

The
Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

June 2000



From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

As we know, debt has shipwrecked many businesses and personal lives. With the exception of past mortgages on our buildings, the *Berean Bible Society* has always avoided the trappings of long-term credit. We feel strongly that it is important to be good stewards of the Lord's money; therefore, we have been extremely careful to never overextend ourselves. In the realm of personal finances and business dealings, it is prudent to live well within our means. While most use credit cards these days, as believers we should always do so responsibly.

Beginning June 1st, the *Berean Bible Society* will accept Visa and Master Card for purchases made over the Internet, by phone, and at our bookstore. Probably the most frequently asked question we receive from those who call to purchase literature is, "Do you accept Visa?" The decision to do so boils down to a matter of *convenience*. For the purchaser, Visa provides a monthly billing that itemizes each purchase. It also avoids writing out so many checks and the inconvenience of dropping another payment in the mail. At BBS, this will eventually do away with our Charge Accounts, which normally produces a mountain of paperwork during the course of the year.

On another front, you will notice at the back of the *Searchlight* that our *Book Price List* now has two columns, one with the retail price of our books and the other with the *wholesale* price. If you plan to place an order, be sure to use the prices found in the wholesale column. This is what our readers normally pay unless the book is being offered at an additional discount in our advertised specials each month. The retail column only pertains to the major book houses who require that we sell our books to them at substantial discounts. Of course, we had to set the retail prices about 40 percent higher than our regular prices, so we don't lose our shirt and suspenders too! When it's all said and done, we'll probably be more than happy to simply break even.

Please be patient with us as we implement this new system. It may take us a few weeks to work out all the bugs. Little by little we are updating things while still maintaining a conservative stand for the truth. May God bless our efforts to reach many with the gospel of the grace of God.

Paul M. Sadler
President



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From Michigan:

"I was challenged by the *saying* on the back cover *God is faithful—are you?*" Combined with your article *That Precious Deposit* and Pastor Stam's article on *The Departure*, I have a great deal to meditate on. My job is in the automotive field and quite a rough bunch surrounds me. I keep a New Testament and the *Berean Searchlight* in my pocket during the day to read on breaks and lunch—sometimes opening some animated conversations. I'm also re-reading *Our Great Commission* and *The Controversy*. They certainly stir me up to defend the Word rightly divided. Thanks so much for remaining true to the Word and continuing in the good fight. The *BBS* stands as a rock in these evil days, and is truly a *Searchlight* guiding believers like myself through the dangerous waters to the truth *rightly divided*. As I've gone through some terrible trials and times, it's been a great comfort knowing you're there. Praise the Lord for revealing the truth of the Pauline revelation once again.

From California:

"I have them [books and booklets] all on my shelf. Only wish my brain would absorb every word, but we try."

From Alabama:

"Just a few lines to say *Thanks* for putting me on the list for the *Berean Searchlight*. I know it will add to my studies of the Word of God rightly divided. This is the way the church I attend teaches, but it is extremely hard to find good literature and study guides. I'm also thankful for the extra tracts and study literature booklets that you sent me." (Welcome aboard! It's always great to have new hands on deck to assist us in the work. Ed.)

From Iowa:

"Just a note of thanks for all the things you do to increase our faith in Christ. What would I do without the *Searchlight*? So keep up your good work and our prayers always include *BBS*."

From Wisconsin:

"Just want to say hello to everyone at the *Berean Bible Society*. I have you all in prayer and have not forgotten the lessons I learned from my rightly dividing class at BBI. The Lord has been moving in my life and I am so thankful that He is so faithful to all of us. God bless."

From Arizona:

"We just received the book on *Ephesians* by Pastor Sadler and are already through a good part of it. We will read it several more times to glean all the nuggets, which we may have missed the first time. Please use the enclosed any way it is most needed. It is such a privilege to be able to contribute to your efforts of getting the Word out to a lost and dying world according to the *gospel* of grace as given to us by the Apostle Paul. How precious are the *grace* truths and how privileged we are to have had them revealed to us!!!!"

From Colorado:

"Thank you so much for the monthly *Searchlight* and the articles. Also for everyone's faithfulness in studying the Word to get it out *rightly divided*. I very much appreciate all the work done by all the Lord's faithful servants."

From the Internet:

"Through the recommendation of a Christian cyber friend, I was led to your web page, and my life has never been the same. I am in the process of reading *Paul, His Apostleship and Message* and am amazed at how blind I had been. I've only been a Christian for 4 years and was a member of a non-denominational church....As I look back, I see that I was being led down the wrong road....I have been studying your articles and your books and I am very thankful that I have them to help me in my walk with our Lord Jesus Christ." (We have been involved in many such rescue efforts via the Internet. The Word, rightly divided is like a life preserver that keeps us from drowning in the high seas of confusion. Ed.)

From Puerto Rico:

“Please send me the book on *Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*. I enjoyed the book of Galatians and other books I’ve bought. Thanks for sending me the *Berean Searchlight*. I appreciate greatly your ministry of the Word, rightly divided. My prayers are with you as God’s blessing is sent throughout the world by the message of the grace of God (rightly divided).”

From Michigan:

“I want to let you know that we really appreciate your literature that you are so faithful to send. I regret I can’t give you more for your ministry.”

From Ontario, Canada:

“I have already read about three chapters (Acts Volumes I & II) and I am very interested in what I have read so far. I was never acquainted with the idea of rightly dividing the Bible. Thank you and I shall be placing more orders in the future.”

From Florida:

“Thank you so very much for starting a series on the differences between the General Epistles and Pauline epistles. Recently, this subject caused me great confusion. So I turned to God and prayed that he would open my eyes to understand how to view these in light of each other. Your articles are an answer to prayer. I pray that they will make all this clear to me.” (It is our prayer that we will be used as a compass in the Lord’s hand to point everyone in the right direction. Ed.)

From Iowa:

“Enclosed is my check for the books and booklets I have ordered. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed the literature I already have. Thank you all so much for your faithfulness in rightly dividing God’s Word and your willingness to share it with others.”

From Arizona:

“Thank you for sending us the *Searchlight* all these years. Your ministry has helped our family understand God’s Word, rightly divided. In the midst of a myriad of different theological viewpoints of God’s Word, your ministry has truly been a searchlight, shining on the truth of God’s Word.” (In the midst of the theological storms that have shipwrecked many, we are grateful to God that the light of Paul’s gospel continues to shine forth from BBS. Ed.)

From Colorado:

“Your March issue of the *Searchlight* has arrived and is a beautiful piece of work as well as very informative as to all that is now going on at your headquarters and the people now involved there. I found the personal testimonies most interesting as to how many different ways the Spirit of God reaches people and brings them to the Lord when they believe the truth.”

From Michigan:

“My husband has studied in Romans for 29 years and he discovered the ministry of reconciliation, but he has been unhappy with 50 years of fundamental denominationalism. In January of 1999 he found rightly dividers and I am happy for him.”

From Oregon:

“We thank you again for the opportunity to send for study books that help us to understand Paul’s epistles. Our hearts are filled with peace and joy as we study. Please send us a copy of *Things That Differ*. Please tell Pastor Stam that we are in our nineties and first heard the message from Percy Stoute in the 1940’s. He may remember him.” (Like the old sea captain, who never forgets a safe harbor, Pastor Stam has fond memories of those who faithfully labored with him to recover the message of grace. Ed.)

“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

**BBI Fall
Semester
Begins
August
28th!
Plan Ahead!**

THE BBI BYLINE

Peter, The Rock?

Matthew 16:13-19

By Bill Frank

Just who was Peter anyway? Peter, a boastful fisherman from Bethsaida, brother of Andrew and son of Jona, had his name changed from Simon Barjona to “Petros” which means “rock.” Since Jesus told Peter that he would build His Church upon “this rock” we might wonder: would He just leave the whole kingdom church in the hands of a sinner?

Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ, but Jesus later called him Satan (Matt. 16:21-23). The Scriptures teach that “*there is none righteous, no not one*” (Rom. 3:10). Often we have our own motives in mind and not the will of the Father. I believe this was the case with Peter. He wanted to defend Jesus and his ministry and he loved God, but Peter was unfocused because of lack of understanding of what Jesus was doing. He taught them about His coming death, burial, and resurrection, but they failed to comprehend fully. Peter wanted to be faithful, but he was attempting to force Jesus to make a move toward establishing the Kingdom before the time had come.

After the Lord Jesus was taken captive by the Jews, Peter denied Him three times, and as soon as he heard the rooster crow he wept bitterly (Matt. 26:33-35, 69-75). Peter knew who Jesus was, the Messiah, his Lord and Master, and

still had denied Him. After the Lord was resurrected from the dead, He asked Peter if he loved Him. He answered “*Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love ye.*” The Lord replied “*then feed my sheep*” (see John 21:15-17), referring to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, God’s chosen people, the Jews. They needed salvation and Jesus told His disciples to start there first in proclaiming the kingdom gospel.

Was the Lord Jesus going to build His church on Peter and his understanding of who He was or would He build His church on the foundation of who He, Jesus Christ, is: the Messiah, the Son of Man, God in the flesh?

The answer is found by comparing the meanings of the Greek words used by the Lord, when He said that He would build His church upon this *Petra* (a large, unmovable rock) which is Jesus Christ, the Savior; not on *Petros* (Peter) which refers to a movable, or small stone. However, Peter was influential in building Christ’s Kingdom Church. But for now, with the kingdom having been put on hold, the Lord is using Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, to establish “*the Church which is His Body*” which is unique to the present Dispensation of Grace (see Rom. 16:25; Gal. 1:11-12; Eph. 3:1-9; etc.).

Bill and his wife, Chrissy, moved here from Tennessee in July 1999 to attend BBI. They have two sons, William and Timothy.

The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter (Part V)

By Paul M. Sadler



Mount of Olives

“And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east” (Zech. 14:4).

Most commentators do a great injustice to the Word of God when they contend that Peter was writing to the Church, the Body of Christ. This system of interpretation is a product of Acts 2 dispensationalism, which routinely confuses the ministries of Peter and Paul. Sadly these teachers are like sheep following one another down the wrong path. If we consistently rightly divide the Word of truth, there is little question that Peter was ministering to the remnant in Israel who were scattered abroad after the stoning of Stephen. Consequently, Peter’s epistles closely follow the earthly ministry of Christ which is rooted deeply in the Prophetic Program.

THE PROPHETS

“Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching

what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

—I Peter 1:9-11

The salvation spoken of here by the Apostle Peter has nothing to do with the Mystery. Today we proclaim the gospel of reconciliation wherein God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their sins unto them. This gracious offer of reconciliation is made complete when we simply believe that Christ died for our sins and rose again. As we know, this was unknown in time past.

Notice that Peter says to his hearers “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently.” Who exactly were these prophets? Clearly these are the Old Testament prophets who announced the salvation of God according to *prophecy*. While the prophets of old understood the Messiah would come one day to bring salvation to Israel, that was the limit of their understanding. They “inquired and searched” their own writings as to what the prophecies meant. In particular, who was being spoken of, the manner in which they would be redeemed, and when they could expect the Messiah’s arrival.

Therefore, we must take great care not to anticipate revelation; that is, not to assume that what Peter received by further revelation was understood by the prophets. Clearly the Old Testament saints were never required to place their

faith in the coming death of Christ, simply because this truth was purposely withheld from them.

Moses had no idea his words referred to the Son of God when he said to Israel: “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.” King David never comprehended the significance of his own words when he described the crucifixion of Christ in Psalms 22. Isaiah was perplexed that his prophecy portrayed an innocent victim dying for the guilty. To him this seemed to be a grave injustice. He had no way of knowing that he spoke of the coming death of Christ. A veil of uncertainty shrouded all of the prophecies concerning the person and work of Christ.

Perhaps the best evidence of this is found in the actions of the chosen nation, when Christ “came unto His own, but His own received Him not.” Israel was not looking for a lowly Savior who would go about Palestine doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead, and dying for the sins of the nation. She was anticipating the glory—for the Messiah to split the eastern sky, conquer her enemies, and set up the kingdom. But the prophetic order was clear, for the Spirit had “testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and glory that should follow” (I Pet. 1:11). According to the providence of God, this is why the kingdom was only preached “at hand” before the death of Christ. The first legitimate offer of it was not until shortly *after* the day of Pentecost (Acts 3:19,20).

Interestingly, there was one thing that was shown to the prophets. Peter says, “Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves.” In other words, the Spirit of Christ

within them revealed to the prophets that the unveiling of their prophecies would not take place in their day. Rather the fulfillment of their words was given to a future generation in Israel. To which Peter adds, “but unto *us* they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven” (I Pet. 1:12).

The pronoun “us” used in conjunction with the phrase, “the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven” marks the *general* time frame for us. It was Peter’s generation, specifically the little flock at Pentecost, who witnessed that the one spoken of by the prophets was *Christ*. In addition to Peter’s Pentecostal address, the story of the Ethiopian eunuch confirms this. After the eunuch read from the Book of Isaiah, “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth,” he inquired of Philip: “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the *same* Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:32-35).

THE CURIOSITY OF ANGELS

In regard to salvation, the Scriptures state, “which things the angels desire to look into” (I Pet. 1:12). When the angels came forth from the hand of God in the beginning, He created them as spirit beings. Although they do not possess a human body, as we know it, or a resurrected body like our Lord’s, they do appear to have some type of unique corporeal make up. As ministers for those who shall be heirs of salvation, in time past, they often made

“The hope of the kingdom saints is to see with their own eyes the Messiah stand on the Mount of Olives at His Second Coming.”

visible appearances to make known the will of God. For example, when Gabriel *appeared* at the right side of the altar of incense, the record is clear that Zacharias “saw him” (Luke 1:12 cf. 1:29).


God glories in diversity, so we can be relatively sure that no two angels look alike. Their personalities are as different as the stars of heaven. In fact, they seem to have a curious side, desiring to understand more about God’s plan of salvation. The word “desire” that Peter uses in regard to them has the idea of a *passionate desire* to look into.

While we know the angels had no prior knowledge of the Mystery, there also seems to be strong evidence that they did not fully comprehend the *prophesied* grace that was to come to the kingdom saints. Thus, they are inquisitive regarding every detail of what God has accomplished in the redemption of Israel. Since the chosen angels of God have never sinned they cannot understand the joy of salvation. However, they have such an interest in lost souls that “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10). Although angels can never experience the joy of salvation, they are fascinated spectators of its glory.

Inasmuch as Peter’s reference to angels is in the context of the sufferings of Christ and the glory to

follow, we can safely assume that there are also various facets of the millennial kingdom that they don’t fully comprehend. They were undoubtedly enthralled when our Lord began to teach His disciples about the mysteries of the kingdom. This is not the Mystery that was revealed to Paul, mind you, but the *hidden* truths concerning the coming reign of Christ upon the earth (See Matthew 13). Thus, the kingdom church was like a university where the elect angels could be schooled further in the prophesied grace of God.

With this in mind, Peter reminds his hearers, in the presence of the angels: “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 1:13).

Although these saints were enduring fiery trials at the time, Peter challenges them with a phrase from the original Passover, one they had grown up with from childhood (Ex. 12:11-14). Namely, “gird up the loins,” but he adds, “of your mind.” Be prepared! They were to keep the hope of deliverance constantly before them. In essence, Peter says, just as God delivered our forefathers from the hand of the Egyptian taskmaster, He will also deliver us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Beloved, the “revelation of Jesus Christ” has absolutely nothing to do with the Rapture. This is not the hope of these kingdom believers, nor does Peter hold it out to them. The hope of the kingdom saints is to see with their own eyes the Messiah stand on the Mount of Olives at His Second Coming. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ (Zech. 14:4 cf. Rev. 1:1; 19:11-16). 

To Be Continued!

The Truth About the Truth

By Paul M. Sadler



Things That Differ came about through Pastor Stam's class notes while he was teaching at Milwaukee Bible Institute. This work has been greatly used by God to bring many into an understanding of the revelation of the Mystery.

"As ministers of the gospel may God help us to have a balance as we minister to others."



It has been brought to our attention that certain Bible teachers are using a quote found in *Things That Differ* to imply that Pastor Stam would be sympathetic with what they believe to be a fuller understanding of the Word, rightly divided. On page 13, Pastor Stam states:

"Though we have sought to make this book as comprehensive as possible, it is not presumed to be exhaustive for, as we say, the field of dispensational study is as great as the Bible itself. Should there still be some time remaining before the Lord returns to catch His own away, the Spirit will enlighten the hearts and minds of others to see what we have missed and other writers will doubtless improve upon what has been written here."

While we would never want to discourage anyone from being a Berean, we do want to set the record straight as to what Pastor Stam does and does not believe. This matter has caused a great deal of confusion among the brethren. In fact, we have received an endless stream of letters regarding the subjects that follow. Since we feel Pastor Stam's views are in full agreement with the Word, rightly divided, they will also serve as the official position of the *Berean Bible Society*.

Prayer: Over the years, Pastor Stam and I have had numerous discussions regarding the dispensational aspects of *prayer*. He was so dismayed with those who teach that believers should only pray about spiritual things, he used to say, "But God is our heavenly Father, like any good father He's interested in every area of our lives. I don't deny that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, but this doesn't mean we shouldn't offer thanks at meals or pray about an upcoming trip, Paul did!! In fact, he encouraged others to pray for his deliverance from a *physical* prison, didn't he?" (See Phil. 1:19,20). Mr. Stam writes:

"Be careful [care-full, anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

‘And’ what? “Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive?” **NO!!**

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep [garrison] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6,7).

“Here is ample proof that God is not deaf to the cries of His children in this age. He wants them to pour out all their hearts before Him. There is nothing He does not wish to hear about. He says, ‘Tell me *everything* and be anxious about *nothing* for I’ll work it all out for your good.’ He who loves us is working out our future!

“How foolish then to say ‘What’s the use of praying if we may not even receive what we ask for?’ It is because of the very ‘darkness of this age’ that we must be willing to leave the outcome with Him. He may grant our request—but if not, He will give us what *He knows* is better! He is the Head of the Body and, remember, the head always does the thinking.”

—*The Berean Searchlight*

The Word of God: Although Pastor Stam has always held the King James Version of the Bible in high esteem, believing it to be a faithful and trustworthy translation of the original languages, he has never endorsed the teaching that it is perfect, inerrant, or without proven error, as some teach. He writes:

“Is the King James Version inerrant? If so, which edition? The late edition, which most ‘Inerrant KJV’ believers use? This would be like the pastor saying, ‘This Bible, the *King James Version*, is word-for-word, the inspired, inerrant Word of God,’ while holding up a *late edition* of the KJV. For remember, the King James Version has been edited and revised several times.

“Is it then the original 1611 edition of the KJV that is word-for-word inspired and inerrant? Then what about the hundreds of marginal notes put in *by the translators*, suggesting *alternate readings*? This in itself *proves* that the KJV text is not inerrant—not even the 1611 edition....But more: if the 1611 edition of the KJV is a word-for-word inspired, inerrant Word of God, it surely must follow that the English-speaking people had no Bible prior to 1611 and that non-English-speaking people today have no Bible at all!

“The ‘Inerrant KJV’ theory is, as we have said, not merely erroneous; but it is *foolish*, and especially so when associated with the *preservation* of the Bible through all generations.”

—*The Berean Searchlight*

The Lord's Table: Concerning the Lord's Supper, Pastor Stam has always taught that the Apostle Paul received a special revelation from our Lord regarding communion. The command of Christ is unmistakably clear that it should be observed until He returns for the Church, which is His Body. Mr. Stam writes:


“We believe firmly that the celebration of the Lord's Supper was included in the great revelation committed by the glorified Lord to Paul and is therefore an integral part of the ‘one faith’ to which he refers in Ephesians 4:5, that body of doctrine to which all believers in this present dispensation of grace should subscribe.”

—*The Lord's Supper and the Bible*

Chastisement: Based upon the fact we are living in the dispensation of Grace, many teach that God no longer chastises His saints. However, it is Pastor Stam's conviction that chastisement is a transdispensational truth. “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are *chastened of the Lord*, that we should not be condemned with the world” (I Cor. 11:30-32). He writes:

“We do not believe that the weakness, sickness and death referred to in these verses were the result of miraculous judgments dealt out to the recalcitrant believers at Corinth by spiritual leaders. The apostle states all too clearly that they were chastisements *from God*, inflicted on irresponsible believers that they should *not* be condemned with the world (ver. 32). This reminds us of that oft-repeated truth of Scripture.” “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Heb. 12:6, *et al*).

—*Commentary on I Corinthians*

While the above brethren are certainly entitled to their opinions, we would greatly appreciate it if they didn't infer that Pastor Stam, or the *Berean Bible Society*, would endorse their teachings in any way. As ministers of the gospel may God help us to have a *balance* as we minister to others. 

Copies of the above articles and books are available upon request.



A Profound Truth

“One of the great preachers of the Puritan era captured the real meaning of the resurrection in his sermon entitled, ‘The Death of Death in the Death of Christ.’ The title is more than a play on words. It contains a profound truth.”

—*The Gospel Herald*

Paul and the Children of Adam

By Cornelius R. Stam

THE WORLD'S FIRSTBORN

In Genesis 4:1 we read that when the first child was born into the world Eve exclaimed: *"I have gotten a man from the Lord!"* and the babe was named *Cain*, meaning *Acquisition*.

Some Hebrew scholars have held that Eve actually said: *"I have gotten a man—Jehovah!"* However this may be, it seems clear that Eve did conclude that she had given birth to the promised Seed of Genesis 3:15.

Eve thought Cain was Christ. As she gazed at the child in loving pride, she doubtless said to herself: "A second Adam! The promised seed! And sent in such a lovely way! A man from God in my own arms!"

Eve would have been cold-blooded and hard-hearted had she not thought this. Yet she was wrong, for Cain was not Christ. Rather he was "of that wicked one" and soon enough he would grow up and it would be seen that "his works were evil" (I John 3:12).

CAIN AND ABEL

Whether or not Genesis 4:14 indicates that Adam's children were already numerous when Cain was driven from the presence of the Lord, it is clear that the record of Scripture deals only with Cain and Abel until Seth is born to fill Abel's place (Gen. 4:25).

Let us go back, then, to Cain and Abel, the world's firstborn sons. Here at the dawn of history there were no racial distinctions, no Jew and Gentile, no black and white—just the two sons of one father, *Adam*. Yet there was one great difference between the two: the difference between *faith* and *unbelief*.

It is quite possible that had we known Cain and Abel personally we might have preferred Cain's companionship to that of Abel. Cain was industrious, "a tiller of the ground," while Abel was a shepherd. Cain may have been the more religiously inclined too, for we read first of Cain that "he brought an offering to the Lord," and then of Abel that "he also" brought one (Gen. 4:3,4). Furthermore Cain may well have possessed the more refined and sensitive nature since he brought to the Lord, not a bleeding, quivering, dying

"Today, since Christ has already given Himself as a sacrifice for us, we may either trust in His finished work and be accepted by God or bring our own sacrifice and be rejected."



lamb, but an offering “of the fruit of the ground.” Yet the record goes on to say:

“...And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering;

“But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect...” (Vers. 4,5).

The reason for this is made perfectly clear in Hebrews 11:4, where we read:

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh.”

The fact that Abel, unlike Cain, brought his sacrifice by faith, must mean that God had instructed the brothers as to the sacrifices they were to bring, for “faith cometh by hearing” (Rom. 10:17).

UNBELIEF AND SELF-WILL

As faith is the mother of obedience, so unbelief is the mother of disobedience and self-will.

Cain could, like Abel, have approached God in God’s way. Had he done so he would, like Abel, have been accepted and would have “obtained witness that he was righteous.”

It was unreasonable, therefore, but typical, that when he was *not* accepted he “was very wroth, and his countenance fell” (Ver. 5). How gracious of God, then, to reason with him as He did.

“And the Lord said unto Cain, why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?”

“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, a sin offering¹ lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him” (Vers. 6,7).

The meaning is clear. Do what is right and you will not need to bring a sacrifice, but even now that you have sinned, you need not be rejected for a sin offering lies at hand and you can bring it in sacrifice.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF UNBELIEF

But Cain was adamant. His pride had been hurt. And thus it was that one day “Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (Ver. 8).

Think of the inconsistency of this brutal act! The man who had been too sensitive, too refined, to bring a slain animal to God in sacrifice for his sins, was *not* too sensitive or refined to bludgeon his own brother to death.

As a result of his brutal obstinacy Cain was driven from the presence of the Lord to become a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and to cry with the doomed: “*My punishment is greater than I can bear*” (Ver. 13).

PAUL AND THE CHILDREN OF ADAM

It was given to the Apostle Paul to “fulfil [or *complete*] the Word of God” (Col. 1:25), not statistically, or textually, or chronologically, but *doctrinally*, by the revelation of “the mystery” (Ver. 26).

Paul’s God-given message was the capstone of divine revelation, for “the mystery” revealed to him is the secret of all God’s dealings with men and it is in its light that we must consider even the ancient account of Cain and Abel.

For nearly four thousand years God had made distinctions between

man and man, distinctions between the line of Seth and the line of Cain, between the seed of Abraham and that of the pagan world about him, between the seed of Isaac and that of Ishmael, between the nation Israel and the other nations.

But in due time, under Paul's ministry, God cast away His covenant people (temporarily) along with the Gentiles, concluding all in unbelief "*that He might have MERCY upon all*" (Rom. 11:32, 33).² Thus it is Paul that takes us back, in his theology, not to David or Abraham, with whom the covenants were made, but to fallen Adam, pointing out that "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," so by another "one Man" we may be delivered from sin and death (See Rom. 5:12-19).

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness [or, righteous act] of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom. 5:18).

Thus in Paul's epistles former distinctions disappear. "*Henceforth,*" he says, "know we no man after the flesh" (II Cor. 5:16).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:12,13).

There are, to be sure, human distinctions between Adam's children that are still to be observed, but *before God* there is no difference, except that which we found existing between Adam's *first two*

children, the difference between faith and unbelief.

Now the sacred secret revealed through Paul has cast its light upon the story of Cain and Abel. The blood sacrifice which God then required was typical of that which He has since provided and by which believers not only receive witness that they are righteous but become partakers of all of the merits of Calvary: oneness with Christ, oneness with each other in Christ, a heavenly position, heavenly blessings, a heavenly prospect and all "the riches of His grace."

"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace;

"Where He hath abounded toward us..." (Eph. 1:6-8).

"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

Those who reject this forgiveness and these riches of grace are often much like Cain. They may be industrious, sensitive and refined. They may indeed be religious, but instead of approaching God in *His* way, through the blood of Christ, they come, like Cain, offering what *they think* is better: the fruit of their toil, their "good" character or their religious efforts.

Tell these good, religious people that only the blood of Christ can save them and, like Cain, their countenances fall. But the very religious leaders who have protested that the doctrine of the blood is "loathesome to the finer senses," have also been the leaders in the

apostasy that has encouraged communism and the brutality and godlessness that is even now engulfing our nation in its perils. Such is the inconsistency of unbelief, and it is of such that God says: *“Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain...”* (Jude 11).


THE ONLY DISTINCTION

During this dispensation of Grace God does not favor one race, or nation, or class above another where salvation is concerned. The one basic distinction is that which we found existing at the very beginning between Cain and Abel, and this distinction now, as then, determines our destinies.

“And the Lord had respect unto Abel AND TO HIS OFFERING, but unto Cain AND TO HIS OFFERING He had not respect.” Each man was accepted or rejected on the basis of His offering.

Today, since Christ has already given Himself as a sacrifice for us, we may either trust in His finished work and be accepted by God or bring our own sacrifice and be rejected.

Those who are rejected will one day have to say with Cain: *“My punishment is greater than I can bear.”* Those who are accepted will forever enjoy *“the exceeding riches of His grace...His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”*

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). 

Endnotes

1. A.V. renders this “sin” but in the Hebrew the word for *sin offering* is the same as the word for *sin*. Evidently “sin offering” is intended here.
2. This applies to His *offer* of salvation to all, for as far as salvation itself is concerned He does *not* “have mercy upon all” (See Rom. 9:18).



What Will Hell Be Like?

“There was an old Scotch preacher who was passing a glass factory just before going to church to preach. As a door was ajar, and it was some time till the service, he stepped inside. One of the large furnaces had just been opened. He gazed into the white, blue, and purple mass of liquid flame until it nearly seared his face. As he turned unaware of anyone being present, he exclaimed, ‘Oh, man, what will *hell* be like!’ A stoker standing in the shadow heard him.

“Several nights later at church a man came up to him. ‘You don’t know me, but the other day when you stepped into the furnace room I heard what you said. Every time I have opened that furnace since then, the words have rung in my mind, ‘What will hell be like!’ I have come tonight to find out the way of salvation so that I will not have to find out what hell is like.’ May God grant that our witness may lead many others to do the same.”

—*Illustrations of Bible Truths*

The Kingdom of God

Of Prophecy and of “The Mystery” (Part II)

By Roland N. Icke, M.D.

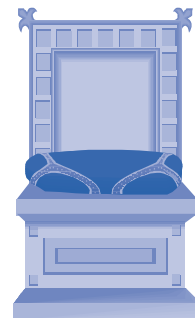
THE PROPHESED KINGDOM OF GOD

The Messianic (Davidic) Kingdom

As God incarnate, Jesus called Himself the “Son of man.” This term is used more than 80 times in the Gospels, and again by Stephen in Acts 7:56, and by John in Revelation 1:13 and 14:14. In Daniel’s prophecy, speaking of end-time events (2:44), he stated: “and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. The kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” Daniel saw in a vision, “One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and there was given to Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people nations and languages, should serve Him...His dominion is everlasting...shall not pass away...shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13,14). This prophecy does not distinguish between the Messiah’s 1000 year reign and His eternal reign, but considers them blending together.

When the wise men from the east “followed the star” (Matt. 2:9-11), they came to Jerusalem and asked: “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” (Matt. 2:1,2). They knew from the Old Testament scrolls that God had promised David that one of his descendants (“Seed”; II Sam. 7:12-17) would establish a kingdom and throne forever. More was revealed in Isaiah 9:6,7, Daniel 2:44 and numerous other prophecies. “A king shall reign and prosper” (Jer. 23:5). “One king shall be king unto them all” (Ezek. 37:22). The virgin, Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she will “bring forth a Son, JESUS, who will be great...the Son of the Highest...and God will give unto Him the throne of His father, David...of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33). This King will “redeem His people (Israel),” deliver from all enemies (Luke 1:68-77), fulfill God’s promises to the patriarchs (Rom. 15:8) and prophecies of Israel’s peaceful earthly inheritance and blessings (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-14), and reign eternally.

Many of the prophecies and promises were written over a period of several hundred years, warning of God’s



“And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever” (II Sam. 7:16).

judgments and dispersion for disobedience and idolatry, but promising future restoration. Since the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C., the Israelites have had no king. The “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) will continue until the Messiah’s second coming to judge, then to reign as King, giving “the sure mercies of David” (Acts 13:34). Israel had been subjected to the Babylonians, Media-Persians (536 B.C.), Grecians (322 B.C.), and Romans (63 B.C.). During the interval of about 400 years between the Old Testament and New Testament writings, the Rabbis developed differing *traditions* for interpretation of the Scriptures, often opposed to the *literal Word*. The genealogy in Matthew (chapter 1) established the legal right of Jesus of Nazareth to the throne of David. More than 300 prophecies were quickly fulfilled *literally* in less than 4 years of His earthly ministry; the remaining prophecies will also be fulfilled *literally*.

“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law” (Gal. 4:4,5). Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7), taken as an infant to Egypt (Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:13-15), and raised in Nazareth (Matt. 2:23; Luke 4:16).

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness...saying: ‘repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand’; For this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight’” (Matt. 3:1-3).

“The genealogy in
Matthew (chapter 1)
established the legal right
of Jesus of Nazareth to
the throne of David.”

He warned the Pharisees and Sadducees: “O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Matt. 3:7,8). Quoting from Malachi 3:1, Jesus said that John was the one preparing the way for the Messiah, as prophesied in the Old Testament (Luke 7:24-27). He was baptized by John, “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15), and that He might be “made manifest to Israel,” He was introduced, “Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.” God the Father and the Holy Spirit authenticated John’s record that “this is the Son of God” (Matt. 3:16,17; John 1:29-34).

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights...and hungered,” the tempter tried repeatedly to entice Him into acting independently of the Father, and showed Him “all the *kingdoms* of the world and the glory of them.” The devil offered “all these things” in exchange for worship (Matt. 4:8; Luke 4:1-13). This was his attempt to “be like the most High,” to displace God, and to be worshipped himself (Isa. 14:12-15). Jesus could *not* violate His covenant with the Father for our redemption (Eph. 1:3-11, 3:10,11)

and He overcame all temptations “by the Word of God.” He came into the world to “destroy the works of the devil” (John 12:27,31; Eph. 6:12; Heb. 2:14; I John 3:8; Rev. 12:10,11).

In the Nazareth synagogue at age 12, Jesus had astonished the doctors with his understanding and answers (Luke 2:46-48). Upon beginning His ministry, He shocked them further by claiming to be the One who fulfilled the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 61:1,2, “As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read...‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor...to heal the broken hearted... preach deliverance to the captives...recovering of sight to the blind...to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He closed the book and said: “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:16-22). He did *not* quote the remainder of Isaiah’s prophecy: “and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn,” for that part is still future. “And all bare Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’” And He said, “no prophet is accepted in his own country” (*vs.* 24). This claim was a threat to their prestigious positions.

“And all they in the synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath” and tried to kill Him, but He passed through the midst of them and went His way (Luke 4:28-30). As on other occasions, His “hour had not yet come” (John 7:30, 8:20). He was

sent to preach the Kingdom of God in other cities also (Luke 4:43). Jesus said: “There is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist, but he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him” (Luke 7:28-30). Many of the chief rulers also believed on Him, “but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42,43). Jesus later reproached the lawyers, who continued trying to trick Him in words in order to ensnare and discredit Him (Luke 11:52-54). He told the covetous Pharisees: “You are they which justify but God knows your hearts. For that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The Law and the prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it” (Luke 16:14-16).

“From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand’” (Matt. 4:17, 9:13), emphasizing the *spiritual* nature of His Kingdom. He raised the Law’s commandment against adultery and covetousness, forbidding lustful thoughts as well as the deeds (Matt. 5:27-28). “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is *at hand*; repent and believe the gospel” (good news; Mark 1:14,15).


“Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the *gospel of the Kingdom*, and healing all manner of sickness...and diseases...and cast out devils (as prophesied for Israel’s Messiah). His fame went throughout all Syria...and a great multitude of people followed Him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond Jordan” (Matt. 4:23-25).

Throughout Jesus’ earthly ministry, He validated the accuracy of the Old Testament prophecies, presented Himself as the One literally fulfilling what the prophets had said, and gave assurance that their remaining predictions would be literally fulfilled. The prophets often did not understand all that they had been divinely-instructed to write (Luke 10:24) and often were unaware of intervals between near and far-term events. The Apostles had not recognized that He must suffer before His reign. Some Rabbis thought there must be two Messiahs, one to suffer and one to reign; and they interpreted some prophecies about suffering to *mean* that the nation Israel suffers.

It should be realized that He was *not* preaching “the gospel of the Grace of God” (Acts 20:24), which in resurrected glory He commanded Paul to preach after Calvary.

“Throughout Jesus’ earthly ministry, He validated the accuracy of the Old Testament prophecies....”

“And seeing the multitude, He went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him...and He taught (that which is known as The Sermon on the Mount), as One having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matt. 5:1 to 7:29). This fifth chapter of Matthew presents what many have called “the charter of the Kingdom,” the “beatitudes” or blessings associated with the prophesied Kingdom of God (out of Heaven) on earth, under the Messiah’s reign as King.

This is the *spiritual* aspect of the *Kingdom* under Christ. Its blessings and promises are *conditional* (as was Israel’s covenant at Sinai), based upon complete obedience. The pure in heart shall see God. The peacemakers shall be called the children of God. Those who mourn shall be comforted. The merciful will be shown mercy. The meek shall inherit the earth (Psa. 37:11). Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. The Kingdom of Heaven is promised to the “poor in spirit,” and to those who are reviled and persecuted for righteousness’ sake (Matt. 5:2,10). Their righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees to enter into this *spiritual* kingdom (Matt. 5:20) for those hypocrites *say* and *do not* (Matt. 23:3). All of the promised blessings will come only under the Messiah’s righteous millennial reign, without any evil influence, when there will be complete obedience to all the terms of God’s covenant *with Israel*. 

To Be Continued!

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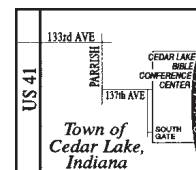
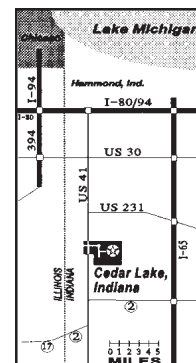
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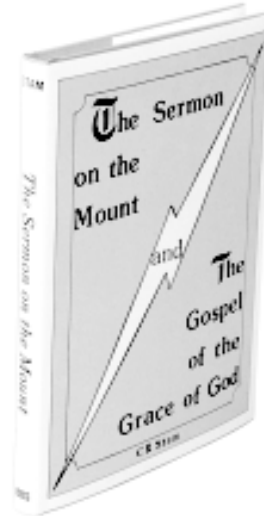
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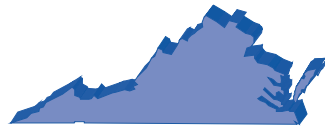
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TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY!***


NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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NEW BIBLE STUDY: Bill and Chrissy Frank, second year students at the *Berean Bible Institute*, are planning to begin a Bible Study this summer at their home, which is located in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. If you are interested in attending, please contact: Mr. & Mrs. Bill Frank at 505 Wisconsin Ave., North Fond du Lac, WI 54937 or phone (920) 924-0484. We think you'll find Bill and Chrissy's enthusiasm for the message to be contagious. May God richly bless these dear folks as they faithfully make known Paul's gospel.

LIGHTHOUSE PICTURES: If you plan to travel this summer from "sea to shining sea" or the Great Lakes in between, be sure to take your camera along to snap a few pictures of coastal lighthouses. Don't forget to send only *copies* of the prints along with the location, and we'll see what we can do to place them on the front cover of the *Berean Searchlight*.

This past year or so, our readers have sent us quite an impressive collection of postcards and magazine photographs of lighthouses. Unfortunately, we are unable to use them without permission from the photographers. But thanks so very much for your thoughtfulness.

 **TO OUR CANADIAN FRIENDS:** For those who have been recently introduced to the ministries of the *Berean Bible Society*, who live in Canada, we would like to encourage you to channel your donations through BBS Canada. This serves a twofold purpose: First, it insures you will be given full credit for the amount of your donation for tax purposes. Second, it saves a considerable amount of the Lord's money that must be paid in banking fees. Here in the U.S. we are charged a sizable fee on each transaction.

Don Potter, the President of BBS Canada, will see that you receive a receipt and make sure your gift is forwarded to us. Brother Potter's address is: 513 Labrador Dr., Oshawa, Ontario, Canada L1H 7G1. In addition, all *book and tape orders* should be sent here to Wisconsin, but, please remit in U.S. funds. Heartfelt thanks to our northern co-workers who have been faithfully helping us spread the good news of Paul's apostleship and message.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was sent to us by Oddbjorn Iglebaek. The *Grønningen Lighthouse* is located near Kristiansand, a town in Norway.

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“There is an exit sign in public buildings almost everywhere—
but there are no EXIT signs in Hell!” “Behold, now is the ac-
cepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Trust Christ
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