had them read to him in the palace but being displeased at what he heard, he took and cut the roll into pieces which he threw on the fire (602 BC). Then after three years of continued idolatry *Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon* by refusing to pay the Tribute.

Nebuchadnezzar (601BC) sent bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites who cruelly harassed the country. *Jehoiakim* reigned 11 years, dying in 595 BC and his son *Jehoiachin* (also called Jeconiah or Coniah) reigned next but only for 100 days. He was then taken captive to Babylon, together with Ezekiel and Mordecai, and the flower of the nobility, all the leading men in Jerusalem and a great body of the general population - all the men of might, craftsmen, smiths, those strong and apt for war - 10,000 people in all. (Ref. 2Ki. 24:12-16; Jer. 52:28-33)

For another 11 years Judah continued as a vassal state under King *Zedekiah* who also **did evil in the sight of the Lord**, and finally rebelled against Babylon after having made a contract with Egypt.

Once again, Nebuchadnezzar came with a strong force conquering city after city till only the fenced cities of Jerusalem, Lachish and Azekah were left. Excavations reveal the method of destruction of Lachish and Azekah. The Babylonian engineers gathered all the wood they could find and piled it around the walls of the cities. Forests, thickets and hills for miles around were cleared, and that olive groves were hacked down is shown by the enormous number of charred olive stones found in the ashes. When set alight, the tremendous heat generated caused the white hot stone walls to burst and cave in.

#### JERUSALEM FINALLY TAKEN (585 BC)

As little wood remained in the area around Jerusalem, the incendiary method could not be used. For 18 months Jerusalem was besieged with battering rams and siege engines. Famine raged in the city and when finally no bread was left many tried to escape. Most of these people were captured, including King Zedekiah whose sons were captured and slaughtered before him. Jerusalem was plundered; the Royal Palace and the Temple were set on fire. Again, a great part of the population was deported and Judea became a Babylonian Province.

Escaped Judahites waged guerilla warfare from hideouts in the mountains and Gedaliah, the governor left by Nebuchadnezzar, was killed. As a reprisal for this the final deportation of Judah took place.

The Babylonians had destroyed and depopulated the Land of Judah and Jerusalem with its Temple. None of the cities of Judah was inhabited again until a small band of people returned 50 years later from Babylon to rebuild the Temple. Behold..... saith the Lord..... I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant." (Jer. 34:22)

Thus began the fourth and final prophesied period of "Seven Times" of punishment.

604 BC saw the sovereignty of Judah and Jerusalem pass from the Throne of David to the first of the Gentile Succession of Empires which would hold sway until the end of the "Seven Times" period of 2520 years. This came in 1917 when Jerusalem was delivered from the Islamic Turks. The Balfour Declaration made this same year led to the increase in Jewish immigration which has led to the restoration of the land to some degree. But the Holy City has more travail yet to undergo. The opportunity to build a nation there and to rule the inhabitants in peace and equity was given. It was shunned by the Zionists who wanted power and possession in their time rather than God's. The result is before us today.

These four periods of 2520 years began because of the gross iniquity of four different generations of God's Israel people. They ran parallel in time, but beginning and ending on different dates. The later progeny of these generations had ample opportunity to return to their God at the end of the punishment period and reap His blessings continually into the future. But again, the attractions of the flesh being stronger than those of the spirit, and disobedience being more attractive than obedience, the following generations have become increasingly apostate and impure once again.. Mindless of the fact that God had made them great, and blessed them with wealth and abundance, the present generation in ignorance and rebellion, is instead, reaping the rewards of disobedience and unbelief.

During this time the land, cities and peoples of Palestine have suffered devastating wars and invasions. The cry for Peace is heard continually, but only God can bring true peace to His Land and His world.

(Ed.)

## APOLOGISE TO BLAINEY

One historian's prediction of multicultural turmoil in Australia two decades ago cost him his job, but history vindicates his foresight, argues **Peter Ryan** - Director of Melbourne University Press 1962-1989  
(From *The Australian*, 15.12.05 p.10)

Aghast at their television screens as they watched Sydney's race riots, how many Australians cast their minds back 20 years to remember Geoffrey Blainey's thoughtful warning

that such horrors might happen? Happen, that is, unless we reconsidered our program of almost indiscriminate immigration and the accompanying madness of multiculturalism.

I suppose very few viewers - or newspaper readers, or radio listeners - made the connection: if a week is a long time in politics, two decades is almost an ice age in the public memory span of history. Yet warned we were, and little heed we paid.

In mid-1984 Blainey, who then held the Ernest Scott chair of history at Melbourne University and was dean of the arts faculty, gave an address to the Rotary Club of Warrnambool, Victoria. This was hardly a commanding forum; there was no TV or radio coverage. Blainey's themes, quietly and soberly presented, were simply these: Australia each year was taking in migrants at a rate faster than the national fabric could absorb; many migrants were coming from backgrounds so starkly different from Australian norms that prospects of a social fit into our community might lie a long way off.

He went on to say that should a time come when ordinary Australians began to feel crowded or pressured by new arrivals, resentment might soon end the ready acceptance upon which migrants hitherto knew they could rely. Blainey's position was reasonable almost to the point of being obvious and appealed to the commonsense of anybody with worldly experience, and with some acquaintance with wider human nature, of whatever colour or culture.

For those who held a different view, the way was surely open to civilised debate with this most urbane and good natured of scholars.

No such thing!

Almost as if he had set a match to dry grass in summer, Blainey's few sensible words from quiet, coastal Warrnambool ignited an Australia-wide bushfire of howling criticism. The arsonists fanning the flames were his colleagues at the University of Melbourne's history department.

On June 19, 1984, 23 academics published in Melbourne's *The Age* a letter that two decades later still holds some sad record for unctuous academic bilge, expressed with unprickable pomposity.

Drawing in their skirts and elevating their fastidious nostrils, they disowned their own professor, saying in effect that Australia's immigration program was a subject too delicate for him to be allowed to discuss, though clearly it was OK for them.

By inescapable inference, Blainey was a racist.

The issue soon surged beyond animated controversy to become a full-scale witch-hunt. There were disorders on campus, and threatened disorders if this vile man should be allowed to go on teaching. Students organised boycotts of his lectures. His colleagues hung him out to dry, at least some of them slyly conniving in the wider campus hoo-ha. Acting to perfection the part of Pontius Pilate, the university gave the mob its head.

In this impossible situation, Blainey eventually resigned from his chair and Melbourne University lost one of its most distinguished, original and publicly accessible scholars. (A few years later it conferred on him the nowadays rather perfunctory distinction of emeritus).

To reread today the 23 signatures on the letter of 1984 is a curious experience. Going down the list, the mind stops repeatedly to ask: "Who? Who?" They resemble little dogs snapping at the heels of a stately thoroughbred.

On the part of many, envy of a more successful scholar was hard at work:

*When Heaven with such parts has blest him*

*Have I not reason to detest him?*

Only one of the claque reached enduring prominence in the public eye: Stuart Macintyre. In 1991, this former communist moved into the chair of history that Blainey had so thoughtfully vacated for him.

Blainey's gritty experience of the real world far exceeded that of his traducers. After taking his degree he long avoided the sheltered workshops of academe, got out into the worlds of mining and business, and knocked about the country.

Then he wrote his books, based not only on what he had read in the library but also on what he had seen and touched, and had learned from men and from managers. It was largely this quality of veracity, of actuality, that regularly made his books best-sellers, running to repeated new editions in paperback. Such success did little to diminish the glances of the green eyes of envy.

Blainey's experience of the world was what above all entitled him to express an opinion on how Australia might react to injudicious immigration, pushed too far and too fast. Compared with him, most of his colleagues in the history department were still wet behind the ears, with minds still damp in academic mental nappies.

The year after Blainey's resignation, on April 1, 1985, *The Australian Financial Review* devoted its editorial to a review of what by then had become a running academic scandal. Under the heading "Academic assassination", the editorial made plain its opinion that the political correctness of multiculturalism had suppressed proper public discussion of the undoubted disruptions being

caused by some aspects of migration, and that freedom of speech was under attack from the "smelly little orthodoxies that dominate the humanities departments" in universities.

The editorial expressed the paper's concern that the "extraordinary attack" on Blainey was "only too typical of the developing intolerance of genuine intellectual freedom in our universities, colleges and indeed schools". The motives of Blainey's critics were "to give a message to their weaker colleagues that dissent and dialogue will be punished heavily. Punished, too, would be full participation in public discussion, instead of jockeying for power in the groves of academe."

So there we had it, and not much has changed since. The dominant forces in academic history have laid down a rigid party line of accepted orthodoxy: don't expect to be promoted above the level of tutor if you don't toe it.

There may be signs that this rigid mould is cracking. It is now more than 10 years since Australia's historical charlatan-in-chief Manning Clark, was toppled from his pedestal. It is today most unusual to hear Clark quoted as an historical authority on anything at all.

The labours of Keith Windschuttle are bringing sense and truth to our knowledge of white settlement and Aboriginal relations. Michael Connor's new book exposes the spurious doctrine of *tena nullius*, with which the history gang had spooked even the High Court.

But these will be mere battles by the way unless the main campaign for freedom of speech and inquiry can be won in the universities.

My own alma mater, Melbourne, is a specially sad case, having cravenly allowed one of the finest scholars of our time to be driven out by an academic lynch mob. Until amends are made to Blainey, Melbourne's claim to be an institution devoted to free inquiry will remain a joke. The very least that should be done is the creation and endowment in perpetuity within the university of a Geoffrey Blainey chair of history.

Melbourne has in Glyn Davis appointed a new vice-chancellor with ambitious plans to lift the university's reputation. A first step might be to establish the Blainey chair.

Nothing so adds to the standing of a university as a reputation for not evicting distinguished professors simply on the ground that they are doing their job well.

Remember, this is the man who, two decades ago, tried to warn us against what we all witnessed in Cronulla last weekend. Can a university - can a nation- do without such counsellors? Or should they be disposed of at the mere whim of the gruesome ideologues who still control Australian history? []





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**THE DIVINE COMFORTER**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what Thou dost love  
And do what Thou wouldst do.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Until my heart is pure,  
Until with Thee I will one will  
To do and to endure.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Till I am wholly Thine,  
Till all this earthly part of me  
Glows with Thy fire divine.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
So shall I never die,  
But live with Thee the perfect life  
Of Thine eternity.**

Edwin Hatch, 1835-1889

The following extracts are from:

*Contemplations on The God of Israel, in a Series of  
Letters to a Friend by William Huntington, S.S., 1893.*

[Quote]

Oh! What is all religion without the operation of the Holy Spirit! An empty show, and a weariness to the flesh.

I thought not a little of His divine personality; and wondered much how any man living, who reads the Scriptures, could ever have the effrontery to deny His being a divine **Person**.

But the world knows Him not.

*"I will send you a Comforter whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."*

He is therefore to be known by all believers: and those who do know Him will glorify Him and honour Him; reverence Him and adore Him.

And we know that all who are destitute of Him and strangers to His operations, are sensual men, and know nothing but what they know naturally. Hence some have called the Holy Spirit no more than a **quality**, or an attribute of God; others an **influence** only; others no more than a **name**; avowing that there is but one person in the Godhead, but a plurality of names: - as did Simon Magus [Ref. Acts 8: 1-24 v. 9 'used sorcery'= practising magic Gr. *Mageuo* to act as a magos]. Simon Magus gave it out, that he, himself, was *God the Father* in Samaria, the *Word* in Judea, and the *Spirit*, in other parts of the world.....

But we know that no curious diving, no speculative prying, no presumptuous intruding by man, will meet with the divine approbation. "*God resisteth the proud.*"

But Oh, how safe, how sweet, how salutary, how satisfactory, how humbling and softening, are the sweet influences, operations, discoveries, and communications of the Holy Spirit upon the souls of the children of God.....

A *person*..... is an individual personality, an intelligent agent, who is unique, and subsists, lives, speaks, understands, acts and works. The holy Scriptures apply a distinct personal character to the Holy Spirit, such as *I, me, him, his, thou*. For instance:

.... *the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.* (Acts 13:2)  
*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:* (Jn. 16:13)

*..... is the Spirit of the LORD straitened? are these his doings? (Micah 2:7).....*

The Holy Spirit speaks of Himself and for Himself.

*Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. (Acts 8:29)*

*While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. (Acts 19:19-20)*

*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. (Rev. 14:13)*

The Holy Spirit not only speaks, but all that have ever spoken to any good purpose have been taught to speak by Him. He brings the things to their minds, puts words in their mouths, and teaches them how to pronounce them.

*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Cor. 2:13)*

The apostles spake as the Spirit enabled them.

*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4)*

He not only speaks to the saints [believers], and in them, but He teaches us in some measure to discern between those whom He teaches to speak, and those who follow their own spirit, and speak a vision out of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord.

And how evident this is in all who write or speak of divine things without the Spirit's teaching!. What flagrant errors, self-contradictions, inconsistencies, confusion, and darkening of counsel doth appear! Instead of making rough places plain, and crooked things straight they make the plainest places rough, and the straightest things crooked.....

Instead of watering the trees of righteousness, or refreshing the bowels of the saints, these clouds without rain rather exhale or dry up all the dew of heaven that is on the soul, however refreshed it may have been before.....

And it must be so, for *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* (1 Cor. 2:14).

In Scripture **properties** and things which are ascribed to **persons**, are also ascribed to the Holy Spirit, such as *will, power, mind, judgment, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, love, joy, grief, vexation, etc.*

*But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as **He will**.* (1 Cor. 12:11)  
*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the **power of the Holy Ghost**.* (Rom. 15:13)

*And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the **mind of the Spirit**, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* (Rom. 8:27)

*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the **spirit of the LORD** shall rest upon him, the **spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD*** (Isa. 11:1-2).

*Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the **Spirit**, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me....* (Rom. 15:30)

*And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the **Holy Ghost*** (1 Th. 1:6).

But we are warned:

*And **grieve not the holy Spirit of God**, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption* (Eph. 4:30).

In ancient times Israel had rebelled, and vexed his holy **Spirit**: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. (Isa. 63:10).....

Paul and Barnabas being **sent forth by the Holy Ghost**, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. (Acts 13:4)

.....they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the **Holy Ghost** to preach the word in Asia.... (Acts 16:6)

It was the Holy Ghost who came upon the Virgin Mary at her conception, and that formed the human nature which Christ assumed, and preserved it from every stain or spot

of original sin, and then rested upon Him with all His fulness of gifts and grace. He applied the word which the Saviour spoke, and displayed His power in the miracles that He wrought. Therefore those that blasphemed either our Lord's Words or His power, blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. It was through the *eternal Spirit* that He offered Himself in sacrifice to God, and it was the same Spirit that quickened our Lord's body in the tomb.

**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit..... (1 Pet. 3:18)**

Under the Spirit's great power the apostles gave witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and hence it is said that He is declared to be the Son of God with power,  
according to the spirit of holiness,  
by the resurrection from the dead: ..... (Rom. 1:4)

The era of the Gospel, in the administration of it, is peculiarly the Holy Spirit's: hence it is called, "*the ministration of the Spirit*" (2 Cor. 3:6-11). The Holy Spirit is the operator and worker of all good from God, through Christ, in men; and of all the glory and praise that redounds to God by men.

The Holy Spirit will be greatly concerned in the *First Resurrection* (Rev. 20:5-6), i.e., the Resurrection of the 'just' which takes place when "*the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live*" (Jn. 5:25; refer also to 1Thes. 4:13-18).

And the Holy Spirit will attend it, and quicken them all, as it is written -

*"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."* (Rom. 8:11)

*For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;* (Jn. 5:26)

And so hath the Spirit also life in Himself:

*The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* (Job 33:4)

It is at the First Resurrection - the Resurrection of the Just - that the faithful believers receive rewards for any works of true spiritual worth done during their lifetime:

.....for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. (Luke 14:14) [End quote]

## THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was the Work of the Persons of the Godhead acting together.

### 1. God the Father (Psa. 16:10):

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Him [Jesus], being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts 2:23-24)

But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. (Acts 3:)

Buried with him [Jesus Christ] in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:12)

### 2. Christ Himself:

Jesus answered and said unto them,

Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up..... he spake of the temple of his body (Jn. 2:19- 21).

I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. (Jn. 10:17-18)

### 3. The Holy Spirit:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickenened by the Spirit:..... (1 Pet. 3:18)

The Resurrection is the evidence of God's acceptance of Christ's work of Redemption. It ensures a victory over death and the grave for His sincere followers.

Matthew 28:1-8 describes the *first Resurrection morning* as follows:

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

And go quickly, and tell his disciples that **HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD; AND, BEHOLD, HE GOETH BEFORE YOU INTO GALILEE; THERE SHALL YE SEE HIM:** lo, I have told you.

And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

\*When this word came to His disciples, they met Him [in Galilee], and He sent them forth unto the uttermost parts of the earth to preach the Gospel of redeeming grace. They went forth in the strength and power of His might and it was said of them that they turned the world upside down.

If we would meet Him in Galilee, in the daily round of *our* experience, if we would keep our *personal* appointments with Jesus Christ and know what it means to walk with Him and to talk with Him, and to live in the presence of the Living God, to have the Lord manifest His life and His power within us, and know the glory of God in our daily walk, then we must meet Him first of all in the place of judgment - at Calvary - and be cleansed by His precious Blood.

Then we must by faith go through the grave with Him, dying unto sin, unto self, and unto the things of the world. We must experience in our own hearts the *power* of the Resurrection that we might know what it means to live as those who belong above:

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Col. 3:1-2).

Then, we must meet Him in glory, by faith laying hold on all that is ours in Jesus Christ, looking not at the things which are seen, for these are temporal, but at things eternal, that these hearts of ours might be strengthened to walk in the will of God.

Until our affections are fixed upon Him who is at the Father's right hand, until He fills the whole horizon of our lives, we will never know what it means to walk in the joy of the Lord; we will never know what it means to experience in our own souls the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of Christ; we will never know what it means to claim by faith the glory which is ours in Him.

Then, when we have been with Him to Calvary, passed with Him through a tomb, and come out on the other side, laying hold by faith upon the triumph which is in Jesus Christ, when we recognize our relationship to God *in Him*, as heir, and joint heir with Him, then we will meet Him in Galilee.

Until the disciples met Him in Galilee, they were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd; they were gathered together in an upper room for fear of the Jews; they trembled at the thought of the persecution that might await them because they had been seen with Jesus. But once they had met Him in Galilee and received a glimpse of the glory of the risen Son of God, they realized that He was indeed the Son of God, and that He had risen from the dead.

From that time they would abide in Him who is seated in the heavens at the right hand of the Throne of God (1 Jn. 2:5-6). And when they realized all that He meant to them, they went forth living lives that were triumphant, giving themselves for the sake of the Gospel, and turning the world upside down for Jesus Christ.

We, too, must meet the Lord in Galilee on the other side of Calvary, on the other side of an Easter morning, in the light of an eternal glory that belongs to all that are in Jesus Christ. May we constantly have access to the presence of the Father, in the Holy of Holies, obtaining mercy and finding grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:16), because, in all these things, He who wants to meet us in our Galilee has gone before us.

He has gone before us and will lead the way. We need not fear the judgment, for He was judged on our behalf; we need not fear death, for He died that we might live; we need not fear to stand in the presence of the Living God because we are clothed in the righteousness of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We need not seek to accumulate for ourselves the treasures of earth which do not satisfy, for ours is an eternal weight of glory in Him (2 Cor. 4:17-18)

Therefore in the light of all that He is to us and all that He has done for us, may we meet Him in Galilee that from henceforth He may lead *us* in paths of righteousness, in ways of blessing, and of peace.

\*(Abridged from *Called to be Saints* by Larry Love, 1955, ch. 9)[]



## THE BIBLE

We cannot love darkness rather than light. Let us ever be open-minded for fresh light upon the Bible, which, we must remember, is so super-human in its character and origins that no one age has ever been able to discover all its message or to fathom half of the mysteries of its revelation. Should we allow *prejudice*, whether it shelters under the guise of scholarship or piety, to guide our steps? [Rather, let us search the Scriptures prayerfully to find the truth.]

One reason why the Bible is not read today by many people is that they have come to regard it as a more or less interesting jumble of Folk Lore and Legend. From the Garden of Eden to the Road to Emmaus, from Genesis 1 to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, all is suspect, all is doubtful, and all is labelled as the mere product of Poetic Fancy and of pitifully pathetic yearnings after a dim expression of a desire to reach out to the Great Unknown.

But we have 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. (2 Pet. 1:19-21)

This Book is Truth and it deals with vital facts. You neglect at your peril its clear direction for your present and eternal safety. It tells its own story if constantly read and studied, without the need for a plethora of preachers and teachers.

Voltaire, who died in 1788 once boasted, "In 100 years Christianity will have ended." The Bible has been translated into over 1,000 different languages - Voltaire hasn't. Did Shakespear, Longfellow or Tennyson ever claim Divine Inspiration? Yet the Prophets again and again assert "THUS SAITH THE LORD."

The Bible is the Word of God Himself.

With the copying, printing and translating of the Bible human errors have crept in over the centuries, however, due to the detailed work of Textual Critics we have Bible texts which now are in a relatively pure form. It should be noted that versions, translations, copies, however they may have slightly erred, have never changed the real, actual and divine character or grand meaning of the words of the Holy Book. It is only the *Higher Critics* or *Modernists* who have done that, and those who accept on their face value,

assumptions of superior knowledge. Modern translations and versions which stem from such are therefore questionable.

The development of the science of Archaeology has produced an unfolding witness to the veracity of Bible history. A number of learned men who were once agnostics or Higher Critics have been converted to Bible acceptance through the findings of archaeology, e.g., Prof. Sayce of Oxford University and Prof. Adam Smith.

Higher Critics refused to accept the Bible record of the fall of the walls of Jericho in Joshua's time - which gave rise to our term "jerry-built" for badly constructed buildings. The Bible refers to "the gate" of Jericho and only one gate has been unearthed. The walls, probably crowded with people watching the Israelites marching around, and already top heavy due to the houses built upon them, fell outwards. Synchronization of sound, the sudden concussion of blaring trumpets, and the shout of the host, combined to finish what an earth tremour may have started. This had also caused an earth slide up-stream which dammed up the Jordan River and enabled the Israelites to cross dryshod (refer Psalm 114). Dated at c.1400 BC, this event has been verified by archaeology.

The account of Sennacherib and his army (2 Ki. 19) has long been a subject of doubt by Critics. A whole army of strong men suddenly dead overnight - absurd!. What disease could have caused this?

The following statement was read before the B.M.A. in Melbourne, from *Pages of a Surgeon's Note Book*:

During the Great War (WW1) General Allenby lost 250 men by death outside Jerusalem, {and in their military tents too.}

The valley of the Jordan River is 4000 feet below Jerusalem. In the Plain of Jericho, where the British Force was encamped, a large number contracted malaria. Most probably the same thing happened to Sennacherib. His men, in larger proportion than 20th C. troops with 20th C. hygiene, would be subject to malaria. When he went up along the highway to Jerusalem he would have further weakened the men, for there were no transports or Red Cross service then. The sudden change in atmospheric pressure and temperature would have taken its inevitable toll, and decimated the host.

There is no reason to doubt the Bible account.

## THE BIBLE AND HISTORY

The Bible is exact history. If it says a certain thing happened, you may be sure it did. But much modern history, placed in the hands of our children in school, religious schools included, often alleges things which never took place, or if they did, they are stated in such a way as to convey the very opposite of what is true. The crowning instance is that St. Augustine brought Christianity to England in 597 AD. Of course he did. But so did a great number of others long before that timid monk ventured to land in Kent.

You will search in vain for a single definite historical statement in the Bible which can be disproved as non-occurrent. That you cannot prove otherwise than by the Bible that such a thing occurred does not invalidate it, unless you are a Higher Critic and regard the Bible as a purely human document. The Higher Critic used to maintain that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because writing was not known so early. Archaeology has discovered writing which dates to a period prior to the Flood of Noah. Again, the Bible scores as History! Moses could and DID write.

(Abridged from *The Bible as History* by Rev. Dr. A. Law, Th.Schol. of St. John's Church of England, Toorak, Melbourne)

## THE BIBLE - KEY TO PRESENT DAY HISTORY

From Abraham to the Second Coming of Christ we have the history of Redemption. It is summed up in the great promises made to Abraham. These are first stated in Genesis 12:1-4:

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, UNTO A LAND that I will show thee:

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.

They speak of

*a special Land;*

*a great nation* coming from Abraham's multitudinous natural seed (Gen. 13:15-16) which would be a blessing to other peoples; and,

*"in" Abraham*, what is later explained as his *One Special Seed*, through Whom *all the families of the earth would be blessed*.

These promises were expanded in Genesis 15: verses 5-6 (where multitudinous seed are promised) and in verses 7-21 where the area of the *Land* of inheritance was defined, as well as the time when Abraham's descendants would take up possession. God's covenant with Abraham's natural seed with regard to the Land is recorded in verse 18.

The Abrahamic Covenant is further detailed in Genesis 17:1-8 where it is shown to be unconditional and everlasting (v. 7), and to involve rule by kings (v. 6, 16). In chapter 17:19 also God promises to give Abraham and Sarah a miracle son, Isaac, who would inherit the Everlasting Covenant, and through whom the *Special Seed* would descend.

The *Special Seed* would be the fulfilment of the promise given to Eve, in Genesis 3:15, of the Seed who would eventually destroy the works and power of Satan. A further statement of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis Ch. 22:16-18, shows that Abraham's multitudinous seed would be both spiritual (stars) and natural (sand).

Chapter 26 vs. 1-5 records the *transference* of the Abrahamic Covenant to Isaac after the death of his parents (v. 10). In Chapter 28 Jacob receives the "blessing of Abraham" from his father Isaac, and this is confirmed by the Lord during Jacob's journey to Padanaram (vs. 10-17) when the covenant is restated to Jacob at "Bethel" (v. 19).

The Bible records, both as history and as prophecy, the working out of the Covenant made with Abraham. This was to ensure that despite their many failings, apostacy, punishment, their breaking of the "Old or Mosaic Covenant" later made at Sinai, and their consequent expulsion from their Land of inheritance, the natural seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob would endure to fulfil their appointed roles in God's Purpose. These would be an everlasting (= ancient, Isa. 44:7) people who would constitute the two families (Jer. 33:23-26) or the two sections of Jacob's progeny which the Lord had chosen for different tasks. Psalm 114:1-2 records this division:

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house  
of Jacob from a people of strange language;  
Judah was his SANCTUARY, and  
Israel his DOMINION.

One section, His '*sanctuary*', was to receive and preserve the sacred Scriptures, and to bring forth the One Special Seed at the appointed time. This was the House of Judah whose national task was completed when the Saviour rose

from the dead. He had warned the religious leaders (vs. 15 & 23) of the Jewish Nation of His day saying:

**The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.** (Mat.21:43)

That “nation” was to be the reformed House of Israel which composed the second section whose tribes were His ‘dominion’. Increasing abundantly as promised, the tribes of the House of Israel eventually moved westward from their centres of captivity in Assyria and Medo-Persia becoming in the ‘latter days’ strong national entities.

The “nation and company of nations” promised to Jacob (Gen. 35:11), can be recognized as the British Empire and later Commonwealth of Nations, together with the USA with their laws and culture founded on the Christian Bible. Not only did they bring the blessings of medicine, law, education, engineering, technology, etc., to many other peoples of the world, they provided the greatest proportion of personnel, protection and finance which enabled the spread of the Gospel worldwide, thus “bringing forth the fruits” of the *Kingdom of God*.

The developing British nation also provided the medium in which the Throne of David could exist in perpetuity until He comes Whose right it is (Ezek. 21:27).

Most of Israel’s history, given as Biblical prophecy covering over 3000 years, has been fulfilled. But the Christian Israel nations having enjoyed riches, prosperity and great power in the world as a result of their national reverence for their God and His Word, have turned from Him to other gods and to lusts of the flesh and mind. This, too, was prophesied. Our Lord commented (Luke 18:8): **Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?** So His return to earth to take up His kingdom will be, therefore, at a time of great apostacy.

The Apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians ch. 2 warns of a “**falling away**” in faithfulness to God prior to our Lord’s return, and a revealing of the works of Satan and his minions. The Book of Revelation describes, prophetically, the fall of the great world system of men in which profit is the only motivating force, a system which becomes more pervasive as each day passes (refer Rev. Ch. 18).

We eagerly await the fulfilment of the remaining O.T. prophecies concerning Palestine and Jerusalem, which has become, notably, “**the burdensome stone**” of Zech. 12:3. (Ref. . Ezek. Chs. 38-39; Zech. Chs. 12 & 14; Obadiah, Joel 3; Zeph. 3:8-20; Amos 9:11-15 etc. Likewise we eagerly

anticipate the return of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom rule as the prelude to the consumation of His great Work of Redemption.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.....

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24-28)

(Ed.)

## THE STRANGEST ALIAS IN HISTORY

by Rev. Claud Coffin

Courtesy *DESTINY LETTER* - NO. 79

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Many reasons and motives have prompted men to assume other names. Circumstances have arisen which, for the sake of protection, have called for an alias. The hiding of a man's identity beneath an assumed name has enabled him to pass unnoticed where recognition would have involved peril. One of the most difficult tasks of police authorities is to strip a suspected person of any aliases under which he or she may have been living in order to disclose the individual's true identity. Men have mysteriously disappeared from their frequented environments by the simple device of changing their names. Memory is short and a person is soon forgotten, although he may be still living in very close proximity to his former surroundings. Thus, the use of an alias is an extremely effective means of obscuring identity.

### *A Whole Race Disappears*

Only once in human history, with its multitudinous vagaries, has it been recorded that a whole race completely disappeared from sight, seeming to leave no trace behind it. So completely was its identity obliterated that, although still in existence and better known to the whole world than any of its contemporaries, the nations comprising it have a foremost place in history and envied by those striving for world dominion, it still passes unrecognized by the world generally as to its true identity. A commonwealth of nations and a great nation living under an alias! Truth is often stranger than fiction and it would need the pen of a genius and the imagination of some great writer to vividly depict and weave into story form this hiding of nations and the obscuring of their identity while they unobtrusively

play the greatest role that has ever been the lot of any race in the unfolding drama of human relationships.

How comparatively few who read the best-known Book in the world have discovered in it this strange story. How comparatively few have realized that the Bible contains a story thread at all, much less that it is the story of the people created by Almighty God for world service, with a Divine pledge of imperishability, destined at the end of its long journey to lead the nations of the world into the Kingdom of God on earth and to consummate the Divine purpose of blessing every family of the human race. The nations formed by that people are to become the focal centre of world destiny upon which the eyes of the whole world look and to which they turn for guidance, help and deliverance - yet all the while their true identity is unrecognized. This is no mere fiction; it is actual truth and fact. With cynical smile, scoffing word or impatient, incredulous gesture, men dismiss as the fad of a fanatic or the warped idea of a crank the suggestion that, in spite of all their boasted sagacity, they have failed to identify the best-known nations in the world. But so it was intended. How perfectly the alias hides its secret! How completely the identity remains obscured!

### *The Reason for the Alias*

Surely there must be a reason - an important reason - for this remarkable alias? Surely behind what it conceals there must be a Master Mind? It is that reason and that Master Mind which make the story live. How thrilling it must be to pass unnoticed while rubbing shoulders with one's fellows, listening to what they say about one, sharing with them things held in common, all the time wondering at their blindness in failing to see the obvious. And more so since a part of the story in the Bible offers a minute description of the people in question, a vivid word picture so clear in detail that, once attention is drawn to it, one wonders how it could ever have been missed.

It is like the hidden figure intertwined in some drawing which challenges us to find it. How we look and turn the drawing about from side to side, upside down and at every angle. But once it has been found, it stares out at us every time we look at it and we wonder how it could have been possible not to see it before. So it is with the national alias. The national instruments for world blessing march down their prescribed avenues of world history to do a work they could not have done were it universally known who they really are.

## *The Missed Story of the Bible*

Because the *story* of the Bible has been missed, the story of the alias has been overlooked as well. How hard it is to wean ourselves away from traditional beliefs and the confused vocabulary by which men endeavour to interpret the Scriptures. Accepted theology has obscured perfectly plain meanings, and common sense has become confused by involved explanations and complicated exegeses. Why not call a spade a spade; why not believe that God means what He says and says what He means in intelligible language. God has planned it that His purposes shall be perfectly clear to all so that **"the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein"** (Isa. 35:8). When He uses a symbol, He so states. When He employs figurative language, it is obvious. When He speaks in terms of literal history or narrative, He means it to be taken as such. It is this confusing of vital issues which has caused the ordinary reader to miss the story of the Bible. He has been made afraid to take things literally and, when he has had the courage to do so, the Church has resented his action as an infringement of its prerogative to interpret.

## *A People Hidden for 2,520 Years*

The strangest alias of history is written in terms of simple, everyday language. For over 2,520 years God has had a people in the world living under an alias. It is only now, in the days in which you and I live, that the identity of the people so hidden is due to be revealed. The specified time period of the alias is terminating. The time for the greatest discovery of history is at hand. Slowly but surely world events will lift the veil and disclose the origin and the identity of which has for so long been the greatest enigma of human happening.

Let us await God's time; it is not for us to run before history, however eager we may be to make the facts known. To allow our impatience to anticipate God is to betray an ignorance of the Divine purpose or a failure to trust Him to do in His own way and time what He has promised to do. It is not for us to play the role of the private detective, but rather to watch with deepening interest and wonderment how He is carrying through His design. We may often have wondered why our well-meant efforts in public and in private to explain the alias have met with, to us, an inexplicable countermove that has frustrated our efforts. Is it not the evident sign that we have been premature in our eagerness to hurry things? To force open a door so carefully kept closed before the opening time is to hinder rather than help.



**"He hat believeth shall not make haste."** Yet it is the very thing that we, in our earnestness, wish most of all to do. Why won't people listen? Why can't they see? Some have even wanted a national proclamation to be issued, identifying the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples with Israel of old, or have deplored the fact that the Christian Church cannot be compelled to see the truth so as to make an official declaration concerning the true identity of present-day Israel.

Why all this haste? Can we not trust God to do in His own time what, after all, concerns Him far more vitally than it can ever concern us? Shall we try to remember that not all have seen the hidden figure in the drawing - that they do not see what you or I may have discovered. May I urge you to bear with a word of exhortation? It is not our task to remove the national alias, however eager or earnest we may be to disclose the identity beneath it, Shall we try to understand that those closed doors, that opposition, that refusal or apparent unwillingness to listen, may be the very way, perhaps the only, by which God is able to curb our impetuosity and so prevent our spoiling His plan?

This thing is too big, too world significant, too far-reaching to be rendered ineffective by well-meaning but mistaken human interference. World destiny is wrapped up in this alias. How lovingly God deals with us and our keen desire to help Him, but how often He must smile at our childlike lack of understanding while appreciating the motive that would persist in premature action. We want to move forward *now!*

### ***Why the Alias Still Remains***

What lies hidden beneath this alias? Why is it such a zealously-guarded secret? Sufficient information has already been revealed to let us know that the British Commonwealth of free nations and the people of the United States of America are no ordinary nations among the peoples of the world; that they are there for world service, for the uplift of mankind, for the maintenance of law and order and establishment of the basic principles of righteousness, justice and freedom in the earth. With no uncertain voice the Holy Scriptures declare that the alias - change of name - was given to the House of Jacob, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That was the Divinely-appointed line through which blessing was to reach all mankind, the people called in the New Testament **"the Commonwealth of Israel"** (Eph. 2:12)

Make no mistake here, for this alias has nothing to do with the Jew of history. The Bible most plainly records that neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob were Jews. Never has it been necessary or desired to change the name of the Jew. Nothing has ever hidden the identity of the Jew.

On the other hand, you know the story of Jacob, that moment in his career which he met God and wrestled with the Angel. It was the supreme crisis in his life and experience when his name was changed from Jacob to *Israel* (Gen. 32:28). With a changed life and character he was to rule with God. The nations that came from him to play their great part in the world drama have to graduate in the same school. As he wrestled and prevailed, so must the Anglo-Saxon nations wrestle and prevail until their name, too, may be changed and the alias under which they have travelled down their predestined roads gives place to the name by which all shall know that they, too, rule with God for their blessing and for His glory.

Today we are passing through the time of national Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7) which will lead us out into the time of renewal, readiness and worthiness to receive the new name, that of *Israel*. We are facing our Peniel (Gen. 32:30) in this welter of tribulation and tears in order that we, like Jacob, may learn to depend utterly upon God alone; that we, like Jacob, may realise that we dare not let God go until He blesses us. When that day dawns, God will be able to trust us with that name of which He is a part, *Isra-EL* (ruling with God).

The identity is all right: nothing changes that. That has never been in question. The main issue is - When shall we be able to have it made known that we have prevailed with God, taken our place on His side, forsaken our old evil ways, and have been changed and renewed? Then, and only then, will the world know whose we are and whom we serve.

Must we cease, then, to proclaim our identity? Why should we? It is part of the Divine plan, part of the Bible story. We must continue to proclaim it so that those who have eyes to see and ears to hear may see and hear, although the majority remain in ignorance. But let us proclaim it in its right setting - proclaim the struggle that will bring the nation out of the night into the day as we pass over and out of the old life into the new, no more Jacob, but *Israel*. Then will the strangest alias of all history yield its long-guarded secret and the whole world will rejoice.

Thereupon, triumphant voices will be raised in exultation:  
Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of  
the LORD is risen upon thee.  
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and  
gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise  
upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.  
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings  
to the brightness of thy rising. (Isa. 60:1-3)

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? (Rom. 11:15) ||

## LABAN AND HIS IDOLS

(From: *Aid to Bible Understanding*, 1971 USA)

[Quote] Laban was the grandson of Abraham's brother Nahor. He was the son of Bethuel and the brother of Rebekah (Gen. 24:15, 29; 28:5). He was the father of Leah and Rachel (Gen. 29:16) and resided at the city of Haran in Padan-aram, an area of Mesopotamia (Gen 24:10; 27:43; 28:6; 29:4 & 5). Laban is called "the son of Bethuel the Syrian" [lit. "the Aramean"]. He is also referred to as "Laban the Syrian" (Gen. 28:5; 25:20; etc.). This designation is fitting in view of the fact that he was a resident of Padan-aram, which means "the plain (flatlands) Aram", or Syria. Laban was a Shemite dwelling in a region occupied by persons speaking Aramaic, a Semitic language.

To the vicinity just mentioned, aged Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24:1-4, 10). When Laban heard Rebekah's account of her encounter with Abraham's servant and saw the gifts she had been given, he went running to the servant, addressed him as one blessed by Jehovah, and extended hospitality to him (Gen 24:28-32). Laban subsequently took a leading part in the negotiations concerning the marriage of Rebekah, the approval for the marriage coming from both him and his father, Bethuel (Gen. 24:50-61).

Years later to escape Esau's vengeance and to obtain a wife, Jacob travelled to the home of his uncle Laban at Haran (Gen. 27:41-28:5). By this time Laban had two daughters, Leah and Rachel (Gen. 29:16) and sons also (Gen. 31:1). Laban made an agreement with Jacob that for seven years of service he would give Jacob his youngest daughter, Rachel, as wife. However, Laban tricked Jacob on his wedding night by substituting the older daughter Leah for Rachel, brushing Jacob's protests aside by appealing to local custom and then offering Rachel to Jacob as a second wife, if Jacob would serve him for an additional seven years (Gen. 29:13-28).

When Jacob finally wished to depart, Laban urged him to remain and continue serving him for wages (Gen. 30:25-28). The agreement was that Jacob could keep for himself all the speckled and colour-patched sheep, the dark-brown sheep among the young rams and any colour-patched and speckled she-goats (Gen. 30:31-14). But Jacob's later words to Leah and Rachel and also to Laban (Gen. 31:4-9, 41) indicate that during the succeeding years Laban frequently altered this original agreement when it turned out that Jacob's flocks were increasing greatly. At length, Laban's attitude toward Jacob changed, and at Jehovah's direction Jacob decided to return to his homeland with his family and flocks (Gen. 31:1-5, 13, 17-18).

On the third day after Jacob's secret departure, Laban learned of it and pursued Jacob, catching up with him in the mountainous region of Gilead. However, a warning from God prevented Laban from harming Jacob (Gen. 31:19-24). When they met Laban and Jacob quarrelled. Jacob pointed to his twenty years of faithful service and hard work and showed how Laban had dealt with him unfairly, changing his wages ten times (Gen. 31:36-42).

**Laban was very concerned about retrieving the teraphim or household idols, which Rachel, unknown to Jacob, had stolen. These he was unable to find, for Rachel kept them concealed (Gen. 31:30-35).**

Laban may have been influenced in his religious ideas by the moon-worshipping people among whom he dwelt and this may be indicated by his use of omens and his possession of **teraphim**. However, it should be noted that reasons more than merely religious ones probably made Laban so anxious to locate and retrieve the teraphim.

Tablets unearthed at Nuzi near Kirkuk, Iraq, reveal that according to the laws of patriarchal times in that particular area, possession of such household idols by a woman's husband could give him the right to appear in court and claim the estate of his deceased father-in-law. Hence, Laban may have thought that Jacob himself had stolen the teraphim in order later to dispossess Laban's own sons. This may explain why, on failing to locate the household teraphim, Laban was anxious to conclude an agreement with Jacob that would ensure that Jacob would not go back with the household gods after Laban's death to deprive his sons of their inheritance.

Laban made a covenant of family peace with Jacob, and, to memorialize it, a stone pillar and a heap of stones were set up. Using Hebrew, Jacob called the heap Galeed, meaning "witness heap." Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, using an Aramaic or Syrian expression having the same meaning (Gen. 31:43-53). [End quote]



**British-Israel World Federation**  
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**THE WORD**

Thou art the everlasting Word, the Father's only Son;  
God manifestly seen and heard,  
And heaven's beloved One:  
*Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou*  
*That every knee to Thee should bow.*

In Thee most perfectly expressed  
The Father's glories shine;  
Of the full deity possessed, eternally divine.  
True image of the infinite Whose essence is concealed;  
Brightness of uncreated light;  
The heart of God revealed.

But the high mysteries of Thy name  
An angel's grasp transcend;  
The Father only - glorious claim!  
The Son can comprehend.  
Throughout the universe of bliss,  
The centre Thou, and sun;  
The eternal theme of praise is this,  
To heaven's beloved One:

*Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou*  
*That every knee to Thee should bow.*

Josiah Conder, 1789-1855

Chapter 1 of the Gospel of John presents our Lord Jesus Christ first as *the WORD* (Grk. - *logos*), Who pre-existed before Creation and was active in Creation:

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**The same was in the beginning with God.**

**All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (Jn. 1:1-3)**

The Companion Bible notes that "as the spoken word reveals the *invisible thought*, so the Living WORD (Jesus Christ) reveals the *invisible God*."

He came to His own possessions - His Land and Throne - but His own People nationally rejected Him.

**He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. (v. 10)**

**He came unto his own and his own received him not. (v. 11).....**

But many individuals did receive Him and believed that He was the promised Saviour (Gen. 3:15; 28:14; Isa. Ch. 53)

**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born [who was begotten \*], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (vs.12-13) \*Companion Bible rendering.**

He is then proclaimed the Son of God in human flesh:

**And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (v. 14)**

John the Baptist though six months older than the Lord Jesus, had witnessed to His pre-existence saying:

**He was before me (v. 15).**

Verse 17 states:

**For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.**

The Companion Bible's comment on this verse is:

"In the days of Moses there was *grace* (Ex.34:6-7) and the Law itself was an exhibition of *truth*; but when Jesus Christ came, He was Himself the Truth, i.e. the very *personification of truth* (Jn. 14:6), and His life and death were the supreme *manifestation of grace*."

This is the One whose many enemies today are constantly denigrating, belittling and misrepresenting Him and whose own People know little or nothing about Him. While His deity is scoffed at and men profit from devising blasphemous fabrications of His "life story", gnostic writings which discount the Gospel records are given prominence and credibility.

The *Sunday Herald Sun* 02.04.06, page 82, reported that author Anne Rice, who has returned to the Catholic Church after a period of atheism, last year wrote a *novel* about our Lord's family and upbringing. However, she researched the New Testament world thoroughly seeking to depict Him as He appeared in the New Testament.

Her research [Quote] led her to make a series of interesting observations about the dislike many scripture scholars evidently feel for Jesus.

Historians don't usually exhibit an animus towards characters they study. Every attempt is made to put people into their context, even monsters such as Hitler and Stalin. But she found an inexplicable and troubling lack of scholarly detachment with regard to Jesus among Christian academics.

Observers of religious trends over the past 40 years will not be surprised. It is frequently the case that ..... someone who returns to Christianity, discovers an intransigent scepticism on the part of the official believers.

Belief in the historical accuracy of the Gospels is considered at best naive or, more usually, a sinister prelude to narrow fundamentalism. Almost every alternative is explored except the notion that Christ might have been what He claimed.

These modern Christians not only have deeply conflictive feelings about Jesus, but also about the church and churchmen who are seen as accepting the reliability of the Gospel story. These are not idle theological quarrels. They have serious implications for culture and politics.

The Jesus of modern theology, who was a good-natured, if unlucky, hippie with not much to say about the details of our lives, does not threaten as much as the Son of God Incarnate, who spoke with authority, died for our sins and rose in the flesh.

We cannot ignore Him. His words have resonated through the ages....[End quote].

Writing in the *Sunday Herald Sun* 16.04.06, Bryan Patterson asks "Have We Lost the Easter Message?". He writes:

[Quote] On this strange Easter morning, there is talk that Jesus did not walk on water, that Judas was secretly a hero and that praying to God is pointless. It seems that an absurdist ethos is seizing the day.....

It's fashionable to take shots at the Christians. It's the one prejudice you can still get away with.....

[A] scientist suggests that Jesus was able to walk on water, not because he was God, but because part of the Sea of Galilee had iced over.....

A new much-hyped gnostic "gospel of Judas" is being touted as a **radical insight** into the Christ story. In this one, Judas is a good guy who knowingly sacrifices his reputation to do God's will.....

The so-called gospel is just the latest of revisionist retellings of the Jesus story. It is, according to respected scholars, no more credible than Dan Brown's silly *Da Vinci Code*.....

The late American writer Mike Yaconelli said Christianity was characterised in the modern world by its oddness. "Christianity is home for people who are out of step, unfashionable, unconventional and counter-cultural," he wrote.

If the first Christians had not believed that Jesus rose from the dead, there would have been no church and no New Testament.

If Christianity had been founded merely on the moral teaching of Jesus, it would have become a short-lived deviation from orthodox Judaism.

And yet the story of the supreme miracle of Christ has shaken the world to its foundations. [End quote]

Since the Garden of Eden the Evil One has consistently attacked the verity of God's Word, continually questioning, contradicting, and seeking to destroy it. The Living Word of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, also suffered constant attack but **His Resurrection from the dead** was the incontrovertible evidence that **He was** the Divine Conqueror of death and Satan, alive again and appointed to return in great power and in judgment.

It is to this that the four Gospels witness, which is why they are under attack by so called scholars who are bent on proving them unreliable, inconsistent and contradictory. []

## THE GOSPELS - WHY FOUR?

If we accept the Bible as the Inspired Word of Almighty God why was it necessary to have four accounts of the Life, Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially accounts which appear in places to differ? Why were we not given just one full account so as to avoid the accusation of inaccuracies by the sceptics and critics, and the desire to produce a so called "Harmony" of the four?



Dr. Bullinger in his *Companion Bible* p. 1304 and Appendices 96 & 97 (From which the following is abridged) explains the reasons for the **four** Gospels and the teaching expressed thereby.

The Gospels may be regarded as being the completion of the Old Testament, rather than the beginning of the New. They do not speak of the founding of 'the Church' or with the beginning of "Christianity" - as is the subject of The Acts - but are four distinct presentations of the MESSIAH which, together, form one perfect whole.

In each Gospel the ministry of our Lord is divided by *two subjects* - THE KINGDOM and THE KING and in each Gospel these are dealt with from two aspects - their PROCLAMATION and their REJECTION. But in each Gospel the **Person of our Lord** is the one *great central* theme.

However, only those events, miracles, and discourses of our Lord are **selected** which are needed for the presentation of Him and His ministry, and which bear upon, illustrate, and thus emphasize the **special object** of each Gospel.

This is why certain words and works are peculiar to one Gospel, and are omitted from another; and why certain utterances of the Lord are *repeated* on other occasions, and *with varying words*.

It has been too generally assumed that events and discourses which are *similar*, are *identical*. By failing to distinguish or to "try the things that differ" (Phil 1:10 ref. Bullinger's note in *Companion Bible*) and to rightly divide "the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) as to *timing*, events separated by great landmarks of time are brought together and treated as though they were one and the same. Because of this difficulties are created which baffle all the attempts of those who would remove them.

The **special object** of each Gospel may be understood from the following:

Of the 23 words translated "Branch" in the Old Testament the word *zemach* occurs 12 times but is used in the following passages to refer specially to the MESSIAH, and forms a link which connects the four characteristics of "the Branch" with the **four presentations of the MESSIAH**, as set forth in the subject-matter of each of the four Gospels respectively.

1. In Jer. 23:5-6 & 33:15 Messiah (Christ) is presented as "the Branch", the **KING** *raised up* to rule in righteousness.

*"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."*

*"In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land."*

Hence the *royal* genealogy is required from Abraham and David downward (Matt. 1:1-17): and He is presented as what He is - before MAN (relatively) - in the highest earthly position - the KING.

This forms the subject of MATTHEW'S Gospel.

2. In Zech. 3:8 Messiah (Christ) is presented as "the Branch" the **SERVANT** *brought forth* for Jehovah's service.

*"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch."*

He is seen as Jehovah's servant, entering at once on His ministerial work without any preliminary words. Hence no genealogy is required: and He is presented as what He is - before God (relatively) - in the lowest earthly position - the IDEAL SERVANT.

This forms the subject-matter of MARK'S Gospel.

3. In Zech. 6:12, Messiah (Christ) is presented as "the Branch" *growing up out of His place*.

*"And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying,*

*Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord:"*

This *growing up* forms the subject-matter of the earlier portion of the Gospel, and brings out the perfections of Christ as "perfect man". Hence the *human* genealogy is required upward to Adam (Luke 3:23-38): and He is presented as what He is - before man (intrinsically) - the IDEAL MAN.

This is the characteristic of LUKE'S Gospel.

4. In Isa. 4:2 Messiah (Christ) is presented as "the Branch of Jehovah" in all His own intrinsic beauty and glory.

*"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."*

The Lord is presented as Jehovah Himself. Hence no genealogy is required; and He is presented as what He is - before God (intrinsically) - DIVINE.

**This is the great characteristic of the subject-matter of JOHN'S Gospel.**

The Four Gospels thus form one complete whole, and are not to be explained by any "synoptic" arrangement. The four are required to set forth the four aspects of the LIFE of Christ, as the four great O.T. offerings (*Burnt Offering, Peace Offering, Sin Offering and Trespass Offering*) are required to set forth the four aspects of His DEATH.

No one Gospel could set forth the four different aspects of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus, as no one offering could set forth all the aspects of His death. Hence, it is the Divine purpose to give us, in the four Gospels, four aspects of His life on earth. God has so ordered these that a "Harmony" is practically impossible; and this is the reason why, out of more than thirty attempts, there are scarcely two that agree, and not one that is satisfactory.

To attempt to make one, is to ignore the Divine purpose in giving four.

No one view could give a true idea of any building; and no one Gospel "Harmony" can include a complete presentation of the Lord's life on earth. Through failure to recognize this fourfold Divine presentation of our Lord, the term "*Synoptic Gospels*" has been given to the first three, because they are supposed to take one and the same point of view, and thus to differ from the fourth Gospel: whereas the difference is caused by the special object of John's Gospel, which is to present the Lord from the Divine standpoint.

John's Gospel is thus seen to be essentially one of the four and not one standing apart from the three.

(Reproduced from *Monthly Notes Supplement* Sept. 1998)

(Ed.)

## **"THE 'Q' MOVEMENT Yet Another Attack on Christianity**

The 20th century saw intensified criticism of the Bible text,

its O.T. laws, and its moral restraints, with the growing pressures to accept evolution, psychological counselling, homosexuality, free love, free expression of the ego and the adoption of personalised “standards”. Alongside this, however, honest efforts were being made by papyrologists to **authenticate** the four Gospels by their early dating, and thus to reveal them as **attestations of fact** rather than of merely doctrinal speculation.

Satan’s counter to this valuable work appeared in the later years of the 20th century in the form of the **Q Movement**, which involves a supposed “Matthean source known as ‘Q’” which it is **claimed** was in circulation between AD 30 and AD 60 and was used as the basis for two of the Gospel accounts.

The campaign against Christianity in general, and Jesus Christ in particular, is alive and well according to an article entitled *The Search for a No-Frills Jesus - “Q”* by Charlotte Allen published in the December 1996 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*. The article concerns the “Q” movement of “religious educators”. The goal of this movement is to **replace the Gospels of the New Testament with this “Q” document**, which appears to be nothing more than a fiction clothed in the cover of scholarly interpretation.

The article begins by quoting Burton L. Mack, a retired professor of New Testament at the School of theology at Claremont in southern California:

*“It should bring an end to the myth, the history, the mentality, of the Gospels...”*

The article states that Mack believes this ‘Q’ document “*radically undercuts Christianity’s claim to be the religion of Jesus of Nazareth.*” Mack is not “displeased” by this because “*He blames Christianity for contributing to centuries of US wrongdoing, from wars against Native Americans to interventionism abroad.*”

Mack, along with fellow Biblical “scholar” from Claremont, James M. Robinson, who is the founder of the International ‘Q’ Project, are leading proponents of this ‘Q’ movement. Although **no tangible document of this kind exists**, these “scholars” allege that such a document existed in the first century and that this **alleged document** served as a source for the Gospels of Luke and Matthew.

These so-called “Christian” scholars have extrapolated from this hypothesised document that: “the authors of ‘Q’

did not view Jesus as 'the Christ' [that is, as the 'Anointed One,' the promised Messiah], or as the Redeemer who had atoned for their sins by His Crucifixion, or as the Son of God who rose from the dead. Instead, they claim Q's authors esteemed Jesus simply as a roving sage who preached a life of possessionless wandering and full acceptance of one's fellow human beings, no matter how disreputable or marginal. In that respect, they say, he was a Jesus for the America of the third millennium, a Jesus with little supernatural baggage but much respect for cultural diversity.....

'Q' partisans contend that the authors of 'Q' knew nothing about the way Jesus died or about the stories of an empty tomb - or if they knew, they did not care. Hence there was no atonement doctrine in 'Q' theology. And because belief in Jesus' resurrection is the core belief of Christianity ..., the people who wrote 'Q' must have been adherents of Jesus in Palestine who were not 'Christians' - unless, as Robinson and others observe, one stretches the word to include anyone who admires Jesus. Scholars used to refer to members of the 'Q' community as 'Jewish Christians', a term that can sometimes lead to confusion. The preferred designation nowadays for the group of which they are a part is the 'Jesus Movement'.

The matter in which the hypothetical 'Q' document was uncovered is especially interesting. The proponents of 'Q' merely compared the parallel passages of Matthew and Luke and broke them down "into layers reflecting the stages of its writing and rewriting over several decades during the first century AD." These "scholars" believe they can reconstruct not only the document in its earliest form but also the community that produced it: a cadre of itinerant Galilean ascetics ['wandering charismatics' or 'wandering radicals,' in the words of some 'Q' scholars] who actually heard Jesus speak some of the words of 'Q' and who took his command that they not worship Mammon. They surmise that the 'Q' community was Galilean "*Because Jesus did most of his preaching in Galilee. What's more, Jerusalem, where the memory of Jesus' crucifixion would have been too potent to ignore, is some distance south of Galilee hence the lack of a passion narrative in 'Q'.*"

The 'Q' Project has been working for the past fifteen years devising this scheme of legitimating an hypothesis of which there is no substantive proof of its existence. According to the article, the 'Q' Project has been

“assembling the requisite passages of Matthew and Luke, breaking them down into ‘variation units’ in order to assess the tiniest differences of wording and order, and amassing an enormous computer database of 150 years’ worth of scholarly opinion as to whether particular variations represent genuine ‘Q’ material or creative rewriting by either or both evangelists.

The Project is in fact international, but at least half its members are affiliated with universities in the USA, and many of them were students of Robinson’s at one time or another. Only three years ago did Robinson and his project co-editor, John S. Kloppenborg, an associate professor at St. Michael’s College, in Toronto, bring in Paul Hoffman, of the University of Hamburg, in Germany, as a third editor for *Document ‘Q’*, leading the leadership of the reconstruction project of European representation.”

In 1988 Kloppenborg published a synopsis of ‘Q’ material entitled *‘Q’ Parallels*. The earliest ‘Q’ layer, according to Kloppenborg and his colleagues Robinson and Helmut Koester, “reflected a theological view of Jesus as a teacher of God’s wisdom but not primarily an apocalyptic figure, much less the divinely sent one who appears in Matthew and Luke. “‘Q’ wasn’t Christian, but Luke was ‘Christian’, Robinson explains.”

According to Allen, the authority of the magazine article, in Mack’s book *The Lost Gospels* “Mack’s Jesus was a counter cultural guru who encouraged his Galilean followers to “*experiment with novel social notions and lifestyles,*” to question “*taboos on intercourse with people of different ethnic roots,*” and to “*free themselves from traditional social constraints and think of themselves as belonging to a larger human family.*”

The article describes Mack’s next project: “putting together a scholarly consortium that would ‘redescribe’ Christian origins in some other way than through the Gospel narratives and their ‘crucifixion drama,’” as he calls it. Because ‘Q’ contains no passion narrative, Mack believes that no one really knows how Jesus died and that the Gospel stories are pure fiction. - “*It’s over,*” Mack said. “*We’ve had enough apocalypses. We’ve had enough martyrs. Christianity has had a two-thousand-year run, and it’s over.*”

One of the more telling paragraphs in the article discusses the evolution of ‘Q’ from a hypothesis into a serious religious doctrine.

*"The detailed reconstruction work is impressive, but nagging questions remain for any observer. Is it truly possible to turn an hypothetical document into a real document? 'Q' partisans have taken a working hypothesis and given it a life and shape of its own, going so far as to speculate about what the original manuscript looked like, even though other scholars believe that 'Q' may have consisted solely of oral tradition. The 'Q' Project has assumed that an actual first-century papyrus scroll existed. That provenance firmly in place in 'Q' 'manuscript' now has such palpable reality in the minds of its proponents that Mack in *The Lost Gospels* refers to it matter-of-factly as a 'document.'*

*'Q' has grown over time from 200 or so parallel passages in Matthew and Luke to about 235, as scholars have assigned ever more material to it. Robinson, Mack, and others have decided to call the enhanced 'Q' a fully-fledged Gospel. Gospels are, among other things, vehicles for their authors' theology, so the next step has been to work out the theology 'Q' embodies - a theology distinct, in the view of 'Q' scholars, from either Matthew's or Luke's. By discerning layers of textual composition in 'Q' - again, just as if it were an actual document rewritten over time - advocates have worked out the stages in which that theology developed.*

*Finally has come a reconstruction of the community that subscribed to the 'Q' theology and wrote and read the 'Q' Gospel: those shadowy Galileans, unrecorded elsewhere in ancient texts who wandered from town to town carrying no food or money. As can be seen, this entire edifice - building from hypothesis to document to Gospel to theology to Community - is either a marvel of perceptive scholarship or a shadowy sand castle."*

*"The reason behind 'Q' is not scholarly examination, but rather, the destruction of Christianity. This movement needs to destroy the divinity of Christ because they want Christians to believe the Messiah has not yet arrived. ....*

*The entire 'Q' theory fits very comfortably with the ideas behind One World Government, whereby individuals own and possess nothing and "that they not worship Mammon."..... Under One World Government, the riches of the world will be controlled by the very few. They must now start indoctrinating the masses that worldly possessions are not "Christian" nor is worshipping idols like a divine Christ.*

*Under the "new" Christianity espoused by the 'Q' movement we will all unite in a happy multicultural*

lovefest 'belonging to a larger human family.' We will not challenge the New World Order where the world's wealth is concentrated in a few hands because as "Christians" we are being taught the value of making a gift of one's self as that possessionless, nice fellow Jesus taught and like the Galileans of the "'Q' Community" who wandered from town to town carrying no food or money."

"The Bible as we know it has been revised by men with their own agendas for centuries. This latest attempt by the 'Q' Movement should awaken Christians to the fact that the Christian faith is under serious attack..... We can either choose to succumb to the evil of Antichrist behind these attacks or we can fight to defend our Saviour, and the message he brought for mankind on this earth." □

(Abridged from: "*The News Monitor*" no. 22 vl.6/2)

## BEWARE Gnostic WRITINGS

From the birth of the Adamic race Scripture reveals Satan as the Slanderer and Adversary of the Lord God. Especially fierce has been his opposition to the Son of God who, by His Resurrection, has released mankind from Satan's hold by bearing God's judgment for their sin, thus enabling the next phase of God's master plan of restoration to be implemented when the time is ripe.

Throughout the ages Satan has sought to spread untruth in the form of false gods, false teachings and ideas, and spurious writings which claim to record secret knowledge of spiritual truths. These have in some cases formed the bases of teachings and sects for which no support can be found in Scripture, e.g., the Gnostic sects which produced 2nd century Christian heresies.

In modern times Carl Gustav Jung based many of his observations about human nature on his understanding of ancient Gnosticism.

The *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* page 566states:

[Quote]

The foundation-stone of [Gnostic] belief was a radical cosmo-logical dualism, i.e., the belief that the created world was evil, and was totally separate from and in opposition to the world of spirit. The supreme God dwelt in unapproachable splendour in this spiritual world, and had no dealings with the world of matter.

Matter was the creation of an inferior being, the *Demiurge*. He, along with his aides the *archons*, kept mankind



imprisoned within their material existence, and barred the path of individual souls trying to ascend to the spirit world after death. Not even this possibility was open to everyone, however. For only those who possessed a divine spark (*pneuma*) could hope to escape from their corporeal existence. And even those possessing such a spark did not have an automatic escape, for they needed to receive the enlightenment of *gnosis* before they could become aware of their own spiritual condition.....

In most of the Gnostic systems reported by the Church Fathers, this enlightenment is the work of a divine redeemer, who descends from the spiritual world in disguise and is often equated with the Christian Jesus. Salvation for the Gnostic, therefore, is to be alerted to the existence of his divine *pneuma* and then, as a result of this knowledge, to escape on death from the material world to the spiritual. ....

From the standpoint of traditional Christianity, Gnostic thinking is quite alien. Its mythological setting of redemption leads to a depreciation of the historical events of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Its view of man's relationship to God leads to a denial of the importance of the Person and work of Christ, while, in a Gnostic context, "salvation" is not understood in terms of deliverance from sin, but as a form of existential self-realization.....

[Some extant Gnostic writings are *Pistis Sophia*, the *Books of Jeu*, the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip*, the *Gospel of Truth*, the *Coptic Gospel of the Egyptians* and the *Gospel of Mary*, the *Apocalypses of Paul*, of *James*, of *Adam*, and of *Peter*.....

Not all of these texts are Christian texts and it is now thought that Gnosticism was a form of belief which in certain circles became overlaid with Christian ideas. And there were non-Christian forms of Gnosticism.]

Some believe that Gnosticism was in some way connected with Judaism in one of its various forms and it is undoubtedly true that O.T. ideas feature prominently in Gnostic speculations, though always in a context that tears them from the fabric of authentic O.T. thought. Others point to the similarities between Gnosticism and the kind of dualism often found in the writings of the Greek philosophers.....

A different origin has been sought in Iranian religion as Gnosticism is much closer in outlook to the cyclical

concepts of those eastern religions which stem from Zoroastrianism than it is to traditional Christianity. It is impossible to pinpoint accurately the origins of Gnosticism. Indeed it is unlikely that it had a single origin, for by nature Gnostic thinking was extremely syncretistic, and its adherents were always ready, even eager, to utilize religious ideas from many diverse sources to serve their own ends.....

[T]here are serious and fundamental differences between the outlook of the Gnostics and that of the N.T. writers. The Gnostics held a cyclical concept of time, and the notion of history was meaningless to them. Gnostic redemption could never have any meaning in this life, but only in an escape from temporal existence to the world of spirit.

By contrast, both O.T. and N.T. emphasize that time and history are important and both have a divine significance. God has acted in the course of the historical process as both Creator and Redeemer to provide salvation for His people. Whereas, for the Gnostic, God can be known only by an escape from history, to the Christian He can be supremely known because of His involvement in history, specifically in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And Christian salvation is something to be enjoyed here and now in this world, rather than in some ethereal, 'spiritual' world. [End quote]

Gnosticism is thus opposite to Scriptural teaching and has been instigated by the Evil One to entice people away from Truth. Unfortunately, many people tend to delve into such writings because they are old and mysterious, and come to reject the Bible as the Inspired Word of God, embodying the Truth necessary for our salvation as individuals and as nations. (Ed)

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS

Upon opening a secondhand book found among some books donated to our Library, your editor noticed a folded, yellowed, piece of undated newspaper which, when unfolded, revealed the following article.

It was entitled *No Room at the Inn - for the True Story* from *Matthew Byrne*, Rector of St. Margaret's Church, Manchester.

[Quote]

Poor St. Luke. The sentimental Christians have no respect for him. They can't leave. For this year, as for centuries past, the "Christmas Story" was told thousands of

times, but it would be surprising if more than a handful of the presentations bore any resemblance to the record the careful doctor so painstakingly set down.

We were told about worry-weary Joseph, in his frantic last-minute search, failing to get decent accommodation for his wife in the last stages of her pregnancy, and having to make do with a stinking stable on the dark edges of the courtyard of an overcrowded inn.

It all sounded sad and suitable. And it has been told so often that it is now accepted as gospel. But it is not the birth St. Luke describes.

What has been purveyed as the birth of Jesus owes its origins to the **Apocryphal Gospels which circulated in the Middle Ages**. The stories themselves were an attempt by Christians, unfamiliar with the Palestinian background of the Gospels, to enhance what the evangelists had so briefly written. They were trying to fill in the gaps in their knowledge of the birth of Jesus, answering their own questions with the pious fictions of the own imaginations.

It was natural, maybe - but unfortunate. The views and sentiments of the Apocryphal Gospels were given substance by the artists of the age and had enormous influence on the reading and interpretation of the New Testament record of Jesus' birth.

[COMMENT: We have become acutely aware in our own time how strong an influence "Art" - paintings, films, plays, books, etc. - has had upon religious belief, social attitudes, and community life in general. It has been a tool well used by Satan in his ploy to destroy the True Faith as revealed in the Word of God.]

Their influence has effect even today. So much so that it's woe betide anybody who dares to tamper with what we have religiously misunderstood from the time we could first remember. Our misconceptions have been reinforced by *Once in Royal David's City*, *Away in a Manger*, and a host of other carols which, while beautifully sentimental, misinterpreted the evangelists' history of the event.

If we take St. Luke's presentation of the birth seriously, there is no last-minute dash, no frantic father-to-be, overcrowded inns, no cattle-stalls, stables or lean-to sheds.

The striking feature of the birth as St. Luke presents it, in its Palestinian background, is its terrible ordinariness. It is a birth that looked no different from a birth in any other house in the land.

The key to getting the Christmas story right lies in three statements in St. Luke's account. The first of these is, "While they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered."

This simple sentence is usually carefully overlooked. Yet it makes clear that Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem from Nazareth some time before the birth and were there sufficiently long for Mary to settle in, complete the term of her pregnancy, and make proper preparations for the birth of her child.

His next statement is, "There was no room for them in the inn." And this is popularly taken to mean that all the hotels were full.

The word "inn" is an unfortunate translation of St. Luke's Greek word *kataluma*. "Inn" conveys the idea of hotels and guesthouses, the last thing St. Luke had in mind. He seems to be careful in his use of words, and when he wants to convey the idea of an inn or *khan* - as he clearly does in recording the parable of the Good Samaritan - he chooses the right word *pandocheion*.

*Kataluma*, which he uses in his account of the birth, is the same word by which he describes the place where Jesus had the Last Supper. The translations get it right for the Last Supper - calling it a "guest chamber."

The word *kataluma* occurs only three times in the Gospels - twice in St. Luke, in the birth and Last Supper accounts; once in St. Mark's account of the Last Supper. It seems a somewhat whimsical approach to translate it "guest-chamber" in connection with the Last Supper, but "inn" or guesthouse for the birth.

The *kataluma*, the "guest-room" was a room constructed on the flat roof of a house. In ordinary houses, it could be a temporary structure; in richer homes a permanent extra storey.

The O.T. affords two instances of ordinary people providing such a "guest-chamber" - 1 Kings 17:19 (for Elijah) and 2 Kings 4:10 (for Elisha), which also describes what the room contained:

Let's make a small room on the roof and put in it a bed and a table, a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us. (NIV)

What St. Luke is writing about, then, is the guest-chamber on the roof of this house in Bethlehem, the guest-chamber in which, for one reason or another, there was no place for them. And what could possibly be the reason? It may be that the weather, while not bad enough to prevent the robust sleeping here, was not good enough for a woman and her new-born child..... However, it depends on precisely who it is that St. Luke means when he writes that there was not room "for them".

Bear in mind that in this particular paragraph, he focuses attention on Mary and her new-born son -

**“she brought forth her first-born son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger, because there was no place for them in the guest-chamber.”**

It seems correct to decide that when he writes “for them” he does not mean Mary and Joseph and her new-born child, but that there was no room for Mary and her new-born son in the guest-chamber.

It could well have been that there was no place in the guest-chamber on the roof, because it was already occupied by the men of the house who, for privacy's sake, were keeping out of the way, affording Mary and her helping women the privacy belonging to a woman in child-birth.

Mary, then, not occupying the guest-room, gave birth to Jesus on the ground-floor of the house.

St. Luke's third statement is “She laid him in the manger.”

It is, perhaps the mention of a manger that naturally conjures up pictures of cattle-sheds and stables as the scene for the birth.

Mangers, however, were not exclusive to stables. They were essential equipment in the ordinary Palestinian house. The house itself was organised more for sleeping than living in. At night the domestic animals were brought in, as much for safety as for shelter, and shared the house with the human inhabitants. A manger held the food the animals might need during the night hours.

The scene St. Luke describes so simply is nothing extraordinary, and certainly nothing like the background in which the popular fiction places the birth.

Why did Mary place her child in the manger? But why not, in the circumstances?

The delivery on the mat on the floor is completed, the child washed and cared for, the mother made comfortable. Now there is the inevitable tidying-up to do. Busy hands and hurrying feet. Where better for the infant than the manger? Snug, safe, sleeping undisturbed, and within arm's length of his mother.

**And she brought forth her first-born son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in the manger, because there was no place for them in the guest chamber [kataluma]. (Luke 2:7)**

||

## OUR GRACIOUS QUEEN

Following an article critical of the British Monarchy

published in *The Age*, April 20, 2006, written by Graham Smith of the UK Republican movement, stressing the theme of “an aging Queen with an unpopular successor”, an article was published in *The Age* on April 27, 2006. This was written by Aron Paul, a tutor in politics at La Trobe University, Melbourne. He writes that as a young Australian visiting London in 2002 at the time of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee, he realized what remarkable support the monarchy enjoys in its home country. He noted that in June 2002 while an estimated one million people thronged central London for the Jubilee celebrations, a Republican demonstration at the same time attracted only 45 people, who were arrested for disturbing the peace. He commented that an institution that can bring a million people on to the streets is not one that any parliament will abolish.

He felt that Charles and Camilla would attract great support as the new King and Queen if such a situation were to eventuate, and that once King, Charles would be transformed by a new role that would undermine the Republican focus on his personality. He writes that Republicans would be wrong to try to use the unpopularity of individual royals to advance their cause because the personal dramas surrounding royalty are an integral part of the myths that ultimately reaffirm the monarchy.

He contrasts the party boy behaviour of Prince Harry and the respectable older brother Prince William, ultimately to be king, and draws a parallel with Princess Elizabeth and the wilful Princess Margaret “against whom the virtue of the destined monarch might be measured.”

He wrote: “In this way, the monarchy has embodied the tensions and transitions between generations and within families that speak to our own struggles as we find our way through life and family. This connection to the idea of destiny is part of the monarchy’s continuing strength.”

## THE MONARCHY’S ROLE OUTSIDE BRITAIN

The following article appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*, April 20, 2006, entitled *Around the World with Her Commonwealth Family*.

[Quote] That the Queen chose, in her 80th year, to make the long journey to Australia to open the 18th Commonwealth Games, is a measure of her deep affection for, and staunch commitment to, the Commonwealth.

The trip served as a reminder that she is, in fact, 16 queens in one person. Excluding the United Kingdom, she is sovereign of 15 realms, from Antigua and Barbuda

through to tiny Tuvalu. But she is held in great esteem in the republics, many of whom long cast off the shackles of British colonialism, yet make up the majority of the 53 member countries that the Queen likes to think of as her Commonwealth "family".

As she sat on the dais at the Games' opening ceremony in Melbourne her delight was evident as each team, from the huge squad of Australians to the handful from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, strode into the stadium.

She is Head of the Commonwealth, and her aides regularly stress her pride in that title. Lord Hurd, the former Conservative Foreign Secretary, once described it as "a very vivid part of her inheritance". Yet, while she inherited the title of Britain's queen, the modern Commonwealth is something she has helped shape and nurtured with an almost maternal love, and has somehow held together during its many crises.

Though she is its symbolic head, she has no formal powers. Her role, to use the Duke of Edinburgh's words, is as "Commonwealth psychotherapist", in that she meets and talks informally to each of its heads of government at the biennial CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) and regularly pays official visits. She has visited every single Commonwealth country apart from Cameroon, which joined only in 1995. "I suppose that, between us, my husband and I have seen more of the Commonwealth than almost any people alive," she said in 1962.

Such visits have provided a variety of experiences, from fierce Maori displays in New Zealand to near-naked dancers in Malawi. And the Commonwealth has also generated some interesting official gifts, including two black beavers from Canada, two giant turtles from the Seychelles, an elephant from the Cameroon and floor mats from Tonga.

The term *Commonwealth of Nations* was first used as a description for the evolving British Empire, but as the sun set on the Empire, the Commonwealth evolved. It forged its modern form after the Second World War following India's independence. India declared that, while it wished to adopt a republican constitution, it also wanted to stay in the Commonwealth. Over the next decades, more countries followed suit, with its numbers swollen by African nations.

Sir Sonny Ramphal, the British-Guyanian lawyer who was the Commonwealth Secretariat's longest serving Secretary-General, once explained the Queen's bond thus: "She was a young woman growing into international life along with young leaders of the Commonwealth.....She

grew up with them, understood them and related to them. Even when the British Government was at odds with many of these leaders, she was able to understand their point of view without taking sides." In some cases lasting friendships resulted....

Her politically neutral role has also meant that Buckingham Palace can sometimes exploit a line of diplomacy not available to the British Government. This dual role has caused tension between the Palace and No. 10, and tested the requirement of strict political neutrality. The debate over whether Britain should join the Common Market was one such moment, a move which the Commonwealth saw as heralding a declining share of British trade and found the Queen listening patiently to many furious tirades.

In 1971, she was prevented by Edward Heath from attending the CHOGM in Singapore because of the furious reaction he expected over his plans to resume arms sales to South Africa, a policy opposed by many African states. Eventually she was persuaded to stay away after an intense meeting with her prime minister at Balmoral.

When Margaret Thatcher, who like most of the Queen's prime ministers, does not share the same enthusiasm for the Commonwealth, threatened not to attend the CHOGM in Lusaka because of the Government's stance on Rhodesia, the Queen made clear her firm intention to attend. Mrs Thatcher went.

But it was Mrs Thatcher's stand on South African sanctions that caused the keenest conflict and faced the Queen with an intolerable dilemma. With the Commonwealth in favour of sanctions, its members were delighted when reports of the Queen's alleged concern over some of Mrs Thatcher's policies broke in the media, causing embarrassment to both sides.

The Queen has managed, with great dexterity, to avoid any conflict in roles, and is proud of the achievements of the Commonwealth. Professor Ben Pimlott, her respected biographer, remarked:

"Though the Commonwealth has changed greatly from the 'Empire' to which she had dedicated her life in Cape Town in 1947, it remains, in her imagination, a family." [End quote]

It is with great affection and admiration that we acknowledge our Sovereign's dedication to duty and faithful service during a lifetime which has reached eighty years.

May she continue to enjoy good health and to occupy the Throne of David "until He come whose right it is." (Ed.)





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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

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**THE ONLY WAY**

Thou art the Way; to Thee alone;  
From sin and death we flee;  
And he who would the Father seek,  
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee.

Thou art the Truth; Thy Word alone,  
True wisdom can impart;  
Thou only canst inform the mind,  
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life; the rending tomb  
Proclaims Thy conquering arm;  
And those who put their trust in Thee,  
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life;  
Grant us that Way to know,  
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,  
Whose joys eternal flow.

Anonymous

## WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying,

**This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”**

(Matt. 3:16-17)

This statement spoken “from heaven” proclaimed the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ just as Scripture proclaims His preexistence. His life did not begin when He was born. He existed before His birth. He was in the beginning, all things were made by Him, and by Him all things consist (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-18). He came into the world from the Father, having been rich before He became poor, that through His poverty we might be rich (Jn. 16:28; Jn. 6:62; 2 Cor. 8:9).

Our Lord prayed just before His betrayal saying:

**And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**

(Jn. 17:5)

His statement recorded in John 8:58:

**“Before Abraham was, I am”** (not I was!),

claimed for Himself a continued, ever-present existence from before Abraham’s time to that moment.

Speaking from the “burning bush” *The God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob* had instructed Moses to tell the Israelites that **‘I AM’ hath sent me unto you** (Exod. 3:1-17). This name stressed God’s continuance in time - past, present and future. He is “The Eternal” who changes not, and is ever present to meet the needs of His covenant People. Our Lord thus identified Himself with that ‘I AM’, who continues to remain true Israel’s God throughout the ages. The Jews well understood His claim for they took up stones to stone Him.

[Quote]

The Jews understood that the title **Son of God** was a title for One who was fully God. When Jesus stood trial the night before His crucifixion, the high priest put Him on oath, and asked Him,

**“I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God”** (Matt. 26:63).

Jesus admitted this to be true.

Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.(v.65)  
He was convinced that Jesus had spoken blasphemy, because he understood perfectly that the title **Son of God** is a divine title. Of course, it was not blasphemy but truth.

The high priest and the Jewish Council did not believe it. The Jews answered him [Pilate], We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

(Jn. 19:6-7). But the disciples did believe it! The glorious truth of Christ's real identity had flashed into their minds on an earlier occasion when Peter, speaking for them all, had answered:

**Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God** (Matt. 16:16).  
And again, **Thou hast the words of eternal life.**

**And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.** (Jn. 6:68-69)

In the same way when Paul became a Christian believer, straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that **He is the Son of God** (Acts 9:20).

He rejoiced to recall that Jesus was God's 'own son' (Rom. 8:3), and John tells us that the glory he saw in Jesus' life was the glory of the Father's only Son (Jn. 1:14).....

John is dogmatic about the deity of Christ (John 1:1-2), and the glory of Jehovah which Isaiah witnessed about 700 BC was none other than the glory of Christ (Isa.6:1-3; Jn. 12:39-41). The very aim which John had in writing his Gospel was to persuade men to believe that Jesus is the Christ,

**the Son of God; and that believing [they] might have life through his name.** (John 20:31)..... [End quote]

The English word 'Lord' which is so often used of the Son of God also serves to make clear His deity. When the O.T. was translated into Greek, the oldest Greek version being the Septuagint (LXX), *kurios* was the word used to *translate* the Hebrew word Jehovah. In the N.T. which was written in Greek the same word, *kurios*, was used to *represent* the Hebrew word Jehovah. This has been translated by the English word "Lord" in the English N.T.

The writer to the Hebrews refers these words from Psalm 45 verses 6-7: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:

**the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre,**  
to the Lord Jesus Christ: **But unto the Son he saith,**

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: (Hebrews 1:8).

This is but one of many occasions where O.T. passages which refer to Jehovah are applied to Christ by the N.T. writers. We can see, therefore, that it is proper to speak of

our Lord Jesus Christ as 'God'.

Compare Num. 21:5-6: **And the people spake against God,.... and the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people,** with 1 Cor. 10:9: **Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.**

Compare Psalm 102:24-27: **I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.**

**They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:**

**But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.**

with Hebrews 1:10-12:

**And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;**

**And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.**

Compare Isaiah 8:13-14:

**Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.**

with Romans 9:33:

**As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

## DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

Having noted references to His deity "we are not surprised to find that the characteristics which belong to God are ascribed to our Lord. In Isaiah 44:6 we read of Jehovah saying, "I am the first, and I am the last." Yet in Revelation 22:13, Jesus says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last". Jehovah is eternal: Jesus is eternal.

We know that God is unchangeable (Mal. 3:6), and yet the believer is to be comforted by knowing the Son of God as "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). God is present everywhere. But as we go into all the world to spread the Gospel, we are heartened to hear Christ's "Lo, I am with you always" (Matt. 28:20). His presence everywhere is also displayed by His promise to be wherever two or three gather in His name (Matt. 18:20).

God is all-powerful, but Jesus Christ "is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21). God is all-knowing, but this, too, is so obviously true of Christ. He can read people's hearts (Jn. 2:24-25). From the beginning He knew exactly who would betray Him (Jn. 6:70-71; 13:10-11). He predicted the details of His own death and resurrection (Matt. 16:21), and Peter's denial and restoration (Luke 22:31-34). He knows what is going on in the churches (Rev. 2:2). But the full mystery of His own Person is unknowable: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father" (Matt. 11:27).

"Who can forgive sins but God only?" But Jesus authoritatively said to the paralysed man, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." (Mark 2:7,5), and we are urged that "as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13). Who but God is holy? Yet Peter, knowing this full well, is happy to refer Psalm 16 to Christ, and to call Him the "Holy One" (Acts 2:27).

In Isaiah 45:23 Jehovah pledges, "That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." The New Testament pledges that God will cause "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ..... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord....." (Phil. 2:10-11) Again and again we see that what can be said of God, is said of Christ.

## DIVINE WORKS

Who created the world? Of Jesus it is said: ".... all things were created by Him and for Him" (ref. Jn. 1:3,10; Col. 1:16-17). "By Him all things consist" and that He is "upholding all things by the word of His power." He was able to announce to His disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Matt. 28:18).

Who but God will raise the dead and judge the world? Yet we read of Jesus that "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth....." (Jn. 5:28-29) "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10)..... Our Lord announced that He would come in His glory and gather all nations before Him: "And He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:32). Who but God could do this?.....

Throughout the O.T. we read that the prophets introduced

their messages by saying, "Thus said the Lord". When Jesus came, His teaching, too, had a unique authority. It staggered those who heard Him (Matt. 7:28-29; John 7:32, 45-46). They were accustomed to the teaching of the Jewish scribes, who spent most of their time quoting learned writers. Jesus did not speak like them; but nor did He speak like the prophets. He spoke on His own authority, saying, "I say unto you" (Matt. 5:18, 20, 22, etc.).....

In the same way He spoke to demons, and they came out (Mark 1:21-27). His mere word was necessary - how unlike the elaborate ceremonies of the Jewish exorcists! He spoke to the winds and waves, and they obeyed Him (Mark 4:41). He spoke to the blind, and they could see; to the deaf, and they could hear (Matt. 9:27-31; Mark 7:32-37). At His word the lame walked, the diseased were healed and the dead were raised (Jn. 5:8-9; Luke 17:11-19; Mark 5:41-42).

He spoke as God, and those who witnessed His miracles sensed themselves to be in the presence of God (Luke 5:25-26; 7:16; 9:43). His miracles reveal His identity, for as John wrote towards the end of his Gospel:

**And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:**

**But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the CHRIST, the SON OF GOD; and that believing ye might have LIFE through His name.**

(Jn. 20:30-31)

(Quoted in part from *The Three are One* by Stuart Olyott) (Ed.)

## **THE NAME 'JESUS CHRIST' AND THE SCIENCE OF BIBLE NUMERICS**

The O.T. was written in Hebrew and the N.T. in Greek. These are the only languages for which the letters of the Alphabets are used to represent *numbers* as well as *letters*. Each letter, therefore, has its own numeric value. (Each letter also has its own place value within its alphabet.) The *numeric values* of words are gained by adding the numeric values of each letter together. For example the Greek word for 'JESUS' has six letters, their *numeric values* being 10 8 200 70 400 and 200. Adding these we get the *numeric value* of the Greek word for JESUS, which is 888. In the same way we can find the *numeric value* of the Greek word for CHRIST which is 1480. Hence the *numeric value* of the Name JESUS CHRIST is  $888 + 1480 = 2368$ .

These numbers can be expressed as follows:

Jesus Christ:  $2368 = 37 \times 8 \times 8$  Jesus:  $888 = 37 \times 8 \times 3$   
Christ:  $1480 = 37 \times 8 \times 5$

The chance for this precise pattern to occur is one in  $37 \times 37 \times 8 \times 8 \times 8$  or one in 700,928. This is a small chance indeed but not sufficient to establish *design*..

However the *numeric value* 2368 can be further divided into the *numeric values* of the vowels and consonants:

Jesus Christ: 2368

Vowels: 568 or  $8 \times 71$

Consonants: 1800 or  $8 \times 25 \times 9$

Jesus: 488 or  $8 \times 61$

Jesus: 400 or  $8 \times 25 \times 2$

Christ: 80 or  $8 \times 10$

Christ: 1400 or  $8 \times 25 \times 7$

The chance for these additional numerics is one in 896,000,000,000 which is ample for establishing design.

[Quote] "The above is a good example of one of the methods by which the science of BIBLE NUMERICS secures its results. The presence of a numeric design in the Greek of *Jesus Christ* is not a mere curiosity: it brings at once certainty into what had hitherto been conjecture and disputation.

"The Seventy [Septuagint] translators of the O.T. rendered the Hebrew name *Jehoshua* (originally *Yaishua*), by JESUS (Grk. *Iehsous*.) The name could have been transliterated a dozen other ways. But they hit upon the one form which not only produces, with Christ, a scheme of  $37 \times 8$ , but which gives for the *Saviour* 888, where the name of His *Satanic counterpart* is 666.

"All discussion therefore as to whether other transliterations might not be as proper, if not more so, is henceforth shut out. The present Greek form for *Jesus* was meant to be just this - *it was designed*.

"But this design tells more. The Seventy made their translation some 280 years before the Lord Jesus was born. They could not have known that the Messiah's name would be the Hebrew *Joshua*. It was not *they* therefore that chose this name for the Messiah, so as to produce this design in the two words, by passing by other possible transliterations. It is for the deniers of the inspiration of the Scriptures to discover who it was that put this design into the words *Jesus Christ*." (Ed)

(FROM: *The New Testament from the Greek Text as Established by Bible Numerics*, Ed. by Ivan Panin, 1945, Note on pp.588-590)

## WHO WAS ST. MATTHEW?

“The oldest tradition identifies him as Levi-Matthew, called upon by Jesus while he was sitting at his customs post near Capernaum (Mat. 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27-28). Much more than a mere tax collector, he was a *telones*, a word which in Greek could be used to refer to an official who was responsible for a customs station. Levi-Matthew was in charge of a major border point.

At Capernaum, the work involved two forms of levies: the sea tax which fishermen paid in Roman times, and the land border tax levied on goods travelling along the Via Maris. This key trade route between Damascus and the Mediterranean crossed the tetrarchy of Philip and touched the border with the Galilean territory of Herod Antipas close to Capernaum, where there was also a junction leading towards Tyre and Chorazin.

Recent research has established that Levi-Matthew was an influential customs official, perhaps even the leaseholder or tenant of the station, in accordance with the administrative practices of the time.

St. Luke, more forthcoming about Levi-Matthew than Matthew himself would have been, emphasizes his status and wealth in a cameo describing the scene after his calling (5:29). ‘Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house’ (NIV) or ‘a big reception’ (REV). Such a man must have had professional qualifications and financial resources. He could have been fluent in Aramaic and Greek, and, according to some scholars, might have been able to write shorthand.....

Matthew may well have painted a kind of self-portrait when he quoted Jesus in chapter 13:52 of his Gospel: ‘Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom new things as well as old.’ The late C.D.F. Moule, a Cambridge New Testament scholar, suggested that this ‘scribe’ was not a ‘teacher of the law’, as many translations have it. Instead, the Greek word *grammateus* refers to the well-trained writer....

Because of his position, Levi-Matthew, like his fellow *telonai*, was despised and rejected by orthodox Jewish society. Jesus himself was attacked because he was mingling with such people..... Matthew’s name is mentioned for the last time in Acts 1:13, when the core group of Apostles, diminished by the suicide of Judas,



meets in an upper room in Jerusalem..... The second-century author, Heracleon (AD 145-80), claimed to know that the apostle was not martyred but died a natural death.....”

“**Shorthand** writing was a more or less obligatory skill for a trained scribe.....Levi-Matthew .... would probably have had a working knowledge of *tachygraphy*. In consequence, scholars have suggested that he would have been able to transcribe the long Sermon on the Mount verbatim, much as Tertius would have been able to write down St. Paul’s more striking utterances..... There is no logistic, technical or logical reason why such an authentic text should not have been produced by Levi-Matthew or another witness.”

(From *The Jesus Papyrus* pp. 43-45 & 122)

## THE GOSPELS: THEIR AUTHENTICITY

In 1994 the German papyrologist, Carsten Peter Thiede, rediscovered **three tiny scraps of paper** which had been unearthed in Upper Egypt by missionary/scholar Rev. Charles Huleatt and bequeathed by him in 1901 to Magdalen College Oxford. The story of this rediscovery and its bearing upon the dating and authenticity of the Gospels is told in *The Jesus Papyrus* by C. B. Thiede and M. D’Ancona published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1996.

“On both sides of the fragments appeared Greek script, phrases from St. Matthew, chapter 26, describing Jesus’ anointment in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany and His betrayal to the chief priests by Judas Iscariot. Though the verses concern a crucial moment in the life of Christ, the scraps looked unremarkable in themselves. Yet Thiede - Director of the Institute for Basic Epistemological Research in Paderborn, Germany - argued that they were of astonishingly early origin, dating from the **mid-first century AD**..... Here, it was alleged, was a fragment of the 26th chapter of Matthew - remnants of a book **perhaps 150 pages long** - which might have been written in the lifetime of the apostle himself.”

The scientific dating of these fragments has come at a time when scepticism and incredulity are the order of the day and the very foundations of Christianity are being denounced. Indeed the preservation of the fragments, the largest of which is only 4.1 x 1.3 cm., demonstrates the guiding hand of God. As the authors express it -

“Standing in the Old Library, amid the books and manuscripts and carved wooden gargoyles, one can only guess what tricks of fortune saved the papyrus from destruction. Looking out of the window to the splendour of the Magdalen New Buildings - as Gibbon did two centuries ago - it is odd to reflect that the three fragments of papyrus ever reached this place at all. What would the scribes have thought if they had known that their work would one day be brought here? Labouring in the blazing sun of the Near East, committing their story to fragile paper, they would have been amazed to learn that it would travel so far and mean so much.”

The following excerpts illustrate the value of these fragments.

“This book (*The Jesus Papyrus*) .... calls into question the **academic consensus** that the Gospels are the **late creation** of the Christian communities rather than the **record of contemporaries or near-contemporaries of Jesus**. Few issues facing the student of the New Testament are so fundamental. How we approach these texts is in large measure determined by our view of when they were written and in what circumstances. From the dating controversy flow many other questions.”

“The New Testament Scriptures, of which the Magdalen Papyrus is the earliest physical evidence on codex, have been translated into 2,000 languages and dialects. Needless to say, the scholarly battle to identify the nature and origin of the Gospels is as pitched as ever. But the first Christian texts also continue to play an absolutely central role in the moral life of the West. The issues which divide Biblical scholars in seminars and libraries are still of fundamental importance to millions of ordinary people in their daily lives.”

“Many books have changed the history of the West: Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, Marx’s *Das Kapital* and Freud’s *Letters* are three of the most important of recent centuries. Yet the **Gospels are the very building blocks of our civilization**. Without them, Giotto would not have painted his frescoes at Arena; Dante would not have written the *Divine Comedy*; Mozart would not have composed his *Requiem*; and Wren would not have built St. Paul’s Cathedral. The story and message of these four books - along with the Judaic [Hebrew] tradition of the Old Testament - pervade not only the moral conventions of the West but also our systems of social organization, nomenclature, architecture, literature and education and

rituals of birth, marriage and death which shape our lives. Though Christian belief has become a matter of personal choice, the key text which underpins it remains a handbook to the way we live, Christian and non-Christian alike. To ask how old the Gospels are, and why they were written, is to plumb the deepest wells of the social system which we inhabit. These questions are not the preserve of the theologian.

In spite of this extraordinary influence - or perhaps because of it - the New Testament has become an object of cultural suspicion. The instinct to undermine the Gospels has overtaken the pre-modern instinct to take their truth for granted. Today, indeed, some scholars and writers will go to almost any lengths to avoid the charge of credulity, just as their distant predecessors would have taken almost any action to avoid the opposite charge of scepticism.

The post-Enlightenment world has no stakes at which it burns the heretics who dare to question its orthodoxy. It has instead the pressures of the academy, of media opinion and of a disapproving cultural elite, all of which can effectively be brought to bear on a scholar who breaks ranks. The New Testament is indeed worthy of objective analysis. Yet that is not the same thing as the instinctive distrust which it has come to inspire in many quarters. In its most extreme form, this distrust can be absurd. In the early Church, a group of heretics known as Docetists denied that Christ ever had a real body or a narrowly 'historical' existence. The Docetists have found their modern counterparts in the handful of scholars who have pursued doubt to its logical conclusions and presented the New Testament as defiantly unhistorical.....

In a more general sense, the tendency of 20th century popular culture has been to present the historical Jesus as the victim of the Gospels' distortions as much as the subject of their narrative. In much popular art, literature and populist writing on Jesus, it has been insinuated that the Gospels are guilty of a form of treachery, that they disguise the real Jesus and mislead those who seek the truth about him. So deceptive is the New Testament, some allege, that the imagination is a better guide to the truth about Jesus.....The connections between culture and scholarship are complex.

But it is our belief that the profound mistrust of the Gospels detectable in some forms of popular culture has parallels in the world of serious scholarship. We believe,

furthermore, that the redating of the Magdalen Papyrus and forthcoming work on other papyri have important implications for the future direction of Biblical research; and that the **forensic evidence of papyrology** has a major contribution to make to a debate that has too often been governed by emotion.”

“There was a time when to question the literal truth of the Bible was to court death..... Slowly, however, the doctrine of verbal inerrancy was eroded by time and the triumph of the Enlightenment world-view.... The new, more sceptical approach to scripture reflected the development of the modern critical methods which characterize today’s scholarship.....Scholars began to confront seriously the possibility that there might be contradictions within scripture. They also dared to ask whether the Jesus of history was quite the same as the Christ of orthodox faith.....

In 1860 the English publication of the collection *Essays and Reviews* by seven scholars (mostly from Oxford) sounded the death-knell of the old approach to scripture. Legal proceedings were started against the book; ten thousand Anglican clergymen signed a petition condemning it. Yet the critical methods of scholarly investigation which the collection endorsed were here to stay. The inerrancy of the Bible as a product of divine inspiration could no longer be taken for granted. A new era of religious history and scholarship had begun..... The next phase, carried out by the thinkers of the Enlightenment and their successors, was to ask what the Word of God actually was; to question whether it was, indeed, divinely inspired; and to suggest what its textual history might have been. The **great building blocks of our civilization** were at last to be analysed, their structure scrutinized, the identity and intentions of the builders questioned.”

Though the tendency of the latest quest (1970s and 1980s) for the historical Jesus “has been to present Jesus as a teacher of subversive wisdom whose message would have had profound implications for the social world in which he lived, as well as for the souls of those he preached to, .... it is still assumed ..... that a thick veil of tradition stood between the man who wandered through Galilee and the communities that later worshipped Him. They could not see Him clearly as a flesh-and-blood human being; nor did they necessarily wish to. **According to this analysis**, the Gospels were not an attempt to describe an awesome series of events which occurred in Palestine during the first part

of the first century AD but an expression of a religious tradition that had already evolved over many years before it was written down. It has recently been described as a 'foundational claim' of the modern quest that 'Jesus of Nazareth was quite different from how he is portrayed in the gospels and creeds of the church'.

The clearest proof that this is indeed the consensus among academics is the work of the Jesus Seminar. This loose-knit group of about one hundred scholars, mostly from North America, first met in 1985 at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. Organized by the Jesus scholar Robert Funk, the seminar sought to establish, by a complex voting procedure, which of the many sayings attributed to Christ reflect his authentic voice.....

The findings of this curious electoral college were published in 1993 as *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* amid great media excitement. As a snapshot of academic opinion, the book revealed dramatically how untrustworthy most scholars consider the New Testament to be. By the reckoning of the Seminar, only 20 percent of the sayings in the Gospels are authentic or near approximations. Almost all of St. John is inauthentic. Jesus never spoke of himself as 'son of God'. Nor, in fact, did He regard His own death as the purpose of His life. Rarely has there been a more comprehensive rejection of the Gospels as historical sources.

One consequence of this ..... has been the tyranny of theory and interpretation. If the Gospels are assumed to be unreliable, then the theorist becomes our only guide to the life of Jesus. It follows from this that almost anything can be - and has been - said about Jesus. If Jesus was not an Essene, then He was a Buddhist; or a proto-feminist and worshipper of the goddess 'Sophia'; or a Marxist revolutionary; or a politically correct left-winger who would feel at home on a university campus. It does not take much imagination to realize that excessive use of theory makes us see Jesus as we want to see Him, not as He was."

Resistance to Carsten Thiede's thesis about the Magdalen fragments came from many in academia but hostility has gradually lessened. "Yet it was clear that many found the mere suggestion that Matthew had been written so early in the first century unsettling to their own academic and theological convictions. The battle-lines between 'conservative' and 'liberal' remain stark in the world of

biblical scholarship. Indeed, many academics have found their progress up the academic ladder thwarted because of their **conservative views**; in some extreme cases, such scholars have been barred from the **more senior professorships**. For many academics, the redating of the Jesus Papyrus has become a symbol of the squabbles between conservatives and liberal establishment.

We believe that the coming debate on the **redating of the New Testament using papyrological research** is badly needed and will draw some of the poison from the argument.... The whole business of dating the Gospels is ..... fraught with difficulty. The external and internal evidence is limited. Speculation tends to follow inclination. Sceptics will look for later dates; theological conservatives will do the opposite. **This is why forensic evidence is so important**. There is a desperate need for an open-minded scholarly debate on the dating of the New Testament based on papyrological data rather than conjecture rooted in bias."

One early claim is that a Matthean source known as 'Q' and some minor sources were circulating between AD30 and AD 60.

"That may be so. But it now appears that the **finished Gospel according to St. Matthew was also circulating in codex form at this time**. It could conceivably have been read and handled by an eyewitness to the Crucifixion.

This suggests a great deal about the precocious development of the early Church before the destruction of the Temple. The men and women who founded the first Christian communities did so with remarkable speed and organizational skill, driven no doubt by a sense of apocalyptic mission and absolute spiritual responsibility. It also enables us to speculate in a different way about the nature of the Gospels, their character and their purpose. Many criteria have been proposed as ways of establishing the authenticity of statement in the New Testament....

No completely satisfactory criterion or set of criteria has been established. But surely a simpler criterion - the '**criterion of antiquity**' - has been overlooked? If material is older, it is *prima facie* more likely to be a reliable account of what happened. A diary written on the day of an event is - in most cases - better evidence than a memoir written forty years later..... ..... a religious text written twenty years after the events it describes is radically

different from one written forty years after..... If the so-called 'tunnel' separating the life of Jesus from the work of the Evangelists was short - perhaps years rather than decades - then we need not assume that their recollections were faulty or fabricated.... The redating does strengthen the view that, .... **'the Gospels are not a doctrinal speculation but the attestation of a fact'**.

And what more practical need could the early communities have felt than the need for authentic information about their Lord and Saviour? It is odd that the question of accurate witness has been accorded so little significance by recent scholars, given that it was clearly so important to the New Testament authors themselves. The Lucan Evangelist says that his history was handed to him **'by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word'** (Luke 1:2, REV).

The author of St. John, likewise, stresses that his account of the soldier piercing Jesus' side when he was on the Cross is based on eyewitness evidence: **'He who saw it has borne witness - his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth - that you also may believe'** (John 19:35, REV). Later the Evangelist is identified as **'the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true'** (John 21:24, REV). This suggests, like John 1:14, that the author also included many of his *readers* among the eyewitnesses of Jesus' life and resurrection..... The communities for whom the Gospels were written valued accurate testimony. To be a witness to Christ was to be part of a spiritual elite. In Acts 10:41, Jesus is said to have appeared **'not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses'** (REV). It was **not a claim made lightly or simply for show.**

The question of **reliable witness** was evidently one of deadly seriousness. In a series of influential books, the textual scholar Birger Gerhardsson ..... has shown how important the accurate transmission and learning by heart of holy tradition were in the Jewish milieu of the first century AD. **Diligent memorization of important texts and sayings**, he argues, was a sacred task. Paul speaks often of a tradition which was handed over and received between Christians (e.g. 2 Thess. 2:15) So does Matthew in chapter 15 of his Gospel (vs. 1-9). **The transmission of the good news from witness to witness, from witness to convert, from convert to scribe, was probably 'conscious, deliberate, and programmatic'.**

This, as Gerhardsson is the first to point out, does not mean that the Gospels were a stenographer's account of the life and work of Jesus. Equally, however, 'there is no reason to suppose that any believer in the early church could create traditions about Jesus and expect that his word would be accepted.'

Gerhardsson's work .... has much to tell us about the formal relationship between memory and text in the first decades of Christianity.

**The redating of the Jesus Papyrus should be considered in this context. If Matthew's Gospel was written before the destruction of the Temple - perhaps many years before - it was written for men and women who would look upon the events it described as recent reality rather than generations-old folklore. Some of them would have had direct experience of Jesus' ministry; many more would know those who claimed to have seen the miracles, the raising of the dead, even the risen Christ. Their faith was a tradition in the sense that it was a shared, recent experience rather than a body of folklore that had taken decades to evolve."**

"Whether or not one believes these events happened is entirely a matter of personal faith. What should not be doubted is that the authors of the Gospels considered them of overwhelming and perhaps even terrifying significance. We need to imagine people breathless with history, overcome by the impulse to record a quite exceptional occurrence. They felt a divinely inspired obligation to tell the world and posterity that God had been made flesh.

If we lose sight of this elemental truth about the origin of the Gospels - if we become too far drawn into questions of theory and genre and forget their sheer *urgency* - we lose sight of what these extraordinary books really are. In so doing, we forget what we behold: the ancient building blocks beneath our very feet."

"Bultmann was wrong: the authors of the Gospels could hear far more than the faintest whisper of Jesus' voice. Indeed, the first readers of St Matthew may have heard the very words which the Nazarene preacher spoke during His ministry; may have listened to the parables when they were first delivered to the present crowd; may even have asked the wise man questions and waited respectfully for answers. The voice they heard was not a whisper but the passionate oratory of a real man ..... whose teaching would change the world.



To say as much has implications beyond the scope of Biblical scholarship, wide as that is. Indeed, the **redating of the Magdalen Papyrus** speaks to those who have never heard of, or cared about, the centuries-old academic rows over the historic Jesus or the textual development of the Gospels. In the course of everyday conversation and correspondence, we have come to realize the extent to which this new claim is **directly relevant to the fundamental questions of faith** which all people, Christian and non-Christian, atheist and agnostic, must ask themselves. The redating of the St Matthew fragments, in other words, has a life beyond the confines of the academy.

Where will this lead? We live in an age consumed by doubt but desperate for certainty. In the West, there is a new faltering search across the political spectrum for new 'values', or ways of **reinstating traditional Judaeo [Hebrew]-Christian morality**. There is a general weariness with secularism and its aversion to clear morality. There is a corresponding hunger for ideas and policies which will assert some sort of moral framework. In the memorable words of an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*, there is a desire for 'guard-rails', the certainties which protect us from moral anarchy.

The key questions asked by ordinary people today - about family values and permissiveness, crime and punishment, duty and freedoms - are not so very different from the questions asked of Jesus more than nineteen centuries ago. **The New Testament remains a fundamental text for those seeking answers to these basic problems of the human experience."**

"In this context, the redating of the Gospels - a process which is only now beginning in earnest - may seem an enterprise appropriate to its times, to the mood of the millennium's end. There is now good reason to suppose that the **Gospel according to St Matthew**, with its detailed accounts of the Sermon on the Mount and the Great Commission, was written not long after the Crucifixion and certainly before the destruction of the Temple in AD 70; that the **Gospel according to St Mark** was distributed early enough to reach Qumran; that the **Gospel according to St Luke** belonged to the very first generation of Christian codices; and that the internal evidence suggests a date before AD 70 even for the non-synoptic Gospel according to St John.....

These are the first stirrings of a major process of scholarly reappraisal. It concerns all of the Gospels. It affects everyone who has read them or will read them.

Two thousand years after the birth of Jesus, the books that tell of His life are being analysed once more - not by priests, theologians or literary critics but by scientists. For centuries, science has quarrelled with faith..... Yet in the case which is this book's subject, empirical science may prove to be the handmaiden of faith rather than its arch-enemy.

This process of re-evaluation is an opportunity for ordinary people to look afresh at the New Testament and its relevance to their lives. No scientist can say that the Gospels are true. But he or she can form a judgment as to whether they are *authentic*..... Some people will say that evidence - the empirical findings of a science like papyrology - has nothing to do with faith and morality..... Others may take the opposite point of view and find their belief profoundly affected by the redating. They may see in the redating process an unexpected convergence of faith and history; a filling-in of what Gotthold Lessing called the 'ugly ditch' between the two.

For if the Gospels are more authentic than we thought, then perhaps the gap between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith is not as great as academics have claimed and Christians feared. These extraordinary books stand before us bathed in a new light of understanding. Jesus' voice seems anything but a whisper. In this sense, the Magdalen Papyrus speaks not only to the minds of scholars but to the hearts of all people."

(Reprinted from *Monthly Notes Supplement*, August, 1998)

## DISHONOURING THE LORD OUR GOD

Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.

Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:  
And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

**And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. (Ezek. 36:17-20)**

**Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;**

**And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.....**

**Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?**

**For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.**

(Refer: Romans 2: 17-24.)

In former times the House of Israel through their apostacy, moral depravity and bloodshed, lost possession of their Land of Inheritance, bringing disgrace upon the Name of the Lord their God in the lands to which they were forced to move. The Jewish Nation of our Lord's day not only lost possession of their Land, but also of the "Kingdom of God" (Matt. 21:43), because their witnessing to the Lord was that of words rather than actions.

Are our nations any better today? Our leaders are mostly unbelievers, our people are blasphemers and our corrupted youth feel lost and unwanted, many choosing to die rather than face the future. What do the "Gentiles" think of us today? Recently a letter was sent to George W. Bush by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The following is an edited extract of the letter, published by *The Guardian*, 11.05.2006, which was sent to your editor by a reader in England. It is well worth our attention.

(Note: The full text can be read at [www.guardian.co.uk/iran](http://www.guardian.co.uk/iran))

[Quote] For some time now I have been thinking how one can justify the undeniable contradictions that exist in the international arena. Can one be a follower of Jesus Christ, respect human rights, present liberalism as a civilisation model, announce one's opposition to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and WMD, make "war on terror" one's slogan and work towards the establishment of a unified international community - but at the same time have countries attacked, lives, reputations and possessions of people destroyed and, on the slight chance of the presence

of a few criminals in a village, for example, set the entire village ablaze?

Or because of the possibility of WMD in a country, it is occupied, around 100,000 people killed, its water sources, agriculture and industry destroyed, and the country pushed back 50 years. At what price? Hundreds of billions of dollars and tens of thousands of men and women - as occupation troops - put in harm's way, their hands stained with the blood of others. On the pretext of the existence of WMD, this great tragedy came to engulf the peoples of the occupied and occupying countries. Later it was revealed no WMD existed. Of course, Saddam was a murderous dictator. But war was not waged to topple him - the declared goal of the war was to find and destroy WMD. Throughout the many years of the war imposed on Iran, Saddam was supported by the west.

There are prisoners in Guantanamo Bay who have not been tried and have no legal representation, and their families cannot see them. There is no international monitoring of their conditions and fate. European investigators have confirmed the existence of secret prisons in Europe too. I cannot reconcile the abduction of a person, and him or her being kept in secret prisons, with any judicial system. For that matter, I fail to understand how such actions correspond to the teachings of Jesus Christ, human rights and liberal values.

Mr. President, I am sure you know how - and at what cost - Israel[i] was established: many thousands were killed in the process; millions of indigenous people were made refugees; hundreds of thousands of hectares of farmland, olive plantations, towns and villages were destroyed. This tragedy is not exclusive to the time of establishment; unfortunately, it has been ongoing for 60 years now.

A regime has been established that destroys houses while the occupants are still in them; announces beforehand its plans to assassinate Palestinian figures; and keeps thousands of Palestinians in prison. Is support for this regime in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ or Moses, or liberal values? Or are we to understand that allowing the original inhabitants of these lands - inside and outside Palestine - whether they are Christian, Muslim or Jew, to determine their fate, runs contrary to principles of democracy, human rights and the teachings of prophets?

The newly elected Palestinian administration recently took office. All independent observers have confirmed that

this government represents the electorate. The elected government has come under pressure and has been advised to recognise the Israeli regime, abandon the struggle and follow the programmes of the previous government. If the current Palestinian government had run on the above platform, would the Palestinian people have voted for it? Mr. President, the people of the region are becoming increasingly angry with such policies. Why is it that any technological and scientific achievement reached in the Middle East is portrayed as a threat to the Zionist regime? Is not scientific Research and Development one of the basic rights of nations? Lies were told in the Iraqi matter. What was the result?

I have no doubt that telling lies is reprehensible in any culture, and you do not like to be lied to. Don't Latin Americans have the right to ask why their elected governments are being opposed and coup leaders supported? Why must they constantly be threatened and live in fear? The people of Africa are hard-working, creative and talented. Don't they have the right to ask why their enormous wealth - including minerals - is being looted? The people of Iran, too, have many grievances, including the coup e'tat of 1953 and the toppling of the legal government of the day, opposition to the Islamic revolution and support for Saddam in the war waged against Iran.

September 11 was a horrendous incident. The killing of innocents is deplorable and appalling in any part of the world. All governments have a duty to provide security and peace of mind for their citizens. After 9/11, instead of healing and tending to the emotional wounds of the survivors and the American people, some western media intensified the climate of fear and insecurity. Some believe that the hype paved the way - and was the justification - for an attack on Afghanistan. Will the truth not be lost in a contrived and deceptive climate? Those in power do not rule indefinitely, but their names will be recorded in history. The people will scrutinise our presidencies. Did we intend to establish justice or just support special interest groups, and by forcing many people to live in poverty and hardship, make a few people rich and powerful? Did we defend the rights of all people around the world or impose wars on them, interfering illegally in their affairs? Did we tell the truth to our nation and others around the world?

How much longer can the world tolerate this situation? If billions of dollars spent on military campaigns were instead spent on investment and assistance for poor

countries, the establishment of peace, mediation between states, and extinguishing the flames of ethnic and other conflicts, would not your government and people be justifiably proud? Would not your administration's political and economic standing have been stronger? And, I am most sorry to say, would there have been an ever-increasing global hatred of the American government?

If the prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ishmael, Joseph or Jesus Christ were with us today, how would they have judged such behaviour? Is there no better way to interact with the world? Today there are hundreds of millions of Christians, hundreds of millions of Muslims and millions who follow the teachings of Moses. All prophets speak of peace and tranquillity - based on monotheism, justice and respect for human dignity. Do you not think that if all of us abide by these principles, we can overcome the world's problems? Will you not accept this invitation?

History tells us that repressive and cruel governments do not survive. The people of the world are not happy with the status quo. The people are protesting at the increasing gap between the haves and the have-nots, and the rich and poor countries. The people are disgusted with increasing corruption. The people of many countries are angry about the attacks on their cultural foundations and the disintegration of families. They are equally dismayed by the fading of care and compassion. The people of the world have no faith in international organisations, because their rights are not advocated by these organisations.

Liberalism and western-style democracy have not been able to help realise the ideals of humanity. Today, these two concepts have failed. Those with insight can already hear the sounds of the shattering fall of the ideology of the liberal democratic systems.

We increasingly see that people around the world are flocking towards a main focal point - that is Almighty God. Undoubtedly, through faith in God and the teachings of the prophets, the people will conquer their problems. My question for you is: "Do you not want to join them?" Whether we like it or not, the world is gravitating towards faith in the Almighty, and justice and the will of God will prevail over all things. [End quote]

Comment:

How sad is the plight of our Israel Peoples today who have been led astray by imposters, false shepherds, sceptical Biblical 'scholars', and the agents of the Evil One working

within all facets of our societies to destroy our Faith, our Culture, and our worth as witnesses to the God of our Fathers. We can take comfort, however, in the continuing words of Ezekiel chapter 36:21-28, 31:

**But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.**

**And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.**

**For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.**

**A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.**

**And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**

**And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.....**

**Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. (Ed.)**

## **GAZA**

### **IN THE HISTORY OF PALESTINE**

#### **(Part 2)**

The involvements of Gaza in warfare since O.T. times was noted in the January issue of the *Monthly Notes*. In WW1 the problem of defending Egypt from the Turco/German enemy was to be solved, not from the banks of the Suez Canal but from the eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula - the frontier of Palestine.

The western borders of Egypt had been secured by General Peyton's campaign in spring of 1916, but the Turks under Djemal Pasha still held the Sinai Peninsula. This left the Suez Canal, called by the Kaiser "the jugular vein of the British Empire", still in danger. The eastern frontier of Egypt needed to be secured at the east of Sinai.

By that time both the Turkish Army and the British were deeply involved in campaigns in Gallipoli and Mesopotamia. In 1914 the British had seized the oil rich

region of Basra, but in the April of 1916 the British forces under General Townshend had been soundly defeated at Kut al Amarah.. This was a great humiliation for the British army with 8,000 British troops taken prisoner, many of whom died in captivity. This defeat and the complete evacuation of Gallipoli at the beginning of 1916, was to begin a new and significant chapter in the history of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, under the command of General Sir Archibald Murray.

The organisation of mobile forces in addition to stationary defences was deemed essential for the provision of the offensive defence necessary, if the Turco/German army were to be driven out of the Sinai Peninsula and, eventually, out of the Holy Land. The only possible line of advance was along the northern coast of Sinai. In order to launch an offensive along this line an "iron road" - a standard gauge, military, desert railway was built from Kantara on the Suez Canal, through Katieh and El Arish to beyond Rafa on the border of Palestine.

This undertaking involved "work, intense and unremitting. To regain this peninsula, the true frontier of Egypt, hundreds of miles of road and railway had been built, hundreds of miles of water piping had been laid, filters capable of supplying 1,500,000 gallons of water a day, and reservoirs had been installed, and tons of stone transported from distant quarries. Kantara had been transformed from a small canal village into an important railway and water terminus, with wharves and cranes and a railway ferry; and the desert, till then almost destitute of human habitation, showed the successive marks of our advance in the shape of strong positions firmly entrenched, and protected by hundreds of miles of barbed wire, of standing camps where troops could shelter in comfortable huts, of tanks and reservoirs, of railway stations and siding, or aerodromes and of signal stations and wireless installations, by all of which the desert was subdued and made habitable, and adequate lines of communication established between the advancing groups and their ever-receding base."

In January, 1917, the conquest of Sinai was completed with victory at Rafa on the border of Palestine. The military railway continued its rapid advance with the completion of a railway station at Al Arish. The use of Mounted Divisions enabled sweeping movements on a wide front in waterless areas, in an endeavour to hold off the enemy's reinforcements. Those involved were the Imperial Mounted Division, the Imperial Camel Corps, the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division - the



Australian Light Horse and the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, which were later joined by the Indian Imperial Service Cavalry, and were used to great effect by General Allenby in the later Palestine campaign.

On March 26, the first battle for **Gaza** commenced but due to the difficulty of watering the men and their horses, and the impregnability of the city it was not successful. Surrounded by miles of practically waterless terrain Gaza was protected on the south-west, south, and south-east by a labyrinth of trenches, and within the city by thick cactus hedges in which were nests of Turkish machine guns.

The second battle for Gaza began on April 19 at 5.30 a.m., with the bombardment of the outer trenches by French and British naval guns. But again the attack was repulsed as the Turks, recently beaten in Mesopotamia by Sir Stanley Maude's brilliant victory at Baghdad, were determined to hold on to Gaza. In addition, the Arabs of the Hejaz had revolted against the Turks. In 1916 the King of Hejaz (the Grand Sherif of Mecca) had thrown off the Turkish yoke proclaiming independence for Arabia. He had proclaimed himself King Hussain I over a free and independent country, captured Mecca and formed an alliance with other rulers in Arabia. He raised several armies among the tribesmen to assist the British against the Turks. This was to be an invaluable factor in the later decisive campaign under General Allenby. Six months was to elapse with no change to the Gaza situation.

By midsummer 1917 the Bolshevik betrayal in Russia was changing the Allies' military situation from East to West. The British Government and War Office had to plan a campaign in Palestine on a special footing. As Russian co-operation was no longer to be relied upon the Mesopotamian operations were threatened with unanticipated difficulties.

A serious advance on the Palestine front was then projected for the following autumn and a new Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Edmund Allenby, took over on June 28, 1917.

After four months of preparation a new offensive was launched. The Turks held a powerful position stretching from the sea at **Gaza**, which had been made into a strong fortress, heavily entrenched and wired, 30 miles south-east to Beersheba, beyond which extended the waterless desert. General Allenby decided against direct assault against Gaza.

Von Kressenstein was in local command of the Gaza-Beersheba line while General Von Falkenhayn superintended operations on both Turkish fronts in Mesopotamia. Additional London Territorials and other British troops, as well as French and Italian detachments, were sent to assist General Allenby.

The Turks had the advantages of position and water, which was the chief difficulty Allenby had to face. Ample supplies of water were known to exist at Beersheba so its capture was a necessary preliminary to the assault on the Gaza/Beersheba line. The battle for Beersheba continued relentlessly all day, with the mounted troops advancing across the open plain from the east and north-east in small parties. They were making slow progress in the face of increasing opposition. However, in the evening the Australian Light Horse, in a final charge, rode straight at the town from the east, galloping over two deep trenches held by the enemy just outside Beersheba, and, entering the town at about 7 p.m., completed the defeat of the Turks.

Allenby's tactics against the rest of Von Kressenstein's Gaza to Beersheba Line were greatly successful. He had out-maneuvred an enemy which, barely inferior in number to his own army, "had every advantage of position in elaborately prepared lines of enormous strength" which fell one after another into his hands. And Gaza had at last fallen.

The gateway into Palestine was open and Von Kressenstein's last hope of saving Jerusalem had vanished.

"At the close of 1917 the position of our armies, both in Palestine and Mesopotamia, would have been critical but for the timely triumphs of Generals Allenby and Maude. By the middle of December, however, Allenby had broken the Turkish army in Palestine and captured Jerusalem." His Palestine campaign eventually resulted in the occupation of Damascus and Aleppo, and the final overthrow of the Turks.

"No operations had been more heavily handicapped by the Russian collapse than General Allenby's campaign in the Holy Land. The new turn of affairs not only revived all the Turco/German ambitions in the East, but deprived the liberator of Jerusalem of some of his best infantry divisions in order that they might strengthen the battered British line on the Western Front after Ludendorff's offensive in March. It meant the reorganization of the whole of Allenby's army, and the training of the newly-formed

Indian battalions sent to take the place of the British regiments summoned to France and Flanders.”

By October 31, 1918, Allenby had reached Aleppo on the Bagdad Railway from the south-west. British forces in Mesopotamia had advanced along the Tigris through Bagdad, Feluja, Tekrit and Mosul on the Bagdad Railway to the east of Aleppo. The two-pronged attack on Turkey had finally achieved its objective.

It is interesting how the names of places in modern-day news media echo the names of past eras. The battles of General Allenby's campaign are reminiscent of the times of the Judges in Israel. G. W. Gayer in his *Old Testament Chronology*, p.54, has an interesting comment regarding this period:

[Quote]..[P]ractically all the judges from Tola of Issachar (the 7th Judge) onwards, i.e., for about 100 years, had ruled in Northern Palestine and had all been “civil” judges. Under the circumstances, it is hardly strange that the priestly clan, concentrated as they were round the Tabernacle in Shiloh (in Ephraim), should aspire to power.

If it be borne in mind that God, Himself, “raised up the Judges” and “was with them” (Judges 2:18), and if it be noted that in Eli's case there is no mention of God having called him to the judgeship, it will be understood that, in all probability, it was not in accordance with God's will for the High Priest to assume the rule of God's people without being specially called to the office.

Shortly after he assumed power, the Philistine oppression began. God then endowed Samson of Dan very specially with superhuman strength, and the higher strength of His Holy Spirit to become Israel's Ruler.

His sphere of action was quite close to the Tabernacle at Shiloh, but he failed lamentably to rise to his unique opportunity, merely throwing away his great gifts in a striving after, through personal prowess, individual greatness. Having failed, he died without advancing Israel's cause.

Eli - the High Priest - assuming Temporal power, also failed for want of support from God.

It was only when God specially called Samuel, the Levite (c. 1151 BC), to the task that Israel was welded into the semblance of a nation.” [End quote]

General Allenby was known to be a man not only of great ability, but also of great integrity and faith. He was to

some extent aware of the tremendous significance of the date 1917 in regard to Biblical Prophecy and the City of Jerusalem. He was also aware of the spiritual significance of the City where the Lord God of Israel had placed His Name, and where our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Saviour, had Died and Risen Again.

The more recent great efforts of ex-President Clinton in negotiating peace in the Middle East were unfruitful. It is well known that they were made largely to secure for himself the Nobel Peace Prize.

Once again Gaza is a key element in the present Palestinian troubles. Israeli leader Ariel Sharon was able to take Israelis out of Gaza because only a small minority of Jewish settlers valued anything that was there. He had no intention of assisting the Palestinians to form a socially and economically viable State, or to achieve the self respect necessary for responsible behaviour.

The political divide within the Palestinian inhabitants is centred on the question of the Israeli State's right to exist, many Palestinians continuing to regard the Israelis as an occupying enemy.

The Israelis will agree to a two-state solution, i.e. to have a Democratic Palestinian State living by its side, but will not relinquish the territorial borders it won in the 1967 War, which again was fought over the Israeli State's right to exist. These borders are a substantial improvement on the borders agreed to in 1948.

Sir Max Hastings, former editor in chief of London's *Daily Telegraph* has stated:

“It seems almost lunatic for Israel to seek to live as a neighbour with a Palestinian Community dominated by Israeli strategic roads, fortified settlements and a vast wall. The only plausible outcome is a chronically embittered society, which continues to behave with reckless and violent irresponsibility because it perceives no incentives to do otherwise.”

So the stalemate continues. We must wait for God's solution as it is obviously beyond the ability of men to solve. The vital element is the “blindness” of true Israel.

(Main historical reference: *The Great War - A History* Gen .Ed. Frank A. Mumby F.R. Hist. S. Vols. 6, 7 & 8) (Ed.)



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**(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)**

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### **BY FAITH ALONE**

If through unruffled seas,  
Calmly in life we sail,  
With grateful hearts, O God, to thee,  
We'll own the favouring gale.

But should the surges rise,  
And rest delay to come,  
Blest be the sorrow, kind the storm,  
Which drives us nearer home.

Soon shall our doubts and fears  
All yield to thy control;  
Thy tender mercies shall illumine  
The midnight of the soul.

Teach us in every state,  
To make thy will our own,  
And when the joys of sense depart,  
To live by faith alone.

Augustus M. Toplady

## THE WILDERNESS OF TRIAL

After our Lord Jesus Christ's baptism when the Spirit of God had descended upon Him in preparation for His Ministry, and the Voice from heaven had proclaimed:

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,  
He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested.  
This had been prefigured in a sense by God's dealings with His People Israel after their redemption from Egypt.

God said:.....thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn..... (Ex. 4:22)  
And again, When Israel was a child, then I loved him,  
and called my son out of Egypt. (Hos. 11:1)

Scripture records Israel's wilderness journey after they had received their national Law and Constitution from the Lord God at Sinai. In Deuteronomy 8:1-7 we read:

All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these FORTY YEARS in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

And he humbled thee, and SUFFERED THEE TO HUNGER, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by [obeying] every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land.....

Being a spiritually undisciplined and rebellious people Israel failed each of their trials in the wilderness, complaining, rebelling against God, and disobeying His commands. They were fearful, doubting that the Lord could protect them from the dangers of the wilderness and give them victory over the giants of Canaan. And when Moses was in the Mountain receiving the Law from God, they demanded of Aaron **an idol to worship.**

(Ref. Deut. Chs. 8 - 9).

What a contrast is the account of the Spirit filled Son of God as He contended with the Tempter, who tried to entice Him to prove that He was the Son of God.

First, when physically weakened by HUNGER after FORTY days and nights in the wilderness, He was tempted to perform a miracle by turning stones into bread (Matt. 4:3-4).

But he answered and said,  
IT IS WRITTEN, Man shall not live by bread alone,  
but by [obeying] every word that proceedeth  
out of the mouth of God.

He was then tempted to put His Father on trial by proving that He would protect His life as it had been written:

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for IT IS WRITTEN,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, IT IS WRITTEN again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. (Matt. 4:5-7)

Lastly He was tempted to worship another instead of His Father, for His own personal gain.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him,

All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down  
and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for IT IS WRITTEN, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. (Matt. 4:8-10)

Being totally obedient to God's commands and requirements, our Lord was committed to perfect fellowship with His Father and would not allow anything, even death, to stand between them.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became OBEDIENT unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8)

This conflict with Satan in the wilderness demonstrated His complete submission to God's power and will, and the fact that He was, indeed, the **Son of God**.

True Israel, nationally, has failed to make God's wonders and blessings known as a continuing witness to His power throughout the world, because they have been slaves to sin (constant rebellion against the Lord God).

Their human frailty has made it impossible for them to remain obedient servants. A more faithful Son was required - hence the necessity for Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed Saviour, to perform the great Work of Redemption.

His perfect obedience enabled Him to offer Himself to God as the perfect substitute because He alone had not transgressed the Law and so fallen under its curse. **His obedience** is what allows us to be set free from the law of sin and death.

Our Lord referred to Himself also as the "Son of Man" (Matt. 8:20; John 1:49-51) but He didn't deny Nathanael's identification of Him as "the **Son of God**", the "**King of Israel**". And this is the one great hope of our Israel nations today. After centuries of wilderness trials followed by a few periods of faithfulness and many periods of apostacy, true Israel is promised national restoration under the rule of the Son of God, their Saviour, Redeemer and coming King. At this time their national obedience will be assured because God has promised:

I will put my law in their inward parts,  
and write it in their hearts; and will be their God,  
and they shall be my people. (Jer. 31:31-34)

As individual believers we also have our wilderness trials. Though these may be different for each person perhaps they fall into the three categories involved in our Lord's testing.

Do we constantly need a miraculous element to bolster our faith? Do we make signs and wonders the basis for our faith? Or can we rest peacefully in the witness of Creation and the Word of God?

Do we put God on trial by placing ourselves in knowingly dangerous situations, e.g., driving too fast; delving into the occult, or the intellectual theories of men; or over-committing our finances to personal projects; and expecting Him to take care of us?

Do we place the words of a human leader above the Word of God by lazily accepting his interpretation without checking it by the Scriptures? Or perhaps we go along with the teachings of a group in order to maintain a status within that group. Do our jobs, families, hobbies, take precedence over our spiritual lives? Are we afraid of losing the respect of our companions by owning our Saviour?



Some of the Jews who witnessed our Lord's miracles told their leaders about Him.

Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and TAKE AWAY BOTH OUR PLACE AND NATION. (Jn. 11:47-48)

Their positions were more important to them than the coming of the Promised Seed (Gen. 3:15) The Messiah!

We are all vulnerable to the enticements of the Evil One, but we have one sure remedy, and that is to obey the Commands of God. **"Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him."** The Lord Jesus also said: **If ye love me keep my commandments** (Jn. 14:15)

But herein lies our dilemma. Do we know our Bibles well enough to know what these commands are, and how they apply in our lives and to the age in which we live? Paul and Silas drew attention to the Jews of the Synagogue in Berea, who were "more noble than those in Thessalonica,"

**in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, whether those things were so** (Acts 17:10 & 11).

*Blessing can only come with obedience. Obedience can only come with knowledge of the Word of God.*

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 advises us as follows:

**"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:**

**Fear God, and keep his commandments:**

**for this is the whole duty of man.**

For God shall bring every work into judgment,  
with every secret thing, whether it be good,  
or whether it be evil."

The expression, "**the fear of God**", is the pivot of all the Bible's Wisdom Literature (Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10). [Quote] "*Secular philosophy* tends to measure everything by man, and comes to doubt whether wisdom is to be found at all. But the *Old Testament* with this motto turns the world the right way up, with **God at its head**, *His wisdom* the creative and ordering principle that runs through every part; and man, disciplined and taught by that wisdom, finding life and fulfilment in His perfect Will." (Lion Handbook to the Bible 1977, p. 318) (Ed.)

## BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

[Quote] The salvation of man includes his restoration into the image of God and the calling implicit in that image, to subdue the earth and to exercise dominion (i.e., *the power or right to rule and control* - Ps. 8:3-8). Hence, the proclamation of the Gospel was also the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, according to all the New Testament.

A radical deformation of the gospel and of the redeemed man's calling crept into the church as a result of the philosophy of *neoplatonism*. Dominion was renounced, the earth regarded as the devil's realm, the body despised, and a **false humility and meekness** cultivated. Dominion was regarded as a burden of the flesh rather than a godly responsibility. Especially with Pietism (i.e., the emphasis on personal religious feelings and devotion), Jesus was pictured as meek and helpless, pacifistic and mild of manner.

The word 'meek' is a Biblical term. It is used in Numbers 12:3 - (Now the man Moses was VERY MEEK, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

Moses hardly conforms with modern ideas of meekness. John Marsh in *Interpreter's Bible* v.2, p.201, gives the meaning of 'meek':- "Moses does not fight for his own status before men, but is concerned to be **Yahweh's servant**. Therefore **Yahweh** cares for him and his position among the people."

The word 'meek' thus refers primarily to a spiritual state in relationship to God.....

C. J. Elliott, in *Ellicott*, v. 1, p. 516, noted: "It may be observed, further, that the word *anav*, 'meek,' is frequently interchanged with the cognate word *ani*, and that the meaning may be '*bowed down, or oppressed*.'"

The meaning is further clarified by the Beatitude: "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth*" (Matt. 5:5). Dominion over the earth is given to the meek, and meekness clearly has reference to God. The meek are the redeemed whom God has *burdened, oppressed, and broken to harness*, so that they are tamed and workable.

God subjected Moses to a more rigorous discipline than any other believer of his day, and Moses accepted that oppression, grew in terms of it, and became disciplined and strong. Hence, Moses was the meekest man of his age.

Meekness is thus not mousiness, but disciplined strength in, and under, God.

Jesus Christ described Himself as “*meek and lowly in heart*” (Matt. 11:29) ..... He described Himself as such in relationship to those who sought Him. But in His relationship to the Pharisees and Sadducees, Christ’s conduct was firm and resolute. As Christ used the term meekness, it meant, **not the surrender** of dominion, but rather the wise, merciful, and gracious **use** of dominion.

We cannot understand the meaning of meekness in Scripture unless we realize this..... The blessed meek are the tamed of God, those harnessed to His law-word and calling, who shall inherit the earth. The blessed meek are those who submit to God’s dominion, have therefore dominion over themselves, and are capable of exercising dominion over the earth.

They therefore inherit the earth.

The purpose of the Law is to give man the *God-appointed* way to dominion. The purpose of the call to obedience is to exercise that dominion [under God].

[End quote]

(From: *The Institutes of Biblical Law* by R.J. Rushdoony, 1973, pp. 449 - 450)

## THE EXPLOSION OF EVIL

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.....

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

(Gen. 6:5, 12)

Then God’s judgment fell upon the Adamic earth in the form of the Noachic Flood.

On May 21st this year the *Sunday Herald Sun* reported on the removal of Bibles from bedsides in hospitals including the Royal Melbourne, the Royal Children’s, the Austin, The Alfred, the Monash Medical Centre, and Box Hill, Maroondah, Dandenong and Casey Hospitals. Several schools had refused the free distribution of Gideon Bibles to their students. The excuse was that as we are now a multicultural nation, non Christians might be offended by the Bibles.

One letter to the paper stated: “Thanks to some near-sighted politicians, we are in the middle of the monster

called multiculturalism. [Another called it the cancer of political correctness]. It has turned our land into one of fear and uncertainty. Australia has lost its identity and is a melting pot of people controlled by laws that attempt to stifle. Christianity is being very subtly removed from our culture. To withdraw Gideon Bibles from hospital bedsides and see some schools preventing students being given free Bibles is the last straw.....”

This is a further example of the relentless endeavour to rid the world of the Biblical standards of ethics and morality which gained increasing momentum last century. The effects of this are becoming more and more obvious today.

An article in the *Herald Sun* 04.08.06, entitled *God Takes an Almighty Battering*, stated that a new study has revealed that less than 50 percent of Australia’s Young Generation identify with traditional religion, while Tarot Readers and Psychics are riding the wave of youth demand. A large number of Victorian parents are now hiring professional card readers and fortune tellers to appear at their children’s 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties. Most young Australians classify **their spirituality** as humanist or eclectic, and many are happy to dabble in alternative spiritual practices. [It is suggested that such “spirituality” would emanate from the domain of Satan].

In June, *The Age*, 22.06.06, reported that the biggest Presbyterian Church body in the US had approved a policy that will open the way for the ordination of gays and lesbians - a policy accepted on a vote by 57 percent of 500 church representatives of the Presbyterian Church USA. A member of the Group backing the change claimed that it was wrong to interpret the Bible literally on homosexuality. The same article reported that the US Episcopal Church was on a collision course with the world Anglican communion regarding the election of gay bishops.

The *Sunday Herald Sun* on 4th June reported that Victorian schools are being advised to dump the words “mother” and “father”, for “parent” or “carer”, by a controversial **new teachers’ manual** that promotes the cause of same-sex parents. It recommends that posters of gay celebrities be put up in schools and gender-specific toys discarded. It also suggests that pupils as young as five should act out scenarios in which they have two mothers, and have discussions about discrimination. This contentious manual, used in dozens of Victorian schools, is aimed at teachers of prep to year three pupils.

A recent international study by the OECD places Australia at the top of the developed world's list for violent and sexual assault. Pornography is easily available and broadcasting standards do not protect children's viewing time. Though illegal in each of our States, X-Rated videos are available in, and from, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, where numerous, appalling sex crimes committed against Aboriginal women and children - even babies - have recently been uncovered.

In *On Target* 23.06.06,, James Reed writes that this "horrible assault on womanhood - is really a twisted, alcohol-based version of White-fella's porno magazines..... The 'descent into hell' that Aborigines face is a by-product of tolerated racially suicidal evils that are eating away, somewhat more slowly, and at lower abuse rates at White Australians as well.

American hip-hop video clips with Black gangster rappers singing misogynist lyrics along with hard core pornography was the fuel for violence in indigenous communities. Rap music celebrates violence and the degradation of women - especially White women. Songs by Black rappers freely advocate shooting White police officers and raping White women. Black women are treated as sex objects.

This music would be contrary to the race-hate clauses of the Racial Discrimination Act but it is sold freely in big music shops because it is pushed by the Music Industry. If a White said even one hundredth of what these groups say, he would be gaoled. This music of hate is even more socially destructive than pornography."

James Reed also reported on the Chinese treatment of their Falun Gong, a spiritual movement, many of whom have been imprisoned. He quotes *The Advertiser*, 21.04.06, p. 34, as reporting that many of these prisoners are beaten unconscious to save on anaesthetic and then harvested for their organs. This is one of China's big businesses: supplying organs to wealthy foreigners and local Chinese."

The effects of gambling, alcohol and drug abuse are well documented affecting old and young alike, destroying families and communities and causing untold tragedies on our roads. A growing problem also, is the undisciplined disregard of road regulations. Motorists drive unroadworthy and unregistered vehicles. Many drive above the speed limit, and while using mobile phones.

The *Sunday Age* 24.07.06 featured an article on the alarming number of weapons being carried by children, who it

describes as “engaging in an arms race that mirrors the mad brinkmanship of the Cold War.” Melbourne has been shocked by a recent spate of stabbings. Boys are described as “running for their lives as machete-wielding foes bear down on them.” Increasingly, school children of **all** racial groups, are carrying weapons to protect themselves. Girls are also involved, many carrying bags which conceal the “booze and blades for their boyfriends.”

Another report in a local paper stated that knife-wielding vandals had left a \$15,000 trail of destruction in an inner city suburb, damaging cars and private property in an overnight rampage during which car tyres and canopies were slashed, windscreens broken, panels damaged and letter boxes and fences broken.

And so we could go on and on, the horrors of today’s world are endless - trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings as well as animals, sex slavery, drug cheats in sport, bogus drugs sold in Third World countries netting millions for the perpetrators, ecological destruction of vast areas out of greed for money, and increasing violence involving women and children. As the Bible is disparaged and disbelieved, its moral code scorned, and its Author rejected, so man’s fascination with evil expands and the quality of community life continues its downward spiral.

One would have thought that the perversion of sex had reached its zenith with the explosion of pornography and its related evils on the internet. However, we can now read about: “The Irresistible Rise of Cybersex. From full-on encounters to online dating with a twist, simulated sex is on the up in mainstream gaming.”

“Games’ developers are teaming up with the pornography industry to **open up cybersex to the masses**. This collaboration has led to the first generation of erotic, multiplayer online games,” [e.g., *Naughty America*] which includes virtual rape.

Such games will go **beyond online sex** - they will tie cybersex to online dating. (Ref. *New Scientist* 17.06.06 pp. 30-31)

Although it is very difficult to prove, people have for a long time argued that committing crimes in games encourages the same behaviour in the real world. This view is ignored by those who would profit by promoting such games. One virtual world consultant claimed that “adults have a right to play with their own fantasies, which can be sexual and dark, as long as it doesn’t give them the propensity to do that to other people.”

He also commented on the challenge of multiplying the obsessive passions of sex with those of game-play, saying : “If you can get it right, you can **make a fortune.**”

So the propensity for evil in people’s hearts (Jer. 17:9-10) is not only to be encouraged, but to be harvested so that others can “make a fortune”!

On the subject of pornography *On Target Bulletin*, 28.07.06 quoted the late Ivor Benson as follows:

“The civilization that has come into existence in the West has seriously disturbed the relations of the sexes, the main symptom of this disturbance being the progressive break-up of the family as an institution. Pornography and sex crime are, therefore, only two aspects of a single all-embracing problem of **social disintegration** in which class war was replaced by a sex war..... Even primitive societies recognise that their well-being and survival require the **containment and regulation of the sexual appetite**..... In a word, people must learn how to live with the sexual appetite and to **control** rather than **be controlled** by it.....

Pornography whether promoted for commercial gain or for purposes of cultural subversion can be described as a deadly social evil.....” This could also apply to Cybersex.

Proverbs 23:7 warns that as a man “**thinketh in his heart, so is he**”. Even man’s wisdom tells us to “**think positive, or think pleasant thoughts**” if we desire good health.

God’s way for enjoying peace of heart and mind is given in Phil. 4:8:

**Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true,  
whosoever things are honest, whatsoever things are  
just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things  
are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;  
if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,  
think on these things.**

The choice is ours. We are instructed to walk not in the flesh, but in the Spirit: Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

Let us take note of Isaiah 26:9 which reads:

“..... when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

As the Flood came to Noah's wicked generation so also it was not until the iniquity of the Amorites was "full" that the seed of Abraham (as the Children of Israel) were allowed to take the Promised Land (Gen. 15:16).

When the Israelites of the northern Kingdom of Israel became nationally apostate and evil, God allowed the Assyrians to conquer them and deport the survivors to Assyrian territories (2 Ki. 17:1-18). Likewise, over 140 years later, an evil and apostate Kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the Babylonians and its inhabitants deported to Babylon (2 Ki. 25:1-21). When iniquity reaches a peak, the "judgments of God" fall - whether it be upon His People of Israel or Judah, or upon the nations of the world, because evil brings its own repercussions and retributions.

We are today facing a very serious period in the history of our People and of our World, which has but one hope for its inhabitants - the return to earth of Messiah the King, our Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 49:5-6 record the words spoken to the Messiah by the Lord God:

**And now, saith the LORD that formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and My God shall be My strength.**

**And He said, It is a light [small] thing that thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel:**

**I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles [nations], that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth.** (Ed.)

## **THE UNPOPULAR PATH OF TRUTH**

by

**Rev. Dr. David Powys,**

**Vicar of the Anglican Parish of Mount Eliza.**

*From: The Age 06.06.1996.*

**What role is there for the Church in contemporary Australian society?**

While some see no place for the Church, most would not agree. The majority of Australians, even though not churchgoers themselves, want the church to stay. They want the church there for a rainy day, and particularly for when tragedies hit..... An obliging, pastoral church is one thing. Sometimes, however, the church takes on less popular roles. It quickly attracts critics when it assumes a challenging, prophetic role.



The modern church has many critics, but they are not agreed. For some the church is too modern, for others it has "passed its use-by date". For some it is judgmental, for others it has failed to give moral leadership. For some it is irrelevant, for others it has become too immersed in the world. For some it has engaged wrongly in political debate, for others it has erred in failing to engage that debate. The church's critics are deeply divided, a thing that will make it impossible to please everyone. This raises the question, **"Who should the church be pleasing?"**

John Carroll in his article *Teaching Youth to Seize the Day*, 17.05.1996, charged that "the failure of traditional religious institutions to maintain faith and belief is a major link in the causal chain that has led to youth disillusionment". He implied that the church ought to provide meaning and hope for society in general, and youth in particular. But will anything do? Will just any faith or belief that counteracts alienation and meaninglessness suffice? Or is there some obligation regarding truthfulness?

Taking a medical analogy, is the obligation to offer the treatment that best relieves the pain, or the treatment that actually tackles the disease. If the church has to decide between words of comfort and words of truth, which should it choose?

If God is seen as the source of truth, this dilemma takes on another dimension. Put baldly, the dilemma becomes, "Should the church supply and promote whatever faith people find conducive and reassuring, or should it proclaim the saving truths it has from God?" This question is: "To whom should the church be true?"

In an age when there is a new openness to faith and spirituality, and an increasing willingness to embrace a range of beliefs at odds with orthodox Christian convictions, the church faces a real dilemma. Should it embrace, affirm and endorse the diverse and often contradictory spiritual fashions of modern society? Should the church adopt the tenets of modern popular "spirituality", including the notions that everything is divine; people are intrinsically good; divinity exists for the benefit of humanity; evil, death, pain, suffering and even life itself are illusory; all religions are the same; truth is subjective; and human obligation ends with self?

To take this course would be one way of trying to maintain faith and belief. It might boost the acceptability and

popularity of the church, and it might bring comfort to some. But would this ultimately help anyone come to terms with earthly and heavenly realities?

The alternative is an unpopular and costly course. It will attract criticism and resentment, especially from those who would have the church do homage to a god of their own devising and convenience. Yet this hard course is the right course if the church is to remain true to its calling to be "in" but not "of" the world. In the spirit of the apostle Peter - who, refusing to succumb to human persuasion, declared, **Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.**

**For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:19-20)**

the modern church must remain true to God's revelation. To do less would be to fail to be the church, to become severed from the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Such a church will refuse to abandon convictions that flow from that revelation: the goodness of creation; the dignity of every human being; the peril facing humanity on account of human wilfulness; the reality of sin, suffering and death; the primacy of justice and the divine obligation under which humanity stands; Christ's redeeming death, offer of forgiveness and invitation into His eternal kingdom; the gift of the Holy Spirit and the prospect of Christ's future coming to restore this broken and divided world.

**History has repeatedly demonstrated that when the church becomes confused about its loyalties, the well-being of society is itself jeopardised.**

When the church has been willing to merely mirror public opinion or parrot the words of rulers and governments, it has **lost its saltiness**. When it has been prepared to say "Thus says the Lord", without fear or favour, even when this has met with scorn and derision, then it has **best served wider human society**. It was at the darkest moments of [Biblical] Israel's history that the voices of the prophets were not heard, or worse still, when false prophets called "peace, peace" when there was no peace.

In evaluating the contribution of the modern church, we will do well to remember that truth will not always bring comfort, and comfort does not necessarily bring salvation. Heaven help us if the church ever **abandons the task of speaking the truth** in order to become the endorser of smooth and self-indulgent popular "faith" and "belief". []

## GAZA (Part 3)

In March this year after defeating Fatah in elections, Hamas took control of the Palestinian Authority. This triggered a freeze in foreign aid. In order to create stability and **avoid an humanitarian crisis** the Quartet of international mediators (the US, Russia, the EU and the UN) agreed to send direct humanitarian support to the Palestinian Authority, but bypassing the Hamas Government, as Hamas refused to accept Western demands to recognise Israel and renounce violence.

Four months later the humanitarian crisis is a tragic reality. However, though the world is seeing events in Lebanon, little is now being shown of the continued suffering in Gaza. The contents of an e-mail sent from Gaza posted by mideastinfo@link.net July 11, 2006, 10.26 p.m. headed "*Israel is a Terrorist State - America Her Ally in Evil*", was reproduced in *On Target* July 28, 2006.

[Quote] Southern Gaza is in total darkness... northern Gaza has a few lights. About an hour ago, Israel bombed with F-16's the only power station left in Khan Younes plunging it into total darkness too. Do you know what it means to be without electricity for 10 days in today's world? No water, no sewage, no cooling, no storing of whatever food is left, no communications .... etc.

..... tonight like every night, Israel has been bombing and missiling Gaza and flying over it all night with sonic booms to scare the people and especially the children who are totally terrified..... Israel is targeting civilians and killing dozens.

One of the strongest armies in the world has declared war on a population that does not even have an army! Water is lacking, food is scarce, medicine has run out, fuel has run out....and Israel refuses to let trucks carrying supplies enter Gaza to save a civilian population which was already condemned to live in refugee camps because Israel kicked them out of their homes and stole them.

When Israel first bombed Gaza's power mains, hospitals resorted to using their generators. But generators can only keep going if there is fuel..... and there no longer is fuel. The sick and elderly who live on machines are slowly dying. Babies in incubators are dying. With the increasing rubbish that can no longer be picked up from the streets, diseases are starting. A humanitarian disaster is taking place in Gaza now and Mr. Bush, his Israeli White House, ..... are laying the grounds for their attack on Syria and Iran.... And the world is silent.

None of this would be happening were it not for the American tax-payer who for decades financed and is still financing every bullet and missile being shot from Israel. The US has created a monster that now controls it. US soldiers are fighting Israel's dirty war in the Middle East. US soldiers are dying so that Israel can prosper.....

Where is that great nation that we were all told represented "freedom" and "liberty"?.....

While I am writing this, I am watching the rescue of bodies from a building that collapsed in Gaza about an hour ago after it was bombed by Israeli F-16's. I see panicked and scared Palestinians lighting the collapsed building with their torches and digging with their hands in the rubble to find survivors. I see a hand sticking out of the rubble and it is still moving. A body is under a heavy concrete wall which no one can move without a bulldozer... but there is no fuel and no bulldozer to help. Palestinians don't have bulldozers. [End quote]

The following article appeared in *The Age* written by Tariq Ali and quoted from *The Guardian*. (Date not known)

[Quote] Lebanon a Pawn in Mid-East Colonial War:

In his last interviews, after the 1967 Six-Day War, the historian Isaac Deutscher, whose next-of-kin had died in the Nazi camps and whose surviving relations lived in Israel, said: "To justify or condone Israel's wars against the Arabs is to render Israel a very bad service indeed and harm its own long-term interest."

Comparing Israel to Prussia, he issued a sombre warning: "The Germans have summed up their own experience in the bitter phrase 'Man kann sich totseigen!' 'You can triumph yourself to death'."

In Israel's actions today, we can detect many of the elements of hubris: an imperial arrogance, a distortion of reality, an awareness of its military superiority, the self-righteousness with which it wrecks the social infrastructure of weaker states, and a belief in its racial superiority. The loss of many civilian lives in Gaza and Lebanon matters less than the capture or death of a single Israeli soldier. In this, Israeli actions are validated by the US.

The offensive against Gaza is designed to destroy Hamas for daring to win an election. The "international community" stands by as Gaza suffers collective punishment. Dozens of innocents continue to die. This means nothing to the G8 leaders. Nothing is being done.

Israeli recklessness is always green-lighted by Washington. In this case, their interests coincide. They want to isolate and topple the Syrian regime by securing Lebanon as an Israeli-American protectorate on the

Jordanian model. They argue this was the original design of the country. Contemporary Lebanon, it is true, still remains in large measure the artificial creation of French colonialism it was at the outset - a coastal band of Greater Syria sliced off from its hinterland by Paris to form a regional client dominated by a Maronite minority.

The country's confessional chequerboard has never allowed an accurate census, for fear of revealing that a substantial Muslim - today perhaps even a **Shiite** - majority is denied due representation in the political system.

Sectarian tensions, over-determined by the plight of refugees from Palestine, exploded into civil war in the 1970s, providing for the entry of Syrian troops, with tacit US approval, and their establishment there - ostensibly as a buffer between the warring factions, and a deterrent to an Israeli takeover, on the cards with the invasions of 1978 and 1982 (when Hezbollah did not exist).

The killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri last year provoked vast demonstrations by the middle class, demanding the expulsion of the Syrians, while Western organisations arrived to assist the progress of a Cedar Revolution. Backed by threats from Washington and Paris, the momentum was sufficient to force a Syrian withdrawal and produce a weak government in Beirut.

But Lebanon's factions remained spread-eagled. Hezbollah has not disarmed, and Syria has not fallen. Washington has taken a pawn, but the castle has still to be captured.

I was in Beirut in May, when the Israeli army entered and killed **two "terrorists"** from a Palestinian splinter group. The latter responded with **rockets**. Israeli warplanes punished Hezbollah by dropping more than **50 bombs** on its villages and headquarters near the border.

The latest Israeli offensive is designed to take the castle. Will it succeed? A protracted colonial war lies ahead, since Hezbollah, like Hamas, has mass support. It cannot be written off as a "terrorist" organisation. The Arab world sees its forces as freedom fighters resisting colonial occupation. There are 9000 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli gulags. That is why Israeli soldiers are captured. Prisoner exchanges have occurred as a result.

To blame Syria and Iran for Israel's latest offensive is frivolous. Until the question of Palestine is resolved and Iraq's occupation ended, there will be no peace in the region.

A UN force to deter Hezbollah, but not Israel is a nonsensical notion. [End quote]

Sharon's decision to move Israelis out of Gaza and separate unilaterally from the Palestinians was a bold step towards the Right's dream of a Greater Israel. With Sharon's political demise and no other Israeli politician strong enough to replace him as the leader of the Israeli people, a unified political decision on an alternative solution to the impasse by all factions may be a long time coming.

Meanwhile the establishment of a viable and independent Palestinian State is impossible with the Palestinians sealed off in enclaves on the West Bank, and the continued expansion of Israeli settlements near Jerusalem.

Even with an end to present hostilities it is unlikely that either Hamas or Hezbollah will ever agree to recognize Israeli's right to exist in what they consider to be their land, or to cease hostilities, particularly after so much destruction, suffering and death has been endured.

We can expect continued unrest in this area as men seek to achieve a peace which God alone can create, and which He has ordained. His peace, however, can be made only with the true seed of Israel who are the rightful inheritors of this Land, and after so many intervening years only God knows those who qualify. (Ed.)

## EVANGELISTS SUPPORT ISRAEL

*The Age*, 10.08.06, carried an article by Alec Russell of Washington entitled *American Evangelists See God at Work in Israel*. He comments that anyone wanting to understand why Israel has unwavering support from the US should speak to Fiery television evangelist, Pastor John Hagee, who has become the rallying voice for thousands of American Christians who believe Israel is doing God's work in a "war of good versus evil".

Last month he was cheered to the rafters by 3500 prominent evangelicals, as well as by Israel's ambassador to the US, a former Israeli chief of staff and a host of US congressmen from both sides of politics. Twenty-five years ago Mr. Hagee was denounced as a heretic when he urged his fellow preachers to speak out in support of Israel. But today most of America's 60 million Christian evangelicals, who make up about a quarter of the US electorate and form the core support base for George Bush, are behind the President's pro-Israeli position and are pushing for a showdown with Iran. As many as half are Christian Zionists.

Mr. Hagee said that there is literally a groundswell of support for Israel in the US among evangelicals. What we have done is united all of this evangelical horsepower. Mr. Bush has sent him a message of support. As head of Christians United for Israel, which links hundreds of US evangelical leaders, Mr. Hagee is one of Israel's most influential supporters. He is expecting a religious war between Islam and the West, and thinks the end of the world as we know it is rapidly approaching.

### Comment:

One would wonder how so-called Christians could support an atheistic regime which is also blatantly Christ rejecting. A regime which would appropriate to itself the whole of true Israel's heritage - the territory of the whole 12 Tribes, when at best Israeli represents a small number of descendants of the Two Tribes which formed the smaller Kingdom of Judah.

After the Babylonian Captivity of Judah from 585 BC a small remnant of the deportees was allowed to return to Jerusalem. These formed the basis of the Nation of the Jews which developed in Palestine until destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

Their absorption of other races as proselytes throughout their history is well documented. For example, the Idumean [Edomite] population in the south was forcibly integrated by circumcision in 125 BC under John Hyrcanus. These people were powerful in the nation of our Lord's day. Further infusions of non-Israelite people occurred in the AD centuries, e.g. the Chazars, a Turko/Mongul people embraced Judaism as their state religion from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Their descendants also are now known as Jews.

Recent television programmes discussing the archaeology of Palestine have highlighted the fact that many Israeli Jews do not accept Bible history but see the Biblical story of Abraham and his descendants as a composite of three traditions dating from around the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. How can the claim of their atheistic politicians to the Land of Palestine be valid if the promise to Abraham were only part of a tradition without any real foundation?

Mr. Hagee's position would seem to be the result of a shallow understanding both of Bible history and prophecy. His pronouncements are having far-reaching effects due to his influence on President Bush, who it would appear has only a simple understanding of Bible teaching.

Writing in the *American Free Press*, 20.03.06, p.4, Michael Collins Piper states that "the unAmerican thought police operating on American soil have struck once again. This time their victim is veteran Christian evangelist Dale Crowley, Jr. who has been the host of two popular radio programmes broadcast over WFX 1220 AM radio in the Washington area for the last 20 years.

Crowley was told by the president and general manager of WFX, that his Saturday morning broadcast, "Focus on Israel," was terminated immediately. He was not even given an opportunity to bid farewell to his long-time listeners. The programme was cancelled by the WFX management because supporters of Israel had complained to the radio station about Crowley's criticisms of Israel.

Over the years Crowley has been critical of Israel. He has dared to broadcast facts about efforts by the Israeli government to curtail the work of Christian missionaries in the Holy Land, even to the extent, as Crowley has pointed out, of laws introduced in the Israeli parliament that would penalize Christians who engage in missionary work among the Israelis, requiring that those convicted of evangelism be sent to jail.

In addition, Crowley has used his WFX broadcast to tell Christians in the Washington area of how the Israelis have oppressed Christian Palestinians, uprooting them from their homes, vandalized Christian churches in the Holy Land, and otherwise made life difficult for Christian Palestinians and other Christian Arabs in the Middle East.

Crowley has upset many supporters of Israel by pointing out that under the thinking of such Christian supporters of Israel as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Tim LaHaye, a New York-born Jewish atheist has more right to live in the Holy City of Jerusalem than a Palestinian Christian minister whose family has lived there for 1,000 years.

For daring to speak truths such as this, Crowley's "Focus on Israel" programme has been banned from the air waves by the management of WFX radio although it is quite clear, according to observers who have been investigating the matter, that there was heavy-handed pressure brought to bear on WFX..... Yet the Christian management of WFX has bowed to the demands of the Zionist lobby and is silencing Crowley. They have also told him that, in addition, he is not allowed to talk about "Israel" in future broadcasts of "*The Kings Business*", his daily programme.



Since the term "Israel" is mentioned in the Scriptures over 2,500 times, it will make it difficult for him to speak about the Scriptures.

In the meantime, WFAA critics note, there are **pro-Israel** broadcasters appearing on WFAA radio, such as one Sid Roth, who repeatedly praise Israel. II

## THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

(From *Voice of Israel - Identity Believers in Ulster No. 170*)

In early April news organizations breathlessly reported the "discovery" of a new Gospel - the "Gospel of Judas", as it is being called.

Actually the discovery wasn't new, since the ancient papyrus codex a small book written in the ancient Egyptian Coptic language had been discovered sometime in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and was offered for sale by an Egyptian antiquities dealer in 1983. What was new was that it had been translated and was now the subject of a TV programme, magazine cover story and two books by the prestigious National Geographic Society.

Could this actually be a document authored by Judas, the disciple who infamously betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver as recorded in the Bible? If not, what exactly is it?

An April 7 USA Today cover article stated, "The Gospel of Judas takes a whole different vision of the life, death and purpose of Jesus." And indeed it does. To a regular Bible reader, the text is so strange as to be virtually incomprehensible. Apart from a few names familiar to Bible readers, the manuscript is utterly foreign.

That's because "the Gospel of Judas" is one of a number of gnostic writings discovered in Egypt during the last century. Gnosticism, which takes its name from gnosis, the Greek word for "knowledge", was a movement that began in the first century and flourished for several centuries. This particular document has been dated to AD 220 to 340, when the gnostic movement appears to have been near its peak in Egypt.

Gnosticism emphasized special or secret knowledge (hence the name of the movement) involving mysticism, cosmology, the angelic realm and the soul. A basic (but heretical) premise of the "Christian" version of gnosticism was that

Jesus was never a real flesh and blood human being like us, but only appeared to be human.

These strange and antibiblical beliefs permeate "the Gospel of Judas." The translation of the document provided by the National Geographic Society is filled with references to mystical gnostic teachings on cosmology, imaginary spirit realms, ranks of angelic creatures and spirit beings called "aeons."

Since it is the product of a strange sect with no real connection to Jesus Christ or His disciples, it presents a vastly different view of God and Jesus Christ. For example, it has Jesus mocking the disciples for praying to "your god," a being who, in gnostic theology, was inherently evil and corresponded to the God of the Old Testament.

It contradicts the record of the authentic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in many ways. It has the disciples seeing visions and Jesus interpreting those visions. It states that Jesus often appeared to the disciples not as Himself, but as a child. It has the disciples getting furious at Jesus to the point that they "began blaspheming against him in their hearts."

It also bizarrely has Jesus describing Judas, who in reality was a thief and betrayer whom Jesus called "the son of perdition" (John 17:12), as the disciple who "will exceed all" the other disciples by playing a role in the killing of Jesus' physical self so His supposed inner man could be set free.

Regular readers of the Bible are no doubt familiar with the fact that the New Testament books constantly quote and refer to the Old Testament, demonstrating the unity found throughout the Scriptures. It is striking that this manuscript contains no quotes or accurate references to anything else found in the Bible, other than the last few sentences briefly describing Judas betraying Jesus for money.

And, of course, it is difficult to imagine when Judas would have written his story down or told it to someone else, since Matthew records that shortly after betraying Jesus, Judas was filled with remorse, returned the money to the priests and committed suicide by hanging himself (Matthew 27:1-5).

It is not surprising that this document should vary so greatly from biblical teaching. The bizarre philosophies expressed in it simply did not exist when Jesus Christ actually lived. These ideas came along several decades later and weren't

fully developed for another century or two which is when the Gospel of Judas" was written.

The Daily Telegraph (London) summed up this incongruity well in quoting Aberdeen University New Testament scholar Simon Gathercole, who said: "It is certainly an ancient text, but not ancient enough to tell us anything new. It contains themes which are alien to the first century world of Jesus and Judas, but which became popular later. An analogy would be finding a speech said to have been written by Queen Victoria, in which she talked about her CDs" (April 7).

This so-called "Gospel of Judas" serves no useful purpose for Christians other than to show how utterly clouded and confused human thinking becomes when we reject the truth of God and His Word. []

## MARONITES

Maronite Christians, the followers of one John Maron, a monk of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, who assumed the title of "Patriarch of Antioch." They were an Oriental body which seems originally to have been heretical, a remnant of the \*Monothelites and \*Monophysites.

In the course of time the Maronites spread all over Syria, and became a small though independent nation. Their liturgy is in Syriac, but the Gospels are read in the local Arabic.

The Maronites remained spiritually independent until 1182, when, through the influence of the Crusaders, they became attached to the Roman Church. Since 1860 the Maronites have been much weakened through conflicts with the Druses (Mohammedans). In that year nearly 2000 were massacred in the streets of Damascus on one day.

They are now largely restricted to the Lebanese Republic.

### **\*Monophysites:**

An early Christian sect who believed that the divine and human natures of Christ were so united as to constitute a single nature. The sect was originated in the 5<sup>th</sup> century by Eutyches, and represented a zealous protest against the teachings of Nestorius. The term Monophysite was first used after the condemnation of the doctrines by the fourth general council held at Chalcedon in 451.

### **\*Monothelites:**

A Christian heretical sect which grew out of the attempt of the Emperor Heraclius to reconcile the Monophysites to the Catholic Church in 630 by publishing an edict asserting the existence of both human and divine natures, but only one will, in Christ. The sixth general council, held at Constantinople (680-1), decided that the two wills were harmonised in the Person of Christ, and anathematised the Monothelites, who soon afterwards disappeared. []

## **THE RED SEA PARTS**

At a rupture of the Earth's crust in the Afar Depression, at the southern end of the Red Sea magma is pushing the ground apart as the African tectonic plate moves away from the Arabian plate.

Tim Wright, of the University of Oxford, and his colleagues used the European Space Agency's Envisat radar satellite to monitor the uneven rift. In September 2005 they observed a sudden 8-metre widening in the Afar region of Ethiopia, accompanied by small earthquakes and a volcanic eruption. The pressure created by magma funnelling along underground cracks can account for 92 percent of the movement. (*Nature*, vol. 442, p.291)

## **QUAKE FEARS HAUNT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

While San Franciscans justifiably worry about living near the San Andreas fault, many forget that southern Californians too live in fear of their own "big one".

No major quake has struck the southern San Andreas fault in at least 250 years, and scientists say that the region is now primed for a release of the built-up tension. A new study, by geophysicist Yuri Fialko of the University of California, San Diego, provides the most precise measurements of this accumulated strain.

Deep within the earth's crust, the west side of the San Andreas Fault has moved relative to the east by as much as eight metres since the region's last earthquake. But closer to the surface the two sides of the fault are jammed against each other, building up ever-increasing strain, which is on a par with the maximum movement ever experienced between quakes - enough energy to unleash a magnitude 8 earthquake if the strain were released all at once. This would cause a major disaster. []



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endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian H.Q.) Inc.)

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## ALL THAT THE PROPHETS HAVE SPOKEN

“And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned,

**Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them.**  
But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.  
**And He said unto them,**

**What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are SAD?**

And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? **And He said unto them, What things?** And they said unto him, Concerning *Jesus of Nazareth*, which was a **PROPHET mighty in deed and word** before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him.

But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not.

**Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe ALL THAT THE PROPHETS HAVE SPOKEN: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?**

**And beginning at MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, He expounded unto them in ALL THE SCRIPTURES the things concerning Himself.**

And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.

**And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.**

**And *their eyes were opened, and they knew Him;* and He vanished out of their sight.**

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?

And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake,

**Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them,  
and saith unto them, PEACE BE UNTO YOU."**

(Luke 24:13-36)

As we look about us today and see worldwide, the suffering of helpless peoples and animals, experience the disintegration of our own Christian-based way of life, and view the human tragedies resulting from encroaching climate change, we also are made sad. Our Lord's advice to the "two" was that if they had **believed all** that the Prophets had spoken, they would have known that He had to suffer, die and rise again, **before** He could return in glory to restore Israel and take up His Throne.

Through the sadness of their loss of Him they were pointed to the **written Word of God** as preserved in their day, to find comfort in all the Scriptures (the O.T.) from the things concerning Himself.

"Moses and the Prophets" contain the whole story of the Promised "Seed" (Gen. 3:15) whose **temporary** sufferings (a bruised heel) would lead finally to the **complete destruction** of Satan and his works (a bruised head).

There was no other PROPHET in Old Testament times

**"like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt....." (Deut. 34:10-12)**

A true Prophet, he **spoke forth God's words** faithfully (Jer. 23:28). [A false Prophet speaks his **own words** deceitfully].

## THAT PROPHET

As the greatest of human prophets, Moses typified "**that prophet**" who the Lord God had promised to send at a future time:

**"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee [Moses], and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him.**

**And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him". (Deut. 18:18-19)**

The Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask the little known John the Baptist who **he** was. They asked if he were Elijah, or "***that Prophet***", but he answered, "No." It was Peter who confirmed that the Son of God - the Prince of Life - Jesus Christ, was indeed "***that Prophet***" promised so many years before (Acts 3:22-26; Jn. 6:14; Acts 7:35-37).

God had performed signs and wonders through the agency of Moses in Egypt, at the Red Sea and in the wilderness. He likewise performed greater wonders through His Son, Who calmed the storm, healed the sick and the lame, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, fed the multitudes - even as under Moses, Israel was fed with manna (Ex. 16:14-16), and finally rose, Himself, victorious over death.

The intricate and highly significant Tabernacle and Ordinances of Worship given to Israel through Moses were prophetic of the Life, Person, Work and Destiny of the promised Seed whose life on earth was lived in total dedication to the Will of God, and whose voluntary death fulfilled God's requirements of perfect Justice and perfect Love. This provided the way for men to communicate again with God, to approach Him in repentance and humility, and so to obtain pardon for their sins, and the gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

While on earth our Lord "spoke the words of God" thus fulfilling His role as "*that Prophet*". After His ascension, His apostles spoke and wrote His words thus carrying on His role as Prophet through the Written Word of God as embodied in the New Testament. The last book of the N.T. sets forth in prophetic imagery the historical phases in the battle, political and religious, which was to be waged on this earth between Satan and Christ, until Satan is vanquished and his influence in this world finally eradicated. The battle was to continue on throughout the Christian era from our Lord's day to the time of the Second Resurrection and the final judgement (Rev. 20:7-15).

Revelation 19 verse 10 tells us that

**the testimony [witness] of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, and this is confirmed by the opening three verses of the Book:**

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.**

**Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time [the right time or season] is at hand.**



The gradual fulfilment of the prophecies in the Book of Revelation has been a sure witness to the truth of Scripture and a light in the darkness to those with eyes to see.

## **PRIEST**

Psalm 110:4 promises that the Coming One would be also  
a **PRIEST** forever after the order of Melchisedec.

(Ref. Heb. 5:5-10; 6:18-20; 7:24-25; 10:12).

This was fulfilled after our Lord's Resurrection, when He ascended to be seated at His Father's right hand:

**Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.**

(Rom. 8:34)

## **KING**

And the Prophet Zechariah records the prophecy of His yet future rule on earth as **KING**, at which time the two offices of Priest and King will be combined.

**Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH.....  
Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of PEACE shall be between both [offices].**

(Zech. 6:12-13)

The O.T. Scriptures foretold God's whole plan for the conquest of Evil, the Salvation of men, and the Redemption of His Servant Nation, Israel. Many prophecies are given, most of which have been fulfilled. Isaiah ch. 53 is a clear reference to our Lord's suffering and death, as is Psalm 22, while Daniel chapter 9:20-27 foretells the time period of the Messiah's Sacrifice.

But there are many other prophetic statements regarding Him which are shown by the New Testament record to have been fulfilled. And there are those in both the O.T and N.T. Scriptures which deal with His glorious return to earth to rule as King of Kings, which are yet to be fulfilled (e.g. Psalms 47, 72 and 146; Micah 4:6-7; Zech. 14:9; Rev.11:15 and 19:11-16.)

Prophecies are also given of historical events past and future which can be understood by a study of Biblical prophecy in relation to history, but these are evident only to those willing to spend time studying their Bibles in this regard. The Book of Daniel, for example, contains a preview of the rise of four great empires of history - Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece and Pagan Rome.

This preview is continued in the N.T. Book of Revelation, which pictures, in chapter 13, the Pagan Roman Empire as a composite of the previous three empires which were successively consumed to form it. These are depicted in Daniel chapter seven as a Lion, a Bear and a Leopard.

Rev. 13:1-2 states:

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. [Pagan Rome]

And the beast which I saw was like unto a LEOPARD, and his feet were as the FEET OF A BEAR, and his mouth as the MOUTH OF A LION: and the dragon [Satan] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Its further development as the Papacy (verse 11), whose subsequent church structure, operation and character, modelled on Pagan Rome, is entitled the *Image of the Beast* (verse 14).

Both the Books of Daniel and Revelation are continuous history pre-written in symbolic form. For those to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God they are a guide through the political chaos of the centuries, and a comfort in knowing that God's **foreknowledge** of the outcome of man's chosen degradation enabled the Remedy to be foreordained (Refer to Jn. 1:29, Rev. Ch. 5).

**Fulfilled prophecy** is a great proof of the truth of the Word of God, and was given to us so that we would know that our God was the One and only Living God, able to know and proclaim the end from the beginning.

I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: BEFORE they spring forth I TELL YOU OF THEM. (Isa. 42:8-9)

**I have even from the beginning declared it to thee;  
BEFORE IT CAME TO PASS I SHOWED IT THEE:  
lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my  
graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded  
them. (Isa. 48:5)**

We are to believe **ALL** that the prophets have spoken - not *just some*. The Jews believed the prophecies of the glory but not those of the sufferings, and cast out their Messiah.

We live at a time when much of prophecy has been fulfilled so we have much to comfort us and strengthen our belief. However, though prophecies referring to the end of this age and heralding our Lord's return (e.g., Zech. Chs. 12-14; Mal. Ch.4; Matt. 24:27-44; Luke 21:25-36) may concern us deeply, we must believe **ALL** that the prophets have spoken. We have, therefore, much to look forward to as we contemplate our Lord's radiant return and the glorious operation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Well might we pray:

**"Thy kingdom come,**

**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."**

At last true Peace will come to our sad and despoiled world.

**For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the  
government shall be upon his shoulder:  
and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The  
mighty God, The everlasting Father, THE PRINCE OF  
PEACE.**

**Of the increase of His government and PEACE there shall  
be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His  
kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment  
and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal  
of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isa. 9:6-7)**

Even amid today's unrest and violence we have the promise that the **PEACE OF GOD**, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through **CHRIST JESUS**. (Phil.4:7).

May we all find that PEACE in Him. (Ed.)

# THE ORACLES OF GOD

What advantage then hath the Jew?  
Or what profit is there of circumcision?  
Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them  
were committed [entrusted] the ORACLES OF GOD.  
(Rom. 3:1)

It was Moses who received from God on Mount Sinai the "lively oracles" [or "living utterances"] for the establishment of Israel as God's kingdom on earth (Acts 7:38). These living utterances were the Law of God, recodified at Sinai as the Constitution of the fledgeling Israel Nation.

The worship of the Lord God was to be preserved by the Tribe of Judah (Ps. 78:67-69). This was particularly evident in the days of King David, the great Psalmist of Israel, who carefully set in order the ritual of divine worship, establishing Zion as God's Holy Hill.

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob  
from a people of strange language; JUDAH was [became]  
his SANCTUARY, and Israel his dominion. (Ps. 114:1-2)

The House of Judah was to be entrusted with preserving the O.T. Scriptures as, in a later period, the Apostle Paul was to be "put in trust with the Gospel" (1 Thess. 2:4).

Because of Solomon's later idolatry the Lord God purposed to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms giving the greater part - the Ten Tribes - to *Jeroboam* (1 Ki. 11:28-31) to rule over, but only one tribe to *Rehoboam*, the son of Solomon.

(But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)......

And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David [of Judah] my servant may have a LIGHT always before me in JERUSALEM, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. (1Ki. 11:32 & 36)

Psalm 119:105 describes the Word of God as  
a lamp unto my feet, and a LIGHT unto my path.

Judah had been given custody of that LIGHT - The Word of God received at Sinai, but Jerusalem was in Benjamin's territory. This is why the Tribe of Benjamin was given to *Rehoboam* to become part of the Kingdom of Judah, so that the Light of God's Word could always be before the Lord in *Jerusalem*. (Ed.)

## WE HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR BELIEF

[Quote] In many important matters everyone recognizes the need for an authority - a supreme "court of appeal" higher than which no one can go. In the realm of supernatural things there is only *One Authority* recognized by Christian people. This is not the church, nor the "infallible" words of men, nor one's own ego, nor a hierarchy of Roman "priests," Protestant ministers, or Jewish rabbis. All such are fallible and prone to error and prejudice.

The Bible makes high claims to Divine inspiration, inerrancy and authority; and if it is true that the Sovereign God of the universe has condescended to reveal Himself supernaturally in His Book, even as He has revealed Himself naturally in the material universe, then man - even in a world ruined by sin - has a **firm foundation** on which to build for time and eternity.

That the Sovereign God of creation has done this in the Holy Scriptures is acknowledged by many earnest Christians, but a question arises which demands a clear answer: "Which Bible do you mean?"

A century or so ago this question would have had but one answer - the King James Version; but now many new translations demand recognition and prominence - *the Revised Version, the American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, the Knox Version, the Anchor Version, etc., etc.*

Jasper James Ray, missionary and Bible teacher, in the splendid book, *God Wrote Only One Bible*, says -

"A multiplicity of differing Bible versions are in circulation today, resulting in a state of bewildering confusion. Some versions omit words, verses, phrases and even chapter portions which are well known to be included in a number of ancient manuscripts. In some of these new versions words and phrases have been added which have no corresponding basic expression in authentic copies of the Hebrew and Greek. Among these you will not find the Bible which God gave when holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16)."

Ray asserts that while the true Christian religion puts the inspired Word of God above everything else, the false system puts something above the Bible or places human tradition in a chair of equal authority with it. At the Council of Trent in 1546 fifty-three prelates made a decree declaring that the **apocryphal books** together with **unwritten tradition** are of God and are to be received and venerated as the Word of God.

In the primitive church the only authentic Scriptures recognized were those given by the inspiration of God. These are the true Word of God, and through His gracious providence and infinite wisdom the stream of the life-giving water of God's inspired Word has come to us crystal clear.

The god of this world directs his attack first on the character and Person of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, and then on the integrity and accuracy of the written Word of God - THE BIBLE. From the beginning there has been no pause in the assault on God's Son and God's Word.....True, they finally crucified Him, but only by His permission; for it is written,

Therefore doth my Father love me, because

I lay down my life, that I might take it again (Jn. 10:17).

And in many other ways the hatred of Satan toward the Son of God has been manifested.

In the second arena, that of the Word of God Written, Satan is more than ever active today. From the very outset, when he cast doubt upon God's Word in the Garden with the question, Yea, hath God said.... ? he has sought to corrupt or destroy that which God has caused to be written.

The power and providence of God are displayed in the history of the preservation and transmission of His Word, in fulfilment of the promise of the Son of God,

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass,  
one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law,  
till all be fulfilled (Matt.5:18).

Our Lord was not given to exaggeration, and God's holy Law was not confined to the commands of Sinai but is set forth in all that He inspired his prophets and apostles to write.

The whole realm of created things is ordered and sustained by the over-ruling providence of God, Who upholds all things by the word of His power. The Scriptures make it quite clear that He is also well able to insure the providential preservation of His own Word through the ages, and that He is the Author and Preserver of the Divine Revelation.

The Bible cannot be accounted for in any other way..... Those who reject this as impossible would reduce the Almighty to the stature of a fallible man, but  
**with God all things are possible.** [End quote]

(From: *Which Bible?*, Edited by David Otis Fuller D.D. pp. 1-5)

## THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

During the period of political and linguistic decay from 500 - 164 BC, following the Babylonian Captivity of Judah, the Jewish Nation was subservient first to *Persia* and then *the Greeks*. The only certain literary works in Hebrew written during this period were Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles and, as would be expected, they are all characterized by Persian, Babylonian, and Aramaic words - Ezra being nearly half Aramaic, a North West Semitic dialect. This became the *Lingua franca* of all South West Asia during the Persian Empire (539-331 BC), as a result of the traffic of Aramaean merchants.

The Hebrew works written before this period do not contain Persian, Greek or Aramaic words.

The period following 164 BC saw independence for the Jewish Nation and by 104 BC under Judea's John Hyrcanus and his son Aristobulus I, the kingdom was extended to include Samaria, Galilee, Idumea, and lands east of Jordan. Alexander Jannaeus extended the boundaries further until in 64 BC Judea was subdued by the Roman General Pompey and, on the completion of his conquest of Palestine in the next year, made part of the Roman province of Syria.

Renewed literary activity in the Jewish Nation during this period produced the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works of *Ecclesiasticus*, *Wisdom*, *Maccabees*, *Jubilees*, parts of *Enoch*, and many other works of greater or lesser

value. Only *Ecclesiasticus* has been preserved in Hebrew. However, its language differs markedly from the Hebrew of Ecclesiastes, the Psalms and earlier Hebrew works both in vocabulary and forms, demonstrating its later period of origin.

Jerome (AD 345-419) advocated excluding the apocryphal books from the Canon of Scripture. However, some of the early Church fathers, including Augustine, did accept them - but not necessarily on a par with the Hebrew O.T.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the (Protestant) Reformers affirmed *Solar Scriptura* - that the **Bible alone** is authoritative revelation, and thus denied the Apocrypha a place among the inspired writings because it contained errors.

The Roman Church reacted against the Reformers at the Council of Trent (1545-1563) by stating that all the Apocrypha was canonical. Protestants and Catholics have maintained this difference since that time.

[Quote] The O.T. Canon was generally agreed upon ..... from the time the last O.T. book was written. How did the scholars know which books were inspired? They chose the books written by those known as spokesmen for God. They studied those books carefully and found no errors in history, geography, or theology.

Christians in the early church applied similar tests to prove which N.T. books were authentic and which were not. A key test was *apostolic authorship*. Every N.T. book had to be written by an apostle or a close associate of the apostles. For example, Mark, who was not an apostle, was a companion of Peter. Luke who was not an apostle, worked closely with the Apostle Paul.

A second test used by the early church was content. Acts 2:42 tells us that the first time the church met, they gave themselves to prayer, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the apostles' doctrine. Later, in considering which writings were to be revered as Scripture, they asked, "Does it agree with apostolic doctrine?" This test was very important because of all the heretics that tried to worm their way into the church. But their doctrinal errors were easily spotted because they contradicted the apostles' teaching.



A third test was *the response of the churches*. If God's people accepted it, used it for worship, and made it part of their lives, and if Christians were universally being taught and blessed by the book, that was another important stamp of approval.

By AD 404 the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible was complete. It was the earliest known translation of all sixty-six books of the Bible. They were the same books we still have in our modern English Bibles. God spoke once for all, and His Word has been preserved through the ages.

From the time of the apostles until the present, the true church has always believed that the Bible is complete. God has given His revelation, and now Scripture is finished. God has spoken. What He gave is complete, efficacious, sufficient, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative. Attempts to add to the Bible, and claims of further revelation from God have always been characteristic of heretics and cultists, not the true people of God.....

It has always been important to be able to separate God's Word from that which is false. God worked through an historical process to establish the authenticity of the Canon so that the whole church might have a clear standard. If we now throw out that historical standard and redefine inspiration and revelation, we undermine our own ability to receive God's truth. If we subvert the uniqueness of the Bible, we will have no way of distinguishing God's voice from man's.....

The Holy Spirit's role is to *empower* us as we preach, teach, write, talk, witness, think, serve, and live. He does *lead* us into God's truth and direct us into God's will for our lives.

**But He does it *through* God's Word,  
never apart from it.**

To refer to the Holy Spirit's leading and empowering ministry as *inspiration or revelation* is a mistake.....

The terms and concepts of Ephesians 5:18-19 and 2 Peter 1:21 are not to be mixed. Being filled with the Spirit and speaking to one another in psalms and hymns is not the same as **being moved by the Holy Spirit to write inspired Scripture.**

[End quote]

(From: *Charismatic Chaos* by John F. MacArthur, Jr., pp.74-77)

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

With the so-called 'critical method' being applied to sacred history during the past two centuries, many Christians have had their faith in the veracity of the Scriptures shaken. The result of the destructive work of such 'modern scholarship' is the diminishing faith in the teachings of Scripture.

But how do the so-called 'modern scholars' compare with the literary giants of the previous era - men such as Prof. Robert Dick Wilson, M.A., Ph.D., Princeton, (1856-1939)? Determined to be able to investigate and answer any attack made on the Text and the Verbal Inspiration of the O.T., he mastered, through long years of continuous study, all the ancient languages and dialects needed to read the manuscripts of the Bible; forty-five ancient tongues\_ in all.

Then for 45 continuous years he devoted himself to "the one great study of the Old Testament, in all its languages, in all its archaeology, in all its translations, and as far as possible in everything bearing upon its text and history." He claimed, therefore, to speak as an **expert**.

He said, "*I may add that the result of my forty-five years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that in the Old Testament we have a true historical account of the history of the Israelite people; and I have a right to commend this to some of those bright men and women who think that they can laugh at the old-time Christian and believer in the Word of God.*"

His aim was to reduce the O.T. Criticism to an absolutely objective science; something which is based on **evidence** rather than on **opinion**. A *textual expert* must be "a master of paleography and of philology; to have an exact knowledge of a dozen languages at least, so that every word may be thoroughly sifted. To ascertain the true text of the O.T. is fundamental to everything concerning Bible history and Bible doctrine."

After 30 years given to a study of the Text he stated, "*I can affirm that there is not a page of the O.T. concerning which we need have any doubt. We can be absolutely certain that substantially we have the text of the O.T. that Christ and the Apostles had, and which was in existence from the beginning.*"

Dr. Wilson called attention to the fact that "while the study

of the religious systems of the ancient peoples has shown that there was amongst them a groping after God, nowhere is it to be seen that they reached any clear apprehension of the One True God, the Creator, Preserver, Judge, Saviour and Sanctifier of His people. Their religions were of an outward kind; the O.T. religion is essentially one of the mind and heart; a religion of love, joy, faith, hope, and salvation through the grace of God.

How can we account for this? The prophets of Israel declared that their teaching came from God.

The modern critical school is antagonistic to this claim. They say that the prophets gave utterance to the ideas of their own time, and that they were limited by their environment.

But if this is so how does it come about that neither from the oracles of Thebes and Memphis, nor from Delphi and Rome, nor from Babylon, nor from the deserts of Media, but from the sheep-folds and humble homes of Israel, yea, from the captive by the river of an alien land, came forth those great messages of hope and salvation?

One of the mighty phrases of Scripture is that of '**God with us**'; this is the key which unlocks the mysterious chambers of the Old Testament, and opens to us their rich and enduring treasure."

Dr. Wilson considered that much of the material called by the critics '*the assured results of modern scholarship*' is nothing more than the quicksand footsteps of inexcusable ignorance.

"The evidence on which the destructive critics base their conclusions, [he] found to be utterly worthless.

Concerning the evidence for the orthodox position he writes: 'The evidence in our possession has convinced me that "at sundry times and in divers manners God spoke unto our fathers through the prophets," and that the Old Testament in Hebrew, "being immediately inspired by God," has "by His singular care and providence been kept pure in all ages." ' ' ' (Quotes are from *Which Bible?* pp. 42 - 48)

(Ed)

## THE MASSORAH

(Ref. *Companion Bible Appendix 30*)

All the oldest and best manuscripts of the **Hebrew Bible** contain on every page, beside the Text (which is arranged in two or more columns), a varying number of lines of **smaller** writing, distributed between the upper and lower margins. This smaller writing in the margins is called the *Massorah Magna* or Great Massorah, while that in the side

margins and between the columns is called the *Massorah Parva* or Small Massorah.....

The word *Massorah* is from the root *masar*, to *deliver something into the hand of another*, so as to commit it to his trust. Hence the name is given to the small writing referred to, because it contains information necessary to those into whose trust the Sacred Text was committed, so that they might transcribe it, and hand it down correctly.

The Text itself had been fixed before the *Massoretes* were put in charge of it from around AD 600. This had been the work of the *Sopherim* (from *saphar*, to count, or number). Their work, under Ezra and Nehemiah, was to set the Text in order after the return from Babylon; and we read of it in Neh. 8:8:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

[Ezra the priest is described as “a ready scribe in the law of Moses”; and “the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord and of His statutes to Israel.” (Ezra 7:6, 11)]

The men of “the Great Synagogue” completed the work, which lasted about 110 years, from Nehemiah to Simon the First, 410-300 BC.

The *Sopherim* were the authorised revisers of the Sacred Text; and, their work being completed, the *Massoretes* were the authorised custodians of it.

[The *Massoretes* were a body of Jewish scholars who made it their business to hand down what they believed to be the true Text of the O.T.]

The *Massorah* is called “A Fence to the Scriptures,” because it locked all words and letters in their places. It does not contain notes or comments as such, but facts and phenomena. It records the number of times the several letters occur in the various books of the Bible; the number of words, and the middle word; the number of verses, and the middle verse; the number of expressions and combinations of words, etc. All this, not from a perverted ingenuity, but for the set purpose of safeguarding the Sacred Text, and preventing the loss or misplacement of a single letter or word.

It must be remembered that printing was not invented until AD 1454. For all the centuries before then books existed only as handwritten copies called “manuscripts” from the Latin meaning ‘written by hand’. The Massoretic rules and notes were an endeavour to guard against copyists’ mistakes, which crept in due to human error, being repeated each time the manuscript was recopied. Any discrepancy discovered was duly noted in the margins but the Text itself was not altered.

The *Massorah*, therefore, is not contained in the margins of any one Manuscript (MS). No MS contains the whole, or even the same part. It is spread over many MSS and Dr. C. D. Ginsburg was the first and only scholar who set himself to collect and collate the whole, copying it from every available MS in the libraries of many countries. He published it in three large folio volumes, and only a small number of copies was printed. They were obtainable only by the original subscribers.

A vast number of the Massoretic notes, however, concern only the orthography, and matters that pertain to the Concordance. But many of those which affect the sense, or throw any additional light on the Sacred Text, are noted in the margin of *The Companion Bible* [a valuable study aid.]

## THE UNPUNCTUATED TEXT

Hebrew writing has changed over the millennia. In the time of the Judah Kingdom Hebrew was written in characters which were common to the Hebrews, Samaritans and the Phoenicians, and have been preserved in the manuscripts of the Samaritan Pentateuch. The oldest extant examples are on the Moabite Stone dating from c. 900BC, and carved on the conduit leading to the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem, dating from c. 700BC.

They also appear on coins and later inscriptions, which show a gradual change in the old, stiff characters to the more cursive forms used after the Babylonian Exile when the influence of contemporary Aramaic writing in Syria and Arabia was felt. Later, with the intention of making the writing of the Sacred Books more beautiful, the square characters were developed and were adopted as the essential form for manuscripts of the Scriptures. To these were added vowel points and accents to indicate the pronunciation of each word.

A similar thing happened in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD when the

handsomest uncial writing - detached capital letters - came into use in great copies of the Greek Bible.

Originally the Hebrew Text was written in consonants only, the vowels being left to the reader's mind to supply. The words were not separated one from another. It was from such a text that the Greek Septuagint Version was translated. The divisions of the Books themselves into paragraphs and verses were made in very early times and were indicated in the manuscripts by blank spaces of greater or lesser size. Regarding the Massoretic Text, manuscripts exist which collectively give us a good representation of a text which reached its final shape about the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. There is evidence that the scholars who made this final revision did not substantially alter the text which had been in use for some five centuries previously, i.e. from AD 100. But did this text represent what had been written in previous centuries?

It has been suggested that when the Jews under Ezra and Nehemiah returned from Babylon to set up the Jewish Nation (from 535 BC) one of the Divine motives was the preservation of the Scriptures down through the centuries. From that time the *five Books of Moses* ( the Law) were regarded as most sacred and the greatest care came to be devoted to copying them with perfect accuracy and studying minutely every word that they contained. At the time of our Lord the text of the Law was held in the utmost veneration and the class of the Scribes whose special duty was to copy the sacred Books, was fully established and held in considerable esteem.

The *Prophets* seem to have been accepted about 300 BC and the *Hagiographa* (consisting of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles) about 100 BC.

In the second half of last century the famous archaeological discovery at Masada revealed the final struggle of the Jewish Zealots against the Romans in AD 73. Here a parchment fragment of the Book of Psalms (Psalms 81-85) was found, which had been written some 20-30 years earlier. It was almost exactly identical to the text of the biblical books which are in use today. Even the division into chapters and psalms is identical with the traditional divisions.

Other fragments found (the last two chapters of Deuteronomy; Leviticus chs. 8-12; Ezekiel ch. 37) also exhibited texts identical with the traditional text.

From the time of Moses Israel was commanded to abide by the unadulterated Word of God:

**Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (Deut. 4:2)**

The Bible itself affirms that:

**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16-17).**

**and that..... 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. (2 Pet.1:21)**

Faithful men throughout the ages have worked tirelessly to preserve the integrity of these precious Words of God, but the Enemy, too, has been constantly busy in his endeavour to undermine the truth of God's Holy Word.

For example, the insertion, by the Massoretes of the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, of one full stop in the middle of a sentence, has thrown the prophecy concerning the coming Messiah (Dan. 9:24-27) into total confusion. This has been followed by the Revised Version and subsequent New Age versions. (We will look at this in the next issue of M.N.)

## PRINTING

When the **Hebrew Text** was **printed** only the large writing in the columns (the actual Text) was reproduced. The smaller writing of the *Massorah* was **not** included in the printed editions, but left unheeded in the MSS from which the Text was taken.

When **translators** worked on the printed Hebrew Text, they were thus without the information contained in the *Massorah*. When the Revisers as well as the Translators of the **Authorised Version** carried out their work they did not know of the treasures of the *Massorah* which affect so seriously the understanding of the Text. (*Comp. Bible App.30*)

However, the **Authorised Version** of the Christian Bible, was based on the older unpunctuated text. It follows the old Latin and Greek translations made from the Hebrew by

the early fathers of the Christian church who, in their day, were able to consult the unpunctuated text. (Ed.)

## INSPIRATION AND TRANSLATION

Our Scriptures were written, originally, in two languages - the O.T. in Hebrew, the N.T. in Greek, both of which languages are described today as "dead" languages.

But their "death" has meant that the words used originally to express God's revelations did not change their meanings with the passage of time. This has enabled the generations in the following millennia to correctly translate the original thoughts into current speech.

If we are to believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God Written, how can we reconcile this belief with the acceptance of authentic *alternative translations*? This question presents a real difficulty to many people who rightly believe that every word of the Bible is inspired in the original text. But there is an essential difference between ideas and the words which express ideas.

Everyone has ideas but only a few are able to express their ideas clearly in words.

The idea of the salvation and love of God may be expressed in many ways and in many languages. If the inspiration were limited to the words of a particular language, there would be no point in translating the Bible into foreign tongues. It would be impossible to take the message of salvation to any people who did not speak that original language.

But inspiration is much more wonderful than that. Inspiration transcends all language. If we say "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved in German, French, English, Italian, Dutch or Hindustani it makes not the slightest difference to the inspiration. The saving power of the utterance will be the same in each case.

Words are simply tools used to express ideas. The essential inspiration then is behind the idea not the language used. The Words of God or the ideas of God expressed are spirit and they are life. We may clothe these living ideas of God in a thousand languages and the saving power will be just the same. Thus inspiration is one of ideas, not of specific words. Our Lord was always striving to teach His disciples the essential difference between the letter and the spirit of the Law. That is, the difference and distinction between dead



words and living ideas, between spiritual power and mere language. Words are garments with which we clothe ideas. Language is the vehicle used to convey the idea to the hearer. But it is the idea, not the language, which is the principal thing.

The quickening power is in the spirit of the idea behind the language. It makes no difference what language or form of expression is used to clothe the idea provided it is **expressed faithfully**.

The translations of God's Holy, Inspired Word are just as efficacious as the original text, provided the translation accurately portrays the ideas expressed in the original language.

True inspiration is never of the word but of the spirit, for the Word of God is Spirit.

Bishop Ellicott has said, "We verily believe that the Holy Ghost was so breathed into the mind of the writer, so illumined his spirit and pervaded his thoughts, that while nothing that individualized him as a man was taken away, everything that was necessary to enable him to declare the Divine Truth in all its fullness was bestowed and superadded."

Let us be assured that

**Divine Inspiration and Providential Preservation of Scripture** is Christian basic doctrine. (Ed.)

## **WHITHER AMERICA?**

(By Paul Craig Roberts, *American Free Press* 25.04.2005)

### **America's Grim Future Parallels Roman Empire in More Ways than One**

What is America's future? Prediction is no one's strong point. A century after the fall of Rome, no one could have predicted that Roman armies would reappear to reclaim for the empire "that which was lost to neglect" and destroy the Ostrogoths in Italy and the Vandals in Africa.

Neither could anyone have predicted that Justinian the Great's restoration of the Roman Empire would be undone in the following century by the rise of an obscure people united under the banner of Islam.

It is easier to note that which America is losing to neglect than to predict the consequences. Failings are everywhere apparent. President Bush has led us into a gratuitous war

that has destroyed America's soft power and demonstrated the limits of its hard power. In the name of fighting terrorism, Bush has eroded already weakened civil liberties. President Bush's "war on terror" has inflicted greater costs on America than that inflicted by the terrorists themselves.

The opposition party does not oppose. The Bush administration has given Democrats more opportune targets than President Clinton's sexcapade provided Republicans. But the Democrats are too weak to capitalize on the political opportunities.

The failures of Democrats and Republicans offer chances to Libertarians. But Libertarians are politically impotent. Their ideology and abstract commitments are perceived as taking precedence over the well-being of their fellow citizens. Libertarians cannot differentiate between the comparative advantage case for free trade and labour arbitrage based on absolute advantage that is destroying the jobs and hopes of Americans.

America is so fractured by diversity, multiculturalism, organized special interest groups and race- and gender-based legal privileges that the concept of the public interest has simply disappeared.

America's intellectual camps have become boosterish echo chambers that dismiss out of hand any contrary thought. Preaching to the choir while demonizing others is a path to intellectual impotence.

The rule of law has been replaced by the rule of regulators and prosecutors, who interpret the law to suit their careers and agendas, and by the rule of plunder in torts.

Faced with these grave challenges to America's integrity, the political energies of the American left are focussed on gay marriage and abortion; that of the American right on the opposite. Twenty million evangelical Christians, who once focussed on saving their souls, now seek an avenue to heaven through war in the Middle East, which they believe will bring on Armageddon and the Rapture.

A once-independent media are now highly concentrated and speak mostly with a single voice on behalf of the interests of advertisers and a new aggressive American nationalism. To save its existence, even National Public Radio feels pressured to partake of the Karl Rove spin.

Democracy struggles under the best of circumstances. When

the people are woefully uninformed on almost every subject and totally dependent on spun news, success must rest on outside events and the failure of others.

Was America's 20<sup>th</sup> century pre-eminence the result of democracy and free trade, or was it the result of two wars, which devastated Europe, and the rise of communism, which set back the clock in Russia and Asia for decades?

It is very easy to be pre-eminent while every other economy must recover from ruin.

## ASIA RISING

Today, America is failing while Asia rises as the economic powerhouse and Europe seeks to unite.

America's once-powerful manufacturers are today little more than brand names with sales forces. Some still assemble foreign-made parts, but many simply market products of foreign innovation, design, engineering and manufacture. As more and more of America's economy is out-sourced, America's engineering and design professions decline, as does the value of a college education. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, America has been unable to create jobs in export and import-competitive sectors.

America's financial pre-eminence is based on the dollar's role as reserve currency, a role threatened by the dollar's long downward slide in value as the result of trade and budget deficits.

America's strong communities and neighbourhood schools are gone, destroyed by an ideology that used busing to break them apart.

Feminism has put great pressure on families by weakening women's commitments to children and marriages with the new commitment to career and independence.

Parents cannot discipline children without risk of government intervention through Child Protective Services. Acceptable standards of behaviour decline, and children become sexually promiscuous and partake of alcohol and drugs at earlier and earlier ages. Shame is a lost concept.

University students are stressed to find a major that cannot be outsourced. Students are discovering that outsourcing and work visas have closed many occupations to them.

America's borders are not protected against legal and illegal immigration that long ago dispelled any pretense of assimilation. Disparate interests, races and values have overwhelmed the abstract basis of American unity. Patriotism is being destroyed by the government's indifference to, if not preference for, immigrant invasion. Patriotism's place is being taken by a dangerous nationalism.

Will the Republican Party's neo-Jacobin ideology reunite the country in an aggressive nationalism against the world, or will America's Asian bankers cease to finance the empire of red ink?

Does America still have an edge, or is America in retirement, living off past accomplishments?

"Whither America?" is a question that deserves a lot more attention than it gets. []

Another article in the *American Free Press*, 16.01.06, written by Charley Reese and entitled *American 'Culture' Commits Suicide*, opens with the comment that the United States is becoming nuttier and more decadent with each passing day. However, he points out that the situation is largely in the hands of individual Americans. He ends as follows:

"We should realize that the cultural messages found in advertising and entertainment are the products of a very thin slice of the population, centred mostly in New York City and Los Angeles, two of the least-typical megalopolises in the United States in which the majority of writers and producers are cynical hedonists we wouldn't invite into our homes. Since their work products reflect their values, which are foreign to most of us and certainly to traditional American values, we ought to keep their work products out of our homes and minds. We don't need the government to do it. **We can use the "on-off" button.**

We have plenty of freedom, but too often we cede it to commercial interests, which tell us to watch this, do that, buy this, go here or go there. We can, however, by active concentration lead a quiet, thoughtful life free from the clamouring crowd.

The solution to all of the ills of our nutty culture lies not in Washington but in the hearts and minds of the American people. The culture is really us; therefore, by changing

ourselves, we can change the culture. We just have to learn to say "No."

Secularism, hedonism and nihilism, which characterize today's culture, spell the death of any civilization. It may well be that Western civilization has already committed suicide, as some have argued. That means it is all the more important for the remnants who still believe in ideals to preserve themselves and produce the seeds for a new and better civilization." []

This provides a solemn lesson for our own country of Australia where the pursuit of pleasure, sport and sexual gratification play a dominating part in the lives of so many. Films and television shows ape the American models of stark reality, violence and the denigration of religious ideals, and even of our Lord Himself, under the guise of "humour".

A newspaper cutting from the *Herald Sun*, 11.03.02, recorded an article by Andrew Bolt in response to a newly published book by Media Watch presenter David Marr, in which Marr mocks the Salvation Army and states that for such hard Christians, the **core evil is pleasure itself**.

Mr. Bolt points out that drunkenness, prostitution and drug-taking were once widely regarded as sins. That it wasn't because we feared "pleasure" - or else we'd have passed laws against footy, reading, children, pizza and sex, too. We feared instead what prostitution did to women and to the marriages of the men who used them. We feared what drink and drugs might do to people and how they might hurt others. But now we seem to forget.

We are being culturally manipulated into unbelief and self destruction. Today our Israel peoples are under constant spiritual attack in many avenues, as well as facing grave changes in the political and natural worlds. May we be constantly mindful of that wonderful promise given by God to King Solomon:

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.  
(2 Chron. 7:14)

## ISRAELI LAWMAKER SAYS ZIONISM WILL DIE

(by Michael Collins Piper *American Free Press* 06.10.2003)

The following article published in 2003 seems almost prophetic of the type of attitude demonstrated by Israeli leaders regarding recent events in Lebanon.

“The Zionist revolution is dead.”

From 1999 to 2003 Avraham Burg was speaker of Israel’s Parliament. As a member of the opposition Labour Party, he spoke out candidly. In his assessment, the State of Israel is on the verge of implosion, a direct consequence of its refusal to give up the occupied Palestinian territories, the insistence on expanding Jewish settlements in those territories and the determination to continue to suppress the Christian and Muslim Palestinian people.

In a candid essay published in the Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Ahronot*, Burg says, “The Israeli nation today rests on a scaffolding of corruption and on foundations of oppression and injustice. As such, the end of the Zionist enterprise is already on our doorstep. There is a real chance that ours will be the last Zionist generation. There may yet be a Jewish state here, but it will be a different sort, strange and ugly.”

He says that supporters of Israel must recognize the need for reform..... and rejects the idea of Israel as a tough military state, which, of course is the idea of Israel, promoted by Rev. Jerry Falwell, etc., who view Israel as a “frontline ally” of the U.S.

“The Jewish people did not survive for two millennia in order to pioneer new weaponry, computer security programmes or anti-missile missiles.

We are supposed to be a light unto the nations. In this we have failed.”

Burg strikes out at the continuing settlements in occupied Arab territories, saying: “It turns out that the 2000-year struggle for Jewish survival comes down to a state of settlements run by an amoral clique of corrupt lawbreakers who are deaf both to their citizens and to their enemies. A state lacking justice cannot survive..... The countdown to the end of Israeli society has begun.”

The oppression of the Arab peoples is also very much of concern to this Israeli statesman. He says that no matter how much the Palestinians submit to Israel's occupation, "A structure built on human callousness will inevitably collapse in on itself."

He compares the State of Israel to the "cheap Jerusalem wedding hall" that collapsed some years ago because rampant bribery and corruption in the Israeli system permitted crooked developers to build substandard structures.....

Referring to the rising number of social problems in Israeli society, Burg suggests those problems have been ignored as a direct result of the Sharon regime's determination to focus instead of the suppression of the Palestinians and the expansion of Israel's borders and influence abroad.

Likewise, since Israel's rulers also have no concern about the plight of Palestinian children, it should be no surprise "when they come washed in hatred, and blow themselves up in the centres of Israeli escapism. They consign themselves to Allah in our places of recreation because their own lives are torture."

Burg insists that no matter how many Palestinian leaders the Israelis kill, "nothing would be solved because the leaders come up from below - from the wells of hatred and anger" that develop because of Israel's infrastructure of "injustice and moral corruption."

The idea of democracy in Israel cannot exist "without equal rights for all who live here, Arab as well as Jew." The dream of a "Greater Israel" [enthusiastically endorsed by Falwell and his ilk] can only exist by the abandonment of democracy and the institution of "an efficient system of racial separation," complete with "prison camps and detention villages." Burg rejects that.

Burg says that the decision comes down to "*Jewish racialism* (= Jewish supremacy) or *democracy*."

He says, "The disease eating away at the body of Zionism

has already attacked the head.” The “inescapable conclusion,” he says, “is that the Zionist revolution is dead.”

Burg urges Israel’s friends abroad to “reach out and help Israel to navigate the road map toward our national destiny as a light unto the nations and a society of peace, justice and equality.” []

NOTE:

There is only one verse in the Bible which mentions “equality” and this is in regard to the distribution of gifts to needy people. The socialist cry for “equality” is not found in Scripture. Rather, it is **equity** (concord, rectitude) that is called for, and it is linked with **judgment** and **righteousness**.

Psalm 98:9 speaks of the Lord coming  
to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he  
judge the world, and the people with equity.

Proverbs 2:6-9:

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh  
knowledge and understanding.

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a  
buckler to them that walk uprightly.

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way  
of his saints.

Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment,  
and equity; yea, every good path.

As far as PEACE is concerned, how can Jews, or Christians,  
or Muslims, find true peace when they continue to reject

**THE PRINCE OF PEACE?** (Ed.)

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom,  
and the man that getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise  
of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

She is more precious than rubies:  
and all the things thou canst desire  
are not to be compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand;  
and in her left hand riches and honour.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
and all her paths are PEACE. (Prov. 3:13-17)





# British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

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## MONTHLY NOTES

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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily  
endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian H.Q.) Inc.)

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### A PRAYER

Oh God of Abraham,  
God of Isaac, God of Jacob,  
we pray Thee for Thy People Israel at this time.  
Thou hast said:  
"Ye are my witnesses",  
and we pray Thee that this People may understand  
the great responsibility  
which Thou hast placed upon them.  
Thou art the Lord  
and beside Thee there is no Saviour.  
Turn the hearts of Thy People, Oh Lord,  
back to Thyself in sincere repentance.  
Give us the faith to ask Thee for the rains  
that we need in our Land,  
and sanctify Thyself in the eyes of all nations  
to Thy honour and glory.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain.....  
If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble  
themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from  
their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will  
forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chr.. 7:13-14)

## CULTURE WAR

The recent move by the Government to create a National Board of Studies would provide a national centre of education responsible for school curricula. This has been proposed because Leftist ideologies have been widely disseminated in Australian schools by ideologues in State and Territory education bureaucracies. Education Minister Julie Bishop has described these ideologues as having hijacked school curricula and experimented with the education of our young people from a comfortable position of 'unaccountability' (*The Australian* 06.10.06, p.1). As well as this subjects such as Geography have been replaced in favour of "Studies of Society and Environment" where the ideology of naive left-wing environmentalism rules (*The Australian* 28.09.06 p.11). However, the continued indoctrination of our young people will not be easy to counter as many teachers are female, feminist and Leftist. (Ref. *On Target* 04.11.06)

The indoctrination of the young with false ideals, philosophies, perverted history, and false religious beliefs and customs, has been a tactic used by the Enemy throughout the millennia of Israel's development into the promised latter days "*nation and company of nations*" (Gen. 35:11). It has been done to trick new generations into forgetting their God and His Law for building an enduring and prosperous society, by sowing the seeds of unbelief and disobedience, and ensuring an ignorance of His great purpose in history. Though God's continuing purpose has endured, generations have suffered the consequences of living without the abundant blessings which could have been theirs, through faithfulness and obedience to the God of their Fathers and His Kingdom Law.

As our Lord's return approaches, the Enemy is endeavouring to destroy not only any true understanding of the Bible but, by the promotion of homosexuality, abortion and multiculturalism, the very people God has promised to reclaim, and to restore as the people of His Kingdom on earth (Jer. 30:1- Jer. 31:14).

## RELIGION AT THE FIRST ADVENT

Prior to our Lord's First Advent the knowledge of the spiritual truths taught through the Ordinances of Worship given to Israel by God at Sinai, had been lost and the prophecies of the Coming One who would make **atonement for sin** were not understood (Ref. Is. 53; Dan.

19:20-27). The known world was full of spurious religions and philosophies, which were man-conceived rather than God-revealed.

[Quote] During the later centuries BC the wonderful truth of the coming Atonement, through which men would be able to fellowship with God covered by the righteousness of the Perfect Sacrifice had become disbelieved, misunderstood, obscured and perverted. Instead of being made known throughout all the earth, the wonderful Name of Israel's God, His Character and great purpose, became profaned not only in Israel's own land but also "*among the heathen, whither they went.*" Instead of the paramount Spiritual Truths enshrined in the Tabernacle Worship the world was to be cluttered with a plethora of manmade religions, and intricate and erroneous philosophies.

The Pagan religions of the **Middle East** had adapted their creeds to the great myths of **ASTROLOGY**, which was accorded the status of a **science**. From the time of Alexander the Great the astrologers of the Chaldean and Alexandro-Egyptian schools, which spread over Asia, Greece and Italy, had taught that a secret influence from the planets was continually exerted upon the earth and man, and that by magical cults and astrological prayers, the forces of the planets could be directed as required. It was believed that man was subject to the planets and constellations from before birth until death, and was therefore **shackled to the wheel of Fate**.

Such **ORIENTAL MYSTICISM** had an irresistible impact upon the Philosophy of the **Greek** thinkers even at the time of the **Jewish Philosopher Philo** (20 BC - AD 50), who was the founder of **NEOPLATONISM** (which was Platonism as revived by Plotinus c. AD 205-270)

The philosophy of the **PYTHAGOREANS** had influenced **Jewish** [Judean] thought during the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC, and the later **PLATONISM** of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC which was publicly taught by **Greeks in Alexandria** was well received by the **Alexandrian Jews**.

From the **VEDISM** of the **Indian Aryans**, being the claimed revelations of a self-existent being to certain holy men, was to develop six centuries BC, monotheistic **BRAHMANISM** which through metaphysical speculation gave rise to polytheistic **HINDUISM**.

From **HINDUISM** was to derive **PANTHEISM** which sees the Universe as God and all things as an expression of God. This philosophy led to Greek **STOICISM** and **NEOPLATONISM** and to the more modern philosophies of Spinoza (AD 1632-1677) and Hegal (AD 1770-1831). PANTHEISM underlies much of **GREEK PHILOSOPHY**.

In **Persia** **ZOROASTRIANISM** had been established c.800 BC as a protest against the polytheism, idolatry and licentiousness of the age. Its basic tenets were the monotheistic worship of **WISDOM** and an ethical dualism opposing Truth and Lie. Zoroastrian teaching was to perform good actions and refrain from evil ones. Continual conflict was seen to exist between the powers of good (Wisdom and his emanations) and the powers of evil (the Fiendish Spirit and his assistants).

Fire symbolized the Chief Power of Light and was the principal object of worship. Natural objects, mythical creatures and ancestor spirits gradually came to be worshipped also. Zoroastrianism displayed a 'dualistic' philosophy - one which recognized two radically independent elements (the creative and the destructive) as underlying all known phenomena.

**DUALISM** portrayed the primal conflict between God, represented by **Light and Spirit**, and Satan, represented by **Darkness and the Material World**. Human beings were considered to be *divine in spirit* but to have *seeds of darkness* because of their material bodies.

Zoroastrian thought was to influence the **Jews** [Judeans] who returned from the Babylonian Captivity. Its teaching was to be continued by the much later Parsees of India whose ancestors migrated thither to escape the persecutions of the Muslim powers of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The worship of **MITHRAS**, the **Persian** god of light, vegetation and generation, considered to be the mediator between humanity and God, spread well beyond the Persian Empire with the conquests of Alexander the Great, gaining ground in **Rome** towards the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD. Here it was prohibited by Emperor Hadrian because of the human sacrifices sometimes involved in its rites, but it spread even to **Britain** when revived under Emperor Commodus.

Doctrines of **Egyptian** magi and priests were also added to the **Greek** teachings. These philosophies thence spread to **Palestine** resulting in sects such as **ESSENES**, **SADDUCEES** and **CABALISTIC Gnostics**.

**Gnosis** was the term used by the Jewish philosophers of the **Alexandrian School** for the knowledge of mysteries celestial and cosmic. For example, the *Book of Enoch* contains Jewish Gnosis influenced by Persian thought.

The wars of Alexander the Great led not only to the intermingling of different nations but also of the doctrines, esoteric traditions, rites and worship of **Greece, Egypt, Persia and India**. These esoteric traditions conveyed the GNOSIS, or science of the MYSTERIES, handed down from generation to generation forming a confusing and widespread **MULTICULTURALISM**.

Such were the “**religions**” of the known world when Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. [End quote]

(From: *Monthly Notes*, No. 555, Oct. 1997)

As can be recognized the modern day cults and so-called New Age beliefs and philosophies are but echoes of these ancient “untruths.” Indeed many of the so-called heresies and deviations from Biblical Truth which have influenced the Christian Church throughout 2000 years, also have their roots in the same confusion of error.

## THE PRESERVATION OF TRUTH

With the constant proliferation of “untruths” for three and a half millennia since **True Law** was recodified at Sinai, it would seem impossible that it could have survived to this present time. But the personification of Truth came with the advent of **Jesus Christ** (Jn. 1:17) and His teaching changed the world.

A further mighty reawakening and deeper understanding of God’s Truth came with the gradual dissemination of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in languages understood by the ordinary people, and the resulting Reformation. This led to the Gospel being preached throughout the world, and to the establishment and growth of the British Empire and its many peaceful societies, whose constitutions and civil institutions reflected (though dimly) the moral and spiritual principles taught in the Christian Bible.

The one constant factor in this periodic revival of Truth has been the **Written Word of God**, miraculously preserved throughout this extensive period, and its prophecies faithfully fulfilled in part by the Son of God, and by many other foretold events. The dysfunction of present day Christian societies reflects their attitude of unbelief, disobedience to, and disregard of, the Written Word of God.

## CULTURAL BASES

All societies and cultures are built upon theoretical principles and philosophies, which may be religious or secular, but the accepted beliefs and values underlying a society are reflected in its institutions and cultural attitudes. For example:

[Quote] The practical consequences of the high Oriental religion of the Brahmin or Buddhist with its profound pessimism and depersonalisation are immense. If life is radically bad and the one goal is escape from personality, there can be no point in seeking justice and social reform.

The doctrine of Karma - reincarnation - explicitly means that your lot in life, your place in the community, is the penalty or reward for your actions in a previous existence. Rewards or penalties are distributed through the process of reincarnation, therefore it is believed that the Caste system represents the working of an inexorable law... (*The Hungry Sheep* by Sir David Kelly) [End quote]

David Kelly observed also that the new Indian 'democracy' still has her millions of 'untouchables'! Hence, the tendency in a nation like India with this type of metaphysical foundation, is towards passive acceptance of social and political abuses and loss of personal freedom. (From: *On Target* 29.09.06.)

A further quote from the above issue of *On Target* is on *The Perils of Islamic Culture* by Peter Ewer, who quotes from an address given by former Treasury Secretary John Stone given at a *Quadrant* dinner and reported in *The Australian* newspaper 30.06.06.

[Quote] "In communities where large numbers of Muslims gather, non-Muslims are gradually driven out. It is then not long before there are established no-go areas where Muslim gangs flourish .....

In turn, as the host country's own laws are set aside in these no-go areas, there develop demands for the recognition of these areas as small states within the state, to be governed by Sharia law, administered not by national courts but by Sharia-type courts overseen by local imams.

In France, we have begun to see the ultimate expression of such developments. There a public official is reported to have agreed to meet an imam outside the predominantly Muslim district of Roubaix which, according to the imam, was Islamic territory and closed to non-Muslims. Similar demands can already be heard in Britain. To a more limited extent (so far) we have begun to hear them in Australia. [End quote]

The **Ten Commandments** were the fundamental principles of God's Law as given at Sinai. This Law taught that the stranger dwelling within Israel society must obey Israel's Law and publicly reverence only Israel's God.

The external display of idol worship by anyone was not to be allowed within Israel. It was considered as treason against Israel's Divine King, and a danger to the whole society. (Deut. 12:28 - 13:18; 17:2-5) This protected the accommodating society from the fragmentation caused by the active introduction into public worship of various, different beliefs, values and cultural practices. It was necessary for preserving within Israel the pure worship of, and reverence for, the Lord God of Israel.

The Ten Commandments were also the fundamental principles underlying the Law of Christian Britain and her derivatives over hundreds of years. And the resurrected Saviour and Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, was revered as the future returning King of Kings. Since AD 1900, however, the Christian basis of British Culture has been under attack by the new religion of our times - viz., HUMANISM.

## HUMANISM

Humanism is not as many think, *humanitarianism*, which involves the welfare of human beings. Humanism it has been said is "a diabolical religion which seeks to deify man and dethrone Almighty God." It claims that people should locate and seek the ultimate values of human life within life, and not beyond it. It denies the existence of The Creator.

It has its roots in IONIAN HUMANISM which was founded by Thales of Miletus (625-550 BC).

By claiming to believe in a Supreme Being, although their faith is in **man**, Humanists have been able throughout the last century to permeate every walk of life - education, government, courts of law, news media and most of the **religious organizations and churches**. They have promoted an international Humanistic Christianity through seminaries, teachers' colleges, schools, universities and the influence of social action theologians. This has been financed by grants from tax-exempt foundations such as the Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, specially set up for the purpose.

The yearly selection and indoctrination of young graduates from former British Colonies and Commonwealth nations, the United States and Germany, as Rhodes Scholars, provided a set of multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultured youths for training for world leadership. They were to become instruments of global influence, as many were offered positions in Internationalist, Eastern Establishment and political circles.

## HUMANIST BELIEFS

Humanists promote evolutionary theory and look to the State to shape man's future, through forced progress and manipulative environment control.

They believe man is independent from God, and without any obligation to God, and that Man controls his own destiny. Next to evolution, **autonomy** (the self-sufficiency of man), is the most prominent feature of Humanism.

Human reason is supreme and supposedly able to answer all the great questions. There are no absolutes - no right or wrong. Morals are self-determined and situational.

Science is the ultimate guide to progress and the ultimate provider of an alternative to both religion and morals.

Humanism believes in removing the distinctive roles of male and female. Children should be trained for "group conformity" and in "one race" - the human race.

Complete reproductive freedom, and sexual freedom between consenting individuals regardless of age, as well as suicide and euthanasia. are advocated.

Their socialist economy seeks to bring about equality by the equal distribution of wealth (among the masses). Humanism believes in a minimum guaranteed income, government control of population, environment and energy. This is relevant in our present situation!

Regarding world government Humanists believe in the removal of patriotism, sovereignty and the free enterprise system, in disarmament and the creation of a one-world, socialistic government.

Humanism gained popularity as the theory of Evolution came to be regarded as "established fact" c. AD1900, and *Humanist Manifesto I* (1933) and *Humanist Manifesto II* (1973) were signed by prominent people such as:

John Dewey - father of Progressive Education;

Betty Friedan - mother of "Women's Lib";

Alan Guttmacher - a president of Planned Parenthood;

Lester Mondale - brother of a former Vice President of US.



Lester Kirkendall - father of Sex Education;  
Sir Julian Huxley - British Atheist;  
Gunnar Myrdal - Swedish Socialist Educator;  
B. F. Skinner - a Harvard Professor of Psychology, and  
over 265 others.

**Four goals of Humanism** have been stated as:

1. The establishment of a *New World Religion*, based on science, and having Man or the State as its god.
2. A *New Economic System*, exchanging the profit-motivated society for Socialism, shared wealth, guaranteed income, and government control of goods, services, income. Is the present Global Trade debacle a softening up process geared towards the acceptance of a controlling World Authority?
3. A *New World Order*, where war is abolished, social problems solved, national sovereignty abolished and an interdependent "world community" created.
4. A *New Race* by controlling our own evolution, breeding by genetic engineering, and an Educational system which controls children from age two, through University, and promotes humanism through mass media, courts, governments, and churches.

We can see how the *Humanist Manifestos I and II* defined the philosophy that throughout the last century has reshaped our Christian Culture and Society, and which is now the foundation of public education throughout the Western World. God has been replaced by the concept of "public good", and the Social Studies which replaced History, Geography and Civics has been a vehicle for promoting global interdependence and social and political revolution.

The results of this permissive Humanistic philosophy can be seen all around us. Young people scorn the Christian standard of morality (inherent in the Ten Commandments), which once underpinned our national culture. There is open homosexuality, untold numbers of abortions, rampant venereal disease, broken marriages, rebellion against law and order, and alcohol, drug, and food abuse, and many suicides.

Humanists teach the right of individuals to maximum autonomy - i.e., the right to do one's own thing without outside control. This has resulted in a tendency to rebel against all authority and our own cultural precepts, and to engage in violent and destructive public behaviour.

When the Law of God is discarded as the standard for absolute Truth, there is no other sure standard by which to determine moral values. The young, therefore, have no reliable guide to help them in making many of life's most difficult decisions, and many have found the choices they have made to be destructive both to themselves and to others. How many young women have chosen the path to career satisfaction at the price of motherhood, only to regret this decision at a later time? How many regret early pregnancies and the abortions they felt it necessary to have? How many regret the years of their lives lost to drugs?

Speaking to Israel before they entered into the Promised Land Moses said:

**Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. (Deut. 12:8-9)**

But he reminded them that the Lord **will** show them mercy and compassion, and **will** multiply them as He had promised their fathers, but only -

**WHEN thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep all His commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is RIGHT IN THE EYES OF THE LORD THY GOD.**

Let us pray that our People will turn again, away from the untruths and religious inventions of men and back to the Lord their God, that they might keep His Commandments and do that which is **right in His eyes**, rather than what is right in their own eyes, as they do at present.

**Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezek. 18:31)**

(Ed.)

### **A PRAYER FOR OUR LEADERS**

Oh God, Almighty Father, King of Kings  
and Lord of all our rulers,  
grant that the hearts and minds of all who go out  
as leaders before us, the statesmen, the judges,  
the men of learning, and the men of wealth,  
may be so filled with the love of **Thy Laws**,  
and of that which is **righteous and life-giving**,  
that they may serve as a wholesome salt unto the  
earth and be worthy stewards of Thy good and  
perfect gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

(Taken from the *14<sup>th</sup> Century Knights of the Garter Service*)

## THE MURDOCH MEDIA

*Murdoch Empire 'Bad for Britain'*, from *Telegraph*, London, quoted in *The Age* 23.11.06.

[Quote] Entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson says Rupert Murdoch's media empire should be broken up to preserve democracy in Britain, insisting that it has dominated British media for far too long.

In his second attack since the Murdoch-controlled BSkyB swooped on ITV, paying £940 million (A\$2.3 billion) for a 17.9 percent blocking stake the Virgin founder said: "All of us know governments are scared stiff of Murdoch. If *The Sun*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Times*, *Sky*, *The News of the World*, just to name a few of the things that Murdoch owns, all come out in favour of a particular political party, the election is likely to be won by that particular party.

"If you tag on ITV to that as well, basically we've got rid of democracy in this country and we might as well just let Murdoch decide who is going to be our prime minister." He said Mr. Murdoch had given an insight into his power in a recent interview when he was quoted saying that, when he visits England, Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chancellor Gordon Brown compete to have breakfast with him. "Why are they competing to have breakfast with this person? Because he has such influence." [End quote]

The *On Target Supplement*, 01.12.06, also comments on Murdoch. "In October the [Australian] Federal Parliament overturned media laws which prevented media corporations from simultaneously owning metropolitan newspapers and television channels. Rupert Murdoch already owned about 70 percent or more of Australia's newspapers.....

Murdoch has a political agenda of promoting globalization, Asianisation and a reductionist form of neo-liberal economic rationalism. Those who dissent from the News Corporation's religion of globalism - be they from the Left or the Right - watch out!"

## NEXT STEP TO HUMANIST UTOPIA?

The following information was reported in *On Target*, 08.12.06:

"The British Housewives' League has published a paper in *The Lantern*, October 2006, alerting their fellow Britishers to another facet of the push for a 'new world order'. The report outlines the agenda and tactics of a semi-secret group known as **Common Purpose**, whose

stated aim is to set up a post-democratic society in the United Kingdom under the rule and reign of the European Union parliament and its bureaucrats.”

Though little is known about it generally **Common Purpose International**, set up in 1985 and registered as a Charity involved in Adult Education, has 80,000 trainees in 36 cities in the UK, 18,000 graduate members and enormous power.

“It identifies leaders in all levels of our [UK] government, to assume power when our nation is replaced by the EU, in what they call the Post-Democratic-Society. They are learning to rule without democracy, and will bring the EU police state home ...” [No wonder democracy has not been allowed to work in Iraq!]

“It [C.P.] has members in the UK National Health Service, the BBC, the Police, the legal profession, the Church, many of Britains 8,500 *quangos*, local councils, schools, social services, the Civil Service, government ministries (it is backed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, J. Prescott), in Parliament, and it controls many of the Regional Development Agencies. It was the Common Purpose senior police officer who authorised the “Shoot-to-kill” policy without reference to Parliament, the Law, or the British Constitution.” And it still remains in place.

Although over a hundred million pounds has been spent on C.P., Members’ names are kept secret and accounts are not published. The costs of courses are in the range of 4000 to 10,000 pounds, and are paid out of the public purse. Their meetings are held under the Chatham House rules of secrecy, but in spite of offering utopian visions of ‘empowering communities’, ‘working partnerships’, regeneration, celebrating diversity and such-like, secrecy has bred fraud and corruption.

“Common Purpose undermines traditional effective and efficient government departments, with an overwhelming influx of new language, political correctness, and management initiatives.” The result is an overloaded bureaucracy, destructive decisions, confusion and waste of money. []

Just to hand the *Crown and Commonwealth*, Autumn 2006 issue, warns that England’s Humanist, Globalist Prime Minister Blair’s “parting shot” is his intention to sign away Britain’s Veto on the EU **JHA** [Justice and Home Affairs] plans to replace Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights, et al, with **Corpus Juris** - the infamous Napoleonic legal system. Torquil Dick-Erickson is quoted as follows:

“JHA includes the power to put people into prison; i.e., it is the heart of state power.

Once the EU has that, it is to all intents and purposes a state. In addition, what many do not realize is that nearly all the members of the 'committee' which will collectively decide our justice (?) systems, come from judicial traditions that are radically and utterly different from ours - for instance, which have no place for Habeas Corpus or Trial by Independent Jury, and this is why these are explicitly ruled out in the embryo European criminal code, Corpus Juris (articles 20.3g and 26.2), which will be wheeled out again and thrust upon us willy-nilly."

(Ed.)

## ISRAEL AND THE OLIVE TREE

The Olive tree has been an intriguing symbol throughout the Bible. It has been used as an emblem of peace, prosperity, wealth, beauty and dignity, fruitfulness and testimony for God.

King David wrote:

**But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God:  
I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.**

(Psa. 52:8)

Scripture refers to Jacob/Israel as an olive tree:

**The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair,  
and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult  
He hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it  
are broken.** (Jer. 11:16)

This symbolised Israel's fall from faith and blessing, to apostasy and punishment. But speaking of their yet future return to God in the coming Kingdom age Hosea 14:6 states: **His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.**

The first mention of the Olive is the **leaf** brought back to Noah's Ark by the dove:

**And the dove came in to him [Noah] in the evening;  
and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so  
Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the  
earth.** (Gen. 8:11)

The olive tree symbolised the spiritual prerogative which would be vested in the Israel People as the foundation for God's Kingdom on earth, and as custodians of His Word of Truth. The olive leaf looked forward to a new beginning for the Adamic Race, and God's great purpose to be completed, viz., the final restoration of this earth to spiritual perfection - an earth in which God's Will will be done as it is in heaven.

Four olive trees are used as symbolic of God's '*anointed ones*' and His '*witnesses*'. (Zech. 4:3,11-14; Rev. 11:3)  
But to be God's *witnesses* was the role of the Israel People:

**Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: (Isa. 43:10)**

**.....ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God. (Isa. 43:12)**

**Fear ye not, .... ye are even my witnesses.... (Isa. 44:8)**

The branches of the olive tree were among those used for the construction of booths in which the Israel people dwelt during the Feast of Tabernacles. This festival celebrated the blessings of the Harvest, and the Presence of the Lord God in their midst, when He dwelt in the Inner Sanctuary of the Tabernacle and later Temples. (Neh. 8:15)

The cherubim of Solomon's Temple (c.1000 BC), and the doors and posts of the Inner and Outer Sanctuary, were made of olive-wood (1 Kings 6:23, 31-33).

Before they entered Canaan Israel were promised they would be given: ..... vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not... (Deut. 6:11; 8:8; Josh. 24:13).

This was of great advantage to the young nation in occupying the Land as the olive tree is exceptionally long-lived, even over a thousand years, and can live for centuries whether cultivated or not; but it may take up to 15 years before it is mature enough to produce a harvest.

Israel has been an *enduring* People for over three and a half millennia, and their history has been one of long periods of spiritual decline interspersed by periods of repentance and spiritual awakening. Their spiritual "cultivation" has been, therefore, intermittent. But the knowledge of the One True God and the understanding of His Word have been preserved by the few faithful "olives" during the times of apostasy, while in times of national repentance and religious revival the Israel Peoples have produced an abundance of "olives" (faithful servants of the Lord). This has been reflected in the life of the nation which has during such periods has been richly blessed and exhibited the fruit of righteousness, justice and mercy, equity and peace.

If an olive tree is cut down it will send up as many as five new shoots from its roots, to produce five new trunks. Aged trees also will often perpetuate themselves in this way. This is reflected in the third verse of Psalm 128:

**Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.**

Israel Britain has seen in her 'old age' the nations of the white Commonwealth grow up and mature around her as children from her own roots.

## THE OLIVE AND THE PROMISED LAND

Throughout millennia the olive tree has been so abundant in Palestine that it has been considered Palestine's characteristic tree. Olive orchards from time immemorial have provided one of the chief sources of wealth for the country's inhabitants, and one of its three chief staple products - corn (wheat and barley), wine and oil. It is significant that the *Land of Israel's inheritance* should be so marked by olive trees.

Galilee in particular abounded in olive orchards. Gischala in the north was previously known as Gushhalab (fat soil) and was famous for its oil. The abundance of oil in Galilee is illustrated by the use made of boiling oil in the defence of Jotapata when the defenders poured large quantities of oil down on the attacking Roman soldiers. Part of the Galilee area comprised the territory of the Tribe of Asher of whom the Bible says:

Let Asher be blessed with children,.....  
and let him dip his foot in oil. (Duet. 33:24)

## THE FLOWERS AND FRUIT

Each year the olive tree produces a great profusion of small, white flowers which are easily blown off. They are cast off by the millions like flakes of snow (Job 15:33). Less than one percent of flowers come to maturity and produce fruit. Israel has been a *multitudinous* People but only a relative few in any age have come to spiritual maturity and produced spiritual fruit.

The flower that does mature is followed by a smooth, oval, plum-like fruit comprising an oily pulp enclosing a hard rough stone. Only the fully ripe berries are eaten raw or preserved, but before they can be eaten they must be soaked in brine to remove a bitter substance which they contain. The brine [salt] acts as a purifying agent and is necessary even for the most perfect fruits of the harvest, reminding us that **all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;** (Rom. 3:23) and can be cleansed only through faith in the Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on their behalf.

The rest of the olive crop is pressed to produce **oil**.

## THE OIL

The olive tree in its natural, or wild, state bears very few berries and these are small and without oil.

Wild olive trees growing on the hillsides were often subjected to grafting with cuttings from the cultivated, productive trees, so that they would produce good fruit. A new, or productive olive tree may be created, therefore, by grafting a productive branch from a good, cultivated tree, on to a wild olive stock.

Later, when the grafted tree has grown, if one of the large, wart-like knobs on the trunk above the graft, which contains an embryo shoot or a small branch, is cut off and carefully cultivated it will strike out roots and grow. This new plant will be a good tree from the root and all scions taken from it will be “good by nature”, bearing berries with oil.

The unripe berries are pressed to produce the oil, a good tree yielding from 10 to 15 gallons in one season. Even a tree which has been long neglected will revive again, if recultivated, and begin to yield as before. That olive oil was a great source of wealth to the Hebrews is demonstrated by the fact that King Solomon gave quantities of it annually to Hiram King of Tyre, in exchange for the services of his people in building the Temple:

And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil. (2 Chron. 2:10)

As one bath contained approximately seven and a half gallons of oil, this would approximate 150,000 gallons.

Psalms 45:7 speaks of the **oil of gladness** [joy] and Isaiah 61:3 of the **oil of joy**. “Joy” is listed in Galatians 5:22-23, as being part of the “*fruit of the Spirit*”.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness [patience], temperance.....

The oil of the olive tree, therefore, symbolises the “**fruit of the Spirit**”, which is the evidence of the activity of the indwelling Holy Spirit in our lives. As fruit is produced and becomes obvious, it is seen and experienced by others, just as the presence of oil in a lamp is made obvious by the light of its burning. Our lives as individual believers are judged by the abundance, or otherwise, of the above “fruit” - not by wealth, or popularity, or influence, or any other of man’s valued achievements.

When national Israel, repentant, returned, and restored, is given a “heart of flesh” in place of their “heart of stone”, they will bring forth, nationally, the “fruit of the Spirit”.



For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. (Ezek. 36:24-27; refer also Jer. 31:31-34)

Then, only, will Israel be the "Kingdom of priests" and the "holy nation" which they were destined to become.

(Ref. Ex. 19:5-6).

## THE OLIVE AND THE ROCK

The olive tree flourishes best in the calcareous soil of rocky hills and plains, driving its roots deep into the crevices from where it draws its best oil. Deuteronomy 32:13 speaks of Jacob sucking oil out of the flinty rock.

In Scripture **rock** is used symbolically of God as the provider of *refuge, security, strength, spiritual sustenance and salvation*.

And who is a rock save our God? (2 Sam. 22:32)

The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer;

My God, my strength, in Whom I will trust. (Psa. 18:2)

Unto thee will I cry. O Lord my rock. (Psa. 28:1)

Isaiah 17:10 speaks of God as the Rock of thy strength and, referring to King David, Psalm 89:26 reads:

He shall cry unto Me, 'Thou art my father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.

When the roots of the Israel nation are deeply embedded in the Word and Will of God, and the life of the nation is guided by His precepts, the nation brings forth righteous rulers and many people who produce abundant 'oil' - the 'fruit of the Spirit'.

This has been but rarely demonstrated so far, but Israel in the coming Kingdom Age, with 'hearts of flesh' a 'new spirit within', and under the Kingship of our returned Lord Jesus Christ, will become truly 'a kingdom of priests (a royal priesthood) and an holy nation'. As such they will bring forth the 'fruit of the Spirit' and witness to all nations the benefits of obeying their **Great Rock of Salvation**, and the necessity to walk in His ways.

## GOD'S PURPOSE EXPLAINED

Finally, in Romans Chapter 11 God uses the **olive tree** to explain His motive in forming a People who He foreknew could never practise His Law precisely, or remain faithful to Him throughout many generations. In His mercy the blessings for obedience were always available and came into operation whenever Israel turned back to Him in repentance and faith. But the predicted chastisements were always consequent upon their disobedience and **unbelief**. (Ref. Lev. Ch. 26)

We must remember that when the Apostle Paul was writing, "Israel" was represented by the Jewish Nation of our Lord's day, together with the dispersed of Judah who were scattered throughout the known world. These people have continued to be known as "Jews" and as worshippers of Jehovah, i.e., as Jehovah's People. They were never classed as Lo-ammi (**NOT MY PEOPLE**).

The rest of the Israel Peoples, consisted of the more numerous "Israelites" of the idolatrous northern kingdom of the Ten Tribes, and the Judahites from Judah's "\*46 fenced cities" at the time of King Hezekiah. These had been deported to Assyrian territories in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC whence they lost their identity as Israelites and their connection with the Promised Land. (Ref. \*Sennacherib's Cylinder Inscript.; Isa. 36:1; 2Ki. 18:13 - 710 BC  
Ref. also: 1 Chron. 5:26 - 734 BC; 2 Ki. 17:5 - 717 BC)

This northern Israelite kingdom had been idolatrous since its setting up in 970 BC under Jeroboam 1, who placed *golden calves* in Bethel and Dan for the people to worship. Baal Worship was widespread in Israel from the time of King Ahab (913 BC), and for their continued idolatry and unbelief the northern Kingdom of Israel was cast finally out of the Land of their inheritance, losing their identity and becoming "**Lo-ammi**", "**NOT MY PEOPLE**", as foretold in Hosea 1:6-9.

In other words, the main bulk of the Israel People - those of the Kingdom of Israel, together with the Judahites taken captive to Assyria, had become absorbed among the nations of the world. They had become "Gentiles", alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, the final national phase of which was represented by the *Nation of the Jews*, which the Romans destroyed in the first century AD. The Kingdoms of both Israel and Judah had been marked by **apostasy and unbelief** as was, finally, the Nation of the Jews who rejected and killed The Messiah.

God had set up His Kingdom in Israel with the giving of The Law at Sinai in 1486 BC, and it was to endure in several phases for more than 1500 years. Our Lord had warned the Chief Priests and Pharisees of His day :

**The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.**  
(Matt. 21:43)

Devoid of spiritual understanding themselves they were indeed blind leaders of a blind people, who would finally condone the crucifixion of their King and be forced out of their Land.

Romans chapter 11 explains, however, that God has not cast away His People, but that throughout their history only a small, elect remnant had been given spiritual discernment while the rest remained blind.

**What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (vs. 7-8)**

In our Lord's day that elect remnant was composed of those who recognised The Messiah and believed on His name.

**He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (Jn. 1:11-12)**

It was this believing remnant who preached the Good News of salvation in Christ Jesus throughout the nations of the known world, among whom were the numerous descendants of the Lo-ammi Kingdom of the Ten Tribes and of the fenced cities of Judah conquered by Sennacherib in 710 BC.

Paul questions whether it is God's purpose that His People should fall away from Him permanently.

**Have they stumbled that they should fall?  
God forbid: but rather through their fall  
salvation is come unto the Gentiles..... (vs. 11)**

The "fall" of the Israel Peoples made it possible for the "Gentiles" (who in Paul's day included the dispersed descendants of the Assyrian captives) to be included, by faith, in the blessings stemming from our Lord's Sacrifice, by which He took away not only Israel's sin, but the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29).

**Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness [restoration]?  
(Rom. 11:12)**

If the fall of all the visible sections of the Israel People had resulted in a way of access to God's blessings becoming available to the Gentiles, how much greater the benefits to the rest of the world would be if the Israel People were restored again as God's servant nation?

**For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? (v.15)**

God's Kingdom of Israel had been a good olive, cultivated and protected throughout many centuries, during which numbers of branches had been broken off due to unbelief.

After the atonement made for sin by our Lord's Sacrifice, it was possible for 'wild olive' branches to be grafted "by faith" into the old, 'good olive tree'. This we are told is "contrary to nature" (verse 24) but possible by faith. The wild olive branches (Gentile believers) gain their sustenance (spiritual life) through the roots of the good olive because **if the root be holy, so are the branches**.

It is also possible for the broken off natural branches to be grafted back into their own good olive tree provided they do not remain unbelieving.

Through faith, therefore, provision was made for the descendants of the cast off, Lo-ammi Kingdom of Israel to be grafted back into their old good olive, when they **believe**.

And millions of them have believed throughout the Christian centuries. These have formed the basis of the "nation and company of nations" promised to Jacob (Gen. 35:11) and of the nation spoken of by our Lord, which would bring forth the fruits of the kingdom of God (Matt. 21:43). This has been so far proportional to the influence of the **believing, 'elect remnant'** within the nation, but when the whole nation is restored to faith in God, the fruits will be abundant, to the blessing of all peoples.

Hosea sees beyond the Lo-ammi, cast off phase of the Kingdom of Israel, to the Christian centuries and beyond:

**Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are THE SONS OF THE LIVING GOD. (Hos. 1:10)**

**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the SONS OF GOD, even to them that BELIEVE on his name: (Jn. 1:12)**

Repentant, forgiven, restored and **believing**, the lost sheep of Jacob's descendants will come together out of the Land of their dispersion to again inhabit the Land of their inheritance under their great King and Redeemer, Christ Jesus the Lord. (Hos. 1:11) Here they will be recognised as "Sons of God" as they will "all know the Lord from the least of them unto the greatest of them", and "He will forgive their iniquity" and "remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34) (Ed.)

## **A RITUAL OF REBIRTH**

### **Christianity is Not Universal**

### **But its Values Are**

(From: *The Weekend Australian* 24/25.12.2005.)

Perhaps the single most fruitless debate of 2005 was the one initiated in Federal Parliament last month by Labor MP Julia Irwin. "When it comes to good old-fashioned violence," she said, "the Judaeo-Christian God is hard to beat." We have had numerous versions of this pseudo-inquiry put before us in recent years: which religion is most blood-thirsty, Christianity or Islam? Another version of the same kind of moral relativism tries to equate Christian with Islamist fundamentalism, as though there were Christian fundamentalists out there organising themselves into terror networks or flying airliners full of innocent people into buildings.

But it is hard to think of anything that gets the true point about the role of the great religions in human society more wrong than the debate about the relative quotients of hate-speech in the various holy texts. It is true that there are plenty of terrible stories of hatred and discord littered through the Jewish and Christian Bibles, as well as through the Koran. But the remarkable thing about the great religions is how completely they contain these elements inside a much larger story of renewal and identity. The truth of the matter is that the big religious stories include tragedy, but contain it in a broader vision that is "comic" in the sense of offering a happy ending.

This larger story of an original human identity, or state of grace, that is lost in history but finally rediscovered is a remarkable corrective to the cultural relativists. The great religions, like the great myths of ancient Greece and Rome, tell us that fundamental human concerns such as preferring peace over war, human companionship over isolation and freedom over constraint are, indeed, universals.....

Christianity and Islam have been interacting for millennia - often violently, it is true, but more often via a process of mutual cultural enrichment. Indeed, intolerance these days is generally more pronounced among the enemies of religion than among the leaders of mainstream religions, who are constantly reaching out to each other in inter-faith dialogue.

In Christianity, the two rituals that express tragedy and renewal, death and rebirth, are Easter and Christmas. The debate ..... over reasserting Christmas as Christmas - not just the "festive season" - dictates that many Australians are sick of being made to feel embarrassed about the role of religion in our culture. Even non-believers and adherents of other faiths should support them in this.

Australia is a Christian country that welcomes those of all faiths and creeds, but Christianity is deeply ingrained in our culture, our system of laws and our democratic institutions. Immigrants of other faiths have always shown deep respect for this aspect of the majority culture. After all, the freedoms and civilities in Australian life, to which Christianity has made such a profound contribution, are precisely what have made this country a magnet for waves of immigrants from non-English-speaking, and in many cases non-Christian, countries.

It appears to us that the movement to shame Australia out of its Christian heritage, and ban such displays as nativity scenes at Christmas, emanates not from any religious minority but from fanatical atheists. Perhaps they should ask themselves if they would be happier or better off without the plays of William Shakespeare, or the poems of John Milton or William Blake. Because Western secular artistic culture is yet another derivation from Christianity, which Blake expressed brilliantly in a phrase when he called the Bible the "Great Code of Art".

New Age religions, such as the worship of Gaia or the earth mother, are well and good, but it would take millennia for them to accrue the weight of myth and ritual that Christianity carries with it, or to have anything like the equivalent cultural force.

If militant atheists wish to argue that Christianity stands in the way of a society founded on scientific enlightenment they should at least concede that all active experiments in that direction have proved disastrous. Christianity tells a dialectical story in which the world that the human

imagination most fiercely rejects is placed in contrast with the world that the human imagination most fiercely desires. In the absence of some version of that story, science and ideology, alone, are as likely to drag us towards the nightmare vision as towards enlightenment. The tragedy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is that it is replete with competing versions of fascism and communism. This why on subjects such as bio-ethics, the churches will always have an important role to play as a corrective to the unbridled scientific will.

None of this is to say, of course, that a perverted religious impulse cannot itself turn into fascist nightmare, which is precisely what we have seen with Islamism. It would have been nice if Australians could celebrate Christmas this year without further reminders of the Islamist infamy, but that will not be possible..... Australia still has troops in the Middle East..... They will be sorely missed by their families.....

And who knows? Perhaps it is the intrinsic connection between Christianity and the family that really riles the anti-religious fundamentalists. What is certain is that this connection guarantees the survival of the Christian churches as central elements in Australian life. Try as they might the avatars of enlightenment have failed to convince Australians that anything ever could, or should, replace the family as the central organising unit of both individual and social life. Family is what Christmas is all about, but it is also another element held in common by Christians, Muslims and Jews.

The innocence of children, and their need for nurture and protection, is as central as any other value to the story of human concern told by the ancient religions. Jesus, whose own birth and infancy we celebrate was characteristically direct about those who would harm children:

**It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. (Luke 17:2)**

The Bethlehem saga places a single child and family at the crux of human history: it tells us that we cannot have a civilised society in which the family has no place to shelter. For around 10 million Australians, this story is the focus of an intense faith that is integral to their lives. For the remaining 10 million, it should be the focus of intense respect, and of the recognition that, without the moral force of Christianity, our society would be a much poorer one.

[[

## GOD'S PRECIOUS GIFT

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." (Luke 2:1-20)

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A JOYOUS AND  
BLESSED CHRISTMAS!





# **British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.**

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### **PSALM 67**

**God be merciful unto us, and bless us;  
and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.  
That thy way may be known upon earth,  
thy saving health among all nations.**

**Let the people praise thee, O God;  
let all the people praise thee.  
O let the nations be glad and sing for joy:  
for thou shalt judge the people righteously,  
and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.**

**Let the people praise thee, O God;  
let all the people praise thee.  
Then shall the earth yield her increase;  
and God, even our own God, shall bless us.  
God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth  
shall fear him.**

---

# THE BLESSER

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich,  
And He addeth no sorrow with it. (Prov. 10:22)

But the blessing of the Lord upon a person or a People is contingent upon *obedience to Him*. Israel was told:

“The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, **if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.....**

And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers to give thee.

The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; ..... **if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God.....**” (Deut. 28:8-13)

Israel’s God is the *ever-present* supplier of her needs -  
He Who IS, Who WAS, and Who IS TO COME .

But we must not defraud the Lord our God by withholding His due portion of our increase:

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and **pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.**

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

And **all nations shall call you blessed:** for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.”

(Mal. 3:10-12)

And our blessings through Christ go far beyond the material blessings of this world:

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared **for them that love him**. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (1 Cor 2:9-10)

In Genesis 17:1 the Lord appeared to Abram and identified Himself for the first time in Scripture as “Almighty God” - *El Shaddai*. This title reveals God as the great *Giver* and refers to **His power to supply all the needs of His people**. *Shaddai* means the *All-bountiful*.

The same Almighty God is included in Philippians 4:19:  
**But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**  
and Psalm 37:4 says:  
**Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.**

Our God is indeed a bountiful God, able and willing to **bless abundantly** all individuals and nations, who trust in Him and walk faithfully in His ways. Many people today, especially the young, are fearful, apprehensive and untrusting of the future because they do not know God, His Reality, His Character, His Great Purpose in the Earth, His Power and His redeeming Grace in Jesus Christ, all of which demonstrate His integrity, His faithfulness, loving kindness and absolute trustworthiness. The attitude of many is “Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die (without hope of anything more).”

C. S. Lewis has written:

[Quote] If you asked twenty good men today what they thought the highest of the virtues, nineteen of them would reply, *Unselfishness*.

But if you had asked almost any of the great Christians of old he would have replied, *Love*. You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive, and this is of more than philological importance.

The negative ideal of Unselfishness carries with it the suggestion, not primarily of securing good things for others, but of going without them ourselves, as if our abstinence and not their happiness were the important point. I do not think this is the Christian virtue of Love.

The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what

we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire.

If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it, is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from [the philosophy of] Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian Faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak.

We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased. [End quote]

For example, Romans 8:14 teaches that **as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons [children] of God.**

If we are 'children of God' then we are to be heirs of God, **and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17).**

**Our lives are hid with Christ in God, and when He appears then shall we also appear with him in glory (Col. 3:3-4).**

In the meantime, 1 John 2:28 exhorts us to

**abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

There is a future, a wonderful future in which we can have a part, both nationally and individually. It is a future designed by God but only glimpsed in the pages of Scripture. God's great purpose in history cannot be altered by anything man can do nor be nullified by any attack of Satan. God's promises to the fathers of Israel - *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* - stand, and their progressive fulfilment is coming to a close as the consummation of the Adamic Age draws near.

## THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM

Not long after his arrival in the Promised Land Abram had pursued and overcome the invading armies of Chedorlaomer, King of Elam, and his confederates who had looted Sodom and Gomorrah, capturing Abram's nephew Lot and appropriating all his possessions. Abram refused any reward offered him by the King of Sodom but in gratitude to God for his victory, gave tithes to

Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who .....blessed him, and said, "Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." (Gen. 14:19-20)

Soon after this the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision saying "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. 15:1)

Later, after Abraham had demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, trusting God to restore him to life again (Gen. 22:5), God again promised him great blessing:

By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. (Gen. 22:16-18; Gen. 26:1-5)

This wonderful, far-reaching **blessing of Abraham** was inherited by Isaac and passed on to Jacob and His seed as follows:

And God Almighty bless thee [Jacob], and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. (Gen. 28:1-5)

On Jacob's subsequent journey to Haran the Lord appeared to him in a dream and confirmed his inheritance of the Abrahamic Blessing (Gen. 28:12-16).

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee [the natural seed] and in thy seed [Christ, the One Spiritual Seed] shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (v. 14)

The **Blessing of Abraham** is fundamental to the purpose of God in this earth.

It provided for continuing natural seed with sufficient power to protect and nurture the spiritual seed which would grow and witness in the earth as time progressed.

The sign of circumcision was required (Gen. 17:10) as a symbol of the subjection of the flesh to the spirit. This is the goal of the Blessing of Abraham which looks to a time

when the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Rev. 21:3-4)

History watched as Abraham's numerous seed through Isaac and Jacob were born as a nation whose founding Law was given to them by Jehovah Himself, and whose Ordinances of Worship symbolised in detail the coming Person and Sacrifice of God's greatest Blessing to men, His own Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:17).

Built into Israel's constitution were the **Blessing clauses** which were to operate when the nation obeyed God's Law and remained faithful to Him in worship, as they had promised to do (Gen. 19:5-8).

**Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.....** (Ref. Duet. 28:1-14)

But disobedience and apostasy would bring the opposite repercussions ("curses"). Their enemies would conquer them and rule over them, they would have drought, pestilence, illness, disrupted community life, slavery, want..... (Ref. Deut. 28:15-44).

**Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:**

**AND THEY SHALL BE UPON THEE FOR A SIGN AND FOR A WONDER, AND UPON THY SEED FOR EVER.**

**Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; (Deut. 28:45-47).**

And again History watched as Israel became a God-reverencing nation under the kingship of King David and King Solomon in his early reign, with the resultant prosperity, expansion in population, trade, territory, riches and culture. But as apostasy again crept in, the blessings ceased and the powerful and prosperous nation became fractured into two kingdoms, both of which lost their place in the land of their inheritance **because they ceased to keep God's Law and served idols instead of the Lord their God.**

This was to form a pattern in the national experience of the evolving Israel nations, by which they could be identified as such.

While blessings of peace and prosperity came with reverence for God and obedience to His Word, war, want and suffering were to be the result of turning away from God and His rules of conduct. This has been well demonstrated in the history of the cast off, gentilised Israel peoples even though a large proportion of them have been ignorant of their identity for centuries.

But God promised through the Prophet Jeremiah that finally He would rebuild and replant His People in their inheritance. Under the New Covenant His People will be given a "new heart" in which His Law will be written, and they will all know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest of them.

This heart is described by the Prophet Ezekiel as a 'heart of flesh' in place of a stony heart:

**Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.**

**A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.**

**And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**

**And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.**

**(Ezek. 36:25-28)**

In accordance with Romans 8:14:

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,**

this cleansed, Spirit-led nation will then be considered "sons of God" and will fulfil the words of Hosea 1:10:

**.....it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.**

It will then be demonstrated nationally that the Lord is their God and that they are His People (Ref. Jer. 31:31-37). They will then be restored as the *Holy Nation* they were originally formed to be (Ex. 19:5-6), and will be used in the blessing of the peoples of the earth during the reign of the returned Christ at His second advent (Rev. 20:6).

This has been made possible, however, only through the atonement made for sin by Christ at His first appearing.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles [nations] through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Gal. 3:13-14)

The cast off and exiled Tribes of Israel 'lost' among the Gentile nations have been able to return to God by faith. Many individuals from among the Gentile nations have turned to God in this way also, and obtained forgiveness of sins and the promise of Life Everlasting.

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

The faithful *individual believer* knows now the blessing of sins forgiven, the indwelling comfort of God's Spirit, and the promise of eternal life (1 Jn.1:7-9; Jn. 3 :14-16). He knows that he will be raised or translated with a perfect body at the First Resurrection to meet the returning Christ at His Second Advent (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-57) and so be forever with the Lord. He will have a part in Christ's millennial reign (Rev. 20:6) and in the perfect heaven and earth of Revelation chapter 21. What blessing it will be to live where nothing defiles, works abomination or tells a lie (ref. vs. 27).

But the national restoration of 'lost' Israel will be a blessing for all the world to experience. God has promised:

I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? (Hos. 14:4-8)



For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? (Rom. 11:15)

The restored Twelve Tribes of Israel in the coming Millennial Kingdom will be blessed in living under, and participating in, the perfect world rule of our returned Lord Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:30-33; Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22-23). They are mentioned as having a part also in the perfected Heaven and Earth typified in Revelation Chapter 21.

Isaiah 26:9 states:

..... when thy judgments are in the earth,  
the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

But though we anticipate God's judgments will fall, not only upon a wicked and rebellious world, but upon our own ignorant and apostate people, let us not look to the future with dread and foreboding but in joyous anticipation of the promised blessings of Abraham, the wonders of which we cannot as yet imagine.

(Ed.)

## MORE ABOUT THE OLIVE TREE

A reader provided the following information relative to the article in the last issue of the Notes.

The usual method of determining the age of a tree by counting the 'annual rings' through a transverse section of the trunk will not apply in the case of an Olive tree. After 40 to 50 years of age, the Olive tree develops a hollow cavity in the centre of its trunk. As this enlarges year after year it is impossible to assess the age of a mature tree. It is, therefore, a fitting symbol for an "everlasting nation".

Isaiah 44:7 speaks of Israel as the "*ancient people*".

*The Companion Bible's* note on this verse is as follows:

[Quote]

The *ancient People* = the everlasting Nation.

The nation of Israel is everlasting like the Covenant. The nations which oppressed Israel (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Rome) have passed away; but Israel remains, and when restored, will remain forever. [End quote]

(Ed.)

## THE MASSORETES AND THE MESSIAH

From Appendix 30 of the *Companion Bible* we learn that the work of the *Sopherim* (from *saphar*, to count or number) under Ezra and Nehemiah, was to set the Text of the Old Testament Scriptures in order after the remnant of Judah returned from the Babylonian captivity. (Neh. 8:8). The work of the *Sopherim* - the authorised revisers - was completed between then and the time of Simon the First (410-300 BC), when the *Massoretes* became the authorised custodians of the O T Scriptures.

The Massoretes were a body of Jewish scholars dedicated to preserving and perpetuating what they believed was the true Text of the O T. The rule was that any discrepancy discovered in a copied manuscript was noted in the margins but the Text itself was never altered. However, the Massoretic Jews of the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD by inserting one full stop in the middle of a sentence have caused far-reaching confusion, in respect of **Daniel 9:24-26**.

The Authorised Version reads:

- 24** Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
- 25** Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
- 26** And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Following the Massoretes' addition of the full stop the Revised Standard Version translates v. 25 as follows:

- 25** Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks,

Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

26 And after sixty-two weeks an anointed one shall be cut off etc.”

Mr. W. Edmund Filmer in his *Daniel's Predictions* page 108, comments as follows:

[Quote] Now it must be realised that in ancient Hebrew there was no punctuation, hence Paul's emphasis on “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The A.V. follows the old Latin and Greek translations made from the Hebrew by the early fathers of the Christian church who, in their day, were able to consult the ancient unpunctuated text.

Guided, no doubt, by the Holy Spirit, as well as by well known Jewish tradition, they all coupled the **seven** with the **sixty-two**, making a total of **sixty-nine weeks** (of years) to the coming of the Messiah. On the authority of John 1:41 and 4:25, they understood *Messiah* to mean Christ, the Anointed One, and so left that word untranslated, just as they did the word Christ in the New Testament.

Without exception they taught that the prophecy was fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ **after sixty-nine weeks of years, i.e., 483 years.**

It was not until the tenth century that the Massoretic Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and disliked the Christian application of this prophecy, inserted a **full stop** in the middle of the sentence, thus throwing it into total confusion. No fulfilment or application of the prophecy according to the Massoretic text has ever been successfully demonstrated, although some attempts have been made.

“Messiah” has to be changed to “an anointed one” who appears already after 49 years. Then, because he could not have lived a further 434 years (sixty-two weeks) before being cut off, a second anointed one, alleged to be another Jewish priest, has to be introduced to fulfil this latter part of the prophecy.

Thus one error leads to another, and our translators have now been persuaded by these Massoretic Jews not only to reject the authority of John's Gospel, but to remove all messianic content from the one and only prophecy to use the name *Messiah*, and from which that name was originally derived. [End quote]

Mr. Filmer places Nehemiah's final reforms near the end of the first 49 years (458-409 BC), showing that the first seven of the 70 weeks (of years) was occupied by the restoration of the city and its walls “even in troublous times”, as the punctuation of the A.V. implies.

The final week (v. 26):

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself”. The words “cut off” probably alludes to the Crucifixion, for the Hebrew word is one generally used for anyone executed by judicial decree.

The remainder of verse 26 foretells the destruction of Jerusalem by the people of the prince (Titus, son of the Emperor) and his invading Roman army (the flood).

Mr. Filmer deals with this in much more detail than can be included here, but this serves to illustrate how even one full stop in the wrong place can destroy the meaning and intent of God’s Word. How careful we should be to heed the warning of Deut. 4:2 :

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you,  
neither shall ye diminish ought from it.....

(Ed.)

## SABOTAGING THE SCRIPTURES

by

Howard B. Rand. (Abridged)

In the generation of the mission of Jesus Christ upon the earth, when He walked among the people and became their Redeemer and Saviour, the Pharisees were the Fundamentalists of the time. In their own minds the Pharisees had programmed what was to be, bending the Scriptures to conform with their preconceived point of view. During the course of Jesus’ ministry, the Pharisees and the Scribes denounced His disciples for repudiating the **traditions of the elders**. But Jesus countered:

Why do ye also transgress the **commandment of God** by your tradition?” (Matt. 15:3)

The Amplified Bible provides an invaluable rendering of the exchange of questions. The Pharisees and Scribes scornfully asked: “Why do your disciples transgress and violate the rules handed down by the elders of the past?”

Jesus responded: “And why also do you transgress and violate the commandment of God for the sake of the rules handed down to you by your forefathers - the elders?”

Then our Lord declared:

“So for the sake of your tradition (the rules handed down by your forefathers), you have set aside the Word of God - depriving it of force and authority and making it of no effect.” (Matt. 15:6, *Amplified Bible*)

He followed this accusation with a scathing denunciation: “You pretenders - hypocrites!”

He pointed out that Isaiah had uttered a true prophecy, voicing God's condemnation:

**"Uselessly do they worship me, for they teach as doctrines the commands of men."** (Matt. 15:9; cf. Isa. 29:13, *Amplified Bible*.)

A hypocrite, as the dictionary defines the word, is a dissembler, putting on a false appearance; concealing facts under some pretense. Because they were motivated by their pretension to be the final authority on Scriptural doctrine, Jesus upbraided the Fundamentalists of His day:

**"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."** (Matt. 23:13)

A cross reference to Luke's Gospel includes the pronouncement of woe upon the "lawyers" - those who styled themselves as experts on the law - accusing them:

**"Ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."** (Luke 11:52)

This reference to the "key of knowledge" is extremely interesting, for there is indeed a vital key to understanding which is denied acceptance in Fundamentalist Christendom today. Present-day Pharisees are following in the footsteps of their earlier counterparts when they spurn the basic tenet of the Gospel of the Kingdom that has been given special emphasis during the last one hundred years, because its correct evaluation is of imperative relevance to the times and seasons in which we now live. Not only do they refuse to accept the evidence identifying the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples as the House of Israel in the world today, but they do everything in their power to hinder others from receiving this truth. A key has two functions: it either permits or it prevents entrance, possession or control. Our Lord's censure of the Fundamentalists of His day is readily applicable to those today who have taken a pharisaical stance, as translated by Smith and Goodspeed:

**"You hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, for you lock the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven in men's faces, for you will neither go in yourselves nor let those enter who are trying to do so."** (Matt. 23:14)

Before us is a modern rendition of the Scriptures entitled *The Living Bible*. The paperback copy in our possession carries this notation on the flyleaf: "Crusade Edition published for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association." It was freely distributed as a part of the Billy Graham

Crusade program. The overall sales of this Bible number in the millions, for printings have not only been produced by Tyndale House Publishers, but by Doubleday and by A. J. Holman Company of Philadelphia.

Under the title, *The Living Bible*, one word is printed: "Paraphrased."

The Preface of the book contains this admission:

"There are dangers in paraphrases, as well as values. For whenever the author's exact words are not translated from the original languages, there is a possibility that the translator, however honest, may be giving the English reader something that the original writer did not mean to say. This is because a paraphrase is guided not only by the translator's skill in simplifying, but also by the clarity of his understanding of what the author meant, and by his theology. For when the Greek or Hebrew is not clear, then the theology of the translator is his guide, along with his sense of logic, unless perchance the translation is allowed to stand without any clear meaning at all.

The theological lodestar in this book has been a rigid evangelical position."

Consider the last sentence again in the light of its context: "*The theological lodestar in this book has been a rigid evangelical position.*"

That which is rigid is unyielding and inflexible, both excellent attributes when defending known truth. However, when a rigid position blinds the eyes and closes the mind in order to maintain a belief that is contrary to the truth, it becomes an entirely different matter. Then to become rigid is to become stiff (or stiff-necked); in fact, so stiff that there can be no bending without breaking.

Why do we take issue with this attempt to produce a special Bible that purports to make the Written Word of God easier to read? It has been explained that this work was done with a specific purpose in view. But what was that specific purpose? Is it possible that one group of those who produced this version of the Scriptures had one objective in mind, while another group of, shall we say, consultants, were guided by an entirely different motivation? We pose these questions because of what we discovered when we attempted to read this Bible.

It is a very hazardous practice to engage in adding to or taking from the Scriptures and the rendering of Revelation 22:18-19 in *The Living Bible* itself states this accurately:

"I solemnly declare to everyone who reads this book: if anyone adds anything to what is written here, God shall add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone subtracts any part of these prophecies, God shall take away his share in the Tree of Life, and in the Holy City just described."

The principle embodied in these statements can apply as readily to any part of the Scriptures, just as Moses stated: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2)

Turning to the Old Testament in *The Living Bible*, we have found that wherever the phrase "**house of Israel**" should be so translated in English, the generic term "Israel" is used, but the qualifying words "house of" are omitted. Furthermore, by substituting the Hebrew word *am*, meaning "people" for the Hebrew word *bayith*, meaning "house", the paraphrasers belie their own declaration that the signification of their choice of words expresses what the Scriptures intended to convey.

**The result is that the distinctions between the various branches of God's People are obliterated.** Also the diversified blessings reserved for the House of Israel, apart from the House of Judah, the House of David and the House of Joseph, are wholly obscured.

Moreover, confusion is compounded by the refusal to recognize that those in Jewry who can lay claim to being of the seed of Abraham are, nevertheless, only a small part of the descendants of one of the sons of Jacob; that is, Judah. There are no Jews among the progeny of the other eleven sons of Jacob and the prophetic portion of each, as contained in their inheritance in the Abrahamic and Mount Sinai covenants, was plainly delineated by both Moses and the prophets.

By failing to treat the *House of Israel* and the *House of Judah* as separate entities, the prophetic books of the Bible are set at variance with one another. This subterfuge makes one prophet falsify the pronouncements of a fellow prophet. It makes Isaiah call into question the prophecies of Jeremiah, also causing Jeremiah to impugn the declarations of Hosea. It sets Joel against Amos, Zephaniah against Zechariah and makes Ezekiel contradict them all. Hundreds of proofs are at hand to substantiate these accusations, but a few must suffice in the space allowed.

When, at times, the prefix "house of" is not used with the word "Israel" in the Scriptures, the context in which the name appears defines the people of whom the prophet is speaking. In the third chapter of Jeremiah, for example, the fact of the division of Israel into two sections is obvious:

"And I saw, when for all the causes, whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also." (Jer.3:8)

No one will deny that it was the people of the northern, ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel - the **House of Israel** - to whom a bill of divorcement was given, not the southern, two-tribed Kingdom or House of Judah. This Scriptural passage alone, showing that Israel was fragmented into two parts, should place every Bible student on alert to carefully analyse the Biblical distinctions between the two, for certain prophecies apply to one of the divisions, while an entirely different group of prophecies are addressed to the other. If this were not true, the rendering, even as it is given in *The Living Bible*, would be meaningless:

"In fact, faithless Israel is less guilty than treacherous Judah!" (Jer. 3:11)

## THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH 18 & 19

Now compare the handling of the prophecies of Jeremiah in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> chapters of his book. The 18<sup>th</sup> chapter commences as follows in the Authorized KJV:

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O **house of Israel**, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O **house of Israel**. (Jer. 18:1-6)

Contrast this with the rendering in *The Living Bible*.

"Here is another message to Jeremiah from the Lord: Go down to the shop where clay pots and jars are made and I will talk to you there. I did as he told me, and found the potter working at his wheel.



But the jar that he was forming didn't turn out as he wished, so he kneaded it into a lump and started again. Then the Lord said: O **Israel**, can't I do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand." (Jer.18:1-6)

In the A.V. the designation, "House of Israel," is given twice, whereas *The Living Bible* uses the identifying term "Israel" just once. It is important to know that this prophecy was specifically addressed to the House of Israel, for in the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of Jeremiah's book an entirely different prophecy is given, to another section of God's People.

The 19<sup>th</sup> chapter commences as follows in the A.V.

Thus saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;

And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. (Jer. 19:1-3)

A prophecy of doom and destruction follows because of the sins of the **House of Judah** and the people of the southern Kingdom, who were the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Then Jeremiah was instructed (Jer. 19:10-11):

Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee. And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Even so will I break **this people and this city**, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again:

*The Living Bible* translates these verses (Jer. 19:1-4 & 10-11):

The Lord said, Buy a clay jar and take it out into the valley of Ben-Hinnom by the east gate of the city. Take some of the elders of the people and some of the older priests with you, and speak to them whatever words I give you. Then the Lord spoke to them and said: Listen to the word of the Lord, kings of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem! The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, says, I will bring terrible evil upon this place, so terrible that the ears of those who hear it will prickle. For Israel has forsaken me and turned this valley into

a place of shame and wickedness..... And now, Jeremiah, as these men watch, smash the jar you brought with you, and say to them, This is the message to you from the Lord of Hosts: As this jar lies shattered, so I will shatter the people of Jerusalem; and as this jar cannot be mended, neither can they.

This second prophecy, regarding the second earthen vessel, was addressed to **Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem**. Yet *The Living Bible* inserts the name "Israel" in Jeremiah 19:4, for the pronoun "they", in clear violation of the intent of the words conveying the condemnation of **Judah**, not of Israel of the ten tribes. The clay vessel, which symbolized the House of Israel, could be remoulded, and it was. The earthen bottle could not, and nothing in the subsequent history of Judah, or Jewry, to this day can alter the ultimate outworking of the prophecy given through Jeremiah.

The refashioning of the House of Israel was later confirmed when Jeremiah declared:

"The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even **Israel**, when I went to cause him to rest." (Jer. 31:2)

They "found grace in the wilderness"; that is, during the wilderness wanderings of the trekking tribes of the House of Israel following their escape from Assyrian captivity. In both the Old and the New Testaments, the word translated "grace" means "favour" - made acceptable by the favour and mercy of God. The grace they found brought them eventually to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and Saviour.

In order that the branch of Israel would be properly identified to which reference is made in this manner, Jeremiah named **Ephraim**, the head tribe of the **House of Israel**, when he prophesied:

'For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God." (Jer. 31:6)

History has provided ample evidence that the early disciples of our Lord brought the message of redemption to the Isles of Britain. Descendants of Ephraim, residing there, heeded the call of the watchmen and acknowledged the Lord to be their God.

On the other hand, the southern Kingdom of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, having become the "Nation of the Jews", rejected the Divine visitation by the crucifixion of their Messiah. They failed to find grace, and, instead, became the broken bottle that was completely shattered and cannot be restored (see Dan. 9:26, marginal rendering).

If the mishandling of the Divine Record of the messages of the Lord through the Prophet Jeremiah is a deliberate endeavour to delete from the Bible the evidence confirming the correct identification of the modern House of Israel, as distinct from Judah or Jewry, then it has been accomplished in the paraphrased version by a very simple yet clever ruse. This being so, the only deduction that can be drawn is that a Satanic influence directed this effort.

However, there may have been a second incentive, inducing the paraphrasers to consent to an arbitrary use of terms in order to mask the truth. It is only when the Bible is read in blindness, by those remaining under the assumption that the Jews are the "chosen people," and the sole inheritors of the provisions of the everlasting Abrahamic covenant, that the prophetic portions of the Scriptures become a mass of confusion.

Tom Paine fell into the common error of looking at the Jews as the House of Israel and admitted boldly in his writings two centuries ago that he was led into infidelity because he saw that the Jews could never verify the promises given to Israel. Therefore, he gave the Bible up as a collection of myths.

The knowledge concerning the identity of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples as the House of Israel in the world today is the KEY by which the entire Bible becomes an intelligible and fascinating story from Genesis to Revelation.

Professor C.A.L. Totten expressed it well when he said in the year 1889:

"I cannot state too strongly that the man who has not seen that Israel in the Scriptures is totally distinct from the Jewish people is yet in the very infancy, the mere alphabet, of Biblical study, and that, to this day, the meaning of fully seven-eighths of the Bible is completely shut to his understanding."

To the leaders who rejected Him, Jesus made the pronouncement: Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (Matt. 21:43)

That nation is the House of Israel, who received Jesus as both Lord and Christ, and to whom has been given the responsibility of proclaiming the whole Word of God and the Gospel of the Kingdom.

If collaboration with Greek and Hebrew “specialists” provided the opportunity to emasculate the message of the Scriptures in order to further a devious design, the result has been the production of a so-called “Bible” that is a monstrous fraud that will lead thousands of unsuspecting Christians astray.

[Let us beware of all so-called “modern translations”.]

## FURTHER ATTACK ON THE MONARCHY

The *New Times Survey* for December, 2006, reported on the “misleading and mischievous” claim being made by investigative journalist and financial writer Kevin Cahill in his book *Who Owns the World: the Hidden Facts Behind Landownership*, viz, that Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth owns the ground beneath everyone’s feet and has first claim on our homes.

The explanatory remarks given by Australian Constitutional Authority Dr. David Mitchell are reproduced as follows: [Quote]

Like much of the nonsense currently being circulated regarding alleged inapplicability of law, this claim sounds as if it might be right. Indeed, there is a sense in which there are elements of truth behind the claim **but these elements are so misrepresented that they are completely misleading and mischievous.**

In our constitutional system the term Crown or Queen can be confusing because it usually has no reference to the person of the monarch. Both these words are generic terms meaning “the government”. It is nonsense to say that the Queen has any claim, let alone first claim, on your home. By legislation, the government does have some rights, but the Queen in person has none.

### **The law protected Freeholder’s rights:**

Historically, the idea was that the monarch “owned” the land and could deal with it however he chose. When the monarch was strong enough to defend his “ownership” by physical force the historical theory worked in practice. However, when a stronger claimed the land, the monarch no longer “owned” it. As English law and its enforcement developed, the technical “ownership” by the

king was recognised but the concept of "freehold" was also recognised as ownership.

"Freehold" existed when the king granted land, for whatever reason, to another person without retaining any right to recover the land. Such land was referred to as being "alienated" because it was no longer "owned" by the king. The law protected the freeholder's right to his land against everyone, including against the king. The freeholder could himself assign his ownership, or rights in the land, to another person. Of course, assignments from the king or from a freeholder could be conditional. If land is assigned for a limited period the assignment is called a **lease**.

### **Lender and borrower and 'his' land:**

When land is offered as security for money lent, historically the title actually passed to the lender. The loan document was called a "dead hand (or dead glove)" (mortgage) because the borrower was no longer in control of "his" land. The owner retained only "an equity of redemption" (a right to demand the return of the land on repayment of principal and interest). Since the passing of the Land Titles Acts in every State of Australia the term "mortgage" is still used but the freeholder retains title. If the borrower fails to fulfil his contract to repay principal and interest the lender has power to sell the land for the purpose of recovering what is owing to him under the loan contract.

The way in which land is held or owned is called "tenure". The owner is called a "tenant" (e.g., tenant in fee simple, joint tenant, tenant in common), not because he pays rent but because "tenant" means "holder".

### **Unalienated 'Crown' land and Native Title claims:**

The "unalienated" land of Australia (or Great Britain or Canada or New Zealand) is referred to as Crown land, not because it is owned by the Queen but because it is controlled by the government. In Australia all unalienated Crown land is now subject to possible claims for Native Title.

The Queen in person does own land in freehold, as do other members of the Royal Family, (particularly in the U.K., perhaps in other countries also) but unalienated Crown land is not hers. **"Crown" land is government land of the country concerned.**

The queen has no power to resume land from a freeholder for her own benefit. Resumption can only take place if there is government legislation authorising it. In the Commonwealth and in every State there is legislation authorising the government to resume land for public

purposes, but the payment of “just compensation” to the landowner is required.

Compulsory acquisition is common, particularly for road making or widening. Acquired land does not become the property of the Queen, even in war time. If acquisition is stated to be in the name of the Queen or the Crown, this still means the acquisition is by and for the government.”

[End quote]

## FREE MARKET DEMAND OR ANOTHER ONE-WORLD STEP ?

Writing as a Republican Member of the U.S. Congress in *American Free Press* November 13, 2006, Ron Paul supports a resolution introduced by Rep. Virgil Goode against the following proposal.

[Quote]

By now many Texans have heard about the proposed “NAFTA Superhighway,” which is also referred to as the trans-Texas corridor. What you many not know is the extent to which plans for such a superhighway are moving forward **without** congressional oversight or media attention.

This superhighway would connect Mexico, the United States and Canada, cutting a wide swath through the middle of Texas and up through Kansas City. Offshoots would connect the main artery to the West Coast, Florida and the Northeast. Proponents envision a 10-lane colossus the width of several football fields, with freight and rail lines, fibre-optic cable lines, and oil and natural gas pipelines running alongside.

This will require co-ordinated federal and state eminent domain actions on an unprecedented scale, as literally millions of people and businesses could be displaced. The loss of whole communities is almost certain, as planners cannot wind the highway around every quaint town, historic building, or senior citizen apartment for thousands of miles..... Congress has provided small amounts of money to study the proposal, but since this money was just one item in an enormous transportation appropriations bill, most members of Congress were not aware of it.

The proposed highway is part of a broader plan advanced by a **quasi-government organization** called the “*Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America*,” or SPP. It was first launched in 2005 by the heads of the state of Canada, Mexico and the United States at a summit in Waco. It was not created by a treaty between the nations involved, nor was Congress involved in any way.

Instead, the SPP is an unholy alliance of foreign consortiums and officials from several governments.

One principal player is a Spanish construction company, which plans to build the highway and operate it as a toll road. But don't be fooled: the superhighway proposal is not the result of free market demand, but rather an extension of government-managed trade schemes like the North American Free Trade Agreement that benefit politically connected interests.

The real issue is national sovereignty. Once again, decisions that affect millions of Americans are not being made by those Americans themselves, or even by their elected representatives in Congress. Instead, a handful of elites use their government connections to bypass national legislatures and ignore our Constitution - which expressly grants Congress the sole authority to regulate international trade.

The ultimate goal is not simply a superhighway, but an integrated North American Union - complete with a currency, a cross-national bureaucracy and virtually borderless travel within the Union. Like the European Union, a North American Union would represent another step toward the abolition of national sovereignty altogether..... Any movement toward a North American Union diminishes the ability of average Americans to influence the laws under which they must live.

The SPP agreement, including the plan for a major transnational superhighway through the heartland of our nation, is moving forward without congressional oversight - and that is an outrage. [End quote]

This has also been linked with proposals for a national ID System with a standardised database which would include also the provinces of Canada and the states of Mexico.

One wonders what plans are already prepared for Australia with the Government's proposal for a new "Access Card" supposedly for providing access to government services. But with the addition of the biometric photograph it could well become a national ID card. What deep laid plans have already been made to further plunder Australia's wealth of mineral resources. How true are the words of David Irving spoken to the People of Hungary on October 23, 2003:

*"But who is really behind the government of your country, or mine..... We live in an age where Big Business alone calls the shots. Big Business has replaced the "Big Brother" of George Orwell. A Big Business which invisibly crosses frontiers and state boundaries. A Big Business which operates silently along digital cable lines and optical fire networks. A Big Business for which money is the only*

*goal, and greed is the ruthless driving force. A Big Business which honours no flag, and is not answerable to electors at the ballot box.”* (Ed.)

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR:

We would like to apologise to our readers for the lateness of this issue of the Notes. This is the result of a time-consuming family situation and health constraints. We will continue to produce the Notes for the time being but they will come out as time permits, rather than on a regular basis. We would like to thank readers for their patience. (V. M. Walke - Editor)

## WORLD AT THE CROSSROADS

With scientific assessments of global warming and climate change, pollution of the environment and the oceans, species dying out, the increase in degenerative diseases, and the loss of large areas of previously productive land due to over-production, our once rich and beautiful world now presents a scary future.

What is currently greatly concerning doctors is that the bacteria that cause TB have mutated to resist most of the weapons we have been using against them. An extensively drug-resistant TB is now spreading to every part of the globe and can be passed on merely by coughing, particularly in crowded areas. We are as helpless against a drug-resistant TB as we were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before antibiotics. Responsible for one in five deaths from 1600s to the 1900s, TB has also been found in Egyptian mummies. TB could have been wiped out but was allowed to continue in poor areas. No new drugs or vaccines have been developed because there are few profits in diseases of the poor.

Surely we are reaching a point at which man's ability to control his destiny must be recognised as totally inadequate. How much suffering must there be before we humbly turn to God for His help? (Ed.)

O Almighty God, who alone  
canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men;  
grant unto thy people,  
that they may love  
the thing which thou commandest,  
and desire that which thou dost promise;  
that so among the sundry and manifold changes  
of the world,  
our hearts may surely there be fixed,  
where true joys are to be found;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.