

# SOUND DOCTRINE

—A—

SERIES OF BIBLE STUDIES FOR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES,  
PRAYER MEETINGS,  
PRIVATE STUDY,  
COLLEGE CLASSES,  
etc.

—BY—

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## VOL. IV

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# A Word to Teacher and Student

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Each student, as well as teacher, should have a good Bible, a Bible concordance, and a Bible dictionary.

Always take your Bible to the recitation with you.

Do not try to force your views on others.

Do not spend the entire time for the recitation discussing one point.

The scripture quotations in this book are from the American Standard Version.

If you think you can make valuable suggestions for additional volumes to be published, write me.

Volume V. of this series will be ready by the time the class has finished this volume. The series will consist of at least twenty-four books.

In many places where Volume I. has been used the class has devoted one night to the lesson, and for the next night has assigned someone each of the subjects suggested in "Topics for Investigation and Discussion," found at the close of each lesson, having them prepare a talk on such subjects. This course has been followed for study in midweek Bible classes. They have found it very profitable, and it has been the means of developing young people, as well as the older members of the congregation.

I will be glad to furnish you any book you may need to assist you in your studies.

THE PUBLISHER.

# The Divine Origin of Christianity.

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That Christianity exists in the world and has to do with the destinies of men and nations cannot be denied by any one. Since it began to exist it has had its friends and enemies. From whence came this great system? It is easy for a Christian to satisfy himself that Christianity is of divine origin, for he has tasted of its fruit and knows that it is good. But the man who has not experienced any of the blessings which come through its revolutionizing influence in the lives of those who have subscribed to its precepts may stand at the threshold and demand to know of the power of this system before entering. It is our purpose to give some of the facts and evidences which show Christianity to be of divine origin. The proofs are so many and so varied that it is a problem to select that which will be most appropriate for the lesson.

## **ITS RESULTS.**

**A Tree is Known by Its Fruits.** (Mt. 7:20.) A good tree may bear some wormy, knotty fruit. It is not to be judged by that—other causes are responsible. Christianity is not to be judged by wild fanatics, nor moral perverts, who profess to enlist under its banner. The question is, Has it borne good fruit? When men and women live up to its demands and ideals, are they made better? Anyone, unless warped by prejudice and hatred, knows that it is elevating in its influences. Now, Christianity is either true, or the greatest lie ever invented. Is it possible, then, that the greatest lie ever invented will reform and elevate character? A lie does not reform people, nor does it elevate them. Truth reforms and elevates. Christianity reforms and elevates.

**Material Progress.** This may truly be called the byproducts of Christianity. Where Christianity goes material improvements follow. Christianity does not say anything about building better houses, but it builds them. It does not say anything about better methods of farming, but it inaugurates them. It does not say anything about better stock, but it gives us better breeds. There are

causes for these improvements. Christianity gives us higher ideals, and these create a desire for better things: and these higher ideals are reflected in better living conditions. Moreover it gives us a higher standard of morals, and this, together with higher ideals, quickens the intellect, and produces a more intelligent citizenship. As a result of this quickening of the ideals and intellect, better living conditions are not only desirable, but they are made possible. A contrast between the living conditions where Christianity has the greatest influence with the conditions where Christianity has no influence will convince any thoughtful person that these statements are true.

**Women.** If you wish to get a view of what Christianity has done for woman, contrast her condition and standing in a land influenced by Christianity with her condition where Christianity has not gone, or with her condition before Christianity began. Where Christianity has not gone brute force is the main force, or factor, in shaping social and domestic life. Physically man is stronger than woman. He is made so because of the part he must play in life. Where brute force controls there is one inevitable result—the man subdues the woman to a state of drudgery and menial service, little, if any better than slavery. How any woman of intelligence can fail to be an ardent believer in Christianity and an enthusiastic advocate of its principles is more than we can understand.

**Philanthropic.** As people advance in Christianity they become more and more interested in their fellow men. Christianity develops love for others, and a desire to help. This spirit leads them to sacrifice for the well-being and happiness of others. Instead of casting the infirm and helpless aside, as so much encumbrance, people, influenced by the spirit of Christ, build hospitals, asylums, homes, and schools, for them. If it is in your heart to reply that people who are not Christians frequently give liberally to such institutions, just remember that people brought up in Christian homes and surrounded by Christian influences generally imbibe some of the Christian spirit, though not themselves Christians. And even if some should give through a

desire to create a favorable impression, and gain applause, or increase of business, they are paying tribute to the Christian spirit—they realize that people full of the Christian spirit applaud sacrifice for others. And remember, too, that these things are not done in heathen lands where the spirit of Christ is unknown. Could a falsehood develop such a good and helpful spirit? Is Christianity the biggest lie ever propagated? Does any sane person think that the biggest lie ever invented has developed more good in people than all truth combined?

**Lord's Supper.** There is an institution observed by many churches every Lord's day. This institution they call the Lord's supper. It is observed in commemoration of Jesus Christ. Whence came this supper?

It had a beginning. It is declared in the scriptures that Jesus instituted it, and commanded, "This do in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19, 20). Paul also declared, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). It is a monument to Christ—when was it erected, if not when the scriptures declare? If it is not of divine origin, it is an imposture—a fraud. It is not enough for infidels to say that Christians now are deluded in the matter—they must account for its origin. The first group who ate the supper—how were they induced to believe that it was of divine origin, if it is forgery? If a deceiver or deluded man had tried to induce them to begin the observance of an unheard of thing, how would he have so deceived them? He could not have told them that a recently crucified and risen Christ had instituted and commanded it. They would have known better, if it were not true. If he told them that such a Being in the remote past had required it, they would call for historic evidence, and demand why it had not been observed before. It is an unanswerable argument, and by its observance we do show his death, and it will continue till he comes again.

**Anno Domini.** Christianity has become so fixed as a truth that all people in the civilized world acknowledge the year of Christ's birth in all written communications and legal documents. Even those

who profess not to believe in Christ must also bear witness to this great truth in their letters and legal documents.

**For or Against Christ.** "He that is not with me is against me" (Lk. 11:23). No one but a dullard can be indifferent to Christ and his claims. People cannot let him alone. No matter where you go, if there is a man in the community who does not believe in Christ, he makes the fact known—he is, as Christ said, against him; and his very opposition becomes and is a declaration of the truthfulness of the claims of Christ—that he was more than a man. Men may disbelieve in Mohammed, and you never know of it—in fact they are serenely indifferent towards Mohammed; but the one who disbelieves in Christ is pronounced in his opposition to Christ and Christianity. Christianity has a vital force about it. Men cannot be opposed to it and let it alone. It not only demands their attention, but has their attention—you are either for or against Christ.

**Unity of the Bible.** The claims of Christianity rests on the Bible. If the Bible is the product of divine wisdom and benevolence, so is Christianity, for it is the central thought, the goal towards which everything in the Bible tends.

During a period of about fifteen hundred years, many men of various attainments, under various conditions and circumstances, separated widely by time and space, were engaged in writing the Bible; yet the entire Bible presents one central thought, Jesus the Christ the Son of the Living God. Only because these men were guided by one supreme Intelligence could they have so coordinated their work that the unity is constantly seen and that no conflicting statements were made.

In these lessons we present only a part of the mass of evidence which is available to prove the claims of the Bible to be the product of divine Wisdom.

**Laws of Sanitation.** Only in the past few years has the medical profession learned much about sanitary regulations and how certain diseases are spread. Only recently have we learned that indiscriminate spitting spreads disease. But thousands of years

before medical science knew anything about the laws of sanitation, or the need of such laws, God gave through Moses a system of sanitary laws superior to any now in operation in the most enlightened communities. Read Lev. 15; Deut. 23:10

The most enlightened nations that that time, and for thousands of years later, could not have developed a system of sanitation any ways near approaching that given through Moses, much less would we expect such laws to have been developed by a nation of people just out of slavery. These laws came from God; on no other grounds can we account for them.

### **ARGUMENTS FROM PROPHECY.**

**Prophecy Defined.** A combination of circumstances or causes may plainly indicate that certain things will happen—to predict such inevitable results is not prophecy. From observation and the history of a disease the physician may be quite certain what the developments of the morrow will show in his patient, but that is not the result of prophetic powers. A prophecy is a prediction concerning future events, which the unaided powers of man cannot forecast. It is such a declaration as only One who sees the end from the beginning could make. Such prophecies are found in the Bible concerning men, cities, and nations. History enables us to trace out these prophecies and see their complete fulfillment; and their fulfillment proves conclusively that "no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21) We invite your attention to a few of these prophecies.

**Babylon.** This city can be traced back to about three thousand years before Christ. See Gen. 10:10; 11:1-9. Isaiah speaks of it as "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans pride" (Isa. 13:19). After Isaiah's day the city continued to grow in power and splendor for more than a hundred years, and became the seat of universal empire. It was located in a fertile plain on the Euphrates river. The city was laid off as a square, and has been variously estimated by historians to have been forty to sixty miles in circumference. A great wall of defense, seventy-five feet thick,



on which were two hundred and fifty towers. surrounded the city. This wall was surrounded by a deep, wide ditch filled with water from the Euphrates. Perhaps no city of that time was so well fortified, and yet Jeremiah says, "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire" (Jer. 51:58). Previous to this Isaiah had declared, "And Babylon, the glory of kingdom the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles,. and jackals in the pleasant places" (Isa. 13:19;22). No matter how it might prosper for a time, God had decreed its utter destruction and ruin. See also Isaiah 14:4-27. Later, about the time of Babylon's greatest glory, Jeremiah uttered prophecies to the same import (Jer. 25:8-14; 51:1-64). These seemingly unreasonable prophecies have been literally fulfilled; for centuries the city, now no more than heaps of ruins, has been uninhabited. Desolation is spread over **the place**, and the once glorious city has become the home of the wild beast and doleful creatures. And, as the prophet said, the Arabian refuses to pitch tent there, and shepherds camp not there with their herds. This complete desolation of the once mighty Babylon is a continuous argument for the inspiration of the men of God, **Isaiah** and Jeremiah, who, while the city was in its glory and still prosperous, foretold its downfall and present desolation.

**Tyre.** As far back as the settling of the Israelites in Canaan Tyre was a fortified city (Josh. 19:29). In the days of David and Solomon, Tyre was friendly to Israel (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 7:13-45). Tyre was a city of wealth (Zech. 9:3), the merchant of the people of many isles (Ezk. 27:3), a great shipping center, and her fortifications were so complete that a five year siege by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, failed of results. "It was against a city such as this, so confident, and to all appearance so justifiably confident, of sitting a queen forever, that several prophets,

particularly Isaiah and Ezekiel," through inspiration foretold its destruction. "And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters. . . . And I will make thee a bare rock; thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more: for I Jehovah have spoken" (Ezk. 26:12-14). A part of Tyre was on the main land and a part on an island near to shore. Ezekiel tells us that Tyre would be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (26:7-11). History tells us that after a siege of thirteen years Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city on the mainland. Later Alexander the Great laid siege to the city. He took the ruins of the part destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and laid them in the water so as to build a pass-way to the island, thus literally fulfilling Ezekiel's words. Also so completely were the ruins of Tyre thrown into the sea that its location has been lost; and this fulfills another statement of Ezekiel: "Though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again" (26:21). The student should read Isa. 23; Ezk., chapters 26, 27, 28; Amos 1:9, 10; Zech. 9:2-4; and then search histories, books of travel, and Encyclopedias, and see how literally all these prophecies have been, and are being fulfilled.

"Alexander the Great, after a memorable siege, captured the city of Tyre and reduced it to ruins (332 B. C.). She recovered in a measure from this blow, but never regained the place she had held in the world. The larger part of the site of the once great city is now 'bare as the top of a rock'—a place where the fishermen who still frequent the spot spread their nets to dry."—Myers' General History, page 55.

**Egypt.** (See Isa. 19; Ezk. 29-32.) From these prophecies we learn that Egypt was to be reduced to a land of desolation and waste, "in the midst of the countries that are desolate." "And I will diminish them that they shall no more rule over the nations." At the time of this prophecy, and from the dawn of history, Egypt had been one of the leading nations of the earth. They had subdued many nations. Some of their works are the wonder of the world today. The recent discoveries in the tomb of King Tut-Ankh-Amen show

the splendor and glory of that ancient kingdom. But in the midst of her glory Jehovah predicted her complete downfall. "And there shall no more be a prince from the land of Egypt." This is a remarkable feature of the prophecy. More than five hundred years before Christ Egypt lost her independence; and it has since passed under the dominion of different governments. Every effort to gain their independence, or to put one of their own race on the throne, has met with failure. Study the prophecies relating to Egypt and study her history, and see that she presents a perpetual monument to the inspiration of the Bible.

**Prophecy of Moses Concerning the Jews.** (Deut. 28.) The student should read the entire chapter. This remarkable prophecy was uttered by Moses concerning his own people before they reached the land out of which they were to be taken, and fifteen hundred years before the events occurred. If the student would read a vivid account of the fulfillment of this prophecy, he may do so in the Wars of the Jews, by Josephus, Book 2, chapter 7 to close of Book 6. (Let the teacher mark some of the striking passages in Josephus, and read them to the class.)

Let us notice some of the predictions in this chapter (Deut. 28). Many ills were to befall the Israelites in case they disobeyed the Lord.

"Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from afar, as the eagle flieth" (V. 49). Israel was not conquered by her neighbors, as is usually the case; but by a nation from afar, Rome, conquered her. And there was no cringing fear in the hearts of the Roman soldiers as they came upon the Jews—like an eagle, the Roman army was fearless and certain in its movements.

"A nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand." The Jews would have understood the language of the Syrians, or that of any other nation near them; "but Moses declared they would be conquered by a nation whose language they understood not. They understood not the language of the Romans.

"A nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the person of

the old, nor show favor to the young." This, as you learn from all histories, was characteristic of the Roman army.

"And they shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fortified walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land; and they shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land" (52). The Roman army completely overran the land of the Jews, destroying not only Jerusalem, but the walls of every fortified city as well. Josephus records these matters at length.

"And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and thy daughters. . . .The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eyes shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter, and towards her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and towards her children whom she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly, in the siege and in the distress wherein thine enemies shall distress thee in thy gates" (53-57). See how literally this was fulfilled.

"There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan; her name was Mary, her father was Eleazar, of the village of Bethzod, which signifies the house of Hyssop. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had fled away to Jerusalem with the rest of the multitude, and was with them besieged therein at this time." Josephus relates how all her living was consumed, and how, when she got together anything to eat, the rapacious guards robbed her of it till it was "impossible for any way to find any more food, while the famine pierced through her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with anything but with her passion and the necessity she was in. ... She slew her son; and then roasted him, and ate the one-half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed. Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her, that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied that she had saved a very fine portion

of it for them; and withal uncovered what was left of her son. Hereupon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight, when she said to them, 'This is mine own son, and what hath been done was mine own doing. Come eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself.' . . . After which those men went out trembling, being never so much afrighted at anything as they were at this."—Wars of the Jews, by Josephus, Book 6, chapter 3, section 4. This horrid incident in fulfillment of the prophecy of Moses needs no comment.

"And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all the people whither Jehovah shall lead thee away" (Verse 37). See also Jer. 29:15-20. Thus Moses spoke of the future of his own people, and this prophecy is today being fulfilled before the eyes of all nations. Every nation has its Jews, and everywhere the Jew is a wanderer, and a hiss, and a byword among all peoples. We hold that it is not possible for one to honestly read the history of the Jews as outlined in the prophecies and written by Josephus, and also observe their present condition, and not be convinced that these prophecies were given by inspiration.

**Scattered, but not Consumed.** In their dispersion the Jews were not to be utterly destroyed from off the earth. This is indicated in the statement that they would be a continual hiss and byword. See also Jer. 5:18; 30:11; Amos 9:8. They were to be scattered everywhere, never to dwell in their own land again, but would not be utterly consumed. Persecution has not destroyed him; neither has he lost his identity by marrying and intermarrying with other peoples. He is a living and perpetual demonstration that the prophets were holy men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

**Nineveh.** Nineveh was one of the oldest cities of history (Gen. 10:8-12). It became a wonderful city, variously estimated to have been from sixty to seventy-four miles in circumference, with a protecting wall one hundred feet high, surmounted by fifteen hundred towers two hundred feet high. The people in this city, in its great glory, became so wicked that God sent Jonah to preach to

them (Jonah 1:1, 2; 3:1, 2). In her great pride, Nineveh had boasted, "I am, and there is none beside me." The student should read the three chapters of Nahum and Zeph. 2:13-15. These prophets foretell the utter destruction of this mighty city. She would become "a desolation, and dry like the wilderness. And herds shall lie down in the midst of her. all the beasts of the nation: both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the capitals thereof; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds." Not one word of this prophecy has failed. The destruction and desolation is too well-known to every student of history to need recounting in this connection. Excavations, first begun in 1820, have revealed in destroyed. Nineveh only that which confirms all the Bible said of that place. Hence, the prophecies against Nineveh, like all other prophecies in the Bible, furnish proof of the inspiration of the Bible.

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### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Prophecies Concerning Christ.
- The Prophet Like Moses (Deut. 18:15-19).
- Why the Jewish Nation was Destroyed.
- What the Bible is to me.
- Prophecies Concerning False Teachers in the Christian Age.

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### **QUESTIONS.**

1. What needs of yours does Christianity meet?
2. What longings does it satisfy?
3. What comforts and consolations does it give?
4. By what do you judge a fruit tree?
5. What good fruit does Christianity bear?

6. How does this prove its truthfulness?
7. How does Christianity promote material progress?
8. Give some points of contrast between nations where Christianity has some influence and those where it has not gone.
9. What blessings has Christianity brought to women?
10. Why do people influenced by Christianity build institutions for the needy and helpless?
11. How are the needy and helpless treated in heathen lands?
12. Will falsehood develop nobility of character?
13. For what does the Bible say the Lord's supper was established?
14. In what way does its existence prove its divine origin?
15. Can people be indifferent to the claims of Christ?
16. What did Christ say on this point?
17. How does this prove Christianity to be a vital force?
18. About how many years intervened between writing the first part of the Bible and the last?
19. What is the central thought of the Bible?
20. How does this unity prove its divine origin?
21. Give some of the sanitary regulations of the law of Moses.
22. How do they prove the inspiration of the Bible?
23. What is prophecy?
24. How may we know these prophecies were neither deductions nor guesses?
25. How far back can you trace Babylon?
26. Where located?
27. How fortified?
28. What of its glory in Isaiah's day?
29. What did Jeremiah say would happen to its broad walls and

high gates?

30. What did Isaiah say of its future desolation?
31. What is known of its present condition?
32. What to you is the most remarkable feature in this prophecy and its fulfillment?
33. Give location of Tyre.
34. When was it first mentioned in the Bible?
35. What of its riches and power?
36. What does Ezekiel say of its destruction?
37. Who destroyed old Tyre?
38. Why cannot its location be found?
39. How did Alexander the Great take the part located on the island?
40. What particular feature of Ezekiel's prophecy did he fulfill?
41. What is Tyre's present condition?
42. Where is the land of Egypt?
43. Tell something of its ancient power and splendor.
44. Who prophesied of its downfall?
45. What other remarkable thing did the prophets mention concerning Egypt?
46. What description did Moses give of the nation that would come against the Jews?
47. How extensive would that invasion be?
48. Give the prophecy of the tender and delicate woman and its fulfillment.
49. What would the Jews become among all nations?
50. Give some expressions and sayings of today which prove the Jew to be a hiss and a byword.
51. How do these things prove the inspiration of Moses?



52. Read some passages showing that the Jews were to be scattered among all nations.
53. Could the unaided powers of man have known that they would not lose their identity by marrying into other nations?
54. Could the unaided powers of man have known that they would be scattered everywhere?
55. What proof is there in these things that the prophets were inspired?
56. Where is Nineveh first mentioned?
57. Give its location.
58. Tell about its greatness and its defenses.
59. What was Nineveh's boast?
60. Tell about Jonah and Nineveh.
61. What prophecies were uttered concerning Nineveh?
62. Tell what you can about their fulfillment.

# The Divine Origin of Christianity (Concluded)

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"For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). To demonstrate that men were enabled to make known future events will, we think, convince any reasonable man that they were inspired in such utterances by the Supreme Intelligence. Prophecies and their fulfillment furnish a line of evidence which any one may learn, and which increases in force as the years go by. Many of these great prophecies were so contrary to what would naturally be expected that no one could even imagine that such things would ever be; and yet, in the light of developments, prophecies became accurate history. Prophecy said that certain powerful kingdoms would be overthrown never to be re-established, and so they were, and that certain magnificent cities would be destroyed never to be rebuilt, and so they were. Each prophecy fulfilled furnishes a new argument, and the continued desolation of such cities as Babylon, Nineveh, and Tyre furnishes a new argument every day. Many other prophecies might be considered, but we have space for only a few more.

## **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM (Dan. 2:1-45).**

**The Dream Made Known.** Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which troubled him, but he was not able to recall it, and the wise men of the kingdom could not make known to him the dream. Only Daniel, a prophet of Jehovah, was able to make known to Nebuchadnezzar his dream.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands,

which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Vs. 31-35).

**The Dream Interpreted by Daniel.** "Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, for as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that crusheth all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron does not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Vs. 37-45).

Five universal kingdoms are mentioned in this prophecy, and several centuries of history are accurately outlined.

**Nebuchadnezzar's Kingdom is the First**, and is represented in the image by the "head of gold." Babylon, his capitol city, was a wonderfully fortified city, and Chaldea, Arabia, and Palestine were included in his dominions. But even during the lifetime of Daniel Babylon fell, and its vast domains passed under the rule of the next universal empire.

**The Medo-Persian.** Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, removed the king of Media, and united the two kingdoms under his rule (550 B. C.). He subdued the kingdom of Lydia in Asia Minor (645 B. C.) Then Babylon was conquered (B. C. 538), and Medo-Persia became the second universal empire of Daniel's prophecy. This kingdom was the "breast and arms" of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

**The Macedonian Kingdom.** Alexander the Great, who inherited the small kingdom of Macedonia from his father Philip, soon rose to world power by rapid conquest of territories belonging to the Medo-Persian kingdom. In rapid succession he overran Asia Minor (B. C. 334), Syria (333 B. C.) and Egypt (332 B. C.) He then turned his course towards the heart of the Persian Empire. In the decisive battle of Arbela he routed the Persian king (331 B. C.), and became master of all the countries ruled by the Medo-Persian kings. After his death (323 B. C.) his world empire soon fell to pieces. The Macedonian kingdom was represented by the belly and thighs of the image of Nebuchadnezzar.

**The Roman Kingdom.** After the death of Alexander, the Macedonian Kingdom divided into many fragments. By conquering these fragments and other territories near Rome, the Roman government became the next universal empire. It was the legs of the image.

**The Kingdom of Christ**, the "little stone" of the dream. Daniel declared that in the days of "those kings," the kings represented by the image, the God of heavens would set up a kingdom. During the existence of the Roman kingdom, Jesus was born in Palestine. He announced, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15). He gathered about him a small body of disciples, the

nucleus of the kingdom which Daniel saw as "a little stone" in its beginning and which was to smite the image on its feet and break it to pieces. The kingdom of God, small in the beginning, was not established by force of arms. It was indeed a "little stone" cut out of the mountains without hands, but it grew till it filled the earth. It smote the image on its feet, and destroyed it. By the end of the fifth century after Christ the Roman kingdom had been divided into ten kingdoms. Thus the Roman kingdom was destroyed, and in its destruction ended the image of universal earthly empire. Today there is not a man, woman, or child under the Roman government or any part of it. The government of Italy is in no sense a successor of the ancient government of Rome. Hence, the image of Nebuchadnezzar passed away, but the kingdom of God began as prophesied by Daniel. It continues to grow, and will stand forever. Since the fall of Rome there has been no earthly universal empire.

At first glance the student may fail to see how the "little stone" could destroy all these kingdoms by striking the image on its feet after three of the kingdoms had passed away. A little reflection will clear the matter up. In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw the image of a man, and this image represented these world empires. As in a human being, so in this image, one spirit animates the entire body, and gives it personality. Herein is found the personal identity of the image, for the same spirit moved and controlled every kingdom represented in this image—all were moved by the spirit of pride, selfish greed, and worldly ambition. Nothing else could have led them through such hardships and hazards in their search for universal dominion. This spirit adopts the principle that "Might makes right." Between such spirit and the kingdom of God there is no compatibility, but continual and uncompromising warfare; and to the extent that the kingdom of God influences men the spirit of universal worldly empire is destroyed. The Golden Rule, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them," cannot be a part of the program of greed for universal worldly dominion. The kingdom of Christ, the "little stone," smote the spirit as exemplified in the Roman government and destroyed it, never to rise again. A few men have since been filled with such spirit, but not enough at one time to

give it universal power. Charlemagne, Napoleon, and others tried it, but failed. The recent efforts of the Emperor of Germany at world empire is another illustration to the same effect.

It is remarkable that Daniel, at a time when universal empire was in vogue, should accurately outline the rise and fall of one universal kingdom after another till there should rise a kingdom; small in beginning, so impregnated with a spirit diverse from these and would so influence men that it would destroy from the face of the earth such a monster.

Study the image and Daniel's interpretation, and see with what precision Daniel made known the history of the nations, and the beginning of the kingdom of Christ. There is only one explanation: Daniel was an inspired prophet—the Bible is true.

### **CHRIST'S PROPHECY CONCERNING JERUSALEM AND THE JEWS.**

(Mt. 24:1-28; Mk. 13:3-23; Lk. 21:5-24.)

Here we have recorded our Lord's remarkable prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the calamities to befall the Jews. The student should carefully read these passages, and note carefully each item of the prophecy. In connection with this prophecy Jesus also mentioned his second coming, and some superficial readers get the two mixed. It can safely be said that all the things recorded in Mt. 24:4-28 relates to the destruction of Jerusalem and the calamities to befall the Jews in that connection. Every one who has any knowledge of ancient history knows that in A. D. 70 Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies, but not every one has investigated carefully to see how completely every detail of our Lord's prophecy was fulfilled. It will strengthen your faith to look carefully into these matters. Josephus was an eyewitness to much that took place, being a participant in the war. We know of no other war and siege of which we have on record such minute details and vivid descriptions, as we have of the Roman invasion of Palestine and their siege of Jerusalem, given by Josephus in his Wars of the Jews. This history was endorsed by

Vespasian and many of the Romans who took part in the war and siege; also by Chalsis, and Agrippa. Titus the commander of the Roman armies in that memorable war, placed his name to the history in attestation of its truthfulness. In reading Josephus' account of these matters, did we not know he was a Jew and an unbeliever in Christ, we might think he was fully bent on showing that every detail of the Lord's prophecy was fulfilled.

## **SIGNS OF APPROACHING DESOLATION.**

To protect his disciples from these calamities Jesus pointed out certain signs which would warn them of the near approach of the coming doom.

**Wars and Rumors of Wars.** "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Vs. 6, 7). The end here referred to is the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the wars and rumors of wars are those that in some way would affect the Jewish people. This is evident from the fact that Jesus admonished his disciples to "be not troubled," and the further fact that the things which would affect the Jewish people was the subject under consideration.

The near approach of such calamities as Jesus here foretells would not be thought of as a possibility by any of those then living, for the Jews were at peace among themselves and with the nations around them. But some years before the destruction of Jerusalem trouble arose in all the cities in which there were Jews. At Caesarea 20,000 Jews were killed and from that trouble spread through the country generally; "so that the disorders in all Syria were terrible, and every city was divided into two armies encamped one against another, and the preservation of the one party was in the destruction of the other; so the daytime was spent in shedding of blood, and the night in fear, which was of the two the more terrible; for when the Syrians thought they had ruined the Jews, they had the Judaizers in suspicion also; and as each side did not care to slay those whom they only suspected on the other, so

did they greatly fear them when they mingled with the other, as if they were foreigners" (Wars of the Jews, book 2, ch. 18, Sec. 1, 2).

**Famines and Earthquakes.** "And there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places." Famines did come, at least one of which was very severe. See Antiquities of the Jews, b. 3, ch. 15, sec. 3; also b. 20, ch. 2, sec. 5, and the many references in The Acts and Paul's letters. Historians mention various earthquakes. Josephus mentions one in particular which occurred in Jerusalem (Wars of Jews, 4, 4, 5).

**Signs from Heaven.** "And there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven" (Lk. 21:11). The following from Josephus proves that these things did occur before the destruction of Jerusalem: "There was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, ... so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day-time; which lasted for half an hour. . . . Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner (court of the) temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, . . . was seen to open of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. . . . Besides these, a few days after the feast (Passover), ... a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: . . . for, before sunsetting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding the cities. Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner (court of the) temple, as their custom was, to perform their second ministrations, they said, in the first place they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a multitude, saying, 'Let us remove hence.'" Four years before the war a certain man from the country, "when the city was in very peace and prosperity," entered the city, and "began on a sudden to cry aloud, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against the whole people.' This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city." The severest



punishments often inflicted upon him did not cause him to cease, nor utter any words good or bad except that one cry. Even after the siege began, as he went around on the walls of the city uttering his familiar cry, he was killed by the enemy as he cried, "We, we to myself also." See Wars of the Jews, b. 6, c. 6, s. 3.

**Disciples to be Persecuted.** "Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake." This was to come before the destruction of Jerusalem, and did come, as is shown by Luke's record in Acts and by other historians.

**Gospel to be Preached to all the World.** "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." Humanly speaking, it seems impossible, that, beginning with a mere handful of disciples, the gospel should be so soon spread over the then-known world, but so it was. See Ro. 1:8; 10:18; Col. 1:23.

**Desolation at Hand.** "But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand" (Lk. 21:20). The Roman armies spoken of in Luke is the same thing as the "abomination of desolation" spoken of in Mt. 24:15. "The Romans, being Gentiles, were an abomination to the Jews; and because the Roman armies had images on their banners the Jews would specially abominate them. And they made the country desolate; hence, appropriately called "the abomination of desolation." And when the Roman armies planted their banners around Jerusalem they literally stood on holy ground.

**Then Flee.** "Then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains." The admonition indicates that they were to flee in haste, and that they would have an opportunity to escape even after the city was surrounded by the Roman legions. This opportunity came.

**The Siege.** Cestius Gallus, after some success in other parts of Palestine, led his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to the city. After taking the outer parts of the city and setting fire to some of it,

he pitched his camp over against the royal palace. Josephus says that at this time he could have entered the city by force, and won it, had he only made the attempt. Many of the principal men of the city, seeing the hopelessness of the situation, invited Cestius to enter the city, but, fearing treachery, he declined. Then the Romans attacked the walls for five days, and the first, second, and third lines rested their shields against the walls. Again the Jews were about to open the gates to Cestius, but Cestius knew not this; "and so he recalled his soldiers from the place, and by despairing of any expectation of taking it, without having received any disgrace, he retired from the city without any reason in the world." See Wars of the Jews, book 2, chapters. 4, 5, 6, 7. While Cestius knew of no reason for giving up the siege and marching away, God had a reason for his doing so; for it gave the Christians an opportunity to escape to the mountains, as Jesus had told them to do. That great numbers did flee to the mountains is stated by Josephus and Eusebius.

**The Final Siege.** A. D. 70. After the siege of Cestius, war and preparation for war continued in other parts of Palestine. Then again the Roman armies laid siege to Jerusalem, this time under the leadership of Titus. Then began the real miseries of the Jews in Jerusalem. "For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be" (Mk. 13:19). Of these sufferings Josephus says: "It appears to me, that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were." (Preface to Wars of Jews, Sec. 4.) "Neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries" (Wars, b. 5, c. 10, s. 5). It is singular that this unbeliever in Christ, in recording the history of the siege, should use almost the same words used by Christ in his prophecy. It was in this siege that the delicate woman mentioned in the preceding lesson ate her own child.

**The Destruction Complete.** Of the temple Jesus said, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." "For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies

shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round about, and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children with thee; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Lk. 19:43). Is it possible to think of prophecies which would seem more improbable of fulfillment? Jerusalem was so situated as to be, in a large measure, a natural fortress, and surrounded by walls thought to be impregnable. And yet every vestige of defense would be leveled to the ground. And the magnificence of the temple was beyond comparison. Not one stone of it was to be left upon another. What an enormous task, and how useless, such destruction would seem to be! And it was the custom of the Romans to preserve art and things useful and magnificent. Titus tried faithfully to save the temple from harm. Notwithstanding all this, not one stone was left upon another. Every student of this prophecy should read the fifth and sixth books of Wars of the Jews, by Josephus.

**Continued Fulfillment.** "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Lk. 21:24). More than a million Jews perished in Jerusalem, besides the untold thousands who perished in other cities, and thousands were carried captive to Rome. Thus the religious and civil polity of the Jews came to an end, and the Jews have since remained scattered throughout the world, never again to have a government of their own.

Out of the many prophecies which we do not have space to discuss we merely call attention to the following:

Jesus pronounced woes upon Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum (Mt. 11:21-23). Only heaps of ruins remain of these cities.

The country of Moab was to be laid waste (Isa., chapters 15, 16; Jer. 48). Edom was to be brought to desolation (Isa. 34:5-17; 49:7-20; Ezk. 25:12-14, chapters 25-36).

After traveling through these countries whose desolation was foretold by Jesus and the prophets, Volney, a celebrated French

infidel, said:

"And the history of former times revive in my mind; I remembered those ancient ages when many illustrious nations inhabited these countries; I figured to myself the Assyrians on the banks of the Tigris, the Chaldeans on the banks of the Euphrates, the Persian reigning from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria, the warlike states of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phoenicia. This Syria, said I, now so depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. In all parts were seen cultivated fields, frequented roads, and crowded habitations. Ah! whither have flown those ages of life and abundance?—whither vanished those brilliant creations of human industry? Where are those ramparts of Nineveh, those walls of Babylon, those palaces of Persepolis, those temples of Babel, and of Jerusalem? Where are those fleets of Tyre, those dockyards of Arad, those workshops of Sidon, and the multitude of sailors, of pilots, of merchants, and of soldiers? Where those husbandmen, harvests, flocks, and all the creation of living beings in which the face of the earth rejoices? Alas! I have passed over this desolate land! I have visited the palaces, once the scene of so much splendor, and I beheld nothing but solitude and desolation. I sought the ancient inhabitants and their works, and found nothing but a trace, like the footprints of a traveler over the sand. The temples are fallen, the palaces overthrown, the ports filled up, the cities destroyed; and the earth, stripped of inhabitants, has become a place of sepulchers. Great God! whence proceeded such fatal revolutions? What causes have so changed the fortunes of these centuries? Wherefore are so many cities destroyed? Why has not this ancient population been reproduced and perpetuated?"—The Ruin of Empires, by Volney, pp. 6, 7.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34).

- Do the Prophecies of Paul in 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 4:3, 4 Fit These Times?
- Prophecies Concerning John the Baptist and Their Fulfillment.
- The Fruits of Christianity as Proof of its Divine Origin.
- What Has Infidelity to Offer in Lieu of Christianity?

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. By what power did prophets speak?
2. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?
3. Where was Babylon?
4. Of what kingdom was it the capital?
5. Who was Daniel?
6. How came he to be in Babylon?
7. How did Nebuchadnezzar seek to find out his dream?
8. Relate his dream.
9. To whom did Daniel say belonged power to interpret the dream?
10. What did the image represent?
11. Name these universal kingdoms.
12. Give some leading facts about the Babylonian kingdom.
13. What part of the image represented this kingdom?
14. Who conquered Babylon?
15. Give some facts about the Medo-Persian kingdom.
16. In the image what represented Medo-Persia?
17. Give some facts concerning Alexander's rapid rise to universal dominion.
18. What represented the Macedonian kingdom in the image?

19. What was the next universal kingdom?
20. In the image what was Rome?
21. What other kingdom would be set up?
22. What was it like in its beginning?
23. Was it a part of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
24. What did it do for the image?
25. What spirit animated all these universal earthly kingdoms?
26. How did Christianity destroy this spirit, this image of universal world empire?
27. Who have since tried to revive this spirit and failed?
28. How does Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream prove that he was inspired?
29. Describe Jerusalem in the time of Jesus.
30. Describe the temple.
31. What did Jesus say concerning the temple?
32. What was to be the final doom of Jerusalem?
33. What signs would precede its final destruction?
34. Why did Jesus tell the disciples about these signs?
35. What were the first signs?
36. Where did these troubles begin?
37. Tell about the signs from heaven.
38. What would happen to the disciples?
39. Was this fulfilled?
40. To what extent was the gospel to be preached?
41. Prove that this item of the prophecy was fulfilled.
42. Name and discuss the other signs mentioned by Jesus.
43. How would they know the desolation of Jerusalem was at hand?
44. What was the "abomination of desolation," and why so called?

45. What were the disciples then to do?
46. What commander first laid siege to Jerusalem?
47. Tell about that siege.
48. Why did he withdraw?
49. When did the disciples have an opportunity to leave Jerusalem?
50. Why flee to the mountains?
51. What commander next came against Jerusalem?
52. Who was his father?
53. What did Jesus say about the tribulations of this siege?
54. What does Josephus say about it?
55. What can you say of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple?
56. How many perished in Jerusalem?
57. What did Jesus say would become of the survivors?
58. Is that prophecy continuing to be fulfilled?
59. If these things strengthen your faith how should it affect your lives?
60. What did Jesus say of Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum?
61. What is their condition now?
62. What was foretold concerning the country of Moab?
63. What was to be the fate of the country of Edom?
64. What can you say of the fulfillment of these prophecies?

# Nature of Man.

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"What is man?" has been a question through the ages. By experience and observation we may learn many practical lessons about our physical organism and the working of our intellect and emotions, but such does not answer the question.

The Bible is a revelation of God to man, and of man to himself. By experiment we may learn the mode of operation of the life in a seed, but that gives no clue as to what that life is; and so we may learn the method of the operation of electricity without learning one thing as to what it is. Psychology and the much talked of Psycho-analysis may teach us much about the methods of the operation of man's spirit, but they cannot reveal to us what it is or whence it came.

## **MAN'S BEGINNING.**

"And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Such language is never used in making reference to animals. Let it be observed that "breath" is not life. The child lives before it breathes.

**Body Without Spirit is Dead.** "The body apart from the spirit is dead" (Jas. 2:26). Death is predicated of the body, and the separation of the spirit from the body results in the death of the body.

**Man in the Image of God.** "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). Being made in the image of God does not refer to our physical bodies. If the view entertained by materialists be true, man is no more than an image shaped out of clay, with air breathed into him. Paul declares that we are the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:29). Image carries with it the idea of likeness.

**Points of Likeness Between God and Man—Intellect, Emotions,**



and Will. Spirit knows (1 Cor. 2:11); grieves (Dan. 7:15); and rejoices (Lk. 1:47). Spirit wills (Mt. 26:41). Intelligence is not an attribute of the body. If it were, the body would be just as intelligent after the separation of the spirit from the body as before. The "image" consists not in a physical likeness, but in intellectual, or spiritual, likeness. Man possesses these attributes as Jehovah, though in a finite degree. If man's physical body, which is made of clay, is the thing that was made in the "image" of God, then every likeness of man carved out of stone is also in the "image" of God. But Paul declares that we ought not to think that God is like a material image (Acts 17:29). We ought not to think, then, that God is like our material bodies. Paul also declares that ignorance caused men to think that God was like material images. And so it is now. He who thinks that "in the image" of God refers to physical likeness is ignorant of the nature of God and man. God is Spirit (Jno. 4:24), and spirit is not like flesh and bones (Lk. 24:36-39).

**Spirit Returns to God.** "The dust returneth to the dust as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). When Jesus was crucified, he cried, just before his death, "Father, into thy hands! commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46). Stephen, the first Christian martyr, at his death cried, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). From these passages we learn that the spirit at death returns to God. And when the Lord comes again he will bring with him those who have died in faith: "Even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thes. 4:14). According to materialism there will be none for God to bring with him, for the dead will not exist till he returns and raises them, or recreates them.

**The Body Our House.** "And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me. Yea, I will give diligence that at every time ye may be able after my decease (Greek, departure) to call these things to remembrance" (2 Pet. 1:13, 15). "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in

the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven; if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5:1-4). The fleshy body is the tabernacle, the house in which the real man lives. Paul shows that at death we put off this tabernacle—the spirit leaves the body. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore years; yet is there pride but labor and sorrow; for it is soon gone, and we fly away" (Ps. 90:10). "The spirit returns to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). Our bodies do not fly away, but inspiration declares that the spirit leaves the body, puts it off, and returns to God.

**Jesus and the Sadducees.** "And there came to him certain of the Sadducees, they that say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Teacher, Moses wrote unto us, that if a man's brother die, having a wife, and he be childless, his brother should take the wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died childless; and the second; and the third took her; and likewise the seven also left no children, and died. Afterward the woman also died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife of them shall she be? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus said unto them, The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they that are accounted worthy to attain unto that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the place concerning the Bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him" (Lk. 20:27-38). "The major premise of his argument is the proposition that "God is the God of the living." Here the term dead is used in the sense attached to it by the Sadducees. If he had been disputing with the Pharisees, they could have answered, He is the God of the dead; for Abraham and Isaac

and Jacob were dead when he said 'I am their God.' But to a Sadducee a dead man was **non est**—he had ceased to exist, he was nothing; and to say, in their sense of the term, that God is the God of the dead, is to say he is the God of nothing. It would be nonsense. But God did say, hundreds of years after the death of the three patriarchs, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' (Ex. 3:6). The conclusion follows, that these patriarchs were not dead in the Sadducean sense of the term; and as the conclusion applies to their spirits, it proves that spirits continue to be alive after the bodies which they inhabited are dead."—McGarvey. "All live unto him," said Jesus. Whether the body be dead or living, whether the spirit is in the body or out, "all live unto him."

**Cannot Kill the Soul.** "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Mt. 10:28). According to materialists every one who kills another kills both soul and body, but Jesus declares this not to be true. According to him, a man cannot kill the soul.

**Paul's Strait**—to Abide or Depart. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh—if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake" (Phil. 1:21-24). Here Paul contrasts living in the flesh with departing and being with Christ. To live in the flesh was to bring fruit from his labors—this any Christian desires, and to die was to be with Christ—a thing to be desired; hence, the strait. A materialist is never in this strait, for to him to die is to become extinct. According to materialists Paul could have lived till the second coming of Christ and been with him as early as to have died when he did!

**In the Body or Out.** "I know a man in Christ, four-teen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart

from the body, I know not: God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:2-4). A materialist would have told Paul that such doubts were senseless, that he was certainly in the body, for that is the only mode of existence. But Paul was no materialist. As a Pharisee he believed that a man's spirit could live apart from his body; and, being inspired, he knew that, whether in the body or out, a man's spirit was conscious, and could hear words.

Spirit is Eternal. "Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for a moment, worketh for us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:16-18.). We can see that the body, the outward man, perishes as we grow older; inspiration tells us that the inward man, the spirit, is at the same time renewed. For these reasons the outward man is not the Christian's chief concern. He looks at (Greek, *skopeo*, observes, contemplates) the things not seen (not visible, *blepo*). The body is seen, the spirit is not seen. The spirit, then, is eternal. Hence, though our outward man is decaying, that is no cause of deep concern; for we are not having regard for things seen, the outward, perishable man; but our chief concern is for the inward man, the unseen, the eternal.

**Home in the Body—Absent from the Lord.** "Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him" (2 Cor. 5:6-9). It is certain that a materialist did not write this passage, for with them there is no such thing as being absent from the body. Paul says that when a Christian leaves the body he is at home with the Lord; and while he is at home in the body he is absent from the Lord. With the

materialists there is a tabernacle, a house, but no one dwelling in it—a house, but nobody at home.

**The Transfiguration.** "And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart; and he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him. And Peter answered, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid" (Mt. 17:1-6). Moses died more than fourteen hundred years before this, but he continued to retain his individuality and identity. Elijah did not die, but was caught up into heaven. He too is still Elijah, just as much a real being as he was during his life on earth. The three apostles with Jesus on the mount saw these two men, Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus on the mount. Materialists say this was a vision. Certainly; it was not a dream. Luke's account of this occurrence says they had been asleep; "but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him" (Lk. 9:32). They also heard the conversation. Peter's evidence is also decisive. He declares they were eye-witness of his glory and heard God's voice while they were in the holy mount (2 Pet. 1:16-18).

**Spirit Distinct from the Flesh.** Jesus distinguishes between the flesh and spirit: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt. 26:41.).

**Spirit is Within.** "Jehovah . . . formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1.) "Who among men knoweth the thinks of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him" (1 Cor. 2:11). And this spirit in man is not composed of flesh and bones; "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having" (Lk. 24:39.)

**Souls Purified.** "Seeing ye have purified your souls' in your obedience to the truth (1 Pet. 1:22.) But obedience does not purify the flesh (1 Pet. 3:21). Therefore man is more than flesh.

**Soul Departs; and Comes Again into the Body.** "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died) (Gen. 35:18). "And the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived" (1 Kings 17:22). "And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately" (Lk. 8:55). "The body apart from the spirit is dead" (Jas. 2:26).

**Shall Never Die.** "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death" (Prov. 12:28). "If a man keep my word, he shall never see death. The Jews said unto him, Now we know that thou hast a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death" (Jno. 8:51, 52). Of course, Jesus knew that people die, but he also knew that there is a sense in which good people do not die. This he plainly affirms. These materialistic rulers talked back at him just as present day materialists do. If materialists are right, then those Jews were right. If those Jews were wrong, then present day materialists are also wrong. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jno. 11:26). "Believest thou this?" is a very appropriate question, and so we pass it on to the materialists.

**Souls Under the Altar.** "And he opened the fifth seal, and I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. 6:9, 10). Their persecutors were still living on the earth. This, then, was before the resurrection. It is also said of these souls: "And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who would be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course" (Vs. 11). This conversation with these souls was after their bodies had been beheaded, and while their enemies and their brethren were still

living on the earth. Their fellow-servants who were still living on the earth were also to suffer death, as they had. Only one who disbelieves the Bible can contend that these souls were not alive and conscious, even though their bodies had been slain.

**Wicked Continue Conscious.** "The Lord knoweth ] how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment" (2 Pet. 2:9). These unrighteous people were kept in punishment after death and before the judgment. This harmonizes with Prov. 5:11, 12: "And thou mourn at thy latter end, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof." This they said when their bodies were consumed.

**Rich Man and Lazarus.** See Lk. 16:19-31. The condition of the dead, both of the righteous and the wicked, as set forth in the preceding paragraphs, is further borne out by what Jesus says concerning the rich man and Lazarus. This is not a parable, but we shall not consume space discussing that point. A parable is a statement of a fact, or truth, in nature, to illustrate spiritual or heavenly things. To say that this is a parable might involve us in some doubt as to what the figure signified, but it would not at all do away with the facts as Jesus stated them. A parable is a statement of truths or facts. To deny this is to say that a parable is false. There was a certain rich man, and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus. Jesus said so. If there was not this certain rich man and this certain beggar, then Jesus did not state facts. This rich man and this beggar lived and died while the Law of Moses was in force; and the conversation took place between Abraham and the rich man while the rich man's brethren were still living.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- The Transfiguration.
- The Rich Man and Lazarus.

- The Sadducees and Pharisees and Wherein They Differed.
- Building a Character for Eternity.
- What is Physical Death? Spiritual Death? Eternal Death?

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## QUESTIONS.

1. What theories have you heard as to the nature of man?
2. How may we learn what man is?
3. Describe the creation of man.
4. Is breath life?
5. What is said of the body without the spirit?
6. What is the meaning of the word "image?"
7. What is the meaning of the word "likeness?"
8. What is said of God?
9. Why cannot "image of God" refer to physical likeness? •
10. How is man like God?
11. Show that man's physical body was not that which was made in the image of God.
12. Quote passages showing that at death the spirit returns to God.
13. When the Lord returns whom will he bring?
14. What is a tabernacle?
15. Why call the body a tabernacle?
16. What is meant by "putting off the tabernacle?"



17. What flies away?
18. What difficulty did the Sadducees put to Jesus?
19. How did Jesus meet the difficulty?
20. To the Sadducees what did death mean?
21. How did the reply of Jesus prove that the spirits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still lived?
22. Quote Matt. 10:28.
23. What is there about man that we cannot kill?
24. Tell why Paul was in a strait.
25. What about this shows Paul was not a materialist?
26. Show that Paul understood that man can live in the body or out, and be conscious.
27. What about man perishes and what is renewed?
28. What about man is eternal?
29. In what sense is the body a house?
30. Where does Paul say he would be, if absent from the body?
31. What difficulty here confronts the materialists?
32. Describe the Transfiguration.
33. Prove that it was a real occurrence.
34. What bearing does it have on this subject?
35. How does Jesus distinguish between flesh and spirit?
36. Prove that man's spirit is within him.
37. Prove that soul and flesh are distinct.

38. What is said of the soul at death?
39. Prove that it returns to the body when the dead are raised.
40. What is said in Proverbs 12:28?
41. Why did the Jews say Jesus had a demon?
42. How does this statement of Jesus show that he was not a materialist?
43. What did John see under the altar?
44. What did these souls say?
45. Prove that this was before the resurrection.
46. What does the Bible teach concerning the condition of the wicked between death and the judgment?
47. What is a parable?
48. Is the story of the rich man and Lazarus a parable?
49. If it were a parable would it be any less true, and the characters any less real?
50. What shows that the conversation between the rich man and Lazarus took place soon after the rich man died?
51. What law was then in force?

# Events of Sinai.

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The student should review the lesson on "Deliverance of Hebrews from Bondage," Sound Doctrine, Vol. 2, 31-55.

After the Israelites left the Red Sea, Moses led them into the wilderness of Shur where they murmured because they found no water. After three days they reached Marah, but the water was bitter, and they could not drink it. At the command of Jehovah, Moses cast a tree into the water, and the waters became sweet (Ex. 15:22-26).

**Manna.** Soon they complained of hunger, and longed to be back in Egypt. The Lord fed them with manna. They were required to gather each day only enough for that day, save on the sixth day they were required to gather enough for the Sabbath also, as no manna fell on the Sabbath. Some of them disregarded the Lord's word both in regard to keeping some of it over night during the week, and in seeking for it on the Sabbath.

**Preserving a Portion of Manna.** At the command of Jehovah an omerful was put into a pot to be kept throughout their generations as a reminder to future generations of the food they ate in the wilderness for a period of forty years (Ex. 16). Again they complained about the water, and were miraculously supplied (Ex. 17:1-7).

**Battle with Amalek.** In Rephidim, Amalek made war with them. Joshua led Israel to battle. From a hill Moses watched the battle. While he held up his hands Israel prevailed; when he lowered them Amalek prevailed. Because his hands were "heavy," Aaron and Hur seated him on a rock, and held up his hands till the going down of the sun. Amalek was defeated. Then God had a threat recorded that in future years Amalek would be utterly destroyed (Ex. 17:8-16).

**Jethro.** Jethro, priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, visited them, bringing with him Moses' wife and two sons. When Jethro

saw the heavy burden upon Moses in judging Israel, he suggested that Moses select seventy elders of Israel to judge in the smaller matters. Matters which could not be settled were brought to Moses. Let it not be overlooked that Jethro gave the advice on the condition that "God command thee so."

## **AT SINAI.**

**The Covenant.** God promised, on condition of obedience, that he would take them as a people for his own possession and make them a kingdom. The people pledged themselves to obey (Ex. 19:1-8).

**Must Not Touch the Mount.** Preparatory to giving the law the people were sanctified, and commanded not to touch the mount. Certain death was the penalty for touching the mount (Ex. 19).

**The Ten Commandments.** (Ex. 20.) The ten commandments were first spoken by Jehovah to the people at Sinai. Jehovah appeared on the mount in the midst of thunderings, lightnings, smoke, and the voice of a trumpet. The people were so awed by this sublime sight that they requested that thereafter all communications be delivered them through Moses. This is referred to in Heb. 12:18-27. (For a fuller discussion of the Ten Commandments see "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 2, pp. 53-70.)

**Sundry Other Laws.** In addition to the ten commandments, a full code of laws regulating the social, political, and religious life of the people was given. Many of these laws are recorded in twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of Exodus. The laws regulating the priesthood and sacrifice (see first nine chapters of Leviticus), and the laws regulating the three annual feasts (Ex. 23:14-17; 34:18-25; Lev. 23:44) are of particular interest to the student of the New Testament. (On the feasts see "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 1, pp. 109, 110.)

**Moses in the Mount.** Soon after the ten commandments were given, Moses at the call of Jehovah, went up into the mount, where he remained forty days, during which time Jehovah instructed him

fully concerning the building of the tabernacle, and gave him two tables of stone on which were written the ten commandments (Exodus, chapters 24-31).

**The Golden Calf.** (Ex. 32.) The people became restless at the long absence of Moses. To Aaron they said: "Up, make us gods, which shall be before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him." Of the ornaments of gold that were contributed by the people Aaron made a golden calf, and called the people to its worship. Jehovah informed Moses of what the people had done. In hot anger, he said to Moses: "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation." The plea of Moses for the people is beautiful in its unselfishness, humility, and trust. But when Moses neared the camp of Israel and saw with his own eyes what was taking place, his "anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." He rebuked Aaron, and Aaron sought to lay the blame on the people. Aaron knew better than to make that calf, but it is a case of yielding to the demands of the people. There have always been teachers who would yield to the demands of the people. "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3, 4). God has always severely condemned such leaders.

**About Three Thousand Killed.** Names Blotted Out. About three thousand people were slain for the sin of making and worshiping the golden calf. Then Moses prayed, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Ex. 32:31, 32). Jehovah answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." There is a book of life in which the names of the righteous are written (Mal. 3:16, 17; Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3). Sin may cause these names to be blotted out (Ex. 32:32, 33; Ps. 69:28). Then at the judgment those whose names are not found written in the book

of life are cast into hell (Rev. 20:11-15).

**Second Time in the Mount.** (Ex. 34.) Jehovah commanded Moses to prepare two tables of stone like the first, and to come again into the mount. When Moses went up into the mount Jehovah descended in a cloud and proclaimed himself to be "Jehovah," a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness and truth; keeping loving-kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and fourth generation." Moses at the command of Jehovah wrote the ten commandments upon two tables of stone. When Moses returned from the mount his face shone so that Aaron and the people were afraid to come near him. Then he put a veil on his face. Paul refers to this veil in 2 Cor. 3.

**The Two Great Events at Sinai.** The student will readily see that the two outstanding events of Sinai were the giving of the law, of which we have already spoken, and the building of the tabernacle, which is discussed in another lesson.

**The Priests.** Out of the tribes of Israel the tribe of Levi was selected as the priestly tribe. But not all Levites were priests, for out of the tribe of Levi the family of Aaron was selected to be the priests (Ex. 2:1-10; 4:14-20; 28:1, 40-43; 29:1-9, 44; Num. 18:1-7). The other Levites were helpers or ministers to Aaron and his sons (Num. 3:5-10; 18:21-24). The priests had many duties, of which a very prominent feature was the offering of sacrifices. The laws governing the sacrifices are recorded mainly in the first nine chapters of Leviticus. In the old dispensation they had their priests and high priests, and the people approached Jehovah through these men. It is the province of the priest to intervene between men and Jehovah. In the Christian dispensation every child of God is a priest (1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6). Christians do not have to appeal to a Catholic priest to have him intercede with God for them; but, being priests themselves, they go to God. Again, the priests under the law made material sacrifices, but Christians offer spiritual sacrifices.

The high priest under the law had infirmities, but our high priest, Christ, is perfect (Heb. 7:28). The Jews were required to offer the very best they had—they were not allowed to bring the crippled calf, nor defective lamb.

**Nadab and Abihu.** (Lev. 10:1-10.) Nadab and Abihu were priests, sons of Aaron. It was their duty to offer sacrifices and to burn incense. But in officiating as priests they went too far, "and offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them. And there came forth fire from before Jehovah and devoured them, and they died before Jehovah." So far as we know they had done everything that day that the Lord commanded them to do; at least, it is not charged against them that they left off anything. But they did more than the Lord had appointed, and did that which he had not commanded. They presumed to improve on what the Lord had appointed. They were "progressive"—they did not believe in staying in the old ruts. Jehovah had not declared in express terms what they should not do, but he had told them what to do. To most people their offence would seem to be a small matter. "Burning a little incense, even if it was not required. What harm could there be in that? Why be so legalistic anyway?" At least, so people reason about matters today. Jehovah sees not as man sees. Concerning his laws, he says, "Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12:32). But Nadab and Abihu added—they did that "which the Lord had not commanded them"; and, without even the form of a legal trial, God destroyed them. These things were written for our learning (Ro. 10:5), and happened to them for examples for us (1 Cor. 10:11).

**Blaspheming and Cursing.** To blaspheme is to speak contemptuously of God, or to use his name in a light, frivolous way; or speak in any way to reflect on his majesty or glory. Profanity, so often heard, is blasphemy. The use preachers sometimes make of the name of the Lord in a light, flippant way approaches dangerously near to blasphemy. To curse is to "utter a wish of evil against one; to imprecate evil upon; to call for mischief or injury to fall upon; to execrate."

Two men had a fight in the camp of Israel. One of them "blasphemed the Name and cursed." The Lord commanded that he be stoned; "and they brought forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and storied him with stones" (See Lev. 24:10-23). This shows how abhorrent it is of God for one to curse and blaspheme.

**Numbering the People.** By order of Jehovah all the people of Israel from twenty years old and upward were numbered. Each tribe was numbered separately. There were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty exclusive of the tribe of Levi, which was not included in the numbering (Num. 1:1-49). Afterwards the Levites were numbered, every male from a month old and upward, twenty-two thousand (Num. 3:14-43).

**Exchanging the First-born for the Levites.** When the Lord slew the first-born of the Egyptians, he dedicated to himself the first-born in Israel, both of man and of beast (Ex. 13:1-15). At Sinai God accepted the Levites as his instead of the first-born of all Israel; but there were two hundred seventy-three more of the first born of Israel than there were of the male Levites. The people redeemed this two hundred seventy-three by payment of five shekels for each of the two hundred seventy-three (Num. 3:40-51).

**The Order of Encampment and Marching.** The whole order of encamping and marching was regulated by Jehovah to the minutest detail. The Levites encamped round about the tabernacle (Num. 1:52), with Gershon on the west (Num. 3:21-23), Kohath on the south (Num. 3:27-29), the Meraites on the north (Num. 3:33-35), and Moses, Aaron, and his sons on the east (Num. 3:38). The other tribes were distributed as follows: On the east, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulum (Num. 2:3-9); on the south, Ruben, Simeon, and Gad (10-12); on the west, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin (18-24); on the north, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali (25-31). Each family of the Levites had its special burden assigned it in transporting the tabernacle (Num. 3:21-37; 7:4-9). A definite order was followed in breaking camp to move: the standard of Judah when first, the tabernacle was then taken down and borne by the Gershinites and the Meraites, following Judah; then followed the standard of



Reuben, the Kohathites following, bearing the sanctuary; the standard of Ephraim and the standard of Dan in the rear (Num. 10:11-28).

**The Cloud.** The cloud rested over the tabernacle while they were in camp; and not till the cloud was raised and moved, did they break camp and move (Ex. 40:34-38; Num. 9:15-23). They then marched till the cloud stopped, and there they camped again. The Lord selected the camping places.

**Time at Sinai.** By reference to Ex. 19:1 and Num. 10:11 it will be seen that the Israelites remained in camp at Sinai nearly a year.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Israel's Deliverance from Bondage.
- The Sin of Murmuring and Complaining.
- The Sinfulness and Folly of Profanity.
- The Blessings of Righteousness to a Country Socially and Politically.
- God's Dealings with the Israelites as Examples to Us.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. How came Israel to be in Egypt?
2. How long were they in Egypt?
3. Describe the severity of their bondage.
4. Who led them out of Egypt?
5. What happened at the Red Sea?
6. When were they saved from the Egyptians?
7. When did they sing the "song of deliverance?"

8. Where is the Red Sea?
9. After the Red Sea into what wilderness did they go?
10. What about their water to drink?
11. How was the water sweetened?
12. Tell of the murmurings before they reached Sinai.
13. How did the Lord satisfy their hunger?
14. Describe the manna.
15. Tell of the regulations concerning gathering manna.
16. How long did they eat manna?
17. In what, and why did they preserve some of the manna?
18. Who were the Amalekites?
19. Where did Israel come into contact with the Amalekites?
20. Describe the battle.
21. What threat was recorded?
22. Who was Jethro?
23. What relation was Jethro to Moses?
24. What advice did he give Moses?
25. On what condition did he recommend the advice?
26. What promise did God make Israel at Sinai?
27. On what condition?
28. What reply did the people make?
29. What was the regulation about touching the mount?
30. Describe the scenes connected with giving the ten commandments.
31. Repeat the ten commandments.
32. When were the ten commandments first given?
33. Name some of the laws not expressed in the ten commandments.

34. Where do we find the laws regulating the priests and sacrifices?
35. What were the three annual feasts?
36. How long was Moses in the Mount the first time?
37. What instructions did Jehovah give him concerning the tabernacle?
38. What was the tabernacle?
39. Describe the making and worship of the golden calf.
40. What did the Lord say?
41. What plea did Moses make for the people?
42. What did Moses do when he saw the people worshipping the calf?
43. Why did Aaron make the calf?
44. Why are there false teachers today?
45. How many people were slain for worshipping the calf?
46. Repeat the prayer of Moses for the people.
47. What about the "book of life?"
48. What kind of a God is Jehovah?
49. What of Moses' face when he returned from the mount?
50. What effect did this have on Aaron and the people?
51. Why was a veil put over the face of Moses?
52. What does Paul say about this veil in 2 Cor. 3?
53. In what sense do the children bear the iniquity of the parents?
54. What do you regard as the greatest events at Sinai?
55. Which was the priestly tribe?
56. Of what family were the priests?
57. Who ministered to the priests?
58. What was the duties of the priests?
59. Who are priests now?

60. Who is the high priest now?
61. Why not have a few men as special priests now?
62. What kind of sacrifices do Christians make?
63. Describe the sacrifices required of the Jews under the law?
64. Who were Nadab and Abihu?
65. What was their duty?
66. What sin did they commit?
67. What happened to them?
68. In what did they sin? Why?
69. What does Jehovah say about adding to his word?
70. What does Paul say concerning Old Testament examples?
71. What is blasphemy?
72. What is it to curse?
73. Tell of the fight and the half Egyptian?
74. Who cursed and blasphemed?
75. What was done to him?
76. What do you think of one who curses or uses profanity?
77. Why did Jehovah claim the first born?
78. For who did the Lord exchange the first born?
79. How was the difference in number adjusted?
80. Locate the tabernacle, and tell who surrounded it.
81. Locate the tribes in camp, and the leader of each group.
82. Who bore the tabernacle in the march?
83. Name the order of the tribes in the march.
84. Tell the burdens of the families of Levi in transporting the tabernacle.
85. Tell about the cloud, and how long they were at Sinai.

# The Tabernacle.

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**Its Significance.** Building and furnishing the tabernacle, together with the ordering of its mode of worship, occupies a prominent place in the history of the Hebrews. The early religious life of the Hebrew nation centered around the tabernacle, and, later, around the temple. To the New Testament student its chief value is found in its typical significance of the new order of worship.

**Historic Review.** In former lessons we became familiar with Abraham (Vol. 1, pp. 54-67), Isaac and Jacob (Vol. 2, pp. 5-15), and with the fact that Jacob became the father of twelve sons who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. We learned that Joseph (Vol. 2, pp. 18-28), through the treachery of his brethren, was sold into Egypt, and how, through him, food was stored up against the seven years of famine, and how Jacob and the other sons with their families finally came down, and were given the fat of the land.

The descendants of Jacob were finally reduced to bondage. Their bondage was terrific in its severity. During this time Moses was born. He was preserved from Pharaoh's decree, and brought up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter with all the advantages of a royal education. Stephen gives an interesting synopsis of early Hebrew history in the seventh chapter of The Acts.

With Moses as their leader the Hebrews were later delivered from bondage. Pharaoh, stubborn and self-willed, defied Jehovah; and Jehovah determined to crush him so that he would willingly let the Israelites go. No more interesting history was ever written than that of this mighty conflict. Finally Pharaoh gave his consent to let them go, and then, having decided that he acted foolishly, pursued them to bring them back. The result is told in the fourteenth chapter of Exodus. Then the Israelites sang the song of their deliverance. See Sound Doctrine, Vol. 2, pp. 30-41.

## **THEIR JOURNEYS.**

**From the Red Sea to Mount Sinai.** In the last of the historic lessons from the Old Testament in "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 2, we left the children of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea. They did not tarry long at the place of their deliverance, but immediately took up their march towards Sinai. After three days' journey they came to Marah (Ex. 15:22-26), thence to Elim (Ex. 15:27), thence into the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai. They entered this wilderness "on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 16:1). Here they complained of hunger, and murmured against Moses and Aaron; and here they were first fed with manna, See Ex. 16. They passed on to Rephidim where God gave the water from a rock (Ex. 17:1-7). Here they were attacked by Amalek, and Jehovah gave them the victory (Ex. 17:8-15). In the third month they came into the wilderness of Sinai, and camped before the mount (Ex. 19:1, 2). Their journey is given in greater detail in Numbers 23:1-15.

**At Sinai.** Here Jehovah entered into a covenant with them (Ex. 19:3-15), and gave them the ten commandments (Ex. 20:1-17). See "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 2, pp. 56-68. Other laws were given. The Tabernacle was erected. In fact, Exodus 19:1 to Numbers 10:12 is a record of the laws given and the events at Sinai.

**Provisional Tabernacle.** The Tent mentioned in Exodus 33:7-11 was evidently not the Tabernacle which was erected as God's dwelling place and a place of worship. This Tent was pitched "without the camp, afar off from the camp"; but the Tabernacle was set up in the midst of the camp (Num. 1:52, 53; 2:1-31). Only Levites might enter the tabernacle, but Joshua, of the tribe of Ephraim (Num. 13:8, 16), as the minister of Moses had the care of this tent, and "departed not out of the Tent" (Ex. 33:11). It appears to have been used temporarily while the tabernacle was being constructed.

**Collecting the Material.** "And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for me an offering: of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take an

offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them: gold and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, and acacia wood, oil for light, spices for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 24:1-8). "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whose spirit made him willing, and brought Jehovah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and all the service thereof, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought" material so abundantly that the workmen reported to Moses', "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which Jehovah commanded to make"; and Moses commanded that they cease their offerings. Exodus 35:21-29; 36:5-7.

**The Architect.** The tabernacle was not the product of human wisdom or skill. Jehovah was the architect—from him came the plans and specifications. "According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Ex. 25:9). "And see that thou make them after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount" (Ex. 25:40). This point is emphasized in Heb. 8:5. The whole plan of the tabernacle is given in Ex. 25, 26, 27, 36, 37, 38. The student should carefully read these six chapters.

**The Artisans.** God called two skilled workmen, Bezalel and Oholiab, and inspired them for the work. These were the master-workmen. Wise-hearted men and women assisted them. See Ex. 31:1-7; 35:25-35; 36:1-3.

**The Superintendent.** Inasmuch as God gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle and made him responsible for its construction, it was necessary that he superintend every detail of its construction.

**General Plan of the Tabernacle.** By reading Ex. 40:1-33 the student will get a comprehensive view of the general plan of the tabernacle. An outer court serves as a sort of fence or protecting

wall around the tabernacle. The tabernacle proper was an oblong structure, divided by a screen or veil into two compartments, called the holy place and the most holy place. The articles of furniture consisted of the brazen altar, the laver, the table of showbread, the candlestick, the altar of incense, the ark of the covenant, together with certain utensils for service.

**The Court.** This protecting wall or fence around the tabernacle was one hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and five cubits high. The foundation of the court consisted of sixty sockets of brass, twenty on the north side, ten on the west end, twenty on the south side, and ten on the east end. Into these were fitted sixty pillars of brass provided with silver hooks on which were hung curtains of linen. The curtains for the door, twenty cubits wide, in the east end, were ornamented with fine needlework. The altar of burnt offerings and the laver were placed in the court before the door of the tabernacle. See Ex. 27:9-18; 38:9-20; 40:29-33.

It is certain that the people might enter this court, for it is specified that when any man of Israel made an oblation of a burnt offering he should bring it to the door of the tent of meeting, and kill it on the side of the altar northward (Lev. 1:1-11).

**Foundation of the Tabernacle.** The foundation of the tabernacle consisted of one hundred sockets of silver and five sockets of brass (Ex. 26:19-25; 38:27-30). It seems that this silver for the sockets was obtained by taxation (Ex. 38:25-27).

**The Walls.** The walls of the tabernacle were made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold. "And he made the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing up. Ten cubits was the length of a board, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each board" (Ex. 36:20, 21). Two tenons were mortised into one end of each board, and these tenons fitted into two sockets of silver in the foundation. There were twenty boards in the south side of the tabernacle, and twenty boards in the north side, and six in the west end, and two corner boards— forty-eight in all. The tabernacle was therefore thirty cubits long. There is some difficulty in determining its exact width. Six boards of a cubit and a half each for the west end would make



the tabernacle only nine cubits wide, but it is likely that the corner boards lapped over in such a way as to make the west wall ten cubits. See Ex. 26:15-25; 36:2-30.

These boards were held in place by bars of acacia wood, five on each side and five on the west end. These bars passed through rings fastened to the boards, excepting the middle bar. It seems that the boards were of sufficient thickness to admit of a hole being mortised through them. Through these holes the middle bar passed. See Ex. 26:26-30; 36:31-34.

**The Apartments.** The tabernacle was divided into two rooms. The partition was made of a richly-wrought curtain called the veil. This curtain was hung on four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold and set in sockets of silver. Ex. 36:35, 36. The first apartment, or room, was called "the holy place" (Ex. 26:33), "the tent of meeting" (Ex. 40:26), "the first tabernacle" (Heb. 9:6). The articles of furniture placed in this room were, the table of showbread, the candlestick, and the altar of incense (Ex. 40:24-36).

The second room, or apartment, was called "the most holy place" (Ex. 26:33, 34), "holy place within the veil" (Lev. 16:2), "holy of holies" (Heb. 9:3). It contained the ark of the covenant.

**The Coverings.** The tabernacle had four coverings. See Ex. 26:1-14. These coverings formed the roof of the tabernacle. Whether there was a ridge pole so as to give some pitch to the roof or whether the curtains hung flat over the top has been a matter for some speculation. It seems impossible that proper drainage could have been given had there been no pitch for the roof. The student will notice that each covering was large enough to hang down on the sides and ends of the tabernacle.

**Setting up the Tabernacle.** When all the work was finished, and ready for setting up the tabernacle, Moses inspected the work, and blessed the workmen (Ex. 39:42, 43).

The tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month in the second year after they came out of Egypt (Ex. 40:17). As the

Israelites started from Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month it will be seen that the tabernacle was set up just eleven months and fifteen days after they began their journey. What wonderful events had occurred during this short period!

**Diagram.** For the benefit of the class a diagram should be placed on the board, or let some member of the class draw the diagram. Care should be exercised in placing the various articles of furniture in their proper places. It is not stated just what position the tabernacle occupied within the court. As the altar of burnt offering and the laver stood at the front of the tabernacle, and as a considerable space was required for the animals and for the work of preparing them for sacrifice, it is likely that the tabernacle was set well back in the court, leaving more space at the front than at the back of the tabernacle. (If each member of the class will draw a diagram of the tabernacle it will assist them in the study.)

**The Diagram.** With the diagram before us let us go on an excursion of inspection. To do so it is well to begin at the east end, at the door of the court, and study each item as we advance.

**Gate of the Court.** The gate of the court was twenty cubits wide; a beautifully ornamented curtain was suspended on four pillars of brass, set in sockets of silver (Ex. 27:16).

**Altar of Burnt Offerings.** Inside the court we first come to the altar of burnt offerings. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with brass with a network of brass, and was provided with pots, shovels, basins, flesh-hooks, and fire pans—all made of brass. See Ex. 38:1-7.

**The Laver.** The laver stood between the altar of burnt offerings and the door of the tabernacle (Ex. 40:30). Water was kept in it. "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: when they go into the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire unto Jehovah. So shall they wash their hands and their feet, that they die not. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and his seed throughout their

generations" (Ex. 30:17-21).

**Door of the Tabernacle.** There were no boards at the east end, or front, of the tabernacle. Five pillars, set in sockets of brass and provided with hooks of gold, stood at the entrance. On these was suspended a richly ornamented curtain (Ex. 26:36, 37).

**Table of Showbread.** This table was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, and stood in the holy place, on the north side. Its utensils for the service were made of gold. Twelve loaves of bread were placed on this table every sabbath day, and the priests ate, in the holy place, the loaves that were removed. See Ex. 25:23-30; 40:22, 23; Lev. 24:5-9.

**Candlestick.** The candlestick stood on the left as one entered the tabernacle, on the south side. It was made of gold, with an upright shaft and six branches—a lamp on each branch and one on the upright shaft (Ex. 25:31-40; 30:8; Lev. 24:1-3). The common idea that the lamps were kept burning day and night seems not to be borne out by the facts, for it is stated that Aaron was to dress the lamps in the morning and light them at even (Ex. 30:7, 8). While it is stated that the lamp was to burn continually, it is also stated that Aaron was to keep it in order from evening to morning continually. A little reflection will make the matter clear. Compare Ex. 29:38; 2 Sam. 9:7-13.

**Altar of Incense.** This altar, made of acacia wood, and overlaid with gold, stood in the holy place before the second veil. Incense was burned on it every morning, and blood from the sin offering of atonement was put on the horns of this altar once a year. See Ex. 30:1-10; 40:26, 27.

**The Second Veil.** The second veil separated the holy place from the most holy place (Ex. 26:33). It was beautifully ornamented with figures of cherubims. It was suspended on four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold and set in sockets of silver.

**The Ark.** This was a chest, or box, made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The lid was made of pure gold, and was called

the mercy seat. See Ex. 25:10-22. This sacred chest was called the ark of the covenant, because the tables of the covenant were placed in it (Deut. 9:9-12; 10:1-5). It was located in the most holy place (Ex. 26:33, 34; 40:20, 21).

### **THE TABERNACLE AS A TYPE.**

**Caution.** It is not safe to press a type further than we have divine warrant. That the tabernacle as a whole was a type is made plain by Paul in Hebrews 8:5; 9:9. Having mentioned the articles of furniture, he says, "Of which things we cannot speak severally" (Heb. 9:5). This rather indicates that each article of furniture had a typical significance, but we are not told what they typify. And we are not told what the court typifies. We do not care to speculate as to these matters, neither will we be dogmatic.

**The Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.** It seems plain that the holy place was a type of the church, and the most holy place, a type of heaven (Heb. 8:2; 9:1-10, 23-25; 10:19-21).

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### **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Stirring Events of Sinai.
- Need of Inspired Workmen in Building the Tabernacle and the Church.
- Following the Pattern.
- Liberality of the Hebrews a Rebuke to Us.
- The Tabernacle as a Type.

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### **QUESTIONS.**

1. What was Abraham's native country?

2. Repeat the promise in Gen. 12:1-3.
3. How old was Abraham at the birth of Isaac?
4. Give names of Isaac's sons.
5. Name Jacob's sons.
6. How came Joseph in Egypt?
7. What caused his father and brothers to come down?
8. Describe the bondage of Israel.
9. How was the child Moses preserved?
10. Name the plagues sent on Egypt.
11. Describe their crossing the Red Sea.
12. Give names of places they passed after leaving Red Sea, in their march to Sinai.
13. Give date of their arrival at Sinai.
14. Describe the giving of the ten commandments.
15. Do you think the tent mentioned in Ex. 33:7-11 was the tabernacle? Give reason for your answer.
16. How was material for the tabernacle obtained?
17. What kinds of material was called for?
18. Who brought material?
19. How came them with so much silver, gold, and jewels?
20. Who gave the plans for the tabernacle?
21. What charge was given concerning these plans?
22. Name the skilled workmen.

23. Who assisted?
24. Who superintended the erecting of the tabernacle?
25. Did God say to Moses: "Thou shalt not make ten windows in the tabernacle?"
26. Would Moses have sinned in making ten windows in the tabernacle? Give reason for your answer.
27. May we add to the New Testament pattern?
28. What was the court?
29. How was the tabernacle divided?
30. Name the articles of furniture.
31. Give the dimensions of the court.
32. Describe the foundation.
33. How many pillars?
34. Who might enter the court?
35. Of what was the foundation of the tabernacle made?
36. Describe the boards.
37. How were they fitted into the foundation?
38. How many boards?
39. How were these boards held in place?
40. What was the first room in the tabernacle called?
41. What was the second room called?
42. Describe the coverings of the tabernacle.
43. Give date of setting up the tabernacle.

44. How long after they left Egypt?
45. Describe the gate, or door, of the court.
46. Give dimensions of the altar of burnt offerings.
47. Name its utensils for service.
48. Where was it located?
49. Of what was the laver made?
50. What were its uses?
51. Where located?
52. Describe the door of the tabernacle.
53. Where was the table of showbread located?
54. What purpose did it serve?
55. How often were the loaves replaced?
56. How much gold was used in. making the candlestick?
57. How many lamps?
58. Were the lamps kept burning day and night? Give reason for answer.
59. Where was the altar of incense located?
60. Describe the second veil.
61. Where was the ark of the covenant located?
62. What did it contain?
63. Describe the mercy seat.
64. Discuss the tabernacle as a type.

# John The Baptist.

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**The Priests.** ALL priests under the law of Moses were of the tribe of Levi, but not all Levites were priests. The family of Aaron of the tribe of Levi was selected as the priestly family (Ex. 28:1, 43; Num. 3:10; 18:7). In allotting the land of Canaan to the Israelites, instead of giving the tribe of Levi a section of the country to themselves, certain cities located in the possessions of the other tribes were given to them (Num. 35:1-8; Josh. 21:1-42). When the priests multiplied and became numerous it was not necessary for all of them to be in Jerusalem continuously. To establish order and system, David divided the priests into twenty-four courses (1 Chr. 24:1-19). The courses served by turn at the temple, and each course had its chief. Hence, the origin of the term "chief priest."

**John's Parents.** Zacharias and Elizabeth were both of priestly families, and Zacharias was of the course of Abijah. "There was in the days of Herod., king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Lk. 1:5,6),

**A Child of Promise.** Zacharias and Elizabeth were old and childless. They had prayed for a son. "And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. Now it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the hour of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: because thy supplication is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (Lk. 1:7-13).



**Unbelief of Zacharias.** Zacharias was a good man, but his faith wavered. "And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I am sent to speak unto thee, and to bring thee these good tidings, And behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season" (Lk. 1:18-20).

**Forecast of John's Greatness.** "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn, unto the Lord their God. And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him" (Lk. 1:14-17).

**Zacharias Prophesied.** "Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people in the remission of their sins" (Lk. 1:76, 77).

**John's Environments.** John grew up in the sparsely-settled hill country of Judea (Lk. 1:80). Thus environed he had time for meditation and communion with God, and his character matured, unspoiled by all those artificial niceties that people of the world call culture and refinement. Nor did he learn, by daily contact with immoral people and false religious teachers to view with indifference the baseness and corruption then so prevalent. This gave him boldness and directness in denouncing sin and calling people to repentance.

**His Dress and Food.** "Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (lit. 3:4). His clothing was well suited to his work of baptizing, and his food such as the deserts afforded.

The law allowed the Jews to eat locusts (Lev. 11:20-23).

**Expectancy of the People.** "And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel" (Lk. 2:25). Anna the prophetess "gave thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (Lk. 2:38). So great was their expectancy that a Deliverer appeared about that time that "all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ" (Lk. 3:15). This feeling grew till the leaders at Jerusalem sent a delegation to learn if he were indeed the Messiah (Jno. 1:19-27).

**Multitudes Come to Him.** The Israelites had long been under Roman rule. Such condition is distasteful to any people; it was especially so for those who considered themselves God's chosen people. They resented being ruled by "Gentile dogs." They longed for deliverance. Hence, when John announced, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:2), the people were thrilled with the prospects of deliverance, and poured out to him in throngs. "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan; and were baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mt. 3:5, 6).

**Forerunner.** John was to make ready the people for the coming of Christ. "And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Lk. 3:3-6). The imagery is drawn from the building of a highway. John was not literally digging down the hills and filling up the valleys—he was dealing with people—and yet his figure of speech fitly describes certain features of his work. "Every valley shall be filled." The downcast, the hopeless, the dispirited, needed to be lifted up, to have their hopes rekindled; to

be made to know that by the help of God they could fill their God-appointed mission in life. "Every mountain and hill shall be brought low." The self-righteous, the arrogant, the haughty, the proud, the egotistical, must be brought to a true humility of spirit that bows tremblingly at God's word.

"The crooked shall become straight." Moses said of Israel, "They are a perverse and crooked generation" (Deut. 32:5), and David spoke of those who "turn aside unto their crooked ways" (Psa. 125:5). Paul spoke of "a crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2:15), and Peter exhorted his hearers to save themselves from this crooked generation (Acts 2:40). Who has not heard of one so dishonest in his dealings that he is referred to as "a crook?" To be of use to God and man such crookedness must be straightened out. "And the rough ways smooth." Some otherwise good people are rough in their ways and manners, and inconsiderate of the feelings and comfort of others. This roughness must be eliminated, and supplanted by gentleness, forbearance, and consideration. These things so necessary then to prepare people for the Lord are necessary now.

**His Teaching.** While John was a reformer and a prophet, his teaching was, in some respects, unlike that of any prophet preceding him. He demanded: (1) faith in the coming Messiah (Acts 19:4); (2) repentance. He rebuked the sins of the people, and called them to repentance. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:2). This was the burden of his preaching. (3) Confession of sins. "They were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mt. 3:6). (4) Baptism. And those who refused to be baptized rejected the counsel of God against themselves (Lk. 7:30). (5) That those baptized show by their lives that they had repented. "Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance," said he (Mt. 3:8). This does not mean that they were to relate an experience preparatory to baptism, but that they practice deeds answerable to amendment of life; that is, that they live so as to show they had repented. By submitting to baptism they bound themselves to a life of reformation.

His teaching also removed false hopes. The Jews depended much on the fact that they were descendants of Abraham; but John, in a striking figure, informed them that those who did not live right would be cast into the fire (Mt. 3:7-12).

**Established No Church.** There is not the slightest evidence that John established a church or set up a kingdom. He was only a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." John was not in the kingdom. Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist; yet he that is but little (Marginal reading: Greek, lesser) in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Mt. 11:11). Had John been in the kingdom of heaven it would have been impossible for him to be as great as any born of women, and yet less than the least in the kingdom. John's work was to prepare a people for the kingdom; so of the personal ministry of Christ and his disciples in their mission to the Jews. The kingdom was then in preparation. "The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it" (Lk. 16:16). "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the men of violence take it by force" (Mt. 11:12,13).

Till John, their only teaching was derived from the law and the prophets. This does not mean that the law and the prophets ended then, but that John's preaching was added. The law and the prophets could not end till they were fulfilled. The typical sin-offerings and atonement under the law were not fulfilled till Christ entered heaven with his own blood (Heb. 9:12-24). The prophecies concerning Christ were not fulfilled till he was glorified in heaven (Lk. 24:44; Acts 2:25-36; 13:33). Jesus himself declared that not one jot or tittle of the law would fail till it was fulfilled (Mt. 5:18); and he taught his disciples to observe the law (Mt. 5:19; 23:1-3), but to beware of the corruptions added by the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 16:6, 11, 12).

Roman dominion over Judea was very distasteful to the Jews, and the bolder and more violent were ready to seize any opportunity to

throw off the yoke. When John announced the near approach of the kingdom and gave evidence of his greatness, people were ready to flock to him as the promised deliverer. After he was cast into prison, and Jesus became prominent the daring and reckless were ready to take him, and, by force, make him king (Jno. 6:15). To keep down such rashness Jesus charged his disciples to tell no man that he was the Christ (Mt. 16:20; Mk. 8:30; Lk. 8:31), and charged those he cured to tell no one (Mt. 8:4; Lk. 5:14).

**His Name.** In announcing to Zacharias that a son should be born to him the angel Gabriel named this son John (Lk. 1:13); and when they came to circumcise the new-born child and would name him Zacharias, "after the name of his father," his mother said, "Not so; but he shall be called John." See Lk. 1:50-63. The thing that distinguished John from all preceding reformers was the fact that he baptized his converts. For this reason he gained the title "the Baptist." Hence "Baptist" was an official title, or descriptive term. A baptist is one who baptizes. It is unreasonable and unscriptural for any body of people the greater number of whom never baptized any one to call themselves Baptists. The fact that John the Baptist baptized a person did not make that person a Baptist any more than it changed his name to John the Baptist. If John Doe the merchant sells goods to a man that man does not thereby become a merchant. To so argue would be foolish, and to argue that because John the Baptist baptized a man the man thereby became a Baptist reveals a degree of ignorance as astounding as it is inexcusable,

**Two-fold Nature of His Work.** (1) John made ready a people for the Lord. Of this we have already spoken. (2). He pointed out Christ, and bore witness of his divinity. "And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (Jno. 1:32-34).

**Jesus Comes to Be Baptized.** It had been revealed to John that he

would baptize the Son of God. Though John knew him not, a sign had been given him by which he would know him: "Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit" (Jno. 1:33). With what interest and expectancy John watched for the sign we can only conjecture. John says, "I knew him not"; and yet when Jesus came to be baptized, he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Mt. 3:14), Perhaps this only indicates that John knew him to be a good man, but did not know him to be the Son of God.

In grandeur and sublimity the baptism of Jesus surpassed anything that had taken place since the creation of the world. John, than whom none greater had ever been born of woman, was the administrator, the Son of God, the active agent in creating the world (Jno. 1:1-10; Col. 1:16,17; Heb. 1:1, 2), was the subject. As the two came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit gave his sanction by descending upon Jesus in visible form, and God the Father spoke his approval from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Mt. 3:17). What other scene so sublime has mortal eye ever beheld? In our own baptism, however, we may visualize this scene when we are baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:18, 19).

## **THE CHARACTER OF JOHN.**

**His Courage.** John rebuked the sins of the masses. Perhaps this required no great amount of moral courage, for he was in no special way dependent on them for support; neither did they have political power by which they might harm him. But King Herod had shamelessly contracted an unlawful and adulterous marriage with the wife of his brother. John's courage was put to the test. No doubt the people were watching him—will he rebuke sin in the exalted as well as in the poor and lowly? But John acquitted himself like a man. Without hesitation came the rebuke: "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Mt. 14:4). For his fidelity to the right, he was, perhaps not unexpectedly cast into prison. Had his courage

not stood the test in the presence of royalty, even the cringing, whimpering boot-lick that now toadies to wealth and influence would thunder at John anathemas of condemnation.

**Jesus' Estimate of John.** Jesus said that none born of women was greater than John (Mt. 11:11). To the multitude Jesus said: "What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?" See Mt. 11:7-9. A reed is a long slender plant, easily swayed to and fro by the passing breezes. John was a sturdy character swayed neither by applause nor persecution, unshaken by the fads or fancies of others. "But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment?" Did you go out to see a fawning sycophant, a smooth, oily, self-seeking flatterer? John was not that!

**His Unselfish Devotion to Realities.** To understand the realities of life and unselfishly fill our proper place in God's economy is a worthy attainment. Many good men have been carried off their feet by ambition and flattery. Men have sacrificed known truths and duties to gain position of fame and power. Here John's character shines as in a dark place. He came at a time when the world was in expectation, and his preaching excited the masses. His fame reached the leaders at Jerusalem, and they sent a committee to John to learn from him if he was the Christ. All were in a receptive mood. What a commotion might he have created had he claimed to be the promised deliverer! The people would have followed, and John knew it. What a temptation it would have been to some men! But John calmly replied, "I am not the Christ" (Jno. 1:20); and directed the attention of the people to one greater than he; "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man who is become before me: for he was before me" (Jno. 1:29). More; he realized that the zenith of his power and fame had been reached. "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Men generally contemplate the waning of their powers, the diminishing of their influence, with sadness, sometimes with a tinge of bitterness. Not so with John; he was the friend of the bridegroom and rejoiced at his coming, even though it meant the eclipsing of his own splendor. See Jno. 3:26-30. John was not looking for earthly glory, but sought to be of real service

to God and man. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Mt. 23:11).

**Elijah.** Jesus said of John, "This is Elijah, that is to come" (Mt. 11:14). And yet when the Jews asked John, "Art thou Elijah?" he said, "I am not" (Jno. 1:21). Not a person, but in character and work, he was Elijah. The angel said concerning him, "He shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Lk. 1:17).

**His Death.** The account of John's death is given in Mt. 14:1-12; Mk. 6:14-29. Herod being reproved by John for his unlawful marriage, cast John into prison. He had deferred his execution out of fear of the multitudes who regarded John as a true prophet (Mt. 14:5). It seems that when Herod's first wave of anger at being rebuked had passed there returned a growing respect for John; but not so with Herodias, for there burned in her heart an implacable thirst for his blood (Mk. 6:19, 20). She kept to her purpose; "and when a convenient day was come"—convenient for her purpose—"Herod on his birthday made a supper for his lords, and the high captain, and the chief men of Galilee" (Mk. 6:21). At all such feasts wine flowed freely. Into this maudlin bunch of lecherous bloats the adulterous Herodias shamelessly sent Salome, her daughter by Philip, to dance the licentious dance of the Orientals. The dance so pleased Herod that he vowed to give her anything she might ask, even to the half of his kingdom. She went to her mother about the matter and said, "What shall I ask?" "The head of John the Baptist." Her opportunity had come. "The king was exceedingly sorry." But like many other weaklings, he would commit a revolting crime rather than break a foolish promise. John was beheaded, and his head presented to the daughter on a platter. "And his disciples came, and took up the corpse, and buried him; and they went and told Jesus."

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## TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.

- Office of a Priest.



- Significance of Names.
- The River Jordan.
- Herod and His Birthday Party.
- Dancing.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. What is a priest?
2. Of what tribe were the priests under the law?
3. Of what family?
4. Name the cities given the priests.
5. Into how many courses did David divide the priests?
6. What was a chief priest?
7. Who were John's parents?
8. For what had they prayed?
9. What was their character?
10. Describe the angel's visit to Zacharias.
11. Of what course was Zacharias as a priest?
12. How did Zacharias receive Gabriel's message?
13. What sign was given Zacharias?
14. What did the angels say concerning the child's future greatness?

15. What did Zacharias prophesy concerning the child's great ness?
16. What do you know of John's early life?
17. Describe his dress and food.
18. What of the suitableness of his dress for his work?
19. What were the people expecting? Show the class that your answer is correct.
20. What were their thoughts concerning John?
21. What did the leaders in Jerusalem do?
22. What was the political condition of the Jews at this time?
23. Why was this distasteful to them?
24. What special message of John interested them?
25. What did the multitude do?
26. From what is the figure of speech in Lk. 3:3-6 drawn?
27. How did he dig down the mountains?
28. How did he fill up the valleys?
29. What is the meaning of "crooked" as applied to people?
30. Meaning or "rough" as applied to people?
31. Is the same kind of preparation needed now? Why?
32. Name the different things John's preaching demanded. Give reference.
33. What is said of those who refused to be baptized?
34. What is meant by "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance?"

35. What false hopes did the Jews have?
36. How did John remove that?
37. Where is the proof that John established a church?
38. Prove that John was not in the kingdom.
39. In what sense did the kingdom exist?
40. What did men of violence seek to do?
41. When was the law and prophets fulfilled?
42. Why was John called the Baptist?
43. Prove that it was not part of his name in childhood.
44. Give the two-fold nature of John's work.
45. What special event had been revealed to John?
46. How was John to know when he baptized the Son of God?
47. Why was the baptism of Jesus such a sublime scene?
48. Give proof of John's courage.
49. What did Jesus say of John?
50. What is the difference between flattery and encouragement?
51. Is flattery ever helpful?
52. What was John's opportunity to be carried away by ambition?
53. What did he say of himself?
54. What fact might have soured a lesser soul?
55. In what sense was he Elijah?
56. Where is the account of John's death given?

57. Whom had Herod married?
58. Why was John cast into prison?
59. What was Herod's attitude towards John?
60. Who was present at Herod's birthday feast?
61. What was the attitude of Herodias towards John?
62. Who danced at Herod's party?
63. Does dancing make people better?
64. Does it take a wise person to dance well?
65. How did Herod feel about that dance of Salome?
66. What did he promise?
67. What did she ask, and on whose advice?
68. How did Herod receive the request?
69. Why did he grant the request?
70. Tell the remainder of the performance.
71. What became of John's body?
72. Let each one in the class give what to him is the most striking thing about John and his ministry.

# Miraculous Manifestations Of The Spirit.

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**What or Who Is the Holy Spirit?** Many people are confused as to whether the Holy Spirit is, or is not, a person. Some contend that the Holy Spirit is only a power, influence, or force. Without an effort or desire to sustain any theory, let us see what we can learn from the New Testament.

**The Spirit Knows.** "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:10, 11). The Spirit which is here said to know the things of God is the same Spirit which the apostles received, and by which they were inspired. This the language plainly shows, and all agree that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is plain therefore that the Holy Spirit knows.

**The Holy Spirit Speaks.** " The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called, them" (Acts 13:2). "Thus saith the Holy Spirit" (Acts 21:11). "Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers" (Acts 28:25). "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in latter times some shall depart from the faith" (1 Tim. 4:1). "He that hath an ear, let him hear what "the Spirit saith to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6,

22). Many other passages might be given.

**The Holy Spirit Has Emotions.** "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30). The power to know, speak, and to suffer grief belongs only to intelligent beings.

## **THREE PERSONS.**

There are three divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit. We need not bother ourselves about any speculations concerning the Trinity. Such speculations are profitless. We may know these divine persons exist, but we cannot comprehend their glory, majesty, and power. However certain things concerning their work and their relationship to them are clearly revealed.

**The Three in Creation.** Jehovah, the Father, was the designer. "Let us make man," said he, "in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). To whom was he speaking? Who was included in the pronouns "us" and "our"? It is certain that the Son, the Logos, the Word, was present, and that he was the active agent through whom the Father worked—that he was the executor of the Father's will. "In the beginning was The Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. "All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (Jno. 1:1-3). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth. things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him" (Col. 1:15-17). "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1 2).

In these passages it is plainly declared that Jehovah made all things through the Son. But what of the Spirit's work? "And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the "Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). The marginal reading here is very significant, "**was brooding upon** the face of the waters." "By his Spirit the heavens were garnished" (Job. 26:13). "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created" (Ps. 104:30). Thus it is seen that the Spirit was the finisher, the beautifier, the one who brought order out of chaos, and made the world a habitable place.

**The Three in Creating the Plan of Redemption.** Many fail to realize that God is a God of order and system. In any

well-organized business, different men have different work assigned them. There is not the overlapping of functions in the divine economy that some seem to think. Who has not heard people pray indiscriminately to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit to convert, or save the sinner? Such prayers show that the one praying does not realize that there is system or order in the divine operations.

The plan of redemption originated in the great loving heart of God, and the Son came to execute the Father's plan (Jno. 3:16, 17; Col. 1:19, 20; Jno. 5:30; 6:38; 14:4). But after Jesus, through death and resurrection, made possible the salvation of man, not a man knew of the significance of his death, nor how to be saved. So far as the people were concerned, the plan was in chaos, and darkness covered the face of the earth. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus expressed the sentiment of the disciples: "But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel" (Lk. 24:21). Hence, no one could at that time appropriate or use the benefits of this new order created through the death and resurrection of Christ. The Holy Spirit then, as in creation of the world, had to perform his work to make useable that which God had through the Son created. Jesus had said to his apostles just before his death: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. . . . But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (Jno. 14:16, 17, 26). "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, "because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he

shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." (Jno.16:7-14). And he expressly charged them: "Tarry ye in the city (Jerusalem) until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:7, 8). On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ the Holy Spirit came, so enlightening them as to enable them to know and declare fully the plan of redemption. Jesus was preached, and inquirers were told what to do to be saved. (See Acts 2.)

### **BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

It is said of Old Testament prophets that they "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). That they were not baptized in the Holy Spirit is evident from the fact that such endowment is first mentioned in Matt. 3:11.

Of Christ it is said that he received the Spirit "without measure" (Jno. 3:34). Old Testament prophets had that measure of the Spirit which enabled them to teach present truths and to reveal future events. They had that measure of the Spirit called inspiration, which enabled them to be God's spokesmen; for a prophet is one who speaks for another (Ex. 7:1). Some had an additional measure, enabling them to work miracles. We have no record that any of them had the gift of tongues. There was no need for such gift, as the prophets spoke only to their own people, unless Jonah be an exception. In the saying that Christ received the Spirit without "measure" the thought is presented that others did receive it by "measure."

After Christ was raised from the dead he made reference to baptism in the Spirit promised by John the Baptist: "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not



many days hence" (Acts 1:5). This was only a few days before the day of Pentecost. The apostles tarried in Jerusalem as the Lord had directed them (Lk. 24:46-49). "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).

What was this baptism in the Holy Spirit, and what were the results? The following results will help us to determine what the baptism in the Spirit was.

### **Results Of Baptism In The Spirit:**

The recipients were enabled to speak in tongues, that is, they spoke in other languages without the slow process of learning them. "They began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

**Inspiration.** "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Mt. 10:20). "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (Jno. 14:26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (Jno. 16:13). See also Lk. 24:49; 2 Cor. 2:10-13.

It appears that all the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were conferred by the baptism of the Spirit.

### **Baptism of the Spirit:**

**Did Not Depend on Human Agency.** It was administered by the Lord, and the apostles did not so much as know when they were to receive it (Acts 1:5).

**Did Not Purify the Heart.** "And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9).

**Did Not Sanctify.** "Sanctify them in thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jno. 17:17). "Sanctified by faith" (Acts 26:18).

**Did Not Save.** Although Cornelius received a miraculous endowment of the Spirit, it did not save him, for the angel had said to him, Peter, "shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thousand all thy house" (Acts 11:14)." (Acts 11:14).

**Did Not Convert.** "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul" (Ps. 19:7).

**Did Not Give Faith.** "And so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed" (Acts 14:1).

**Did Not Purify Soul.** "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth" (1 Pet. 1:22).

**Was Not Common.** In rehearsing the case of Cornelius before his brethren Peter said: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15, 16). The Spirit was given to the Samaritans by the imposition of the hands of the apostles (Acts 8:14-17). But in making reference to the Spirit falling on Cornelius and his house, Peter declares that it fell on them as on the apostles "at the beginning."

The fact that he referred to the "beginning"—Pentecost—for a like occurrence shows that from that date till the incident at the house of Cornelius there had been nothing like it.

## **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.**

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4)

"For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to

another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits: to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will" (1 Cor. 12:8-11).

From this it seems that a person ordinarily had only one gift of the Spirit, but this was not always the case, for Philip the evangelist, not only received direct communication from the Spirit, but he also worked miracles. (See Acts) It should be remembered that the apostles who were baptized in the Spirit had all the gifts of the Spirit.

### **PASSING AWAY OF BAPTISM AND GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.**

Paul indicates in Eph. 4:8-14 that these gifts were meant to continue "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The fullness of the knowledge of the Son of God is revealed to us in the gospel. These gifts were to continue then till the will of God was fully revealed—till the canon of the Holy Scriptures were completed— which was done with the giving of the book of Revelation. The sacred writing having been completed, there is no longer need for inspiration, nor for miracles to confirm the word.

**The More Excellent Way.** After having discussed at length the matter of spiritual gifts in first Corinthians twelfth chapter, Paul declared that he would show unto them a more excellent way. This more excellent way is revealed in the thirteenth chapter. In verse nine he affirms that they knew in part, and spake in part, that is, the gospel was revealed unto them a part at a time, and, of course, they could speak only that part revealed. The apostles had revealed to them at any given time only so much as was needed for the occasion, and, of course spoke only what was revealed. By this

process the whole will of God was revealed—revelation was completed. Paul affirms that that which was in part, that is, those spiritual gifts, would be done away. "But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:10). He had just affirmed that prophecy, or inspired revelation, and tongues would cease, or "be done away" (Vs. 8), and in this verse he tells when they would cease or "be done away," namely, when revelation was completed. With John's book of Revelation the sacred canon was closed—the gospel was completely made known. To us has been revealed fully man's origin, sin, and destiny; together with a knowledge of how he may escape sin and attain to the tree of life in the city of God. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit, having served their purpose, passed away, never again to be needed or used by man in this life. "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three." To contend for the miraculous powers of the Spirit now is to deny that the Bible is a complete revelation from God; or else the one so contending does not understand the purpose for which these miraculous powers were given.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Why the Early Church Needed Gifts.
- How Did Miracles Confirm the Word?
- The One Baptism (Eph. 4).
- Why is Love Greater Than Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 13).
- The Bible Complete.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. Name some theories about the Holy Spirit.
2. Quote a passage proving the Holy Spirit knows.

3. Quote a passage proving the Holy Spirit speaks.
4. Quote a passage which ascribes emotions to the Holy Spirit.
5. Prove that the Holy Spirit is a person.
6. There are how many divine persons?
7. Name them.
8. Tell of God's work in creating the earth.
9. Tell of Christ's work in creating the earth.
10. Tell of work of Holy Spirit in creating the earth.
11. Why do you think God is a God of order?
12. Tell of some prayers you have heard.
13. To whom should one pray?
14. With whom did the scheme of redemption originate?
15. Quote passage in proof.
16. What is the work of Christ in saving men?
17. Quote passage in proof.
18. When, was Christ's work in plan of salvation completed?
19. What the work of the Holy Spirit in plan of salvation?
20. When the earth was without form and void, what did the Spirit do?
21. Quote passages showing the work of Spirit in saving men.
22. What did Christ tell apostles Spirit would do for them?
23. What was the Holy Spirit to do for the world?

24. When did Spirit come on apostles as promised by Christ?
25. Were Old Testament prophets inspired? Quote proof. 23. Where is first promise of baptism in Holy Spirit?
26. Who had the Spirit without "measure"?
27. What measure of the Spirit did Old Testament prophets have?
28. What was a prophet in Old Testament times?
29. Did Old Testament prophets speak with tongues?
30. Who first promised a baptism in the Holy Spirit?
31. Where is the next promise of baptism in the Spirit?
32. What were the results of a baptism in the Spirit?
33. Who administered baptism in Holy Spirit?
34. Did apostles know when they would receive baptism in Spirit?
35. Did baptism in Spirit purify hearts? Quote Acts 15:9.
36. Did baptism in Spirit sanctify? Quote Jno. 17:17.
37. Did baptism in Spirit save? Quote Acts 11:14.
38. Did baptism in Spirit convert? Quote Ps. 19:7.
39. Did baptism in Spirit give faith? Quote Acts 14:1.
40. Did baptism in Spirit purify soul? Quote 1 Pet. 1:22.
41. Of what did Spirit falling on Cornelius remind Peter?
42. How was the Spirit given the Samaritans? '44. Name some of the gifts of the Spirit.
43. Name the gifts of the Spirit possessed by Philip.
44. What gifts of the Spirit did apostles have?

45. How long were gifts of Spirit to continue? Eph. 4:8-14.
46. What is meant by "knowledge of Son of God"?
47. This knowledge is revealed where?
48. When was the sacred canon closed?
49. How was the word confirmed? Heb. 2:1-4.
50. Why no need for inspiration now?
51. Why no need for miracles now?
52. What is the "more excellent way"?
53. How many apostles were there?
54. Did all speak with tongues?
55. What is meant by know "in part"?
56. What was to be "done away"? 1 Cor. 13:10.
57. When did the "perfect" come?
58. What of those who contend for miraculous powers now?

# The Work of The Holy Spirit In Conversion.

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In the conversion of sinners the Holy Spirit operates through the word of God. So far as we know all who believe the Bible insist that in the conversion of sinners the Spirit has a work to do, but people differ as to the means the Spirit uses in doing his work; in fact, some contend that the Spirit's work is without means. Or, stated differently, some contend that the Spirit comes into direct touch with the sinner's heart, and does a work on the sinner's heart separate from, or without, the word.

## **DEPRAVITY.**

Those who contend for a work of the Holy Spirit without the word argue that "man is so depraved that he is unable without the direct enabling power of the Holy Spirit to obey the gospel of the Son of God."— J. B. Moody, Missionary Baptist, in Nashville Debate.

The theory of human depravity is expressed as follows by J. M. Pendleton, Missionary Baptist, in "Church Manual Designed for the Use of Baptist Churches": "All mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse." In the Assembly, or Second London, Confession (Baptist), Chap. VI, we read: "From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." So also states the Philadelphia Confession. These confessions certainly paint a dark picture of the human family.

We wish here to notice some of the passages generally relied on to establish the doctrine of inherited depravity.

**Ps. 51:5.** "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." When David said he was brought forth



"in iniquity," he is far from affirming that the iniquity was in him. Though he was "conceived in sin," it was not a fault, nor sin, in David. He does not affirm that sin was conceived in him. David was brought forth "in iniquity." What is the significance of this expression? People are said to be born "in a language." "How hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born" (Acts 2:8). What is the meaning of being born "in" a language? Certainly it means only that we are born in a country where a certain language is spoken. And the expression, "brought forth in iniquity," can mean no more than that David was brought forth in a world where his surroundings were sinful.

**Ps. 58:3.** "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." Let it be observed that the ones David speaks of "go astray"—they were not born astray. David was speaking of the wickedness of the wicked, and not of all, as may be seen by reading the verses following the foregoing quotation.

**Jer. 13:23.** "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." This passage speaks not of infants, or of our condition at birth, but of these "accustomed" (marginal reading, taught) to do evil.

**Eph. 2:1-3.** "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." In this passage it is affirmed that they "were dead." Paul does not say, "Ye were born dead," but, "Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins." See also Col. 2:13. "Were by nature children of wrath." The word "nature" frequently refers to nature acquired by practice. It is so used in 1 Cor. 11:14. It is evidently so used in the passage under consideration, for they were said to be dead through their "trespasses and sins." But if nature here refers to inherent nature,

Paul is far from saying that we are sinners by this nature, for sinners are only those who transgress the law (1 Jno. 3:4). When Adam sinned the wrath of God fell on him, and he suffered physical death. This penalty comes on all, and all in that sense are "children of wrath." See Sound Doctrine, Vol. 1, pp. 32-25. But this does not even intimate that we are born totally depraved. Such an idea is not in the entire passage.

The dogma of inherited sin is not taught in the Bible; but if it were, it does not follow that man must have the Holy Spirit to come into his heart, separate and apart from the word, to enable him to hear, believe and obey the gospel. In preparing the plan of salvation God adapted the gospel to the needs of man as he is, and holds man responsible for not obeying it.

The fact stands forth that man is a sinner as a result of his having transgressed the law of Jehovah. This man needs to be saved, and God proposes to save him. The question before us is: How does God bring the fact of man's lost condition to his consciousness, and how does he lead man out of that sin to become a Christian?

**Motive.** All rational beings act from motive. Motive, then, is the power which produces voluntary action. If the gospel produces all the proper motives to move one to become a Christian, there can be no other power to move a free moral agent to become a Christian. The gospel presents to us the most powerful of motives, such as salvation, heaven, the love of God, and fear of punishment. Can man know these motives? Do they appeal to him without God's sending the Holy Spirit into his heart to enable him to know the motives and to be influenced by them? It is conceded that Satan seduced Eve and led her into sin by placing motives before her. Eve, acting on these motives, departed from the Lord and became a sinner; but, according to the direct operation advocates, God is unable to reach the heart of the sinner by motives presented in the gospel without some additional power. Thus the strange theory is held out that God cannot accomplish as much by motive as the Devil did. Eve was as far from Satan as the sinner is from God; she was as free from the taint of sin as the sinner is from righteousness,

even according to the theory of the most radical advocate of total depravity. The New Hampshire Confession, said, by Prof. W. J. McGlothlin, to be "the most widely used and influential statement of doctrine among American Baptist at the present time," makes this statement: "We believe that man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state." Hence, according to the direct-operation theory, Satan, by motive, led God's holy servants to voluntary sin, but God cannot, by motive, lead sinners to do right. Who can believe that Satan is so much more powerful than God?

**Ability.** Has the sinner the ability to become a Christian? Without hesitation we affirm that he has, when properly instructed, the ability to forsake sin and obey the gospel, and that he has the ability to understand the gospel when it is presented to him. Otherwise he would not be responsible. Where there is no ability there is no responsibility.

**Inclination.** Inclination is a leaning or preference of the feelings, mind, or will. What inclined Adam and Eve to sin? What inclines a rational person to perform any act? What inclines people to become Christians? Is it possible that the stirring appeals of the gospel cannot stir up in a sinner's heart any desire for the blessings offered?

**Action.** Can a sinner become a Christian? Keep in mind the fact that the sinner's sinfulness does not exceed the holiness of Adam and Eve, that the sinner is no further from God than Adam and Eve were from Satan; yet Adam and Eve were able, when the way was opened to them, to voluntarily go into sin. So also the sinner is able, when the way is opened to him, to voluntarily obey the gospel. If sinners do not have the ability, it is not their fault, and they cannot be blamed. It must follow then that, if the sinner cannot become a Christian when the gospel is presented to him, God only is to be blamed for his remaining in sin. If the direct work of the Spirit on the sinner's heart gives him the ability to act, then he is helpless till God sends him the Spirit; neither would he,

in any way, be responsible till the Holy Spirit gave him the ability. If the sinner has the ability, but has no inclination till the direct work of the Spirit creates in him the inclination, then he is not responsible for not being inclined. We do not recall a clear-cut statement by the direct-operation advocates as to whether they think the Holy Spirit, by direct operation on the sinner's heart, creates in him some new faculty enabling him to act, or whether he woos the sinner into favorable feelings towards the Lord, or forces him out of sin into salvation. But no matter about that, the fact is, the theory frees the sinner from responsibility till God sees fit to send the Holy Spirit into him. If the theory is true, then God damns a man for not doing that which he cannot do. But the scriptures nowhere intimate that the Spirit of God does, or must, accompany the word to make it either intelligible or credible, or to enable one to accept it. God gave the gospel to meet man's needs as he is.

### **DIRECT INFLUENCE DOES NOT CHANGE CHARACTER.**

That there have been some instances in which it seems there was direct spiritual influences even on sinners is not disputed, but did such operation change character, or convert a sinner to God?

**Pharaoh.** Pharaoh's dream was of God, but it in no way changed his character. See Gen. 41.

**Enemies Restrained.** When the children of Israel reached the land of Canaan, they were constantly beset by enemies, looking always for an opportunity to strike them. This opportunity came three times a year when all the men, as required by the law, went up to Jerusalem to attend the feasts, thus leaving their homes and borders without protection. What an opportunity to their enemies! But God in some way exercised a restraining influence on these heathen enemies. His promise to Israel gave Israel assurance: "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou goest up to appear before Jehovah thy God three times in the year" (Ex. 34:24). Of course these heathen nations knew not that their desires were held in abeyance by the God of Israel, neither were they at all benefitted by such spiritual influence.

**Balaam** is another striking example. See Numbers, chapters 22-24. By invitation of Balak he went to curse Israel, but every time he opened his mouth to pronounce a curse God caused him to pronounce a blessing. It is said that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him (24:2). Still Balaam was a degenerate prophet who loved the hire of wrong doing (2 Per. 2:15), and taught Israel to sin (Num. 31:16; Rev. 2:14). Thus in spite of the direct work of the Spirit on Balaam, he grew worse and worse, finally coming to a miserable end, forever disgraced (Num. 31:8). Also Balaam's ass was enabled to speak; but, of course, the direct influence on the beast produced no change in her (Num. 22:28-30).

**King Saul**, disowned and cast off by the Lord, with murder in his heart started in quest of David. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he prophesied (1 Sam. 19:18-24). Of course it produced no moral improvement in him.

**Caiaphas**. In a council to plot against the Lord Caiaphas was inspired to make a clear prophecy concerning the Lord (Jno. 11:47-53). Caiaphas was not morally improved by this direct influence which enabled him to prophesy, but continued as an enemy of the Lord. In fact, no one can prove that direct operation, or direct spiritual influence, ever affected a change in the character of a person thus operated upon, nor that such influence was ever wrought on any one for the purpose of converting him to the Lord.

## **THE SPIRIT CONVICTS OF SIN.**

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jno. 16:7, 8). It is not stated here clearly how the Spirit will convict the world of sin, but the method is implied in the statement that, having come to the apostles, he would convict the world.

**Saul, or Paul, Convicted.** Of course, to convict a person of sin is to convince him that he is a sinner. Paul gives us a concrete

example in his own conviction. "I had not known sin, except through the law" (Ro. 7:7). "Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Ro. 3:20). He also declares that the Scriptures are profitable for reproof (1 Tim. 3:16). The word here translated reproof is the noun form of the same word translated convict in John 16:8. Hence the same thing is affirmed of both the Spirit and the Scriptures, or word. This does not mean that there are two ways by which sinners are convicted. It only shows that the word is the instrument, or means, used by the Spirit in conviction. The Scriptures are the words of the Spirit. People who do not know the Scriptures have no just idea of what sin is.

**The Heathen.** The heathen, certainly above all people, need to be illuminated and brought to a realization that they are sinners; but never was one of them converted till he heard the word of the Lord. In the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to them, and through these words convicts them. Every denomination seems to realize this, and so bend their efforts to send the gospel to the heathen. This, no matter what their theory or practice is at home, is a confession that they realize the only way to convert a heathen is to preach to him. The prayer system of conversion would be cheaper, as respects the heathen, if it would work.

**The Ninevites.** The Ninevites were worshipers of idols, and in no sense in covenant relationship with the Lord. Their wickedness was so great that Jehovah determined to destroy them. To this wicked city God sent Jonah, declaring to them that within forty days the city would be destroyed. The preaching of Jonah resulted in the reformation of the entire city. Even the king bowed himself, and proclaimed that all should fast and cry mightily unto God, and turn from their evil ways. God says they repented (Mt. 12:41). The city was spared. If the work of the Spirit in convincing people of sin is performed separate and apart from the word there was no need for Jonah to visit Nineveh and preach to them; neither is there any need for the gospel to be sent to the heathen nations today. In the history given of the conversion of the Ninevites not one word is said about any influence brought to bear on them aside from the preaching of Jonah. If the direct operation of the Spirit was

necessary to their conversion, then Jonah, in recording the matter, left out the essential thing, and recorded minor matters. This no careful and reliable historian does. If one could prove that they were converted by a direct power, he would convict Jonah of being an unreliable historian. The fact that Jonah did not mention any direct operation is proof positive that there was no direct operation in their conversion.

## **RECONCILIATION.**

To reconcile men to God is to restore them to harmony with God. How is this accomplished? "All things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18, 19). Here it is said the apostles had the ministry, or work, of reconciliation committed to them. What means were they to use in performing this great work? We are not left to guess, for it is plainly declared that God gave them "the word of reconciliation." The word, then, was the instrument by which they were to reconcile the world unto God. If reconciliation is to be accomplished by the direct work of the Spirit, then the language of Paul is misleading, and they had nothing to do with reconciling the world to God. In the verse following the ones quoted Paul says, "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God."

An ambassador is one sent as a diplomatic agent to represent his sovereign to others. See *Sound Doctrine*, Vol. 1, p. 90. If the Holy Spirit is sent from God directly into the hearts of sinners to perform the work of reconciliation, or any part of it, separate and apart from the work the apostles were to do, then they were not ambassadors, and did not have the ministry or word of reconciliation committed unto them.

## **ALL THAT PERTAINS.**

"His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3). The force of this passage will be better appreciated if we understand what Peter means by the phrase "through the knowledge of him." He uses the expression a number of times, and it is, therefore, easy to determine what he means by it. It will be seen that "knowledge of God" and "knowledge of Christ" means knowledge that is revealed concerning them. "For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to not be idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:8). We may be idle and unfruitful in the knowledge revealed to us concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, but we can be neither idle nor unfruitful in what he knows. "But grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). We may grow in our knowledge of Jesus Christ, may grow in the knowledge revealed concerning him, but we cannot grow in what he knows. Hence, it is plain that by "knowledge of Christ" Peter means that knowledge which we have concerning him, that is, the knowledge revealed in the Bible. Peter, therefore, affirms that we have in the Bible everything that pertains to life and godliness. Hence, we have in the Bible, not only everything that is essential to life and godliness, but everything that pertains to life and godliness, that is, everything that in any way belongs to life and godliness. To pray for a power or a means of godliness or spiritual life separate and apart from the Bible is to deny that Peter knew what he was talking about; and no one who understands and believes what Peter says would pray for any additional power, any power separate from the word of God, to produce life and godliness.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- The use of the eyes and ears in conversion.
- Ability and responsibility.



- The Great Invitation (Mt. 11:28-30).
- The Parable of the Sower.
- The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

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## QUESTIONS.

1. State some theories held by people concerning the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion.
2. State the theory of inherited depravity as held by some.
3. What is meant by being born "in" a language?
4. What does David mean by "brought forth in iniquity"?
5. Show that David does not teach in Ps. 58:3 that we are born away from God.
6. Show that Jer. 13:23 does not teach inherited sin?
7. How does Paul say we were dead?
8. What does the word "nature" sometimes mean?
9. In what sense do we suffer as a result of Adam's sin?
10. Does not all life, animal and vegetable, fall under the same penalty?
11. What is motive?
12. What moves rational beings to act?
13. What motives does the gospel present?
14. Can you think of any higher motives that could be presented?

15. How did Satan seduce Eve?
16. What motives did he present to her?
17. Was the act of Adam and Eve voluntary?
18. As to character what was the condition of Adam and Eve?
19. What does the direct-operation theory involve as to the relative power of Satan and God?
20. What about ability and responsibility?
21. What is inclination?
22. What inclined Adam and Eve?
23. What inclines sinners to become Christians?
24. Can you show that the sinner's sinfulness does not exceed the holiness of Adam and Eve?
25. Show that, if the direct-operation theory be true, the sinner is not to blame if he does not obey the gospel?
26. Can you prove that Pharaoh's dream was from God?
27. What power did God exercise over the nations around Israel?
28. Were they conscious of that influence?
29. Did it reform or change them in, character?
30. Show that the direct operation on Balaam did not improve him.
31. What enabled King Saul to prophesy?
32. What about Caiaphas?
33. Quote John 16:7, 8.
34. What is it to convict sinners?

35. To whom was he to come that he might convict the world?
36. How does Paul say he knew sin?
37. Explain how the Holy Spirit convicts by words.
38. Why preach to the heathen nations?
39. What do the actions of all denominations show as to what they think is necessary to convert the heathen?
40. Tell about the results of Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites.
41. What need for Jonah to preach to them?
42. What do reliable historians record?
43. Prove that there was no direct operation in the conversion of the Ninevites.
44. What is reconciliation?
45. How were the apostles to bring about this reconciliation?
46. Prove that this excludes the idea of direct operation of the Holy Spirit.
47. Quote 2 Pet. 1:3.
48. What does "knowledge of Christ" mean?
49. Prove that 2 Pet. 1:3 excludes the idea of direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

# The Work Of The Holy Spirit In Conversion (Concluded)

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**Begotten by the Word.** "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. . . . And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:22-25). Without a begetting there can be no spiritual life. Peter here affirms that they were begotten by the incorruptible seed, "the word of God, which liveth and abideth," and that word, or seed, "is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you." This is plain and emphatic, and if the sinner is begotten by a direct work of the Spirit, Peter's language is misleading. But his language is not misleading, for, in fact, the Holy Spirit was here, through Peter, telling just how sinners were begotten.

**The Parable of the Sower** (Mt. 13:1-23; Mk. 4:2-20; Lk. 8:4-15). In this parable Jesus shows that the word of God sustains the same relation to the spiritual kingdom that vegetable seed sustains to the vegetable kingdom. In nature seed must be planted in the soil to produce a harvest. The same thing is true in the spiritual kingdom, or else the parable and Christ's explanation of it means nothing to us. Hence, in the spiritual kingdom, seed must be planted in the soil. Jesus explains that the seed is the word of God, and the human heart is the soil. He also explains that the word, or seed, enters the heart, the soil, through hearing. "And that in the good ground, these are such as in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, hold it fast, and bring forth fruit with patience." The force of this cannot be evaded by arguing that the soil must be prepared; for, no matter how well you prepare soil, you cannot raise a crop without planting seed. The devil knows this, and, for that reason, he, when he can steals the word out of the heart, lest people believe and be saved. He knows that the word of God is a living, incorruptible seed, and that if it is allowed to remain in the

heart the person will believe. If it is not living seed, in which the germ of spiritual life is lodged, why his anxiety to get it out of the heart? Indeed, if the word of God as seed has not in it the germ of life, just as does the vegetable seed, then the parable is misleading. This parable settles the matter—no seed, no harvest. The seed which makes Christians is the word of God.

## **THINGS ATTRIBUTED TO THE WORD.**

**It Makes Believers.** "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (Jno. 20:30, 31). "So then belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Ro. 10:17). "And it came to pass in Iconium that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed" (Acts 14:1).

**It Begets.** "I begat you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15).

**It Quickens.** "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me" (Ps. 119:50). "I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me" (Ps. 119:93).

**It Enlightens.** "The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 19:8).

**It Sanctified.** "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jno. 17:17).

**It Cleanses.** "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (Jno. 15:3).

**It Saves.** "Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21). "Who shall speak unto you words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house" (Acts 11:14). "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved" (1 These. 2:16).

The foregoing quotations need no explanation. They are plain statements. Plainly do they affirm that we are made believers, begotten, quickened, enlightened, sanctified, cleansed, saved, by the word of God. If the advocates of the direct operation of the Spirit in conversion could find one plain statement to the effect that we are converted by a direct impact of the Spirit on the heart, they would consider the matter settled beyond controversy. With us one plain declaration to that effect would settle the matter, and we would advocate the doctrine; why then will they not allow the foregoing plain declarations to settle the matter with them? But the advocates of the direct-operation theory cannot read one plain statement of Scripture in support of their theory. They infer that the sinner needs this power, and therefore must have it, else he cannot turn to God. The doctrine is only a guess, an inference, a speculation, and yet God nowhere says the sinner needs such power.

### **JUDGED BY THE WORD.**

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12:48). "So speak ye, and so do, as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty" (Jas. 2:12).

As we are to be judged by the word, or the law of liberty, our responsibility does not go beyond the word. But if there is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on our hearts, and we are responsible for the way we treat this influence, then the word of God, by which we are to be judged, does not reach the limit of our responsibilities. This would leave some of our responsible acts for which we are not to be judged. It must follow, then, that, if there be such a thing as a direct influence of the Holy Spirit in conversion, no one is, or could be, responsible for the way he treats this influence.

### **PAUL'S COMMISSION.**

"To this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the

people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:16-18).

**To Open Their Eyes.** Paul was sent to open the eyes of the people. But surely no one thinks Paul was sent to open the physical eyes of the people. His work was to enlighten the people, to open the eyes of their understanding, "that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." After certain people had been enlightened and had become Christians, he said to them, "Having the eyes of your heart enlightened" (Eph. 1:18). To open their eyes was to open their hearts; to give a correct understanding, and to lead them to be favorably inclined towards the Lord. We understand with the heart (Mt. 13:15). Paul opened the eyes of the people; for that purpose the Lord sent him. He was the Lord's agent, and, as such, the Lord was working through him. To say that the Lord cannot open the eyes of the people or convert them through his own chosen agent is to limit the power of God. The Holy Spirit was in Paul, and, through him, preaching to the people. To say the Holy Spirit could not open the eyes, or hearts, of people through his own chosen instrument or agency is to limit the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul affirms that Christ was working through him: "For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed" (Ro. 15:18). If there is a direct power to convert people, Paul would not dare mention it, for he would not "speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through" him. But he did, even in this passage, mention "the obedience of the Gentiles"; hence, Christ brought about their obedience through Paul. And the plain fact that God did things through Paul helps us to understand a matter of much dispute in connection with the conversion of Lydia.

**Lydia's Conversion.** (Acts 16:6-15.) At Troas "a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help

us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them." It is significant that the call for help was interpreted by these inspired men to mean that God had called them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. It shows that the people of Macedonia needed help, and that God intended to extend the needed help through his chosen agents. Leaving Troas, Paul and his company went to Philippi, a city of Macedonia, where they tarried for a number of days. "And on the Sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things that were spoken by Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there."

Help was needed in Macedonia, and Paul's vision at Troas shows that this needed help was to be derived through Paul and his company.

They understood the vision to mean that God was calling them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. .

The help Macedonia needed, then, was to be extended through preaching the gospel to them.

Through Paul's preaching the Lord was seeking to open the eyes of the people, for to that end was Paul sent (Acts 26:18).

If they were to be converted by a direct impact of the Holy Spirit, what need was there for Paul to visit them? It is plain from the record that no one there was converted before Paul preached to them. This shows how the Lord opened Lydia's heart. To open the eyes and to open the heart is but two ways of saying the same thing. Such expressions mean, to enlighten a person, to give him understanding, and lead him to be favorably inclined towards the Lord. The sight of intense suffering may open the heart of a stingy



man so that he attends to the needs of the suffering. The gospel is God's power for saving men. This power Paul preached, and through his preaching Lydia saw the sufferings of Christ and his great love and rich provisions for man's salvation. Thus, through his chosen agents, God was bringing his power to bear on Lydia's heart; and, in this way, her heart was touched and opened so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, that is, she obeyed what Paul taught her.

There is nothing strange or forced in the foregoing statements. They are in perfect harmony with the general trend of Scriptural teaching and with the claims God makes for his word. Is the heart stony? Then his word is "like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces" (Jer. 23:29). Is the heart ignorant? "The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130). Are the eyes closed? Then Paul was sent for the express purpose of opening the eyes. The word is a sword (Eph. 6:17) which cuts to the heart (Acts 2:37; 7:54); it gives understanding (Ps. 119:104), enlightens the eyes (Ps. 19:8), and produces faith (Rom. 10:17). The word is seed, and its fruits were seen in the promptness of Lydia being baptized. Paul preached the gospel, Lydia's heart gave ready response to its appeal, and she promptly acted. God accomplished this through his agent, Paul, whom he had chosen for that purpose.

## **THE GREAT COMMISSION.**

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:19, 20).

This passage clearly lays the burden of making disciples on the apostles. That they were to accomplish this work by preaching the gospel is plainly set forth in Mark's record of the Commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mk. 16:15, 16).

Men can be neither converted nor saved without the power of God. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Ro. 1:16). The gospel is God's power for saving, and no one can be saved without it, unless he can be saved without God's power. If any other power saves men, then the gospel is not God's power to save, or else God has two powers by which he saves. The apostles knew nothing of any other power. They preached the gospel, believing it to be God's power to save. They never mentioned any direct power by which sinners might be saved; neither did they ever pray for the Holy Spirit to come directly into the sinner's heart to regenerate him. They proceeded on the hypothesis that sinners could hear, understand, believe, and obey the gospel. The Holy Spirit spoke through them, and confirmed the word with miracles and signs (Heb. 2:3, 4).

## **THE FIRST SERMON UNDER THE GREAT COMMISSION (Acts 2).**

The apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit, "and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." When the people heard Peter's words, that is, the words of the Holy Spirit spoken through Peter, "they were pricked to their heart" (V. 37). But they were not yet saved, for they immediately asked, "Brethren, what shall we do?" The answer came to them in no uncertain terms (V. 38), and with that answer an exhortation to save themselves. About three thousand received the word, and were baptized. Nothing is said about their receiving any other power.

All the disciples, excepting the apostles, were driven out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-4). They went about preaching the gospel. The fact that they risked their physical lives to preach the gospel shows that a greater life depended on it.

**Philip at Samaria.** "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women"

(Acts 8:12). Philip preached the gospel; the people heard, believed, and were baptized. Through Philip the Holy Spirit preached to the people, and confirmed the word with signs.

**The Eunuch.** Acts 8:26-40. (See conversion of the Eunuch in this volume.) Here again the process was preaching, hearing, believing, baptism. The Spirit was present, but he spoke to Philip, and through Philip to the Eunuch.

**Saul.** (Acts 9:1-18; 22:3-16; 26:2-18.) Saul heard the Lord speaking in an audible voice, saying, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Having heard this, he believed, and inquired what to do. The Lord replied, "Enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." At the command of the Lord, Ananias came to him, and said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized., and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." Saul heard, believed, and was baptized.

**Cornelius.** (Acts 10.) Peter was sent to Cornelius to tell him words where he and his house would be saved. Peter preached to him, and he believed and was baptized. The Holy Spirit fell on him, but not to save him, for he was to be saved through words (Acts 11:14); nor was it to give him faith, for words produced faith (Acts 15:7); nor to purify his heart, for that was done by faith (Acts 15:8, 9).

**The Jailer.** (Acts 16:19-34.) The jailer heard the preaching, believed, and was baptized. The apostles were active in preaching the gospel, and the book of Acts gives a record of some of their work. Their words were the words of the Holy Spirit, for they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. In this way the Spirit led men to Christ. The inspired historian records not one case of a conversion by a direct work of the Spirit in the sinner's heart. And yet some claim that, in all conversions, there is a direct, or super-added, work of the Holy Spirit. Why did Luke not mention such momentous matters, if such were present? He did tell of the preaching, of believing, of repenting, of baptism, and of salvation; but not once does he tell us that a direct work of the Spirit was necessary to convert one soul. Luke was a reliable historian. While he did not tell all the various incidents connected with the various

conversions, he did as a reliable historian, record all the important essential matters. Therefore, to contend that the conversion of all these thousands was accomplished by a direct operation of the Spirit in the sinner's heart, is to cast a serious reflection on Luke as a trustworthy historian. Believe it who can; but we cannot believe that Luke was so remiss in his duties as a historian as to leave out, in every case, the one essential thing.

### **THE DRAWING POWER.**

"No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jno. 6:44). It is sometimes argued from this verse that God, in some way above our comprehension and aside from the word, draws the sinner to Christ. It is here clearly stated that God draws the sinner; the next verse tells how he does it. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me." The one who is drawn comes, and the one who is taught comes. It is plain therefore that the drawing power is put forth through the teaching. It is in this way that God's power, the gospel, is brought to bear on people. If people could not come, Jesus would not invite them to do so." See Mt. 11:28-30.

### **THE GOSPEL COMES NOT IN WORD ONLY.**

"Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance" (1 Thes. 1:5). This passage is often used by those who argue for a direct work of the Spirit. But they forget that Jesus promised that miraculous powers would accompany the proclamation of the Gospel (Mk. 16:15-20). These signs confirmed the word (Heb. 2:3, 4). These powers, conferred by the Holy Spirit, not only gave the preacher assurance that his message was true and that God was with him, but also gave the people "much assurance" of its divine origin. These extraordinary powers and signs were not wrought in the sinner's heart to convert him, but they were visible manifestations of divine power to show the people that God was with the preacher, and that his message was from God.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Responsibility of the Church in Preaching the Gospel.
- The Power of Ideals and Motives.
- The Ideals and Motives Presented in the Gospel.
- How Men Know God.
- How the Spirit Bears Witness, or Testifies.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. Show that we are begotten by the word.
2. What does Peter say about this word?
3. Is there life in the word?
4. Give the facts of the parable of the sower.
5. Give Jesus' explanation of the parable.
6. What is necessary to produce a plant in the vegetable kingdom?
7. What is necessary to produce a plant, a Christian, in the spiritual kingdom?
8. How does the seed enter the heart?
9. Why is the devil anxious to get the word out of the heart?
10. Quote Jas. 1:18, and show its bearing on the subject.
11. Quote passages showing the word saves.
12. How are we sanctified? Quote passage.

13. Quote passages showing we are quickened by the word.
14. What does quicken mean?
15. Quote passages showing how faith comes.
16. By what are we to be judged?
17. What is the extent of our responsibility?
18. What bearing does this have on the direct-operation theory?
19. Quote Paul's commission.
20. In what sense could he open people's eyes?
21. Why was he sent to open their eyes?
22. Who was working through Paul?
23. Do you think God can do as much through an agent as without one?
24. Paul dared to speak only of what?
25. How does this show there was no direct operation?
26. Tell about Paul's vision in Troas.
27. How did they interpret this vision?
28. What help did Macedonia need?
29. How was this to be extended to them?
30. To what city in Macedonia did they go?
31. Tell about the meeting with Lydia and the other women.
32. How did Paul proceed to help them?
33. How was Lydia's heart opened?

34. Could the Lord open Lydia's heart through Paul?
35. What of the word as a hammer? Quote passage.
36. What effect did Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost have on the people?
37. Quote Matthew's account of the Great Commission.
38. What is the meaning of the word disciple?
39. How were the apostles to make disciples?
40. What is God's power for saving people? Quote passage.
41. Tell about the first sermon under the Great Commission.
42. What effect did it have?
43. Show that this effect was produced by the Holy Spirit.
44. In what way, then, did the Holy Spirit convert them?
45. Tell about Philip's work at Samaria.
46. How did the Holy Spirit have part on their conversion?
47. What caused Saul to believe?
48. Give the process of conversion in the Eunuch's case.
49. How did the Holy Spirit have part in his conversion?
50. What caused the Eunuch to believe?
51. Prove that the Holy Spirit did not fall on Cornelius to give him faith, nor to purify his heart, nor to save him. (Quote passages.)
52. Where do we find the record of the preaching of the apostles?
53. Who wrote that record?
54. What do we expect reliable historians to record?

55. How does this prove that the conversions in Acts were not brought about by a direct work of the Spirit on the sinner's heart?
56. Who draws sinners to Christ?
57. Prove that this is done through preaching?
58. What accompanied the preaching of the apostles?
59. What was the purpose of these signs?
60. Why preach the gospel?



# The Heart.

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One frequently hears these and similar expressions: "I believe in a change of heart," "I believe in heart felt religion." A correct understanding of these terms would be helpful to all and would eliminate much confusion.

That one must be sincerely religious and his heart be right to be saved is not a matter of doubt; but that one may be religious after a false system of religion, believe he is saved, and rejoice in the feeling produced by such assurance while still in his sins, must be apparent to any thoughtful person.

## WHAT IS THE HEART?

**Not the Physical Organ.** There is an inward man, and an outward man (2 Cor. 4:16). But few, and they the most ignorant, can be found who think that the heart mentioned in the Bible, with which religion has to do, is the physical heart, the center of the body's circulatory system. The physical heart is susceptible of only two changes, namely, physical and chemical, and either would produce instant death. If this is the heart with which religion has to do, then, when the spirit leaves the body and the body and heart are buried, where will the religion of the spirit be?

**Spiritual.** A careful study of what the Bible says concerning the activities and functions of the heart will give us a better understanding of the heart. The three major functions of the heart are intellect, emotions, and will.

**Intellect.** All our intellectual activities are ascribed, in the Bible, to the heart. The heart thinks. "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Mr. 9:4).

"Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts" (Mt. 15:19). **The heart understands.** "The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge" (Isa. 32:4). "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed: lest haply they

should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should turn again, and I should heal them" (Mt 13:15). The heart knows. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness" (Prov. 14:10). The heart believes. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Ro. 10:10). The heart doubts. See Mk. 11:23. The heart ponders. "But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart" (Lk. 2:19). The heart reasons. "But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts" (Mk. 2:6). The heart judges. "Because if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness towards God" (1 Jno. 3:20, 21). To condemn is to pass adverse judgment. See also 1 Kings 3:9. These are purely intellectual processes, and are not processes of the physical heart. Perception, reflection, memory, are also intellectual processes, and belong to the heart.

**Emotions, or Sensibilities.** From the Bible we learn also that the heart is the seat of our emotions. We love with the heart. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" (Mt. 22:37). Despise with the heart. "She despised him in her heart" (2 Sam. 6:16). It is the seat of gladness and sorrow. "A glad heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken" (Prov. 15:13). The heart rejoices. "Our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name" (Ps. 33:21). **Admiration, wonder, fear, hate,** etc., are also emotions, and belong to the heart.

**Will.** Voluntary action along any line is the result of the will. The will is a faculty, or shall we say a function? of the heart? **We determine with the heart.** "But he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart," etc. (1 Cor. 7:37). **Purpose with the heart.** "Let each man do as he hath purposed in his heart" (2 Cor. 9:7). **Repent with the heart.** Repentance is a change of mind, or purpose. Paul speaks of an impenitent heart, a heart not willing to change its purpose with reference to sin and righteousness (Ro. 2:4, 5). **We obey from the heart.** "But thanks

be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness (Ro. 6:17, 18).

We classified believing as an intellectual act. This, of course, relates only to that degree of faith which merely accepts the truthfulness of a proposition. And yet our emotions may help or hinder us in accepting the truthfulness of a proposition. The degree of faith that leads to salvation is a belief in Jesus Christ with all the heart. This, of course, includes the emotions and the will. Faith then, in this broad sense belongs to every faculty of the heart—the intellect, emotions, and will.

### **CHANGE OF HEART.**

The expression, change of heart, is rather indefinite. It indicates nothing as to the nature of the change. Do we believe in a change of heart? It depends on what kind of change you have in mind. Nebuchadnezzar had a change of heart. "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him" (Dan. 4:16). "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as an oxen, and his body was wet with the dews of heaven, till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (V. 33). We do not want that change of heart. Change from a pure heart to a corrupt heart would be a change of heart. We should not want that. Purifying, or cleansing the heart is more definite (Acts 15:9). Yet there is a change of heart when a sinner turns to God.

When a sinner turns to God how much change takes place? a complete change in his intellect, emotions, and will? Not necessarily; perhaps he already knows what is right in many things, understands some things, and believes some things that all men should believe. But his understanding must be sufficiently enlightened so that he will know what to do. What change must take place in his emotions? Must he come to love the things he once hated and hate the things he once loved? Perhaps he already loves his wife, children, and law and order. He must not change

this to hatred. But he must love God more than these, must love him so that nothing will hinder his serving him. His will must be changed so that, whereas he was not willing to serve God, he is now determined to serve him. The word of God enlightens our understanding, stirs up our emotions, breaks down our stubborn will, and enlists us in his service" (Deut. 4:10; Ps. 119:9, 11, 104, 130; Mt. 13:15; Jno. 6:44, 45; Acts 26:16-18; Ro. 10:14-17). These and many other passages teach us that the necessary changes in intellect, emotions, and will are effected by the word of God.

**Further Light.** We may receive additional light as to what the heart is by considering the fact that certain actions are affirmed of both the heart and the spirit. We serve God with the spirit—"Whom I serve with my spirit" (Ro. 1:9), and we serve him with the heart (Deut. 28:47). We know with the spirit (1 Cor. 2:11), and we know with the heart (Prov. 14:10). We suffer anguish of spirit (Job. 7:11), and anguish of heart (2 Cor. 2:4). This shows that the heart of which the Bible speaks in connection with religion is not an organ of the flesh.

### **THE HEART RIGHT.**

It is frequently said, "If one's heart is right, he is all right." If this refers only to the emotions, it is not true; but if it refers to the whole heart, then it is eminently correct. The heart is right only when the intellect, the emotions, and the will are right.

### **HEART-FELT RELIGION.**

The physical sensations felt which are interpreted by some as heart-felt religion are caused by a reflex influence from our emotions, and are present when our emotions are greatly excited from any cause. Extreme delight, profound astonishment, great sorrow or fear, or any great emotion will produce a decided physical sensation, no matter what may be the exciting cause, whether religion, or earthly joy, love, calamities, fears, or sorrows. Whether the emotions be excited by truth or falsehood, if it be believed true, the feeling is the same. When Jacob believed on false evidence that Joseph was dead, his emotions and, therefore,

his feelings were just as they would have been had Joseph been dead. See Gen. 37:28

And when Joseph saw that his father Jacob was dead his emotions were aroused and the depressing feelings followed. See Gen. 49:33; 50:1. The process producing the feelings was the same in each case—the impression on the mind that a loved one was dead, emotions aroused, and depressed feelings followed. Truth was the cause in one case, falsehood in the other.

Make a person believe he is lost, and grief follows, which, in turn, produces a feeling of depression. As an intense emotion cannot be sustained for a long period, the conscience smitten sinner loaded down with grief and a consequent feeling of depression is usually easily swayed the other way. Then make him believe he is saved, his emotions are aroused to the other extreme, the load of depression is removed, and a feeling of pleasure and joy follows. But his feelings are no evidence of his pardon, for they follow as a natural result of his emotions, and his emotions correspond with his faith. Such feelings are not evidence of the truthfulness of what one believes, but only the result of his belief. Instances in your own experience and under your own observation, as well as the case of Jacob when he believed Joseph dead, prove this to be true.

In considering feelings under this heading we have had reference only to those fleshly sensations produced by emotions which some seem to think is heart-felt religion. But all sincere religion, whether heathen or Christian, produces these feelings. A person could believe in heathen religion and repudiate Christianity with all his soul, and still believe in that sort of heartfelt religion.

But emotions themselves are spiritual feelings. In this sense also all sincere religion is heart-felt, for emotions are aroused in all people when they are sincere in their religion. To accuse a person, therefore, of not experiencing heart-felt religion is to accuse him of not being sincere. The sincere worshiper of idols experiences these pleasurable emotions when he believes he satisfies the demands of his gods.

## HONEST HEART.

Honesty is a condition, or attitude, of the heart. An honest heart seeks to bring about, or establish, right relations. In business affairs it seeks to deal on principles of justice and right; and if it finds that in some former transaction unjust gain was obtained, even though it was done by oversight, or mistaken calculations, it will seek to make proper adjustment of matters. It seeks to render to every man that which rightfully belongs to him, whether in social or business affairs, even though it requires self-sacrifice to do so. It is a fine thing to be honest towards all men, but it is a greater thing to be honest towards the truth, towards God; for the greater includes the less. A person is not honest towards the truth when he will not open his heart to receive all the facts, all the light, on any proposition. A partisan spirit that shuts up the heart against the reception of any truth that militates against the party is not honest towards the truth. A heart honest towards God seeks to establish right relationship with him, to scrupulously render to him that which is his due, according to the highest standard of justice and right. A wise heart recognizes that God's way, God's will, is right, and an honest heart seeks to conform to it. This explains why the good and honest heart in the parable of the sower so readily received the word and brought forth fruit abundantly. See Lk. 8:15. This does not mean that an honest heart will not make mistakes. Saul of Tarsus sinned grievously in persecuting the church (1 Tim. 1:10-16), though he thought he was doing right (Acts 26:9, 10). His honest effort to live up to what he thought was right gave him a good conscience towards God (Acts 23:1; 24:16), but it proved nothing as to the righteousness of his course. It did enable him, however, to readily accept the truth when he saw it, and to thereafter put forth every ounce of his energy in promoting it. A heart waxed gross will not accept the truth, because such heart is not honest towards God. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should turn again, and I should heal them (Mt. 13:15).

## CONDITION OF THE HEART BY NATURE.

The condition of the human heart at birth has long been a subject of debate. Dr. W. A. Jarrell, a Missionary Baptist minister, who has engaged in a great number of public debates with ministers of the Methodist Church, and also with Christian ministers, says, "That man is totally depraved is evident from his being a child of the devil—fathered by the devil of the same moral nature"—Gospel in Water, pp. 251, 252. Every child, according to this is a little devil, possessing the same moral nature of the devil. This doctrine of inherent depravity is the very foundation of all denominational claims for a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. They claim that the heart is impure by nature, that even infants are impure by nature, and that infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, else they would be damned.

Adam was as good as God desired him to be. God pronounced all the work of his creation, including Adam, very good. See Gen. 1:31. More, he was a son of God (Lk. 3:38). Certainly he was as good as Jehovah wanted him to be; if not, why not? And yet this good man, who certainly was not corrupt by nature, sinned, so far as we know, the first opportunity he had. The fact that a man sins is not, therefore, evidence of a corrupt, depraved heart.

"God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29). "We are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28). God is the Father of our spirits (Heb. 12:9). Advocates of the doctrine of total depravity put much stress on their argument that children inherit the nature of their parents. How, then, can they show that our spirits do not inherit the pure nature of the Father of our spirits?

We are told in the Creeds that we inherit a corrupt nature, being "made opposed to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil," and that the sinner cannot think a good thought nor do a good deed till God regenerates him by a direct impact of the Holy Spirit. If this is true, man is in no way responsible for his sinfulness, nor for his failure to become a Christian. And yet God will damn him for being such a character—can a man with any sense of justice,

believe such a doctrine?

**Responsibility for Condition of the Heart.** When Adam sinned he did not blame God for not making him better, but did seem to lay the blame for his sin on his wife. But he is getting paid back. Every advocate of the doctrine of inherent depravity blames Adam for all the sinfulness in the world. It is an easy way to shirk responsibility, but it is neither manly nor just. God makes every man responsible for the condition of his own heart. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Jesus blamed the people for the grossness of their heart (Mt. 13:15).

## **RELIGION.**

**Not Enough to Be Religious.** One may be religious and still condemned by Jehovah. The Jews were religious in the days of Christ and the apostles as they are now, and the straightest sect of the Jews were Pharisees. But Jesus said, "Expect your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20). He also pronounced woes unto them, and denounced them in the most scathing terms (Mt. 23:13-16). To Nicodemus, one of the best of the Pharisees, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jno. 3:1-3). As a Pharisee Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church with all his might (Acts 26:2-11), and made great advancement in the Jews' religion" (Gal. 1:13, 14). He thought he was doing right, and this gave him a good conscience, good feelings (Acts 23:1; 26:9). And yet he was a great sinner, and found salvation only in Christ (1 Tim. 1:12-16). James speaks of vain religion (Jas. 1:27). Certainly this sort of religion is worthless.

**Sincerity and Truth Essential.** Sincerity of heart is essential to salvation and to the development of true culture; but sincerity alone is not sufficient. Of course, without sincerity of heart there cannot be a clear conscience nor any good feelings; but sincerity, a clear conscience, and good feelings do not prove one is correct. The case of Saul of Tarsus proves this. Also, one may believe that



sprinkling is baptism, and another believe that it is not. Both are intense in their feelings about the matter, but one is certainly wrong.

Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jno. 8:31, 32). Knowing the truth, abiding in the word, are conditions of discipleship.

## **PURE RELIGION.**

"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27). Any man, whether religious or not, can help the needy; but keeping one's self unspotted from the world is possible only to him, who, by obedience to the gospel, has separated himself from the world. But how keep one's self unspotted from the world? The world follows worldly wisdom, the church follows the wisdom of God. This is the only permanent, and always present, point of distinction between the world and the church. To the extent that Christian people adopt worldly wisdom in religious matters to that extent they become spotted with the world. Help the needy, and keep yourself unspotted from the world —this is pure religion.

**Do you feel your religion?** Certainly, and others should be able to feel your religion, too. As a general proposition it is true that our feelings correspond with the nature of the things we believe. If we believe joyful news, we feel joyous; if we believe sad news, we feel sad. But there is an additional thought we should consider: If we do not act in harmony with what we believe to be our duty, the good feeling will not follow our belief.

**Conclusion.** Three divisions of the heart: Intellect, Emotions, and Will. To promote our usefulness, satisfaction, self-respect, and happiness the heart should be cultivated with the greatest possible diligence. The intellect is the great machinery for acquiring, retaining, and classifying information. A certain part of emotional interest must be aroused, or we will make poor progress in

acquiring and remembering information. Poor memory is due largely to a lack of interest. If one loves the truth the acquiring of any truth produces pleasurable emotions, which leads to action, if the will is not too enfeebled. Strong emotions stimulate the will. A lazy man is stirred to instant action if the motive of fear becomes strong enough. Weakness of will and a failure to act is usually due to little, or no, emotion. "Keep thy heart with diligence."

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Cultivating the Intellect.
- Cultivating the Emotions.
- Cultivating the Will.
- Blessed Are the Pure in Heart (Mt. 5:8).

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. What advantage in understanding such terms as "change of heart," and heart-felt religion?
2. Must one be religious to be saved?
3. Can one be religious and not be saved? (Give an example.)
4. What does Paul say about the inward man and the outward man?
5. What is the function of the physical heart?
6. What about changing it?
7. Is it the heart with which religion has to do?
8. If so, where would the spirit's religion be when the physical heart is buried?

9. Have students name and discuss different intellectual activities of the heart.
10. In the same way discuss the emotions.
11. Discuss the will.
12. Show that to believe with all the heart includes the intellect, emotions, and the will.
13. Why is "change of heart" indefinite?
14. Discuss Nebuchadnezzar's change of heart.
15. Why is "purify the heart" more definite?
16. Discuss the change of heart necessary in becoming a Christian.
17. Show how the word of God produces these changes.
18. What actions are ascribed to both heart and spirit?
19. When is the heart right?
20. Is a person all right if his heart is right? Why?
21. Do you ever have sensations about the physical heart when the emotions are aroused?
22. How do you account for this?
23. Must the emotions be religious to cause these sensations?
24. Mention some emotions that you know by experience produces these feelings.
25. Are these sensations an evidence of religion?
26. Show how truth and falsehood may produce the same feelings.
27. Do all sinners have feelings of depression? If not, why not?
28. Do any have this feeling? Why?

29. How may this feeling be followed by a pleasant feeling?
30. Is this feeling an evidence of pardon? If not, why not?
31. Are feelings evidence of the truthfulness of what one believes?
32. May heathens have these pleasant sensations?
33. May not emotions themselves be called feelings?
34. Show how all sincere religion is heart-felt.
35. Does sincerity make one's religion right?
36. What is honesty of heart?
37. What is it to be honest in business affairs?
38. What is it to be honest socially?
39. What is it to be honest towards the truth?
40. How does a party spirit destroy this honesty?
41. What is it to be honest towards God?
42. What will an honest heart do about its mistakes?
43. Discuss Saul's condition of heart before his conversion.
44. What is meant by total hereditary depravity?
45. What other doctrine does this dogma give rise to?
46. Discuss Adam's condition at creation.
47. Did his sin prove that he was depraved?
48. When we sin, is that proof of inherent depravity?
49. Prove that man was not originally depraved.
50. Show that man is responsible.

51. From whom does your spirit come?
52. Show that we are responsible for the condition of our hearts.
53. Discuss the "honest heart" in the parable of the sower.
54. Show that one can be religious, and not be saved.
55. Show that sincerity and truth are necessary.
56. What is vain religion?
57. What is pure religion?
58. Discuss keeping unspotted from the world.
59. Show the value of emotions in religion.

# Conversion of The Eunuch.

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## LESSON TEXT. ACTS 8:26-40.

**The Church Scattered.** In the first part of the eighth chapter of The Acts we have an account of the first persecution against the church at Jerusalem. This resulted in driving all the disciples out of Jerusalem, excepting the apostles. Having been so long under the teaching of the apostles, these disciples were so full of the word that they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:1-5). Thus this persecution, instead of destroying Christianity as it was aimed to do, sent out active evangelists everywhere.

**Philip at Samaria.** Philip was one of the seven selected to distribute alms (Acts 6:1-6). By means of this persecution, Philip the deacon became the evangelist. Samaria was his first field of labor. Here he met with phenomenal success. This city had long been under the influence of Simon the sorcerer, who had succeeded in making them believe that he was "that power of God that is called Great" (V. 10). "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. they were baptized, both men and women. And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip" (Acts 8:9-13). See "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 1 p. 113.

**The Angel.** Samaria had been converted, and had received miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (V. 8-18). With the teaching and training they had received, together with the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit, these disciples were able to carry on the work in that city. At this juncture "an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go towards the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert" (Acts 8:26).

**Apostles, Not Angels Are Ambassadors.** During the entire history covered by the Bible God frequently communicated with

man through the medium of angels; but since the apostles received their commission as ambassadors of Christ, God has never revealed his law to any man through an angel. After that time angels sometimes appeared to man, but not to show him the way of salvation. An angel appeared to devout Cornelius, not to preach the gospel to him, but to direct him to a man who would speak to him words whereby he and all his house should be saved (Acts 10:1-8, 11:11-14). When the Ethiopian Nobleman was to be brought to Christ an angel was sent to the preacher. In both cases when the angel had delivered his message he withdrew. Neither has Christ since the apostles were empowered to act as his ambassadors, ever appeared to any one in person to tell him what to do to be saved. It is true that he appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus, and that incident is very illuminating. See Acts 9:1-19. Saul makes the direct appeal, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" But the Lord did not in person give him the desired information. That work had been given to man. Hence Saul was sent to Damascus to learn from a man the answer to his question. See lesson on "Apostles," Sound Doctrine, Vol. 1, p. 84.

**Philip Promptly Obeys.** Philip was commanded to leave Samaria, and "go towards the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same in desert" (V. 26). To a preacher the command to leave a city and go fifty miles to an uninhabited country would seem singular, but Philip showed his faith in God's guidance by prompt obedience. "And he arose, and went."

**The Same Is Desert.** It has been argued by a certain class of controversialists that the country, being desert, where the eunuch was baptized, afforded not sufficient water for immersion. But no informed man who valued his word should make such assertion. As a matter of fact the word desert, in the New Testament, does not mean a barren, waterless waste. Thayer's New Testament Greek Lexicon defines the word from which we have the word desert: "Solitary, lonely, desolate, uninhabited." A study of the usage of the word in the New Testament will show this definition of the word to be correct. By reading Mt. 14:13-21; Mk. 6:31-34, you will learn that Jesus and his disciples went to desert place in a

boat, and that the multitudes followed them, were made to sit down on the green grass and were fed, and that Jesus immediately caused the disciples to enter the boat while he sent the multitudes away. They were in a solitary, uninhabited place, and yet they were on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. It was desert, but not barren and waterless.

The road from Jerusalem to Gaza passed through what was then a well- populated country, with the exception of a short stretch of road some miles out from Jerusalem. It was to this point in the road that Philip was instructed to go. Prof. J. W. McGarvey, who traveled through this country, says:

"The term desert is not here to be understood as meaning a barren waste; for no such waste has ever existed between Jerusalem and Gaza; but as meaning that part of the way which leads through a comparatively unpopulated district. Much error and confusion concerning this way, or road, is found in the older commentaries, which were written before the recent thorough explorations of the country; but these, and especially the actual surveys made by the Palestine Exploration Fund of Great Britain) have cleared up the subject by showing that there was a Roman paved road leading direct from Jerusalem to Gaza, some traces of which are still visible, though the route, in the roughest part, is now impassable for vehicles. This road is laid down on the great map of Palestine made from the surveys, and can be easily traced by any one in possession of the map. The whole distance from city to city is about fifty miles, and the direction from Jerusalem is nearly due southwest. Some five or six miles from the latter city the road begins to descend from the central ridge, which it follows that far, through a rough and narrow ravine called **Wady el Mesarr, into Wady es Sunt**, known in the Old Testament as the valley of Elah. After traveling this valley for a few miles nearly due south, the road turns to the west, and rises through another wady to the level of the great Philistine plain, which it follows the rest of the way to Gaza. The passage along the mountain ravine must be the part called desert for all the rest of the way the road passes through the midst of villages, pastures, and cultivated fields; that is, it did so



when the country was well populated" (Commentary on Acts, Vol. 1, pp. 150, 151).

**His Route.** To go direct from Samaria to the desert part of the Jerusalem-to-Gaza road would require Philip to pass through the country to the west of Jerusalem. This would harmonize with the command, for he was not commanded to go to Jerusalem and take the road leading out to Gaza, but to go to the way that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.

**Reaches the Way.** He had fulfilled the command when he reached the way. Here he must wait for further orders. However, at that moment the Ethiopian was passing in a chariot. Philip could not as yet know that his journey had any relation to this man, and would most likely have let him pass out of sight had not the Holy Spirit given further directions.

**Foreknowledge.** (Perhaps with God there is no foreknowledge nor afterknowledge, as time can be thought of as relating only to material things; but we use this word in the sense attached to it by most people.) God deliberately laid plans for the conversion of this Nobleman. Philip had to travel some fifty miles, and the eunuch only ten or twelve, to reach the point of meeting. Philip, therefore, had to leave Samaria, at least, the day before the eunuch left Jerusalem. But God had known the exact time the eunuch would leave Jerusalem, else he could not have properly timed the movements of Philip.

**The Eunuch.** An eunuch is a man who by reason of physical conditions cannot be a father. The eunuch of this lesson was most likely a Jew, for the Jews then, as now, might be found in most civilized countries. His intelligence and honesty commended him to Candace, queen of Ethiopia, as being preeminently fitted for the position of treasurer of the kingdom. He was a believer in God, and had been to Jerusalem to worship according to the law of Moses. Ethiopia lay to the south of Egypt. The distance being so great, it is not likely that he went to Jerusalem three times a year as the law required (Deut. 16:16). Besides, it would have been necessary for him to have obtained leave of absence from the queen, who,

doubtless, had not sufficient interest in his religion to indulge him in the loss of so much time from his important duties. Only a few years had elapsed since John the Immerser began to preach. Perhaps the eunuch had known little or nothing of the momentous events connected with the beginning and progress of Christianity. Not long before this visit to Jerusalem the church had been scattered from that city by persecution, and Saul of Tarsus was yet vigorously making war against the church. It is impossible that he did not on this visit hear something of these things. Whether he had heard anything favorable about this new religion and those who had espoused it is not certain, but his conduct shows that he left Jerusalem in a contemplative and inquiring state of mind. In this state of mind he began early in his journey to read carefully the copy of the Scriptures which he had. He was not a careless reader, but sought diligently to learn the meaning of what he read. But God, who was watching him and guiding the movements of another man, was bringing him help in a way he had not dreamed.

**"The Holy Spirit Said."** The eunuch was very desirous of more light, and God had laid plans to enlighten him; but, instead of the Holy Spirit coming to this inquiring man to enlighten him or convert him, the Spirit talked with the preacher. "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot," said the Spirit to Philip. The eunuch must have already passed on some distance, for Philip ran to him.

**Heard Him Reading.** One thing was now settled in Philip's mind, namely, that this man was the object of his mission, though he could not know whether this man was a Christian or Jewish worshiper; but he knew that a simple question would determine the matter, without raising any antagonism in the man if he should be an unbeliever. The Nobleman was reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and Philip knew that no Jew with the Jewish idea of the worldly glory of the promised Messiah could understand this Scripture. This chapter speaks of the lowliness, humility, suffering, and death of some one; and this would not fit the Jews' idea of what the Messiah would be, but to the Christian it was plain. Hence, the simple question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The eunuch responded, "How can I except some man

should guide me?" This showed Philip that the man was not a Christian. He knew now how to proceed, and needed only an opportunity to give the needed instruction. This the eunuch afforded by inviting Philip to sit with him in the chariot.

**The Passage.** The exact point in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah which the eunuch was reading was: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: his generation who shall declare: for his life is taken from the earth."

285 B. C. the Old Testament was translated into Greek. This version was called the Septuagint, and was extensively used by foreign Jews, also by the apostles. That the eunuch was reading from this version is proved by the fact that the wording of the quotation given from Isaiah agrees with the Septuagint. Compare verse 32 with Isa. 53:7. You will notice that "lamb" and "sheep" change places in these passages, but this is exactly what occurred in the Septuagint, with which Acts 8:32 agrees.

**"In His Humiliation"**—in his trial and crucifixion—"his judgment was taken away." The judgment delivered by Pilate—"I find no fault in this man"—was taken away by the clamoring Jews, and Jesus was crucified.

**Philip Preaches Jesus.** The student should carefully read Isaiah 52. The eunuch's question, "Of whom speakest the prophet this? of himself, or of some other?" gave Philip an excellent opportunity to enlighten this earnest inquirer; "and, beginning from this scripture," he "preached unto him Jesus." To preach Jesus was then, and is now, more than to set forth his deity. For a fuller discussion of what it is to preach Jesus, the student is referred to "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 2, pp. 115-118. It is certain that Philip was laboring under the Great Commission, and that he was faithful to it. The Great Commission required on the part of the alien sinner faith, repentance, and baptism. See "Sound Doctrine," Vol. 1, pp. 95-108. Philip taught him that it was his duty to be baptized. Of this we are sure; for the eunuch said, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" He could not otherwise have

learned the need of being baptized.

The conceit that the eunuch learned of baptism from Isa. 52:15, which says, in our common version, "So shall he sprinkle many nations," is not borne out by the facts. The marginal reading in the American Standard Version has "startle." Isaac Lesser, a learned Jew, made a translation of the entire Hebrew Scriptures. He translates the passage: "Thus will he cause many nations to jump up (in astonishment)". This translation agrees with the context of the verse. It is further proved that the eunuch did not learn of baptism from this verse by the simple fact that he was reading the Septuagint Version, which, instead of having the Greek word for sprinkle—**rantizo**—it has the **thaumazo**, which means to astonish.

**The Baptism.** "They both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Some controversialists have argued that Philip and the eunuch went only down **to** the water, but language could not be framed in either the Greek or our English versions to indicate more clearly that they both went down **into** the water. Some who have tried to be funny rather than argumentative have said the Zacheus climbed up into a sycamore tree without going into the body of the tree, and Jesus went up into a mountain without going into the ground. But one can easily see how Zacheus could climb up into a sycamore tree without getting inside the body, and how Jesus could go up into the mountain without going into the ground, but no one can see how Philip and the eunuch could go down into the water without going into the water. Besides, when Jesus went up into the mountain he did not just go to the mountain. Just so, when Philip and the eunuch went down into, the water they crossed the line between the dry land and the water. They both went down into the water, just as is done in every case of immersion. The baptizing was done while they were in the water, and then they came up out of the water. The description does not fit the practice of affusionists. Affusionists do not take the candidates down into the water; immersionists do.

## **SOME REFLECTIONS.**

**Baptized Immediately.** In The Acts no one was considered

converted till he was baptized. This explains why there was no delay in administering baptism then. Every Christian should urge on those who respond to the invitation the duty of being baptized at the earliest moment.

**No Voting on Candidates.** There is no indication that any inspired man ever called for a vote to determine whether any candidate should be baptized. It is certain that Philip did not call for a vote at Samaria nor in the eunuch's case, for there was no church present in either case. This is a rebuke to those who practice such".

**Conclusion.** The conversion of the eunuch throws much light on the ancient manner of evangelizing. Religious people have in these degenerate times fallen far short of the simplicity of New Testament evangelism. We have not space here to enumerate and discuss the points of divergence; the discriminating student can easily do that.

The eunuch was a devout worshiper of God; but he was not a Christian, not a saved man. He was however, an earnest inquirer after truth. Such honesty of heart commends him to God. God sent both an angel and the Holy Spirit to Philip to guide him to the eunuch. Philip preached Jesus to him. The gospel is the power of God for saving men (Ro. 1:16), and Philip brought this power to bear on the Nobleman. From this preaching he learned of his duty to be baptized, and Philip baptized him. Whatever the word baptize meant in that day is exactly what Philip did to him. Nothing can be settled by the scholarship of the world more certainly and definitely than that the Greek word **baptize**, from which we get the word baptize, means immerse. And the circumstances connected with this baptism are such as always accompany an immersion, but never accompany sprinkling and pouring. Such language is never used to describe sprinkling or pouring.

Having now learned of Jesus the Savior of man and having been baptized in obedience to his command, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing in the assurance of salvation and in the hope of a glorious immortality.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- What Is It to Preach Christ?
- Christ in Prophecy.
- The Sufferings of Christ.
- The Agency of Man in Converting Sinners.
- The Doctrine of Mt. 5:6 and Its Application in This Case.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. What is the first account we have of Philip?
2. What is a deacon?
3. Why did he leave Jerusalem?
4. Where was his first field of labor?
5. Who, besides Philip, went forth preaching the word?
6. What success attended Philip's labors in his first field?
7. What did Philip do besides preach in that place?
8. Who was regarded as a great man in that place?
9. What is a sorcerer?
10. Are there such people now?
11. How were the disciples in Samaria prepared to carry on the work?
12. Who appeared to Philip?

13. What message did he deliver?
14. Give some accounts of God communicating with man by angels.
15. When did the apostles become ambassadors for Christ?
16. What of the ministry of angels after the apostles became ambassadors?
17. Why did the angel appear to Cornelius?
18. Why did not Christ tell Saul what to do to be saved?
19. Define the word "desert" as used in the Bible? Give instances.
20. What can you say of the road from Jerusalem to Gaza?
21. What the distance from Jerusalem to Gaza?
22. What direction from Jerusalem to Gaza?
23. What direction is Samaria from Jerusalem?
24. What part of the road from Jerusalem to Gaza is desert?
25. Why might Philip have wondered at the command of the angel?
26. Why did he so readily obey?
27. Can you give some probable reason why Philip was not sent to Jerusalem to find the eunuch?
28. Who was the eunuch?
29. Was he an Ethiopian?
30. How do you account for the fact that Philip's movements were so well timed?
31. What was the religion of the eunuch?

32. Where was Ethiopia?
33. How far from Jerusalem to Ethiopia?
34. Is it probable that the eunuch had heard of Christianity while in Jerusalem?
35. How did he occupy his time along the highway?
36. To whom did the Holy Spirit speak, and what did he say?
37. What did Philip do?
38. Could the Nobleman know that Philip was specially sent to him?
39. What part of the Scripture was the Nobleman reading?
40. Repeat some of this chapter.
41. Does this chapter agree with the Jews' conception of the Messiah?
42. What did Philip ask the Nobleman?
43. How would his answer reveal his religious state?
44. Give the answer to the Nobleman.
45. What was the language Philip heard him reading?
46. From what version was he reading?
47. Give the meaning of "his humiliation."
48. Give meaning of "judgment taken away."
49. What is it to preach Jesus? Prove your answer to be true.
50. Prove that Philip preached one should be baptized.
51. Prove that the eunuch did not learn of baptism from Isa. 52:15.



52. Describe the baptism of the eunuch.
53. Show that the circumstances do not indicate sprinkling.
54. Give reason for promptness in being baptized.
55. Could Philip have called for a vote of the church? Why?
56. Show some points of difference between present day evangelizing and ancient preaching—evangelizing.
57. What is the power of God to save? Quote scripture for reply.
58. Will pretty speeches, funny jokes, or speculations save?
59. Why do some people indulge in such?
60. Can a man preach the gospel and not preach doctrine?
61. Why did the Nobleman rejoice as he went his way?
62. Whose duty is it to preach the gospel now?

# Action of Baptism.

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All the great religious bodies professing to believe the New Testament to be the word of God hold that to be a member of their respective churches one must submit to baptism, or to what they call baptism; and, in administering the rite, they refer to Matt. 28:18, 19 as their authority for performing the rite.

Some hold that baptism may be performed by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, while others insist that immersion only is baptism.

In giving the command to "baptize" Jesus certainly used a word which had a clear, definite meaning, and used that word with its commonly accepted meaning. From the lexicons of the language used in recording what Jesus said, we may easily learn the "meaning of this word, and also from the practice of the inspired men performing the act commanded by the Master.

The command of Christ was recorded in the Greek language, that being the language in which the New Testament was written. The word "baptize" is from the Greek word **baptizo**. The question is not what does the word "baptize" mean as now used, but what does the word "**baptizo**," as used by inspired men, mean? What was the meaning of the word when Christ gave the Commission?

Baptizo: "**To dip in or under water.**"—Liddell and Scott.

Sophocles, a native Greek, in his lexicon defines Baptizo: "To dip, to immerse: to sink."

Thayer, who is without doubt, the greatest New Testament Greek lexicographer in all the world, defines **Baptizo**: "To dip repeatedly, to immerse, submerge."

We could quote a great many Greek lexicons, but why should we, since there is not a recognized standard Greek lexicon in the world which defines the word otherwise than the foregoing.

## **BAPTISM ADMINISTERED BY INSPIRED MEN.**

If one could be an eye witness of a baptism administered by inspired men, the question as to what act they performed would be settled; but since this is not possible for us in this day, let us determine from the inspired records just what act was performed.

## **JOHN BAPTIZED IN THE RIVER JORDAN.**

"And they were baptized of him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mt. 3:6).

And Jesus "was baptized of John in Jordan" (Mk. 1:9). After his baptism it is said: "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending on him" (Mk. 1:9, 10).

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (Jno. 3:25).

Much water is not required for sprinkling or pouring; neither do those who have water sprinkled or poured on them "come up out of the water," as did Jesus immediately after his baptism; neither does anyone sprinkle or pour anyone in or into a river. All these conditions and circumstances are met, however, in immersion.

## **PHILIP BAPTIZES THE EUNUCH.**

"And as they went on their way they came unto a certain Water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:36-39).

They came to the water. 2. They went down into the water. 3. Philip baptized the eunuch. 4. They came up out of the water. The baptizing took place after they went down into the water, and

before they came up out of the water. The same procedure is followed in every case of immersion, but is never necessary in sprinkling or pouring. (See lesson on "Conversion of the Eunuch" in this volume of Sound Doctrine.)

### **BAPTISM IS A BURIAL.**

"We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4).

"Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12).

Mr. Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church says, commenting on Ro. 6:4, "We were buried with him—Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion" (Wesley's Notes).

These passages so completely reveal the fact that in baptizing there was an immersion, that it seems to us unnecessary to make even a comment. Certainly every one knows that in sprinkling or pouring water on a person, just a few drops of water, there is not, there cannot be, a burial, nor is there anything that even resembles a burial. Every ordinary reader of the New Testament would, unless misled, understand that in baptism there is an immersion.

### **BAPTISM NOT TO PUT AWAY FILTH OF FLESH,**

Peter declare that baptism is not to put away the filth of the flesh (1 Pet. 3:21). A little reflection will show the student the significance of Peter's statement. Both Jews and Greeks were accustomed to the practice of plunging into the water to put away the filth of the flesh. Hence, in seeing Christians immerse people, they would likely conclude that they were doing it to wash away the dirt from their bodies; but no such thought would have ever entered their minds had the practice of the Christians been to slightly moisten the foreheads of the people for baptism. There can be no escape from the conclusion that Peter's language teaches that they were immersed when baptized.

<b>Baptism requires</b>	<b>Immersion requires</b>
1 Water	1 Water
2 Much water	2 Much water
3 Going to water	3 Going to water
4 Going down into water	4 Going down into water
5 Baptizing while in water	5 Baptizing while in water
6 Burial	6 Burial
7 Administrator handles subject	7 Administrator handles subject
8 Going up out of water	8 Coming up out of water

### **CLAIMS TO AFFUSIONISTS CONSIDERED.**

Controversialists among those who sprinkle and pour for baptism seek to offset the foregoing facts. In so doing, not only do they disregard the foregoing facts, but they practically disregard the scholarship of the world. No one thing is more clearly established by the scholarship of the world than that the apostles always immersed.

**Ezk. 36:25.** "And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." It is claimed by affusionists that this prophecy of Ezekiel refers to baptism under the New Covenant. Replying we would say:

1st. If this passage refers to baptism it proves too much for the affusionist, for they stoutly insist that baptism has nothing to do with cleansing people from their sins; whereas this passage declares, as a result of this sprinkling, they were to be cleansed from all their filthiness and idols.

2nd. The prophet in this passage does not refer to baptism, or the

Christian dispensation, but to the national restoration of Israel from captivity in Babylon.

3rd. Read the entire passage (Verses 22-31). It is plainly declared that the Lord would gather them out of all nations and countries, and bring them into their own land. Ezekiel prophesied during the early days of the captivity of Israel in Babylon (Ezk. 1:1-3). After the restoration mentioned in this passage, and after the cleansing by sprinkling, they were to dwell in the land God gave their fathers, and the Lord would cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places to be built. The desolate land was to be tilled, whereas it was desolation in the sight of all that passed by; and the grain was to be multiplied. Years after Ezekiel uttered this prophecy the Jews did return from Babylon to their own land. When a Jew became unclean from any cause he was to have the water of cleansing sprinkled on him. The preparation and use of this water is described in Numbers nineteenth chapter. Having been denied in foreign lands, they must have the water of cleansing (clean water) sprinkled upon them. It is astonishing that any Bible student would refer to this passage as proof of sprinkling for baptism, when, as a matter of fact, it was certainly fulfilled when the Jews returned from Babylon to inhabit the land of their fathers.

### **WATER ALONE NEVER SPRINKLED OR POURED.**

In all the Bible, there is not one instance where, by the authority of Jehovah, water, simply water, water unmixed with any other element, was ever, for any purpose, by anyone, sprinkled or poured on anyone.

**Baptize With Water.** It is argued that John baptized "with water," and that therefore he applied the water to the subject, just as in whipping the boy "with a switch" the switch is applied to the boy. But we also wash clothes "with water," but not by sprinkling water upon them; and we dye clothes "with dye," but not by sprinkling dye upon them. The fact is, nothing can be proved, as to the act, by the use of the word "with." The word "baptize" tells what was done, and the expression "with water" names the element used; just as the expression that Christ will baptize "with the Holy Spirit"

declares, by the word "baptize" what he would do, and "with Spirit" named the element he would use. But the American Standard Version, which is regarded by most scholars as the best translation, renders the passage, "I indeed baptize you in water" (Mt. 3:11). This is the correct translation.

## **BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT.**

The argument relied on by the affusionist as the most conclusive is the following: John said the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11). The apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:1-4). Peter applied the prophecy of Joel, "I will pour forth or my Spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28), to the baptism (Acts 2:17). Therefore, it is argued, God's way of baptizing is by pouring. This is the strongest argument an affusionist can make for his contention, that sprinkling or pouring is baptism.

The facts are, the apostles were overwhelmed in the power and influence of the Spirit. (Even affusionists will not have it that they had just a little of the Holy Spirit sprinkled upon them.) The overwhelming was the baptism. Let it be remembered that Jesus told the apostles to go to Jerusalem, and there tarry till they were "clothed with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). The word "clothed" is from the Greek word **enduo**. This word is found again in 2 Cor. 5:4, where it is translated "clothed." "For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon (enduo), that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." Paul here is expressing his longing for the house, body, he had just made reference to in the first verse of this chapter: "for we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In his body of flesh he was groaning, not wishing to be unclothed, but clothed upon (enduo) with the house from heaven—the immortal body. Surely no one thinks he was longing for a little immortality to be sprinkled on his head, or for a little immortality to be poured on him; but he was longing for the mortal to be swallowed up of life.

The Lord promised the apostles they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:6, 6). In Lk. 24:49 he calls it being "clothed" (enduo) with power from on high. From this it must follow that to be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to be clothed in the Spirit. Hence, in their baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4), they were clothed, or swallowed up, in the Spirit—completely overwhelmed, submerged.

The falling rain fills a pool, and a person is baptized in that pool—would anyone say he was baptized by sprinkling? The water pours from a hydrant into a baptistry, and one is baptized in it—would anyone say he was baptized by pouring? or that he was immersed by pouring? Put a coin in a glass of water and pour water into the glass till the coin is covered. It is immersed—was it immersed by pouring? It is also buried. Was the pouring immersion? Was the pouring the burial? But enough water was poured on it to cover it, to overwhelm it; and this covering—this overwhelming, was the immersion, the burial. Just so with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was poured out on the apostles till they were completely under its influence, overwhelmed by the Spirit; and this overwhelming was the baptism. If the pouring was the baptism, then, as soon as the pouring ceased, the baptism ceased, whereas they continued to be overwhelmed, continued in this baptism.

**Baptized in the Cloud and Sea.** "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, "that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10:1, 2). In connection with this passage the affusionist quotes Ps. 68:7-9, "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God, the God of Israel. Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain," and contend that this rain was at the crossing of the Red Sea, and that the falling of the rain on them was the baptism. They are clearly wrong in making such contention, for

The rain mentioned in this passage has no more reference to what



took place at the crossing of the Red Sea than it does to the rain which fell at the end of the drought in the days of Elijah. The fact is David was speaking of what took place at Sinai.

If it could be proved that it rained when they crossed the Red Sea (but it cannot, for it is expressly stated that they crossed on dry ground, Ex. 14:22), it would be easy to prove that they were not baptized in, that is, by the rain. Paul says they were baptized "in the cloud and in the sea." There were two elements, cloud and sea, in their baptism. Any theory that leaves out one or both of these elements is wrong. To say that they were baptized by spray blown from the sea leaves out the cloud—one element in which Paul says they were baptized. To say they were baptized by falling rain, leaves out both the elements in which Paul says they were baptized. Paul does not say they were baptized in the rain, but in the "cloud and in the sea." Read the account of this in Ex. 14:15-25. The waters stood upright on either side of them as they marched across (Ex. 15:8), making a channel through which they marched (Ex. 14:22). The cloud, which guided them in their march, "removed from before them, and stood behind them," thus completely hiding them from the Egyptians, submerging the Israelites, burying them out of the Egyptians' sight. Hence, they were baptized, overwhelmed, in the cloud and in the sea, as Paul declares. If some one should argue that this cloud became a pillar of fire by night to give Israel light, let it be remembered that Paul calls it a cloud, and so does Moses (Ex. 14:19, 20). It was darkness on the side next to the Egyptians, but light on the side next to the Israelites. This the record plainly declares. Neither did the cloud pour out rain on Israel, for it stood behind them to hide them from the Egyptians.

## **HISTORY OF SPRINKLING FOR BAPTISM.**

Dr. Wall, of the Church of England, in his history of Infant Baptism, says: "Their general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it was an infant, or grown man or woman, into the water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that, as one cannot but pity the

weak endeavors of such paedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the profane scoffs which some people give to the English antipaedobaptists merely for their use of dipping. It is one thing to maintain that that circumstance is not absolutely necessary to the essence of baptism, and another, to go about to represent it as ridiculous and foolish, or as shameful and indecent; when it was in all probability the way by which our blessed Savior, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians, did receive their baptism" (Vo. 2, pp. 384, 385). ,

Dr. Wall then gives several instances of what was called baptism without immersion. The most ancient one he cites is that of Novatian in A. D. 251 (Wall, Vol. 2, pp. 385, 433), who, while confined to his bed by sickness, had water poured on and around him? This is the first instance of anything but immersion being called baptism known in religious history. Dr. Wall gives the case of Novation as one of "the most ancient instances of that sort of baptism that are *now* extant in records" (Vol. 1, pp. 390).

**Sprinkling Legalized.** "The council of Revenna (1311) was the first to allow a choice between sprinkling and immersion" — Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pp. 201.

## **SPRINKLING IN THE BIBLE.**

In all the Bible there is not one instance of sprinkling being called baptism. Not one!!

We do not find where water alone was ever sprinkled on any one in Old Testament times. Water mixed with blood, water mixed with oil, water mixed with ashes of a heifer, was sprinkled, but never was unmixed water sprinkled or poured on any one for anything, by the authority of God. In Num. 19 will be found direction for making the water of purifying, or clean water, which God commanded to be used in the sprinklings of the Old Testament times.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Baptism of Jesus.
- Immersion More Impressive Than Sprinkling.
- The Sin of Substitution Something Else for What God Commands.
- An Appeal for Prompt Obedience.
- Col. 3:1.

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. What religious bodies practice affusion or immersion?
2. Name the bodies practicing immersion only.
3. Quote Matt. 28:18, 19.
4. How may we learn the meaning of the Greek word for baptize?
5. In what language was the New Testament written?
6. How do the lexicons define "baptize"?
7. How else may we learn the meaning of baptizo??
8. In what places did John baptize?
9. Why did he baptize in Aenon?
10. Describe the baptism of Jesus.
11. Describe the baptism of the eunuch.
12. Was not the eunuch in a desert when baptized?
13. How was water found in the "desert" to baptize?

14. How do some try to prove that "into" does not mean "into"?
15. Quote the passages which speak of baptism as a burial.
16. Why did Peter say baptism is not to put away filth of flesh?
17. Why would sprinkling and pouring not make unbelievers so think?
18. What does New Testament require?
19. What does sprinkling require?
20. Quote Ezk. 36:25.
21. Show that Ezk. 36:25 does not refer to baptism.
22. What was "clean water"?
23. How was "clean water" made?
24. Can you show that water alone was ever sprinkled or poured on anyone by the authority of God?
25. State the argument of affusionists on "with water."
26. Reply to argument on "with water."
27. Give affusionists' argument on baptized "with Holy Spirit."
28. Reply to this argument.
29. Quote 1 Cor. 10:1, 2.
30. What argument do Affusionists make on 1 Cor. 10:1, 2?
31. Reply to this argument.
32. Describe the baptism of the Israelites.
33. When was the first instance of sprinkling or pouring being called baptism?

34. When was this?

35. When was sprinkling "legalized"?

# Letter to The Church at Ephesus.

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## LESSON TEXT—REV. 2:1-7.

Ephesus was a sea port town on the western coast of Asia, a city of great importance. Several nationalities made up its citizenship. Here stood the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. With the exception of the Jews dwelling there the city, when the gospel was first brought to it, was devoted to the worship of idols.

As Paul returned, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, from this first preaching tour in Europe, he stopped off for a short stay in Ephesus, preaching while there, in the synagogue of the Jews. Leaving Priscilla and Aquila there, he took his departure, promising to return "if God will." This may be regarded as the beginning of the church in that wicked city. See Acts 18:18-21. About this time Apollos, an eloquent preacher who knew only the baptism of John, came to Ephesus, and began boldly to preach in the synagogue. "But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26).

When Paul returned to Ephesus he found certain disciples. By questioning them, he learned that they had been baptized into John's baptism. When he had taught them they were baptized into the name of the Lord (See Acts 19:1-7). After the Great Commission became operative, no one could be baptized by divine authority into John's baptism. But there is not the least evidence that those who were baptized into John's baptism while it was valid were ever baptized again. These men whom Paul found at Ephesus who had been baptized into John's baptism were evidently converts of Apollos before he had been taught properly by Priscilla and Aquila.

For three months, in the synagogue, Paul spoke boldly the things pertaining to the kingdom of God without serious opposition. Then

the opposition became so pronounced that he withdrew with the disciples, and established himself in the school of one Tyrannus where he taught daily for two years. So great were his opportunities and so active was he in preaching the gospel it is said, within the short space of two years and six months spent in Ephesus, "all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord." The influence of Paul's preaching was so far reaching and revolutionizing in its results that "not a few of them that practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver," about \$8,000.

The preaching of Paul was endangering the business of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, who were engaged in the lucrative business of making silver shrines of Diana. This so enraged them that they headed a mob, and put the city in a great uproar, which was finally quieted by the town clerk. After the uproar Paul delivered an exhortation to the disciples and left the city. Later, as he was passing near the city, he sent for the elders of the church, and made a very striking speech to them (Acts 20:17-35). He also sent Timothy to Ephesus to counteract some false teaching and useless speculations (1 Tim. 1:3, 4).

## **JOHN AT EPHEBUS.**

We are told that John for a number of years during the latter part of his life lived at Ephesus. From that city this beloved and holy man was banished to the isle of Patmos for the sole reason that he was a preacher of the gospel of Christ (Rev. 1:9). On a certain Lord's day the Lord appeared to him, and dictated seven letters to be written to seven churches in Asia. He saw the glorified Lord standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks and holding seven stars in his right hand. These seven candlesticks were explained to be the seven churches, and the seven stars, the angels of the seven churches.

**The Candlesticks.** In John's vision the candlesticks represented churches. This is a significant figure of speech. A candlestick generates no light, but it upholds and sustains that which gives

light. So the church generates no light, no matter how learned and wise the membership may be. There is no spiritual light in the schemes, philosophies, and inventions of man. The word of God is a light to our pathway (Ps. 119:105), and the church upheld that light. "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:15). The church does this by living the Bible, and by teaching it as the inspired word of God.

**The Stars.** The stars were angels of the churches. An angel is a messenger. Not all angels are heavenly messengers. A person or being who carries a message is an angel, a messenger, for that is the import of the word.

God sent John the Baptist with a message to the people. He called him "my messenger" (Greek, **angel**) (Mt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 7:27).

On one occasion as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he sent messengers (Greek, **angels**) on before him to make ready for him in a village of the Samaritans (Lk. 9:51-56); and the two spies whom Joshua sent into Jericho to bring him information concerning the land and Jericho are referred to by James as messengers (Greek, angels) (Jas. 2:25).

**Angels of the Churches.** Various theories have been held as to who or what these angels of the seven churches were. Some hold that every church has a guardian angel who watches over its destinies. We know of no basis for such theory. If there be such guardian angels the condition of some churches would indicate that they were rather remiss in their duties. Besides, the Lord would hardly have had John to write letters and send them to such invisible beings. Others claim that each church had a pastor, and these pastors were angels, or messengers, of the churches. We cannot see in what sense such persons would be messengers of the churches. If a church sent a man somewhere with a message, or for a message, he would be the angel, or message bearer, of that church; otherwise he could not have been the angel of that church.

A little reflection, while bearing in mind the meaning of the word



angel, will help us to see who these angels, or messengers, were. John's home was at Ephesus, and the other six churches were not far away. All must have known John. At this time he was an old man, the only living apostle, and a very lovely character. Now he is banished to Patmos, a small island twenty miles from the coast, and almost barren. Such tragedy would touch the heart of every Christian wherever the news went. They would want to have word from him, also to comfort him all they could. We can well imagine that they discussed the matter till each church in that region decided to send some reliable man of their own number to see him, and bring back from him any message he might have for them. One thing we do know: John was instructed to write these letters and send them to the seven churches. Some one was at hand by whom he was to send them, for in no other way was it possible for him to send them. Hence, the command of the Lord to send these letters by the angels of the churches. The Greek can as be translated "by" or "unto."

**Condition of the Churches.** The letter to each church reveals the conditions of that church. A fair survey of the field then and now will lead one to conclude that churches were little, if any, better then than now. We sometimes hear people say the churches in the days of the apostles were perfect. But not so. Churches were then made of people with the weaknesses people now have. In fact, many churches then were composed mostly of those converted from idolatry. The whole social fabric out of which they were taken was saturated with immorality and ignorance. They had a long way to go to reach the perfection we sometimes hear attributed to them. No wonder so many of them fell so far short of the ideal. Read Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth and see how far they were from what they should have been. The letter to the church at Ephesus shows that church not to have been pleasing to the Lord. Hence, when we become discouraged about churches now, let us reflect that it has always been thus.

**The Dead-Line.** But will the Lord own such churches? He is long suffering (Lk. 18:7; 1 Tim. 1:16), and bears with them for a time. If not, none of us could be saved. But there is a deadline, beyond

which, if we go, the Lord will cut us off. When a church has had its attention called to an evil in it and then determines to go on in that evil regardless of what the Lord says, their day of doom has arrived. "He that being often reproved hardened his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. 29:1). The Lord threatened Ephesus, unless they repented. And yet there were things about that church which pleased him.

## **THINGS APPROVED.**

**Their Works and Toil.** "I know thy works, and thy toil," said the Lord; and he approved that. To toil is to work under difficulties and hardships. There is drudgery and weariness about toil. Not all work in the service of the Lord is toil. When the church is at peace the Lord's day worship interesting, uplifting, and inspiring, to do what you can to serve God is work, and the Lord is pleased with your efforts; but there, is no toil about that—it is delightful work. But when everything goes dead-wrong—the church is in confusion, the neighbors regard it as fussing bunch of senseless cranks, the singing is poor, the prayers are mechanical, the spirit of suspicion and cynical criticism is rife so that your best efforts are misunderstood and adversely criticized—and yet, in spite of all, you strive to do your best, there is toil about that.

**Ephesus Warned.** Years before John wrote to Ephesus, Paul warned the elders of that church: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). And when Timothy was left there by Paul, some were teaching a different doctrine and others were wrangling over endless genealogies. No wonder the faithful had toiled. Such continued efforts, under trying circumstances, required staying qualities; and, at least, some had that.

**Patience.** The Lord had taken knowledge of their patience, and

was pleased with it. What is patience? It is to hold on to the right, no matter what the trials, difficulties, or persecutions may be. Patience never quits, never lets up, never lets go. For a fuller discussion of patience see Sound Doctrine, Vol. 1, pp. 170,171.

**Could Not Bear Evil Men.** Notice the wording: "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men." This church was so patient that it could not bear evil men. Sometimes people think that patience will serenely put up with anything, but not so with the patience which the Lord commends. Some things it cannot bear. But their patience, when it could not bear these evil men, ousted them, instead of skulking off home and leaving them in charge. Genuine patience does not say, "Well, if that is the way you are going to do, I'll quit"; but it does say, "Get out of this church, you evil men; and let us keep the church pure": and then proceeds to make its word good.

**Churches Not Careful.** Many churches are not careful as to their teachers. They send for preachers whom they know only through reports in the papers. As a result they frequently get trouble on their hands, and the church is injured so that it may never recover. When the tide of innovations swept over Texas many churches could have been saved had the leaders been watchful, and kept designing preachers out. Many elders realized this after it was too late. They were not watchful. Another innovation is now springing up, namely, settling matters by majority vote; and churches are being disturbed, and some of them divided. When it suits their purpose they vote the elders out. Will the elders protect themselves and the churches against this danger?

**Ephesus Watchful.** "And didst try them that call themselves apostles and they are not, and didst find them false." They would not tolerate pretenders. It is not likely that they had a church trial; church trials usually result in confusion. They give a designing man with a glib tongue an opportunity for mischief. Besides, there is no need for a trial if the leaders are wise. How they proceeded to try them we do not know. They knew what an apostle should be; and, in some way, they put them to the test, and found that they

were not apostles.

**Narrow and Bigoted?** For one to make any headway at pretending to be an apostle, he would have to be a man with some personality and accomplishments. An ignorant man, shabbily dressed, and of no personality, would fool no one. Most likely these men worked up a following. That was a crisis in the church at Ephesus, but they met it in the way the Lord approved. But what would be said now? If an accomplished man with selfish designs, and with the mixing qualities of Absalom, should come to a church, he would keep his selfish designs hidden; and he would gain a following. If, however, he was put out of the church, as were these pretenders at Ephesus, that church would be called a narrow, contracted, bigoted bunch of heresy hunters. But why should that church worry, if the Lord approves? Are not many churches guilty of studying too much about what the world will think of their course rather than of what the Lord will think of them? The Lord requires, discipline, even to withdrawing fellowship, when that is the only remedy. See lesson on Discipline, Sound Doctrine, Vol. 3, pp. 109-121.

**Left First Love.** "But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen." Can you imagine the scene in that church when the letter was being read. The messenger of the church had returned from John. The disciples whom he met would anxiously inquire concerning the beloved John. Think of the report: "He is well, and has seen the Lord in his glorified state; and the Lord had him write a letter to this church!" A letter from the glorified Lord! What a sensation! That letter will be read next Lord's day to the whole church! How the news would fly! Sunday comes; not a vacant seat; every member is present. How eagerly they listened, leaning forward to catch every word falling from the lips of the good man as he read that letter. How their hearts must have swelled with gladness as he read the words of praise from the Lord for their work, toil, patience, and discipline. "Nothing wrong with us," they must have thought. Then with measured tones showing deep emotion, for the reader must have shown how he was effected, he read: "But I have

this against thee." This pronouncement must have caused consternation for the moment, and the question must have arisen in each heart, "What has the Lord against us?" Then with directness the words came: "Thou didst leave thy first love. Remember whence thou art fallen."

**A Well-Balanced Church.** The church at Ephesus worked, and toiled, and held on. They would have nothing to do with lying pretenders, and they hated the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, for all of which the Lord approved them. They hated, but they did not love. Some one said, "Love is of God; hate is of the Devil." But that is not always true. "I hate them that regard lying vanities; but I trust in Jehovah" (Ps. 31:6). "I hate the work of them that turn aside" (Ps. 101:3). "Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way" (Ps. 119:104). "I hate them that are of a double mind; but thy law do I love" (Ps. 119:113). "I hate and abhor falsehood; but thy law do I love" (Ps. 119:163). "There are six things which Jehovah hateth; yet, seven which are an abomination unto him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked purposes, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that uttereth lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. 6:16-19). "The fear of Jehovah is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the perverse mouth, do I hate" (Prov. 8:13). "Hate the evil, and love the good" (Amos 5:15). "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro. 12:9). "Thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate" (Rev. 2:6). The Christian must hate the Devil and all his works, and love God and all his works. But the church at Ephesus had cultivated hatred for the Devil and imposters, but failed to cultivate love for God and the right. All the powers of their souls were consumed in hating. The Christian character is balanced between love and hate. Ephesus was lopsided. Hate the Devil, but not more than you love God. Some good men now, as did Ephesus, cultivate opposition to wrong, and neglect an active interest in building up the right, till they become austere, dogmatic, and little less than a nuisance. They become all back-bone, with none of the gentler graces to make them desirable or helpful. Others cultivate gentleness,

sweet-spiritedness, and all the gentler graces, and neglect to cultivate the heroic spirit of opposition to wrong, till they become so soft and flabby that they are practically worthless. A character is properly balanced by cultivating seemingly opposing characteristics. A well-balanced character is a rare accomplishment.

**Remedy.** Few people can realize that, having labored, and toiled, and kept the church free from imposters, and, like Ephesus, never growing weary of the task, they may, notwithstanding this, be in a fallen condition. It must have shocked Ephesus when the Lord said, "Remember whence thou art fallen." Such characters are usually assertive, and overrate their own accomplishments and loyalty to the Lord. But they had fallen. And the remedy: "Repent and do the first works." Rekindle the love you had in your hearts for the Lord, for the church, and for man, when you first became Christians. "Or else"—you repent, humble your haughty spirit, and rekindle your first love—"or else I will come to thee," not to approve and bless, but I "will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent," that is, I will cease to recognize you as my church, unless you repent.

**Encouragement.** "To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God."

**Applies to All.** "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Through this letter to Ephesus the Lord speaks of all churches.

**Periods of Church History.** Some have advanced the idea that these seven churches in Asia represent seven periods in the history of Christianity, and that we are now living in the Laodicean period, or age. This is a mere conceit, with no foundation in Scripture or reason. The theory involves too much. The seven letters described conditions then existing in those churches; otherwise the letter would have been a mystery to those churches, and they would have been puzzled to know why the Lord would so write to them. But to say that the conditions described in those letters did prevail in those churches, but they still represent periods of church history,

would involve the idea that God made those churches so they would fit the periods to be represented, or else he made the periods to correspond with the condition of the churches. That is absurd. Neither does history show any such periods. It is supposed that the church at Ephesus represented the churches of that period. But that will not do, for there are six other churches mentioned in these letters, each one differing from the other, and not one of them like Ephesus. Besides, if Laodicea represents all the churches of this age there is little hope for any of them. Neither do all the churches now seem to be as rich and well-satisfied as was Laodicea, nor are they all lukewarm.

**The Lord Knows.** Though the Lord was seated on his throne in glory, yet he described himself as "he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." He knew their works. They are his churches and he is interested in them; and he still walks among them, and knows their conditions, and knows the heart and life of each member.

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## **TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION.**

- Letter to Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11).
- Letter to Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17).
- Letter to Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29).
- Letter to Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6).
- Letter to Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13).
- Letter to Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22).

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## **QUESTIONS.**

1. Locate Ephesus.

2. What of its citizenship?
3. What about its religion?
4. Tell of Paul's first visit to that city.
5. Whom did he leave there?
6. What great temple was located in Ephesus?
7. Tell about Apollos and his preaching.
8. Whom did Paul find when he returned?
9. Did John baptize for the remission of sins?
10. Why then did Paul baptize people at Ephesus again?
11. How long did Paul preach in the synagogue?
12. Why did he cease to preach in the synagogue?
13. In whose school did he then teach?
14. How long did he teach in that school?
15. What of his success?
16. What stirred up the silver-smiths?
17. Tell about the mob.
18. Tell about Paul's speech made later to the elders.
19. Why did he sent Timothy to Ephesus?
20. How came the apostle John to be on Patmos?
21. How far, and what direction is Patmos from Ephesus?
22. Tell how the Lord appeared to John on Patmos.
23. What were the candlesticks and the stars?



24. Why is a church like a candlestick?
25. What gives light?
26. What is an angel?
27. Show that men are called angels, or messengers.
28. Who were the angels of these churches?
29. How did John send the letters to the seven churches?
30. Name the seven churches in Asia.
31. Were all of them perfect? Which were not?
32. Does the Lord recognize imperfect churches?
33. Will he always bear with them?
34. Where is the dead-line?
35. What did the Lord approve about Ephesus?
36. What is toil?
37. When is work not toilsome?
38. In your efforts to do right, what most discourages you?
39. Repeat Paul's warning to the elders at Ephesus.
40. What is patience?
41. Describe the patience of the church at Ephesus.
42. Why should churches be careful in selecting teachers?
43. Do you know of any evil results from a failure to be careful in selecting teachers?
44. How have innovations been brought into churches?

45. How do designing men capture churches?
46. What is an innovation?
47. Is there Scriptural authority for settling matters by majority vote?
48. Should the elders select a teacher who is in favor of an innovation?
49. How could Ephesus know that certain men were not apostles?
50. Why did the Lord commend their dealings with these pretenders?
51. What enabled Absalom to be so successful? (2 Sam. 14:25; 15:1-6.)
52. What fault did the Lord find with Ephesus?
53. Must a Christian hate? If so, what?
54. What is a well-balanced character?
55. From what had Ephesus fallen?
56. What was the remedy?
57. What would the Lord do if they failed to do their duty?
58. What encouragement did he give them?
59. Why cannot these churches represent different periods in church history?
60. Why is the Lord interested in knowing the condition of churches?
61. Does the Lord know what the church of which you are a member is doing?
62. Wherein do you see that the church of which you are a member

can improve?