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The Vision is yet for an Appointed Time

"But at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." - Habakkuk 2:3.

Last summer while in the British Isles one of our Editors had the privilege of hearing a very inspiring discourse on the text forming the caption of this article. On request, the speaker, Brother Fred H. Guard, an Elder of the Forest Gate Church, amplified his discourse notes and prepared the following article for Herald publication. In submitting same, Brother Guard advised us that he had been indebted to a number of scholars and writers for some of the thoughts (and possibly for even an occasional phrase) the article contained. Where he had been able to recall the source, it had been appropriately acknowledged; but since his thoughts had been developed over many years, it had not always been possible for him to recall a source and make suitable acknowledgment. If, therefore, Brother Guard urged, we should decide to publish his article it must be with that understanding.

- Editorial Committee

Little is known of the prophet Habakkuk; his parentage, birthplace, and era are unrecorded. It is considered probable, however, that he prophesied around 625 B.C. The prophecy takes the form of a dialogue with Jehovah and parts of it are unsurpassed in the whole compass of Hebrew poetry—there being nothing nobler in Isaiah, nor more daring in Ezekiel, nor more gorgeous in the closing sections of Job.

HABAKKUK'S FIRST PROBLEM: WHY DOES GOD PERMIT EVIL?

The prophecy, in addition to its portrayals of the future, deals with the problems created by faith and with the Divine answers to the questions which express those problems. The opening words, "O Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear?" reveal the first problem and one which has confronted the faithful in all ages. Habakkuk lived when the outlook on circumstances seemed to contradict his faith in the righteous government of God. The times were characterized by violence, iniquity, perverseness, spoiling, strife, contention. All the ways of justice were paralyzed. God was apparently doing nothing and in spite of the troubled cry of his servant remained silent.

Let it also be observed that the further value of this book is that it reveals a man who in the presence of a problem stated it to God rather than made it an occasion for unbelief. The problem

was created by his faith and his faith acted in declaring it to God. By such action he made it possible for God, in communion with him, to give him an explanation. That was a great gain although the first answer did not satisfy Habakkuk. Indeed, it created a new situation more bewildering and inexplicable than the first.

The Divine declaration was that God was not idle, inactive. He was raising up and employing the Chaldeans, the avowed and bitter enemies of his people, to carry out his purposes. This was what was more bewildering to the prophet than that God should be inactive and silent. Although the invading host would "proceed of themselves" (Hab. 1:7), they were in fact to be God's agency for chastisement. They would, however, not escape Divine judgment because in the process they would "load themselves with guilt [as do all men] whose own power is their god" (Hab. 1:11, *Amplified Bible*).

Today iniquity abounds and is increasing on every hand, recalling what Jesus said that "because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." The children of God today are, however, assured that God is working; that "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. 4:35); and can confidently say with the Psalmist as they expectantly look forward to the day when the Messiah shall have come in glory and power: "There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise" (Psa. 36:12).

**HABAKKUK'S SECOND PROBLEM:
SINCE THE CHALDEANS ARE
MORE WICKED THAN WE ARE,
WHY USE SUCH AN AGENCY TO
CHASTISE AND PUNISH US?**

As we have seen, the Divine reply did not satisfy the Prophet Habakkuk and he was almost filled with consternation. He lamented over the prospect of desolation at the hand of the cruel invader and tried to assure himself that as God is the Eternal

One and lives, so his people will surely not be completely obliterated, and furthermore that after all God would only use the Chaldeans as a means of judgment and correction. On the other hand, Habakkuk felt that by his "rousing up the Chaldeans" to be the instrument of judgment, God's majesty would be impugned. "Why are you silent when the wicked one destroys him who is more righteous than he [the Chaldean oppressor] is?" (*Hab. 1:13, Amplified Bible*).

GOD'S SOLUTION TO BOTH PROBLEMS

It was then that the Prophet said, "I will watch; I will wait; I will see what God will say to me and what will be the solution of the perplexities I am deploring regarding which he will make me a mouthpiece to others" (Hab. 2:1). His watching and waiting were rewarded. "The Lord answered me," he declared. "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that readeth it"; or as other versions have this last clause: "that one may swiftly read it"; and "run his eye quickly through it"; and "read it at a glance" (Hab. 2:2). Continuing the Divine answer, the Prophet went on to record: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie." The sense in the Hebrew here is that the vision "pants for the day of its completion" or "longs to fulfil its destiny" and although it should seem to tarry, wait earnestly for it; because it will surely come, it will not be behindhand on its appointed day (*Hab. 2:3, Amplified Bible*).

The vision comprehends all of the remaining verses in chapter 2 (Hab. 2:4-20). First of all, it shows that the invader is puffed up with pride, manifesting an attitude of hollow self-exaltation -- a state of mind which God abhors and resists. While the vision does not say precisely what the end of this self-exalting one shall be, the implication is clear that his end is *death*. In strong contrast the words that follow assert that the just by his faith shall *live*. The humble fidelity of faith -- in a word, faithfulness -- is that which commends anyone to God and the end for that one is *life*. *To us* Christian believers it means a sincere trust in the credibility of salvation and a life of faithfulness consistent with and resulting from that trust. It is by immovable and unwavering confidence in God that final salvation is assured to the believer.

THE VISION HAS A MESSIANIC APPLICATION

Now the central gem of the vision and prophecy consists of the words: "The just by his faith [faithfulness] shall live." This is quoted three times by New Testament writers and that which particularly interests us in this study is Hebrews 10:37-39. The writer to the Hebrews quotes from the LXX version of Habakkuk which reads "Though *he* should tarry, wait for *him*; for *he will* surely come, *he will* not tarry." Without doubt the vision of Habakkuk is here given a Messianic application. In this our day, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord, the Messiah, it is only the faith -- righteous who shall live. We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Phil. 3:20, 21).

THOUGH ITS FULFILLMENT SEEM TO TARRY, WAIT EARNESTLY FOR IT

In verse 37 of Hebrews 10 (Heb. 10:37) "a little while" is literally "a very, very little while" and this was written over 1,900 years ago. The Messiah is still awaited. True, the day is at hand and our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. But there is still tarrying by the expected One and those who by their faithfulness are living and shall live are doing so by waiting and watching with patient endurance.

Now in 2 Peter 3:8-10, it is shown that whereas time is the condition of man's thought and action, it is not so with God. One day with him is as a thousand years and he is not to be considered slow concerning the fulfillment of his promises as men think of slowness. Delay is merely a human conception and cannot be applied to the operation of God's purposes. Meanwhile, as Peter shows in this context, God is long-suffering, that is, he defers and restrains his anger. "But," adds the Apostle, "the day of the Lord *will come*." This day of settlement and of judgment is fixed in the Divine arrangement just as Habakkuk's vision was for an appointed time.

WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMETH SHALL HE FIND "THE" FAITH ON THE EARTH? WHAT FAITH?

On one occasion our Lord spake a parable regarding an importunate widow and an unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8). He used the parable to illustrate our need of persistency in prayer (Luke 18:1). It was the persistence of the widow that forced the judge "to avenge her" but his motive for so doing was no higher than that he thought she might in extremity injure him physically, unless he acted on her behalf. From this story our Lord deduced this: "Will not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7). Our Lord is not comparing the reason for the action of the judge with what God will do. Rather, the two are in direct contrast. The position has been expressed thus "If a bad judge for a bad reason will avenge a woman who is a dangerous nuisance,

how much more for a good reason will God listen to and avenge his own?" The words "though he bear long with them" do not mean that God is long-suffering (the meaning of "bear long") *with his people* but with their opponents against whom they pray to be avenged. The translation, with its explanatory parenthesis (by Wuest), bears out this thought exactly: "And God shall he not most assuredly accomplish the vindication of his chosen-out ones who are crying aloud to him day and night, exacting justice in their behalf even though he is long-suffering in their case (*that of the enemies of his chosen-out ones*)." Rotherham aptly adds a note here: "Slow to smite his foes, God seems also slow to save his friends."

The avenging in Luke 18:8 is said to be done "speedily." The thought appears to be "with suddenness" -- short and swift when God steps in at the time appointed.

The final question of the parable teaches the positive by the assertion of the negative. It means "*the faith*" (in the Greek, it is emphatic) will be all but lacking. This does not signify that there will be no profession of Christianity, no piety, complete unbelief. Here again the translation and parenthesis (by Wuest) of the latter part of verse 8 is illuminating: "Yet, the Son of Man having come, will he find the aforementioned kind of faith on the earth (a faith which keeps on pleading in prayer, such as that exemplified by the persistence of the widow with regard to the judge)?"

In harmony with this, we quote from another in a commentary on this parable: "It means that the faith in demand, the faith he wishes to inspire, faith in God's providence, will have all but died out in the hearts *even* of the godly, even of the elect. So long will the judge delay his coming, that it will come to this.... It is often the case that God's action as a deliverer is delayed until his people have ceased to hope for deliverance. So it was with Israel in Egypt; so it was with her again in Babylon.... This method of Divine action-long delay followed by a sudden crisis-so frankly recognized by Christ, is one to which we find it hard to reconcile ourselves.... Delay is not incompatible with grace. It is simply the result of love taking counsel with wisdom, so that the very end aimed at may not be frustrated by too great haste to attain it.... We must be prepared for receiving and appreciating the benefit God means to bestow on us and delay is an important element in the discipline necessary for that purpose."

OUR POSITION TODAY

Our position today resembles closely that of Habakkuk centuries ago. The law is paralyzed. Iniquity and evil prosper everywhere. The testimony of God's saints is set at naught and the question is, who of us shall endure to the end? Habakkuk was told that the fate of the proud invader was sealed. He was assured that only those who maintained faithfulness and integrity towards God would live. So it is today.

The Lord Jesus is about to manifest himself to vindicate his people and to gather them to himself; to bring to naught every evil institution and to pour upon the nations his fierce anger and thereafter to turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent (Zeph. 3:8, 9). This echoes a brief word in the vision which Habakkuk received. In Zeph. 2:13-14, the latter sees the invader laboring only for the fire and the Chaldeans wearying themselves for nothing. His mind is then carried forward further still. He sees another (the 5th) universal empire, under Christ, taking the stage: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." All these wondrous things are for the time appointed. They will surely come. Although they seem to tarry, wait for them and for him who shall introduce them. It is for us to be sure that, like the five prudent virgins, we have oil in our vessels as well as in our lamps (Matt. 25:4). *We shall require the reserve of oil.* It was this that enabled the prudent to keep their lamps alight until the bridegroom came. We know not the day nor the hour. Therefore, watch! But the day and hour are appointed and are known to God. What assurance this gives!

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall **live** by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but **of** them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:35-39).

- Fred H. Guard, Eng.

Fellowship in the British Isles

The following statistics will provide the reader with some factual information concerning our ministry. Between June 15, 1968, and September 3, 1968 (Sister Faye Iannaccone arrived August 3), forty-two different conventions, classes, or home meetings were attended including the two week-long ones -- Maranatha and Bible-Week at Nuneaton. Twenty-three different discourses were used in the fifty-five speaking engagements. The Lord graciously provided some six additional visits to brethren including several who were isolated because of ill health or age. However, a true appraisal of the visit must include the blessings *received* from our Heavenly Father through our British brethren.

The Lord's gifts through our brethren in Ireland and Great Britain included "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace ... to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). Coming to know the Bible Student's Hymnal through our brethren and their habit of singing out joyfully and in time was a blessed experience. Learning hymns which taught more clearly the message of one's own sermons was a blessing too. The following lines were one such gift from above as the brethren sang them:

*"I ask thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes;
A heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathize."*

Receiving texts from class after class was joyful, enlightening, and encouraging along the way. They became a load of love to take back to America. These ranged from the great promise of Genesis 28:15, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, ... for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of," to Revelation 2:10, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

One group of brethren sent a text for the family at home which paid tribute to their part in the ministry, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb. 6:10). This together with a letter from an older brother helped our sons Larry and Paul to feel part of the ministry as, indeed, they were.

The Lord's goodness was evident in the fellowship of the brethren in two ways particularly. The attentive and serious listening to words spoken, taking these each to themselves as mature men and women of the Lord was in itself a great kindness. It was outmatched by the efforts made by brethren (sometimes in their eighties) to travel in pairs or even alone by public transportation to hear a talk

and participate in the fellowship. These were living illustrations of Hebrews 10:24 and 25, and their consideration provoked love as that Scripture indicates it must. Even more evident was the Lord's

blessing in visits with brethren in their homes by ones and twos where instead of serving them, they blessed our fellowship as living testimonies of the Lord's work.

Our Father's bounteous nature appeared in the fellowship of conversation too. No visit seemed long enough. The warm and loving discussions (sometimes including different views of some Scriptures) helped us to see points of view we had not adequately considered before and to face questions about our own views not previously entertained. The meaning of Paul's words in Romans 14:1 and 15:1 became clearer by example as brethren entertained their American visitor and exchanged differing thoughts concerning God's work and plan without any sense of strain.

Above all, there was the atmosphere of mature, well-read students of the Bible, not afraid to be gentle with one another, calmly confident of the Lord's overruling and not so fearful as to refuse to try one another's spirits. Such are unlikely to be tossed from one opinion to another but were ready to simply, not argumentatively, state their understanding of Scripture, thus planting or watering but leaving the increase and pruning to God while they entertained a stranger gently communicating the feeling that they felt they might be entertaining a messenger unawares (Heb. 13:1, 2). Indeed, as the Apostle Paul saw in Timothy, one "who will naturally care for your state," so it was easy to see in them this same rare quality.

The love of the British brethren, as developed by God's spirit, was displayed, especially by the sisters, in more mundane but essential ways. Driving about England one frequently sees signs, "bed and breakfast." The sisters provided more, much more. Their services, which included meals and laundry, rest, and godly conversation, were performed with a sense of consecration that said to one, these things were done as unto the Lord, and made one seek the more earnestly to do his part too as God's slave among his children.

Perhaps the greatest gift of all was in the example set by those brethren whose cross-bearing were sermons of what may be, under God's spirit. We saw brethren respond to painful experiences: illness, the loss of loved ones, or some other difficult trial, as messengers from the Lord. Not only were these responded to as crosses to be suffered, but more maturely as vehicles to bring them closer to the Lord, to full stature in Christ. The words of a hymn came alive:

*"Let sorrow do its work,
Send grief and pain;
Sweet are thy messengers,
Sweet their refrain;
When they can sing with me:
More love, O Christ, to thee."*

These sermons without words were, above all else, lessons never to be forgotten.

We left with no regrets, after the London Convention at Conway Hall, filled with the spirit, knowing that the prayers of the brethren in America and the British Isles, from our first visit to the Central London class on, had borne good fruit of blessings for us. God's way must also result in blessings for our brethren overseas. We returned to bring what blessings we might by his will to our brethren in America.

We are seeking to reflect our blessings of the summer in Paul's words, "determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"; [to be] "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling . . . that [our] faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:1-5). We are grateful to our brethren on both sides of the Atlantic for their prayers and other efforts on our behalf and to our Heavenly Father's overruling care. We are especially grateful for the message "Lie Still," Hymn 207 in the Bible Student's Hymnal, "*Bend me, oh, bend me to thy will,*

While in thy hand I'm lying still." We continue trying to learn new lessons as we remember our brethren across the water.

- *L. Iannaccone*

Israel Today

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." - Jeremiah 30:7.

Countdown in the Holy Land. In its November 1968 issue, the Reader's Digest has condensed a book (by Lester Velie) bearing this title, and .advises that the book itself is to be published next spring (Funk & Wagnalls, New York).

The Reader's Digest's introduction to the book reads as follows:

"On two fateful days in June 1967, the United States and the Soviet Union came perilously close to war. Over the hot line from Moscow, the Russians were threatening to intercede in the Arab-Israeli conflict. We stood ready to stop them if they tried.

"Why did the two superpowers risk a confrontation that might have brought nuclear disaster to the world? The answer lies in the character and content of the Middle East. This strategic, tension-ridden area links three continents, contains 60 percent of the world's oil reserves, and provides the shortest air and sea routes between Europe and Southern Asia. For 20 years it has been a critical arena in the Cold War and a prime target of Soviet foreign policy.

"In this revealing book, Lester Velie unmaskes the Soviet designs on the Middle East. He shows how, despite the blunder of the Six-Day War-which cost the U.S.S.R. \$2 billion-the Kremlin has gone on to entrench and expand its power in this area. The countdown to a new and more ominous confrontation has already begun."

Again (on page 268 of the Reader's Digest) the book closes with the following significant forecast:

"The Soviet Union's aggressive global-war tactics in the Middle East -- and the United States' policy of drift -- could plunge the world into atomic proliferation against which the Kremlin has been piously preaching. And the Middle East, which gave birth to three major world religions, could become the burial ground of civilization."

In the foregoing quotations from the Reader's Digest, it is not difficult to see that, without using the words "Jacob's Trouble" (and possibly without conscious knowledge of Jeremiah's prediction), the minds of thinking men today are pondering the trend of the times and reaching conclusions which students of Bible prophecy have long held * In this connection, we are forcibly reminded of our Lord's own words: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:26).

In these columns, in the November-December 1968 issue, under the subheading "The Valley of Judgment" we presented an interesting discussion of our text from the pages of The Forest Gate Church Bible Monthly. We turn now to some paragraphs condensed from a recent issue of the Bible Study Monthly, under the caption

* For a brief review of Bible prophecies, write us for one each of two free booklets: (1) The ABC of Bible Prophecy and (2) Israel and the Middle East.

TITLE DEEDS OF THE LAND

"In the latter years you [Gog, of the land of Magog - Ezek. 38:2] will go against the land that is restored from war, the land where people were gathered from many nations upon the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste; its people were brought out from the nations and now dwell securely, all of them . . . and you will devise an evil scheme and say, 'I will go up against the land of unwallled villages; I will fall upon the quiet people who dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having no bars or gates'; to seize spoil and carry off plunder; to assail the waste places which are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have gotten cattle and goods, who dwell at the center of the earth" (Ezek. 38:8-12, R.S.V.).

The invasion of the Holy Land by the hosts of "Gog and Magog" is the last great event of this Age. The overthrow of that great host is the signal for the establishment and announcement of the Kingdom of God upon earth. From that point of time Restitution processes will commence, and the work of world conversion, the restoration of the earth and rehabilitation of the human race, go forward. A clear understanding of the prophecy in the light both of Biblical lore and of contemporary knowledge is an essential for those who desire to keep abreast with the outworking of the Divine Plan.

The central feature of the prophecy is the land and its people, and a question immediately arises, "Where is the land and who are the people?" ** The old-time theology, inspired mainly by St. Augustine, declared that the whole passage is symbolic, that it depicts the final triumph of Christ and his Church over the forces of evil. Such explanation will not satisfy students of the Bible who understand and look for the coming of Christ's Kingdom upon earth. Quite clearly, this passage is directly related to the Divine destiny for the ideal Israel of the End Time and to the establishment of the Kingdom, and must therefore be understood in a dispensational sense and in an earthly setting. Putting it briefly, the time of the prophecy is at the end of this Age and the place of its fulfillment is upon this earth.

** We hope to discuss this question in more detail in a future issue of The Herald.

The Old Testament, from the Book of Genesis onward, maintains a consistent claim that God promised the patriarch Abraham that of his descendants there would be developed a nation which should possess to all perpetuity the land over which he wandered and in which he lived. In that land this nation is to become the Divine instrument, to be a light to the nations and declare God's salvation to the ends of the earth. The New Testament takes up the promise and shows that it will become reality at the end of the Age. In the meantime Abraham's descendants, while admittedly constituting a power for good in history, have never reached up to the standard demanded for this historic destiny, but when the time comes such a nation will be ready in the land thus promised; Ezekiel's prophecy refers to that fulfillment. It is to be taken as a basic- principle, therefore, that the land promised to Abraham nearly four thousand, years ago, the land in which he spent his life, the land in which his descendants Isaac and Jacob, and the nation of Israel which sprang from Jacob, played their respective parts on the stage of history, is the land of the promise and of the prophecy. There it is that a people will be gathered to fulfill in every respect the description given by Ezekiel. Although the contemporary modern political state of Israel is but a small country the size of Wales the ancient nation of Israel did in fact occupy a larger area; the promises to Abraham and his successors define an even greater expanse of territory destined to form the Holy Land of the Kingdom Age. It has to be accepted that not only modern Israel but a number of other recently created sovereign States in that part of the world will eventually be merged to form the

stage upon which this last act in the drama of this "present evil world," to use St. Peter's description, is to be played.

It is noteworthy that God seems to have selected this part of the earth's surface as the scene of those events which mark definite steps or epochs in the development of his purposes. The travels of Abraham, from Ur of the Chaldees in the southeast Euphrates valley, to Haran in the north, down through Canaan into Egypt in the southwest, and back into Canaan, there to settle, mark out a great triangle which roughly defines the area promised to him and to his seed by Divine covenant. Within or immediately adjacent to this triangle practically the whole of the incidents in the Old Testament were enacted, with the three exceptions of the landing of the Ark in the far northeast, Jonah's mission to Nineveh, and the story of Esther.

There is a very significant expression in verse 12 of chapter 38 (Eze. 38:12). The regathered nation is said *to dwell "at the center of the earth."* Now this is, geographically, literally true of the land of Israel and its surroundings. Of all the circles of latitude encircling the earth, that passing through the Middle East traverses the greatest length of land, nearly ten thousand miles. Israel is situated at the junction of three continents, Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is roughly midway in distance between the West Coast of Africa and the East Coast of China, between the southernmost limit of Africa and the northernmost of Siberia. If a point had to be selected which could be said to be the center of the land masses of the earth then Israel would logically be that point, and can claim more than anywhere else to be called the "center of the earth." As the administrative seat of the World Government which will be in operation during the Millennial Age no more suitable place could be chosen. It is tempting to think that God deliberately selected this particular part of the earth's surface for its historic mission because of its physical suitability.

Now the actual extent and boundaries of this future Holy Land are defined in the Scriptures with a certain degree of precision and in good legal form. The ancients of Abraham's day were quite accustomed to the drawing up of legal documents embodying the title to ownership of land-many such tablets exist today in the British Museum among other places- and the promises of God regarding the land he has set aside for the administration of the Kingdom are set out in precise style. There are four such "title deeds" incorporated in the Old Testament, each defining the land in a different manner, by their united testimony affording the student a very fair idea of the boundaries of the land that is to be.

The accompanying map is an endeavor to show how these four Scriptures between them indicate the general extent of the land.

TITLE DEED No. 1

The first definition was given to Abraham and recorded in Genesis 15:18-21. The Lord had concluded a covenant with the patriarch under the terms of which his seed was to become the means of blessing all families of the earth. Later events showed that the line of descent to the "seed of blessing was to be traced through Isaac, Jacob, and eventually the twelve tribes of Israel. Said the Lord, *"Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."* A significant element in this passage is the list of peoples then existing whose territory is to be included in the Holy Land.

The river Euphrates rises in the mountains of modern Turkey and after traversing northern Syria flows through Iraq into the Persian Gulf. The empires of Sumeria, Assyria, Mari, and Babylon

rose and fell on its banks. Abraham's migration from Ur to Haran followed the course of the river for a great part of its length. David and Solomon extended the commercial influence of the Kingdom of Israel to the Euphrates where it now flows through Syria. According to this title deed the eastern frontier of the Holy Land is marked by the Euphrates.

The "river of Egypt" is the Nile. The same expression is used some half dozen times in the Old Testament to describe the Wady-el-Arish, a seasonal stream running down from the middle of the Sinai peninsula into the Mediterranean sea at El-Arish. In these cases the word for river is "*nachal*" meaning a torrent bed dry in summer and flooded in winter -- the Arabic "wady." When the Nile is intended, as in Gen. 15:18, the word is "*nahar*" meaning a permanent running stream. The Nile delta or its vicinity would therefore appear to be the western frontier of the Holy Land. David's Kingdom reached as far as the Wady-el-Arish.

The ten nations mentioned as occupying this territory in Abraham's day have long since disappeared from history, although in most cases a good deal is known about them.

TITLE DEED No. 2

The second title deed was the gift of God to the emerging nation of Israel at the time of the Exodus. "*I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river*" (Exod. 23:31). This statement defines the north-south and east-west limits of the land. The expression "Sea of the Philistines" is in itself an interesting internal proof of the early date of the Book of Genesis. The Philistines were immigrants from Crete (*Caphtor* in the Old Testament, Egyptian *Keftu* - see Jer. 47:4 and Amos 9:7) and were settled on the coast of Canaan primarily for the purpose of growing corn for their homeland. Crete was the dominant sea power in the Mediterranean in the days of Abraham and that sea was then known as the "Sea of the Philistines." Less than a century after the Exodus the supremacy of Crete was broken and her sea power passed to the Phoenicians of Tyre and Sidon. From then the sea was known to the Hebrews and in the Old Testament as the "Great Sea."

From the Red Sea to the Mediterranean; from the desert to the river! "Desert" here is "*midbar*" which defined the desert of Sinai and northwestern Arabia, in the former of which Israel was at that moment encamped. "*The river,*" when not otherwise qualified, always denotes the Euphrates in the Old Testament. The Red Sea, the Arabian desert, the Euphrates and the Mediterranean coast are declared to be the ultimate boundaries of the land, agreeably to the definition given to Abraham in Gen. 15:18 four centuries earlier.

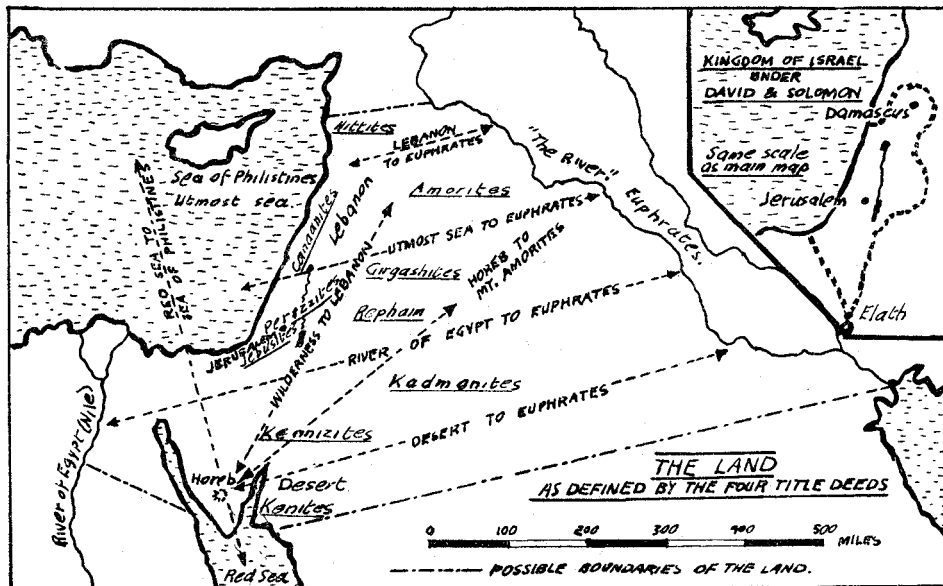
TITLE DEED No. 3

The third title deed was awarded a few months later, when Israel was about to leave Sinai. "*Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the Mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them*" (Deut. 1:7, 8). The Mount of the Amorites was the elevated region extending for many miles east of the Jordan; the "plain" (*arabah*), the deep valley in which the Jordan flows from Galilee to the Dead Sea; the "hills" (*har-high* peaks), the hill country of Judea and Samaria; the "vale" (*ha-shephelah*), the low plain extending from Joppa southward; the south (*negeb*), the territory toward Sinai and the Gulf of Akaba, the seacoast in the west, Lebanon in the north, sweeping across to Euphrates in the

east. This vast terrain was only partially won, even in the days of David; the full accomplishment of the Divine mandate lies still in the future.

TITLE DEED No. 4

The fourth title deed, given forty years later as Israel was at long last about to pass over Jordan into the land, is confirmatory of the third. Said Moses, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours, from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be (Deut. 11:24). "Wilderness" here is *midbar*, rendered "desert" in the second title deed (Ex. 23:31), so that the boundaries here defined also extend from the Arabian desert in the south to Lebanon in the north, from the Euphrates in the east to the Mediterranean ("uttermost sea" is *acharon*, the "hinder sea" a Hebrew term for that sea) in the west.



THE FOUR TITLE DEEDS ARE IN AGREEMENT

So the four declarations, separated from each other, first to last, from the time of Abraham to that of Joshua, agree together on the boundaries of the land as it is finally to be constituted when the Divine purposes come to fruition and the Kingdom of God upon earth is at hand. The fact that Israel of old never possessed more than a part of this great area is immaterial; Israel's failure to measure up to the conditions of her calling accounts for this as well as many other deficiencies in her attainments in history. This is the land as it will be when the ideal Israel, the Holy Nation of the End Time, takes its stand for God in face of world opposition.

**THE TERRITORIAL CHANGES
FORECAST ARE NOT TO BE
ACHIEVED BY PHYSICAL FORCE
OR AGGRESSIVE WARFARE**

The territory thus defined includes not only contemporary Israel but the whole of the State of Jordan and parts of Egypt, Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. There must obviously be a considerable political adjustment of frontiers to be effected before the Holy Land assumes the shape foreseen in the Pentateuch, and nothing in the prophetic Scriptures gives ground for thinking this is to be attained by physical force or by aggressive warfare. Any territorial changes achieved by conflicts between the present State of Israel and her Arab neighbors have to do with the fortunes of the kingdoms of this world rather than those of the next. And in any case, the Israel of today is very far removed from that God believing "Holy Nation" of the future which is going to survive the great attack because it has put its trust in God instead of in armed force.

**ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEMS
To BE SETTLED PEACEFULLY**

It must be expected, therefore, that the future holds in prospect a much more peaceful settlement of Arab-Israel problems than at the present time seems possible. It has to be remembered that in the past these two peoples have not always been at variance, that their present antagonism is largely inspired by the conflicting commercial interests of other nations. Most important of all, the same series of Divine promises which set the sons of Isaac apart for a specific destiny also provided specially for the sons of Ishmael. The Arab race originated from a number of sources but for the most part are of Semitic stock, in the main from the thirteen sons of Joktan (Gen. 10:26-30) and the twelve sons of Ishmael, many of their names surviving as main Arabic divisions to this day. Concerning Ishmael God declared that he would make of him a great nation and multiply him exceedingly, so that he could not be numbered for multitude. Four times in Genesis is this promise reiterated. 'I am with the lad," said the Most High, "I have blessed him; I will make him a great nation" (Gen. 16:10-12; Gen. 17:20; Gen. 21:13, 18). These words are not meaningless and the very significant fact that not one of the Semitic Arab nations appears in Ezekiel's list of those who join the forces of Gog in the attack provokes the question as to their whereabouts and their attitude at that time. The land of Arabia proper, one-third the size of Europe and something like four times the size of the Holy Land of the End Time, if restored to the fertility it enjoyed in early ages, could support many times the present populations of the Arab nations of the Middle East. Calling to mind the progress now being made in restoring the present land of Israel from its past desolation it is not too fanciful to surmise that something of the same kind might be achieved in Arabia. God said of Ishmael that he was to dwell to the east of his brethren, i.e., of Isaac (Gen. 16:12). The geographical definitions of the land originally settled by the sons of Joktan (Gen. 10:30) cover the whole - of Arabia to the Indian Ocean. History concurs in pointing to that land as the natural home of the Arab peoples just as Israel is that of the Israelis.

It might well be, therefore, that the outlines of the promised Holy Land will begin to take shape in proportion -- as a hitherto unlocked for settlement of the differences between these two peoples looms on the political horizon.

**OUT OF ZION SHALL GO FORTH
THE LAW, AND THE WORD OF THE
LORD FROM JERUSALEM**

This is the land, therefore, which is to become the center of the closing events of this Age and the opening events of the next. It will be literally true that "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3). Not for nothing has the Holy City preserved its existence and its name for so many centuries. It was already there when history began-the earliest records we have speak of Urusalim, the City of God of Peace, a place sacred to the worship of the Most High God. To the three great religions of the world-Judaism, Christianity, Islam -it is still a sacred city. Besieged, overthrown and destroyed at least seventeen times, leveled with the ground and plowed up more than once, stripped and despoiled of its treasures time after time, always has the city risen again, still it stands, a symbol of the eternal things that can never pass away. Where else in all the world could God find so fitting a land and city- to be the center of administration for the new earth which is to be? "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, . . . the city of the great King" (Psa. 48:2). There is much in all the Scriptures which speak of the day when God sets his hand to recover to this land a people which will build up the desolate wastes and raise- a standard of righteousness in the eyes of all nations. Here, where Europe, Asia, and Africa meet, it is the Divine intention to create a gathering place for -that nation which shall enter the most fiery trial that has ever confronted a people - and, in the power of God, emerge victorious.

- A. O. Hudson, Eng.

Calamities -- Why Permitted?

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." - Isaiah 45 :7.

Since the publication of the Nov. - Dec. issue of the "Herald," our country has experienced a number of hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, with disastrous results, and reports have reached us that people in other countries have undergone similar calamities, including earthquakes. The severity and extent of these catastrophes brought forcibly back to mind an article written by Brother Russell in the early days of his ministry. Believing the lessons he drew at that time are peculiarly applicable to today's events, we have condensed the following paragraphs from his pen, written in February 1884 -- Editorial Committee.

ACCOUNTS of the widespread and destructive floods of these past months, with their accompanying distress, have ere this reached you through the daily press. Such like events as floods, fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, pestilences, cyclones, etc., have always elicited much comment both from press and pulpit regarding their cause.

The most commonly attributed cause is that God has sent the calamity as a special punishment for supposed greater wickedness of the people of the suffering districts, and as *a warning to others*. Another and growing view is that it just *happened so* from *natural* causes; and that, if there is a God, he either cannot help such things, or does not care to do so. For our part, we cannot endorse either of these views.

The reasons which lead people in general to suppose these calamities to be "special judgments" are founded, we believe, mainly on the dealings of God with Israel, upon whom he sent calamities, captivities, etc., as national punishments for national sins. But let us remember that Israel was a peculiar people, chosen of God for a special purpose, and, like the saints of the Gospel Age, dealt with in a peculiar manner, different from the world. To them he said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2.) Israel was the only nation which Jehovah directly governed; therefore he chastised their sins, and made his promises to them, while other nations were left under the dominion of Satan, the prince of this world, until he whose right it is, shall have come and established the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens.

While remembering that God has used calamities, such as the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom, as punishments and examples of an overthrow of the ungodly, it should not be forgotten that those were examples of those who should afterward live ungodly. And these *examples* are not examples of God's dealings in the present time, but are examples of the punishment or destruction awaiting the finally incorrigible during or at the close of the Millennial judgment period, or day. That Peter so applies those calamities as examples of the *future*, see 2 Peter 2:4-9.

In Jesus' day some had the same impression, that great, disasters indicated God's special displeasure but Jesus corrected them, saying "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? Or those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent ye shall all likewise PERISH."

These words of Jesus contain the key to what we believe is the correct view of this subject in the last word, *perish*. The fact is that the *great calamity* DEATH, of which pestilences, earthquakes, floods, etc., are only *incidentals*, has passed upon ALL MEN, because all are sinners. (Rom. 5:12.) We have become so accustomed to *death*, the great calamity which is rapidly swallowing up the whole race, that it, the greatest of all losses, and the cause of all others, is looked upon as a

proper and natural matter. If, however, things were properly considered, *death* as a whole would be seen as the great calamity, and the floods, etc., which *only hasten* it to a few, would be of comparatively little importance.

As *death*, the great calamity and curse, was caused by sin, so all these calamities spring from the same cause, and are under the control of him that has the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14), whose dominion and power, thank God, is soon to be taken away and given to the Prince of Peace. As death is the result of sin, so are pestilences, tornadoes, etc.

By one man's disobedience, *death* with its numerous channels of sickness and disaster passed upon all men, and those who meet it in one way avoid it in others; but all meet it in some form.

This will be apparent when we remember that when Adam became a sinner, not only did the curse of *death* fall upon him, but the entire dominion of his kingdom-the earth -suffered, and is in a cursed condition. (Gen. 3:17.) For a time Satan is permitted to usurp the dominion of earth, and while seemingly working out his own plans, he at the same time acts as the agent of justice, to execute the penalty of sin. This being true, he is the one who by permission exercises the destructive power upon the earth; and Jehovah does not interfere because mankind has justly come under the curse of a violated law, death; and because man is gaining a valuable lesson under the present dominion of evil and death, which will benefit him when the *curse is* lifted not only legally, but *actually*, by the Redeemer who for *this* cause was manifested "that he might destroy DEATH [the great catastrophe in all its forms] and him that hath the power of death, [and who brings to pass the various calamities] that is, the devil."

As soon as the new Prince, Immanuel, takes possession of the Kingdom, a great change will begin, both in the world of nature and of mankind. The curse being canceled will be removed, and the blessings purchased by the "precious blood of Christ" will be bestowed. So great will be the change under the new administration, that in symbol it is called a new heavens (new spiritual ruling power). Behold he will make all things new; he will *re-new* or restore all things to harmony with God, and to a condition which from God's standpoint, is "very good."

Hence we regard those disasters, not as special punishments, but as parts of the general curse, results of sin; but all working out in harmony with God's design an ultimate good to those rightly *exercised* thereby. We have heretofore seen that the Prophet Job was made a type of mankind; that the disaster and trouble and losses which befell him illustrated the losses sustained by mankind, and that his restoration to favor and after-blessing, foreshadowed the "restitution of all things" to mankind. (Acts 3:19.) And we call to mind that the source of his trouble was Satan (Job 1:12), whom God in wisdom *permitted* to have power over him. As then the whirlwind, etc., was the agent of Satan, so we claim it is today. So, too, it was in Jesus' day. Jesus did not go about opposing the Father's will. If the Father had *caused* the death of Lazarus, would Jesus have opposed him by undoing his work? If Jehovah had caused the storm on the Sea of Galilee, which nearly overwhelmed the Lord and his disciples, would Jesus have been justified in stilling the tempest? But if the sickness and death and storms which Jesus counteracted were the work of Satan, the present "prince of the world," then all is clear, and we and all creation groan and travail and wait for the glorious reign of the new prince, whose relief is foreshadowed by the acts of his earthly ministry, praying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth." When the night of sin and suffering and weeping is over, and the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings for the various troubles of man and of earth, the mists of ignorance will be dispelled, and it will be seen that not Jehovah, but man's sin and his present prince, Satan, has been the direct cause of earth's woe and sorrow.

Ministry of the Word in the British Isles

"We live in a world in which all things are passing away. Kingdoms, empires, cities, ancient institutions, families, all are liable to change and corruption." These are words of an eminent theologian preached in 1858. How markedly true are these words today, over one century later and worldwide in scope! This being true, it seemed quite appropriate that one should make another trip to visit brethren in the British Isles as an indication of "the tie that binds" us all together in the unity in Christ.

It was a wonderful trip by air from New York to London, and delightful to be warmly welcomed on arrival by members of a gracious family with whom we have had sweet fellowship in the Lord for a number of years. The class meeting that evening began the series of talks that were to be given almost daily for the next four months. The next few days were spent with Brother Gordon Chilvers, who had very kindly agreed to arrange my itinerary for the duration. This was much appreciated in view of his many other commitments at work and in Christian service in the area.

From this point onward throughout the trip the pleasure and profit derived from personal fellowship and the discussion of the Lord's Word cannot be estimated. It has always been a characteristic of our British brethren to be familiar with their Bibles, many of which were "dog-eared." The fellowship was sweet and restful in view of these turbulent times and interested attention was given to our discussions of Bible subjects.

The first convention was held at Blaby, in the Midlands, May 25-26, and featured a good program. About 100 friends were in attendance and profited by the discussions of various speakers on such themes as "living temples"; "sitting and coming," Matt. 26:64; "lost and found," Luke 15; a symposium on "the challenge of our times," Rom. 12:1-2; and "the guidance of God." Then came visits to Manchester, Bury, Belfast, and on to the convention at Portrush, June 1-3, with some 50 in attendance.

Here there was a variety of talks on character building with many helpful suggestions on how this can be done. There were good discussions of Bible topics between meetings including differences of opinion, which gave room for a brotherly approach and conclusions.

The next 18 days were spent in Scotland visiting the brethren in Glasgow, Dundee, Brechin, Montrose, Johnston, and Moffat. Only a handful of brethren remain of those with whom I had sweet fellowship in the truth many years ago. It was good to see once more the faces of those known and loved in the Lord and to exhort one another to continued fellowship and faithfulness to the end.

June 23-28 was spent in Northern Ireland - Londonderry, County Fermanagh, Belfast-and in Eire with the friends in Dublin. We rejoiced together in our hope in Christ and the signs of the times indicating the early assumption by Christ of his Kingdom rule. We had much good fellowship during this time encouraging one another to press on in the way of the Lord.

Then by plane back to England and from June 29 till July 12 we spent happy hours with the Midland brethren. Here were many opportunities for service and experiencing the loving hospitality of the brethren in their homes. The warmth of Christian affection and the practice of it in driving me around to the various scheduled meetings was most enjoyable.

A convention was held at Liverpool July 6 and 7 and we had splendid fellowship and helpful discourses which dealt with the heavenly Jerusalem; Bible stones; God's gifts; songs of the Pilgrims; and lessons from Peter. It was here that I had the privilege of renewing fellowship with Brother and Sister P. L. Read of St. Louis, Mo., who had shortly before arrived in England. (Brother E. K. Roberts had kindly relinquished his place on the program so that Brother Read might address the brethren.)

The next two weeks brought me into the London area where we renewed fellowship with old friends at Central London, West Wickham, Welling, Aldersbrook, Forest Gate, Eastbourne, Bexhill, Greenford, Hitchin, and Harpenden, bringing back happy memories of previous visits. In all these places we rejoiced together in the knowledge of the grand purposes of our heavenly Father and exhorted one another to greater faithfulness. At Harpenden I spent several days with Brother and Sister Adam Rutherford of Pyramid fame and had most interesting discussions re the Great Pyramid of Gizeh. We have been friends for more than half a century.

The Maranatha Convention was held August 3-10 in a beautiful country setting, restful and relaxing. Approximately 200 attended and the love of the brethren was everywhere to be seen. The various talks dealt with two major themes; one, the imminent coming of Christ, and, two, certain Bible prophecies dealing with the events surrounding Christ's second advent. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the conclusions offered by the various speakers regarding the second advent of Christ, none could find fault with the loving Christian spirit in which the whole proceedings were carried forward.

From here the journey took me to Langley, Ipswich, Downham Market, Coventry, Lincoln, Sheepie Magna, Wokingham, Aylesbury, Gloucester, Coventry, Crick, Blaby, Rugby, and Northampton. In each place was the same sweet spirit of the Lord as we took counsel together. Then came London with its annual convention at Conway Hall, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, with around 200 present. The discourses here were along the line of character development in the likeness of Christ and included a panel discussion of the following Scriptures: Rev. 20:7-9; Matt. 13:47-50; Luke 21. These Scriptures indicate some of the thoughts and subjects with which the friends are concerned, looking for "that blessed hope" held out by the Lord and his apostles.

At the close of this convention one of the young brothers very kindly set aside one week of his vacation in order to take me in his car to the final appointments of my schedule. We had good fellowship as we rode and Bible discussions on matters very dear to our hearts. We went to Yeovil, Paignton, Bristol, Cardiff, and Windsor. At Cardiff a convention was held September 7-8 with approximately 70 brethren present. Here were discussed matters relating to Christ's imminent coming and our proper attitude thereto. Talks were given on Isa. 49:3; 2 Pet. 3:1; spiritual sicknesses; amazing grace.

Here again were more warmhearted brethren who were most hospitable, and with whom we had the sweetest fellowship. By now, however, the flesh was beginning to become weary while, at the same time, the spirit was much invigorated.

At various times during these months I had the privilege of fellowshiping with Brother and Sister Iannaccone at several points where we jointly served.

My final stop was at Windsor and here again loving hands tended to my needs. On September 10 I went to the London Airport and was happy to see a number of brethren on hand to wish me bon voyage, a final token of that Christian love and goodwill so encouraging in these perilous times. The plane was some two hours late in leaving, so we all had a chance to continue fellowship in

the spirit of our calling in Christ. The flight from London to Chicago was wonderfully easy and in due time I was welcomed into a loving home in Batavia, Ill., for a few days' rest.

I was asked to convey to the brethren in the United States the warm Christian love and best wishes from the British brethren. Several classes expressed their thoughts by a Scripture text; amongst these were: Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 1 Pet. 5:10; Latchford, England, 2 Thess. 3:16; Aldersbrook, London, Phil. 4:19; Forest Gate, London, Eph. 3:16-19; Conway Hall, London Convention, 1 Cor. 15:58; and Cardiff, Wales Convention, Psa. 31:23-24.

It would give me the greatest pleasure to make mention by name all the dear brothers and sisters who did so much to make my visit in Great Britain so pleasant and spiritually profitable, and in whose homes I found the peace of Christ and the spirit of the Master, but space forbids. As I flew homeward, memory delighted to recall the loving faces and the warm handshakes and to once again walk with them all in peace and quietness. They may be sure that my heart fully reciprocates the kind good wishes given me by the brethren throughout the trip. Let us commit our ways to the Lord in these perilous times and let the world fight its fight: the Lord will supervise and the results will be glorious eventually. We should lay hold upon the glorious things set before us and not only stand ourselves, but help all those begotten of the same spirit stand complete in him. By and by God's loving care over all his creatures will be manifested in the glorious kingdom of his dear Son for the blessing of all. Then all will see that God so loved the world as to give his Son to die for us and to thus open the way for his Kingdom blessings.

- *A. L. Muir*

The Question Box

Question:

Does this passage refer to the bodies of individual Christians, or to the one body of Christ (described by the Apostle in the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians) of which each true Christian is a member?

Regardless of the answer to the foregoing, how are we to understand the word "vile" in this connection? (According to modern dictionaries the word "vile" means worthless, despicable, morally base, depraved.)

Answer:

Let us first study the Greek word here translated "vile." For the benefit of English students who have had little or no experience with Greek word studies, may we suggest the following procedure:

1. Turn first to Strong's Concordance, under the word "vile." This will be found listed on page 1098. On that page it will be noted that the word "vile" (in Phil. 3:21) is a translation of Word No. SG5014.
2. Word No. SG5014 appears on page 70 in the Greek dictionary at the back of the concordance, and is the Greek word "tapeinosis."
3. "Tapeinosis," it will be seen, means "depression (in rank or feeling)."
4. Refer next to the Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament, to the English and Greek section, commencing on page 873.

In this section turn to the word "vile" (page 939). It will be noted that the word "vile" is used to translate a number of Greek words. However, our present study has to do with only one of these, namely, "tapeinosis," which is the third on the list, the reference being to page 720.

5. On turning to page 720 we find all the verses in which "tapeinosis" occurs, listed in scriptural sequence. We note also that they are four in number, and that "tapeinosis" is only once translated "vile." (Scholars are agreed that "vile" is a poor translation here; the word "humiliation" is preferred.)

Let us now consider the four scriptures in which "tapeinosis" appears, postponing our consideration of Philippians 3:21 until after we have examined the other three scriptures.

(1) Luke 1:48

"For he bath regarded the *low estate* (tapeinosis) of his handmaiden. "

The Virgin Mary is the speaker here. She is making no reference to her body. (If she were, it is inconceivable that she would call it vile.) Actually she is contrasting her then lowly social status with the lofty status of the house of David from which she sprang.

(2) Acts 8:33

"In his *humiliation* (tapeinosis) his judgment was taken away."

The reference here is to Jesus, he who was "holy, harmless, undefiled" (Heb. 7:26), and whose body, therefore, could not have been, at any time, vile.

Actually the body of Jesus is not under consideration in this passage. Instead, the entire period of his life on earth is under review. From the cradle to the grave, his whole career had been one of humiliation, and it is to this that the prophecy of Isaiah, expounded by Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, drew attention.

(3) James 1:9, 10

"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in *that* he is *made low* (tapeinosis)."

A rich brother is not here exhorted to rejoice that his body is made vile. (Such an exhortation would surely fall on deaf ears, if anyone were so foolish as to offer it.)

The rich brother may, however, (and, indeed, he must, if he is to be a more-than-conqueror) learn to distinguish the true riches from those of earth, and to lay them up, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matt. 6:19-21). If, in the Lord's providence, the best way for him to learn this lesson is by being "made low" (by being stripped of his earthly riches and social status) he is to rejoice therein.

This concludes our review of the meaning of "tapeinosis" in 3 of its 4 occurrences in the New Testament.

(4) Philippians 3:20, 21

Let us now turn to our text, and see if the foregoing study throws any light on the word here. While not conclusive, the fact that in none of the other three occurrences does "tapeinosis" refer to an individual's body, but in each case has reference to his (or her) lowly social status; this fact, we say, suggests that the same meaning is likely to hold true here, too.

First, however, we must secure a better translation than the Authorized Version given at the head of this question. (All scholars are agreed that our Authorized Version, in this text, leaves much to be desired.) A preferred translation is submitted below:

"For our citizenship [margin: commonwealth] is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our *humiliation* [tapeinosis] that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (*American Revised Standard Version*, 1901 edition).

Now for our question: In these two verses, is the Apostle contrasting the individual flesh and blood bodies of the members of the Church on earth with the spiritual bodies they will have in heaven, or is he contrasting the lowly status of Christ's body (the Church) on earth with the lofty status it will have when the Lord returns for her?

As indicated in the foregoing, there is a strong presumption (from our examination of the other three occurrences of "tapeinosis") that the reference is not to the individual bodies of Christians, but to the mystical *body* of Christ. However, the context must decide this question. This being true, the question remains one of interpretation. In all matters of interpretation, there is room for different opinions. Our own understanding, submitted with due regard for the views of others who may think differently, is that the context supports the viewpoint which interprets the passage as having reference to the mystical body of Christ, not to the individual bodies of its members.

St. Paul's general line of argument seems clear: In the company of professing Christ-followers there are two main groups—the true and the false. They are easily distinguished, not by slight differences of viewpoint on some "hard to be understood" points of doctrine on which even inspired Apostles differed (2 Pet. 3:16), but by the general tenor of their lives. The false are described as of earthly mind—who live as enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18, 19). The true are not to be content with merely adding to their store of knowledge, but, as Moffatt's choice translation puts it, "We must let our steps be guided by such truth as we have attained" (Phil. 3:16). This must be true both of the mature and the immature (Phil. 3:15). It is mandatory in the Christian experience that each fresh item of truth understood be promptly put into practice. At once it is to have its place in "guiding the steps." This principle was so elementary with Paul that he could, in all humility, consistently urge upon the brethren not merely that they pay attention to his teaching, but that they copy him -- and even were to take note of those who lived by the example he set (Phil. 3:17, 18, *Moffatt*).

Then comes the great contrast, which we may well believe was ever present to his mind—the state of humiliation in which the true Church, the Body of Christ, was to complete its course, and the state of glory to which she would be changed. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). "*Then,*" as Brother Russell has so well expressed it (*Reprints*, p. R1102), "the Church shall in reality be a glorious body, a body suitable in every way for the high position she shall fill as the Bride of Christ -- the companion of the Son of God for all eternity, his joint-heir in all things, and his efficient and thoroughly capable coworker in the great mission to which Jehovah hath appointed the Christ -- Head and Body -- Bridegroom and Bride. Together they shall constitute the great Prophet, Priest, and King whom Jehovah hath anointed; and their glory shall appear to all intelligent creatures in heaven and earth."

- P. L. Read

The Year Before Us

Standing at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in my sight to stand."
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

For the year before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

- *Frances R. Havergal*

Entered Into Rest

Nellie Buczak, Chicago, Ill.
Evelyn Dickens, Sussex, England
Sr. F. A. Dungate, Lincoln, England
Eva Gero, E. Liverpool, Ohio
Aquila Goucik, Charleroi Pa.
Ethel A. Hapgood, Seattle, Wash.
Annie Hargrave, Orillia, Ont.
W. Waldrop Lowry, Richmond, Va.
Albert G. Messersmith, St. Paul, Minn.
Willie Meyer, Oak Ridge, Tenn.
Beatrice N. Nesbit, Asbury Park, N. J.
Theodore Oxford, Bangor, Pa.
Herbert Rutmiller, Miami, Fla.
Paul Sears, Jamestown, Cal.
Charles Smith, E. Rutherford, N. J.
August Swanson, Chico, Cal.
Edith L. Wheelock, Minneapolis, Minn.