

BIBLE STUDIES

A magazine for the exploration and understanding
of the Word of God (Acts 17. 11)

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

(Chapters 1-11)

NOTES ON THE PSALMS

VOLUME 37

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ORIGINS IN GENESIS (Genesis Chapters 1 to 11)

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BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures dally, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11)

VOLUME 37

JANUARY, 1969

EDITORIAL

Two desires from Paul's prayers for the Colossians may worthily arise from our hearts as we approach our year's study: "That ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (1. 9) and "That they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (2. 2, 3).

To search out knowledge appeals to the enquiring mind. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the glory of kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25. 2). What man could never have searched out by natural investigation has been revealed by God through the inspired Word, and the salient theme of this written Word is Christ. Although primarily a revelation of spiritual truth it does include the divine record of the material creation, including the way in which man and woman originated. The testimony of the Lord Jesus to the truth of the written Word in Genesis must govern our year's study. He, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, is essentially the Truth (John 14. 6). It is inconceivable that He would have given a false impression by confirming the literality of the creation account or of the Flood if these were not historic fact. We must therefore avoid any interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis which involves regarding literal people or events as merely allegorical. There are aspects of our study which may justify some liberty of interpretation, but for believers in the verbal inspiration of Scripture there are well defined limits to this liberty.

Our safeguard will be to rest upon the testimony of the Lord Jesus to the truth of Genesis, and to distinguish clearly between the proved conclusions of scientific investigation and "scientific" theories which have never been established. Some may find difficulty in being fully assured in their own mind when alternatives seem feasible in attempts to reconcile statements of divine revelation and the findings of true science. To recognize that there are alternative possible solutions to certain problems is often helpful. For in some things we may rest upon the word of God without disturbance to our faith, leaving as unsolved problems matters on which we have insufficient data to reach an assured conclusion.

G. P. Jr.

The Self-revelation of God

The knowledge of God is the most worthy and satisfying pursuit open to human investigation. But it is important to notice that what may be known of God is restricted to what He has chosen to reveal about Himself. The Bible is not, as some represent it to be, an account of human

strivings after God, reflecting man's struggle for knowledge and his genius for discovering the unknown. The nature of Scripture is misunderstood unless it be recognized that it is the disclosure of a self-revealing God. This is what it claims to be. It follows, then, that man's knowledge of God is entirely dependent on divine revelation.

The opening words of Scripture, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", are the starting-point of God's self-disclosure. No attempt is made to prove His existence. That there is one God who is the sole cause of creation is stated in clear and direct terms. Belief in this assertion is the first step along the road to the discovery of God. Without faith, we remain in darkness and ignorance, "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Hebrews 11. 6).

There is, of course, confirming evidence outside Scripture of the existence of God. The law of causation and the argument from design are frequently cited as harmonizing with the revelation of God in Scripture. This kind of evidence is termed by theologians *Natural Religion* (that is, what man is able to discover by his natural senses). The witness given to God's power and divinity by the things that are made is referred to in Romans 1. 19, 20. But God has graciously given much more than this. The revelation of Himself in Scripture transcends everything that can be learned from His creative acts. In his address to the philosophers on Mars hill Paul gives a masterly summary of the witness to God by creation and Scripture (Acts 17. 22-31). This statement should be carefully studied. In a few words it gives the fullest treatment of the subject in Scripture.

Genesis has been called the seed-plot of the Bible because many leading doctrines of Scripture are found there, if sometimes only in germ-form. The opening statement is a profound declaration, basic and fundamental to the whole scheme of the self-revelation of God. Upon it the entire structure of Scripture rests. It is constantly reiterated; and when the apostle John saw in vision the throne of God he records that four and twenty elders surrounding the throne cast their crowns before God with an ascription of praise which confirms and amplifies the words of Genesis 1. 1:

"Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power: for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created" (Revelation 4. 11).

We observe that the revelation of God in Scripture is progressive (Hebrews 1. 1). There is a gradual and orderly unfolding until the climax and fulness is reached when God sent His Only-begotten Son into the world. The book of Genesis contains not only the record of creation but also the history of God's early dealings with men. God does not change (Malachi 3. 6), His wisdom being complete does not mature, therefore His character is invariable (James 1. 17). This is the reason Scripture records so much of God's past dealings with men so that by these we may learn His ways. We must firmly reject the idea, frequently asserted, that the God of the Old Testament is different from the God of the New Testament. If the revelation of God in Scripture is progressive, it is not therefore defective at any point. The stream deepens and expands, but it ever flows from the same source. We may therefore

launch out on its waters with the confidence that it will carry us forward to a greater knowledge of God.

Within the limits of this short paper we can merely indicate some of the basic facts revealed in Scripture regarding the Being and Nature of God. "There is one God", and "God is one" (1 Timothy 2. 5; see also Galatians 3. 20; 1 Corinthians 8. 4). This belief is common to those with a Christian background but there are millions who believe that there is a multiplicity of gods. Such a belief is called Polytheism. The God revealed in Scripture is the *only* God (John 17. 3). Underlying many of the religions of the East and some of their Western equivalents is the doctrine that God is everything, and everything is God. This is called Pantheism. It denies the personality of God and reduces Him to a mere force or influence. But Scripture reveals not only that there is one God, but that He is the *living* God (Jeremiah 10. 10; Joshua 3. 10). He is a living, personal Being, not an abstract force or influence. There is a great gulf between Pantheism and the living God revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures.

God is also eternal and self-existent (Isaiah 40. 28; Psalm 90. 2). And He is the cause and the goal of all material and spiritual existence (Colossians 1. 12-20). There is a heresy known as Deism. Deists do not accept Scripture as divine revelation. They believe that there is a God who created the universe, but that having created it He no longer exercises control over it. The God revealed in Scripture is the sovereign Lord and Judge of the universe. "He is not far from each one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17. 27, 28). He upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1. 3), and "in Him all things consist" (or hold together) (Colossians 1. 17).

As Scripture proceeds to unveil the mystery of God it discloses that there are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father is God (Philippians 2. 11), the Son is God (Hebrews 1. 8), the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5. 3. 4). Because the mode of existence of the Divine Being is unique the utmost reserve is necessary when attempting to illustrate this great mystery. Some have suggested that the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit are used to describe three forms in which one and the same Person is manifested, as, in human affairs, one and the same person may be the father of a family, the commander of an army and the sovereign of a kingdom. Such a conception is contrary to the revelation of God in Scripture. The Father is described as *sending* the Son (1 John 4. 10), and the Father and the Son as *sending* the Spirit (John 14. 26 and 16. 7). At the river Jordan when Christ was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven, and the Spirit of God descended in bodily form as a dove upon the Son (Matthew 3. 13-17). Such examples of the activities of the Persons in the Godhead are plainly inconsistent with the idea of the Trinity being three manifestations of one Person. "The Trinity in Unity, being the mode of existence of the Eternal, is a thing essentially unique, and is therefore lifted far above the possibility of complete comparison or illustration. The student and teacher will do wisely therefore to deal very sparingly with such treatment of the doctrine, and will always guard what he does in this direction with a remembrance of the unique nature of the subject** (Moule).

The doctrine of the Trinity is clearly discernible in the Old Testament Scriptures but is fully demonstrated in the New Testament. The command of the risen Christ, "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28. 19), demands the acceptance of this doctrine by all who submit themselves for baptism as His disciples. His use of the singular *name* is significant. The full revelation of the triune God to men could only be accomplished through the incarnation of the Son and the sending forth of the Spirit.

The relationship of the Persons in the Godhead is eternal. There are some who profess to accept the doctrine of the Trinity and of the deity and eternity of the Persons in the Godhead, but who affirm that our Lord's divine Sonship is a development which took place in time, either at His incarnation or at His resurrection, and that it is therefore not original and eternal. Many passages of Scripture (e. g., Hebrews 1, 2; Colossians 1. 15, 16) clearly indicate that the relationship antedated creation. Further, the Fatherhood in the Godhead is the primary pattern from which the concept of every fatherhood is derived. To say that the divine Fatherhood commenced at some point in time is clearly inconsistent with such a passage as Ephesians 3. 15. Because it is beyond human comprehension it is impossible to define all that is involved in the relationship of Father and Son in the Godhead, but the ineffable glory of the Son of God is bound up with it. We believe that the teaching of Scripture on this important matter demands acceptance of the doctrine of the *eternal* Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ as an article of faith.

If God has given an infallible revelation of Himself in Scripture, it follows that the knowledge of God can be attained only by careful attention to what is written. In this, as in all other studies the activities of the mind are called into play. In the study of Scripture we must always be careful not to go beyond what is written. Because we tend to form concepts from our own imagination, we need to bring our minds back continually to reflect on what is written in Scripture. Warfield expresses well the wisdom and love of God in giving us a *written* revelation: "Thanks to Him who has so loved us as to give us so pure a record of His will, God-given in all its parts even though cast in the forms of human speech, infallible in all its statements, divine even to its smallest particle... Look at those who have lost the knowledge of this infallible guide; see them evincing man's most pressing need by inventing for themselves an infallible church, or even an infallible Pope. Revelation is but half revelation unless it be infallibly communicated, it is but half communicated unless it be infallibly recorded. The heathen in their blindness are our witnesses of what becomes of an unrecorded revelation. Let us bless God, then, for His inspired word!"

But if diligent application to what is written is indispensable, this alone is not the key to the hidden treasures of God's word. Many study Scripture but remain unenlightened by the Spirit of God. Such were the Pharisees to whom our Lord said:

"Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life... and ye will not come to Me" (John 5. 39, 40).

In **Scripture God** is revealed yet hidden. Our Lord's further words confirm **this** paradox:

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes" (Matthew 11. 25).

The essentials to progress in the discovery of God, then, are earnest enquiry and diligent application to the Holy Scriptures, a child-like mind, unquestioning faith, and the enlightenment of the Spirit of God. **May** our studies help **us** to this end! **T. M. H.**

Science and the Bible Truth of Creation

The fact of creation stands majestically at the threshold of the written revelation of God in the Scriptures. The matter is not argued or discussed. It is simply stated that "in the beginning God created..." Thereafter the Holy Spirit provides us with the form and length of narrative which divine wisdom has decreed. The ever-changing state of human knowledge down through the ages was fully known to the Author and the spiritual purpose of the creation account was fundamental in its inspiration.

The accomplished work of creation also stands in the fore-front of man's responsibility to God. This is clear in Romans 1. 20: "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity". Albert Einstein, of world renown as physicist and mathematician, caught something of the wonder of natural phenomena in these words, "The scientist's religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection". But to far greater heights does the Psalmist rise through the Spirit, "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory upon the heavens", (Psalm 8. 1). The Person and greatness of God are acknowledged, and we draw near to the worship of the Creator.

Now Christians approach a discussion of 'Science and the Bible truth of Creation' as men and women who have known spiritual experience; who have conviction about revealed divine truth, although we may frankly profess difficulties in our comprehension of some of God's revelation. Could it be otherwise in the very nature of the subject? However, we know God's principles about sin, judgement, redemption the eternal life; and we know this through the divine Word, both written and Incarnate.

Scientists, like all men, are fallen men. Their thought processes are subject to the distortions of a sinful nature. Thus the pure, impersonal search for truth, which is the truly scientific approach, is tarnished in practice. An arresting example of this is in Sir Arthur Keith's statement on evolution: "We believe it because the only alternative is special creation, which is unthinkable". He started from a clear rejection of revealed Bible truth.

If the Christian is criticised as not being completely **objective or unbiassed**, no more so is the scientist. This need not, however, preclude an honest evaluation of fact; a readiness to face truly established knowledge, while at the same time ruthlessly unmasking the "science falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6. 20 A. V.).

This brings us to a definition of terms. **Let us say that by science** we simply mean "knowledge"—thus most dictionaries begin, **before** proceeding to extensions of the meaning of the word. Beyond the simplest and purest meaning of 'science' lies the popular understanding of it as the study and pursuit of various branches of knowledge about natural phenomena. By "creation" we mean the bringing into being of things of substance, including man, by a special act of God.

The critical question presents: "Is there any conflict between the facts of science, truly so called, and the scriptural assertion of creation as the divine method of bringing the universe into being?" In the popular mind such a conflict is often assumed, and this has undoubtedly been fostered by many workers in the scientific world. It has been claimed that the conclusions to be drawn from certain areas of scientific study have discredited the whole concept of creation. We must now apply ourselves briefly to this alleged conflict. First, let it be said clearly that, far from scientists as a group being contemptuous of things spiritual, ample testimony has often been given to the contrary. A former esteemed editor of this magazine, himself a man of science of the highest standing, wrote of his fellows, "In all my experience, I have never found one who deliberately opposed the Bible as the Word of God" (Dr. A. T. Doodson). Nevertheless, the theories and conclusions arrived at in some branches of science, and readily embraced by the popular mind, have barred the way to a living faith for many, and stumbled many more in their Christian lives.

Let us next consider how limited, at the best, is human knowledge, when set against the infinity of divine comprehension. Over 300 years ago, Wm. Harvey, a bright star in the constellation: of medical scientists, said, "The very greatest number of things of which we know, is only equal to the very smallest fraction of the things of which we are ignorant". It was to a great man of God that the divine rebuke came: — "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding... Hast thou comprehended the breadth of the earth? Declare, if thou knowest it all" (Job 38. 4, 18). Beside this inescapable truth is the sobering fact that the most closely cherished scientific theory of yesterday may well be found abandoned on today's scrap-heap of ideas. The impermanence of some of the conclusions drawn even from truly scientific data requires to be carefully recognized. Again, the distinction between data obtained through careful observation and recording, and the theories derived therefrom, is crucial. Where a theory relies on calculation the questions arise, "Is the basis of the calculation sound?", or "Are we building one theory on another"? This may well be shown to apply to certain approaches to the age of the earth's substance, for example, the use of calculations based on radioactivity. It may be quite false to assume that "laws" discerned in nature today, have always applied. To the believer in the Bible, divine intervention in natural phenomena is no unfamiliar thing.

The present writer believes that **it is chiefly in the field of the sciences of living things (and areas of other sciences which impinge on biology such as geology and palaeontology)** that the challenge to the Bible truth of creation is most active today. In what might be generally described as the mathematical, exact sciences, for example physics, chemistry, astronomy, the challenge to the idea of creation is not so strident. Many experts in these fields definitely assert creation. A towering historical figure, and a Christian, said, "Science positively demands creation" (Lord Kelvin). This challenge in the world of biology arises in association with what is generally called the theory of evolution; not, incidentally, a concept entirely exclusive to living things, but one which in this particular area, comes into conflict with the scriptural truth of creation. Although the term has carried many and varied definitions, we are regarding evolution as the belief that complex organisms, including man, have developed over vast spaces of time from primitive forms, by a multitude of changes, controlled by such factors as 'natural selection'. Many of its ablest protagonists have indicated quite emphatically that the theory is, in its very nature, opposed to Biblical revelation about the creation of man. Thus we have Huxley, "The doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation. Evolution consistently applied makes it impossible to believe the Bible". In the short compass of this article it is only possible to make two points plain on this subject. The first is the fact that many men of the highest standing and the deepest instruction in the sciences concerned have, after years of study, reached the matured opinion that the concept of evolution, as defined above, merits only complete rejection. Quotations could be multiplied to support this, and there is an extensive literature which leads to such a conclusion. Secondly, following on the above, it must be recognized that many of the pillars of the evolutionary theory in biology and geology, are the subject of wide controversy within these sciences. Many authorities with no interest in supporting a Christian point of view, have expressed their lack of confidence in them. Amongst such matters are teachings on the significance of fossil remains; on an imagined re-capitulation of evolution in the development before birth of the human frame; on the significance of certain organs of the human body with ill-defined or undiscovered functions, for example the appendix (the so-called vestigial organs). Over a number of years of consideration of the evolutionary case based on the above two arguments directly concerning the human body, the present writer has been satisfied that no evolutionary significance can be attached without violation of all reasonable deduction. It produces a rather striking result to lay alongside one another the following two quotations. Sir Arthur Keith, a strong supporter of evolution, said, "Evolution is unproved, and unprovable". And Sir Cecil Wakeley, past President of the Royal College of Surgeons, "There is no evidence, scientific or otherwise, to support the theory of evolution. Evolution is a man-made theory. Creation came by the hand of Almighty God".

To be true to God's revelation in the Bible, the special creation of man, with his unique spiritual constitution in God's own likeness, cannot for a moment be challenged. To do so is to destroy the entire fabric of scriptural teaching and meaning about divine-human relationships; and involves at the same time nothing less than a discrediting of the Person and words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although there are

believing scientists who find themselves able. to envisage some kind of evolutionary process in the bringing into being of living things, even they repudiate the unwarranted assumption of evolutionists in general, that man is no more than a further stage of evolutionary development. For the Christian, it is clearly impossible to contemplate any conflict between the Word and the works of God. Men have signally failed to establish any such conflict, and have, in the process, revealed the more clearly the sinister underlying conflict between a subtle adversary and the Spirit of God speaking through His Word. Consider for a moment the effect of the truth of the resurrection of Christ on human ideas which reject divine intervention or concern in human affairs. Consider the impact of the whole historical unfolding of the birth, life, death, as well as the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And then look at the Bible truth of creation, and we find at the centre of it "the Word... and without Him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1. 3). We begin to revel in the richness of the scriptural unveiling of the Son... "for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominion or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Colossians 1. 16). So stands the calmly majestic claim of Scripture; and here rests our assurance of eternal glory when all the mists of human wisdom have been rolled away. For let us make no mistake about the application of the indictment of Romans chapter one to men of our day, as then; to men who superimpose a purely human wisdom on divine revelation, and ultimately worship and serve "the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" (Romans 1. 25). Let such ponder humbly the answer of God to Job out of the whirlwind in Job 38, and respond in becoming terms: "Behold, I am of small account... " (Job 40. 3-5). To this unfolding of the Son of God as Creator, we must add His personal testimony to the truth of the creation narrative as contained in Old Testament Scripture. It was the same Lord of creation who fed 5, 000 from a boy's lunch-pack, and called Lazarus out of his tomb, who set His seal to "Moses and the prophets" (Luke 24. 27); and demonstrated complete approval of Moses' writings (John 5. 45-46).

And so as we proceed in coming months to the study of the creation and early history of man as recorded in Genesis; and as specific topics of both spiritual and genuinely scientific interest are discussed, for example the days of Genesis 1, 2 and the flood narrative, let us keep a truly spiritual perspective. This is very finely indicated in yet another quotation from the late Dr. A. T. Doodson: "The early chapters of Genesis are not a textbook of the details of the process of creation, but we do hold firm by the view that we have in those early chapters, a comprehensive summary of events which are recorded for us because of their bearing upon the ways of God with men".

J. D. Terrell

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Spiritual Truths from the First Five Days of Creation—Genesis 1. 1-23

From Macduff.—However much God had revealed to us concerning creation we should still have to trust in His word, for it is at once plain

that we are faced with things which are beyond us to understand completely (Hebrews 11. 3). We believe sin had marred creation and that the second verse describes a disaster. Isaiah 45. 18 shows that God "created it not a waste, He formed it to be inhabited", but verse 7 and Psalm 104. 20 indicate that God Himself made darkness, and we think that this is part of God's judgement on that earlier creation. He covered it in water and shrouded it in darkness.

However the condition of verse 2 came about, the record of the first five days' work in Genesis 1 shows God making the earth habitable for man. Adam would be God's chief work and the conditions had to be prepared. The picture of God the Spirit brooding upon the face of the waters is solemn, and suggestive of God contemplating the past lost creation. "Let there be light" brought day, and now God was working to create conditions suitable for life to flourish. The daily cycle of night and day is a reminder that God is light and that He has controlled the darkness. It is not till the New Earth that we shall have no darkness at all. This carries its own warning in spiritual things, "Ye are of the light".

Psalm 104 is a beautiful picture of the third day when order and new life appear. Order and beauty are associated with God's works. The water that had a part in the wasteness of verse 2 had bounds set to it, and plant life began to flourish, but the subsequent flood shows that the presence of seas and water is a reminder of sin and purging. In the New Earth there will be no sea. It is significant that there is in the solar system one natural source of light, the sun; all others reflect the sun's rays. The divine pattern is set for the "true Light, which lighteth every man coming into the world" (John 1. 9), and it is our business to reflect His light in the darkness of our time. Whatever our place or gift, to reflect Him is our duty. We noted that God dealt with the simplest forms of animal life on one day, and there is thus set a clear difference between them and the higher forms. We see no reason to make this a long day so that some evolutionary process might give us all the varieties; God achieved it all at once. *A. B. R.*

From Lagos. —The first sentence in the first book of the Bible introduces us to the Creator (Genesis 1. 1). Christ is the Creator. All things were made by Him (John 1. 1-3). The manifold wisdom of the triune God was made manifest in creation (Psalm 104. 24) through Him who framed the worlds, and is upholding all things by the word of His power (Colossians 1. 16; Hebrews 1. 3, 11. 3). He created not the earth in vain (Isaiah 45. 18), but to be inhabited. We attribute to Satan the waste and void of the earth for a time (Genesis 1. 2). "An enemy hath done this" (Matthew 13. 28).

At His majestic word, "Let there be light" there was light. It was good. God divided light from darkness (verses 3-4), thus laying down for us for the first time the divine principle of separation. "What communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6. 14). Let your light so shine. Alas that many lights of the world today are being covered with the bushels of man's precepts. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (Matthew 5. 15, 18; 2 Corinthians 6. 17).

Five times in the story of the first five days of creation we read, "God saw that it was good" (verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21), showing how perfectly the Creator finished everything in creation, and as though to confirm these testimonies, we read later, "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good... and the heaven and the earth were finished" (Genesis 1. 31, 2. 1). Let us see creation as the showroom of the perfect Workman. Referring to another of His works, we read, "Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished... said, I thirst", and almost immediately following, "It is finished".

M. Imoukhuede, S. Brown

(We welcome this paper from Lagos. Eds.)

From Glasgow (Parkhead). —"In the beginning". When was the beginning? Would not the words be better rendered "In beginning", because the inclusion of the definite article seems to refer to a specific period in time? [It is not easy for us to express time as we understand it in relation to the order of things which obtained in the past eternity. But it is suggested by such expressions as "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1. 4) that the beginning of the creation of the world was a definable point in God's purposes and therefore "in the beginning" may be regarded as the point at which God began this creative work. *G. P. Jr.*] "In the beginning" {Proverbs 8. 22-31; Job 38. 4-12} "God (*Elohim*) created the heaven and the earth". The Lord Jesus, working with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, played a very prominent part in creation. "Without Him was not anything made that hath been made".

We understand that between the first two verses of Genesis there is a vast gap in time. The events recorded in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 took place between the first and second creations. The earth was waste and void but was not created so (Isaiah 45. 18). The Lord said, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10. 18), and the great destroyer's presence on earth resulted in its chaotic state before the re-creation of verse 2. The re-creation of the earth is a comparatively recent event compared with the first creation. The actual number of years can be reckoned from the genealogies.

"The Spirit of God moved upon (was brooding upon, *R. V. M.*) the face of the waters". Waters, in the book of Revelation, are indicative of tribes and tongues and peoples and nations. The Holy Spirit is in the world to convict men of sin, righteousness and judgement. The works of God, whether in creation or redemption, must begin by the operation of the Spirit of God.

"God said, Let there be light: and there was light. " Paul gives a free rendering of Genesis 1. 3 in 2 Corinthians 4. 6, "Light shall shine out of darkness. " It is not light shining into darkness, but out of it, divinely produced by the word of God. The light of creation is not greater than the light of revelation which can enable a soul to pass from darkness to light in a moment of time to become a new creation in Christ Jesus.

The natural sun and the "Sun of Righteousness" are both referred to as "the faithful witness" (Psalm 89. 37; Revelation 3. 14). Believers are likened unto lights (luminaries) in the world amidst the darkness and squalor of a crooked and perverse generation (Philippians 2. 15).

J. Peddie

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Eighteen other papers were **received**—**Aberkenfig and Barry**, Atherton and Leigh, Belfast, Birmingham, Blackburn, Denmark Hill, **Derby**, Edinburgh, Glasgow (**Partick**), Greenock, Halifax, Kilmarnock, Liverpool, Methil, Portslade, Sydney, **Teesside and Toronto**.

Further points of interest from these papers are summarized below: —

(1) Most contributors have expressed **agreement** with the view that there was **an undefined** period of time between the declaration of Genesis **1. 1** and the "re-creation" described from verse three onwards. The only alternative suggested by one **paper was that verse three might be regarded as a stage** in the process of creation, but this **is difficult to reconcile with such statements as "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast"**.

It was also generally **agreed** that the ruin of the original creation was associated with the rebellion of **Satan against God**.

(2) The **greatness** of God as Creator has **been** fittingly emphasized—"the sole Originator of all things temporal, **and** the sole Source and Originator of all things spiritual". The **significance** of the plural noun '**Elohim**' **being** used with the **singular** verb 'created' (**1. 1**) is referred to in the light of **New Testament** revelation.

(3) Several have touched on the occurrence of the Hebrew word **BAR A (create)** in verses **1, 21 and 27** as distinguished from the words **ASAH (made) and YATSAR (formed)**. As illustrated in relation to the heavenly bodies (verses **14-19**) attention is **drawn** to Psalm **19. 4**: "In them hath He **set a tabernacle** for the sun". The word '**set**' is a translation of the Hebrew word **SIM** which has a variety of **meanings** but does not imply creation; **again** the moon and the **stars are said** to have **been "ordained"** (Psalm **8. 3**). These distinctions **merit** further thought.

(4) The **Spirit's** work in verse **2** has interested **several**: "Over the **scene of darkness** and desolation which is presented in **verse 2** the Spirit of God brooded (R. V. M.). Newberry gives 'fluttering' as a marginal reading, **and refers** to the same word **used** in Deuteronomy 32. 11. As the Spirit was **present** in this **great** work of the **six** days, so was *He* also in the forming of the Israel nation. There was a fluttering or stirring **up** in Israel before God called His people out of Egypt. We also saw a comparison with the descent of the Spirit **at Pentecost**".

(5) Some papers **related** the work of the third day to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: "**Again** on the third **day Jesus was raised** from the dead. Those who **live** in Christ **are part** of a new creation, and each is **expected to bear** fruit for its adorning and extension. Others **won** for Christ will **be after** the **same kind** as ourselves, that is, **born of the Spirit**".

(6) Of the fourth day one **paper suggested**: "The **sun was** for the day, the moon and the **stars** for the night. We **await** the day when the **Sun of Righteousness will arise, and** meanwhile His light should **be reflected** by ourselves. We should **be seen** as luminaries **in the world**".

(7) The fruitfulness of **verses 11 and 22** was emphasized by several as God's **desire for us** in a spiritual sense: "The **believer is raised** to walk in newness of life, **and that should be manifested** in **fruitbearing**" (Romans **7. 4**; Galatians **5. 22-23**; Colossians **1. 6**).

(8) Suggestions were also put forward to trace a sequence of spiritual development in parallel with the phases of creation: two of these are summarized below:—

(a) Original darkness—man's natural state: Spirit's brooding—Holy Spirit's convicting work; illumination (verses 3-5)—understanding of mind; preparation of environment and food (verses 6-13)—provision of Scriptures to meet spiritual need; preparation of heavenly time-pieces (verses 14-19)—related to pattern of spiritual life; creation of life (verses 20-25)—spiritual life and fruitfulness.

(b) First day—new birth through light of God's word; second day—possibly baptism and being raised to walk in newness of life; third day—separation of diverse elements and manifestly abundant life; fourth day—illustrative of testimony; fifth day—illustrative of spiritual increase.

Interesting as these exercises are, the fact that such widely different interpretations may be proposed shows the importance of a very tentative approach on these lines.

With regard to item (1) above, we should bear in mind that there are sincere believers in verbal inspiration who do not accept the theory proposed by most contributors, namely the "gap theory". Rejection of it does not necessarily mean that the days of creation have to be expanded into vast ages. Special articles to be published in later months will point to other possibilities. *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Was the sun created "in the beginning" (verse 1) or on the first or the fourth day? (Macduff).

Those who favour an interpretation indicating an indefinite period between verses one and two would usually place the creation of the sun within the context of verse 1, and regard verses three and sixteen as steps in the process by which the sun's light was regulated in relation to the earth.

2. What was the source of light prior to verse 14? In the new heaven and the new earth the Lamb will be the light. Was this the case before the sun was put in the heavens? (Portslade).

See answer to Question 1. It would be difficult to substantiate the suggestion that the light of the Lamb is referred to in verse 3. The command, "Let there be light" and the division of light from darkness would be difficult to reconcile with this idea.

3. Can it be said that in its role as ruler of the night the moon typifies evil? (Atherton and Leigh).

Scripture nowhere suggests this. Rather the day of the new moon was important in connexion with the services of the Temple (1 Chronicles 23. 31) and a symbol of divine faithfulness (Psalm 89. 37). The moon illuminates the darkness of the night. The work of the moon in reflecting the sun's light typifies the witness-bearing of saints. We are not sources of light. We should reflect God's light.

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BIBLE STUDIES

"A Magazine for the exploration and understanding of the Word of God
(Acts 17. 11). "

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EDITORIAL

Artists in all ages have used their skill to provide graphic representations of God, but all such efforts must be failures, whether intended to help the understanding or to provide a visual object of worship. The nature of God may be conveyed to our minds by the written or spoken word alone, for God is Spirit (John 4. 24 R. V. M.) and no man has seen Him (John 1. 18). Old Testament appearances of God to men such as Abraham, Moses and Gideon were but partial and veiled but in New Testament times the Son of God, who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1. 15), was manifested in the flesh in order to reveal God to men.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5. 8) may seem to contradict what has already been put forward, but Philip was given the solution to the difficulty when he questioned the Lord about His assertion that knowing Him was equivalent to knowing the Father. Jesus said in reply, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Shew us the Father?" (John 14. 7-9). This has no reference to outward appearance; the statement that Christ Jesus is in the form of God (Philippians 2. 6) has to do with His essential nature, for He is the very image of God's substance (Hebrews 1. 3).

Such considerations as these lead us to the conclusion that when God made man in His image and after His likeness, notwithstanding that part of the human body (hands, face, eyes) may be used metaphorically of some of the attributes of God, He did not give man a God-like appearance in a physical sense. So contributors have rightly indicated points of likeness such as moral character, creative capacity and ability to rule as being more consistent with the general tenor of Scripture.

L. B.

SPIRIT AND SOUL AND BODY

"The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2. 7). In these words we have the Scriptural account of how man began to be. We observe that in the constitution of man there was

- (1) that which was out of the earth,
- (2) that which was out of God,
- (3) that which man became—a living soul.

There are, therefore, three things which present themselves in relation to man's constitution,

- (1) body—that which came from the dust,
- (2) spirit—that which came from God,

(3) soul—the person in whom is the spirit and who lives in the body.

In the creation of man we reach a crisis in the creative work of God. Living creatures, cattle, creeping things, beasts had been made each after its kind. But in relation to man "God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness". Here is something distinctive. "In Our image, after Our likeness" cannot refer to anything physical because God is spirit. It seems rather to imply that man, superior to the other living creatures on the earth, was intended to be God's overlord on the earth, God's representative, possessing not only God-consciousness and self-consciousness but enjoying also sovereignty and dominion over the living things in the sea, in the air and on the earth.

In the Scriptures we find the words "spirit" and "soul" and "body" used with a variety of significations. And it will be observed that in order to secure a particular emphasis each of these words has been used as representing the person. Peter referring to certain persons calls them "the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3. 19). In the next verse he writes of those who were saved at the time when God sent the judgement of the Flood and he says, "Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water". Paul when dealing with the sin of fornication writes, "Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body?" (1 Corinthians 6. 16).

Though the words may be used with the variety of signification to which we have referred and also each be used to represent a person, there is in Scripture a clear indication that man consists of spirit and soul and body, and this truth was in the mind of Paul when he wrote, "And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5. 23).

When we consider the great mystery of the incarnation of God the Son we find outstanding proof of the tripartite constitution of man. He partook of blood and flesh so that He might die to fulfil great purposes of the divine counsels. As we think of the Cross we recall that when the work undertaken by Christ was accomplished He said, "It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit" (John 19. 30). He was dead. His spirit He had commended into the hands of His Father. His body was carried by Joseph and Nicodemus and placed in the tomb. He Himself went to Sheol (Gk., Hades). When preaching on the day of Pentecost Peter quoted concerning Christ from Psalm 16, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2. 27). It is clear that Christ in becoming Man possessed spirit and soul and body. It is also clear that in particular His soul is identified with Himself, the One who having given up His spirit and having vacated His body went down into Sheol.

Long before Christ came into the world by incarnation Job, a man who not only enjoyed remarkable powers of observation but who also received profound illumination through divine revelation, said, "Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job 14. 10). Here Job seeks to probe the great mystery of death and its consequences. He knew something of what happened to the body—it wasted away. He had the knowledge that man gave up the spirit. On another occasion Job said, "For my life is yet whole in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27. 3). But Job's question related to the man who had been in the body and in whom was the

spirit. **Where was he?** Where **did he go at death?** The analysis which **Job's** words involve seems to indicate that he regarded man as body and spirit and soul.

With Job's words in mind we can go back to examine the record of the death of Abraham. We read, "Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah" (Genesis 25. 8, 9). Three facts emerge here. (1) Abraham gave up the ghost. Job said, "Man giveth up the ghost"; (2) Abraham's sons buried him, and in the cave the body went to corruption. Job said, "and wasteth away"; (3) Abraham was gathered to his people. "Where is he?" was asked by Job. In Abraham's case he was gathered to his people. What happened to Abraham in the great dissolution which results from death happened to many others about whom we read in the Scriptures.

Accepting that man is body and soul and spirit we may consider in particular some things that are said about each. The body of man, as we have seen, came originally from the earth. To this Paul refers when he says, "The first man is of the earth, earthy". David said, "Wonderful are Thy works". This truth is specially demonstrated in the body of man, and David wrote also, "I will give thanks unto Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139. 14). Man's body in its anatomical relationships and in its physiological functions has drawn admiration from all who have studied it. Brilliant minds have made specialized examination of the various parts and organs of the body, and as we think of the vast accumulation of knowledge which the aggregate of this specialized investigation must provide we feel something of the force of David's words "I am fearfully and wonderfully made".

When sin entered through Adam's transgression the resultant fall of man brought serious consequences which affected the whole being of man. Into his body came the effects of sin. Disease and death were among these effects. And sin laid hold upon the body to use it as its instrument for sinful passions and activities. Paul wrote, "When we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death" (Romans 7. 5). In the experience of regeneration the body of the believing sinner is indwelt by the Spirit of God, and by reason of this indwelling the believer's body is temple of the *Holy Spirit*. Further, the believer is assured that his body which belonged to Christ by reason of Creatorship now belongs to Christ by right of purchase. "Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (1 Corinthians 6. 19, 20). Tremendous possibilities now unfold. The believer may glorify God in his body. By the Spirit's power he can respond to the exhortation, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof" (Romans 6. 12). Instead he may obey the injunction, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12. 1).

When Christ returns for His Church, the body of the believer will undergo amazing radical changes, whether through the resurrection

triumph in the raising of **the dead** and their **being** clothed upon "with our habitation which **is** from heaven", or through the change **by** which "this mortal **must put on** immortality". The **great** change will involve that the Saviour from heaven will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that **it may be** conformed to the body of His glory" (Philippians 3. 21). "**As** we have borne the **image** of the earthy (one), we shall also **bear** the **image** of the heavenly (One)" (1 Corinthians 15. 49).

Of **man's** spirit someone has **said**, "Thus the 'spirit' **is** that **part** of your personality which, **as** the higher consciousness, is directed toward the Divine **and** super-sensual". Paul's words **give us** help **in** this **matter**, "Who among **men** knoweth the things of **a man**, **save** the spirit of the **man**, which **is** in him?" (1 Corinthians 2. 11). It is therefore clear that with the **spirit** of **man** is associated that complete **inner** knowledge which **penetrates** the complex being of **man in** his motives, desires, purposes **and** will. We believe that the spirit of **man**, like the body of **man**, **suffered** the **effects** of the Fall. In regeneration the **Spirit** of God indwells the body **and** **makes** vital contact with the **spirit** of the believer. "The **Spirit** Himself beareth witness with our **spirit**, that **we are** children of God" (Romans 8. 16). Thus **is** established **true** spiritual fellowship, the communion of the Spirit, which **makes** possible the higher knowledge of God our Father. There **can be** no doubt that **in** the **spirit** there **is** God-consciousness which **can direct** the body **in** "reasonable service".

It has **been** said that the soul **attains** merely to self-consciousness. Such a **statement** would have to **be** examined **against** the **answer cited** by the lawyer from Deuteronomy 6. 5, **and** approved by Christ, "Thou shalt love **the** Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul... " (Luke 10. 27). The soul **can** love **and** **can direct** its love to the Lord. Paul exhorted, "Whatsoever **ye** do, work heartily, **as** unto the Lord... " (Colossians 3. 23). Note that the word "heartily" **is** really "from the soul" (see R. V. Margin). It **may be true** that the soul reaches out through the body, through **its** **appetites** and lusts, to **find** sensual satisfaction, **but as in** regeneration the body and the **spirit** enjoy **spiritual** restoration so also does the soul.

We live **in a day** of **great** spiritual dangers. These **may affect any part** of our complex being. The **prayer** of Paul should **be** often on our lips. "**May** your **spirit** and soul **and** body **be preserved entire**, without blame **at** the coming of **our** Lord Jesus Christ". *J. Drain*

The Days of Genesis 1. 5 - 2. 3

B. W. Newton concludes his "Remarks on Mosaic Cosmogony" with a "Proposed Article of Faith" containing the words, "We believe and **confess** that God **did**, in six literal days, **make** the heaven **and** the earth **and** all that **in** them is". Many years later, under pressure to record my own view on the **days** of **Genesis**, I too wrote, "I **believe** that they (the 7 days) **are directly** related to other **seven days** of Scripture, **are not** therefore periods of **time of varying** and almost **infinite** duration in some cases, **but well defined** as to **evening** and morning and therefore comparable with, **if not actually**, solar days". To this assertion Dr. Doodson wisely retorted, "I would not **use** the word '**believe**' with regard to an interpretation. A brother might **say** or write, **Tor myself**

I take the simple view that the days were such as we experience, and simply **accept** that **God** acted by infinite power in His work on the six days'. Another brother may say, 'I do not desire to be dogmatic about an interpretation', another, that he thinks that some of the days were **longer** than others. **So** long as there is no doubt cast upon the word of **God** and we confess the inability of our minds to understand all, we shall do well". And with this premise we address ourselves to some of the views on the nature of the days of Genesis 1 and 2, the object before us being the giving of an answer concerning the hope that is in us.

1. There are those who in the light of God's revelation of man as a being created with a spiritual constitution answering in a unique way to His own, hold the view that, to Moses, God gave a representative record of His acts in creation. Under human terminology actions, feelings and members (arm, eye, mouth etc.) are attributed to God. Similarly, it is suggested, whilst the days of Genesis 1 are in the description ordinary 'human' days, they speak of divine days (compare Psalm 90. 4 and 2 Peter 3. 8); in other words they are not six literal but six representative days. Job himself (10. 4, 5) asks of God, "Hast Thou eyes of flesh?... Are Thy days as the days of man?" To which the answer presumably is 'No'. P. J. Wiseman considers that the text of the chapter can carry the interpretation that the creation story was revealed in six daily instalments to Adam, and that there is no record at all as to how long the actual process of creation took. The six days to such may therefore have purely theological significance and enshrine fundamental truths, which are indeed of paramount significance.

2. Those who believe that the creation took place in six (solar) days can claim in support not only the explicit statement of the Fourth Commandment, "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth", but can also point to other Biblical references to first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh days (Exodus 40. 2, Joshua 6. 14, Genesis 22. 4, 2 Chronicles 20. 26, Judges 19. 8, Exodus 16. 22, 12. 15) where clearly the days were solar days. Recently, Professors J. C. Whitcomb (theologian) and H. M. Morris (hydraulic engineer) supporting this view, have published a book, "The Genesis Flood", in which they point out that theories of evolution depend essentially upon continuity, the assumption that all changes have proceeded at the same average rate over countless ages. In their book they show incontrovertibly that smooth running continuity has again and again been interrupted by catastrophe and that the Flood, as Scripture indicates, was of such magnitude that unimaginable forces were set in action which utterly shattered the uniformity upon which historical geology unjustifiably is based. They therefore ascribe to the effects of the Flood alone the vast changes which geologists and evolutionists believe took place over periods of hundreds of millions of years. Whatever weight may attach to the general conclusions of Whitcomb and Morris, at least they present formidable reasons for questioning the widely proposed uniformitarian theory upon which evolutionists rely so much.

3. The difficulties of interpretation of those who hold the 'period theory' for the days of Genesis 1 and 2 appear to be greater than for those who interpret the days literally as above: — (a) Are the periods

identical or variable? (b) If **the sun** was **in** existence on **the first day** **the sun-earth** relationship as to radiation would already **be** established **and** so we **read** of 'day', 'night', 'evening' and 'morning', (c) Vegetation, 'brought forth' on **the third day** with the establishment of **an** atmosphere, through which the **sun** shone **on day** four, would proceed to grow with normal photosynthesis (growth **under** the **influence** of light **and** air). The period between **days** three **and** four **must** of **necessity** have **been** short.

4. It is **a fact** that there **are** visible **stars** so **distant** that their light **takes** **2, 000** million **years** to reach the earth. The universe therefore **appears to be** at least **as** old. **An** interpretation of the **days** of **Genesis 1** must therefore allow of such duration of **time**. In **presenting** the so-called '**Gap Theory**' as to **an** unlimited period of **time** **between** the **first verse** and the **first 'day'** of **Genesis 1** it **seems relevant** to review some **statements** in the chapter, commenting **first** that the devil has **ever** sought to **frustrate** God's purposes in His creation **causing** chaos where he could. That the earth was '**given** to the children of **men**' (Psalm **115. 16**) is endorsed by Isaiah (**45. 18**), He "formed the earth and made it; He established it. He **created** it not a waste (compare **Genesis 1. 2**), He formed it to **be** inhabited". We **understand** moreover that, whatever theories of **scientists** as to the evolution of the **species** **may be** predicated, **man's entry** into the earth was the result of a specific **act** of God, **as** also was that of woman (**Mark 10. 6**), Adam's creation **on** the sixth day calls for no **greater** lapse of **time** than, following his deep sleep, the formation of woman. **As** to the fourth **day** the inspired writings do not **speak** there of the **creation** of the sun and stars, the **first verse** having already recorded the creation of the earth and therefore of the sun **and** the other heavenly bodies. The astronomer is **prepared** to believe either **in** a process of continuous creation or that, perhaps **20, 000** million **years** ago, **part** of the **energy** of the **universe**— '**it** could have **been in** the **space** of half **an hour**'— was '**compacted**' into matter **as** we know it. This then was '**in the beginning**'.

Accepting these postulates **we may be** prepared to agree with those from Augustine **and** Chrysostom onwards who have held that the **first verse** of **Genesis**, like that in John **1. 1, 2**, stands alone and that what follows focuses our attention on God's preparations for **man** and his creation or re-creation (John **1. 13**). That **an enemy** had **intervened** causing a state of chaos (as in verse **2**) is the logical **sequence** to this view.

Of the four possibilities of interpretation (and there **are** at least **as many variants**) the **first, presented** in a considerable **treatise** (The Week of Creation, by Geo. Warrington) provides perhaps the "**easiest**" answer, though the fourth **may** enable a course to **be steered** between the literal **and** the **scientific**. Whichever is chosen a host of questions will **require** to be answered both **as to** the **meaning** of words such as **make, create, form, and as to** modern **beliefs** of the origin and development of the **animate and inanimate** creation. The believer is content, having **as** his **Master One** who is the Creator **and** Upholder of all things and who **says after** He has rolled together the heavens **as** a scroll (Isaian **34, 4**), "**Behold I make** all things new".

A. Chamings

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 1. 24-2. 7

Creation of Man and God's Rest

From Birmingham. —The creation of man on the sixth day completed God's work of creation so that it could be said, "The heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them". Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day and also the animals, concerning which God said, "Let the earth bring forth", perhaps suggesting that the animals as to their physical constitution were related to the earth in a sense similar to Adam's body being made of the dust of the ground.

God rested on the seventh day. It was suggested that this was an extended rest because God had completed creation; we do not read there was evening and morning on the seventh day. [Exodus 20. 10, 11 would point to a 24 hour day. See answer to question 6. Eds.]

We also wondered whether the sixth day was a literal 24 hour period, considering the events that took place that day. [See answer to question 11]. They appear to include the planting of a garden as distinct from creating it. During Adam's sleep Eve was created within that garden, whereas Adam was created before the garden was planted. On the same day the creation of the animals and their naming took place. We do read, however, "There was evening and there was morning the sixth day".

We suggested that Genesis 2. 4-7 is a summary of the creation and not a continuation from the previous verses, chronologically. The thought of God planting a garden and Adam dressing it and keeping it may be likened to the planting of a church of God and the responsibility of elders to dress and keep it. God's extended rest within that garden is seen when *He* communed with man in the cool of the day (Genesis 3. 8). That rest is also seen in the service and communion of the Tabernacle and later on in the Temple. God delights to take rest in the service and communion of *His* house in our day. He places men in His garden and they are privileged to serve, dress and keep, and also receive many blessings as Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the garden.

D. H. Elson

From Denmark Hill. —God made man the highest point of His creation. There is nothing greater or more noble than man on the face of the earth. Man has the divine imprint upon him and he is lord over all creation, all things were made subject to him, including woman. As we know, the entrance of sin has disturbed this order but originally all the beasts of the field and every living thing were for man's pleasure and good (Psalm 8. 5-8), woman being a special creation from the man and for the man. Man's headship over the woman was not as a result of the Fall but due to the fact that the woman came from the man and was created for man (1 Corinthians 11. 8, 9; 1 Timothy 2. 13).

Note carefully the choice of words in Genesis 1. 27, apparently implying that only man (the male) was created in the image of God. However, most thought that the woman was included. [See answer to question 4]. Only man of all God's creation answers to Him in spiritual and moral qualities, although with the entrance of sin this likeness has been marred and defaced. Only mankind of all God's creation can

consciously communicate with and respond to his Creator, God. Because the woman came from man and is part of him she also shares his spiritual nature. The happy pair were told to have children and work, control and subdue the earth with all its activities. Man was blessed with a suitable help in Eve and both were given a charge as to the creation which was entirely for their benefit and that of the Creator.

The culminating act of God's creative activities was on the sixth day and God rested from His labours on the seventh day. God did not rest in the sense of being tired from His labours but in order to appreciate and reflect on His work. Man also needs rest like God. Man has been given work to do and by so working (he fulfils his God-given role, labouring, building, tending, and subduing. In his rest on one day a week he should be wholly occupied with praising, meditating upon, **and** serving his Creator, God.

R. F. Robertson

From **Methil**. —On the sixth day God made the living creatures, cattle and creeping things. Each was made after its kind. Then when everything else had been created, God (Elohim) said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness". We judge that this means that man resembled God in character. The Hebrew word for image means resemblance, and the word likeness means model or shape. At the same time we are not overlooking the fact that God is Spirit (John 4. 24). God made man upright (Ecclesiastes 7. 29). "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes" (1 Corinthians 15. 39). This scripture refutes the contention of evolution. God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (1 Corinthians 15. 45) as distinct from the animals, which were living creatures. God gave man dominion over fish, fowl, cattle and creeping things (Psalm 8; Genesis 1. 26) and told him to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.

For food God gave to man herbs yielding seed and all manner of fruit, and for beast and bird and creeping things, "every green herb" (Psalm 104, 14, 15). It was only after the Flood that God instructed Noah to eat flesh (Genesis 9. 2-4), so that original man would appear to have been a vegetarian (Genesis 1. 29, 30). We appreciate that the fall of man changed all this. On the seventh day God rested from all His work which He had made, so that God entered into His rest because He was entirely satisfied with the previous six days' work. He Himself foreshadowed the law by resting on the seventh day. The Sabbath was a day set apart for God Himself. This is applied in Hebrews 4. 9-11 in connexion with the present-day "sabbath rest" for the people of God. Man enters into God's rest by doing His will. Refusing to observe God's rest has serious consequences, as the children of Israel found when they failed to give their land its rest. God's perfect rest is in His Son, for He was the One who did all His will down here below.

David B. Reid, N. G. Coomer

From Sydney. —How tragic it is that many people turn to evolution as the answer to man's origin! One wonders how many precious souls have been lost because of this teaching. Darwin's theory of evolution cannot be accepted without rejecting God's word. Genesis discounts any such theory, for it says everything was made, "after its kind" (1. 11, 12, 21). Man is the only creature made after God's image, or likeness.

He was also the last thing created, for Eve was *made*, not created, Genesis 2. 21, 22. [See answer to question 9]. Human life as we know it was not in existence before Genesis 1. 27. There is in everything God has created divine rule (Genesis 1. 16). Man, the greatest of God's creatures, has been given dominion over every form of animal life (1. 28). So it is with the believer, there must be rule and control. James 3. 2-4, 7-12 links the taming of the sea, beasts and creeping things, with man's need to tame his tongue.

What a peaceful scene must have been presented in the garden of Eden! Prior to the Fall, the animals, which today are ferocious, both towards other animals and man, walked and lived in peace with both! In this respect we suggest there will be a return to pre-Fall days in the Millennium, when the lamb and the wolf will lie down together (Isaiah 11. 6). God did not rest between His works, but at the completion of them. It was not the rest of a weary person, but the rest that comes with the knowledge of a completed and perfect work.

Gordon J. Munday

Impressions from other Contributors

Thirteen other papers were submitted, from Aberkenfig and Barry, Atherton and Leigh, Belfast, Blackburn, Derby, Glasgow (Parkhead), Halifax and Leeds, Hamilton (Ont.), Lagos, Macduff, Southport, Tees-side and Toronto. The following are some additional points of interest:

1. The account of the creation of man makes it clear that "the Triune God took counsel concerning the formation of man in His image. This appears to be emphasized in order to exalt the dignity of man", for no other work of creation was prefaced with the words, "Let Us".

2. Adam is a type of Christ in the following respects.

(a) He was in the image of God and was given dominion over every living thing (Colossians 1. 15).

(b) "The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15. 45).

(c) Adam was leader of the human race, Christ is head of the Church the Body.

3. When God blessed the seventh day it was with the intention that it should be "the means of producing spiritual fruit in the lives of His people" through rest and worship drawing men near to God. In both Old and New Testament times men are graciously called into God's rest which is associated with His house (Hebrews 4. 4-9). "Arise, O LORD, into Thy resting place; Thou, and the ark of Thy strength" (2 Chronicles 6. 41; Psalm 132. 8). God's rest will not be experienced in its fulness until all things are reconciled to Him (Colossians 1. 20). His rest "is the rest of satisfaction, not of inactivity, for He nurtures what He has created".

Eds.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(carried forward from January)

4. Can we liken the moon to the adversary? Although it is dead it reflect's the sun's light and so is a counterfeit of the sun. (Portslade).

See Answer to Question 3. The moon is so remarkably ordained of God in relation to the sun and earth that the idea suggested in this

question would **appear** out of **character**.

The adversary never **reflects** divine light, **and** the moon is **not** a counterfeit.

5. **Can good and evil be** correlated with light **and** darkness in view of the necessity for night? (Atherton and Leigh).

The constant alternation of light **and** **darkness** in the present scheme of things has **been** ordained of God **as necessary and good** for **animal and** plant life, **and** also for **men** if properly **used**. Nevertheless light **and** darkness **are** frequently **used** in Scripture **as** figures of good **and** evil (John **3. 19-21**; Ephesians **5. 8**). This results of course from fallen **man's** misuse of the night (Isaiah **29. 15**).

6. The words, "God saw that it was good" **are** omitted from the account of the second **day's** work. Is there **any** significance in this? It was **suggested** that **Satan** quickly occupied this sphere (**in a** much lower realm than previously) **and** this marred the goodness of the work (Blackburn).

Since **the** review of verse **31** is all-embracing, including "**every** thing that He had **made**" **being** "**very** good", the idea proposed in this question appears to **be** untenable. The several works of the **six** days were all required to express the bounteous harmony God had in mind. The omission has no **reference** to **Satan**.

7. **Can we deduce** what happened between **verses 1 and 2** from the lesson contained in **2 Corinthians 4. 4-6**? (Atherton **and** Leigh).

It is highly dangerous to **argue backwards** by supplying supposedly missing details in the type to answer to the antitype. The **suggested** deduction could not **be** relied upon.

8. Does "heaven" in verse **8** include the angelic realm? (Blackburn).

Verses 7 and 8 define heaven in this context as the **firmament** dividing the waters under the **firmament** (that is, on the earth) from those above the **firmament** (that is, the **sky**), **and** refers to the atmosphere surrounding the earth. The "angelic realm" is a **vague term** which would normally **be taken** to **mean** the heavenly regions associated with God's dwelling place, **and** therefore not envisaged in **Genesis 1. 8**. *Eds.*

1. Israel failed to enter into God's **rest** (Hebrews **3. 11**) **and** we also may fail in the **same** way (Hebrews **4. 1, 11**). How **can** this **be** prevented, **and** what is God's **rest**? (Denmark Hill).

Unbelief (Hebrews **3. 12, 19**) **and** disobedience (Hebrews **3. 18**) will result in failure to **enter** into God's **rest** today, **as** with **many** of Israel in the **days** of the provocation (Hebrews **3. 15-17**). The **remedy** lies in humble subjection to the word of God concerning the **divine service** of His people in this dispensation. It is in God's house that He **finds rest** (Psalm **132**) **and** it is here that the believer **can find rest** from his striving; it is here that spiritual harmony **between God and man** may **be** realized.

2. What is **meant** by "the image of God" (**Genesis 1. 27**)? (Aberkenfig **and** Barry, Blackburn, **Denmark Hill, Derby, Macduff, Teesside**).

See Editorial **and** Leading Study Article **by** J. Drain.

3. What is the meaning of the word "replenish" in **Genesis 1. 28**? (Aberkenfig **and** Barry, **Derby, Toronto**).

Reference to a good concordance shows that the Hebrew word *male* is usually translated "fill" (note especially Genesis 1. 22) but only in a few cases, including Genesis 1. 28 and 9. 1 is it translated "replenish". The context therefore needs to be examined to obtain the correct meaning. In 1. 28 God is speaking to Adam and Eve, but as Adam was the first man (1 Corinthians 15. 45) any thought of refilling the earth with his descendants is out of the question. It may be noted that the R. S. V. uses the word "fill" here.

4. In Genesis 1. 27 does "man" include the woman? (Denmark Hill).

We would suggest that Adam is here viewed as representing the whole human race and therefore the woman is included. The mention of male and female later in the verse does not imply the exclusion of the female from the former statement. In fact, "created He them" is parallel to, and refers back to, "God created man".

5. Is Genesis 2. 4-25 a restatement of Genesis 1? If so, how can Genesis 2. 5 be explained? (Toronto).

It is suggested verses 5 and 6 mean that even in the absence of rain and cultivation God caused plant life to grow after first watering the earth with a mist. These two verses describe some of the events of the third day of creation in a different way, the fourth and fifth day are omitted and verses 7-24 describe some events of the sixth day.

6. Does the use of the word "day" in Genesis 2. 4 help us in interpreting meaning of the days of Genesis 1? (Toronto).

We judge not. The word "day" has a variety of meanings in Scripture, as it has in modern English, but the setting usually gives a good indication of its import. In Genesis 2. 4 it must mean a period of time of at least six days. In Genesis 1, however, all the indications are that a well-defined time interval is intended. The numbering of the days and the mention of evenings and mornings are significant, and it is hardly conceivable that the days of creation would have been referred to in connexion with the keeping of the sabbath (Exodus 20. 10, 11) unless they were days of 24 hours.

7. How are we to understand the use of the word "subdue" in Genesis 1. 28? (Aberkenfig and Barry).

It seems evident that there would be no need to subdue in the sense of forcible conquest, so this expression emphasizes the effectual authority of Adam over the animal creation, a degree of control which was in great measure forfeited at the Fall.

8. What does "all the host of them" mean (Genesis 2. 1)? (Aberkenfig and Barry).

The root from which the word "host" is derived indicates a mass of people or things. In the context of Genesis 2. 1 therefore it would refer to the seemingly infinite variety of things which God had brought into being during the six days' creative work.

9. Was Adam the last object created, as Eve was made (2. 22) not created? (Sydney).

The distinction between the two words in this particular context is not so great as may be supposed. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground, whereas Eve was builded from one of Adam's ribs; neither was created out of nothing. Genesis 1. 27 shows that both Adam and Eve are equally regarded as having been created, that is, brought into being by the special exercise of divine power.

10. It would **seem that men and animals were vegetarian prior to the Flood.** Will this also **be the case in the Millennium** (Isaiah 11. 6)? (Blackburn).

There **are** general indications that in both eras men and animals subsist on vegetarian foods, but are these references altogether conclusive? For instance, sacrifices are mentioned in connexion with both periods (Genesis 4. 4; Ezekiel 40. 39) but under Mosaic law some offerings were to be eaten by the priests (Leviticus 6. 24-7. 7). The Levitical rules would not apply in detail to antediluvian times but at least they throw a possibility of doubt upon the propositions advanced in the question.

11. Considering the many events that took place on the sixth day, was it a 24 hour period? (Birmingham).

See answer to question 6. It may be that Genesis 2. 6, 8 (1st part) and 9-14 refer to what took place before the sixth day. In any case the only real difficulty refers to Adam's capacity to name all the animals in so short a time. We suggest that he was given special powers for this task. Some, who would be the first to defend the integrity of Genesis as God's inspired word, regard the reference to male and female in 1. 28 as anticipatory so far as Eve is concerned, and suggest that when the six days' work was completed God afterwards established Eden and made Eve from Adam's rib. There are obvious difficulties in this approach, and it seems more satisfactory to regard 2. 4-25 as a fuller account of the six-day creation, which implies that Eve was made on the sixth day.

12. Is it mandatory to refrain from work on the Lord's Day (as the Lord's command was as to the Remembrance only)? Should further time be taken for physical rest as the Lord's Day is often very tiring? (Atherton and Leigh).

It is clear from Acts 15. 28-29 that in contrast to the mandatory terms of the Mosaic law in regard to the sabbath, Gentile believers of this dispensation are not bound by the same restrictions on the seventh day of the week. New Testament references to the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, are sparse. The principle of dedicating this day to His things is consistent with the tenor of Scripture, but it is clear that this may be subject to modification. For instance, 1 Corinthians 7. 20-24 shows that in certain callings there may be restriction of liberty: "if thou canst become free, use it rather". Sabbath-Keeping is the only one of the Ten Commandments not confirmed under the New Covenant. It is clear from New Testament scriptures that the first day of the week takes its place, but under a law of liberty. As to physical rest, this is a matter for individual adjustment. *Eds.*

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

An Appreciation of Mr. John Miller

Our readers will have learned already of the homecall of dear Mr. John Miller, who passed into his Lord's presence on 12th December, 1968, at the ripe age of 86. Well-earned tributes have been paid to his memory by those who worked with him in various spheres of labour and service for the Master. We shall confine our tribute to an expression of our appreciation of his long and faithful service as editor of *Bible Studies*, formerly named *Young Men's Corner*.

In September 1926 students in Young Men's Corners suffered a great loss in the tragic death of Mr. George Nelson, who at that time had been editing their contributions. Following this, Mr. John Miller took over the supervision of the magazine, and the writer of this editorial was much privileged in being appointed his humble assistant on the printing side of the magazine. Thus it has been, that in this close association, one has had the unique opportunity of benefitting from the rich store of knowledge which Mr. Miller possessed.

A quotation from Francis Bacon's *Essay of Study*, describes J. M. aptly,

"Reading maketh a full man;
Conference a ready man,
And writing an exact man. "

Add to this his love for the Lord and for His people, his profound knowledge of the ways of the Lord in different dispensations, his wisdom in rightly dividing the word of truth, and his ability to communicate to, with and teach young and old alike, and you have a man ideally equipped for the compiling and controlling of such a magazine as our own *Bible Studies*.

He had read widely the works of devoted students of the Scriptures, and under the Holy Spirit's guidance that made J. M. a full man. In conference many learned how ready he was in exposition, and in his prolific writings we note the perspicuity of expression and clarity of thought. Many a time have I heard him say, "Unless young men think clearly, they will never be able to express themselves clearly".

Fully a year ago Mr. Miller had to relinquish much of his editorial work through failing bodily health, but he has left us a rich heritage out of his treasury of things old and new. His pen-nib was bright and fluent almost until the homecall, and we have even yet some of his "Notes on the Psalms", still to be published.

One has written, "The faithful continuance of those he so carefully instructed will be a becoming memorial to him". As I peruse my volumes of *Young Men's Corners, Bible Studies and Needed Truth*, I am constrained to quote lines from Robert Southey's poem which I learned at school, and which are so apt now in advancing years,

My days among the dead are pass'd;
 Around me I behold,
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old;
 My never-failing friends are they
 With whom I converse night and day.
 With them I take delight in weal,
 And seek relief in woe;
 And while I understand and feel
 How much to them I owe,
 My cheeks have often been bedew'd
 With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

May it be to present and future generations, until the Lord come, that, "that he being dead yet speaketh". *Jas. Martin*

MARRIAGE, ITS ORIGIN AND IDEALS

Marriage in its origin is a divine institution. It is the state in which one man and one woman can live together, as husband and wife, fulfilling the purpose that the Creator has in them for their highest good and true happiness. It is therefore profitable to consider closely the divinely inspired account of the creation of man, God's masterpiece, as given to us in the first two chapters of the book of Genesis. Here we have simply recorded some of God's purposes in man and some of the principles involved in the marriage relationship. Where man has introduced practices and customs at variance with divine purposes and principles it has, in a greater or lesser degree, been to his sorrow and the forfeiture of the rich blessings which the Creator intended for him.

We turn for the record of creation to Genesis 1. 27, "And God created (Hebrew, *bara* = create) man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them". We then read the more detailed account of this work in Genesis 2. 18-23, "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him... And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs... and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, made He (R. V. M, builded He into) a woman, and brought her unto the man". There is thus demonstrated from the very beginning a unity that the Creator intended for man and woman in their relationship to each other as husband and wife. Originally they were created of one (cp. Acts 17. 26); and even before the building of Eve Adam held communion in innocence with his Creator. He could converse with Him; and he was entrusted with the onerous yet enlightening task of giving their names to all living creatures, and over which he was given dominion. However, in all these living creatures there was not found an help meet for Adam. This record emphasizes this unity, which was recognized by Adam himself in his statement when Eve was presented

to him, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man". Here is introduced the **pattern of all future marriages**, according to the divine mind, that the man should leave his parents, and cleave unto his wife, and that the twain should be one flesh. This principle the Lord Jesus Himself enunciated again when He was being cross-questioned by the Pharisees concerning divorce (Matthew 19. 3-9, Mark 10. 1-9). He said, "Have ye not read, that He which made them from the beginning made them male and female?" and then He quoted, "the twain shall become one flesh". And later the apostle Paul quotes the same scripture in his letter to the Ephesians (5. 31), when by the Spirit he is describing the Bridegroom-Bride relationship of Christ and His Church, and teaching those who are married to love, cherish and honour each other.

In the Genesis scripture is also contained the divine intention that divorce was never even contemplated. The Lord Jesus explained to His tempting enquirers that Moses issued a bill of divorcement only because of their hardness of heart, one of the sad results of man's Fall, but He adds "from the beginning it hath not been so" (Matthew 19. 8). The Lord spake the authoritative and final word with regard to divorce, saying, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (verse 6). The joining together of the first pair was "of God", and what was originally intended in the husband and wife relationship is the pattern and example for all marriage to follow. Marriage involves an indissoluble bond of one man and one woman for life.

We learn further that God recognizes that those joined in marriage are in that relationship "set apart" from all others. Even "the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were their children unclean; but now are they holy" (1 Corinthians 7. 14). This "sanctified" is in the perfect tense and is equal to "set apart", that is, one for the other and for no other. Only death dissolves this close, divinely appointed partnership, "for the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband" (Romans 7. 2). And again in 1 Corinthians 7. 39 the same principle is stated, with "but if the husband be dead, she (the wife) is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord". The apostle's teaching for those in churches of God today, who enter this state of marriage, demands the highest possible standard of conduct because their bodies are indwelt by the blessed Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6. 19).

The first recorded commandment by the Creator is found in Genesis 1. 28: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it". Herein we find God ennobling man, male and female, in their marriage relationship by granting to them the power of procreation. This is an honour entailing high responsibility. Parenthood brings exceedingly great joy and correspondingly great sacrifice, for entrusted to the husband and wife is the responsibility of training their offspring in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

The **natural instinct** by which **this** command to be fruitful can be fulfilled has **been** implanted **in mankind** by the Creator. **It is** therefore **in itself** pure, but **it is** a powerful force which **must be** controlled, and the divinely planned way of control **between man and woman is** in marriage. **Even** within that relationship, for **this** powerful force to be a factor in refreshing and enriching the whole relationship of husband and wife, **it must also be** controlled. 1 Corinthians 7. 2-5 provides instruction in this matter. **It is quite** clear from the **Genesis** accounts of the creation of **man**, and from other **Scriptures**, that the natural **instinct** of **sex** should not be prostituted outside the **marriage** bond. **It is** impossible to **estimate** the **bitter** toll of human **suffering and misery** that has **ensued** from **man's** failure in this respect. **Let us remember** that "this is the will of God, **even** your sanctification, that **ye abstain** from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel **in** sanctification **and** honour, not **in** the passion of lust... **because** the Lord is an **avenger** in all these things,... for God called **us** not **for** uncleanness, **but in** sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4. 3-7).

According to **Genesis 2. 18-23**, one more purpose of God in **instituting marriage** was to provide companionship for man, a companionship which cannot be excelled **in its** closeness and comfort and happiness **in any** other human relationship. Both **man and woman** dread loneliness. Each has a **deep** need to love and to be loved. The Creator provided **in** Eve such an help meet for Adam. How ideally happy this is when bodily, mentally and spiritually, each spouse is the **true** complement of the other! Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11. 8-11, "The **man is** not of the **woman; but** the woman of the **man**... Howbeit neither is the woman without the **man**, nor the **man** without the woman, **in** the Lord", and although this **scripture** has primarily to do with male and female in a church of God, yet there is a wider application in principle. **Marriage by bringing man and woman into a secure and exclusive association** provides the condition in which comradeship can come to **maturity**.

These **great ends** which were served in the **first marriage** are changeless. Parenthood and the physical means whereby it is attained deepen and enrich companionship, and this companionship provides a happy home in which to **bring up** children. That **first marriage in Eden**, before the entrance of sin, radiated joy and gladness and thanksgiving, and raised the voice of melody. And although sin has tarnished this happy estate of marriage, yet by the **redeeming** work of Christ on the Cross, the original and fundamental blessings from God are still available to **man**, especially to those in Christ and in the Lord. Further, according to Ephesians 5 the **marriage** of man and woman does provide a simile, however inadequate, of the future blessed union of Christ and His Bride.

We can enter into the joy of the **Baptist** when he said, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom: but the **friend** of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly **because** of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled" (John 3. 29).

Jas Martin

THE SABBATH—ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Its Origin

"On the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Genesis 2. 2). God, having divided His creative work into six parts, completed it in six days. As He had reviewed this work, He had felt great pleasure and satisfaction in the work of His hands. He then ceased from such works of creation. On the seventh day He rested, not as one weary, but as one well-pleased and satisfied. Because of the rest, He blessed the seventh day—He spoke well of it, and He hallowed it—sanctified it and set it apart as His own. Whereas in the first chapter, during the six days' work, the Creator is spoken of as God (Elohim), on the completion of the seventh day He is referred to as Jehovah Elohim, the ever-existing One who gives being to all things. Although not mentioned at its origin, later development indicates that God intended this day to be set apart in memory of His creation of the world, a day of repose for man and beast. At this stage, the word 'sabbath' (rest, cessation from labour) is not expressly mentioned. Also, in contrast to the other six days, there is no reference to evening and morning.

From the Creation to the Giving of the Law

The adoption of this day as the Sabbath seems to be obscure. There is no mention of its having been observed in the book of Genesis, and there is no evidence of its observance in patriarchal times. It has been suggested from this silence that no sabbatic ordinance was actually given before the Sinaitic Law, Genesis being anticipatory of the subsequent statutory obligation. Yet we must not forget that the history of the patriarchs, covering 2500 years, is condensed in the small compass of Genesis and thus many details {e. g. the observance of the Sabbath} are necessarily omitted that may be taken for granted. There are indications of seven-day weeks before the giving of the Law. Noah waited seven days on two occasions (Genesis 8. 10, 12); Jacob was asked to fulfil "the week"; for Leah (Genesis 29. 27, 28). Also, in preparation for, and in anticipation of, the legal enactment to follow at Sinai for His chosen nation, God had promised double manna for the sixth day to avoid the necessity of gathering on the Sabbath (Exodus 16. 5, 23). This is the first mention of the word in Scripture.

The Sabbath under Mosaic Law

The fourth commandment makes the position of the sabbath very clear indeed: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20. 8-11). The use of the word "remember" would suggest that the Israelites were to bring to their memories what had been previously instituted and observed. The sabbath was already known to Israel, but they needed their minds stirred up and the position needed to be legally stated: proclaimed from Mount Sinai, written on tables of stone, and as part of the decalogue, deposited in the Ark of the covenant, it was to be a day dedicated to God, when they would be withdrawn from common employment. This withdrawal was to be widely practised, by the head of the household, his family, his servants and strangers. The merciful character of the commandment appeared in its extension even to the cattle. The Israelites were not to have their strength exhausted

by continuous labour, **day in, day out**. The all-wise **God, who** knows man's bodily and spiritual needs, **ordained** a weekly-recurring **day of** repose, designed as a memorial of the creation of the world by Himself. It was God's day, "a sabbath unto the LORD thy God", ordained, blessed and hallowed by Him, to be set apart by the people as a God-given rest. "I gave them My sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am **the LORD that sanctify them**" (Ezekiel 20. 12). But it was also for the physical and spiritual benefit of man: "The sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2. 27).

The concisely stated fourth commandment is amplified later on, and its nature, meaning and intention are made clear. In Exodus 23. 12, the ox and the ass are expressly included in the provision for rest; in Exodus 31. 12-17, the death penalty is included for profaners of **the** out their generations, for a perpetual covenant". Even though the sabbath. The children of Israel were "to observe the sabbath through-building of the Tabernacle was going to become **an urgent pre-occupation** of the people, they were not to break this law. The sabbath was a sign between God and the people that He had chosen and distinguished them from all other people. It was holy **unto God and them**, designed for God's honour and their benefit, to be kept **as a sacred trust**. Amongst other forbidden activities were the gathering of manna (Exodus 16. 22-30), the lighting of fires (Exodus 35. 3), the gathering of sticks (Numbers 15. 32-36), sowing and reaping (Exodus 34. 21). A close reading of Exodus 31 would suggest that at the conclusion of what God had to say to Moses on the Mount, He emphasized the law of the sabbath and the observance of it, and then gave to Moses "the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with **the** finger of God" (verse 18).

At the repetition of the law given by Moses in Deuteronomy 5. 6-21, there is a further interesting amplification of it. Emphasis is laid on the inclusion of the servants, male and female, in the provision of rest: "that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou" (verse 14). Israel was reminded "that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (verse 15). Thus another reason, peculiar to Israel, is given for keeping the seventh day as the sabbath. In Exodus 20, the stated reason is taken from the creation of the world, but in Deuteronomy 5 the added reason given is their redemption out of Egyptian bondage.

Holy Duties on the Sabbath

Although the people were to abstain from all manner of work on the sabbath, the priests were to continue the services of the Tabernacle and later the Temple and yet remain guiltless (Matthew 12. 5).

1. Fire was to be kept burning upon the altar continually; it was not to be allowed to go out (Leviticus 6. 13).
2. The daily sacrifices, morning and evening, were to be doubled on that day (Numbers 28. 9, 10).
3. The Shewbread was to* be changed on the sabbath (Leviticus 24. 8).

It would also appear from Leviticus 23. 2, 3, that on each Sabbath there was to be "an holy convocation" (A. V. and R. V.), or "a holy

calling together" (Newberry) or "assembly by summons" (Amplified Bible). This may have been a meeting for prayer and reading of the Law.

Extension of the Use of 'Sabbath'

The development of the use of the actual word for other rest periods is seen in two instances:

1. The sabbatical year, every seventh year, was consecrated to the LORD. The land of Canaan was to rest and lie uncultivated. There was to be no sowing, pruning, harvesting: "a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath unto the LORD" (Leviticus 25. 1-7). This year was also to be a year of release, in which all debts owed by Israelites to Israelites were to be "released" (Deuteronomy 15. 1, 2).
2. The year of jubile, every fiftieth year, was a year of the proclamation of liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants. Every man was to return to his possession and to his family. Land was to be returned to the hereditary owner, and liberty was to be restored to the slave (Leviticus 25. 8-55).

Further Old Testament History

Rather strikingly, the sabbath is not referred to in Scripture after the time of Moses until the days of the kings. The husband of the great woman of Shunem mentioned it incidentally (2 Kings 4. 23), as also does Jehoiada in 2 Kings 11. It was recognized by David (1 Chronicles 23. 31), by Solomon (2 Chronicles 2. 4), and Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 31. 3). During this period sabbath-keeping seems to have been regularly observed, along with the other holy days of the Jewish ceremonial law. Isaiah condemns hypocritical keeping of the sabbath (1. 13), and teaches that its observance should be regarded as a primary duty (56. 6 and 58. 13). Other prophets, both major and minor, similarly condemn the profaning of the sabbath.

It is not till the time of the Exile that the matter is greatly stressed, Nehemiah especially making its observance one of the chief points of his programme of restoration. He condemned buying from the peoples of the land on that day (Nehemiah 10. 31) and he testified against those who were treading the vinepresses, bringing in sheaves, lading asses, carrying burdens, selling victuals, buying fish and all manner of ware (13. 15, 16). The command was given that the doors of the gates of Jerusalem be shut before the sabbath and not opened till its completion (13. 19). Nehemiah even took the unusual precaution of threatening physical violence if the merchants and sellers lodged before the wall (verse 21), with the result that from that time forth they came no more on the sabbath. As a further precaution, he commanded the Levites to purify themselves, that they should come and keep the gates, "to sanctify the sabbath day". This strictness in this matter by the Jews became well-known so that it is not surprising that by the time of the Lord there was a scrupulous and even excessive severity in sabbath observance.

The Sabbath in the New Testament

To the enactments of the Law of Moses, the Jewish rabbis added other regulations not included in the Law. The rigid insistence on abstaining from work degenerated into a system of taboos, in which the

spirit of the Law was forgotten and the letter was magnified. **The Son of Man** is Lord of the Sabbath and He stressed mercy as preferable to sacrifice (Matthew 12. 7, 8). "The sabbath was made for man, and **not** man for the sabbath" (Mark 2. 27). Christ condemned the burdensome restraints multiplied by the Pharisees, because they violated the law of mercy. They were not for man's good, for which God had ordained the rest day. He did not intend to encourage laxity in sabbath observance but rather insisted that God's holy day was an appropriate day for works of kindness and mercy. His own actions in this respect brought Him into continual trouble with the Pharisees, but this did not cause Him for one moment to deviate from His line of conduct.

Neither the Lord Jesus Christ nor His disciples made a formal statement or decree ending the sabbath-observance on the seventh day of the week. It would appear that both the seventh and the first days of the week were specially regarded at the beginning of the Christian period, and this offended neither Jews nor Christians. Soon Judaizing Christians sought to bring Christians under the bondage of the Law and became open opponents of the true position under grace. Then the Jewish sabbath appears to have been tacitly set aside. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Colossians 2. 16, 17). And again, "Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain" (Galatians 4. 10, 11).

The First Day of the Week

The first day came into prominence after the Cross of Christ. This was the day on which the Redeemer rose from the dead. On this day He made repeated appearances to His disciples after His resurrection, when they were evidently assembled together for spiritual purposes (John 20. 19, 26). This early emphasis on the first day of the week is supported by apostolic usage. The disciples in Troas came together to break bread on this day (Acts 20. 7), and the saints in the Corinthian church were required to lay by their contributions towards the collections for the poor saints (1 Corinthians 16. 1, 2). In Revelation 1. 10, the first day of the week is called "the Lord's day" or "the Lordly day". The seventh day was called by Jehovah "My sabbath" (Exodus 31. 13), whilst the aged John, in the Spirit, called the first day "the Lord's day". The Old Testament sabbath was the seal of God's first creation; the New Testament Lord's day, the resurrection day, is the seal of the new creation. With the latter there are no legal sabbatic regulations, neither is this day called the sabbath in Scripture. The response of the Christian to this day is that of the service of love and the devotion of worship—voluntarily offered to God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

"God rested on the seventh day from all His works" (Hebrews 4. 4), and it is God's intention that His people should enter into His rest. The people of Israel failed to enter into their rest in the land of Canaan because of unbelief and consequent disobedience. The solemn warning is given to the people of God in this dispensation, "Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into

His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it" (4. 1). The 'rest' spoken of here is the rest of God in association with His house, which He strongly desires His people to share. But faith is still essential for entering into this rest. "The entrance into God's rest is never a complete thing... God's rest... is dependent on continuous faith" (J. M., Bible Studies 1937, p. 66). "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (verse 9). The word 'remaineth' is not the word that means 'abideth' but carries the sense of being left (behind). It does not essentially point forward to eternal continuity. This spiritual 'sabbath rest' is especially associated with "Today".

F. L. E.

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 2. 8 - 2. 25

Eden and the creation of Eve

From Aberkenfig and Barry. —The phrase "a garden eastward in Eden" suggests an enclosed area within Eden. Not only was this to be the home of Adam and the partner God had prepared for him, but the place of man's fellowship with his Creator. The wonder of such a place, designed and planted by God, defies our imagination and writers of the Scriptures refer to it as "the garden of the Lord". [1]

Of all that was created for man's enjoyment only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was prohibited to him. This could have been any fruitful tree; we do not think that the knowledge of evil was in the fruit itself. [2] Obedience is the foundation of man's communion with God, for He alone is Sovereign and has the right to be obeyed by the creature He has made. The penalty for disobedience was death; obviously physical death at the moment of eating is not envisaged here, but spiritual death resulted and has passed to all humanity. "We were dead through our trespasses" (Ephesians 2. 5). The tree of life had no prohibition and was placed there for a different purpose. This may well have been to preserve the life of man and was later denied to him by reason of the Fall. [3]

The need for a partner like himself was felt by Adam, and God in His wisdom built from his rib a woman. Having been taken out of man she became a separate entity, yet in the marriage bond they become one (Heb. *ECHAD*) flesh. This Hebrew word means a unity of persons or things. The apostle Paul quotes verse 24 to explain the truth of Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5. 31, 32). Christ loves and cherishes the Church, and the picture of the husband and wife becoming one in marriage illustrates the mystery of Christ and the Church which is His Body.

B. V. F.

From Derby. —Reference to the east are significant in the Scriptures. The LORD God (Jehovah Elohim) planted a garden eastward (toward the sun-rising) in Eden (delight). God had most gracious thoughts towards His creature man, and the glorious possibilities open to man, which through Christ will yet be fulfilled, are beyond human thought.

The LORD God made to grow every tree, pleasant to look at and good to eat. Two trees were given special names, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life was not denied while man was in a state of innocence. God used the other

named tree as a test of obedience; to eat of this would **mean** death.

It was thought, however, that the one form of knowledge which should have occupied the mind of the man was the knowledge of God Himself, "That they should know Thee the only true God". This is the knowledge most to be coveted and which we may have now, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 4. 6).

The exact position of Eden seems not to be known, but the sources of the rivers mentioned and their connexion with the territories of Havilah and Cush seem to indicate the vicinity of Ararat [see answer to Question 1]. God formed out of the ground every beast of the field over which the man was to have dominion. He also was **given** the honour of naming them, a sign of that overlordship.

Among all these animals there was not found an help meet for the man, so the LORD God created the woman. The man was caused to fall into a deep sleep (a figure of death), and having taken out of the man a rib, the LORD God made a woman (builded He into a woman, R. V. margin). We were thus reminded of our blessed Redeemer through whose death and resurrection the Church which is His body is being builded (Matthew 16. 18), and is described as "the fulness (complement) of Him" (Ephesians 1. 23). Adam and Eve **are** a type of Christ and the Church, the last Adam and the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb (Revelation 19. 7, 21. 9). "Fit companion for the Master, from Him for Him made".

In verse 24 is the divine institution of marriage. Three times this verse is cited in the New Testament. In Malachi 2. 15, 16 God expresses His hatred of putting away (divorce). It is good for all, especially God's people, if God is taken into counsel in regard to the important matter of marriage.

The man named his wife Eve (life or living), but first he called her Woman, for he said. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh", teaching the oneness of man and wife as Ephesians 5. 22-33 brings out the oneness of Christ and the Church.

From Halifax and Leeds. —Eden is a picture of the good and perfect work of God. The plants and trees required man's attention and work, so that the best possible use could be made of them for food. Man's needs were more profound, but they also were provided for in his environment. With the plants to occupy him in mental and physical labour, and the animals also to observe, his mind and body would be fully exercised. His spiritual capacity was provided for in communion with God.

We thought of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a type of the standard of God's law, and noticed the judgement associated with it. • he tree of life seemed to us a type of the Lord Jesus, who Himself is life. He died that sinful men might be redeemed from the curse of the law, and might have life for ever. The river may perhaps be regarded as a type of the Holy Spirit, for it watered the garden, and all spiritual life in the hearts of men today is dependent upon the Spirit's work.

Some thought that Eve might represent the Church which is Christ's Body, but it was argued that when God said, "the twain shall become one flesh", He did not mean one body. Others thought that Eve represented the Church as the Bride of Christ [See answer to question 2].

J. R. Butler, R. G. Butler

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

The **seventeen** remaining papers submitted from Atherton and Leigh, Belfast, Birmingham, Blackburn, Glasgow (Parkhead), Greenock, Kilmarnock, Methil, Lagos, Liverpool, Macduff, Paisley, Portslade, Southport, Sydney, Teesside and Wigan) support the general lines taken by the published papers and add the following points:—

1. **Eden** answers to the garden of God in heaven (Ezekiel 28. 13) and it had a defined boundary (Genesis 3. 24) implying a within and a without. It resembled the new Jerusalem in that it contained the tree of life (Revelation 22. 2) and it was like the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts (Isaiah 5. 1-7).

2. **Eden** illustrates man's right relationship with God. "It was a place where communion with his Creator was known in a very real way... There they were to live not merely by herb yielding seed for their physical well-being (Genesis 1. 29), but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, for their spiritual well-being was the highest purpose of their lives".

3. In **Eden** there was service to God and communion with Him; His pleasure was there. Similar principles were seen as extending to the tabernacle in the wilderness, Shiloh, and Mount Zion, the Temple of Solomon and the churches of God forming the House of God in the present dispensation. It was suggested that Adam's work of dressing and keeping the garden could be likened to the work of oversight in churches of God today, and the river flowing out of Eden typified the outflow of teaching from the spiritual house. (1 Thessalonians 1. 8).

4. "The word 'garden' as used in Genesis 2 means 'fenced' or 'enclosed'... In 1 Corinthians 3. 9 Paul, writing to the church of God in Corinth says, 'Ye are God's husbandry (tilled land R. V. M.), God's building'. This 'enclosed' place is still indeed a pleasant place to be in, a place of fellowship and service, and it is still a place of testing. "

Eds.

COMMENTS

[1] **Aberkenfig** and Barry. —A garden must be enclosed, preferably walled.

J. B.

[2] There was only one such tree; *The* tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

J. B.

[3] It would have been disastrous if fallen man were to eat of the tree of life.

J. B.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Does the geographical information given in verses 8-14 provide any basis for locating the garden of Eden? (Derby, Glasgow (Parkhead), Kilmarnock, Southport).

The account seems to imply that the garden was in the eastern part of a region known as Eden and that a river flowed through Eden to the garden. The river was subsequently divided into four branches, three of which flowed for great distances through the lands of Havilah, Cush and Assyria. The fourth, Euphrates, was presumably so well known as not to need description. Scholars have attempted to solve the prob-

lem but with little success, possibly because the Flood may have completely altered the geography of the region. This suggestion presumes that we have in this chapter a contemporary account which was used by Moses in compiling the Pentateuch.

2. Is Eve a type of the Church the Body or the Bride the Wife of the Lamb? (Halifax and Leeds).

Ephesians 5. 22-33 beautifully illustrates the love of Christ for His Church, using the illustration of a man's true relationship with his wife and citing God's word concerning Adam and Eve (Genesis 2. 24). In the former passage the Church is viewed as the Body (verse 23) and as the Bride (verse 27) but the two thoughts are inseparably interwoven into the argument. Our friends' difficulty arises because they are trying to see Eve herself as a type, whereas Scripture portrays the relationship between Adam and Eve as the type.

3. Eve was in Adam before God builded her into a woman. Does this speak of the Church being in Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1. 4)? (Blackburn, Methil).

The Ephesians scripture says that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. It was the choice that was in Christ, not the persons. In the same way the eternal purpose was in Christ (Ephesians 3. 11). Only in an anticipatory sense can it be said that the Church was in Christ before the foundation of the world.

4. Is the LORD God who spoke in the garden one Person of the Trinity? (Portslade).

This divine title is plural in form (Jehovah Elohim) but is generally used with a singular verb. In Genesis 3. 22 "Behold, the man is become as one of Us" indicates plurality in connexion with the same title, so that we can safely conclude that the Triune God is thereby indicated. Nevertheless it may be suggested that in some contexts the Son, acting in intimate association with the Father and the Spirit, expresses the mind of the Triune God as the Eternal Word and gives effect to the divine counsel as the "Master Workman". So in Genesis 2. 4, "The LORD God made earth and heaven", yet in John 1. 3 "all things were made by Him (the Word)". Similarly in Genesis 3. 8 the voice of the Triune God may have been expressed by the eternal Son (Proverbs 8. 30, 31).

5. Did Moses understand the implication of the word "Elohim" as referring to three Persons? (Portslade).

It is not possible for us to be sure to what extent Moses appreciated the deep implication of such names as "Elohim". 1 Peter 1. 10-12 shows that Old Testament prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit to write things which they found difficult to understand. In some things they were told that they had written for the benefit of future generations (Daniel 12. 8, 9). Yet as one who was so intimately favoured by God (Numbers 12. 7, 8) Moses may have been granted some appreciation of the meaning of "Elohim".

G. P. Jr. L. B.

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

The overall title of our study subject this year is 'Origins in Genesis'; and our theme for this month, 'Man's fall through sin', presents us with one of the most profound mysteries in the matter of origins—the ultimate origin of sin. It has pleased a God of supreme wisdom to conceal from His creatures one of the most fundamental issues of all eternity. Yet God's revelation in holy Scripture is concerned pre-eminently with sin's reality, its effects, and its divine remedy.

It is a measure of the Adversary's subtle determination to obscure and pervert human understanding of sin, that religious cults brazenly using the terms 'Christian' and 'science' can exist to distort truth about sin and righteousness and judgement to come. May our supremely solemn study this month keep us, as students and stewards of the word, keenly sensitive to the enormous tragedy of sin. Thus shall our appreciation be richly enhanced of "Him who knew no sin... made to be sin on our behalf" (2 Corinthians 5. 21). As we proceed in coming months to the study of Atonement and related truths, we shall increasingly appreciate how jealously God's people must guard those rocks of divine truth which are found in the opening three chapters of Genesis.

J. D. T.

SIN, ITS ORIGIN AND OUTWORKING

Regarding the origin and outworking of sin, the Scriptures are chiefly concerned with this subject as it affects the human race from the fall of Adam onwards, but glimpses are given of an even earlier expression of sin in the devil's rebellion against God. However limited our understanding of this may be, it is indicated that Satan had occupied a position of remarkable dignity and responsibility in the divine presence, but this was forfeited because of iniquity being found in him, in that he desired to grasp the prerogatives of Deity. In 1 John 3. 8 we are told that "the devil sinneth from the beginning", an illuminating word which points back beyond the Adamic creation, and helps us to appreciate that a power for evil was operating against God's purposes in earth's earliest ages. It was the Lord Himself who said, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10. 18), an allusion, we would understand, to divine judgement on him when "unrighteousness was found" in him (Ezekiel 28. 15). Isaiah 14. 12-15 and Ezekiel 28. 12-17 merit careful thought in connexion with the devil's rebellion against God. It is remarkable that both Isaiah and Ezekiel introduce these references to Satan's downfall in the context of burdens of judgement upon great nations which held dominating power in their day. Isaiah 14 deals with the overweening pride of Babylon and Ezekiel 28 with the hauteur of Tyre. It is characteristic of many attaining great wealth and power that

they **tend** to become uplifted in pride. By **the** leading of the Holy Spirit, **the** prophets **Isaiah** and **Ezekiel** introduced **against** **this** background of **human** folly the fearful effrontery which **caused** **Satan** to **reach** beyond his appointed sphere. For **in** both of **these** prophecies **are** **statements** which could **have** **been** fully applied neither to Babylon nor **Tyre**, as for example **in** **Ezekiel** **28. 14-17**:

"Thou **wast** **the** anointed cherub that covereth... Thou **wast** **perfect** **in** thy ways from the **day** that thou **wast** **created**, till unrighteousness was found in thee... thou hast **sinned**: therefore have I **cast** thee **as** profane out of the mountain of God..."

What **was** the **nature** of the unrighteousness that was found **in** him? Isaiah **14. 13-14** suggests that **it** was **pride** which **aimed** at equality with God. The **five** "**I** wills" of this portion **are** typical of a **basic** attitude of opposition to the will of God. The one **described** as the "**day** star, son of the morning", is **represented** as **saying**:

"I will **ascend** into heaven",

"I will exalt **my** throne",

"**I** will **sit** upon the mount of congregation",

"I will **ascend** above the heights of the clouds",

"**I** will **be** like the Most High".

In reply to which lawless ambition the **judgement** of God declared, "Thou shalt **be** brought down to hell, to the uttermost **parts** of the pit".

Here then **is** **seen** the **attitude** of the devil **in** **utter** opposition to the will of God. This opposition found **its** outworking **in** the effort to undo God's handiwork **in** the garden of Eden. **Assuming** the **guise** of a **serpent**, the devil approached **Eve** in the hope of **turning** her from allegiance to her Creator. **His** **success** **in** **turning** her and **Adam** aside from obedience to the divine **will** was the origin of **sin** as **it** affects the Adamic race.

In considering the **nature** of **sin** as **seen** **in** **Genesis** **3**, **it** may be helpful to think of **it** from the viewpoint of four **New** **Testament** definitions.

1. "**Sin** is lawlessness" (1 John 3. 4).

The **principle** of Romans 7. 7 **may** **be** applied to the situation **in** **Eden**, for God's declared law, when understood, **brings** responsibility to **keep** it. A plain prohibition had **been** **given** to **Adam** and **Eve**. They understood perfectly well what God had **said** (**Genesis** 2. 16-17). The devil **subtly** beguiled **Eve**, the **weaker** vessel, **and** she believed his lie. She **in** **turn** **became** **Adam's** **temptress**, **and** then he deliberately broke the **divine** law. Lawlessness **is** the rejection of the will of God **and** the substitution of **man's** will. This **is** clearly **seen** **in** **Genesis** 3. 1-7, illustrating, **at** the **beginning**, one **facet** of the **nature** of **sin**.

2. "All unrighteousness **is** **sin**" (1 John 5. 17).

The **Greek** word for **sin** in this sentence **is** *adikia*, meaning wrong-doing or injustice. If lawlessness **is** the violation of God's will, **as** **expressed** **in** His law, unrighteousness **is** the violation of God's standard **as** **expressed** **in** His justice. This **aspect** of **sin** **is** implied **in** **Adam's** **acceptance** of the devil's **statement** **in** **Genesis** 3. 5, "For God doth know that

in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil". The suggestion that God was withholding good from His creatures was a fearful slander; it was essentially unrighteous. Adam should have repudiated this, but he endorsed it by his action; this was sin.

3. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14. 23).

Adam and Eve were faced with the choice between the word of God and the devil's lie. Faith rests upon the word of God. The devil questioned this and then contradicted it. Confidence in God's word having been undermined, Eve acted by sight rather than by faith. Adam would be assailed by conflicting thoughts as he took the fruit, reflecting a truth concisely stated in Romans 14. 23, "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat". His action was not of faith, therefore it was sin. In doing this he "exchanged the truth of God for a lie... and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Romans 1. 25).

4. "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4. 17).

We are told in 1 Timothy 2. 14 that Adam was not beguiled. This was in contrast to Eve, of whom it is written that she was thoroughly beguiled, a strengthened form of the Greek word *apatao* to deceive or beguile. This strengthened form *exapatao* is also used in 2 Corinthians 11. 3, "as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness".

Romans 5. 19 refers to Adam's disobedience, a translation of the Greek word, *parakoe*—*para*, aside; *akouo*, to hear; "hence signifying a refusal to hear" (Vine). Adam refused to listen to the voice of God, and listened to his wife's voice. He knew to do good, but did it not; to him this was sin.

Certain far-reaching consequences of sin are seen in Genesis 3, and these may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Eyes opened to evil (verse 7)
- (b) Fear—hiding from God (verses 8, 10)
- (c) Enmity (verse 15)
- (d) Sorrow (verse 16) and toil (verse 17)—the same word in Hebrew.
- (e) Curse (verse 17)
- (f) Death (verse 19)

"It is a sore travail that God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith", declared the Preacher (Ecclesiastes 1. 13), and throughout all human history these consequences of sin have been apparent. If we take enmity as a specific illustration, we are told that God would put enmity between the Seed of the woman and the serpent's seed. Here is enshrined the first Messianic prophecy, foretelling the victory of Calvary. The seed of the serpent is identified by reference to John 8. 44 as those who reject the truth of God's word, for they showed the same characteristics as their father, the devil. They were three times described as an "offspring of vipers" and they will share the serpent's judgement (Matthew 23. 33). This basic enmity will persist until the fulfilment of the triumphant word in Romans 16. 20: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly".

All through **Scripture** the outworking of the **principle** of sin in **human experience** finds consistent illustration. **It is one evidence** of the divine authorship of the **sacred** writings that they **penetrate** so accurately to the **root** of mankind's dilemma in the early chapters of **Genesis**, and then **present** from the wide **range** of human experience a selection of **convincing** evidence to the **effects** of sin, and God's abounding **grace** despite it. Let us consider for example the outworking of the principle that "**sin is lawlessness**".

Adam's transgression of the law of **God** in **Eden** was followed within his own family by the tragic **act** of lawlessness when Cain slew his own brother Abel. "**Cain was of (ek, out of) the evil one, and slew his brother**" is the divine comment through the apostle John (**1 John 3. 12**). God dealt graciously with Cain in the **matter** of the rejection of his offering. **Yet** Cain deliberately **refused** to **receive** the counsel of God, and sin, "**couching at the door**" as a wild **beast** ready to devour, soon impelled Cain to commit the **first** murder. It was the Lord who said that the devil was a **murderer from the beginning** (**John 8. 44**), and in Cain's action we see a typical **expression** of lawlessness to that extreme.

As the human **family** multiplied there was a sinister development of this **aspect** of sin. The Spirit of **God** traces the **dark** sequence from unworthy thoughts concerning God to **basest** forms of wrong-doing (**Genesis 6. 5-11; Romans 1. 21, 26**). If the antediluvian **race** lacked the **precise** instruction of a written law such as was later **given at Sinai**, they nevertheless had certain salient truths of divine law "**written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them**" (**Romans 2. 15**). The **measure** of the **affront** to God by their **utter** defiance of His most obvious laws **may be seen in** the fearful severity of the **great** deluge. The earth had become corrupt before God and was filled with violence, the latter a projection of Cain's violence to Abel, and of Lamech's proud boast of having slain a man for wounding him (**Genesis 4. 23**). If more localized, the later condition of Sodom and Gomorrah had similar conditions of lawlessness (**Genesis 18, 19**), again expressed in **gross** immorality and recourse to violence without provocation. Lot was distressed by their "**lascivious life**" and "**lawless deeds**" (**2 Peter 2. 7, 8**).

Even when God called Israel to special privilege in holy nationhood the outworking of sin as lawlessness found **grave** manifestation. The **failure at Sinai** is an **amazing** commentary on the power of **sin** through human weakness. Accompanied by unique manifestations of the divine presence, God's laws were pronounced in the hearing of an awe-struck people. The **first** two commandments **forbade** the worship of other gods or the **making of graven** images. **Yet** within a few weeks Moses, the **meekest man in** all the earth, shattered the tables of the law at the foot of the mount, an action **fittingly** symbolizing human **readiness** to reject **divine** law. Later wilderness experiences only emphasized the lawlessness which so readily **asserts** itself. The **crisis** of disobedience at Kadesh-barnea was the climax of successive **acts** of rebellion against God's word through **Moses**, and in pronouncing the judgement of forty years' wandering in the wilderness God **stated** that they had **tempted** Him these **ten** times, and had not hearkened unto His voice. **Even** within the most privileged **ranks** of the Aaronic priesthood a lawless **attitude** developed when **Nadab** and **Abihu** brought the judgement of

death upon themselves through offering strange **fire** before the LORD "which He had not **commanded** them" (Leviticus 10. 1).

Numerous other examples will readily **occur** to students of Scripture. **Suffice it to** mention finally that **extreme** outworking of human lawlessness at the time of the **end**, when "the man of **sin**" otherwise **termed** "the lawless **one**", will oppose himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped, setting himself forth as God. The real character of sin, as shown through Satan before the **Adamic** creation, **and** in human experience since **Adam's** expulsion from **Eden**, will **be** seen in blackest intensity through the blasphemous claims of Antichrist.

Our study may fittingly conclude with a brief reference to the gloriously welcome contrast seen in the sinless One, "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, **but** emptied Himself... and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross". "The law of His God is in His heart; None of His steps shall slide". The delight of His heart was to carry out the divine will (Psalm 40. 8; John 4. 34, 5. 30, 6. 38). A. F. Toms

SATAN, HIS NATURE, CHARACTER AND OBJECTIVES

The name Satan occurs nineteen times in the Old Testament and thirty-four times in the New, in the Hebrew as "Satan" and in the Greek as "Satanas", these words meaning adversary, opponent, accuser, arch-enemy of good. Thus is described the person who since the dawn of human history has master-minded the propagation and motivation of evil throughout the world.

It is instructive that God's message to the prince of Tyre, ruler of an ancient world's great commercial seaport on the Mediterranean, is used to describe the origin of Satan (Ezekiel 28). The serpent, most subtle of all the beasts God had made, was used as the vehicle for Satan's deception of our first parents in Eden. This set the pattern of man's sinful course through the centuries (Genesis 3), while the prophecy against the king of Babylon (Isaiah 14), predicting the fall of that great pagan empire, is used to describe the fall and destruction of Satan. Examining these three areas of revelation will be helpful in answering the age-long question, "Is Satan a real person or a myth?"

That Satan is a real personality of a very high intellectual order and of angelic origin cannot be refuted, since the sure word of God, through the ancient prophet, dips into the timeless past and brings him into view. "Thou wast in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering,... the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the day that thou wast created thy were prepared. Thou wast the anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee,... and thou hast sinned: therefore have I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness" (Ezekiel 28. 13-17). We have quoted this important passage to show the detailed

characteristics which could only apply to a being who lived and moved in close association with the throne of God, and not to the prince of Tyre. Satan is a created intelligence and did not have eternal being in the past. He had a beginning and was created for a purpose in the eternal plan of God, and held a high place of great responsibility in the "holy mountain of God". We suggest he was anointed by the Spirit of God for a work of "covering" in the presence of God. The word "covering" here means to protect or defend. Walking up and down "in the midst of the stones of fire" (verse 14) may suggest he was a guardian in the divine presence. The principle of guardianship appears in Genesis 3. 24, where God placed "at the east of the garden of Eden, the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life". Scripture does not state that Satan was incapable of sinning, only that he was perfect in his ways. His wonderful attributes were to be used only for the glory and service of God. The crowning glory of Satan was his beauty. There is nothing wrong with beauty, until it is corrupted. God vested beauty and power in this great creature, but never intended that it should be sacrificed on the altar of pride, but alas, it was so with Satan. Human description fails to tell of the dazzling glory of the "mountain of God" which was the sphere of Satan's responsibility; his name at that time was Lucifer (light), son of the morning (Isaiah 14. 12. A. V.). A great responsibility rests on those who have exceptional gifts and abilities, but these can be of rich blessing, if given in total commitment to Him for whose glory they were created.

We now consider briefly the fall of Satan. The cry goes out, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning!" (Isaiah 14. 12). Here again there is duality of application, where some of the prophecy refers to the king of Babylon, and some to Satan. To Isaiah is given a ministry of revelation to take us further into the great drama of Satan's fall. Verses 13 and 14 of Isaiah 14 show how this great personality, given moral responsibility in divine affairs, used the power of free choice, not only to become obsessed with his own beauty, but to lift up his heart in pride, and follow the path where these choices can only lead, into rebellion and the presumptuous sin of usurping that which was not his. "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High". As a result of this, God cast him out as "profane out of the mountain of God". The Lord Jesus witnessed his fall, for He said, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10. 18). Ephesians 6. 12 seems to confirm that Satan had a following host of angelic beings in his attempt to usurp the throne of God.

In his fallen state Satan still possesses great power, but this is controlled by the permissive and directive will of God. Job chapters 1 and 2 give an account of Satan's access to God when he presented himself with the sons of God and challenged the integrity of Job. Satan was jealous of Job's total commitment to God. Job was probably one of the richest men in the East, yet he feared God and turned away from evil. We marvel at Satan's unholy boldness with God. "Doth Job fear God for nought?" He accused God of putting a hedge about Job, and in return of receiving unusual devotion from him. Satan's challenge was, "Put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce Thee to Thy face". God knew His man, and by

an act of His permissive will He turned him over to Satan with one condition, to spare his life. The contest between God and Satan shows the power Satan had after his expulsion from heaven. Again, Jude's epistle shows Satan contending with Michael the archangel over the body of Moses. Satan tried to claim the body of God's great servant, whom he had not been able to overthrow in life. God had other plans, and as these two great personalities met, Michael dared not to bring a railing accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9).

We now consider a further reduction in the power of Satan. It is marvellous to see in descending order the dealings of God with Satan, when we realize that He could have destroyed him with all his host with a single stroke of judgement. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past tracing out!" (Romans 11. 33). God's purpose in Christ holds the key to the ultimate and complete victory over evil. Satan had to come face to face with the "last Adam", God manifest in flesh, and here again in the temptation in the wilderness, a confrontation took place in which the permissive will of God allowed Christ to be put through severe temptations. Satan was defeated.

In His infancy and during His life, as well as at Calvary, Satan sought the overthrow of the One he knew he must meet in mortal combat. Satan's power was seen during the Lord's ministry, in demon possession, also in asking for the apostles in order to sift them as wheat, and in entering into Judas for the fateful betrayal night. It is clear from Hebrews 2. 14 that the death of Christ brought to nought "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil".

In His resurrection Christ led captivity captive (Ephesians 4. 8) and He has "the keys of death and of Hades" (Revelation 1. 18). Satan's present dominion is as "the prince of the power of the air", "the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2. 2). Paul sees him as an "angel of light... his ministers... as the ministers of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 11. 14, 15).

The whole creation bears the marks of sin which has held sway through the centuries, and the rapid progress of evil in our time makes the terrible period of satanic power in the last days seem imminent, when he will enter into the man of sin who will be used to bring about the "great tribulation", the time of Jacob's trouble.

Another stage in the destruction of Satan is seen in Revelation 12. 7-10, when in a time yet to come there will be war in heaven; "Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels". The result of this titanic struggle, unknown during the battle to men on earth, will be a great defeat for Satan and his hosts. His identification is clearly spelled out. "And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him". He is also called the "accuser of our brethren", who accuses them before God day and night, and those who overcame him did so "because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12. 11). At this point in Satan's long history of deception he knows "that he hath but a short time", and he works dreadful havoc and brings relent-

less persecution on those who refuse to wear the "mark of the beast" during those terrible three and a half years of the last seven years of Daniel's prophecy, yet to be fulfilled upon Israel.

Satan will then meet the Lord Jesus face to face when He comes out of heaven as the Word of God, and after the Har-Magedon battle is over Satan will be bound for a thousand years during the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus (Revelation 20. 1, 2). Finally, Satan will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20. 10).

R. Armstrong

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 3. 1 to 3. 24

Man's Fall through Sin

From Teesside. —The serpent was a beast of the field, more subtle than its fellows, but it had no place in the garden; it was an intruder. Satan, also an intruder, spoke through the serpent. Whether the serpent spoke in audible words or by affecting the thoughts of Eve, she was not surprised, but hearkened, and was led astray by "Satan's artful treachery" [see answer to question 1].

The communion that they had with the Creator as they walked in the garden in the cool of the day was shattered by this one act of sin. Man, who in innocence and perfection had walked in nakedness, because of his new-found knowledge of good and evil and the newly planted sin in his heart, now wished to cover his nakedness from God's sight. God covered Adam and Eve but at the cost of the death of an animal, a pointing forward to our being covered by the death of God's Son.

The consequences of Adam's sin were far-reaching. The curse of God fell on the serpent, on man and woman, and on the ground. The serpent, which may have originally walked upright, was doomed to crawl on its belly, and enmity was decreed between it and man, and prophetically, between Satan and the Son of Man. Woman would have her sorrow greatly multiplied. Man would eat bread in the sweat of his face. The ground would bring forth thorns and thistles. We related this to the sufferings of God's Son. In His toil and sweat, in the thorns that crowned His brow, we see the outworking of the curse to the Seed of the woman, knowing these sorrows as a result of Adam's fall.

There was no prohibition in regard to the tree of life until the advent of sin; then man was driven out of the garden and the cherubim were set to guard the way lest Adam and Eve should partake of its fruit and live for ever. This led us to think that there was no limit placed upon the length of man's days until sin came. Since then, with the multiplying of sin, man's days have been progressively shortened.

W. Taylor, J. McIlvenna

From Blackburn. —The story of Adam and Eve must belong to history, not mythology. Furthermore, these divinely recorded facts, because of the involvement of the entire race, illustrate the story of every man. This two-fold view is fundamental to an understanding of man's plight and an appreciation of his prospects.

Satan, "the old serpent" (Revelation 12. 9), was in the world, "the field". Such was his mighty power that he took possession of the serpent. Significantly, the original Hebrew word (*nachash*) is derived from a primitive root, probably meaning "to hiss" and contains the thought of a magic spell (Strong).

The tempter attacked Adam at his most vulnerable point, his attachment to Eve. Satan's attack on Eve was a challenge to the sovereignty of God, the word of God and the love of God. Eve was ignorant of Satan and of "his devices", but not of God's word. However, Satan in his craftiness beguiled her (2 Corinthians 11. 3). According to one rendering "he caused her to forget". He misquoted the word of God, he challenged the goodness of God and finally he contradicted the word of God. Eve made the grave mistake of accepting evil suggestions. She became preoccupied with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life (1 John 2. 16). Lust having been conceived bore sin, she took, she ate (see James 1. 15).

As a result of his sin, conscience was aroused, man became self-conscious and uncomfortable with his new found knowledge of evil by experience. "To the pure all things are pure" (Titus 1. 15), but Adam and Eve had become defiled in their own eyes. Their relationship with each other was marred, but worse, their friendship with God was shattered; they tried to run away from Him. Mercifully they were not hardened in their sin, they responded to their consciences in so far as they tried to cover themselves.

The divine provision for man may be summarized as follows:

- (1) The seed of the woman will conquer Satan (verse 15)
- (2) The highest human relationship of marriage is preserved (verse 16)
- (3) Toil is prescribed as the way of life, presumably in men's highest interest (verses 17-19)
- (4) Man is covered not by his own efforts, but God provides a sacrifice (verse 21)
- (5) Man is saved from everlasting death (verse 22)

From the darkest chapter of human history shines a light of brightest hope!

A. P. Sands

From Portslade. —"Ye shall be as gods"; these words reveal the character of the one responsible for man's fall (Ezekiel 28. 17; Isaiah 14. 14) and the culmination of the temptation in which man relinquished the glory and honour of earthly dominion, together with a place of service within the paradise of God, for seemingly greater heights of glory proffered in the Satanic allusion.

During possibly a hundred years of habitual communion, Adam had gained experience of one of the greatest spiritual truths to be learned: subjection to a munificent God, whose one prohibition was a test that called for obedience [see answer to question 4]. The woman's failure, which also contained a breach of this fundamental principle, seems to be signified in the judgement, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee".

As the weaker vessel, her being chosen for the attack was a typical act of the one whose wisdom was corrupt. This contrasts with the

action of the LORD God, who from the weaker vessel, made weaker by transgression, was to bring the Seed which was to bruise the head of the serpent.

In Romans 5 we find that Adam's sin contains such features as missing the mark (falling short of the glory of God), trespass (falling away from God), transgression (overstepping God's law) and disobedience (hearing amiss, unattentive). The warning, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" was not given by Adam sufficient weight to prevent him from acting on the suggestion of his wife. We trace the same loose attitude to God's commands throughout the history of man.

Man's fall can hardly be exaggerated. From a noble creature made in the image of God, able to cope with the great responsibilities given him, living in communion with his Creator, and snaring this happy state of the life of God with his wife, Adam was reduced to shame, slavery to sin, wearisome toil and death for himself and his posterity. Like God indeed, but like the god of this world also, bound by the slavish chains of his own disobedience. W. T.

Impressions from Other Contributors

Many of this month's articles tended to include too much narrative; the basis of a study paper should be thoughtful comment on the passage, using particular points to illustrate principles. The following additional thoughts are taken from the sixteen unpublished papers received from: Aberkenfig and Barry, Birmingham, Denmark Hill, Derby, Glasgow (Parkhead), Glasgow (Partick), Greenock, Hamilton (Ont.), Kilmarnock, Macduff, Melbourne, Methil, Paisley, Southport, Sydney and Toronto.

"This chapter describes the first human experience of the devil (verse 1), lies (v. 4), slander (v. 5), lust (v. 6), sin (v. 6), shame (v. 7), fear (v. 10), retribution (vv. 14-19), enmity (v. 15), sorrow (v. 16), toil and sweat for survival (vv. 17, 19), death (v. 19), and separation from God (v. 23). These things, the product of the intrusion of the devil into human affairs, were counteracted by the mercy and grace of God, who gave the promise of the final vanquishing of the devil (v. 15), a series of commands to make life bearable among sinners (vv. 14-19), and shed the blood of another to meet man's needs (v. 21)".

The word 'subtle' has the root meaning of 'under a web', illustrating the thought of a trap being set. Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve follows closely his temptation of the Lord Jesus, but whereas Eve's knowledge of the word of God was imperfect, the Lord used the Scriptures with perfect effect. God had entrusted our first parents with intelligence and choice. Being in the garden of Eden was not proof against sin, and they failed because they did not test the serpent's words with those of God, as they should have done. By their action they despised the goodness of God, the liberty to eat freely of every other tree was forgotten. The wisdom and sovereignty of God were also questioned.

The God-given coverings for Adam and Eve, Joseph's coat (Genesis 37. 3) and the holy garments for Aaron and his sons (Exodus 28. 2) were in Hebrew called *k'thahmeth* and speak of fitness to rule, or fitness to appear before God.

As there are things which accompany salvation, so there are things which inevitably follow as a result of sin, such as enmity, sorrow, death and separation from God. Man has not risen, but has fallen, he left the known to face the unknown, an exile from the kingdom of God. Although created in the image of God, because of the Fall the Lord Jesus could speak of some as "Of your father, the devil". Because of his self-exaltation the devil has been brought low; in contrast the Lord Jesus Christ has been given the highest exaltation in recognition of His self-humbling (Philippians 2. 5-11). Satan's head was bruised at Calvary, but the full effect of his defeat will not be seen until all things are subject to the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2. 5-8).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Carried forward from March issue)

6. For what purpose were animals in the garden of Eden? (Methil)
The extent to which animals were habitually in the garden of Eden is not clearly stated in Scripture. That they were brought to Adam to be named does not necessarily imply that they all remained there. It is well to establish that the interaction of many forms of life are necessary for the balanced functioning of the natural creation and this would probably be reflected in Eden. Adam was given authority over every living thing, so it is reasonable to suggest that he would control the animals in relation to the garden of Eden. Perhaps under those conditions the natural aptitudes of certain animals would be more fully used for man's service. It is of interest to note that in the millennial day various animals are mentioned in connexion with the "holy mountain" (Isaiah 11. 6-9).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Many questions arose, but space will not permit discussion of them all; moreover on certain points raised it would be difficult to offer an informed opinion because insufficient detail has been revealed in Scripture. Contributors will also note that some points have been taken from papers and presented for discussion in question form.

1. Did the serpent speak audibly to Eve, or did he implant wrong thoughts in Eve's mind? (Teesside)

Satan can indeed influence men's minds, and that is how he often works today, but in Eden he chose to speak audibly through the serpent. This is confirmed by the fact that Eve replied audibly; no other interpretation can properly be placed upon the words of Scripture (Genesis 3. 1-5). If Satan had intended to implant wrong thoughts into Eve's mind without the vehicle of speech, there would have been no need for the serpent.

L. B.

2. What benefit will access to the tree of life give to those mentioned in Revelation 2 and 22, seeing they already have eternal life? (Teesside)

Revelation 2. 7 has to do with eating the *fruit* of the tree of life by those who have overcome, perhaps leading to the enjoyment of a fuller life than others. Revelation 22. 2 does not go so far as to specify the purpose of the fruits, but says that the *leaves* are for the healing of the nations. "I am of opinion that there will be no disease, there may be

some draining of **their strength** from their employments, **and some measure** of exhaustion, **and the leaves...** will have a vivifying effect" (J. M. —Bible Studies 1959, p. 84; L. B.

3. Is the **tree of life** in Revelation the **same** as that in **Genesis?** (Teesside)

We think not. There will **be new heavens and a new earth** and the **future tree** of life will **be** there, in the New Jerusalem, also **termed** the **Paradise** of God (Revelation 2. 7), of which the **garden of Eden** was a shadow. L. B.

4. Is there **any means** of computing how long Adam and **Eve** were in Eden before they **sinned?** (Portslade)

It has **been** suggested (Needed Truth, 1962, p. 5) that Adam and Eve **may** have enjoyed the bliss of Eden for about a hundred years. It is **true** that **if** the chronology of **Genesis 5** is taken as a guide **Adam** lived for about a hundred **years** before **begetting** children, but **it would be possible to make** use of this information only **if** Cain were born immediately after the Fall. We **suggest** that this is a questionable assumption, for there may have **been a gap** of many **years** between chapters 3 and 4 of Genesis. Another factor which leaves such deductions open to question is that Adam **was mature** when created, whereas the **men** in the genealogy of chapter 5 were **born**. L. B.

Genesis 5 sets an **upper** limit on the duration of Adam's innocence. J. B.

5. **Do fig** leaves **speak** of **empty** profession, connecting Genesis 3 with Matthew 21. 19? (Kilmarnock)

There is no direct link of principle between these **references to fig** leaves. The lack of **fruit** on the leafy **fig tree** of Matthew 21 **may** perhaps **be** spiritualized as denoting **empty** profession. The **use** of **fig** leaves for a covering **by Adam** and **Eve** would derive rather from a **sense** of shame; there is **no suggestion** that they were **making any kind of "profession"**; rather they were cowering from the **presence** of an offended God. G. P. Jr.

They were providing necessary covering without **first** being enlightened **as to** God's way of doing so. J. B.

(to be continued D. V.)

NOTICE

Contributors who **desire** their **papers**, which **are** not published, returned to them with editors' comments, **are requested** to enclose stamped **addressed** envelopes.

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BIBLE STUDIES

"A Magazine for the exploration of the Word of God (Acts 17. 11). "

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EDITORIAL

Through simple contrast the divine record of the sacrifices brought by Cain and Abel presents a truth which is fundamental to the whole revelation of Scripture. Cain reflects man's naturally self-sufficient attitude, his reluctance to accept the need of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. Abel by faith presented a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous. It is impressive to find this truth so clearly illustrated right at the beginning of God's ways with fallen man.

Appropriately linked in this issue with the general study of Genesis 4 is the first of a specialized series of articles on the great doctrine of atonement. These articles will establish from Old and New Testaments the consistent principles of divine thought as to the conditions on which sinful man may find acceptance with God. Atonement is seen as the satisfaction given to God in regard to sin, a satisfaction ultimately based alone upon the shed blood of His spotless Son, which "speaketh better than that of Abel".

In connexion with the three articles on atonement, there is a slight change from the arrangement originally planned in the published syllabus. The Old Testament aspect will now appear in the May and June issues, and the New Testament aspect in the July issue. This rearrangement is due to space considerations, and will not of course affect the contents of our brother's valued contribution to the year's study.
G. P. Jr.

ATONEMENT

1. In the Old Testament

The purpose of this brief study is to enable the student to view the subject in elementary perspective and to appreciate its implications.

The word "atonement" as used to-day, is particularly English. It is of Anglo-Saxon derivation, meaning simply "at-one-ment". Thus it has come to be almost synonymous in our language with "reconciliation", the state of being at-one. Many therefore have considered this to be the scriptural meaning of the word. But that is not so. In Scripture it was the atonement which procured reconciliation, but was not itself the reconciliation. At-one-ment was the result of atonement made.

Although the subject of the atonement pervades the whole of Scripture, culminating at Calvary in New Testament times, the word itself occurs only in the Old Testament (with the single exception of Romans 5. 11 in the A. V. only). The root verb is *Kaphar*, which Gesenius defines as meaning "to cover, to cover over, to overspread with anything". It is translated into several different English words in the Authorized Version and for handy reference it might be well to set these out in detail. The occurrences are 102 in all, and the renderings, in order of their first appearance, are as follows:

Pitch: (1) Genesis 6. 14.

Appease: (1) Genesis 32. 20.

Make atonement: (73) Exodus 29. 33, 36, 37; 30. 10 (twice), 15, 16; 32. 30; Leviticus 1. 4; 4. 20, 26, 31, 35; 5. 6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6. 7; 7. 7; 8. 34; 9. 7 (twice); 10. 17; 12. 7, 8; 14. 18, 19, 20, 21, 29 31, 53; 15. 15, 30; 16. 6, 10, 11, 16, 17 (twice), 18, 24, 27, 30, 32, 33 (thrice), 34; 17. 11 (twice); 19. 22; 23. 28. Numbers 5. 8; 6. 11; 8. 12, 19, 21; 15. 25, 28 (twice); 16. 46, 47; 25. 13, 28. 22, 30; 29. 5; 31. 50. 2 Samuel 21. 3. 1 Chronicles 6. 49. 2 Chronicles 29. 24. Nehemiah 10. 33.

Reconcile: (2) Leviticus 6. 30; Ezekiel 45. 20.

Make reconciliation: (4) Leviticus 8. 15; Ezekiel 45. 15, 17; Daniel 9. 24.

Reconciling: (1) Leviticus 16. 20.

Cleansed: (1) Numbers 35. 33.

Be merciful (1) Deuteronomy 21. 8.

Shall be forgiven: (1) Deuteronomy 21. 8.

Will be merciful: (1) Deuteronomy 32. 43.

Be purged: (1) 1 Samuel 3. 14.

Pardon: (1) 2 Chronicles 30. 18.

Purge away: (2) Psalm 65. 3; 79. 9.

Forgave: (1) Psalm 78. 38.

Is purged: (1) Proverbs 16. 6.

Pacify: (1) Proverbs 16. 14.

Purged: (3) Isaiah 6. 7; 22. 14; 27. 9.

Be disannulled: (1) Isaiah 28. 18.

Put it off: (1) Isaiah 47. 11.

Forgive: (1) Jeremiah 18. 23.

Am pacified: (1) Ezekiel 16. 63.

Purge: (2) Ezekiel 43. 20, 26.

Of these 102 occurrences of *Kaphar*, it will be noted that 73 are translated "make atonement", the remaining 29 being a fair cross-section of what the translators considered to be suitable equivalents. They are all, however, translations of the same Hebrew word, meaning "to cover".

Generally, *Kaphar* is used to describe the action of covering in various ways. The first two occurrences illustrate this diversity.

Genesis 6. 14. Here the word is translated "pitch", from the fact, presumably, that the bitumen was to be so thoroughly applied to the ark by Noah that every evidence of wooden plank would be obliterated, both inside and outside. Which thing of course contained an allegory

as to the completeness of the cover available to the sinner in Christ, so that in the divine reckoning no evidence of sin remains.

Or again, Genesis 32. 20. Jacob is returning to meet his brother Esau, the latter long since offended and deeply hostile. So Jacob sends on ahead his gifts by separate droves, "For he said, I will appease him (Hebrew, cover his face) with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept me (Hebrew, my face)". If these two men, hitherto estranged, were to meet face to face, something must be done to "cover the face" of the offended man. So Esau's eye rested on the gifts and he no longer saw his brother's faults. Thus reconciliation was achieved. The same principle is found in Proverbs 16. 14, "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death; **but a wise man** will pacify (*Kaphar*) it". J. L. Ferguson

THE COURSE OF THIS WORLD

The title of this study is taken from Ephesians 2. 2. The expression occurs only once in our New Testament, but includes two Greek words which are frequently translated "world". Literally it would read, "The age (*aion*) of this world (*kosmos*)". The setting of the expression is instructive: "Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ephesians 2. 1-3). This passage describes the state of the majority of mankind in alienation from God. The Ephesian saints had been like the rest until divine grace reached them in salvation. The *Holy Spirit* reveals the Satanic power behind man's disobedience, and the dominant influence of the desires of the flesh and of the mind. The result is that men walk "according to the course of this world" which remarkably describes the whole trend of human history.

Let us now examine a little more closely the meaning of the words *aion* and *kosmos* in the particular sense of their usage in this context. *Aion* is usually translated "world" in our Bible, although in the Revised Version "age" is always noted in the margin. It signifies an age or period of time having certain characteristics. So it expresses the truth that the present order of things is temporary, being marked by well-defined spiritual features. Other examples of the use of *aion* which confirm both these aspects are: —

"That *He* might deliver us out of this present evil world"

(Galatians 1. 4),

(this world is characteristically evil and is only for the present);
"A wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to nought" (1 Corinthians 2. 6),

(divine wisdom is contrasted with wisdom deriving from mere human thought, even in the ablest representatives of human policy and power; all are coming to nought);

"The sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of light" (Luke 16. 8),

(those dedicated to the principles of this age are contrasted with those following principles of divine revelation; the former are wise "for their own generation", a limited time).

The **basic meaning of *kosmos*** is order or arrangement. It is almost invariably translated "world", but with obviously different meanings. For instance, in Romans 1. 20 it refers to the earth, a usage deriving from the order seen in all created things; in John 3. 16 it means all the people in the world; in John 7. 7 it has the more specialized significance of "the present condition of human affairs in alienation from and opposition to God". It is this last aspect which interests us in connexion with the expression "the course of this world", so two further examples may be helpful:

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17. 14), (all the Lord's ways were governed by subjection to the Father's will, in contrast to the self-willed attitude of men in general; the disciples were to be like their Master, in principle and outlook different from the order of things around them).

"The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6. 14), (the effect of the cross in Paul's experience was to create this absolute contrast of ideals as far as the world was concerned).

From the divine viewpoint, then, man's rebellion against God has resulted in a system of thought and action which follows a similar pattern from generation to generation, and is well expressed by the Greek word *kosmos*. The word *aion* conveys that this order of things will obtain only within the limits of God's permissive purpose.

On what basic principles has this *kosmos*, this ordered system of worldly attitudes, been established? The apostle John touched the root of the matter when he wrote, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2. 16). Powerful springs of human thought and action were polluted at the Fall. Physical desires which in unfallen man had been perfectly balanced and controlled now became to Adam and his descendants the means of self-indulgence and sometimes self-destruction. Man's marvellous capacities of thought were originally dedicated to a fuller appreciation of the Creator, and a richer understanding of His works and ways. These powers were warped by the entrance of sin, becoming to many an expression of pride in human reasoning, the substitution of philosophy for revelation. Satan had skilfully appealed to the desires of the flesh and mind when he beguiled Eve in Eden. She "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3. 6). As a result her will was yielded to disobedience, and Adam fell into transgression through her. Henceforth human attitudes were to be governed largely by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life. Powers which were intended to be for man's service in subjection to God now impelled him tyrannically in bondservice to sin. This disclosure of origins in Genesis accords fully with the Spirit's analysis of the course of this world in Ephesians 2. 1-3. The subtle adversary who through Eve drew Adam from allegiance to God has continued to direct the course of the world; he is described in Ephesians 2. 2 as the "prince of the power of the air", and in 2 Corinthians 4. 4 as "the god of this world (age)". The disobedience of Adam at the beginning is perpetuated in "the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience". It is stated that

"we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind".

There are important references in Galatians and Colossians to "the rudiments (or elements) of the world (*kosmos*)"; see Galatians 4. 3, 9; Colossians 2. 8, 20. The word translated rudiments is *stoicheion*, from *stoichos*, meaning a row or series. Hence derives the thought of an elementary principle. According to Colossians 2. 20 believers are seen as having died with Christ from the rudiments of the world. The basic principles of human thought are contrary to divine revelation in Christ. Resulting attitudes of the unregenerate are necessarily diverse from those of the believer. Both in Galatians and Colossians this truth is presented in relation to religious matters. For in the realm of religion the god of this age has catered bountifully for man's felt need of soul. Vast religious systems have been impressively designed to appeal to the natural mind and to accommodate the desires of the flesh. Yet they are intrinsically "after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"; "weak and beggarly rudiments" is the description given in Galatians 4. 9. Such the principles of this world must always be, even when expressed in religious terms, for the world seeks to elevate man by right of his own worth, rejecting both the divine revelation of human need and the provision of a Saviour in our Lord Jesus Christ.

So the course of this world has flowed on, ever consistent with the principles of its origin. God's word illustrates this in regard to Cain and his descendants. Cain's godless course began with his spiritual pride in presuming to offer of the fruit of the ground, in this way ignoring the need for the shedding of blood for the remission of sin. That God had already revealed this truth to Adam and his sons may safely be implied from the nature of Abel's offering—"the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof". The spirit that worked in Cain as a son of disobedience led to a fearful expression of the works of the flesh in his jealousy and murder of Abel. The record of his posterity in Genesis 4. 16-24 is typical of the course of this world as God views it. "The desires of the flesh and of the mind" pervade the story. Cain is the first recorded city builder, and Lamech the first polygamist. Development of skills in cattle rearing, the construction of musical instruments, and the formation of metal cutting instruments were notable in the sixth generation from Cain. The section closes with Lamech's proud words of self-justification for having slain a young man, and his arrogant claim to special protection from revenge. There is no trace of any glory given to God. It is man's achievement, pride and violence from first to last, the tragic paradox of a race so highly endowed yet acting out of harmony with the Creator.

As if to emphasize the essential difference between those following the course of this world and those who walk with God, the line of Cain is presented separately from the line of Seth. Generally speaking the Scriptures deal much more fully with the experiences of the minority who walk by faith. The mainstream of human unbelief and godlessness rushes on, but God's spiritual purposes are fulfilled through those who recognize the falseness of the rudiments of the world, and separate from it to give effect to His will.

Illustrations could be multiplied of the course of this world at different points of Bible history, but events leading to the great crisis of Calvary

provide an outstanding example. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His Anointed". As the spiritual leader of Israel, Caiaphas stooped to the expedient of counselling the death of the Lord Jesus despite all the healing blessing which proved the truth of His divine claims (John 11. 47-50). As representative of Roman justice, Pontius Pilate yielded to political pressure and sentenced the Lord to death after having declared Him innocent. Fear of losing worldly power and status warped the judgement of both men. In this connexion Paul, speaking of divine wisdom, commented, "Which none of the rulers of this world knoweth: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Corinthians 2. 8).

The course of this world will reach its climax and catastrophe under the coming man of sin. To a degree unprecedented in human history he will dazzle mankind by his appeal to their natural desires and vanity. "He shall magnify himself in his heart... he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand" (Daniel 8. 25).

"The world passeth away, and the lust thereof:
but he that doeth the will of God abideth
for ever" (1 John 2. 17).

G. P. Jr.

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 4. 1-4. 24

The Way of Cain

From Greenock. —Whatever reasons Eve may have had in naming her sons Cain and Abel, it is apparent from this passage of Scripture and from relevant New Testament portions that in process of time Cain and Abel showed characteristics contrary to Eve's expectation; for Abel was the man who obtained imputed righteousness by faith, but Cain was the vain man who wasted his opportunities and got nothing. Both illustrate *in* their lives the principle enunciated by the Lord: "Take heed therefore how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he thinketh he hath".

Surely the way of Cain leads to the land of wandering and destruction and that way should be known so as to be shunned by every Christian. It was not of faith (Hebrews 11. 4) and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin". It was of the evil one and was therefore evil and murderous (1 John 3. 11, 12).

Those who rail at dignities and set at nought dominion are seen to be in the way of Cain (Jude 10, 11). One reason why men pursue this way is that "sin coucheth at the door". Sin may **be** given a welcome at the door **of a man's** heart.

John H. Johnson

From Atherton and Leigh. —The expression "the way of Cain" is found in Jude 11, and described the path taken by a man who rebelled against God, and lost his self-control. It is alarming to realize that sin is so powerful that it could have such a devastating effect so early on in

human history. Hebrews 11. 4 tells us that "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain". Abel's sacrifices involved the shedding of blood, but Cain's did not. Cain offered the result of his own effort, the fruit of the ground, although it should be borne in mind that under the Levitical arrangement (Leviticus 2. 14) it was quite proper to offer to God fruit of the ground, as distinct from animals, in certain circumstances. Abel offered his sacrifice in faith, involving obedience, it being assumed that God would have instructed Adam in this connexion, and he would pass on God's message to his sons. A measure of disobedience appears to have marred Cain's offering. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.

It would seem that if Abel's offering speaks to us of Christ's acceptable sacrifice, so Cain's would tell us of the insufficiency of even the very best of man's efforts. Cain was very angry when his offering was not accepted, and he passed on to Abel the blame for his own failure to please God. Had Cain's anger been directed at his own shortcomings, all might have been well. How many of us have walked the way of Cain in this respect? From God's treatment of Cain later in the story, we may perhaps deduce that Cain's action was not premeditated. Cain's deed in venting his feelings on his innocent brother was nevertheless dark and serious, and for it he was cursed of God.

Genesis 4. 9-14 shows that Cain had no reverence for God his Maker, because he spoke to Him as to a fellow creature. His words were lying, arrogant and careless. We may learn from this that those who no longer fear God may soon begin to forget His greatness and His many other attributes [See answer to question 2]. *D. S. J., S. G. S., H. S.*

From Wigan. —The New Testament scriptures (Hebrews 11. 4, 12. 24; Matthew 23. 35; 1 John 3. 12; Jude 11) bear witness to the fact that the story of Cain is not just an allegory but an historical account of the way a man acted before God.

The way of Cain must be viewed in contrast to the way of Abel. They both enjoyed the same parents, surroundings, instruction and opportunities. No doubt they heard the story of the Fall and God's provision of a sacrifice with its blood-shedding in order to provide a covering for sin (Genesis 3. 21). Whilst Abel learned the lesson and approached God in the correct manner, in God's way, Cain had a rebellious spirit and brought of the fruit of the ground which was unacceptable, an evidence of self-will.

Cain was wroth and he allowed this to grow into murder which, together with his willingness to tell lies to God, proclaims him to be a son of his father, the devil (John 8. 44). He went out a wanderer and a fugitive from God, and his seed followed him in defiance of the will of God (e. g. Lamech).

Cain is a type of the unbelieving religious man of today who is prepared to acknowledge there is a God and attempts to worship Him in his own way. The best of sinful human nature in religious garb and ceremonies is unacceptable. God's salvation is despised and the substitutionary sacrifice He has provided, the only way to Himself, is spurned.

Cain was the head of a line of men who persecuted the godly because they felt the witness of their lives. Many have been martyred for their faithfulness and testimony and so it will continue till the coming of the Son of Man. Those of the way of Cain will finally come under the judgement of God when the man of sin and their father the devil are dealt with (Revelation 19, 20).

Those of the way of Abel, those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof, and should rather reveal the **fruit** of the Spirit. *K. J. Home*

From Toronto, On*. —The way of Cain is the way of self-will, the way of the natural man. This is evident from all three sections of Genesis 4, his offering (verses 1-5), his reactions to being corrected (verses 6-15), and the activities of his descendants (verses 16-24).

It appears that Cain and Abel must have known the proper approach to God by the teaching and example of their father Adam. Cain's error was not so much in the substance of his offering (the fruit of the ground), but in his attitude of perversity in bringing what *he* wanted. Romans 5. 13 shows us that sin is not imputed when there is no law. At this point in history, no law of offerings had been given. Thus Cain's fault did not lie in transgressing a law, but rather in falling short of the requirements of God. It was not disobedience, this was the sin of Adam; rather it was the sin of self-will. [Although there was not a detailed code of law governing sacrifices to God, such as later obtained in Israel, it seems clear that God had made known certain basic principles of acceptable approach. If Cain "fell short of God's requirements" in this respect, was he not being disobedient? G. P. Jr.]

Cain showed that his error was not just a simple mistake in his attitude to divine correction. *He* murdered his brother and then lied about doing so. He had an opportunity for repentance (verse 7) but instead he was consumed with anger and vengeance. Because of this he was cursed from the earth, in even fuller degree than Adam (3. 17), so that the ground which had provided his livelihood would no longer produce abundantly for him. However, the LORD protected him from suffering the same fate as his brother by placing a mark on him, lest any finding him should kill him. Vengeance belongs to the Lord (Romans 12. 19) and not to us.

Adam and Eve may have thought that either Cain or Abel would be the promised seed that would bruise the serpent's head (3. 15). However, Abel was dead and Cain was cursed. But God raised up another, Seth, to take Abel's place. In chapter 4 we have the names of some of Cain's descendants; in chapter 5 we have the line of Seth, and it is remarkable how many of the names are similar. And yet in character they were very different for, as Matthew 7. 20 tells us, "by their fruits ye shall know them". The line of Cain was occupied with the things of this life, and in fact originated the primary endeavours of farming (verse 20), the arts (verse 21) and industry (verse 22). *Keith Dorricott*

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

The fifteen remaining papers, from Aberkenfig and Barry, Birmingham, Blackburn, Denmark Hill, Derby, Hamilton (Ont.), Lagos, Mac-

duff, Methil, Paisley, Glasgow (Parkhead), Portslade, Sydney, Teesside and Vancouver expressed agreement with the main lines of the published contributions and made the following further points of interest.

"That the story of Cain and Abel is not allegorical is clear from the New Testament references. From 1 John 3. 12 we learn that Cain was as real as Abel. From *Hebrews* 11. 4 and 11. **13-16** we learn that Abel died in faith, not having received the promises, **but** he looked forward to the same city to which we look forward, that of which God is the Builder. From *Jude* 11, Cain is as real as Korah and Balaam. Cain was the first-born of Adam and Eve, and thus the first person to be born into the world".

Eve probably hoped that Cain would be the promised seed but she was bitterly disappointed. Cain had opportunities equal to Abel's but he was a self-pleaser, he lacked self-control which is of the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians* 5. 23. R. V. M.). Although provided for in the Levitical rules, the bringing to God of the first-fruits of the ground was inappropriate in Cain's case because on its own it did not provide propitiation for the offerer; it must be preceded by offerings entailing the shedding of blood.

Cain did not show godly sorrow, which worketh repentance (2 *Corinthians* 7. 10). When Adam sinned God cursed the ground, but to Cain God said, "Cursed art thou". He pronounced him a wanderer, but in defiance Cain built a city and dwelt there. Men were not allowed to avenge Abel's blood, that was God's prerogative (*Romans* 12. 19), so God was merciful to Cain. Of his descendants, Lamech, the seventh from Adam, was boastful, arrogant and violent, a bigamist and a murderer, whereas Enoch, the seventh from Adam in the Seth line, walked with God.

Abel's offering was so much in accordance with the Levitical principles that it points to divine instruction having been given, so that Abel offered by faith, and faith rests upon the word of God. He was hated and persecuted as the righteous ever are by the ungodly (*Matthew* 23. 33-35). He was the first to suffer physical death, but he went to the place of comfort to await the resurrection. *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. If the word "sin" (*Genesis* 4. 7) can also be translated "sin offering" what is the significance of this alternative rendering? (Atherton and Leigh). What is the meaning of this verse? (Derby). Because in Hebrew the same word may in certain contexts be used for "sin" as for "sin offering", some have proposed that "sin offering" is a better translation in 4. 7. By this they imply that Cain had the option of following Abel's right example, an animal suitable for a sin offering was couching at his door, available for sacrifice. If he did well by following God's direction in this matter, **Abel** would as the younger brother be in a subject position to Cain, instead of gaining precedence as he had done by virtue of his more excellent sacrifice. I am personally disposed to the view favoured by most contributors that sin crouched ready like a wild beast to spring and exploit Cain's weakness; sin's

desire was towards Cain for his ruin, but he could have gained the mastery, or "ruled over" sin if he had followed God's counsel.

G. P. Jr.

2. How could Cain be hid from the face of God? (Atherton and Leigh). The expression "from Thy face shall I be hid" is figurative and typical of a common Old Testament usage. David was invited to seek God's face, and his heart responded to do so (Psalm 27. 8). He prayed that God would not hide His face from him (verse 9). There are many other occurrences of this expression (e. g. Isaiah 8. 17, Jeremiah 33. 5, Ezekiel 39. 24) clearly implying the forfeiture of God's favour and blessing. The contrasting term is "make His face to shine upon thee", implying divine favour and prosperity (Numbers 6. 25; Psalm 80. 3, 7, 19). So Cain's words in Genesis 4. 14 did not mean that God would be unable to see him (compare Psalm 33. 14-15), but that he would be bereft of the comfort of divine blessing in his life.

G. P. Jr.

3. Does Genesis 4. 12 mean that the earth would yield nothing when Cain tilled it? (Denmark Hill).

We would suggest that "her strength" means her full capability. "When thou tillest the ground" envisages some sort of husbandry, but no one would attempt to work the ground if there were to be no results at all. "From the face of the ground" (verse 14), may mean that Cain was driven from the fertile area he had in the past cultivated.

L. B.

It has to do with Cain as a fugitive and a wanderer. Such peoples rarely gather much in the way of crops even today, and are usually poor agriculturists. The LORD would withhold the full return the earth is capable of supplying.

J. B.

4. Is the "blood... of Abel" (Hebrews 12. 24) Abel's own blood which cried from the ground or is it the blood of his sacrifice? (Paisley). The blood of sprinkling, which is coupled with the expression quoted in the question must be that of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1. 2) by which the New Covenant is ratified to those who are obedient, just as the Old Covenant was ratified by Moses with the blood of burnt offerings and peace offerings (Exodus 24. 1-8). It seems probable that Abel's offering is here regarded as the prototype of the Levitical offerings and is used as the standard for comparison with the better things of this dispensation.

L. B.

The italics in Hebrews 12. 24 should be observed. The translators' insertion of "that of" may mislead. After the comparative (better) the Greek uses the preposition *para* with the accusative case (Abel). This construction can be rendered in several ways, and here it would appear to indicate *beyond Abel*, in the sense of "superior to". If we put this alongside the story in Genesis, we observe that Abel's own blood did not speak of something good when it cried out from the ground. Further "better" in Hebrews 12. 24 is not better in contrast to something bad or inferior, but better in contrast to something good. Abel's offering spoke well for him in the presence of the LORD, but the blood of sprinkling (an application of the shed blood of the Christ) speaks better things on our behalf. It is the blood of the new and better covenant.

J. B.

5. How did Cain know his offering was not accepted. Did fire come down from heaven and consume Abel's sacrifice? (Macduff).

Several instances are recorded in the Old Testament when fire came forth from the presence of the LORD to consume the sacrifice, either to indicate His approval (Leviticus 9. 24; 1 Chronicles 21. 26; 2 Chronicles 7. 1) or to display His power (1 Kings 18. 38). Some positive indication, which was clear to both Cain and Abel, must have been given, but we have no means of knowing whether the suggestion made in the question is correct or not.

L. B.

6. God would know of Cain's displeasure, so why did He ask him concerning it? (Macduff).

It is wonderfully characteristic of God in His graciousness that He deigns to reason patiently with men even when they are obviously in a wrong attitude of heart. An instance of this is seen in His word to Israel, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1. 18). God's questions to Cain were in this spirit, graciously guiding him to a reconsideration of his folly.

G. P. Jr.

This sort of thing occurs in several places in Scripture; its purpose would appear to be to work conviction in the heart of the wrongdoer.

J. B.

7. Of whom or what was Cain afraid? (Macduff).

We tend to assume the background to many Bible incidents without appreciating broad developments which must have taken place. It is clear from 4, 17 and 5. 4 that only Cain, Abel and Seth are named from among the many other children born to Adam and Eve. To Eve God had said, "I will greatly multiply thy conception" (3. 16). Chapters 4 and 5 of Genesis are presented in relation to the contrasting lines of Cain and Seth. They do not disclose the age of Cain and Abel when their offerings were presented. We may certainly deduce from Cain's words in 4. 14 that he could anticipate personal hazard through a rapidly expanding population among which would be many who would wish to avenge Abel's murder.

G. P. Jr.

The following questions are continued from the April issue:—

6. Were Adam and Eve adequately equipped for combat with the devil? Did they have a conscience to guide them? Can they be held accountable for the sin which has brought such dire consequences to their posterity? (Parkhead, Birmingham, Methil)

There can be no doubt that our first parents were given adequate mental and moral powers to resist the devil, but they failed to do so. Conscience is part of man's moral constitution. Moreover they also had the gift of free will, which they abused. It is evident from Eve's conversation with the serpent and her subsequent thoughts and actions (3. 1-6) that a battle was going on within her. Her understanding of God's command was weighed against her own desires, and in that sense her conscience was active. Despite the initiating of temptation by Satan, Adam's accountability for the Fall is confirmed by such Scriptures as Romans 5. 12 and 1 Timothy 2. 14.

L. B.

7. Do the words, "**Thy** desire shall **be** to thy husband, and he shall **rule** over **thee**", imply **that Adam** and **Eve** were on equality before **the** Fall? (Paisley)

In dealing with **the** subject place of the woman, Paul writes: "For **Adam** was **first** formed, **then Eve**" (1 Timothy 2. 13). It is therefore **clear that** the **subject** relationship of wife to **husband** was designed **by** the Creator originally, although **verse 14** of 1 Timothy 2 reinforces **verse 13**, as a further reason for the appropriateness of the woman's subjection to her husband **after** the Fall.

G. P. Jr.

Even today subjection does not involve inequality.

J. B.

8. **Did Adam** and **Eve** eat of the **tree** of life before the Fall, and was **repeated eating** of it necessary to **sustain** life? (Aberkenfig and Barry).

This would **seem** to **be** implied **in Genesis** 2. 16, 17 and 3. 22.

L. B.

9. **Did Eve** **receive** the commandment about the forbidden fruit from Adam or directly from God? (Aberkenfig and Barry).

Scripture records only God's command **to Adam**, so there may **be** ground for the suggestion that **Eve's** failure to quote the words of the Lord **accurately** indicated that she had **received** instruction through her husband.

L. B.

10. How **can James** 1. 14, 15 **be** applied to **Adam** and **Eve** in **innocency**? (Derby)

Was not **Eve** drawn away **after** her own lust (**in the sense** of overriding desire) so that she was **enticed**, and her will was yielded to disobey God?—that **is**, the lust, when it had conceived, bare sin. The "**desire** of the flesh **and** of the **mind**" overcame her loyalty **to** God's command.

G. P. Jr.

11. **Since** the **serpent** as **created** by God was "**very good**", was he subtle in a good **sense**? (Kilmarnock)

It is clear that **quite** apart from the Fall animals have **been created** with **distinctive** characteristics of **temperament** as well as of physical **form**; compare the Lord's words, "wise **as** serpents, and harmless **as** doves". **Satan** would choose for his purpose **a creature suited** to the **need** of a skilled approach which would **disarm** Eve. **If**, as several contributors **suggest**, the **serpent** was originally **a creature of grace and beauty**, **besides** being endowed with instincts of special skill **in comparison** to other **creatures**, it would admirably **suit Satan's design against** Eve.

G. P. Jr.

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BIBLE STUDIES

"A Magazine for the exploration of the Word of God (Acts 17. 11). "

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EDITORIAL

A number of brethren have expressed appreciation, either in writing or verbally, of this year's syllabus and the new method of presentation, but some are critical of the changes. In taking this opportunity of thanking brethren for their comments, we should like to explain that the alterations are aimed at making the magazine more interesting for readers, whether or not they also send in contributions. The persistent labours of those who **write** articles for *Bible Studies* are greatly appreciated, and for their encouragement we would assure them that it is our intention to publish a contribution from each brother who writes with a measure of regularity, although in some cases a few months must elapse before this can be achieved. However, the greater spiritual benefit accrues during study and writing; publication of an article mainly profits those who read, rather than those who have written.

In this connexion perhaps we could remind brethren again that if they wish to have their articles returned with editors' corrections they should send a stamped addressed envelope when submitting their contribution. This service is offered in the hope that by making suggestions of ways in which articles might be improved we can give a little compensation and perhaps some help to those whose papers cannot be published.

L. B.

THE ATONEMENT

1. The Old Testament (continued)

When we come to the 71 references to "make atonement", the Spirit leaves us in no doubt as to the main use which He wished to make of *Kaphar*. It **has** to do with the action of God in covering sin, so that there might be (to select a few instances):

- the consecration of the priests,
- the presentation of the Levites,
- forgiveness for national or individual sin,
- acceptance for the worshipper,
- cleansing from personal impurity,
- cleansing for the leper and his dwelling.

It will be noted that, in the main, the expression "make atonement" is found in the Pentateuch. In the Psalms and the Prophets more specific words are used by the translators, such as purge, pardon, forgive, pacify, disannul, put off. But throughout, the thought is the same. A covering has been found for sin. It is put out of sight.

The covering came from the blood on the altar. Leviticus 17. 11 is clear on the point. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life". It had to be life for life, death for death, substitution. Only on the basis of the blood of the prescribed offering could sin be covered. Only thus could there be "the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God" (Romans 3. 25).

The work of the mediator also played an interesting part in certain aspects of the work of atonement. There are several very fine examples of this. One of these was the action by Aaron at the destruction of Korah and his company, men who had "sinned against their own lives". The congregation of Israel resented the divine judgement which followed, and the wrath of God broke out on them. The plague began. And on that day Aaron ran into the midst of the assembly with his censer full of incense lit from the fire of the altar, "and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed" (Numbers 16. 48).

Another illustration follows shortly after, this time in the mediation of Aaron's grandson, Phinehas. Again, such was the provocation by Israel in the matter of Peor that in His jealousy God would have consumed them. Once again the plague had begun. And Phinehas rose up, and with his spear turned away the anger of God "and made atonement for the children of Israel" (Numbers 25. 13).

In all these figures of the true, God was foreshadowing the great atonement of which the prophets wrote; the "precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ: who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Peter 1. 19, 20). He was the One who would mediate in the day of divine anger against sin, the day when all that had been covered by the shadows would be revealed for judgement, who would experience the abandonment of Calvary, that sinners might come one day into the Lord's presence, and see and be seen "face to face".

From this glorious atonement then comes the reconciliation. The sequence is sin, consequent alienation from God, the willingness of the divine mind to reconcile enemies to Himself, the atonement, then reconciliation. On the basis of the work of the Mediator at Calvary, God has now reconciled sinners to Himself, and into our hands He has committed the great and glorious work of publishing abroad the tidings and of entreating men to come into the fulness of the wealth and joy of this reconciliation. That is the important impact of the atonement on us—a consideration much more vital to pursue than simply an academic study of *Kaphar*.

To complete these notes we should now look briefly at the Hebrew nouns which come from *Kaphar*, and then, through the Septuagint, trace both verb and nouns into New Testament usage. The Hebrew nouns and their occurrences are as follows:

Kapher (a cover). This is found seventeen times in the Old Testament, translated in the Authorized Version thus:

A bribe: (2) 1 Samuel 12. 3; Amos 5. 12.

Camphire: (2) Song of Songs 1. 14, 4. 13.

Pitch: (1) Genesis 6. 14.

Ransom: (8) Exodus 30. 12; Job 33. 24, 36. 18; Psalm 49. 7;

Proverbs 6. 35, 13. 8, 21. 18; Isaiah 43. 3.

Satisfaction: (2) Numbers 35. 31, 32.

Sum of money: (1) Exodus 21. 30.

Villages: (1) 1 Samuel 6. 18.

Kippur (a covering or an expiation) only **used** in the plural (*kippurim*). This occurs eight times and in each case is translated "atonement". The references are:

Exodus 29. 36; 30. 10, 16; Leviticus 23. 27, 28; 25. 9;

Numbers 5. 8; 29. 11.

Kapporeth (a lid). This is uniformly translated "mercy-seat", and occurs twenty-seven times, as follows:

Exodus 25. 17, 18, 19, 20 (twice), 21, 22, 26. 34; 30. 6; 31. 7; 35. 12; 37. 6, 7, 8, 9 (twice); 39. 35; 40. 20;

Leviticus 16. 2 (twice), 13, 14 (twice), 15 (twice).

Numbers 7. 89.

1 Chronicles 28. 11.

Precious covering lid, all of gold but stained with blood, atoning blood of which the LORD said, "there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim" (Exodus 25. 22). Wondrous meeting place, the centre of a communion which was in perfect harmony with all that was represented in the two symbols of divine holiness. Abiding truth—reconciliation based **on** atonement.

J. L. Ferguson

CHRONOLOGY FROM **ADAM** TO THE FLOOD

The detailed chronology of this period, recorded in Genesis 5, may be displayed in tabular form as follows.

| | Age at son's birth | Age at death | Year of birth | Year of death |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Adam | 130 | 930 | 0 | 930 |
| Seth | 105 | 912 | 130 | 1042 |
| Enosh | 90 | 905 | 235 | 1140 |
| Kenan | 70 | 910 | 325 | 1235 |
| Mahalalel | 65 | 895 | 395 | 1290 |
| Jared | 162 | 962 | 460 | 1422 |
| Enoch | 65 | (365) | 622 | (987) |
| Methuselah | 187 | 969 | 687 | 1656 |
| Lamech | 182 | 777 | 874 | 1651 |
| Noah | | 950 | 1056 | 2006 |

The dates in the last two columns are expressed as the number of years from the beginning of Adam's life. Brackets are used to distinguish Enoch's translation. From Genesis 7. 6 we learn that Noah was six hundred years old at the time of the Flood and we therefore conclude that the period from the beginning of Adam's life to the Flood was of 1656 years' duration.

One of the notable features of this first phase of man's history is the longevity of the men named in Genesis 5 and presumably of the rest of mankind at that time. Thus for example, Adam lived until Lamech was fifty-six years old, coexisting with eight generations. The life span of a man was equivalent in duration to a period stretching from the eleventh century A. D. to the present day. However, the divine commentary on the whole period is relatively brief and very unfavourable. "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6. 5).

It would seem that man's longevity was a significant factor in the increase of wickedness on the earth. It is terrible to think of a population containing individuals with centuries of experience in habitual vice and corruption. In our own times it is sometimes possible for a criminal against society to evade legal justice, but even so his capacity for damage is limited to a period of forty years or so at most. Towards the end of this dreadful time in the history of mankind the practice of evil must have attracted a degree of accomplished skill that has never since been equalled. "And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Genesis 6. 11).

After the flood the life span of men was significantly and progressively reduced, as can be seen from Genesis 11. In this connexion it is interesting to consider the case of Hezekiah, who prayed insistently for an extension of his life. The fifteen years thus obtained were spent in a manner that merited the divine comment, "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him" (2 Chronicles 32. 25). The best attitude in this matter is well portrayed in the prayer of Moses, "So teach us to number our days, that we may get us an heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90. 12).

One very arresting feature of Genesis 5 is the care and precision with which the Spirit records the chronology of this antediluvian period. For each name is given (a) the number of years lived until the birth of the son, (b) the number of years lived after that birth, (c) the total number of years lived. Divine emphasis is thus placed on the numerical accuracy of the record. Also, the direct father and son relationship is explicitly stated in each case. The line of descent is further recorded in 1 Chronicles 1. 1-4 and Luke 3. 36-38 and the three accounts are in complete agreement.

In spite of the clarity of this part of the divine record, some doubting Bible readers have suggested that (a) some of the generations from Adam to the flood are not recorded, (b) the life span of individuals was less than that stated in Genesis 5, (c) the total period from Adam to the flood was much longer than the indicated 1656 years. These suggestions seem to have been made in an attempt to render the Scriptural account more credible to the unbeliever who clings to the idea that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (see 2 Peter 3. 4). But since the Scriptural record is so completely unambiguous, such suggestions are a direct challenge to the veracity of the divinely inspired word and must therefore be rejected. On a much lower plane we may also comment that the Scriptural chronology is not in disagreement with

any factual evidence in the realms of history, archaeology or palaeontology. In conclusion we would emphasize the folly of challenging the truth of the word of God on the basis of reasoned extrapolation from inevitably limited human observations and measurements made today. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower faileth: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1. 24, 25). J. W. Archibald

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 4. 25—5. 31

The Godly Line of Witness

From Paisley.—Eve's confession regarding Seth that he was a God-appointed seed shows her awareness of the purposes of God. She recognized that there was a select line leading to the Christ, distinct from the countless lines which would arise through her many children. The first of this line was Abel, slain by Cain. If he had survived one of his sons would have been next in the lineage of the Christ. This is confirmed by Jude's statement that Enoch was the seventh from Adam. In Genesis 5 he appears to be the sixth from Adam, but Jude shows that Abel is included although not mentioned in Genesis 5. [An interesting suggestion, but did Jude really imply this? Was Enoch not rather the seventh from Adam in the sense that "all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations" (Matthew 1. 17)—i. e., including Adam as the first and Enoch as the last of the group mentioned. The line leading to Christ is clearly traced in Luke 3. 38 via Adam, Seth and Enoch, without reference to Abel. G. P. Jr. J. Therefore as well as being a godly line of witness the line is also one of descent from which would come the appointed Seed of Genesis 3. 15.

The similarity of some of the names in the line of Cain and those of Seth's descendants suggests that this line of Cain was Satan's imitation. The witness of the godly line to men was of God, *His* word and *His* ways, when all mankind was rapidly corrupting its way upon the earth. The witness was also prophetic in pointing forward to coming judgement. Fittingly the portion ends with Noah who lived right up to and throughout that judgement.

An attempt has been made to explain away the longevity of these men by inferring that the years in chapter 5 are in fact months. The absurdity of this is shown in verse 12 for Kenan would thus have begotten Mahalalel at the age of six. It is thought that this longevity was due to a genetic difference which existed for a certain time in man. This would also probably account for the ability of Cain and presumably others to marry their sisters without the danger of unhealthy issue.

Jared's son was called Enoch ("initiated"—coming from a word meaning "to narrow"—i. e. to discipline, to train up). This was indeed characteristic of the one who walked with God. *He* was outstanding among the righteous and unique in his translation that he should not see death. It is plain that he walked with God before he begat Methuselah. The very name is prophetic, showing that Enoch knew of the impending flood. Being a prophet (Jude 14) it was apt that he

should prophesy through the name of his son. Also, believing that he would not see death (hence he was translated by faith) he made sure that his prophecy regarding the future judgement would not be forgotten when he was gone. Jude's account of what Enoch said also shows that he saw beyond the Flood to the great and notable day of the Lord of which the Flood was but a figure (2 Peter 3. 6-10).

Lamech saw the death of Adam, then next in his lifetime the translation of Enoch took place. This was followed by the death in succession of all those godly men except his own father Methuselah who outlived Lamech by five years. Despite this passing away of all his contemporaries Lamech, in calling his son Noah, showed his faith in the triumphal outworking of the purposes of God. All that he and his forbears had believed was not going to fail, but in Noah he saw one who would inherit the earth and be an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith: "This same shall comfort us for our work and for the toil of our hands" (Genesis 5. 29). *T. Summerhill, D. Cooper*

From Lagos. —After Cain and Abel, Adam had other children, sons and daughters (Genesis 5. 4); among them was Seth who was born after the death of Abel. The shedding of the blood of righteous Abel, upon the earth by Cain (Matthew 23. 35) brought the steps of other godly people to the point described in Psalm 73 as "well nigh slipped", for men almost stopped calling upon God. The prosperity of the wicked as seen in Cain's line (Genesis 4. 17-24) may also have helped in turning many away from God.

From Adam descended two different lines of people. The first was the line of Cain which extended to Lamech (see Genesis 4. 19-24) the first polygamist and a proud murderer. The other line began from Seth. Seth was a man who through his life and words turned many unto God; for then, says the scripture, "began men to call upon the name of the LORD" (Genesis 4. 26). The Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest in the line of Seth, blessed its end (Luke 3. 23-38).

Other outstanding persons in the line were:

- (a) Enoch who walked with God and was taken alive from the earth because of his righteousness when Seth was 857 years old (Genesis 5. 23-24).
- (b) Methuselah, who lived longer than anybody else recorded in the Bible (Genesis 5. 27).
- (c) Noah, who was noted for his faith and obedience when he was warned about things still future (Hebrews 11. 7).

F. Chuku, S. A. Awonusi

From Melhil. —Adam's son Seth was born in Adam's likeness and after his image, and so there is positively no thought of gradual change or evolution.

Names given to men in those days had a definite meaning, they were divinely inspired. There was nothing haphazard in the choice of a name. Methuselah's name means "when he is dead it shall be sent". This would refer to the judgement of the Flood which took place the same year that Methuselah died, and during the lifetime of his grandson Noah. Methuselah's father was Enoch, an outstanding man, who

walked with God. This was a habitual, constant walking with God, for Enoch was a dedicated man. We believe that Enoch would know from God that the judgement of the Flood would come; hence the naming of his son. Enoch is chronologically the first prophet in the Bible (Jude 14). He is also the first man not to die. The Bible simply says, "and he was not, for God took him". He was translated, he did not see death. He changed residence at the age of three hundred and sixty five years. Men must have looked for Enoch, "and he was not found, because God translated him" (Hebrews 11. 5). Fifty men were sent to look for Elijah when he was translated and they sought three days and found him not (2 Kings 2. 17). What will it be like when the Lord comes for His own, and suddenly the world will take note that thousands are missing (1 Thessalonians 4. 16, 17)? As Enoch was translated before the judgement of the Flood, so also saints at the Rapture will be taken before the day of God's wrath.

In Genesis 5 God records the birth and death of each in the godly line (Psalm 116. 15). Conversely, with Cain and his descendants their deaths are not recorded, whereas what they accomplished physically on earth is stated (Ezekiel 18. 23).

N. G. Coomer, D. B. Reid

Impressions from other contributors

Eleven other papers were received, from Aberkenfig and Barry, Atherton and Leigh, Birkenhead, Birmingham, Denmark Hill, Derby, Greenock, Portslade, Teesside, Toronto and Vancouver.

There was a great deal of interest in the longevity of those included in the genealogy of Genesis 5, a feature which resulted in their lives overlapping subsequent generations, and so helping their godly witness. "This godly line of men, up to Noah, seems to have lived in fellowship. Adam lived to see the generations up to Lamech (the father of Noah), who was fifty-six years of age when Adam died. Thus Adam could have passed on all of his Eden experiences, and testified about Abel the righteous".

Against any suggestion that the length of the years indicated in Genesis 5 was significantly different from our present year, it was commented: "Noah lived for 960 years, and when he was 601 years old God made an important promise to him: 'While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease'. Here are defined the days (earth's rotation on its axis) and the seasons (earth's journey in its orbit round the sun), suggesting that the years were of the same length as they are today. It is the average span of man's life which has been reduced (Psalm 90. 10). "

Another aspect of the chapter which attracted attention was the interpretation of the names of the men listed: "the meaning of the names are understood to be—Adam (red, earthy), Seth (appointed), Enosh (frail, mortal man), Kenan (acquisition), Mahalalel (praise of God), Jared (descent), Enoch (dedicated), Methuselah (when he is dead it shall be sent), Lamech (powerful), Noah (rest, comfort)". In some cases possible alternatives were proposed, but the interpretations listed found more general acceptance. The similarity of certain names in the line of Cain indicated to some that men may have similar abilities, but these are often misdirected.

The reason for men beginning to call upon the name of the LORD (4. 26) was thought to be the witness of the godly line, causing men to turn to God. Adam would have known of God's acceptance of Abel's offering, and would have testified of it, so influencing godly men to follow Abel's example.

In Genesis 5, it is stated of only two men, Enoch and Noah, that they walked with God, and it was thought to be significant that these were the two who appear among outstanding examples of faith in Hebrews 11. In view of the disparity between the life-span of Enoch and his son Methuselah it was suggested that the value of service for God and the degree of spiritual blessing obtained are not dependent merely on length of life.

The fact that the prophecy of Enoch was not recorded in the Old Testament was seen as evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures, for the Holy Spirit seems to have given a direct revelation to Jude concerning this matter. *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Was Enoch's prophecy (Jude 14, 15) completely fulfilled at the Flood? (Birkenhead).

It is clear from the context that Enoch's prophecy is applied to have a bearing on the godless of the day in which Jude wrote, and of course of subsequent generations. Note—"These also in their dreamings" (v. 8); these "rail at dignities" (v. 8); "These are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts" (v. 12); "and to these also Enoch..." (v. 14). Who are "these" to whom Jude repeatedly refers? Surely, the men of verse 4 who had "crept in privily". Enoch's prophecy would warn the godless of the antediluvian age not only of impending visitation at the Flood, but also of the ultimate wrath of God resulting in eternal judgement. The thought of the Lord coming with "his holy myriads" (R. V. M.) seems even more directly appropriate to the coming of the Lord Jesus "with the angels of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1. 2-9) than to the judgement of the Flood. **G. P. Jr.**

2. Did the godly line depart to be with God at death? (Vancouver).

In Old Testament times there was a fear of death which kept men in bondage (Hebrews 2. 15); at death men went down into Sheol (Genesis 44. 31, R. V. M.) which was not the presence of God. In Luke the abode of those who died in faith is called "Abraham's bosom" (16. 22); no doubt this was a place of comfort where its inhabitants awaited the day when the Lord would lead "captivity captive" (Ephesians 4. 8) and so deliver them, having brought to nought him that had the power of death (Hebrews 2. 14, 15). We believe this took place at the Lord's resurrection. **L. B.**

3. Were sons or daughters born to the Seth line before those mentioned in Scripture? (Derby, Paisley).

There is nothing in this chapter which would exclude the possibility of children being born before those mentioned. The word "after" seems to refer solely to the number of years between the birth of the son named

and the father's death; it does not necessarily qualify the phrase "and begat sons and daughters". L. B.

4. When Lamech gave Noah his name did he know that God had chosen him as a deliverer and that through him would come the Messiah? (Greenock).

From Genesis 5. 29 we learn that Lamech gave the name Noah (meaning 'comfort') to one of his sons, because "this same shall comfort us for our work and for the toil of our hands". Lamech must have known by revelation from God that there was a special purpose in this child. The comfort would derive from some measure of assurance that the struggle of the godly line to maintain witness would not be in vain. Despite the tremendous extension of evil, Lamech could be comforted in the knowledge that this son would be used by God to preserve testimony through the judgement which had already been foretold by Enoch and implied in Methuselah's name. There is no evidence directly linking Lamech's naming of his son Noah with the ultimate birth of the Redeemer, although the preservation of the human family was implicit in the promise of the Seed of the woman. Some caution is needed in attaching significance to the meaning of names, especially where the meaning is uncertain, lest we build too much on an insecure foundation.

G. P. Jr.

5. What were the nature and purpose of Enoch's translation to heaven? (Atherton and Leigh).

Nothing is revealed of the circumstances of Enoch's translation, but we know that it was "by faith" and "that he should not see death". Before his translation he had witness borne to him that he had been well-pleasing to God. His translation may therefore have been intended as a warning sign to the ungodly and an encouragement to the righteous. Deeper divine purposes, at present beyond human scrutiny, may of course have been involved. We do not know whether he was taken to heaven in the same manner as Elijah, but would consider that by some means he was taken in bodily form to heaven. More than this God has **not** told us.

G. P. Jr.

6. Did God appear to Enoch in something akin to human form to strengthen communion with him? (Atherton and Leigh).

"Enoch walked with God" (5. 24) is a figurative statement expressing a life of spiritual communion and godliness. While the possibility of the LORD appearing to Enoch as He did to Abraham (e. g. Genesis 18) cannot be precluded, we have no scriptural statement to confirm this, and it should not be implied from the expression "walked with God". *G. P. Jr.*

7. Were all the line from Seth to Noah godly? If so, why the scant mention in Hebrews 11? (Atherton and Leigh).

It seems consistent with the Holy Spirit's presentation of this line in chapter 5 that all those men were of godly character. They are grouped together as distinct from the line of Cain (chapter 4). There is evidence of the fear of God in Seth (4. 26) and in the names given to several in succeeding generations. If Enoch and Noah were outstanding in their walk with God, there is nothing to suggest that the others were not also men of God. The omission of others' names in Hebrews 11 is quite inconclusive. See verse 32, where the writer explains that "time will fail me if I tell" of many other worthy characters. *G. P. Jr.*

8. It is **appointed unto men** once to die". In view of this scripture, will the witnesses of Revelation **11** be Elijah and Enoch as **both these men did** not die? (Teesside).

The general validity of Hebrews 9. **27** would not be affected by the odd exception so we do not think any conclusion can be drawn from this particular scripture which might help in deciding the identity of the two witnesses of Revelation **11**. *G. P. Jr.*

9. Is Malachi **4. 5** a prophecy concerning the coming of John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah (see Matthew **11. 14**)? (Teesside).

Matthew 17. **10-13** shows clearly that Malachi 4. **5** applied to the coming of John the Baptist, but there will be a future fulfilment of the prophecy when Elijah is sent to Israel at the time of the end. *G. P. Jr.*

PSALM 59 continued from page 12 / 1968

Slay them **not**, lest my people forget:
Scatter them by Thy power, and bring them down,
 O Lord our shield.
 For the sin of their mouth, and the words of their lips,
 Let them be taken in their pride,
 And for cursing and lying which they speak (verses 11, 12).

David **did** not wish God to slay those who sought his life, but rather, as the R. V. margin gives the meaning of "scatter", to "make them wander to and fro". He asks this lest God's people should forget. The Hebrew word *NUWA* is rendered "fugitive" in the words of Cain who said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground; and from Thy face shall I be hid; I shall be a fugitive (*NUWA*) and a wanderer (*NUWD*, this word has somewhat of the same meaning as the former) in the earth" (Genesis 4, 13, 14). Cain was not to be slain by man; he became a marked man, so that others would not follow in the way of what he had done. But, alas, they did follow in the way of Cain (Jude 11). David wished that God's displeasure seen on those who sought his life would be a lesson to His people. He called the LORD his Shield. And he spoke of the sin of the mouth, and the words of the lips of those who were ruthlessly against him, of their pride, their cursing and their lying. They were truly in a bitter and bad state.

Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they be no more:
 And let them know that God ruleth in Jacob,
 Unto the ends of the earth. [Selah.
 And at evening let them return, let them make a noise like a dog,
 And go round about the city.
 They shall wander up and down for meat,
 And tarry all night if they be not satisfied (verses 13, 14, 15).

"Consume them" here cannot mean to slay them, for David had already asked, in verse 11, "slay them not". It may be a slow consumption that he pleads for in their case, for he adds, "and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob", and after that he adds, "and at evening let them return, let them make a noise like a dog" in hunger for meat, and if they are not satisfied to tarry all night.

But I will sing of Thy strength;

Yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning:

For Thou hast been my high tower,

And a refuge in the day of my distress.

Unto Thee, O my Strength, will I sing praises:

For God is my high tower, the God of my mercy (verses 16, 17).

In verse 9 David spoke of God as his Strength, and here he sings of God's strength, and he sings aloud of God's mercy in the morning. He again refers to God as his high tower or cliff, as he did in verse 9, and again calls God, as in verse 10, the God of his mercy. These things gave the psalmist in his troubles much comfort and cause to sing praise to God. Likewise we, who have in the Scriptures been given a more extensive view of God's strength, mercy and place of defence, have great cause to sing praise to our God, and so let us sing.

J. M.

PSALM 60

Here is another golden (MIGHTAM) psalm of David, set to "The lily of testimony". It is given to teach, as was Moses' song of Deuteronomy 32, as we see from Deuteronomy 31. 19. This psalm is concerning the victories of David recorded in 1 Samuel 8, in which it is said, "The LORD gave victory to David withersoever he went" (verse 14).

O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast broken us down;
Thou has been angry; O restore us again.

Thou hast made the land to tremble; Thou hast rent it:
Heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh (verses 1, 2).

This it seems was David's view of Israel as he thought of the forces which were against them, and of his recovering his dominion at the river Euphrates. He looks back over the history of Israel for many years. He had just brought back the Ark to Zion, as recorded in 2 Samuel 6. But the story of Shiloh and all that followed it were to him evidence of being cast off, broken down; the land was made to tremble and was rent, and he pleads for restoration and for the healing of the breaches. The reign also of the first king, Saul, had ended disastrously, and there had been long war between the house of Saul and himself, but at last the nation was united under him, and having brought back the Ark he thinks of building God a house, as recorded in chapter 7, but God spoke of his seed building Him a house after

David had slept with his fathers (verses 12, 13). David was assured that his house and kingdom would be established for ever, and that God's mercy would not be taken from him as God had taken it from Saul. As a result David went in and sat before the LORD and spoke to Him (verses 18-29).

Thou hast shewed Thy people hard things:

Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering.

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee,

That it may be displayed because of the truth (verses 3, 4).

[Selah.

When one reads the history of Israel in 1 Samuel, one cannot but be saddened, for it is little better than that recorded in the book of Judges, until we come to the time of the bringing up of the Ark when Israel was a united people. God had showed many hard things to His people and made them to drink of the wine of staggering. But now God had given a banner to them that feared Him to be displayed because of the truth; the law in the Ark which was now in Zion, the new centre for the nation, the city of God and of David. Now a new era of victory had opened up for the nation.

That Thy beloved may be delivered,

Save with Thy right hand, and answer us (the A. V. gives "me").

God hath spoken in His holiness; I will exult:

I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth

(verses 5, 6).

David asks God that He will save by His right hand, and answer them, in order that His beloved (people) would be delivered, for there were many peoples round about them who were ever ready to descend upon them. David refers to God speaking in His holiness, and he would exult, that is, rejoice, for God had spoken to him at length, as recorded in 2 Samuel 7. 1-17, by Nathan the prophet. Shechem was a district and a city. The latter in Mount Ephraim; it was a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, and was the first residence of the kings of Israel. The premier place among the tribes had passed from Ephraim to Judah (Psalm 78. 67, 68), and possibly by dividing Shechem David would take away somewhat of the power of that chief northern tribe. He would also mete or measure out the valley of Succoth, which was in Gad on the east of the river Jordan, and no doubt allot to it some of the families of that tribe. These statements are repeated in Psalm 108, 7.

(to be continued D. V.)

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BIBLE STUDIES

"A Magazine for the exploration of **the** Word of God (Acts 17. 11). "

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EDITORIAL

The picture that God beheld of mankind after sixteen centuries had run their course is startlingly akin to what He must behold today, after sixty centuries! The wickedness of man was great in the earth. Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Corruption and violence rilled the earth. What an overwhelming flood of disaster was let loose upon mankind when "through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin" (Romans 5. 12)! We must never underestimate the wickedness and lawlessness of sin.

Today, not a few editorials in Christian magazines are deploring the prevalence of violence and vice and sex as subjects for the cinema screens. In London, according to the entertainment-guide column of a national newspaper, fifty-seven per cent of the films currently being shown are so marked by the censors to indicate their lewd character. Plays, too, are similarly depraved, dealing with vice that should "not even be named amongst us". These types, it is stated, are, in a slightly lesser percentage, invading the homes on T. V. screens. The general populace is almost apathetic in this permissive age. Comparatively few voices from Christians are raised even in mild protest.

Let us remind ourselves of the warnings to the early churches of God, which in so many ways were highly blessed of God: "Because of *these things* (filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, uncleanness, covetousness) cometh the **wrath of God** upon **the** sons of disobedience. **Be not...** partakers with them" (Ephesians 5. 6, 7). "For which things' sake (a similar list **as** above) cometh the **wrath of God** upon the sons of disobedience" (Colossians 3. 6). "For the **wrath of God** is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Romans 1. 18). Judgement inevitably followed in the days of Noah, and will also fall in the days of the Son of Man, and might easily fall today!

Many years ago I listened to a salesman bargaining to sell a car to a Christian. The salesman's language was vile and blasphemous, not spoken in anger but apparently according to his usual habit. My Christian friend revolted at the blasphemous use of his Saviour's name, and he in a Christlike manner rebuked the salesman. Later my friend revealed the Scripture which impelled him to act as he did, (and I pass it on)—"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but **rather even reprove them**" (Ephesians 5. 11). How cowardly to have remained silent!

Jas. M.

ATONEMENT

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the study of the Atonement in the Old Testament, we noted that the four Hebrew words mainly used were *Kaphar*, *Kopher*, *Kippurim* and *Kapporeth*. Continuing this study, the following points are relevant to a New Testament consideration.

(1) When the Septuagint, that is the translation into Greek of the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures, was prepared during the first two centuries B. C., the following Greek words were, in the main, used as equivalents of the Hebrew words indicated:—

| | |
|--|--|
| Hilaskomai (or compound) | : for Hebrew <i>Kaphar</i> (to make atonement) |
| <i>Hilasterion</i> and to a lesser extent <i>Hilasmos</i> | : for Hebrew <i>Kapporeth</i> (a lid) |
| <i>Hilasmos</i> | : for the Hebrew <i>Kippurim</i> (a covering or expiation) |
| <i>Lutron</i> (see special note at the close of this article) | : for the Hebrew <i>Kopher</i> (a cover), |

The usage of these Greek equivalents in the New Testament is as follows:—

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Hilaskomai</i> | Luke 18. 13— be merciful Hebrews 2. 17—make propitiation |
| <i>Hilasterion</i> | Romans 3. 25— a propitiation Hebrews 9. 5—the mercy-seat |
| <i>Hilasmos</i> | 1 John 2. 2, 4. 10—the propitiation |
| <i>Lutron</i> | Matthew 20. 28— a ransom Mark 10. 45—a ransom |
| <i>Antilutron</i> | 1 Timothy 2. 6— a ransom |

In this connexion the following differences between the Authorized and Revised Versions should be noted:—

(a) In Romans 5. 11 the A. V. translates the **Greek** word *katallage* as "atonement". This is more accurately "reconciliation" in the R. V.

(b) In Hebrews 2. 17 the A. V. translates the **Greek** word *hilaskomai* as "reconciliation". This is more accurately "propitiation" in the R. V.

(2) From the foregoing it is evident that the "atonement" of the Old Testament, that covering of sin in the forbearance of God through an expiatory sacrifice, brought by an offerer in evidence of faith, is expressed, and indeed fulfilled in the "propitiation" of the New Testament. The Lord Jesus makes propitiation and is Himself the propitiation. His death is the great substitutionary ransom-price available to all, effectual in the case of those who believe. All reconciliation to God is based on Him and His work.

(a) He is Himself the propitiation, the expiator, the ransom. This was one of the purposes of the ages (Romans 3. 25), foreshadowed in the mercy-seat of both Tabernacle and Temple (Hebrews 9. 5). He is this for the whole world, for all repentant sinners (1 Timothy 2. 6; 1 John 2. 2), and for all God's children (Matthew 20. 28; Mark 10. 45; 1 John 2. 2, 4. 10), and in a unique sense for God's people (Hebrews 2. 17).

(b) His expiatory work was accomplished, the ransom-price was provided, by His sacrifice in death. "In whom we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses" (Ephesians 1. 7).

Redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation—these are all the fruits of the atonement, the propitiation.

But He also ever lives to administer the value of this atonement, whether it is in the initial reconciliation of the sinner, or in His advocacy for the repentant believer, or in the maintenance of a failing people in divine testimony.

(c) Looking then to the abiding holiness of God, whether viewed in relation to His creatures, His children, or His people, the words of the penitent publican, spoken probably at the hour of the evening sacrifice, have a constant relevancy: "God, be merciful (be propitiated) to me a sinner" (Luke 18. 13).
J. L. Ferguson

Note:

Interested students may apply to Mr. James Martin for a copy of detailed study notes by E. Archibald, tracing the relationship between Hebrew words regarding atonement and their Greek equivalents in the Septuagint.

PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE JUDGEMENT

God gives men clear warning of the consequences of wrong actions. Adam was plainly told that he was permitted to eat of the fruit of every tree except one, which was clearly identified, and disobedience would result in death (Genesis 2. 16, 17). It seems that Eve may have received this information through Adam, but however the word came to her, she failed to quote it accurately (3. 2, 3), and so was beguiled by the serpent. But Adam sinned without excuse, his act was plain disobedience. The immediate effect was that Adam and Eve died spiritually according to the word of God although the judgement did not involve immediate physical death. They were, however, cut off from God, the Source of life, and communion with Him was broken (Genesis 3. 8-10). The divine pronouncements which followed were an outline of the dire effects of sin upon man in general and Adam and Eve in particular, and the first gracious intimation of the plan of salvation conceived in the heart of God before the world began (1 Corinthians 2. 1-7). Even at the first onset of sin the grace of God was shown to man when He made coats of skin, involving the shedding of blood. Adam and Eve must have been greatly comforted and encouraged by this provision.

The divine principle later laid down, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9. 6) was not applied in the case of Cain, the first murderer. He seems to have been treated leniently, nevertheless he protested against the alleged severity of the sentence, which entailed separation from God and his fellow men, hard labour, a nomadic existence and a constant fear of retribution (Genesis 4. 11-15). It is strange that Cain did not show any sign of repentance for his heinous sin, but the grace of God still abounded, for steps were taken to protect Cain from the avenger of blood (Genesis 4. 15).

For about 1500 years the worldly descendants of Cain and the godly line through Seth, his brother, lived on the earth, but sin increased rapidly until even the family of Seth was engulfed and intermingled with that of Cain (Genesis 6. 12). Eventually there was so little remain-

ing upon the earth to give God pleasure that it is recorded, "It repented the LORD that He had made man on earth, and it grieved Him at His heart" (Genesis 6. 6). Do we understand from this statement that God changed His mind? It is difficult for our minds to develop such a line of thought concerning the omniscient God who knows the end from the beginning. We understand rather that such was the deep sorrow in His heart and such was His abhorrence of sin that a completely fresh start would be necessary. He had waited patiently for men to acknowledge His gracious dealings with them, but wicked thoughts, corruption and violence increased until there was no remedy but to destroy man. In a later day God waited until the iniquity of the Amorites was full before He allowed His people to destroy them and occupy the promised land (Genesis 15. 13-16). So in this day of grace God's mercy is being spurned, iniquity is increasing without restraint and assuredly the final judgement cannot be far away.

The all-embracing character of the Flood judgement is repeatedly emphasized in Genesis 7. 19-23; indeed a partial flood would have appeared out of place in view of the extreme gravity of the situation (6. 5-7). As always, divine justice was tempered with mercy. Noah and his family were saved and given the task of replenishing the earth, encouraged by the assurance that there would never again be a universal flood (Genesis 9. 1-11). Another merciful aspect of divine judgement is here exemplified, for a great number of children who lost their lives in the Flood would otherwise undoubtedly have been engulfed in the godlessness of their age, but paradoxically their untimely death in innocence preserved them from eternal judgement. The next universal judgement will be by means of fire (2 Peter 3. 7, 10), but in the meantime God deals with outbreaks of sin whenever they occur by partial but appropriate means. Thus the men of Babel, who hankered after the renown and supposed security of a great man-made edifice, were scattered and frustrated in their purpose by a confusion of language.

Later, the great wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah was punished by a destruction of these cities so complete that their whereabouts today can only be surmised. God's mercy is here further illustrated by His readiness to save Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons (Genesis 18. 32). In this case divine judgement upon righteous but erring people is also involved, for Lot and his family, having left the right way, were now subjected to violence, bereavement and hardship as part of the divine chastening. Nevertheless they experienced the nearness of God; they were rescued from violent death and separated from wordly corruption (Genesis 19. 1-30).

In the time of Israel's bondage the Egyptians do not seem to have been godless or immoral but they were arrogant in their oppression of God's people; they stood in the way of Israel's return to the Promised Land and their functioning as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The early chapters of Exodus record the many opportunities for repentance which Pharaoh was given. These he ignored, so because of his pride God, in judgement, manifested His glory to the Egyptians and to all the world (Exodus 11. 9, 15. 14-16). Those who were thus saved from slavery were henceforth to be subject to the merciful but righteous judgements of God in a special way, for they were the people of God.

His great Name must not, on their account, be evil spoken of (Isaiah 52, 1-6), but conversely, because they were called by the Name of the LORD, He would glorify Himself through them (Daniel 9, 17-19). These principles can be observed in God's dealings with His people from the time they crossed the Red Sea until, after repeated rebellion followed by divine chastisement, they finally rejected divine rule and there was no alternative for God but to remove them from their land.

Restoration was the main object always in view for God's people, and this in fact was accomplished in the case of a remnant of Judah after seventy years of captivity in a strange land. The astonishment of the nations at the extent of Jerusalem's destruction is referred to many times in Jeremiah's prophecy, and Ezekiel testified that the Lord will never deal with a people so severely again (Ezekiel 5, 9). Daniel, in retrospect, was impressed by the singular intensity of the divine visitation (9, 12) but he was fully aware that it was necessary because of the righteousness of God. Equally His great Name demanded that restoration should be effected, both in the short term, as it was during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and in the long term during the millennium and after. Furthermore, the wicked nations which God was pleased to use as His instruments in the chastisement of His people must themselves be punished (Jeremiah 25, 11-14).

In all ages, God has righteously dealt with man's sin in all its innumerable varieties, making the punishment fit the crime, having regard to culpability, personal responsibility, and the effects of the punishment on the sinner's fellow men, always tempering justice with mercy. But the outworking of God's chastening hand with believers may on the surface seem more severe than His dealings with men generally. Such was the experience of Asaph (Psalm 73, 1-14). We ought to be thankful that this is so, for God deals with us as with sons (Hebrews 12, 5-13), and our latter end will be indeed blessed, in contrast to the dire punishment of the unsaved (Psalm 73, 16-19). The problem of the disproportionately great amount of suffering which sometimes seems to afflict believers has often exercised the minds of godly men, but the apostle Peter through the Spirit puts the matter in the right perspective:

"But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name. For the time is come for judgement to begin at the house of God: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4, 16, 17).

L. B.

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 5, 32 - 7, 5

Corruption and Impending Judgement

From Birmingham. —Concerning man, "The LORD saw... that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually". Sin flowed like a mighty river, its source was in Eden and the Lord Jesus described its dreadful flow in the words of Matthew 15, 19, "For

out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness". Time has not changed man's heart. The LORD saw, and it "grieved Him at *His* heart". "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever. " By this word from God, man's opportunity was determined. "The Lord saw. " "His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men. " God could not overlook man's sin. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. " Repentance bears the thought of feeling sorry, so that one might be sorry for the object of intended evil and repent, or sorry because of the response of another and repent of the good that one intended to do. We read that "it repented the LORD that He had made man". (See special article, Principles of, Divine Judgement). The measurements of the ark, as commanded by God to Noah, were precise. No doubt there would be ample accommodation for every kind of creature and for man, but no more than sufficient for all that were to occupy it, through the foreknowledge of God.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness, and his preaching, which had as its theme the coming judgement, would be a mixture of warning and exhortation. Even as the Lord Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit's advent, "He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement". The Lord Jesus is the central theme of this work of the Holy Spirit.

We were interested in the thought of the ark being pitched within and without. This was all-important. We felt that the pitch speaks of the blood of Christ [the pitch speaks of atonement. J. B.]. There was double security for those within the ark. And perhaps there is the thought here of the security of believers in Christ, who are protected from the eternal judgement of sin in its inward aspect (nature) and its outward aspect (practice). *H. Smith*

From Derby. —Corruption always sets in when divine principles are disregarded. Here it was brought about by the intermarriage of the pure and the denied, the Seth line and the Cain line, that which was of God and that which was of men. This distinction is seen throughout the Scriptures. For instance the Lord said to Peter, "Thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" (Matthew 16. 23), and again we read, "Are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?" (1 Corinthians 3. 3).

Genesis 6. 2 shows us the beginning of this corruption, and the following verses its dire results. The only way to avoid this state is to obey the divine command, "Be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6. 17). Some discussion arose as to who were "the sons of God". The thought was expressed that they may have been the angels who kept not their first estate, their proper habitation (Jude 6). Others thought them to be those of the godly Seth line who had married those of the worldly Cain line, being thus defiled. (See question 2).

The Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever" (6. 3). We were reminded, however, that the blessed Spirit of God is still striving with men (John 16. 8-11), but the point of importance is that He did strive with men in that day, specially through the preaching of

Noah, but they took no heed. God reduced the age of man to 120 years (see answer to Question 7). God commanded Noah to build the ark, defining the type of wood. Dr. Young identifies gopher wood as cedar, fir or cypress, an oily type of soft wood in contrast to hard woods such as oak, acacia, teak. The words "and shalt pitch it" translate the Hebrew word *Kaphar* to cover, usually rendered elsewhere, atonement. The pitch kept out the waters of judgement. God said to Noah, "Come thou", and afterwards He said, "Go forth of the ark", denoting that God Himself was also an Occupant, strengthening and encouraging Noah in his work, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Exodus 33. 14).
S. R. Whawell

From Barry and Aberkenfig. —The line of Seth which had maintained separation from the line of Cain now intermarried and brought upon the earth the fierce displeasure of Almighty God. It repented Him that He had made man (6. 6). [In the Old Testament in reference to God "repent" indicates "grieves greatly". J. B. J. God does not change His mind but changes His purposes (1 Samuel 15. 11, 27-29). Sin did not catch God unawares. There is that aspect of the will of God that no man can change, namely, the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; but there is also the sense that God willeth that all men should be saved; this is His desire, the gratification of which depends upon the response of man.

The suggestion that the sons of God were angels or heavenly beings cannot be maintained from the word of God, for verse 3 clearly states, (1) "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever", (2) for that he also is flesh: (3) yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years. These words all relate to created beings of the earth who were able to have children. Regarding the angels the Lord Jesus said, "The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20. 34-36). See also 1 John 3. 9-12, where the children of God are contrasted with those of Cain. The following scriptures were quoted in support of the other point of view Job 1. 6, 38. 7; Jude 6.

Romans 1. 18-32 brings before us something of the condition of things in the days of Noah. Why did Noah find grace in the eyes of the LORD? Because "he was a righteous man, and perfect (or blameless) in his generations. Noah walked with God". This does not mean he was sinless, but he had availed himself of the provision God had made through sacrifice, and being a man of faith he was accepted by God. This seems to be borne out by the words of Hebrews 11. 7.

God had previously warned men of impending judgement through Enoch (Jude 14, 15) and now He warned Noah to build an ark. His obedience was not only a testimony to his faith, but also a further warning that God's judgement was soon to fall upon the earth. Noah is described in 2 Peter 2. 5 as a preacher of righteousness, and there can

be no doubt that Noah would make it quite clear to those with whom he came in contact that God would destroy the earth by a flood. The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah a hundred years.

D. H. Butler

From Southport.—This passage describes a new stage in the progress of evil. In verse 5, what "the LORD saw" differs much from what "God saw", recorded in 1. 31. In the two halves of the verse man's evil is presented extensively and intensively, the latter with devastating force in the three words, "every, only, continually". A more emphatic statement of wickedness of the human heart is hardly conceivable.

The simple brevity of verse 8 is extremely telling after the sweeping terms of verse 7. Together the two verses show God's characteristic way with evil: to meet it not with half-measures but simultaneously with severe judgement and a way of salvation. Grace is still a sheer gift whether its recipient be a Noah or not. The further fact that all life is bound together is made plain in that other creatures shared man's doom and, as the story develops, his deliverance.

In a corrupt world Noah emerged not merely as the best of a bad generation but as a remarkably complete man of God. "Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations" is God's estimate of Noah.

The ark had then to be made. Every measurement had to be followed. In verse 18 we have the first mention of the word "covenant" in the Bible. Noah was assured of much more than to escape with his life. He went into the ark not as a mere survivor but as the bearer of God's promise for the cleansed world. The content of the covenant would be unfolded later and would embrace the whole company; but meanwhile it was directed to the one man through whom the many will be spared.

Five verses of chapter 7 describe how the order to embark was given. There was urgency, yet no haste; time for the whole task but none for postponements.

B. E. Scott

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Eight other papers were received from Birkenhead, Blackburn, Hereford, Lagos, Methil, Parkhead, Portslade and Teesside. Most of these commented on the meaning of the phrase "The sons of God" (6. 2) and in the main agreed with what is put forward in the paper from Barry and Aberkenfig. Another paper put it, "We find it difficult to accept that the sons of God of Genesis 6 were angels, who have changed their estate as some teach. For such angels are reserved in everlasting darkness until the judgement of the great day" (Jude 6). Another point of difficulty discussed concerns the origin and nature of the Nephilim. The Authorized Version reads, 'There were giants in the earth' (6. 4), but we understand the form of the Hebrew word indicates a verbal adjective or noun from Naphal, to fall; so that the translation 'fallen ones' may well have great significance". These were "men like Goliath and his brothers. But size means nothing to God, for He looks on the heart".

We find in this passage the first use of the word "grace" in the Scriptures: "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD". Judgement is God's strange work, yet He also showed grace to one man and waited while the ark was being prepared. Noah's testimony within the family circle interested several contributors. "Noah walked with God, moreover he brought up a God-fearing family, which was difficult at that time". One group discussed whether the seven with Noah were spared on account of his faith, but in the light of Ezekiel 14. 14, 20, thought that Noah's preaching must have converted these members of his own family. It was noted also that there is no mention of any grandchildren having been saved. Since Noah's sons could have been as much as **100** years old, it is possible that they may have had children.

But his preaching condemned the world in its "complete indifference to the strivings of the Holy Spirit". The ark was the only way of salvation, it typifies Christ, the only Saviour of men. There is a marked prophetic element in the portion for, with reference to the godless attitude of men, "prior to the coming of the Son of Man the earth will again experience days like those just before the Flood" and subsequently will come the final dissolution of the material universe by the same word of God that brought the judgement of the Flood upon the world (2 Peter 3. 3-7).

Eds.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. 1 Peter 3. 19: who were the "spirits in prison" to whom the Lord preached? (Blackburn).

The most satisfactory explanation of this difficult Scripture is that through Noah the Spirit of Christ preached to man prior to the Flood. The thought of Christ preaching through the agency of men is also found in Ephesians 2. 17. "In prison" probably refers to the imprisoned state in hades of those who were disobedient in Noah's day; it is not connected with the preaching but with the state of these people at the time Peter wrote.

L. B.

2. Were the "sons of God" (Genesis 6, 2) sons of Seth or spirit beings? (Blackburn).

G. H. Pember in "Earth's Earliest Ages" goes to some lengths to show that these were spirit beings but we disagree.

L. B.

They were not angels: they neither marry nor are given in marriage. It is definitely the line of Seth.

J. B.

3. God told Noah to bring of every unclean beast two, the male and his female, and of the clean beasts seven, the males with their females. But it was not until the days of the wilderness that clean and unclean animals were specified. Did God make this distinction to Noah for the purpose of sacrifice? (Teesside).

There is no doubt that much of God's law was known to man before it was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Abel, and many after him, knew God's requirements as to sacrifice, so they would know the distinction between clean and unclean animals. The larger number of clean animals was required for sacrifices and for food for man subsequent to the Flood (Genesis 9. 3); those not required for these purposes would be available to build up larger flocks of clean animals than would be necessary in the case of the unclean.

L. B.

4. The animal kingdom seems to have been corrupt, there was violence everywhere. Would it be right to assume that through sin Adam lost his dominion over the animals and some of them changed from eating herbs to becoming beasts of prey? (Teesside).

According to Romans 8, "the creation was subjected to vanity" (v. 20), is in "the bondage of corruption" (v. 21), and "groaneth and travaileth in pain together" (v. 22)—all as a result of man's fall in Eden. The serpent's habits were radically changed (Genesis 3. 14). Creation's hope of deliverance is in "the revealing of the sons of God", which we understand to be at the beginning of the millennium. A millennial scene described in Isaiah 11 includes the word that "the lion shall eat straw like the ox" (v. 7), indicating a radical change of habit. The proposal in the question would have some support from those general considerations, but the **data** available is admittedly limited. **G. P. Jr.**

5. Did the light, finished upwards, imply that Noah could not see the death of the wicked and so indicate that the saints will not see the destruction of the wicked? (Teesside).

The record in Genesis gives little indication as to the exact construction of the ark and any suggestion as to the position of the window can only be tentative. It would seem, however, from Genesis 8. 13 that the ark's surroundings could not be seen without removing the covering, possibly a structural operation, as distinct from merely opening the window (8. 6). Considerations of God's mercy would also lead us to think that the ark's occupants would be spared any sight of the horrors around them, but these deductions cannot properly be used as a basis for teaching concerning the destruction of the wicked in a future day except in so far as God's principles are unchanging. Types are given in the Old Testament to illustrate the teaching of the New, not to fill in any supposed gaps there may be in it. **L. B.**

6. Does the provision made in the death of Christ for infants and for those who have never heard the gospel apply to the victims of the Flood? (Teesside).

Divine equity in judgement has no dispensational boundaries. Abraham's question in Genesis 18. 25, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" expresses a truth basic to God's ways with all men. It is alone on the basis of Christ's atoning work that any are justified in any age. Those who "were disobedient" to God's warnings through Noah (1 Peter 3. 20) will be judged accordingly; the general principles of Romans 2. 11-16 will apply to those of Noah's generation, that is, responsibility will be relative, according to light available. On this basis we would understand that infants of the antediluvian age will be covered **by** the work of Christ. **G. P. Jr.**

The provision for the infant dead availed in David's day (2 Samuel 12. 23), and we may take it that it applies to all dispensations. **J. B.**

7. What is the meaning of "yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years" (6. 3)? (Barry and Aberkenfig, Derby, Teesside).

Two explanations of this verse are commonly put forward, (a) The life of man would henceforth be restricted to 120 years; (b) man would be destroyed by the Flood 120 years after this statement of divine judgement. What scriptural support can be found for (a)? The ages of nine patriarchs listed in Genesis 11 ranged from 148 to 600. Following these were Abraham (175), Isaac (187), Jacob (147) and Joseph (110). There is no evidence that 120 became the average life-span. Psalm 90. 10 gives a clear declaration from the pen of Moses, who was himself an exception to that general rule (Deuteronomy 34, 7). It therefore seems more logical to accept explanation (b), that the declaration in Genesis 6. 3 was made by God 120 years before the Flood. That Noah's age is stated to be 500 in 5. 32, leaving only 100 years until the Deluge came (7. 11), does not need to disturb this view, for chapter 6. 1-8 may be regarded as a parenthetical section, giving the general background to Noah's generation. *G. P. Jr.*

8. Is the term "sons of God", particularly in the Old Testament, confined to those who were directly created by the divine hand? (Hereford).

Reference to "sons of God" in the Old Testament are sparse, but it would be difficult to substantiate that all of them refer to beings "directly created by the divine hand". The Lord's words in Luke 20. 34-36 do seem to preclude the idea that the sons of God in Genesis 6. 2 were fallen angels. Certainly those spoken in Hosea 1. 10 as "sons of the living God" were not the subjects of any special physical creation. *G. P. Jr.*

PSALM 60 *continued from page 72*

Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
 Ephraim is also the defence of mine head;
 Judah is my sceptre.
 Moab is my washpot;
 Upon Edom will I cast my shoe:
 Philistia, shout thou because of me (verses 7, 8).

Gilead, where half the tribe of Manasseh dwelt, **and** Manasseh, the other half, who resided west of Jordan were David's Ephraim, the chief northern tribe, was the defence of his head, and Judah was his lawgiver. The R. V. **gave** sceptre, but the Hebrew word *CHAQAO* is never used for sceptre, but always lawgiver, and means to engrave ("meaning laws cut in stone or metal tablets in primitive times"). Moab was his washpot, a pot or bath for washing or bathing in. This kind of pot was a necessary vessel, but not an honourable one. Upon Edom he would cast his shoe as a token of possession, perhaps. The

Philistines who were **subdued** by David were to shout because of **him**. The A. V., which gives "**triumph**" instead of "shout", says in the margin "or **triumph** thou over me (by an irony)". I am doubtful of this. I think the Philistines were to shout because of **David's** triumph in **subduing** them (2 Samuel 8, 1).

Who will **bring me** into the strong city?
 Who hath led **me** unto Edom?
 Hast **not** Thou, O God, **cast us** off?
And Thou goest **not** forth, O God, with our hosts (verses 9, 10).

Before the battle was joined with Edom, David **asks** who would **bring** him to the strong city **and** also to Edom. **And it seems** that **in** the thought **of** the strength of Edom, he goes **back in** thought, **as he** does **in** the beginning of the psalm, to the failure of Israel, **and** to their dishonour, when God did not go forth with their hosts, and they were defeated.

Give us help **against** the adversary:
 For vain **is** the help (or salvation) of **man**.
 Through God we shall do valiantly:
 For He it is that shall **tread** down our **adversaries** (verses 11, 12).

He depends with **great** confidence on God who was to give them **great** help **against** the adversary. He had no **dependence** on the salvation of **man**; it was a **vain** thing **in** David's eyes. But through God, **by** His power **and** **guidance**, they would do valiantly **and** He would tread down their adversaries; for Israel **under** Joab smote twelve thousand of Edom **in** the Valley of Salt, **and** 2 Samuel 8. 13, says, "**David** **gat** him a name when he **returned** from smiting the **Syrians** **in** the Valley of Salt, **even** eighteen thousand men". *J. M.*

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

The historical reality of direct, far-reaching divine intervention in world affairs is perhaps the most basic truth to be recognized in this month's study. Many interesting, and no doubt some problematic points of chronological and descriptive detail are certain to arise. These require careful consideration and discussion. But the record of Genesis 7 and 8 is one of the passages of Holy Scripture which is quite essential to human appreciation of divine ways and purposes. Peter knew this well when he nailed home so securely the lesson of chapter 3 of his second epistle. "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" was the cry which alarmed him and threatened the spiritual confidence of the believers of his day. But not so. Theories depending on this assumption are deeply suspect from the start and stand unmasked in the face of divine revelation. The Flood *did* occur, as God had decreed, and clearly represented a massive intervention by God quite outside this planet's experience before or since. Equally certain it is that God, in accordance with His own unshakable promise, will again, by different means, bring about a universal purifying judgement. Apparent delay teaches firstly a divine concept of the sequence of events, not equivalent to what we call 'time'; and secondly underlines an immense patience towards this cynical, Bible-rejecting world which we know (2 Peter 3. 8-10).

Closing the same chapter, the apostle Peter speaks of "some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore ... beware... But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Peter 3. 14-18).
J. D. T.

SCIENCE AND A WORLD-WIDE FLOOD

This article has a three-fold purpose: to examine the scriptural account of the Genesis 6 Flood in respect of its global character, the scientific theory which opposes, and finally the scientific facts which confirm the world-wide nature of the Flood.

Scriptural Assertion

It must be emphasized that the Holy Spirit asserts that the Flood was global: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and *all* the high **mountains** that were *under the whole heaven* were covered" (Genesis 7. 19). Apart from this and several other similar statements in Genesis 6 to 10, the Flood is mentioned in Psalm 104, Isaiah 54. Ezekiel 14, Matthew 24, Luke 17, Hebrews 11, 1 Peter 3 and twice in 2 Peter. A study of all these portions reveals the following:

(a) The purpose of the Flood was to wipe out completely, apart from those within the ark, *every* creature which *breathed*, whether human, animal, bird, or creeping thing (Genesis 7. 22). If the Flood was only local, what was to prevent creatures moving to a new area to escape destruction? Migrating birds cover vast distances over the earth's surface. Only a complete coverage of the whole of the land for a sufficient time could ensure effective judgement.

(b) The tops of the mountains were covered. This was just as essential as the world-wide coverage to ensure that every breathing creature should die.

(c) The object of the ark was "to keep seed alive". If the Flood was purely local, God would not have asked Noah to go to the trouble of building a vessel half the size of the Queen Elizabeth 2, i. e., of about 30, 000 tons, stocking it with food for a year and making provision for so many animals and birds and creeping things, when He could have sent them a sufficient distance away to avoid the Flood. Such vast preparation is consistent with nothing less than the ark being the only means of escape.

(d) Noah and seven of his family were the *sole* survivors of the Flood (Genesis 7. 23; 1 Peter 3. 20). If this were not so, then either there were people outside the ark just as righteous before God as Noah, or having righteousness was not the only criterion for escape from God's judgement. Against the first suggestion can be quoted Genesis 5. 29, 6. 8-18, 7. 1, 9. 1, Ezekiel 14. 14-20, Hebrews 11. 7 and 2 Peter 2. 5. Against the second can be quoted Genesis 6. 1-6, 6. 11-13, Luke 17. 26, 1 Peter 3. 20, 2 Peter 2. 5 and Jude 14, 15. Hence to deny that Noah and his family were the sole survivors is to deny the word of God. No other conclusion is possible.

(e) The combination of Genesis 6. 13, "I will destroy them with the earth", and Genesis 9. 19, "of these was the whole earth overspread", implies that all people before the Flood were destroyed and a new people occupied the earth afterwards.

(f) In Luke 17. 26-30, the punishment of the world (people) by the Flood is likened to that of Sodom and also of that of the world at Christ's second coming. The argument is destroyed completely if it is conceded that *any* escaped at the Flood, for then some who were deserving judgement in Sodom could have escaped and some will be able to escape Christ's judgement at His return. Similarly telling is the argument of 2 Peter 3. 3-7, for if any part of the physical earth escaped the Flood, so may some of it escape the fire which will dissolve the rest in fervent heat. The two are equally unthinkable.

This sixfold statement leaves no room for doubt or equivocation. A global flood is one of the basic facts of divine revelation: to reject it is to reject the word of God.

Opposing Voices

Despite this conclusion from Scripture, certain modern scientists reject a global flood, because, they say, things happen more uniformly and not suddenly. Only gradual changes can be countenanced. This stems from scientific thought at the end of the last century when uniformitarianism under Lyell was given credence at the expense of the plain statements of Scripture, which were in consequence watered down. For example, the decree of Caesar Augustus that "all the world should be

enrolled" (Luke 2. 1) is quoted with the inference that "the world" does not mean every one. However, God's statements in Genesis 7 are unambiguous and independent of the word "world". Verse 4 says, "Every living thing that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the ground" and verse 21 says, "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every creeping thing... and every man".

Further, such questions as the following have been asked: (a) How could the ark accommodate all the species which existed on the earth? (b) Where did all the water come from to cover the whole earth? Those who have given sober thought to (a) have shown that the number of individual vertebrate animals in the ark would have been 35, 000 at the most, since the many marine creatures would have survived outside. The space occupied by invertebrates would be small compared with the vertebrates. The whole could be accommodated in 73 standard U. S. two-deck rail stock cars. The volume of the ark was equivalent to 522 such cars, leaving ample room for storage of water and food and human accommodation. Similarly no problem exists for (b) since the greatest depth of the sea added to the height of the highest mountain is a tiny fraction of the circumference of the earth. Hence a relatively small movement upward of the sea bed would have displaced enough water to cover the mountains, quite apart from that which came from above. Available space in this paper forbids consideration of other problems, but for each there is a feasible answer.

Supporting Scientific Facts

In all parts of the globe, as outlined below, we find corroboration of a universal inundation at the termination of the Pleistocene period. For example, at the same latitude in both Siberia and Alaska, the bodies of the mammoth have been found enveloped in alluvial deposits and afterwards frozen. Some were in such a posture that it is clear they were escaping from a peril from the south, that is, away from the high ground. Some still had their flesh preserved and blood in distended nostrils gave evidence of drowning. Further south in these countries and in many places in North America and Europe at warmer temperatures, the flesh had decomposed, but the skeletons have remained of herds of animals thrown together in the utmost confusion, "the mammoth, the red deer, the reindeer, antelope, bear, badger, wolf, fox, hyena, lynx, marmot, leopard, and many kinds of birds". Young and old, predators and hunted alike, in so many parts of the world at the same geological time, could not have been thrown together, except by a global flood. That neither boulder clay nor ice was the agent is clear from the most important observation that the bones of all creatures were unrolled, that is, every detail, such as the prominences where ligaments are attached, has been preserved entire. This is only consistent with the bodies having been enveloped in alluvium-filled water, causing drowning, and the flesh having decayed from the bones. Further, in North America, the bodies were found lying vertical in the SW-NE direction, feet resting on a stratum of sand. Again, flight was away from the high ground of the Rockies. In South America the Pampas is covered with a widespread superficial deposit, similar to that in Europe, in which entire skeletons are found with bones unrolled, and preying and preyed-on are herded together. Similar evidence is available from Australia and other continents of the world.

Just as globally are found animal remains in caves, specially on high ground. Thus at Quito, for example, **2778 metres** above sea-level, were discovered hordes of animal skeletons, which were broken, **but** the bones unrolled, so lying as only could be explained **by an** overwhelming flood. **Caves in Germany, France, Malta** and other countries of Europe reveal side by side **fragments of beaver and rabbit** on the one hand, **hyena and bear** on the other, with tortoise **and** elephant, animals from such **different** habitat, all **fleeing** from a peril **and** caught **and** drowned. In Malta, the evidence is that the torrent **came from** the north (Alps).

The erosive **effect** of such **vast** torrents is **seen** not only in gorges **and** canyons on the **earth's surface**, **but** also in canyons on the **sea** bed. Water movements there **at present** are so small that only an uplift to the surface **at the time** of the Flood **and** a lowering again **after** it, can account for the existence of such **canyons**. Corresponding movements occurred with land **masses**, as evidenced, for example, in the finding of fossilized fish at Lincoln County, Wyoming, U. S. A., 1000 miles from the west **coast and 1500 miles from** the east. Along with these fossils were those of alligators, birds **and** land animals. **Since** fish putrify so quickly, this **evidence** demonstrates the suddenness of the land **movements** which trapped the creatures **and** **preserved** their remains.

Where the ark floated would be **expected** relatively calm conditions compared with the tidal wave movements in other **parts** of the earth. This is precisely what Sir Leonard Woolley found as evidenced **by** the eight foot layer of water-laid clay discovered in the **diggings** at Ur of the Chaldees. This layer **separated** two civilizations. Further, the **date** of the Flood, implied **by the dates** of the tombs of the kings, **agrees** with the Bible **date** of about **4400 years** ago. This date is confirmed **by the age** of the world's oldest trees **and by studies** of world population **statistics**. Earlier **dates estimated** from radiocarbon techniques cannot be justified when the assumptions on which they are **based are** critically examined.

The **Scriptures** assert that pre-flood **races** were wiped **out**. If all the **present-day** races **sprang** from Noah's family, **it would be anticipated** that all primitive peoples would retain the story of the unique experience of coming alive through a world-wide deluge. This is precisely the **case, but** only the story **preserved by** God through Israel has **been** unadulterated in the telling.

These **are but** some of the **many** strong evidences of a world-wide flood occurring **at** the time recorded in the Bible. C. L. *Prasher*

THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD AS A TYPE OF THE TIME OF THE END

That God has **set many** things in the **Scriptures** as **types** of things to come, is clear from the **references** to **types** or parables, as for example, **Romans 5. 14; Galatians 4. 24; Hebrews 9. 9**. There have **been**, of course, **many fanciful and extravagant uses** of typology, **bringing** it into **disrepute**, and we **must** be careful that we do not go beyond what is reasonable in recognizing Scriptural types. There **are many** examples of **Old Testament types given to us** in the Gospels and other **New Testament** writings; **it is safe** to conclude **from** such **references** that when these **types** occurred they were **designed by** the **great Architect of time** to illustrate principles of His workings. These things happened so that

we might be fully instructed in the manifestation of God's grace. Is it safe to conclude this of other things which are not expressly stated to be types? "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15. 4). The Lord Jesus reproved the Sadducees because they did not know the Scriptures (Matthew 22. 29) and the Pharisees because they did not realize that the Scriptures speak of Him (John 5. 39). We can therefore accept that by the Spirit's aid it is possible to discover in the Old and New Testaments types of events which happen afterwards. This then is to be our aim in this article although we shall see that Scriptures give us plenty of guidance in this case.

In considering the antediluvian world as a type of the world before the Son of man returns we shall look briefly at both eras as they are described in Scripture, the first from the Old Testament historical record, and the second from prophecy still future, and note their similarities. The state of the world before the Flood is described briefly in Genesis 6. 1-12, from which we can very clearly see that evil abounded, and it repented the LORD that He had made man. There is not much detail of the type of wickedness, but we can see the way that men were developing by the record of the descendants of Cain in Genesis 4. 16-23. The following headings will help us to consider the wicked state of man.

(1) Moral Corruption

Cain, the first man born into the world, became a murderer. We also find moral corruption amongst his descendants. The one singled out above others is Lamech. Both Cain and Seth had sons called Lamech in their line, but what a difference between them! This man was the seventh from Adam through the line of Cain; Enoch was the seventh from Adam in the line of Seth. There is a great contrast between the characters of these two men. Enoch was a godly man. Lamech was an evil man; his song, written for us in Genesis 4. 23, 24, shows how depraved he became. He had committed double murder and boasted of this to his two wives. Here was a man quite unashamed of the sin which he had committed and, it would appear, even mocking God's punishment of Cain in his song. Whilst we have only one instance of such a man, we can take it from Genesis 6. 11 (the earth was filled with violence) that such men as Lamech were not uncommon. Lamech was also an example of how men flouted God's laws, for he disregarded the God-given pattern of marriage and took two wives.

(2) Godlessness

There was obviously complete disregard for the warnings of God's preachers. Noah was a preacher of righteousness who would warn the people of the impending judgement. His preaching brought no repentance. Enoch prophesied of judgement to come (Jude 14, 15), which should certainly have stirred the hearts of the men of the world. It would appear that Enoch's walking with God resulted in his knowing the judgement which God was to bring upon the world then, and in the future. His prophecy should have moved the people, but it had no effect.

(3) Scientific Progress

Man's mind seemed bent upon compensating for all the blessings lost in Paradise. Social science seems to have been the first to have

interested him for we see that Cain built a city. The benefits of community life soon became obvious to sinful man. Technological progress is also seen in Jabal, the father of the nomadic farmer, rearing cattle for the benefit of mankind, and Tubal-cain, the father of the engineer, providing cutting tools for so many purposes. Cultural arts were not neglected either, for in Jubal we have the creator of the musical instrument. Food, defence, improvement of conditions and ability to enjoy his leisure were all catered for so that man could be more comfortable in the cursed earth.

(4) Human Prowess

"When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men which were of old, the men of renown" (Genesis 6. 4). The "sons of God" have been thought to be the line of Seth, the God-chosen line. There was then intermarrying of the faithful with Cain's descendants and this produced mighty men, men of renown. These were the Nephilim.

We now look to the times immediately before the return of the Son of Man.

(1) Moral Corruption and Godlessness

Paul wrote in general terms to the Thessalonians saying that before the day of the Lord there will be a great apostasy (2 Thessalonians 2. 3). Again 2 Timothy 3. 1-5 reveals the things which will feature in the last days (not the "later times", as in 1 Timothy 4, which means the end of the apostolic age), the end of the dispensation. The details given we might describe as normal behaviour for sinful man, but it is clear from the fact that Paul says "grievous times shall come" that this is more serious. Here we see: (i) materialism—"lovers of money, lovers of pleasure"; (ii) glorification of self—"boastful, haughty"; (iii) violence—"fierce, without self control"; (iv) infidelity—"traitors"; (v) hypocrisy—"a form of godliness"; (vi) godlessness—"lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God". In addition Peter also mentions "mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts" (2 Peter 3. 3).

(2) Scientific Progress

The advance of science will be characteristic of the last days. Scientific improvements are not wrong in themselves, but they frequently lead men to treat God's things with scorn and to glory in their own knowledge. The false prophet will impart life to the image of the beast (Revelation 13) and this image will be able to speak and to choose out from the earth those who will not worship the image. The computer-age is upon us now and the last two decades have seen a great acceleration in the advance of the science of computing, but the false prophet will be able to go far beyond what is possible today. There will also be a vast centralization of trade, and only those with the mark of the beast will be able to buy and sell. "Here is wisdom" is the comment of the Holy Spirit (Revelation 13. 18). With the great combining of commercial enterprises there will be a boom in world trade, and many will be made rich (Revelation 18. 11-19). Cain started with a city but the man of sin will end with a universal common market.

(3) Human Prowess

It seems evident from the Scriptures that "the beast" will be a tremendous personality, answering to the "men of renown" (Genesis 6. 4). The whole earth will dote on this man (Revelation 13. 3), he will be the

idol of the nations, and mass hysteria will probably reach its highest peak when his death stroke is healed. "Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him?" (Revelation 13. 3, 4).

The similarities between the two periods under consideration are obvious and we would conclude that a Scriptural type has been established. The following scriptures confirm that this is so.

(1) Matthew 24. 37, 39. "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man".

(2) Jude 14, 15, "And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgement upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him".

The two references to Noah in the second epistle of Peter prove interesting, although not confirming our theme exactly. The first (2 Peter 2) refers to the times at the end of the apostolic age. The second is a warning to men who proclaim that all things continue as they have always been (a view not uncommon today) to remember that in the days of Noah a catastrophe came upon the ungodly, and the future judgement will also surely come.

It is clear therefore that Scripture confirms that the wicked state of the world before the Flood is a type of the condition of things before the Son of Man will appear.

R. C. Jones

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 7. 6—8. 14

The Deluge

From Portslade. —Our subject includes a consideration of divine judgement in two aspects, firstly the examination in principle illustrated so vividly in Daniel 5. 27, then the catastrophic event of the Flood as justice was carried to its fearful end. One of the delightful characteristics of God's justice is *His* long-suffering, gracious way with men before judgement (Romans 2. 4; 1 Peter 3. 20). The scripture in Isaiah 28. 21 indicates that judgement is God's strange work and one has suggested that it is strange in the sense that it is strange to His nature to be angry, yet because He is one who delights in righteousness, injustice is repellant. He can resist the proud and the arrogant (James 4. 6), on occasions with divine fury (Isaiah 63. 3). We stand in awe at the fierce anger of God as revealed against His own Son, but again we have a picture of His holy and righteous attitude toward sin in the judgement of the One who became sin for us.

Can there be a sadder declaration than is contained in Genesis 6. 6? Man was a failure, and the deep love of God for his fallen creature

could not stay the righteous act of judgement, but the evil was such that it repented the LORD that He had made man upon the earth. It is thought that at least twenty million people died in the Flood. For five solar months the waters prevailed and it was approximately a solar year before the earth was dry. This is but a faint picture of approaching **future** judgement.

W. Townsend

From Denmark Hill. —Noah was the first to go into the ark (7. 7), then followed Shem, Ham, Japheth, Noah's wife and Noah's sons' wives, in that order. "Unto Noah" there came into the ark clean beasts, then unclean beasts, fowls, and every creeping thing, male and female. God is a God of order, exact in all His ways. Jehovah then properly and perfectly sealed them all in, at the same time shutting out everyone else. The mockers were condemned before the Flood actually came. Men and women in their sins today are condemned, although God's wrath has not as yet fallen upon them. For a full week not a drop of rain fell, and probably men and women mocked Noah's means of salvation during that week more than they had done over the years when the timber structure was in the making. This reminds us of Calvary. Suddenly, on the eighth day the rains poured down upon the whole earth. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. The waters deluged the earth continuously for forty days and forty nights. For so much cloud to form, and for rain to fall non-stop for almost six weeks is, to the scientist, a very unusual occurrence [see answer to question 7], but God was behind this universal Flood, "the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God". Even the fowl of the heaven died (7. 23). Only eight souls were saved alive, a tiny fraction of mankind. From the day that the rains stopped until the end of a hundred and fifty days there was desolation on the earth. Then God caused a wind to blow to clear the amassed waters in a matter of months. Exactly five months to the day from the first day of terrible deluge the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. The ark had proved its worth. It has been suggested that this 'rest' speaks of resurrection.

At the end of forty days Noah opened the window to send out the raven. It did not return but went to and fro until the waters were dried up. Noah then sent out a dove to find if the waters were 'abated from off the face of the ground' (suggesting 'lower lands'), but the dove flew back to signify the negative. However, when released a week later she returned to indicate that the waters were lowering by bringing in her beak an olive leaf. A week later she flew out of the ark never to return. Only then did Noah remove the covering of the ark to see far and wide. What a view that must have been for him, a cleansed earth!

Mark McKaig

From Glasgow (Parkhead). —The psalmist Asaph said, "God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth" (Psalm 74. 12). And again it is said, "The LORD sat as King at the Flood; yea the LORD sitteth as King for ever" (Psalm 29. 10). The LORD said to Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark". The Spirit of God had striven long with men during the many years while the ark was being built, and while the longsuffering of God waited, and Noah the preacher of righteousness warned of the judgement of God by means of the Flood. The record of Luke 17. 26, 27 gives us in

the words of the Lord Jesus a graphic account of how those around continued in their godless ways, "until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and the flood came, and destroyed them all". When Noah had taken into the ark at God's command the living creatures, male and female, after their kind, "the LORD shut him in". There is a final ring in this statement. Noah and his house alone were saved. Eight souls rested in security, whilst the ark endured the storm from above and from beneath. "It went upon the face of the waters", and was lifted up above the waters, causing us to think of Psalm 42. 7: "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me". Yet resting on Mount Ararat on the 17th day of the 7th month points to the triumphant One of Psalm 24. In resurrection He manifested Himself to His disciples. We noted the true likeness of water baptism in 1 Peter 3. 20-22 through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

R. Shaw

Impressions from other Contributors

Aberkenfig and Barry, Atherton and Leigh, Birmingham, Derby, Edinburgh, Hereford, Methil, Southport, Teesside and Toronto also contributed papers in which the following points were discussed.

Our study title described the judgement of God on a wicked world. It comes from the Hebrew word 'mabbuwl' and means a deluge or flood. The awful judgement of God because of man's wickedness is a truly fearful thing, and reveals something of the dreadful anguish the Saviour experienced when He died for our sins at Calvary (Psalm 42. 7). Yet the longsuffering of God waited all the years that Noah preached righteousness and prepared the ark.

Great gospel truths were seen to be illustrated in the account of Noah's experience. It was God who shut Noah in the ark; the judgement waters could not engulf him, nor could he leave the ark, a picture of the believer's absolute security in Christ. That the ark had only one door reflects the truth of Christ as the only way of salvation, the Door by which the refuge-seeking sinner must enter to be saved. All who refused God's provision must perish.

From 1 Peter 3. 21 it was shown that the truth of baptism is also illustrated from Noah's experience. He was saved from the corruption of the world, for baptism speaks of being dead to the world. Noah emerged alive to walk in newness of life (Romans 6. 4).

From yet another viewpoint the ark was regarded by several as illustrative of a church of God. "The ark is often spoken of as Noah's ark. Noah was its chief builder, but that did not make it his, any more than the church of God at Corinth was Paul's church, although he laid its foundation and planted it. The ark was God's and He chose who should be in it. As God took control of the ark, so by His Spirit He rules in that which is called by His name (1 Corinthians 3. 7)".

A dispensational aspect was also proposed, Enoch being a type of the Church the Body having been taken from the earth before the outpouring of God's judgements upon the earth at the time of the end, and Noah typifying a godly remnant who will be preserved through the time of tribulation.

The resting of the ark on the 17th day of the seventh month was generally thought to foreshadow the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,

since the seventh month later **became the first month, and it was on the 14th day** of that month when our Passover **Lamb suffered, to be raised from the dead after three days**. This is doubtless a valid approximation, although it has **been pointed out** that the waving of the sheaf of **first-fruits on the day after the sabbath** is usually **regarded as a type of the resurrection, and this was on the 16th day of the first month (Abib)—see Leviticus 23. 4-15.**

Several contributors expressed interest in **the spiritual significance of the raven and the dove**. To some the **raven** illustrated "the **mind** of the flesh, unclean, wild, unbroken, seeking freedom", and the dove "the characteristic of one born **again**, full of the **Spirit**, humble and obedient, who finds no rest or place **in the world, but only in Christ, the Ark of our refuge**". Another contrast was **suggested between** "the raven, unclean in its **nature**, typifying the carnal **mind** ready to live amidst confusion and desolation, and the dove's bringing the olive leaf, a shadow of the Spirit-filled Son of God who brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel".

The **mention of the first month and first day of the month in Genesis 8. 13 suggests a new beginning, a pale reflection of the day when God will make all things new.**

The question of the **extent of the Flood attracted** some discussion. One **paper suggested** that "the geographical universality of the Flood was not **necessary at that stage of human increase**", implying that to fulfil God's **judgement** only those **parts** of the world then inhabited **by mankind** would necessarily **be affected**. But this view was **not favoured by most contributors**. "In chapter 7. 19 **we are told** that the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth. Perhaps this might **be understood to mean** that they covered a very considerable **area; but then we are told** that all the high mountains were covered. Further, the phrase **under** the whole heaven is **used**. Dr. Young translates **verse 19, 'and the waters have been very very mighty in the earth'**. Moreover, not only was **mankind to be destroyed, but "every living thing... which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping thing, and fowl of the heaven" (7. 23). An interesting point was made by reference to the Hebrew word 'tebel', which according to Strong denotes the earth as moist and therefore inhabited, implying therefore the inhabited part of the world. In Proverbs 8. 31 it is actually translated 'habitable earth', but in thirty-five other occurrences 'world'. It is felt to be significant that in Genesis 7 and 8 the word 'tebel' is not used, but the words 'erets' or 'adamah', which do not imply any limitation to the inhabited portions of the globe.**

Eds.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What **are** the qualities of gopher wood? (Glasgow, Parkhead).
Some have thought that gopher wood was from the **cypress tree but this is uncertain**. We do not think there **is any significance in the type of wood used**. The important points concerning the construction of the **ark** were **its design and the steps taken to make it watertight.** *L. B.*
2. Why does **Genesis 6. 19 specify two and two of every sort, whilst 7. 2 mentions seven and seven of the clean animals?** (Glasgow, Parkhead).

Genesis 6. 19 was part of a general statement made before the ark was commenced so that Noah would understand the purpose of every feature in the design. 7. 2 contained an amplification relating to the comparatively small number of clean animals and was conveyed to Noah at the time the ark was to be occupied. *L. B.*

3. What is the reason for the repetition of facts in Genesis 7. 6-12 and 7. 13-16? (Atherton and Leigh).

The two sections are not of course identical, but certain points are repeated as though to make clear beyond all doubt the factual truth of a narrative which God knew would become a target of human cynicism and unbelief in future generations. *G. P. Jr.*

4. Did God intend others to go into the ark, in view of Genesis 6. 17, 18? (Atherton and Leigh).

God's condemnation of mankind when He first disclosed to Noah the impending judgement was based on His perfect knowledge of the human race at that time. He foreknew that the preaching of Noah would not influence any outside his family circle to repent and seek salvation in the ark. The ark was designed accordingly, and yet God's longsuffering waited while the ark was being prepared, wonderfully expressive of divine forbearance toward a guilty race. *G. P. Jr.*

5. God was within the ark calling Noah and his family to safety. Is this typical of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5. 19)? (Hereford).

The question as worded might be taken to mean that God was *within* Christ, which is unscriptural; Christ is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1. 15). Mr. John Miller in his "Notes on the Epistles", page 102, explains 2 Corinthians 5. 19 thus: "In the love of God for lost sinners shown at the cross God made it possible for the estranged world of sinners to be reconciled to Him". *L. B.*

6. 2 Peter 3. 10. What will be the extent of the destruction by fire. Will the earth's foundations be moved? (Toronto).

Psalm 104. 5 emphasizes the enduring nature of the earth, but the general tenor of Scripture is that the earth is not eternal (Genesis 8. 22; Hebrews 1. 10-12). Read as a whole, 2 Peter chapter 3 shows that although the earth perished in the Flood (verse 6), it will be burnt up (verse 10) and *all things* will be dissolved (verse 11) in the day of the Lord. Revelation 20. 11 gives another picture of the same events: heaven and earth will flee away and be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21. 1). *L. B.*

7. Was the "rain from heaven" (8. 2) rain as we know it, or did it come from "the waters above the firmament"? (Birmingham).

Many thoughtful and competent Christian students of Scripture have inclined to the view that "the waters above the firmament" (Genesis 1. 7) may have comprised a "vapour canopy" high above the earth's surface. It is thought that this may have modified climatic and other conditions prior to the Flood, and that it may have been one source of the immense rains which persisted for forty days and nights at the time

of the Flood. Such explanations may remain debatable, but they do at least encourage the Bible believer in his assurance that the rains did fall as stated in Genesis 7. 12. For even from this distant perspective modern scientific thought may **propose possible means by** which God could have brought it to pass. *G. P. Jr.*

8. Does the fact that Noah was saved before the ark was built indicate that the ark should be regarded as a type of baptism rather than salvation? (Edinburgh).

This question raises an interesting point as to scriptural interpretation. It was the Lord Jesus who used the serpent of brass as a type of His being lifted up for sinners on Calvary, and He based on this the great gospel truth that "whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life". Yet Israel was a redeemed and separated people at the time of Numbers 21. 8 from where the illustration is taken. Some considerable liberty is therefore permissible in applying Old Testament detail as typical of New Testament truth, and the illustration of gospel truth from Noah and the ark cannot be precluded. It is evident from thoughts expressed by contributors this month that there may be a considerable variety of typical application from the same portion of Scripture, illustrating the depth and beauty of the inspired word. *G. P. Jr.*

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

The word "covenant" is derived from the Latin *convenire*, to come together or assemble. It envisages two or more people with common interests meeting and agreeing upon certain courses of action in certain circumstances. Such an agreement is made binding on the parties concerned by a signed document which sets out the obligations of each and the penalties for failure to fulfil them. Abraham's covenant with the Philistines, Abimelech and Phicol (Genesis 21. 22-34) and Jacob's with Laban (Genesis 31. 36-55) are instructive illustrations of these principles. Human covenants may need revision or cancellation but divine covenants cannot fail (Psalm 89. 34-36). They are in fact not agreements but unilateral promises. Nevertheless the translators have used the same English word, doubtless because the most important feature remains: their binding nature.

The Greek New Testament, with its usual precision, preserves the distinction between divine and human covenants by using the word *diatheke* but never *suntheke*, the usual Greek word for covenant. *Diatheke* means a will made by a person for the disposition of his estate after his death. Like a divine covenant it is made by one party to benefit others, whereas *suntheke* is an agreement made between two parties both of whom expect to benefit in some way. So *suntheke* is obviously not a suitable word for New Testament usage.

Important characteristics of divine covenants are seen in the instance before us in this month's study (Genesis 9. 8-17). God in sovereign grace initiated the covenant with Noah, He devised its details, He guaranteed it and He provided the sign of the rainbow in confirmation. Noah in contrast did nothing but accept in faith, on behalf of his posterity, what God put before him concerning the preservation of the earth from a second world-wide flood. The beneficence and immutability of this early covenant are referred to in Isaiah 54. 9 as being characteristic of God's dealings with His rebellious earthly people. He set them aside once, but regardless of all else, He will one day return to them with everlasting kindness. Such principles continue in this dispensation, so that the rainbow is to us not only an assurance of God's faithfulness concerning earthly seasons but also concerning the blessings of the New Covenant. God will never suffer His faithfulness to fail.

L. B.

SACRIFICES IN GENESIS

The **first** indication of sacrifice in **Scripture is in Genesis 3. 21, and it is only an indication.** The words are, "**And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them**". While we **assume** that animals were **slain** to provide these coats, the lesson we **need to learn is** that of God's provision of **a covering for Adam and Eve in contrast to their own efforts in sewing fig leaves together.** This is a principle which **is seen** throughout the **Scriptures, and** throughout human history, for **men still seek to cover up their sins by human effort, and reject the finished work of Christ as a covering for them.** Note **in this connexion** the parable of the Pharisee **and** the publican who **went up** into the temple to **pray.** The Pharisee, **by the parading of his good works, was like Adam and Eve sewing fig leaves together, but the publican cast himself upon God, seeking His provision to cover his sin (Luke 18. 9-14).**

The **matter of sacrifice is more clearly seen in the story of Cain and Abel, two of Adam's sons, when they brought their offerings to the LORD (Genesis 4. 3-7).** Cain brought of the **fruit** of the ground, while Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock **and** of the **fat** thereof. Cain's offering **may well have been the choicest and best** of the earth's produce, **but it did not meet the divine requirement in regard to sacrifice and blood-shedding, neither did the man who brought it.** Abel offered by faith, which **takes a man out of human effort and rests him in the work of another.** He had learned the lesson of **Genesis 3. 21,** that the LORD requires the **sacrifice** of another to cover human sin. The LORD had **respect** to Abel **and** to his offering, **an** expression to show that He looked **in favour** towards Abel, **and** Abel was **accepted** into that favour on the ground of his offering (a fore-shadowing of the once-for-all **sacrifice** of the **perfect** offering of our Lord Jesus Christ). The **fact** that the **fat** of the firstlings was offered shows that the animals were slain, and not offered **as** living animals. The word "thereof" **in Genesis 4. 4** is plural, showing that **it was the fat** of the firstlings **and** not the **fat** or **best** of the flock.

The Hebrew word **used** for "offering" in **Genesis 4 is minchan, and means a gift or present,** the purpose of which is **to seek the favour** of the person to whom **it is offered.** A good example of the **use and application of the word is in Genesis 32,** when Jacob **sent the five** droves of cattle, sheep, goats, camels **and asses as a present to Esau** his brother. **Twenty years** before this Esau had sworn **vengeance** on Jacob, and now they were about to **meet face to face.** Jacob in his **craftiness sent over his present {minchan} and said, "I will appease him (Heb, "cover his face") with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept me" (verse 20).**

Esau's vengeance was forgotten, **and** Jacob was **accepted in the present** that went over before him. This is a **picture of the priceless gift** of our Lord Jesus Christ to His God **and** Father. We who **merit** the wrath of God **are accepted** into His favour **because** of the One who **appears** before the **face** of God for us.

Our **next** consideration concerns Noah **and his burnt offerings (8. 20, 21).** The **Scriptures are silent as to how Noah knew which animals were acceptable to the LORD for sacrifice and which were to be regarded as**

unclean. So we must assume that the LORD had made it known to him in some way, or the knowledge was given to Adam and passed on to future generations including Noah. The animals that were taken into the ark were seven and seven of clean animals and two and two of unclean animals, so he must have known the distinction then. God told Noah that every moving thing that had life was to be food for him (9. 3), so that the matter of clean or unclean animals did not refer to what animals men were to eat or not to eat, but to what would be acceptable to God in sacrifice.

When Noah came forth from the ark he took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar which he built. This is the first use of the word *olah* as a burnt offering, apart from the use of the verb in Genesis 2. 6, "there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground". It means "an ascending offering", and indicates the character of worship which ascends to God. Noah came out of the ark on to a cleansed earth, so it seems fitting that in contrast to the previous violence and corruption that filled the earth there should now ascend to the LORD the wholesome savour of the burnt offering. "The LORD smelled the sweet savour." These words show one of the features of the burnt offering, for it was all offered and it all ascended as a sweet savour to the LORD. The LORD breathes out His Spirit upon men and they live because of Him, but the same LORD also breathes in, which is the word used for "smelled". The question is, what does the LORD smell from this earth? The corruption of its evil ways? Or the sweet savour of the burnt offering as seen in our Lord Jesus Christ? He gave Himself to God for an odour of a sweet smell, and God rests in complete satisfaction in His finished work.

We cannot tell how enlightened Noah was in regard to the significance of the burnt offering, and the circumstances in which he offered his, but the few words in Genesis 8 show his appreciation of God's goodness to him, and he gave God the glory.

The burnt offering is before us again in the remarkable story of Genesis 22, when God put Abraham to the test as to his faith in receiving the word of God and his obedience in responding to it. All Abraham's hopes and ambitions were centred on Isaac who is called here "his only son", for Ishmael had been cast out, having no inheritance with Isaac. The Scripture says that Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. Add to this the fact that Abraham loved Isaac, and we get one of the outstanding features of the burnt offering. It is the giving of all to the LORD. While it is true that Isaac was to be the burnt offering, it was Abraham who was the giver; and the whole incident is a manifestation of his implicit faith in God. In Isaac, of whom so little is said in this narrative, we see a display of perfect submission to his father as well as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was the perfect burnt offering, entirely surrendered to His Father's will, becoming obedient even unto death.

Abraham and Isaac went both of them together, their harmony complete, for Isaac was subject to his father, and Abraham was obedient to the LORD. This is but a shadow of God the Father and His Beloved Son who went together in perfect harmony and with full knowledge to

the place of **sacrifice** at Calvary. For it is equally true **that God gave His Son and that the Son gave Himself.**

Isaac's question, "Where **is** the lamb for a **burnt offering?**" brought forth from Abraham **an** answer that was **not** evasive. It was a prophetic answer given to him **by** the LORD. "God will provide Himself the lamb for a **burnt offering, my son.**" This does not **mean** that God Himself was to **be** the lamb, **but** that He would provide the lamb (see 1 Samuel 16. 1 for **an** exactly similar construction of Hebrew words, "I have provided **Me a king**"). Abraham's prophecy points forward to the provision of the Lamb of God, who was to come in the fulness of the **time and offer Himself as the burnt offering to God** in fulfilment of the **very scene** that was **being enacted** that **day** on Mount Moriah.

There **are** points **in** this narrative that merit our attention, for they exemplify **features** of the **sacrifice** of our Lord **Jesus Christ**. When Abraham bound Isaac his son there was no **turning back** for Isaac then. He thus foreshadows that **experience** of the Saviour **in Gethsemane** when He bowed **in** total submission **and said**, "Not My will, but Thine, **be done**".

"Abraham built the altar", thus foreshadowing the climax to the divine preparations for the great **day** of Calvary, for it was according to the **divine** plan that the Saviour should thus **suffer and die**. The wood was laid in order upon the altar, then Isaac was bound and laid upon the wood.

In the offerings we **may regard** the **fire as** the claims of a righteous God that fell in **judgement** upon the **victim** that was laid upon the altar, though there is no rigidity **in** the interpretation of these **types**, for angels **are** likened unto **fire** (Psalm 104. 4), the word of God **is** likened unto fire, (Jeremiah 23. 29), **and** the **seven lamps of fire are** likened to the **seven spirits** of God (Revelation 4. 5).

The expression "laid **in** order" is **one** word in the Hebrew **text**, **and** the **pieces** of wood **in** the offerings were so **arranged** upon the altar, and not thrown on carelessly. Perhaps there is **an** indication here of the orderliness of the **sacrifice** of the Lord **Jesus Christ** which was according to the **Scriptures** written beforehand. In Isaac's **case** the **fire** was **never** used, for the angel of the LORD called out of heaven, **and arrested** the **upraised** knife from slaying him **and** prevented the **fire being** applied to the wood.

There was a **ram** caught **by its horns in** the thicket, and in this we see the completion of the **picture** which has **been** broken **by** the intervention of the voice from heaven, for the **ram speaks** of consecration and devotion. It was a **fitting** animal to continue the devotion that Isaac had shown **until** now, **and a fitting type** of the wonderful **burnt offering** who **was yet** to come, whose **very** devotion led Him to the death of the Cross.

Jehovah-jireh, "the LORD will see, or provide", had **its** fulfilment at Calvary, when the One who **came** forth from God **and came** into this world, yielded Himself **as** the **perfect** Sacrifice. *H. King*

CRISES OF DIVINE INTERVENTION

When God placed the first man, Adam, in the garden of Eden, his responsibilities and privileges were clearly defined. Adam was given dominion over creation and the freedom of the garden, except that there was one test of loyalty to his Creator. It was made clear to him at the outset that if he violated the divine law there would be dire consequences. When Adam disobeyed the commandment sin entered into his life, and this deeply affected his relationship with God. Sin separated between himself and God, and death began to work in his members. The man and his wife became aware of this changed relationship, and realized they were naked, and tried to solve their problem by expedients of their own devising. However they were not abandoned by their Maker, who was still keenly interested in their welfare. God's questions, as He drew near, were very searching. To the man He said, "Where art thou?" and to the woman, "What is this thou hast done?" God's intervention here underlines the principle of human accountability to God. Ultimately all men will give account of themselves to God. Adam's sin resulted in spiritual death and his expulsion from the garden; the whole creation commenced to groan and travail in pain.

God's intervention did, however, bring rays of hope. The divine judgement of the serpent foretold the coming of a Saviour, the Seed of the woman. God graciously met the immediate need by clothing the man and his wife in coats of skin. This involved the shedding of blood and pointed forward to Calvary. Man's need is always divinely provided for in advance.

Following the Fall the increase in the earth's population was rapid; it was accompanied by a tide of increasing lawlessness. God saw on every hand evidence of rebellion against His will, and searching the heart of man He knew "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6. 5). Man's inhumanity to man was evident, and his aggressive tendencies resulted in widespread violence. As God viewed the scene He made a solemn pronouncement, "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever" (Genesis 6. 3). This implies that the wilful rejection of divine pleadings in grace and continuation in an attitude of rebellion will result in divine judgement. Sinners may continue with apparent impunity to flout the Creator's will, but a point will come when judgement will fall. God was about to intervene and cleanse the earth and He made known His purpose to His servant Noah. Noah walked with God; he was a separated man who was in no way deflected from his duty by the spiritual and moral climate of the time. The secret of his great spiritual strength was the closeness of his walk with God. Whilst the behaviour of mankind in general aroused God's wrath, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6. 8). God's revelation to Noah of approaching judgement also disclosed the way to preservation for himself and for any who would heed the warning. Noah's faith rested implicitly upon the word of God, and he began to prepare the ark according to the pattern he had been given. He was also a preacher of righteousness to his contemporaries, pleading with them to be reconciled to God. In His long-suffering God waited because He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. It is tragic to contemplate that none but his own household would heed Noah's warning. When the ark was prepared only eight

souls responded to the invitation, "Come... into the ark". Those with Noah were in perfect safety because "the LORD shut him in". Then the floods came and brought destruction upon those who had lived in wickedness and had wilfully rejected the way of salvation.

Relatively speaking, it was not long before God had to intervene in the post-diluvian world in judgement. The fact that "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech" made communication easy and men said one to another, "Let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11. 4). The project was not for the glory of God but for man's self-glorification. They were striving after religious and political unity, but their resources were not in God. Their conception of the city and the tower originated in human pride, and was to be executed by human wealth and power.

The day of reckoning must inevitably come. God intervened to examine the motives behind this feverish activity and to judge accordingly. "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded" (Genesis 11. 5). Because the motives that prompted men to act in this way would not stand examination, God brought their project to nought. The very situation men were trying to guard against God brought about. The LORD scattered the proud in the imagination of their wicked hearts. The confounding of their language forced them to abandon their ill-conceived purpose.

But God does not only intervene in human affairs in judgement; He also intervenes to bless. Frequently God effects His purposes through the choice of a man; such a man was Abraham, the friend of God. Abraham came out at the call and the command of God, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred... unto the land that I will shew thee" (Genesis 12. 1). In the choice of Abraham God had in view universal blessing according to the promise, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed". By faith Abraham went out, taking his nephew Lot with him.

Eventually Lot separated himself from Abraham and "dwelled in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom" (Genesis 13. 12). Whilst there was much that grieved him there, he was prepared to compromise the situation, "and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom" (Genesis 19. 1). This was a disastrous move on the part of Lot. The cities of the Plain were cesspools of iniquity and God was contemplating their destruction. God said, "Because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto Me" (Genesis 18. 20, 21). Divine judgement was called for because sin was rampant. Whilst the Flood called for judgement upon the inhabited earth, the extreme wickedness localized in the cities of the Plain called for a special act of divine judgement upon Sodom and Gomorrah. As a result of Abraham's intercession God promised that He would not destroy the cities if but ten righteous persons were found there, but only three of Lot's family finally escaped the judgement when God rained fire and brimstone upon the cities of the Plain. God afterwards fulfilled His promise to Abraham, and Isaac was born. Eventually the children of Abraham became a great nation. As God's purposes centred in them it was

inevitable that they should eventually be marked out for persecution. Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, set himself up to defy the God of heaven and made the Israelites a nation of slaves. Pharaoh was a hard taskmaster and his oppression of the children of Israel caused them to cry to God for deliverance. "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Exodus 2. 24). In His own time God intervened to crush the haughty Pharaoh and redeem Israel "with a stretched out arm, and with great judgements" (Exodus 6. 6).

God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt pointed forward to that decisive act of divine intervention in human affairs when "God sent forth His S o n . . . that He might redeem" (Galatians 4. 4-5). The death of the paschal lamb in Egypt pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ our Passover. The atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ has made possible deliverance from the thralldom of sin, for those who believe on Him who has obtained eternal redemption.

That God will intervene again in human affairs is certain. The hope of the believer is the Lord's advent to the air, in fulfilment of His promise, "I come again" (John 14. 3). Subsequently to the rapture of the Church the Body of Christ, God will resume His dealings with the nation of Israel. Then will come the advent of the Son of Man to judge and to establish His millennial kingdom.

In this paper we have been mainly concerned with God's major acts of direct intervention in mankind's affairs, acts having profound and far-reaching effects. There have been long periods of human history when we have no record of God intervening so decisively. But God is sovereign, and throughout these periods His purposes were still developing. No human power, no Satanic power can thwart the fulfilment of God's will. "How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past tracing out!" (Romans 11. 33).

D. T. Hyland

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

(Genesis 8. 15—9. 17)

A New Beginning

From Methil. —Whatever thoughts Noah had regarding coming out of the ark into the world again, they were completely laid aside in subjection to the will of God, for he waited until God said, "Go forth of the ark", and immediately he went forth, and built an altar unto the LORD. For Noah this was a new beginning, and the first thing that he did was to offer sacrifices of every clean beast and every clean fowl. These were sweet savour offerings which God accepted. In Noah's day there was no distinction between the various offerings as is later seen in Leviticus.

God commanded Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply. This was necessary because only eight persons had come through the Flood (1 Peter 3. 20), and now God wanted the earth replenished. God gave Adam similar instructions. He also said to Adam before the Fall that he would have dominion over every living thing. In Noah's case God

indicated that the fear and dread of Noah would be upon every beast. Surely the effects of the Fall are seen here, for there was not to be dominion *by* man, but fear *of* man.

Even Noah's eating habits were changed, for he was instructed by God that every living thing would be food for him. Prior to this, we believe that mankind lived on vegetation in its various forms. God gave Noah a very clear instruction not to eat blood, and this was based on the principle that the life of the flesh is in the blood (Leviticus 17. 11). Today also disciples of the Lord Jesus are to abstain from blood (Acts 15).

No longer was there fear of a world-wide deluge. The bow in the cloud is the sign that God has promised never to destroy the entire world by flood again. The earth that was purged by flood will yet be purged by fire. [What scriptural confirmation have we that the earth will be "purged" by fire? Does this expression imply that the present earth will be cleansed by fire and then emerge for further habitation as it did after the Flood? If so, how can we reconcile the words of 2 Peter 3. 10-12; "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up ... dissolved... melt with fervent heat"? With this agree two other scriptures, "They all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up, As a garment, and they shall be changed" (Hebrews 1. 11, 12); "The earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them... And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away". (Revelation 20. 11, 21. 1) G. P. Jr.] None will escape, save those that have fled to the One who passed through the deep waters of death, and met the fire of divine judgement. Then the bow appears in the sky, man is cast upon God's promise, "I will remember My covenant" (**Genesis 9. 15**). **A. R. Smith**

From Hereford. —As Noah went forth out of the ark after the Flood, a deep sense of thanksgiving must have filled his heart. He had understood something of the judgement of God as He had dealt with unbelieving men, and although Noah and those with him had been safe, they could not fail to be impressed with the serious consequences of uncleansed sin. Noah, in the happiness of his heart, built an altar unto the LORD and offered burnt offerings (Genesis 8. 20).

Although we, who shelter in Christ, will not know eternal judgement at the hand of God, we see something of its awfulness in that which the Lord Jesus endured at Calvary. The material ark is not mentioned again, but it is only reasonable to think that often afterwards Noah would reflect on the great deliverance he had known. As Israel were often exhorted at a later stage to "remember", so Noah would also remember. We should always remember the deliverance which God has wrought for us in Christ. This will keep our hearts warm towards the Saviour, and thanksgiving will ascend to God as a result of our experiences at His hand. Consider Psalm 40. 2.

Men use the word "Utopia" to describe an ideal state of society with equal rights and where there is security and sufficient for all. Noah left the ark to carry on man's story from a new beginning. There were fresh opportunities, ample scope for a walk with God. But sin, which

had entered at the Fall, was still in the heart of man, and soon it was to show itself. Because of his sin, man's Utopia will never be realized, but we look forward to a day when there will be new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Peter 3. 13; Revelation 21. 1).

Stuart Hickling, R. Hickling

From Glasgow (Parfick). —The requirement of a good conscience toward God is to renounce the disobedient living of the past and put it away by virtue of the quickening power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *He* passed through the waters of judgement and emerged triumphant. Baptism, as symbolizing our identification with Him both in the judgement and in the resurrection, was foreshadowed by the salvation of Noah from the waters of the Flood which destroyed all flesh. The baptized believer must "press on unto perfection" (Hebrews 6. 1).

It was with full consciousness of his great deliverance that Noah took with him certain of the animals which had survived the Flood and sacrificed them as burnt offerings, which God accepted as a sweet savour. No second curse was to be laid on the earth now, and to smite every living thing again with a flood would be against the principle of fruitfulness which was to characterize the emergent world. The course of seasons was restored to perpetual harmony after a year of great disturbance. Noah had begun the seventh hundred of his years. We do not read of him looking back with longing to the vanished world.

In being given a fresh start, man was warned about the violence which had brought destruction on the old world, and each man was made responsible to answer for it if he should shed any human blood. The repeated injunction to be fruitful stands in contrast to the grave warning to murderers of the death penalty. The setting up of the covenant of the bow in the cloud is completely dependent on God's mercy, irrespective, it seems, of man's failure. The rainbow is there for each fresh generation, everyone sees it for himself, sun and moisture together; a thing of surpassing beauty, it stands as a token of God's unfailing purpose and His desire to command the blessing, as in the **vision** of Isaiah 45. 8.

Eric Archibald

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Birmingham, Derby, Glasgow (Parkhead), Portslade, Southport and Teesside also contributed papers which may be summarized as follows:

As in previous months a variety of typical teaching was advanced in connexion with the passage. It was suggested that whereas Enoch is a type of the saints of this dispensation who will be translated before the great Tribulation, "Noah, left on earth, but preserved through the Flood, is a type of the Jewish people, who will be kept through the tribulation and brought as an earthly people to the blessings of the millennial kingdom and the eternal state". Another paper compared God's covenant following the Flood—judgement with the institution of the New Covenant which came into effect after the cross-work of Christ, the ordinance of the Remembrance being typified by the bow in the cloud which brings God's covenant to remembrance. Noah's offerings not only spoke of his gratitude to God but were also indicative of

spiritual worship. Concerning the covenant with Noah, it was pointed out that the prohibition concerning the eating of flesh containing blood preceded the law of Moses, and was wider in its application for it was to all men. The government of man by man was here introduced for the first time.

God's promise never to repeat the Flood takes our minds forward to the day of judgement by fire described in 2 Peter 3. 7, and the promise of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (verse 13). *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. How can Proverbs 12. 10 be reconciled with Genesis 9. 3, which seems to involve the slaying of animals for food? (Portslade).

The Proverbs scripture has to do with man's attitude to the animals under his care, and more specifically "his beast", that is, the beast of burden which carries himself and his goods from place to place. The necessary killing of animals for human food is a different matter, but we believe it should be done as humanely as possible. The many animal sacrifices demanded by the Levitical law must surely indicate that Proverbs 12. 10 has not the wide application which the question suggests. *L. B.*

2. Were the animals vegetarians previous to the Fall, if so what did fish feed on? (Derby).

Genesis 1. 30 seems to imply that it was not in God's mind that animals should prey one upon another, but that they should live on a diet of herbs. The fish are not mentioned in that verse but there does not seem to be any difficulty in their finding a vegetarian diet in the sea. In fact at the present time many large fish live on vast quantities of minute marine organisms which could hardly be classed as animals. There does not seem to be sufficient guidance in Scripture to enable definite answers to be given to questions of this kind. *L. B.*

PSALM 61

This is a psalm on a stringed instrument.

Hear my cry, O God;

Attend unto my prayer.

From the end of the earth will I call unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed:

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I (verses 1, 2).

Prayer may be in a whisper, or it may be, as here, by crying unto God. The psalmist would call, feeling that he was far away, even from the end or extremity of the earth, when his heart was overwhelmed or

feeble, and ask to be led to the rock (Hebrew *TSUR*, from its sharpness or strength) that was higher than himself. The rock which was smitten in Horeb whence the waters gushed out, was a *TSUR*, a rock of flint (Deuteronomy 8. 15; Psalm 114. 8), both sharp and hard. Such was the face of the LORD in the doing of God's will, "therefore have I set my face like a flint" (Isaiah 50. 7). Flint was struck of old to give off a spark to light the tinder, but God turned the rock of flint into a pool of water. The rock which was to be spoken to in order to give water was *SELA*, a cliff or elevated rock. Christ answers to both kinds of rock, both the one smitten (*TSUR*) and the one spoken to (*SELA*) (Exodus 17. 1-7; Numbers 20. 1-13). Christ was the Rock that followed Israel (1 Corinthians 10. 3, 4).

For Thou hast **been a refuge** for me,

A strong tower from the enemy.

I will dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever:

I will take refuge in the covert of Thy wings (verses 3, 4). [Selah

This sharp, hard rock (*TSUR*) was a refuge for David, for such the Lord had been to David and would continue to be, a strong rock or tower from the enemy. Such was the tower of Babel to be to the people of that long past day, and such have been the spiritual towers that men have built and sought refuge in, both in and before our time. Both Babel's tower and the LORD are called by the same Hebrew word, *MIGDAL*. Happy are those whose tower is the LORD, and not that of Babel, the product of man's work. David in verse 4 speaks of spiritual experience, and not of literal dwelling in God's tabernacle. The tabernacle was where his heart, his inward thoughts were, and he thought of that as his permanent experience. He would take refuge in the covert of God's wings, which I take to mean the wings of the cherubim, for in that inner place of the tabernacle was where the innermost thoughts of the psalmist were. We too may have this experience, if we set our minds on things where Christ is on God's right hand (Colossians 3. 1-3).

For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows:

Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life:

His years shall be as many generations (verses 5, 6).

Jacob is the first we read of vowing to God, that if God would be with him, and so forth, then the LORD would be his God, the stone pillar would be God's house, and he would give a tenth of what God gave him (Genesis 28. 20-22). The Messiah vowed in Psalm 22. 25. We have the vow of the Nazirite (Numbers 6. 2). Solomon says, "Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay" (Ecclesiastes 5. 5). What the psalmist's vows were we are not told here, but God knew what they were. Psalm 127. 3 says, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD. " All the kingdoms of Canaan and lands east of the Jordan were given as a heritage unto Israel (Psalm

135. 11, 12). Then we **have that** remarkable **heritage** of **the servants** of **the LORD** in Isaiah 54. 17, which see. **David expected** God to prolong **his life as king**, and so He **did**, for "**he died in a** good old age, full of **days, riches, and honour**" (1 Chronicles 29. 28).

He shall **abide** before God for ever:

O prepare lovingkindness **and truth**, that **they may** preserve him.

So will I **sing praise** unto Thy **name for ever**,

That I may daily perform **my vows** (**verses 7, 8**).

David evidently looks to **a** life beyond **the** limitations of **time** as we know **it**, for he thinks of abiding before God for ever. But **in** this life he thought of lovingkindness (**CHESED, mercy**) **and truth preserving** him. "Mercy **and truth preserve the king: and** his throne is upholden **by mercy**" (Proverbs 20. 28). With his sweet voice David would sing **praise** unto God's **name for ever, and he** would daily perform **his** vows. **These are** indicative of **a** beautiful life, **a man** whom God found who would do all **His** will (**Acts 13. 22**).

J. M.

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

The circumstances surrounding certain oracular statements in Scripture may seem to be most singular, but this impresses on us the sovereignty of God in His use of the human instrument. A typical example is Balaam's prophetic utterances about the nation of Israel (Numbers 23. 8, 9; 24. 9), and about the Lord Jesus (Numbers 24. 17). Balaam loved the hire of wrong-doing and taught Israel to sin against God, yet he was constrained to declare these prophecies. Similarly Caiaphas the high priest, although an evil man, prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation (John 11. 51). Even with these examples in mind, it may yet seem incongruous that a preacher of righteousness such as Noah should make such a remarkable prophecy about his sons against the background of his own failure through drunkenness.

The striking fulfilment of blessing and curse as predicted by Noah is historically confirmed, even though there are differences of view about the scope of some aspects of the prophecy. Discussion in this issue shows the importance of carefully examining Scripture, lest we take for granted an interpretation which is open to question. That Noah's curse on Canaan has been used to support a policy of extreme racial discrimination in modern times illustrates the possibility of Scripture being seriously misapplied. It is our continuing safeguard to seek together the Spirit's teaching, comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2. 13).

G. P. Jr.

PRINCIPLES OF A COVENANT-KEEPING GOD

The divine covenants in Scripture are part of God's expression of concern for man. In this expression God may appear arbitrary to us. In fact, His righteousness demands that He govern by principles. He says, I "will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Exodus 33. 19), which seems a very arbitrary statement. But the whole message of God's love, culminating in our Lord's redemptive work, shows a combining of the absolute standards of truth and righteousness on which basis His mercy can flow to needy men.

Although a covenant is often equated with an agreement, the covenants of Genesis are unilateral acts of God. "I will make", "I will establish" are not consensual expressions but dictatorial statements. The Hebrew word used is *beriyth*, which implies a compact; and certainly the covenants of God involve a relationship between God and a man or a people. The important characteristic to recognize is that they were not the fruit of the negotiations of equals. They were God-conceived and God-imposed. In this respect they resemble more nearly our modern testamentary will. Through the Greek word *diatheke*, this is the use applied in Hebrews 9. 15-18. The testator conceives his plan of benefit. He enshrines it in his will and dies. On his death his will becomes effective and irrevocable and its terms and conditions bind the beneficiaries; that is, if they wish to benefit from the bounty of the

deceased. Here is the crux of the divine covenant. All analogies fail in detail, but this one grasps the essential element.

Genesis tells us of covenants between God and Noah, Abraham and Isaac. Later scriptures indicate one covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and would suggest that in dealing with Isaac and Jacob, the LORD was really renewing and confirming His covenant with Abraham.

Before the Flood, God said to Noah, "I will establish My covenant with thee" (Genesis 6. 18). After the Flood, the word was, "I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you" (Genesis 9. 9). In this first covenant of God revealed to us, there are three points of significance to note. First: there are no conditions imposed by the LORD for the continuation of the benefits granted by Him; namely, that there should never more be a flood to destroy the earth (Genesis 9. 11). Second: the covenant, which is expressed to be with Noah and his sons and their seed and "every living creature that is with you", is described as an "everlasting covenant" (Genesis 9. 16). Third: the LORD gives a token or earnest of the covenant. In this case, it is the rainbow (Genesis 9. 13). These three factors, viz. condition, duration and token, are seen as recurring throughout God's covenant-dealings with men.

God made a covenant with Abraham as to the granting of the land to him and his seed (Genesis 15. 18). Later, God covenanted with him and his seed for multiplication of seed, fatherhood of nations and perpetual blessing (Genesis 17). This may be regarded more satisfactorily as a general covenant of blessing in two parts, rather than as two separate covenants. The first part of the covenant, respecting the granting of the land, is expressed to be unconditional. In fact, the words used are "I have given". This is confirmed to Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 6. 4). The second part of the covenant is conditional upon the token of circumcision being fulfilled. In this case, the condition and the token merge into one (Genesis 17. 9, 11), but fulfilling the covenant is an individual matter inasmuch as the people must go through the experience one by one. If an individual is not circumcised, God does not unilaterally rescind the benefits of the covenant to the people with whom it was made. Rather, that individual forfeits his right to the benefits of the covenant; "that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My covenant" (Genesis 17. 14).

Regarding the duration of the covenant with Abraham, later confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, it is once again referred to as an "everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17. 7, 13, 19). This appears to mean more accurately, a covenant through all generations. It is evident that the covenant has been honoured by the LORD throughout the ages; but with regard to the granting of the land, has not yet been fulfilled in the fullest sense. Because it was an unconditional promise, we can only assume that the perpetual generations are still running their course, and that the day will dawn, in God's prophetic calendar, when the seed of Abraham shall possess the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15. 18)

The covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob envisaged a growing and developing seed; and in the course of time, the children of Israel became a nation under God, redeemed from Egypt, baptized in the Red Sea and gathered together and separated unto the LORD. The LORD made a covenant with them; now referred to as the old covenant (Hebrews 8. 13). This also was for all generations (Exodus 31. 16). It

was, however, a conditional covenant; conditional upon the keeping of the Law, upon obedience to the revealed will of God. Once again, the covenant, the Law, the commandments, were all God-conceived and God-imposed. But although the people had no say in the substance of the covenant, they were given the opportunity to accept its terms and thus seal the covenant relationship by obedience. Moses "took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath spoken will we do, and be obedient" (Exodus 24. 7). History reveals that all too soon, they had abrogated their rights to the benefits of the covenant by extreme disobedience and idolatry in the matter of the golden calf. But the mercy of God through the intercession of Moses indicates that one act of disobedience, one breach of the covenant, does not have the effect of complete annulment. There is forgiveness with the LORD. And throughout the history of God's dealings with Israel, breaches of the covenant by His people multiply themselves until God has to act effectively in judgement, ultimately setting aside His people during the times of the Gentiles (Hebrews 8. 9).

When a covenant relationship is once again established with Israel it will not be on the basis of the old covenant, which Hebrews 8. 13 indicates was "nigh unto vanishing away", but there will be a "new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Hebrews 8. 8). Fundamentally, this is on the basis of the shed blood of Christ. Hebrews 10. 15-17 indicate two great characteristics of the New Covenant: (1) the inscribing of God's law on the hearts and minds of men, and (2) the remission of the sins of the people. There is no element of agreement here; neither is the benefit expressed to be conditional. It is evident that the new covenant which the LORD will yet make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah is that under which we are the beneficiaries today. We have entered into the benefits of the covenant because of the blood of Christ which effected the remission of our sins. The Spirit of God is given to guide us "into all the truth" (John 16. 13), and thus put His laws on our hearts and into our minds. Whether individual believers obey and live out the truth so revealed as a covenant people is a different question, and one which quite evidently must influence the extent of enjoyment of the benefits of the covenant. This is the significance of the expression "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" in 1 Peter 1. 2.

It throws us back to the token of the covenant God made with Israel, which was the blood. This was not the blood of redemption, but the blood of sprinkling as a seal or earnest of the covenant. It is referred to as the "blood of the covenant" (Hebrews 9. 20). Blood is also the seal of the new covenant. In the upper room, the Lord Jesus took the cup, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, even that which is poured out for you" (Luke 22. 20). Here, the blood is more than a mere seal or token, but is the whole basis of covenant relationship.

This new covenant is not to be effective merely during perpetual generations, but is an "eternal covenant" (Hebrews 13. 20). What transpired at Calvary transcends the bounds of time and fills eternity. For ever God will have a covenant people. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His

peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21. 3). These peoples are the eternal beneficiaries of the new covenant, which became effective when the Great Testator died on the Cross.

J.

A. *Lennox Brown*

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE JUDGEMENT AT BABEL AND ITS OUTWORKING

The Scriptures show clearly that there have been occasions when God has intervened in judgement in the affairs of men. The Flood provides us with one such example and events of Babel provide us with another.

Nimrod was the prime mover in the mighty enterprise at Babel. His name means "rebel", and the spirit of rebellion characterized men at that time. Men were minded to establish a world-centre in the land of Shinar where man would be exalted and God left out. The ambitious project which had been planned, and which had begun to take shape, would be a unique expression of the technology and culture of that time, and the imagination of men would be fired by its greatness. How far men might have gone in the fulfilment of their designs we know not, for divine judgement put an end to the project. The judgement at Babel took a unique form, simple, but most effective because new languages were miraculously given to men and thus suddenly barriers of language divided those gathered together. The origin of diverse languages is thus accounted for in the book of origins and beginnings. The immediate effect of this act of divine judgement was that communications broke down, confusion ensued, and the very thing men were seeking to prevent took place, for they were scattered abroad and their project forsaken.

When men streamed out from Babel in their various linguistic groups it was not a random scattering; God in His sovereignty was over-ruling and distributing the nations in the light of His purposes relative to Israel and the land that was to be theirs (Deuteronomy 32. 8), although some centuries were to run their course before that nation came into existence.

The initial step in the development of the divine purpose relative to Israel was taken when God called the progenitor of that race (Abram) out of the land of Chaldea, and obedient to that call Abram left behind him for ever the land of his birth, and began his journey to the land of God's choice. Someone has expressed it thus: "Men chose Babel and shut God out, so God chose Abram and shut the world out". While it is true that at that time divine purposes seemed to be focussed on one man, from whom a chosen nation was to spring, it was ever the divine intention that through that man and that nation blessing should flow out to others (Genesis 12. 2, 3).

In the affairs of men, as the centuries rolled on, empires rose and declined, but, as far as the divine record is concerned, they are only taken notice of in their relationship to God's people Israel. God's purpose for Israel to be the head of the nations was never realized in the past. Israel were ever prone to turn away from the God who loved them and in His sovereignty God used the surrounding nations to chastise them and eventually to carry them away into captivity.

The fourth year of Jehoiakim king of Judah is a significant date in divine history. It marks the beginning of what is called "the times of

the Gentiles" (Luke 21. 24) in which world leadership was vested in Gentile hands, and these times continue to run their course in our days. The pattern of world empires to the end of those times was revealed to Daniel while he was at the court of the first of these great world-rulers. Men and nations are not allowed to follow their own inclinations unrestrained. Nebuchadnezzar, that first great Gentile monarch, sought to establish in Babylon a great centre of world power, science and culture. God had dealings with that proud and haughty monarch and he was made to realize that God over-rules in the kingdom of men, sometimes permitting, sometimes restraining, for the outworking of His own purposes.

The Babylonian empire was followed by the Persian empire, and during the period of the supremacy of this second kingdom a remnant of Israel returned to their own land to rebuild the house of God, but they remained without a king (Hosea 3. 4). The rise of the Greek empire resulted in the spread of the Greek language and Greek culture and this influence remained when the fourth empire (Rome) became the dominant power. The following quotation is pertinent:

"And if the wisdom of the divine pre-arrangements is illustrated by the period of the spread of the Greek language, it is illustrated no less by that of the completion and maturity of the Roman government. When all parts of the civilised world were bound together in one empire, —when one common organisation pervaded the whole—when channels of communication were everywhere opened—when new facilities of travelling were provided, —then was 'the fulness of time' (Galatians 4. 4), then the Messiah came". (The Life and Epistles of St. Paul, Conybeare and Howson, page 13).

When the Messiah came unto His own, Rome, under the reigning Caesar, was the great centre of world power. The rejection by Israel of their rightful King has resulted in their being set aside nationally by God for the present. In the outworking of those momentous events we see divine sovereignty and human responsibility (Acts 4. 27, 28). The Lord had come not to set up an earthly kingdom but to suffer and die. Arraigned before Pilate He did not deny His Kingship, but He said, "Now is My kingdom not from hence" (John 18. 36). At present He exercises His authority in loyal and subject hearts. The day of Pentecost found one hundred and twenty subject ones together in a divine unity and the gift of speaking in other tongues was given to men to further the divine purpose at that time. Men were together then not to do their own will but God's will; it was indeed Babel in reverse, and God was gathering, not scattering. The kingdom of God in the days of the apostles found its expression in churches of God established in many cities within the confines of the Roman empire.

The ideals that motivated men at Babel have been displayed frequently throughout history and are in evidence in our own day. Men have their own man-made substitutes for many natural materials and great projects are embarked upon, but the specific curb imposed at Babel remains, barriers of language divide men still and great nations vie with one another in scientific research and in the conquest of space. In this context the divine comment made at the time of the tower of Babel is relevant: "Nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do" (Genesis 11. 6). We do not know what objectives men may yet be permitted to achieve in the realms of science and space travel. We live in days of great human activity and increasing know-

ledge (Daniel 12. 4), and against this background the purposes of God for the nations and for Israel are being worked out.

As the times of the Gentiles began so shall they end. The great world ruler of the day to come, designated in the Scriptures as the "man of sin" and "antichrist", will claim the right to direct the worship of men. Many rulers in the past have laid claim to divine honours, but such will be the pride of this man in his self-exaltation that he will demand that men make himself and his image the exclusive objects of their worship. Dissenters will not be tolerated and unprecedented suffering will be the portion of God's faithful ones in that day. Many will be martyred but some will find asylum in the countries of Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

The raging of the nations will reach a climax in the day of antichrist's power. He and his confederate kings will even attempt to take the nations out of the orbit of divine control (Psalm 2. 1). Their efforts will be futile in spite of the resources of the advanced technology of that future day. The Lord in His coming will completely destroy Gentile power and set up His kingdom on earth. Then shall the saying be fulfilled:

"The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever"

(Revelation 11. 15)

Jerusalem will be the great centre of Messiah's kingdom and from it His law will go out world-wide. Then will repentant Israel, restored to divine favour, occupy the premier place among the nations (Psalm 47. 2, 3).

One delightful feature of that glorious millennial reign of Christ in keeping with our present study will be the uniting of the peoples of the earth by a common language. Zephaniah looking forward to that time wrote of this reversal of the judgement at Babel:

"For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the LORD, to serve Him with one consent" (Zephaniah 3. 9).

J. K. D. Johnston

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 9. 18—10. 20

Noah, Japheth and Ham

From Teesside.—This portion deals particularly with the origin of the Gentile nations which are descended from Japheth and Ham. The descendants of Japheth appear to have occupied the north and west regions bordering on the land of Canaan, and those of Ham occupied the land of Canaan, Egypt and the Arabian peninsula. We noted that the whole earth was overspread from the sons of Noah, thus supporting the view that the Flood was global.

The incident of Noah and the vineyard was a shameful one. A father's carelessness was instrumental in bringing a curse upon his son. The influence of wine led to a warning to Aaron and his sons to drink no wine or strong drink when they went into the tent of meeting; this followed the slaying of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10).

We wondered why Canaan, among the sons of Ham, was singled out for Noah's curse. In view of Canaan's proximity to Israel in a later

day, we can see how God purposed that Canaan should be a servant to his brethren. This was fulfilled in Judges 1. 28.

We noted that Japheth would dwell in the tents of Shem. This seems to be a foreshadowing of the blessing which would come to the nations through the descendants of Shem and of Abraham in particular.

However, the mercy of God is now extended to all nations through the gospel. New Testament examples are the Canaanitish woman (Matthew 15), the Ethiopian (Acts 8) and the Roman centurion (Acts 10). **J. R.**

From Toronto. —Noah, the tenth from Adam, lived in a corrupt world, in an age of moral darkness he was found perfect in his generations. *He* walked with God. Because he was intimate with God, God revealed to him that *He* was going to destroy mankind (Genesis 6. 13; Hebrews 11. 7). The building of the ark to the "saving of his house" was no small task, and the work must have been hard. Added to that was the ridicule of the ungodly, but in spite of their mocking Noah warned them of the impending judgement (2 Peter 2. 5). Noah trusted implicitly in God and as a result was given an everlasting covenant (Genesis 9. 15), and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

One would have expected that Noah would always have been consistent, but unfortunately he failed (Genesis 9. 21). Moral self-mastery is never something that can be taken for granted. Because the fight has gone successfully for a long time, as in the case of Noah, it is no guarantee against sudden humiliation if a man leaves himself unguarded.

Japheth was the father of one large branch of the Gentile peoples who spread over the north and western regions of the earth in search of material gain and power. They were to be prosperous and exceedingly powerful. Japheth was the founder of the Medes, Greeks, Romans, Russians and Gauls. Most of the nations springing from him will reappear in the end period under Gog (Ezekiel 38, 39). A sad ending, but they will know that the LORD, He is God.

Ham was the father of the other branch of the Gentile world. From him came the Egyptians, Africans, the original Babylonians, Philistines and Canaanites. Ham's actions in Genesis 9. 22 depicted an impure heart, his father recognized this and thrice repeated the curse on his son Canaan. How tragic it is that the wickedness of Ham appears to have influenced many of his descendants whose history is one of folly and crime. The sin of one man polluted many people. *E. R.*

From Atherton and Leigh. —Noah, after leaving the ark, worked as a husbandman or tiller of the ground. His occupation was simple and innocent and may be considered as an example of the work of paradise renewed. In the first garden, the LORD God took a man and installed him to dress and keep it. However, by making use of the benefits and blessings provided by God the serpent enslaved the first keeper and his descendants to the power of sin. Noah by virtue of his descent from Adam was bound by sin, and his actions soon led him into the way of temptation. Abusing the benefits and blessings provided by God he was abased and found in a drunken state by his son Ham.

Curse and blessing were both pronounced by Noah after the episode of his drunkenness. The historical fulfilment of his words would indicate that he spoke by inspiration. He recalled the actions of his

sons **and cursed** the posterity of **Canaan** whilst blessing that of Japheth **and Shem**.

Japheth prospered, for God enlarged him according to **his father's** prophecy. Historians **say** his posterity **increased and** peopled the whole of Europe **and parts** of Asia, with **the possibility that** some found their **way** into the **new world**.

The **descendants** of Ham, through **the** line of Canaan, received the curse. It is evident from history that the countries **inhabited by** the **descendants** of Canaan **have been** among the most enslaved nations of the world. God **is true** to his promises whether for good or ill. "The **judgements** of the **LORD are true, and** righteous altogether" (Psalm 19. 9). [See later discussion. Eds.]

The history of Canaan raised **the** question of Christian **teaching and** the modern idea of equality of the races. We felt, however, **that** for Christians the issue **is** simplified because **the descendants** of Ham through **the** line of Canaan **in this day** of **grace** are fully included with the other **races in** the world-wide invitation of **the Gospel**.

J. V. T., J. CM.

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Papers were also received from **Aberkenfig & Barry**, Birmingham, Denmark Hill, **Derby**, Hereford, Methil **and** Portslade, each **reflecting** thoughtful study, from which the following **aspects have been** developed.

The degree to which Noah **was** blameworthy for the incident in Genesis 9. 21, **22**, caused some discussion. It **was** pointed out that no **specific blame is** laid at his door **in** Scripture, **and** that rather than his becoming exposed **by** his own action, there **may** have been deliberate **interference by** someone else (perhaps Ham or Canaan) **taking advantage** of his condition. "The only direct **statement** made about Ham indicates that he **saw** and told the situation to his brothers. Since 'son' sometimes applied to 'grandson' **in** Scripture, **it is suggested** that the 'youngest son' **of verse 24 refers** to Canaan, which **is** consistent with the curse **being placed on him (verses 25-27)**". **Interesting as** this possibility **may** be, most contributors thought that Noah **was** to blame for his drunken **state**, regarding this **as** a warning that the most godly **men may fail in** unguarded moments. [See also answers to Questions 2 and 4].

The covering action of **Shem and Japheth was seen** to be consistent with such **scriptures as** Genesis 3. 7, **21** and Exodus 28. 42. "That it is not **in** our old **nature** to **act** thus **seems** symbolised by the **backward** approach of Shem and Japheth"—their action was of the **Spirit and contrary** to the flesh.

There **were** different views about the curse on Canaan. **Some** thought that the curse **was** restricted to Canaan and his **posterity** rather than **to Ham and** his descendants in general. Emphasizing that the **curse** involved *servitude*, this was exemplified in the Gibeonites (Joshua 9. 23) **and** the Canaanites generally (Judges 1. 27-36; 1 Kings 9. 20, 21). It **was** conceded that **it seems strange** that Canaan should be singled out from the several sons of Ham, **but** this was felt to imply that he **may** have played some undesirable **part in** the affair. Others considered that the **curse** had a wider application to all **Ham's descendants**, and that broadly **speaking** the Hamitic **races had been subservient** to the Japhetic and Semitic nations. [See answers to question 5].

Interest was shown in the meaning of the names of Noah's three sons, the significance generally favoured being "name of renown or dignity" (Shem); "to inflame or wax hot"—hence "burnt or black" (Ham); "expansion or enlargement" (Japheth). "So we see in the names themselves three lines reaching out, lines along which the future peopling of the world was to run. When we trace the name and line of descent of Shem we find it leads to Abraham and thus to the Lord".

"The blessing on Shem is most remarkable on several counts:

(i) It is not "Blessed be Shem", but "Blessed be the God of Shem"; a clear pointer to the *spiritual* part which Shem's descendants would play down the ages, for of him came the Christ.

(ii) Whereas "Elohim" is used in the expression "God shall enlarge Japheth", it is "Jehovah" which is selected for the title associated with Shem's blessing; the covenant-keeping aspect is thus emphasized,

(iii) Japheth's expansion would not occur apart from his "dwelling in the tents of Shem". Shem's descendants are still largely the property-owners of many Japhetic nations!

"God enlarge Japheth". Vast territories are occupied by the descendants of this son of Noah. "And let him dwell in the tents of Shem". These words are interesting, for the European nations in particular have been greatly blessed through the light of God's word, for which we are greatly indebted under God to the branch of Shem from which Israel sprang, Abraham and his Seed (Christ), the world-Blesser".

Another view of this expression was that although it had some application in Solomon's day, it would find fulfilment in the Millennium when the nations will share the blessings brought to Israel by the King of kings and Lord of lords. [See also answers to Question 6].

It was noted that the outline of the dispersal of the peoples as given in Genesis 10 actually found its development after the scattering from the tower of Babel as described in chapter 11. This scattering is referred to in 10. 25 in relation to the Semitic line. The final disposition of the nations after the scattering was ordained of God. They did not really choose for themselves, since all was overruled by the One who "set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD'S portion is His people" (Deuteronomy 32. 8, 9; cf. Acts 17. 26).

Some contributors expressed interest in the great divisions of the human family as related to Japheth, Ham, Canaan and Shem in Genesis 10. It is admittedly difficult to identify some of the heads of families named with peoples historically flowing from them. Yet there is general agreement among commentators as to the identity of several, and certain broad features are noteworthy, e. g.:

1. The descendants of Japheth occupied the more northerly zone.

Peoples deriving from Gomer are identified with the Cimmerians on the shores of the Euxine and Caspian Seas, Ashkenaz with Northern Armenia and Riphath with Georgia. Hence Gomer would be the progenitor of the great races of Europe and Asia which moved out from that Caucasian centre, including such peoples as the Gauls and other elements eventually found in Western Europe.

Magog is thought to be the forebear of the Scythians in Russian Georgia; Madai of the peoples of Media, from where there was extension eastwards into India. Meshech's descendants are traced to the tribes occupying an area between the Medes and the Scythians.

Javan is traced as the father of the Ionian race which peopled the Grecian area and such islands as Rhodes, Cyprus and Crete.

It will be appreciated that this represents a vast expanse of population, and historically the descendants of Japheth in this northern zone have proved to be virile and enterprising, and so have contributed significantly to the great world movements as men account them.

2. The descendants of Shem occupied a more central area, in general proximity to the "great fertile crescent", and included the Assyrian, Syrian, Jewish and Elamite peoples.

3. The descendants of Ham tended towards a more southerly location, occupying the area between the Jordan and the eastern Mediterranean sea-board, parts of central and south Arabia, Egypt (at one time called Mizraim after the son of Ham); Lybia (once known as Put); the Upper Nile area (Cush); and from such ancient centres spreading into other parts of Africa.

4. There was an interesting exception to this Hamite trend in the history of Nimrod and his associates. For Nimrod was a son of Ham, yet in his generation he gained a kingdom in the "central zone" of Babylon and Nineveh (Genesis 10. 8-12). The later greatness of these ancient cities was of course under the power of Semitic peoples, descendants of Assur, the son of Shem. It does seem remarkable that at the beginning the family of Ham should prevail in this area; similarly at one phase "the Amorite dwelt in the land" of Canaan while Abraham was but a sojourner there. Yet in due course God showed His higher purpose through the line of Shem, according to promise.

5. Considerably less space is given to the family of Japheth (10. 2-5) than to the line of Ham (10. 6-20), doubtless because peoples deriving from Ham would have a more direct relevance to God's purpose through Israel owing to their nearer geographic location. In particular, the descendants of Canaan were to occupy the land of promise and eventually be driven from it. *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Some of the questions arising this month are of a debateable type; several editors have been asked to offer opinions, and on some points their views do not coincide. Readers' further comments on any of these points will be welcomed.

1. Who was the eldest son of Noah, Shem or Japheth?

The sons of Noah are given in what is deemed their order of birth in Genesis 5. 32, 6. 10, 7. 13, 9. 18, and 10. 1, namely Shem, Ham and Japheth. From this consistent reiteration we judge that Shem was the eldest and Japheth the youngest. The correct translation of Genesis 10. 21 is as in the R. V. text, "Shem... the elder brother of Japheth". The R. V. marginal rendering is considered very improbable. The words "the elder brother of Japheth" seem to be inserted here to remind the reader that Shem was the eldest although mentioned last. The enumeration of Shem's family last leads up to the generations of the chosen line. *Jas. M.*

Most recent authorities in translation support the reading in the Revised Version, thus making Shem the eldest son. *J. D. T.*

2. Nowhere in Scripture is Noah blamed for becoming inebriated with the produce of his husbandry. Are we to conclude that this was the first experience of wine drinking, since it is the first mention in Scripture?

It is too much to assume that first mention indicates first occurrence. The curse on Ham reflects on Noah and so implies blame. The fault does not lie in taking wine, but in allowing it to take control of the man. It is a grave matter that the sin of one man may adversely affect another, or even affect many as in the case of Achan (Joshua 7).

J. B.

This seems a likely conclusion, but the sad result of Noah's use of wine surely points to a lack of wisdom on his part. God does not always underline His servants' lack of wisdom.¹¹ Note there is no direct condemnation of Lot in chapter 19—the narrative is left to speak out its own grim message.

J. D. T.

I find it difficult to understand that after centuries of experience before the Flood man had not discovered how to grow grapes and make wine. That there is no previous scriptural mention seems quite incidental. There appears to me an implied blame on Noah.

G. P. Jr.

3. Why was Canaan, among the sons of Ham, singled out for Noah's curse?

The scriptural record does not state whether Canaan personally played a part in the discreditable behaviour of Ham towards Noah's drunkenness. Noah, however, clearly spoke in 9. 25-27 with prophetic insight, and of the sons of Ham, Canaan nationally and geographically was destined to come into most direct conflict with the chosen line through Shem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Note the selective detail of the genealogies of Ham's sons given by the Holy Spirit in 10. 6-20 in relation to Babel and Nineveh.

J. D. T.

I would understand that the Lord guided Noah's words as truly as He did the hands of Jacob in blessing the sons of Joseph (Genesis 48. 13-15). An aged father's curse or blessing was held to have power of fulfilling itself, and therefore was of the nature of a prophecy. The names mentioned in 9. 25-27 are used symbolically and representatively, not being confined to individuals, but including their descendants. The subsequent history of the Canaanites shows a marked fulfilment of the curse in their various subjugations to Israel and to the descendants of Japheth, races from the west and the north.

Jas. M.

I do not consider that Canaan was singled out to bear the major effect of the curse. Verses 18 and 22 of Genesis 9 serve to keep Canaan to the fore. Chapter 10. 15-20 indicates the races descended from Canaan, and among these are the races to be displaced by Israel. This is why Canaan is kept to the fore: it is prophetic in its implications and purpose.

J. B.

4. The passage tends to indicate that Canaan was involved with his father, hence he received the curse. Have we any scriptural indication of how he was involved?

This question seems to me to draw unjustifiable inferences from the passage. There is no evidence whatsoever that Canaan was involved, and my understanding would be that all the Hamitic races were included in the judgement pronounced by Noah.

J. B.

The twice repeated words that Ham is the father of Canaan (9. 18 & 22) in the connexion of Noah becoming drunk, seem to suggest some collusion between father and son in this sordid scene. Concerning verse 24 some, insisting that the R. V. margin "younger" for "youngest" is not permissible grammatically, state that "youngest" cannot refer to Japheth, but refers to Canaan, the younger son of Ham (10. 6).

According to another commentator, 'youngest' literally means 'his son, his little one'.

Jas. M.

There does not seem to be any scriptural indication of Canaan's direct involvement.

J. D. T.

5. Have we any scriptural indication that the curse of Canaan continues to this day? If so, is racial discrimination of God?

I suggest that the curse of Noah does not contemplate a whole race of descendants from Canaan being subject to slavery. Therefore I deem it an error of judgement to apply this curse to modern peoples of Hamitic descent. Other factors, over-ruled by God no doubt, have led to the over-lordship by temperate zone peoples of races in both tropical and frigid zones. Paul's address (Acts 17. 26-28) clearly shows that there is no racial discrimination by God as regards salvation.

Jas. M.

The curses of God upon men and their posterity in Scripture are not withdrawn, and can usually be traced in history. But this does not mean that the term 'racial discrimination' as used and applied in the world, is appropriate for God. He operates on the basis of His own sovereignty and omniscience; and alongside His curses must be set His abounding grace, especially in Christ, offered to all men as individuals. The same principle applies to the whole human race under the curse of the Fall, but offered restoration through the death of Christ, on the basis of personal salvation.

J. D. T.

In my view the term "the curse of Canaan" is quite inaccurate, for I consider that the curse applies to the entire Hamitic race. Even so, we say emphatically that it is not for us to discriminate against Hamitic races today. The gospel and the love of God are for all men of every race and tribe and tongue.

J. B.

To me there are formidable historic difficulties in trying to apply the words of Noah to all Hamitic races from that day to this. The keynote of the penalty upon Canaan was servitude. This may reasonably be seen in historical outworking so far as the line of Canaan himself was concerned. But can it really be seen in the overall historic picture of other Hamitic lines? What of the mighty empire of Nimrod, who was a son of Cush? How can we account for the great power of Egypt, a dominating empire in the eastern Mediterranean for centuries? Or for the millennium of proud independence sustained by the Ethiopian kingdom? Or for other great African dynasties which controlled the affairs of that continent for some 3000 years between the curse uttered by Noah and the beginnings of European intervention in African affairs? When seen in perspective, the shameful aspect of enslavement by unscrupulous exploiters of human life occupy only a fragment of the time between Noah and the present day. Then again, such Japhetic races as those of India have been for a time brought into subjection to other Japhetic powers. It therefore seems to me that the limitation of the curse to the Canaan line finds clearer fulfilment in historic fact.

G. P. Jr.

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

It is sometimes suggested that the objective of the men of Babel in building their tower was to reach heaven in order that they might thereby approach God or obtain some spiritual glory or blessing. It was indeed proposed that the tower was to "reach unto heaven", but a phrase of similar import was used by some of the twelve spies about the cities of Canaan, which were reported to be "fenced up to heaven", that is, their defensive works were very high and forbidding. Today great buildings are constructed the upper parts of which are sometimes obscured by cloud. In a material sense men have reached up to heaven and we suggest that no more than this can be read into the scriptural statement concerning the tower of Babel. The only motive for this vast project which is actually mentioned in Scripture is that men might make a name for themselves. Probably this would involve attaining strength and security to avoid what they most feared: being scattered.

In a later age Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar for a short time attained the power and invincibility envisaged by Nimrod and his associates. Its boast was in its great buildings, but its unity was maintained by despotic rule. The naughty monarch at first lived in that spirit of pride which characterized the people of Babel (Daniel 4. 30), but God humbled him, and after seventy years divine judgement fell upon the Babylonian empire (Jeremiah 25. 12-14).

In the last days men will again devise a concerted scheme of human aggrandisement but the final product of their energies, Babylon the great, the strong but wicked city, greater than any before it, will soon fall under the judgement of God, never to rise again (Revelation 18).

L. B.

ORIGINS OF THE SEMITIC LINE

The life of Shem began ninety-eight years before the Flood and ended only a few years before the birth of Jacob. It was a life which covered nine generations and out-last-ed all his descendants of those generations except Eber and Abraham. The fact that Abraham, the called-out one, existed contemporarily with Shem (whose God also was Jehovah, Genesis 9. 26) seems to foreshadow the existence of other peoples paralleling the people of God in the purposes of God, in time, though not in position. The five sons of Shem (Genesis 10. 21) eventually became five nations. Historians indicate that Lud became the kingdom of the Lydians in Asia Minor; Elam, the Elamites who live east of the river Tigris, and a nation still in existence in the days of the early churches (Acts 2. 9); Aram's descendants became the Syrians who lived in Syria and Mesopotamia, and figured largely in the history of Israel in the days of the kings, eventually carrying captive Dan and Naphtali under Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 15. 29). It was in Antioch of Syria that the disciples were first called Christians, and here on the

road to Damascus the Lord revealed Himself to **Saul** of Tarsus. Asshur **is** Assyria, a people which eventually conquered **Aram**, uniting with them to become one nation. Arpachshad, whose was the **first recorded** birth **after** the Flood, was ancestor of Abraham **and** the people of God, **as well as many** other **Arab** tribes.

Throughout Old Testament history these nations were a thorn in the flesh to the Israelites, leading them **astray** with their wives and their gods, **and** attacking cities **and** capturing their people. **Yet God** preserved them, **sent** prophets to **bring** them to Himself, **and spoke** much about them. Jeremiah, **Ezekiel**, Nahum, **and** Zephaniah **are** rich in **references** to them. Much of Isaiah's prophecy, beautiful in its **reference** to Christ, **is** spoken about them, Jonah was **sent** to the **end** that Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, might **be** saved. Daniel wrote half of his prophecy in the Aramaic language, a **language** that continued through the **life** of Christ and into the churches of God **in** this dispensation. It was in Babylon that God revealed His purposes with the Gentiles, **and** that to a **Semitic** king, the head of gold of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. It was from Babylon that a small remnant **set** out at the revelation of God to rebuild the house in Jerusalem.

More **remarkable** than this, however, has **been** the **present-day** preservation of the Semitic nations **adjacent** to Israel. In spite of centuries of **warfare** and conquest, of changing geography, and vanishing nationhoods, of colonization, and of language change, there remains **an Arab** federation and language encompassing some eighty million people. These exist for this reason **at** least, that God's **purpose** in relation to His people Israel cannot **be** fulfilled without them. Moab **and** Edom, Babylon **and** Egypt have all **yet a part** to play in divine purpose; **and yet in** the midst of **all** these the tiny nation of Israel awaits the **return** of her Messiah. The day **fast** approaches when Israel will receive Him, **and** once again **take** its place as the head of the nations. "And nations shall come to thy light... Midian **and** Ephah; they all shall come... **and** the ships of Tarshish... the glory of Lebanon... **and** they shall call thee The **city** of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 60). *E. Neely*

BABYLON—ITS ORIGIN AND SCRIPTURE-WIDE SIGNIFICANCE

Babel was the place where **man** planned a spectacular **structure**, a multi-storied tower "reaching unto heaven" (see Genesis 11. 1-4 and compare Deuteronomy 1. 28). This is linked historically with Babylon, a **city** of idol-worshipping temples, shrines and images of gold and silver. Associated with the city was Babylonia, **reputed** to have **been** a land of polytheism, where thirteen gods **are said** to have **been** supplicated to stave off famine **and** pestilence, to give victory in war **and** to **grant many** other favours craved **by** mankind. Scriptural **references** to Babel, Babylon **and** Babylonia have a consistent spiritual **message** traceable from Genesis to Revelation.

Mankind's **first** empire-builder was unquestionably Nimrod who showed **great** prowess **as** a warrior, **and** **as** leader of the hunting expeditions of his **day**; **but** with equal skill he **led** and organized his fellows into the establishment of earth's **first man-made** kingdom (Genesis 10. 8, 10). This was Babylon, which had **its beginning** at

Babel, **and it was** also known as "the land of Nimrod" (Micah 5. 6). On the **plain** of Shinar, which was located **beside** the southern **part** of the Persian **Gulf**, was built the infamous city **and** tower of Babel. God gave no instructions for this building; it was a **man-made** decision possibly **in defiance** of the divine injunction that **men** should replenish the earth. When God **seeks a building**, as in the **case** of the **ark**, the tabernacle **and** the temple, He **gives a plan and a purpose**, but rebellious **man** likes to **produce** his own **independent**, spectacular project, **and use it as a rallying-point** for unity.

Nimrod's **name means** "we shall rebel", **and his act of defiance** at Babel is reminiscent of Satan, the arch-enemy of God **and** His people. "I will **ascend** into heaven, I will **exalt** my throne above the **stars** of God", **said Satan**, "I will **ascend** above the heights of the clouds... " (Isaiah 14. 13, 14). "Let **us** build **us a city... a tower... let us make us a name**", said Nimrod **and** his associates (Genesis 11. 4). So the grandson of Ham (the disgraced son of Noah) **built a tower with substitute** materials, brick for stone **and** slime for mortar, so untypical of buildings about which God gave instruction. The tower was **intended to be** a boastful expression of **man's** ability to unite **under** one name. It was the forerunner of **many** which would **be erected** in the kingdom of Babylon in association with **priestcraft and** religion. For later phases of Babylon's history were characterized **by a medley** of different religious conceptions, **yet** there was **an attempt** to blend these within the empire's unity. In this confusion of principle **under guise** of outward union is **reflected** the **trend** of **man's** religious thought, on towards the **great** religious confederacy of the end-time. The counsel of **God in** relation to **every** outworking of this religious philosophy is well **expressed** in the call, "Come forth, **My** people, out of her, that **ye** have no fellowship with her **sins**" (Revelation 18. 4).

Babel was only the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom, **and** from there he **went** to Assyria **and** built Nineveh **and** other cities (Genesis 10. 11, 12). In course of **time many** small kingdoms **were** absorbed into a vast Babylonian kingdom, Babylon emerging **as** the capital, **and** claiming to **be** the largest city in the world at that time. It was located on the Euphrates, the **Great River** (Joshua 1. 4), which was sacred to the Babylonians, **and it** was built four-square (120 furlongs each side). Known universally **as a** city of merchants (Ezekiel 17. 4), her ships plied the **great** seaports of the ancient world, with **spices**, gums, gold, **pearls**, ivory **and** the **famed** purple **dye** for cloth dipping, the **trade** for which **Lydia** was known at Philippi (Acts 16. 14). Babylon was also **known as** "the golden city" **and** the "glory of the kingdoms". Its famed hanging **gardens**, its temples, palaces **and** towers also **earned** the description of "the **city** of wonders". With **artificers** skilled in weaving **and** embroidery (Did not Achan covet one of the beautifully wrought Babylonish **garments?** Joshua 7. 21), **and men** learned in astronomy, soothsaying, sorcery, magical **arts and** divinations (Ezekiel 21. 21, 22), Babylon enjoyed prosperity, splendour and luxury. But **it** must not **be** forgotten that she dealt also **in** slavery **and** the souls of **men**, while **in** the temple of **Venus** her women prostituted themselves, with parental approval, **and** gave the money derived to the goddess **as a** conciliatory oblation. So Babylon **in** its **ancient** power **maintained** the tradition of Babel **as a** product of **man's** effort **and** skill, **designed** for **man's** glory, **and** expressing false spiritual principles.

The Babylonians were a **proud, arrogant** people (Isaiah 13. 11), as typified in their most powerful monarch, Nebuchadnezzar, who **boasted**, "Is not this **great** Babylon, which I have built... **by** the might of **my power and** for the glory of **my majesty**?" (Daniel 4. 30). **Yet** he lived to **bless, praise, extol and** honour the God of heaven (Daniel 4. 34). No doubt the faithful witness of Daniel **and** his three **friends** helped him to come to this realization. It is remarkable that God **used** the power of Nebuchadnezzar to punish His people. For Zion was the antithesis of Babylon. God had called Israel to separation **to give effect** to His revelation of truth; they were custodians of the divine oracles **and** He dwelt among them. They had gone **astray after** other **gods**, forsaking divine revelation. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, destroyed the temple and the city **defences, and carried** away captive the inhabitants, taking also the gold and silver vessels from the house of God. **Years** later Belshazzar **desecrated** these vessels during a night of debauchery **and drunkenness**. That night his doom was sealed **and** the last of Babylon's monarchs **quaked with fear** as he saw the handwriting on the wall. With his death there ended the world's **first** empire, which had its origins in Nimrod, **and** was **represented by** the head of gold in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's **dream** (Daniel 2).

The contrast in principle between the place of divine revelation (God's* house in Jerusalem) **and** the place of man's self-chosen diversity of worship (Babylon) is emphasized **by** the attitude of godly Israelites held captive in Babylon. "Upon the willows.. we hanged **up** our harps... How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a **strange** land?... O daughter of Babylon, that **art** to be destroyed; happy shall he **be**, that rewardeth thee **as** thou hast served us" (Psalm 137). Those **songs** so **dear** to the heart of God were not to **be** sung again until He stirred **up** the spirit of king **Cyrus** of Persia to release His captive people. But it was a **remnant** of only 42, 360 which **made** its way **back** to Jerusalem; the majority **stayed** in Babylon. The godly **earnestness** of those who **returned** has **been** a source of inspiration to **many** who in modern **times** have felt the Holy Spirit's constraint to leave the Babylon-like confusion of principle which obtains **so** widely.

It is striking that in the book of Revelation Babylon again **emerges** with characteristics answering **to** those of Old Testament times. **Presented** in chapter 17 as "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" is a woman, sitting upon a scarlet coloured **beast**. In chapter 18 is described the overthrow of "the **great** city, Babylon, the strong city". Immense commercial wealth **and** influence belonged **to** the **city, and** the woman was associated with spiritual falsehood **and** the martyrdom of the **saints** of God. Here again **are** man's self-exaltation through **great** material achievement, **and** self-choosing in **defiance** of God, with a union of diverse spiritual principles allied to worldly power. But as Babel **and** its tower, **and** ancient Babylon **and** its shrines all **came** to naught, **so** will the architect of this final **great** deception **be** brought down, **and** future Babylon with him. While the **redeemed** are singing the triumphs of the Lord **Jesus** in heaven, there will resound on earth this **cry** of **greatest** finality, "Woe, woe, the **great** city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come". She "shall **be** found **no** more **at** all". (Revelation 18. 10, 21).

R. Darke

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 10. 21-11. 9

Shem and the scattering of the nations

From Hereford. —The divine account of the origin of the nations is given in Genesis 10. 32, "And of these were the nations divided in the earth after the Flood". It was from the three sons of Noah that the present nations developed as they spread outwards from Ararat. Men multiplied and soon the earth was repopulated. But sin was still in the heart of man and it was not long before that which was in his heart was manifested by his thoughts, words and actions.

The frequent use of the pronoun "us" in Genesis 11. 1-4 is instructive. They, that is fallen men, wanted to make themselves a name, to make something which would bring them fame and security (verse 4). Further, they desired to depose God, to reach up to Him and beyond Him by their own power. Their idea was to build a tower to reach unto heaven, but, in principle, we see the same thing happening today when men, by means of their knowledge and wealth try to manage without God. In seeking to implement their intentions they chose a plain. This was not, nor is, God's choice. His choice was a mountain, and one day He was to show the mountain of His choice to Abraham, and later to others. Much that is deplorable amongst believers today is rooted in their having made their own choice of a place, instead of that which God has chosen.

One very interesting and instructive feature of the passages under consideration is that which deals with languages. Men must communicate with each other and God has given them the means so to do. Bait here it was helping in a sinful project and God confounded their purpose by confounding their language. This confusion led to their scattering and the tower remaining unfinished. So we have diversity of language today, and it is suggested that any attempt to make a universal language will not succeed. It is, however, interesting to note that here judgement came by the confusion of languages. In Acts 2 we have a glorious occasion when grace came in with all its beauty and it was expressed by various tongues so that all men could understand God's message. In Revelation 7 we are taken forward to a time when rejoicing and glory will be expressed by a great multitude out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues.

Stuart Hickling, R. Hickling

From Derby. —Shem means "the name" and we read, "Blessed is the LORD (Jehovah) the God (plural) of Shem". Shem is seen as the link between the men whose genealogy reaches from Adam to Christ (Genesis 5, 11. 10-32; Matthew 1. 2-17). How perfectly God has watched over His chosen ones to fulfil His purposes of grace!

It has been suggested that the word "Hebrew" is derived from the name Eber. Abram was called "Abram the Hebrew" (Genesis 14. 13) which signifies, "one who has passed over", that is, over the river Euphrates. Eber had only two sons, but he had 13 grandsons. Peleg his firstborn is named in the genealogy and is therefore in the line of the coming One. In his days was the earth divided. Peleg was born 109 years after the Flood, and he lived 239 years. It is difficult to fix a date for the scattering; it can however be said that Noah was then alive.

It was noted **that** the children of **men** (**men** of the earth, earthy) **seemed** to have prominence, **as** they have **today**; the **influence** of Noah **and** Shem-like **men being** little in evidence.

The **part** of the earth where Shem **and** his descendants settled was chiefly **in** Mesopotamia **and** Arabia (10. 30). The margin in **Genesis 11. 1** has "lip" for language, **and** "words" for speech, which is helpful.

The congregation of **men** in the land of Shinar (possibly meaning division) was of **men**, not of God, **so** God confounded their language **and** scattered them abroad. When **man** does not obey God's commands **God** has **to step** in **and** **act** to accomplish His purpose. God's children **are scattered** today; only **a remnant** has **been** regathered **as seen** in churches of God forming God's together people, God's holy priesthood, **a holy nation, a people for God's own possession** (**1 Peter 2. 5-9**).

S. R. W.

From Portslade. —From Shem there **is a direct** line of **descent** to Christ, through whom the promises to Abraham will **be** fulfilled (**Genesis 12. 2, 3; Luke 3. 36**). The vast, **eternal blessings** contained in these promises **are** world-wide, **embracing Jew and Gentile** (Ephesians 1. 3, 17-20, 2. 7; Romans 11. 26). **Yet it seems** probable that Shem was **influenced by** the universal **urge** of the **men** of that **time** to **get together** to build for themselves **a city, and a tower up** to heaven. It has **been** thought that the tower was **dedicated** to the moon-goddess **and the bricks cemented with bitumen** were to form a platform from which the mighty Nimrod could defy God.

Shem was contemporary with Abraham for over **140 years and so** may have **spent a part** of his life in Ur of the Chaldees.

W. T.

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Papers were also received from Barry **and Aberkenfig**, Birmingham, Denmark Hill, Lagos, Methil **and** Teesside. Several contributors found **interest in** comparing the false unification of **men** with God's way of unity. The godless joining **up** of forces to provide strength was **in fact** a source of weakness **and** resulted **in man's worst fears being** realized. But **in** the midst of division **Scripture begins to trace** the godly line through Shem from which **God** would choose the **nation** of Israel for Himself, **a people** who would worship Him **in a godly unity in the place** of the name. This place **is** contrasted with Babel where **men** sought **a name** for themselves. Their buildings were of **man-made brick but** the house of God **is** built of **living** stones.

The confusion of Babel **brings** to mind the miracle of Pentecost when the opposite **process** took place, for each **man**, of whatever language, heard the apostles **speaking in** his own tongue. But the **effects** of Babel will not **be** completely obliterated until **men** worship God with a single tongue, **as instanced in** Revelation 7. 9, 10 (see also question 3).

There was **a difference** of **opinion as** to who took **part in** the Babel project. Nimrod, the leader, was of Ham, **so** some thought that Shem **and** his faithful family would not have **been** included. However, **since Genesis 11 seems to be** all-embracing, **and** all nations have **been affected by** the judgement of Babel, others concluded that Shem's

people were led **astray** by Nimrod and in fact the **family** of Shem may have departed from the LORD over a long period, for **Abram** later had to be called out from godless **Ur**.

It was noticed **that** in the genealogy of **Genesis 10** Shem's descendants **are traced through** Joktan of whom **came** Sheba (verse 28) and Ophir (verse 29), places associated with Israel in the **days** of Solomon, whereas the **direct** line through Abraham to Christ **is found in** Luke 3. **The** mention of the Joktan line in **Genesis 10** **may** imply that they and not the Peleg line **are** included among the nations. It is significant that Joktan's brother Peleg was so **named** because in his days the earth was divided. Some **suggested** that **this statement** could possibly indicate **the** separation between the nations **and** God's people, **but** it was more generally thought to **refer** to **the** scattering at Babel.

The lesson for today concerns the **danger** of **trying** to live without God, especially **as** advanced technological resources encourage **men** to be self-sufficient. It was not the actual building project which brought divine judgement upon Babel, it was rather **man's** godless spirit. Can this attitude **creep** in amongst God's people? *Eds.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. In addition to language **differences** were other variations such as **skin**, colour and national temperament introduced **at** Babel? (Birmingham).

There is no suggestion in **Genesis 11** that God's judgement **at** Babel directly **affected any** national characteristic other **than language**. Noah's prophecies concerning his **three** sons (**Genesis 9**, 24-27) **suggest** that racial **differences** were, in **part** at least, rooted in **these** three men.

L. B.

2. Was the scattering gradual or was there miraculous intervention to transport nations across oceans? (Birmingham).

Miracles do not **seem** to have been necessary to ensure the repopulation of **the** earth. Noah's immediate descendants were highly intelligent and civilized, **there was** no **real** difficulty even in those early **days** about building **ships** capable of crossing the oceans.

L. B.

3. Zechariah 8. 23 **seems** to indicate that there will be a difference between nations in the millennium, but will there still be different languages? (Portslade).

It is clear from **many** scriptures (e. g. Isaiah 2. 2; 60. 3) that national distinctions will **be** continued **in** the millennium. Zephaniah 3. 9 **suggests** the introduction of a universally understood language in which all will **be** able to glorify God, **but** this would not necessarily imply **the** cessation of other languages. These **may** well **be** maintained for national **use**, with **the** "**pure tongue**" of Zephaniah 3. 9 **as** the "**lingua franca**" for international purposes **in** general, **and** for spiritual worship **in** particular.

G. P. Jr.

4. What is the **meaning** of **the** prophecy concerning Japheth, "Let him dwell in **the tents** of **Shem**"?

The lands assigned to **Japheth** and to **Shem** **are** quite **separate** (Genesis 10) so the prophecy does not **apply** to **territory**. **At** **present** the sons

of Japheth may enjoy an application of this prophecy in that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation... to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1. 16). Salvation came from the Jews and through the Jews (John 4. 22), and born-again sons of Japheth share the blessing that came through Shem. The true fulfilment, nevertheless, is yet to be, when Israel is supreme and Japheth shares in the blessing. *J. B.*

In verses 26 and 27 it is to be noted that the blessing concerning Shem is invoked upon Jehovah, the God of Shem, and applies only to the Hebrews whose God is Jehovah. The blessing invoked on Japheth is introduced with the name Elohim. The blessing expressed in the word "enlarge" means, "May God extend the rule of Japheth". The R. V. margin, "he shall" is preferable, and the "he" refers to Japheth. The wish expressed is that the descendants of Japheth may live on peaceful terms with the Israelites and be partakers of Israel's blessings. The phrase "to dwell in their tents" (as used in Psalm 78. 55), which means to destroy the homes of the nations, is not analogous of the meaning in Genesis 9. 27. *Jas. M.*

PSALM 62

This is a psalm of David, after the manner of or to Jeduthun. The heading is similar to those of Psalms 39 and 77. Jeduthun (also called Ethan) was of Merari, that branch of the Levites which pitched on the north side of the Tabernacle. Heman was of Kohath which pitched on the south side, and Asaph of Gershon which pitched on the west side. In the days when the service of God was divided between Zion and Gibeon, the Ark was at the former, and the Tabernacle which Moses built was at the latter, Asaph was before the Ark in Zion, and Heman and Jeduthun, and also the priests, were at the Tabernacle at Gibeon (1 Chronicles 16. 37-42).

My soul waiteth only upon God:
From Him cometh my salvation.
He only is my rock and my salvation:
He is my high tower; I shall not be greatly moved (verses 1, 2).

David's soul "is silent unto God", that is, he has ceased from everything in the expectation of the salvation of God coming to him. God only was his rock (*TSUR*, sharp, strong rock) and his salvation; He was his defence, high place, and he would not be greatly moved.

How long will ye set upon a man,
That ye may slay him, all of you,
Like a bowing wall, like a tottering fence?
They only consult to thrust him down from his excellency;
They delight in lies:
They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly
(verses 3, 4). [Selah

When, and under what circumstances, did David write thus? Was it when all Israel under Saul were against him, or Israel under Absalom?

Or **may it be** some other **time not** recorded in **Scripture**? The **verses** on either **side** of **these seem** too personal to conclude that **he is speaking** of someone other **than** himself. **Quite** evidently he has been **set** upon by those who would slay him, **and** he is like a bowing wall **and** a tottering fence. They **take** counsel together to **destroy** his excellency, which **seems** like those in the **days** of Absalom, whose lying **and** deceit, blessing with the mouth **and** cursing inwardly, **seem** to suit that **time**.

My soul, **wait** thou only upon God;

For **my** expectation is **from** Him.

He only is **my** rock **and** **my** salvation:

He is **my** high tower; I shall not **be** moved (verses 5, 6).

Here David **repeats** himself as to his soul **being** silent towards God, **and** in his expectation he **felt** he would not **be** moved. God was his **TSUR**, strong rock, his salvation, his glory **and** defence, **and** his **refuge**. What a **number** of similitudes he **uses** of what God was to him in the **dangers** of that time!

Trust in Him at all **times**, ye people;

Pour out your heart before Him:

God is a **refuge** for **us** (verse 8). [Selah

Here he encourages the people to do what he **did** himself, to **trust** God, to **pray** to **Him**, and to **find** in **Him** their **refuge**. What value is there **in** the exhortation of **any** one who fails to **put** into practice his own exhortation? **Barnabas** was so surnamed **by** the apostles. The **name** means, "Son of exhortation", for he **did** himself what he exhorted others to do. **He** was a Levite from **Cyprus**, **and** having a field he sold it, **and** brought the money, **and** laid it at the apostles' feet (Acts 4. 37).

Surely **men** of low degree are vanity, **and** men of high **degree** are a lie:

In the balances they will go **up**;

They **are** together lighter than vanity.

Trust not **in** oppression,

And become not vain in robbery:

If riches **increase**, **set** not your heart thereon (verses 9, 10)

Here David **sums up** all **men**, high and low, that they **are** lighter than vanity. **He** says in Psalm 39. 5, "Surely **every** man at his **best** estate is altogether vanity". Solomon writes much in Ecclesiastes of the **vanity** of things **under** the sun. He says, "I have **seen** all the works that are done **under** the sun; and, behold, all is vanity **and** a striving after wind" (1. 14). What is **vanity**? It is **emptiness**, **empty** pride and conceit. **Many** have **trusted** in oppression in our **time** and have been **vain** in robbery, **even** legalized **robbery** to further their own **ends**! **David** wisely **advises** that if riches **increase**, the heart is not to **be** set thereon, for "the love of money is a root of all **kinds** of evil" (1 Timothy 6. 10).

God hath spoken once,

Twice have **I** heard this;

That power belongeth unto God:

Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth **mercy**:

For Thou **renderest** to **every** man according to **His** work

(verses 11, 12).

Power here means strength. In Job 33. 14 we find Elihu saying, "God speaketh once, yea twice, though man regardeth it not". But here, though God spoke but once, the psalmist heard it twice. He may be speaking of the voice and the echo. In these days we have heard of the almost infinite power that God placed in the atom, but, alas, man has invented applications of it to his own destruction. A God of infinite strength who lacked mercy would be an intolerable thought to us. But though strength belongs to Him, mercy also belongs to Him. Both are weighed in just measure in all His dealings with men. See Ephesians 2. 4-6. In His justice He will render to each man according to his work. As a righteous Judge He could not do otherwise.

PSALM 63

This is a psalm of David from a dry land, the wilderness of Judah.

O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee:
 My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee,
 In a dry and weary land, where no water is.
 So have I looked upon Thee in the sanctuary,
 To see Thy power and Thy glory (verses 1, 2).

It is a sweet and tender confession of the psalmist, that God (*ELOHIM*, plural) was his God (*EL*, God in victorious power, singular), and we do well, who know the Father, to call Him our God, the One we serve, and who protects and satisfies us. David sought God early. It is better to be early than late. There were lines in our school books,

"Too late to rise, too late for school,
 Too late to keep by each good rule;
 The sluggard soon becomes a fool;
 Oh, never be too late!"

Moses wrote, "O satisfy us in the morning with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Psalm 90. 14). The psalmist's soul thirsted for Him in a dry, weary and waterless land. Such was the wilderness of Judah. In this thirsty state he had, he says, looked upon God (by faith) in the sanctuary to see His power and glory. It is well to be thirsty when we are looking to God, the Fountain of living waters, but it is sad when the thirst of believers is quenched and fouled by their drinking of the muddy pools of this world.

For Thy lovingkindness is better than life;
 My lips shall praise Thee.
 So will I bless Thee while I live:
 I will lift up my hands in Thy name (verses 3, 4).

Most human beings cling to life, but some who bring misery upon themselves seek death rather than life. But for the believer there is something better than life and that is the lovingkindness (*CHESED*, mercy) of God, and in the light of this the psalmist's lips praised Him. He would continue to bless God while He lived, and would lift up His hands, which Paul calls "holy hands" (1 Timothy 2. 8) in prayer in His name.

My soul shall **be satisfied** as with marrow **and fatness**;
And my mouth shall **praise** Thee with joyful lips;
 When **I remember** Thee upon **my bed**,
And meditate on Thee in the night watches.
 For Thou hast **been my** help,
And in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice (**verses 5, 6, 7**).

Marrow **is** the richest **fat**, **and** with this **and fatness**, in the spiritual application of these, the psalmist would **be** satisfied, for he **is** not **speaking** of his stomach **but** of his heart. His mouth would also praise God with joy, **as** he remembered Him upon his bed **and meditated by** night. God had truly **been** his help, **and in** the protection of the shadow of His wings he would rejoice. How personal **and** real God was to David! There **was** nothing theoretical in his knowledge of God.

My soul followeth hard **after** Thee:
 Thy right hand upholdeth **me**.
But those that **seek my** soul, to destroy it,
 Shall go into the lower **parts** of the earth.
 They shall **be given** over to the power of the sword:
 They shall **be a** portion for **foxes** (**8, 9, 10**).

David followed close or hard **after** God. He was not one who straggled away behind. God's right hand upheld him. He was **sure** that those who sought his life would lose theirs, they would go into the lower **parts** of the earth, fall **by** the sword and **be a** portion for foxes **and** jackals.

But the king shall rejoice in God:
Every one that sweareth **by** Him shall glory;
 For the mouth of them that **speak** lies shall **be** stopped (**verse 11**).

If this psalm **was** written **in** the **time** prior to David's **being** anointed king over Judah (2 Samuel 2. 4) and over all Israel (2 Samuel 5. 3; 1 Chronicles 11. 3), while he was **yet persecuted** by Saul, his claim to **be king** was **based** upon his anointing **by** Samuel (1 Samuel 16. 13). Thus David was anointed **king** thrice, **by** Samuel, **by** the **men** of Judah, **and by** the elders of Israel. **Every** one who swore **by** this still rejected **king** would glory, **even as we** shall who **are** loyal to our rejected **King**, the Lord Jesus Christ, **and** then the mouths that **speak** lies shall **be** stopped. **It** was well worth the sufferings of David's **men in** the **time** of his rejection to **be** with him **in** his glory.

PSALM 64

Here is another **psalm** of David without **any** heading to indicate when it was written. We **presume** it is about himself **in** his **days** of persecution, **and** is of general application to all who **are** persecuted.

Hear **my** voice, O God, in **my** complaint:
 Preserve **my** life from **fear** of the enemy.
 Hide **me** from the **secret** counsel of evil-doers;
 From the tumult of the workers of **iniquity**: (**verses 1, 2**)

We may ask, Why was David so much in trouble? The answer **must be** (1) **because** God **found so great** pleasure in him, and (2) **because** through him God's people would **be** raised to a spiritual **state** unknown for **many years**, and that through him the service **of God** would **be restored** in Israel. The devil will **ever see** that those who **serve** God and please Him will have trouble enough. Their salvation **and** strength will **be found** in God Himself. Hence the **need** of continual **prayer**, as in David's **case**, as we **see** in his psalms. Here is David's voice raised in **prayer**, that his life would **be preserved from fear** of the enemy. He wished to **be hid** from the **secret** counsel of evil-doers, and from the tumult **of** the workers **of** iniquity. It **may seem strange** that such people should **be** among the people **of** God, **but** when we think of the sufferings of Christ (these in the main were **caused by** the Jews, God's people **in** their day), we **can see** how **it came** about in David's **time**, and how **it may** also **be** in ours.

Who have whet their **tongue** like a sword,
And have **aimed** their arrows, **even bitter** words:
 That they **may shoot in secret** places at the **perfect**:
 Suddenly do they shoot **at** him, **and fear** not. (verses 3, 4)

David refers to the tongue of evil-doers **being** whetted like a sword. James in his epistle **adds a great** deal on the **subject** of the tongue in chapter 3. He **says** that all **creatures can be tamed by man**, that is, **subdued** and brought **under certain** limits, "**but** the tongue **can** no **man tame**; it is a restless evil, it is full of **deadly** poison" (James 3. 8). **But** those who **are** taught in Christ, **even as truth is in Jesus**, will heed the words of such teaching. "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, **but** such as is good for **edifying** as the **need may be**, that it **may give grace** to them that hear" (Ephesians 4. 20, 21, 29). Not only was the **tongue** of evil-doers as a sharp sword, **but** their **bitter** words were arrows. These were unworthy words. **But** the **just** words of the **Lord** in the **day** of **judgement** will **be** as arrows. "Thine arrows **are** sharp; the peoples fall **under** Thee" (Psalm 45. 5). Jacob in blessing Joseph **said**, "The archers have sorely **grieved** him, **and** shot **at** him". **First** his brethren when they sold him to the Ishmaelites (**Genesis 37. 28**) shot their arrows at him, **and** then Potiphar and his wife **added** theirs (**Genesis 39. 18-20**), **and** Potiphar **cast** Joseph into prison. "**But** his bow abode **in** strength" **and** the **time** came for Joseph to **speak**, **and** his arrows found their **mark** (**Genesis 49. 23, 24**). David **says** that the evil-doers shoot **in secret** at the **perfect**; they shoot suddenly **and** **fear** not.

J. M.

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BIBLE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

The tenth verse of Genesis chapter 11 returns us to the more structured form of genealogy which occupies chapter 5. The selective character of the genealogy of Noah's sons has already been apparent in chapter 10 with the line of Shem significantly left to the last and traced through Arpachshad, Eber and the brothers Peleg and Joktan. Now in this latter part of chapter 11 the genealogy of the Shem line itself becomes selective in choosing to pursue the family of Peleg towards the individual who is to dominate the Genesis narrative from this point.

There is, however, one rather striking difference between the verse couplets of chapter 11 and the earlier corresponding record of the generations of those from Adam to Noah. No mention is now made of the total life span of the individuals concerned. These can, of course, readily be calculated for Shem, Arpachshad, Peleg, etc., to Terah and are notably shorter than the lives of Adam's immediate descendants. Is the Holy Spirit here withdrawing attention from the duration of life and focussing on the now all-important issue of the quality of a man's earthly sojourn, on the direction of heart which Abraham was to show towards God and His word?

God's call was to Abraham, although clearly Terah found a place in the outworkings of the divine, sovereign purpose as he is seen leading his family out of Ur. One can readily imagine the whole move being at the instigation of Abraham. When the chapter 11 narrative is laid alongside the early verses of chapter 12 and of Acts 7, it is in the latter that the spiritual purpose of Abraham's movements shine so clearly.

And so we leave our study of Genesis for the present at the point where the origins of the Israel nation can be discerned; and the early unfolding purpose of God towards a Man who would one day tread the dust of that Holy Land and declare to astonished sons of this great patriarch of faith, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8. 58).

J. D. T.

ABRAHAM, THE FRIEND OF GOD

Abraham heard the call of God whilst serving other gods in Ur of the Chaldees, and responded in sublime faith thereto. This call separated him for ever from a place where the will of God could not be carried out acceptably (Acts 7. 2-5). The incident is a pivot-point in God's dealings with men, and provides a pattern of the way of faith, whereby man can worship and serve God, both in an individual and a collective capacity. In this call to one man God had in mind the descendants of Abraham, who would be to Him a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19. 5, 6).

Ur was no **mean city**, the archaeologist's **spade** having uncovered much that shows Ur's former **grandeur** and glory. There is something especially appropriate **therefore** about Stephen's expression, "The God of glory **appeared** unto our father Abraham" (Acts 7. 2). For Ur's glories would **pass** away, **but** Abraham responded to the call of the God of glory, **even** though it **meant** his going out, not knowing whither he went. There would doubtless **be criticism** of his actions, **and** pronouncements upon his folly, **but** he trod the pathway of **implicit faith in God and in His promises**. From **an idolatrous land and city** he was **separated by** the will of God.

Of those who **left** Mesopotamia with Abraham, only **Sarai**, his wife, was to **prove** herself a help **and** a **meet** companion for him in his pilgrimage. Her faithfulness **earned** for her a new **name**, Sarah, **meaning** "princess". **Significant** in Abraham's life is the **last** clause in **Genesis 12. 5**, "into the **land** of Canaan they came", into a land where they could worship God in a full **and unfettered** way. In Canaan **we suggest** that there is multiple typology, namely **a type** of heaven **and** also, from the history of Israel in the land, **a type** of the **experience** of the people of **God** today, gathered together in churches of God **and forming** the kingdom of God.

Soon **after** Abraham's **entrance** into Canaan the **LORD appeared** to him, the **first** of several **appearances**, showing the close communion which has **earned** for Abraham the title "the friend of God". On his arrival in Canaan one of the **first acts** of the pilgrim from Mesopotamia was to build **an altar**, **and** to call on the **name** of the **LORD**. This building of **an altar** from place to place on his pilgrimage **became** a characteristic **feature** of Abraham's life. It **typified** his exercise in worship and communion. **Great man** of God though he was, there were lapses in Abraham's experience. For example, **in a time of famine** he left Canaan for **Egypt and became** involved in difficulties there (12. 10-20). He quickly **and** wisely recognized his error **and returned** to the land **and** to the altar **and** to his God. Significantly there is **no** record of his building **any altar** in Egypt.

To hear, to believe, then to call upon His **name** is the **sequence** of things in Romans 10. 13-15. Whilst the hearing **and** believing happened in idolatrous **Ur**, the calling on the **name** of the **LORD** (ever in association with the altar) could **be** done only in Canaan in separation unto God. To miss the spiritual implications of the call Abraham received **after** his conversion is to miss God's **great purpose** for His children in both Old **and** New **Testament** times. In the Old Testament there was only **one** place for Abraham's posterity, the land of Canaan, where in **separation** unto God they could **serve** Him as His gathered-out people. In New Testament **times** there is only **one** place indicated by God, namely the Fellowship of His Son, **Jesus Christ** our Lord (1 Corinthians 1. 9). This is **confirmed** by the preaching, hearing and believing of **Acts 2**, when disciples were **baptizea**, added, **and** continued steadfastly in the apostles* teaching **and** fellowship, in the **breaking** of **bread** and the prayers. So was constituted **and came into being** in Jerusalem the **first church** of **God**. From that beginning at **Pentecost** other churches of God **came** into being. A careful reading of 1 Corinthians 1. 1-9 will reveal the calling of God into the Fellowship of His Son (verse 9) linked with the calling **upon** the **name** of the Lord **by** the churches at Corinth **and** elsewhere (verse 2). Those churches **were** all

constituted according to the divine pattern of Acts 2. 41, 42 and "fitly framed together", were growing into a holy temple in the Lord (Ephesians 2. 21, 22). Separation unto God in order to do His will is taught throughout the Scriptures, and involves not only a personal holy manner of living but a coming out by children of God from places and associations, secular and religious, where His word and will cannot be fully observed. Such separation has become a hard saying to many dear children of God. But it should be understood that the separation our God desires is not a withdrawal into a narrow asceticism which may mar the testimony of the Christian, or perhaps to a Pharisical attitude towards others. It is rather an entering into a place of Canaan-like spaciousness where His truth may be fully known in all its wondrous power. In that liberty, as God's gathered people, they may have grace to offer service to Him with reverence and awe.

E. E. Creasey

THE CIVILIZATION OF UR OF THE CHALDEES

"Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before Thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite . . . unto his seed" (Nehemiah 9. 7-8).

Our study of origins in Genesis concludes this month with the beginning of God's purpose through Abraham, of which Isaiah says, "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him, and made him many" (51. 2). This paper traces some of the discoveries of modern archaeological research into the ancient civilization of Ur of the Chaldees, an exercise which not only confirms the existence and fame of Ur in the time of Abraham, but also underlines the faith of that great patriarch in leaving the city at the call of God, to go out, not knowing whither he went.

For over 2000 years Ur of the Chaldees was hidden in the sands of the desert until extensive investigations, carried out at Tell El-Muqaiyar in Southern Mesopotamia, under the direction of Sir C. L. Woolley revealed a remarkable civilization that had existed before 2000 B. C. This site was identified without any doubt as Ur of the Chaldees. Investigations continued for twelve years, and many interesting discoveries provided an excellent background of the legal, social and domestic activities of the city, dating back to earliest times. Abraham lived about the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur, when the city was at the height of its fame and influence. Yet at the call of God he left this civilisation, renowned for its order and material prosperity, to lead in contrast the life of a nomad.

Ur was located in southern Mesopotamia, about 160 miles from the head of the Persian Gulf and 220 miles south-east of Baghdad. The remains of the city have been found some ten miles west of the present course of the River Euphrates, although originally the ancient city was positioned on the eastern bank, before the river's course was changed, centuries ago. The city was associated with an area known in ancient times as Sumer. Evidence to date suggests that the Sumerians

invented cuneiform writing about 3000 B. C., and were probably in advance of the Egyptians in this art. Ur was one of several great rival cities in the Sumerian area, and gained supremacy for over 150 years during the period known as The First Dynasty (commencing about 2700 B. C.). With the Second Dynasty there was a decline in power, but with the advent to power of Ur-Nammu, the first king of the Third Dynasty, the kings of Ur re-established themselves as overlords of the country. This dynasty covered the reigns of five kings for more than a century, and was still in power, it is thought, when Abraham received the call from God.

Woolley and others believe that Ur existed before the Flood, and indeed the scribes who about 2000 B. C. compiled "the King's Lists" looked upon the Flood as an event that affected the continuity of their history. To quote, "The Flood came. After the Flood kings were sent down from on high". The Flood put an end to an early culture known as the Al-Ubaid period, so named after the place where initial discoveries of pottery and remains were made. Outstanding pottery work of high artistic value was discovered in association with this culture. Pottery recovered at a higher level, above the sediments deposited by the Flood, revealed a degeneration in quality and in the standard of art.

During the period of the Third Dynasty, which covered the period in which Abraham may have lived in Ur, there is evidence of remarkable achievement in many fields. The life of Ur's citizens was dominated by the "Ziggurat". The word "ziggurat" is derived from an Akkadian word meaning "to be high", and is the noun used to describe the "artificial mountains" erected as high places for the god whose temple was located on its summit. The ancient people called the ziggurats "the hill of heaven" or "the mountain of God", and clothed the slopes with trees and shrubs. The ziggurat at Ur is the best preserved example in Mesopotamia, and measured 200 feet long by 150 feet wide and about 70 feet high. It was dedicated to the moon god, Nannar, although other deities were worshipped. Nannar was supreme at Ur, being the city's patron deity. The temple of Nannar was built of brick with arched doorways and vaulted or wooden roofs, adorned internally with mosaics. Nannar was not only the god of Ur, but also the king of Ur, and the reigning monarch was his steward! So the temple was more than a place of worship, it was the centre of business and government; civil servants mingled with the priests.

Society consisted of three classes. The upper class included landed gentry, priests and senior civil servants; the middle class merchants, craftsmen, scribes and professional men; the lower class small landowners, agricultural workers and slaves. Families were small, the husband being the head of the household and having only one wife. The higher class families sat down to meals that would have graced any table today.

Like other Sumerian cities, Ur had massive walls for protection. Within these walls the houses were built of brick, some of them being double-storeyed, and they were plastered and whitewashed. There were no windows in the lower storey, and the houses had flat roofs such as can be seen today in many Arab lands. The family usually lived on the first floor which was reached by a staircase, and in many houses there was a chapel, beneath which lay the family burial vaults. The streets of the city were unpaved, narrow and without drainage.

The knowledge of writing led to religious, historical and literary works, and scribes provided text books, grammars and dictionaries. Mathematics, astronomy and astrology were already developed to an advanced degree. The sexagesimal system (60 seconds per minute, 60 minutes **per hour**, the circle of 360 degrees and the 24-hour day) was **accepted** in Abraham's time. Thousands of tablets have been discovered recording commercial transactions; indeed a double entry accountancy system was in operation. The degree of order, both in business and social matters was remarkable. Woolley discovered details of a weaving factory that made twelve varieties of cloth, and which recorded the names of the women employed, together with their individual output and payments. The law-courts met in the temple area and the great House of Tablets contained the records of legal decisions taken. Loans, interest contracts, debts, inventories, etc., were all carefully filed and stored.

The standard of workmanship was of a high order, as evidenced in the monuments, statuettes, boats, harps, daggers, jewellery, razors, helmets, chariots, lamps and mosaics which have been identified by Woolley and others as belonging to the period about 2000 B. C. and earlier.

Within the walls of Ur were the north and west harbours, necessary for the trading activities which were vital to supply raw materials and as an outlet for her products. Ivory, spices, metals and stone were among the many imports from neighbouring countries and from India.

The overall impression to be gleaned of Ur in Abraham's day is one of materialism which would find expression in the religious and civil buildings and monuments, and equally in the family units and their activities. Woolley has stated: "We have to think of Ur in Abraham's time as dominated by a cult the essence of which was its material magnificence, a cult absolutely inseparable from the city". Such a civilization Abraham left, with its abundance and comfort, to answer the call of Jehovah. We pause to contemplate the marvel of God's ways. "When he was but one, I called him... and made him many". Leaving the mighty influence of Ur, Abraham ventured forth alone. He lived in pilgrimage with God in a land not his own, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar.

In course of time Ur's influence declined, and the most recent tablets from the excavated site (dated about the middle of the first century B. C.) indicate a city of minor importance. It is difficult to ascertain how the end of the city came about, but two factors had tremendous importance. First was the change in the course of the River Euphrates with its effect upon trade and the canal system necessary for irrigation. Secondly there was the change in Persian religious thought which led to the adoption of Zoroastrianism. This is basically monotheistic, and therefore led to the end of other temples and images, and a resultant decline in Ur's importance as a centre of religious culture. Ultimately sand obliterated this remarkable city, yet in this was preserved a wealth of material evidence for later interpretation by the archaeologist. To the devout student of Scripture, the desolation of Ur gives point to the inspired comment on Abraham's sterling faith:

"He looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God".

To Abraham's spiritual vision was revealed this far-reaching purpose of God, and he could see even the magnificence of Ur reduced to true perspective in relation to the glory of the eternal city.

R. F. McCormick

ORIGINS IN GENESIS

Genesis 11. 10 — 11. 32

Preparation Towards The Chosen Race

From Teesside. —The chosen race descended from the godly line of Shem. Terah was the father of Abraham, the one to whom the call of God came and to whom was the promise that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed.

It would appear that Haran was the firstborn, being born when Terah was seventy. Possibly Nahor was born next, followed by Abraham when Terah was one hundred and thirty. Genesis 12. 4 and 11. 32 read with Acts 7. 4 would seem to support this, for Abraham was seventy-five when he received the call of God in Haran, and Terah was two hundred and five when he died.

Haran died in the presence of Terah, leaving Lot (Genesis 11. 31), Milcah and Iscah or Sarai (Genesis 11. 29, 31) [To identify Iscah with Sarai seems questionable. For in Genesis 20. 12 Abraham described Sarai as "my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother". If she were the daughter of Haran, this description would seem inappropriate. For presumably Haran was of the same father and mother as Abraham. G. P. Jr.] Abraham subsequently married Sarai and Nahor married Milcah (Genesis 11. 29).

When the call came to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7. 4) Terah and Lot went out with Abraham together with his immediate household, but at that time they went only to Haran, and it was not until the death of Terah that Abraham received a further call and went forth to be a pilgrim. This double call would probably answer to what some regard as the double call in the gospel of this present dispensation; to salvation and into the Fellowship of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. It would appear that the household of Nahor had a knowledge of the true God, but it is clear that his descendants at least worshipped other gods. It should be noted how clearly Laban distinguished between "the God of your father" and "my gods" when addressing Jacob (Genesis 31. 29, 30).

The faith of Abraham was emphasized in that he so readily left a place which had reached an advanced stage of civilization to go forth **not** knowing whither he went (Hebrews 11. 8). *J. McIlvenna*

From Birmingham. —As we examine the generations of Shem we note that only one son was named in each case, though other sons and daughters were born, showing us that only one was chosen from each generation in connexion with the special purpose of God towards Abraham and the ultimate promised Seed. It was not until Terah,

Abraham's father, died that Abraham was called. He was the one chosen to be the father of a great nation.

God saw in Abraham a man who had faith in Him, and had the necessary strength of character to obey Him. The birth of Abraham **marked** the beginning of God's preparation towards the chosen nation of Israel. **God had set** His love upon Israel, never to be withdrawn, even though they were often disobedient. Likewise has the love of Christ been showered upon us. When Terah and his family left Ur of the Chaldees to go to the land of Canaan, they came to Haran, which was not on the direct route to Canaan, but lay along the river Euphrates. [The route via "the great fertile crescent", skirting the north of the Arabian desert area, was of course the obvious way from Ur to Canaan. Admittedly the final stage of the journey from Haran south into Canaan presented more formidable terrain than the earlier stages. G. P. Jr.]. The travelling was relatively easy and there would be water, whereas Abraham, when he later pursued God's call, had to cross mountainous and desert areas. The Christian pathway often approximates to Abraham's later experience in a spiritual sense.

D. P. Brown

From Aberkenfig and Barry. —We noted that Noah lived for a number of years after the birth of Abraham [see answer to Question 5] and would be saddened to see most of his descendants turn to idolatry. In Joshua 24. 2-3 the aged servant of God reminds the people that it was because their fathers served other gods that God took their father Abraham from beyond the River and led him to Canaan. When the God of glory appeared to him he "obeyed to go out unto a place... not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11. 8). It was Abraham that was called, though others went with him. "Terah" means "delay", and it may be that Abraham was influenced by his father to remain in Haran and it was not until his death that the journey to the place of inheritance was continued. The background to Abraham's life in a family where idolatry was common makes the faith of Abraham even more wonderful.

It would appear from Genesis 11 that only the named sons were in the godly line of witness. We also learn from Hebrews 11 that women and the wives of some of the patriarchs were included by God (verses 11 and 35-39). [These scriptures would hardly justify such a conclusion except in the case of Sarah. Eds.]

Ian French, Colin Jones.

IMPRESSIONS FROM OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Birkenhead, Derby, Edinburgh, Glasgow (Parkhead), Methil, Portslade, and Southport also contributed papers.

An instructive contrast was drawn between the human project at Babel, involving vast numbers of men, and God's plan which began with one separated man, Abraham.

A good deal of interest was shown in other scriptural genealogies having a bearing on that of chapter 11. "Whereas each generation in chapter 5 concludes, 'and he died', chapter 11 does not mention death except in the cases of Haran and Terah. Rather we read, 'and begat sons and daughters' ". Again, "of the names mentioned in 10. 22 onwards

only Peleg and his ancestors reappear. Thereafter it is Peleg who is the growing point, not Joktan as in 10. 25". There were ten generations from Adam to Noah and ten from Shem to Abraham.

It was thought remarkable that a man who later displayed such faith should be found in an idolotrous city, but Abraham's call to undertake a wilderness journey was seen to be like the call of the disciple to a position separated from the world (2 Corinthians 6. 17, 18). It is an individual call. Though Abraham went forth not knowing whither he went (*Hebrews* 11. 8), this was not a leap in the dark, but a going forth under divine guidance. *Eds.*

SHEM, HAM AND JAPHETH

In response to the suggestion made on page 118 (October issue), two further contributions have been received regarding the relative ages of Noah's sons, and they are printed for the consideration of readers:

1. To balance editorial remarks on the order of birth of the three sons of Noah we draw attention to a view which must be given due weight.

Genesis 9. 24 (text) refers to Ham as "his (Noah's) *youngest* son", and this has proved a difficulty to many. The **margin** gives "*younger*" which, strictly, should make Ham the second of the three. Again, Genesis 10. 21 (text) refers to Shem as "the elder brother of Japheth", while the margin substitutes "the brother of Japheth the elder". Clearly these two marginal renderings are consistent with one another and give the order Japheth, Ham, Shem (from eldest to youngest). Those who take the order Shem, Ham, Japheth, must find an explanation of the inconsistency arising from "youngest" in Genesis 9. 24. Apparently the difficulty in translating arises from the *Hebrew* mode of expressing comparatives and superlatives. If one method of translation produces the texts of 9. 24 and 10. 21, which contain an inconsistency, and if the other method of translation produces the marginal renderings, which are consistent, we must then allow due weight to this reading.

Support for this view may rightly be adduced from the fact that the order in Genesis 10. 2, 6, 21 is Japheth, Ham, Shem. The chosen line through Shem is given prominence in that it is given again with ages in Genesis 11. 10-26. It may well be that the correct order is Japheth, Ham, Shem, but the election of the line of Shem is foreshadowed in the order in Genesis 6. 10, 9. 18, 10. 1. It is pertinent to add the remark that this order is in keeping with 1 Corinthians 15. 46, "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual", a principle seen in Cain and Abel; Esau and Jacob; and Ishmael and Isaac. **J. B.**

2. In answer to the question, "Who was the eldest son of Noah, Shem or Japheth?" it appears to me that a very simple calculation has been overlooked. In Genesis 5. 32 we are informed that Noah was a father when 500 years old, and had nothing else been told us, we would have concluded that he was the father of triplets. Such was not the case, however, for we read in Genesis 11. 10 "Shem was an hundred years old and begat Arpachshad two years after the Flood". Two years after

the Flood Noah was 602, and Shem was 100, therefore Shem was born when Noah was 502, and not when he was 500. That supports the R. V. marginal rendering, 'The brother of Japheth the elder'. Again, when the generations of the sons of Noah are given, Genesis 10. 1-32 and 1 Chronicles 1. 4-23, the order is, Japheth, Ham and Shem.

Similar is the case of Terah and his sons (Genesis 11. 26), where Terah is a father at 70, and notwithstanding Abraham's name being mentioned first, he was not born till 60 years later, when Terah was 130 (Genesis 11. 32, 12. 4; Acts 7. 4). From Genesis 11. 28, 29 it would seem that Haran was the eldest of the three though named last; I therefore take the order of the names in Genesis 5. 32 and 11. 26 to be from the last born to the first born, the names of the former preceding the names of their brethren, because of the words of Romans 9. 5, "Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh" [See also Answer to Question 5. Eds.]. A. B. Russell

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Did Abraham serve other gods in Ur?

On the information available in Scripture it may be difficult to be quite certain that Abraham served other gods in Ur. But Joshua 24. 2 names Terah as among the fathers of the Jewish race who did this. It seems a fair conclusion that Haran, Nahor and Abraham, his three sons, would initially be familiarised with such idolatrous practice. This may be reflected in the prophet's words: "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father..." (Isaiah 51. 1-2). When the God of glory appeared to Abraham (Acts 7. 2) he would be delivered from any idolatrous association, and it seems that Terah was influenced back to the fear of the true God. On the strength of this revelation they moved out from **Ur** at God's command. G. P. Jr.

2. Why does Cainan appear in the genealogy of Luke 3. 23-38, but not in Genesis 11. 10-28?

Anstey in his chronology suggests that the translators of the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament tampered with the early genealogies to make them agree with certain chronological theories of the time. They gave increased longevity to some of the ancients and inserted Cainan in their text of Genesis 11. Anstey further argues that Luke, not being a Hebrew scholar, would quote from the Greek Septuagint, so perpetuating the error. Against this it could be said that the Holy Spirit would have guarded Luke from errors of this kind. However an ancient manuscript known as Codex Bezae omits Cainan from the genealogy of Luke 3, so that it is possible that Luke's original manuscript did not actually mention Cainan. L. B.

3. Was there any significance in the long life of Eber?

It is remarkable that Eber outlived Abraham by four years and it may be that such longevity was used by God to maintain a testimony to His name in a godless age. The wide variation in the life-span of men even in those early days demonstrates the uncertainty of human life.

L. B.

4. Why did **Abraham** send his **servant back** to his own country to choose a wife **for Isaac**?

The expression "**my country**" in Genesis **24. 4** would **seem** to **refer** to the Haran **area** and **not** to Abraham's original home in Ur. Reference **is made** in **24. 10** to "the city of Nahor" as the place where Eliezer found Bethuel, the son of Nahor and the father of Rebekah. In **Genesis 11. 31** Nahor **is not mentioned** as accompanying Terah, Abraham and Lot **from Ur** to Haran. It would nevertheless **appear** that **at some stage** of Terah's long **stay** in Haran he was joined **by** Nahor and Bethuel. So that Abraham could **refer** to the Haran **area** as his own country in the **sense** that he had lived there for **many years** and that a significant **group** of his own relatives had settled there. This is borne **out** by later references, when Jacob was **sent back** to his mother's home **area** of **Paddan-aram (28. 2, 5)**, to **stay** with Laban in Haran (**27. 43**). The shepherds **from** whom he **made** enquiry for Laban **were** themselves from Haran (**29. 4**). Abraham's object in **sending** Eliezer to Haran was **to ensure** that Isaac's wife would **be of** his own family stock and have some knowledge of the **true** God. Note from **24. 50** the allusion to "the LORD", **despite** the intrusion of some idolatry (**31. 19, 30-34**). Abraham realized the spiritual incompatibility of the daughters of the Canaanites (**24. 3**), **being** as they were **under the curse** of Genesis 9. 25. The later experience of Isaac and Rebekah when **Esau took** wives of "the daughters of the land" underlines the undesirability of marriage with them (**27. 46**). Abraham "**sought a godly seed**" in line with God's **age-abiding** principles. *G. P. Jr.*

5. Did Noah die before Abraham was born?

Noah was **822 years** of **age** when Terah was born. Whether he died **before** Abraham was born **depends** upon the **date** of Abraham's birth, **about** which there has **been** considerable discussion. The following two views **are proposed**:

- (a) From Genesis 11. **32**, 12. **4** and Acts 7. **4** it is inferred that Abraham left Haran **to go** into Canaan immediately **after** his father's death, Abraham then **being 75 years** of **age**. On this submission, Abraham was born when Terah was 130. Genesis 11. **26** might **be read** as **suggesting** that Abraham was born when Terah was **70 years old**, but this verse is regarded as a **summary**, with the three **sons named** in order of **dignity**, and it is thought that Haran and Nahor were **in fact** born before Abraham. It would follow from this interpretation that Noah **died** two **years** before Abraham was born.
- (b) It **is taken** that Abraham *was* the eldest son of Terah, and was **born** when Terah was **aged 70 (Genesis 11. 26)**. To reconcile with this view that Abraham was **75 years** old when he **departed** from Haran (**Genesis 12. 4**) it is thought that Terah **spent sixty years** in Haran **after** Abraham had gone forward into Canaan. How then **can** Stephen's words in Acts 7. **4** be explained? "**They can, it is submitted**, equally **be construed as referring**, not to the event of Abraham's arrival in Canaan **at a time** related to Terah's death, **but to the fact** of his removal or implantation **into** Canaan over a period of **time** which included his father's **decease**. The latter event **is no** doubt specifically mentioned as underlining the spiritual

nature and purpose of Abraham's completed pilgrimage, in contrast with his father's 'dropping out' and 'ultimate death in Haran". If this view is correct, Noah died 58 years after the birth of Abraham.

The former view does seem more naturally to reconcile the clear statement of Acts 7. 4 with the sequence of the narrative in Genesis 11 and 12, but if any have additional points to contribute on the subject we shall be interested to receive them. Reference may usefully be made to Bible Studies, 1964, pages 34-36, 49-51 and 66-68. *G. P. Jr.*

6. What motive had Terah in leaving Ur to go to Canaan?

The first command of the LORD came to Abraham, not Terah (Acts 7. 2, 3), but it seems probable that Abraham's life of faith had an effect upon his family, causing them to desire to leave idolatrous Ur. Since Terah was the head of the family, Abraham would have regard to his wishes and allow him to initiate the move. In this way Abraham was enabled to obey the divine command without alienating his family, a circumstance which proved helpful later when a wife had to be found for Isaac. *L. B.*

PSALM 64-Continued

They encourage themselves in an evil purpose;

They commune of laying snares privily;

They say, Who shall see them?

They search out iniquities;

We have accomplished, say they, a diligent search:

And the inward thought of every one, and the heart, is deep

(verses 5, 6)

What a course to pursue! Encouraging themselves in an evil purpose, and laying snares to catch their victims, they think that they will succeed. Such know not the consequence of wrongdoing contained in the words, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin" (Proverbs 5. 22). The sinner makes ropes to bind himself which he can never break. Not knowing this solemn fact, these people search out the iniquities of others diligently to bring them down. David says that both their thought and their heart is deep, but, alas, it is in mischief.

But God shall shoot at them;

With an arrow suddenly shall they be wounded.

So they shall be made to stumble, their own tongue being
against them:

All that see them shall wag the head (verses 7, 8).

They will no more evade the arrow than Ahab did, when disguised he went into the battle against the Syrians, for the arrow which was shot at a venture smote him between the joints of the harness, and he died later (2 Chronicles 18. 29, 32-34). These thought that no one saw them (verse 7). God will shoot with deadly effect. They will stumble, and their tongue which they thought was their own and could be used against others will be against themselves. When God acts, then others will wag their heads in derision. So it ever happens with evil-doers.

And all men shall fear;

And they shall declare the work of **God,**

And shall wisely consider of His doing.

The righteous shall **be glad in** the **LORD, and shall trust** in Him;

And all the upright in heart shall glory (**verses 9, 10**).

All **men** will **fear** when they **see** those who were **out** to harm others reaping the folly **of** their ways; they will declare **God's** work, **and** wisely consider what He has **done**. The righteous **too** will **be glad and** will trust in God, who **causes men** to **reap** what they sow, **and** the upright **also** will glory **or** boast.

PSALM 65

This is **yet** another of David's psalms, **and** it is also a song. (**Psalms 66, 67, 68** are also songs).

Praise waiteth **for** Thee, O **God, in** Zion:

And unto Thee shall the vow **be** performed.

O Thou that hearest prayer,

Unto Thee shall all flesh come (**verses 1, 2**).

A **psalm** is a **poem of** praise to **God set to** music, **and** was in the **past** dispensation **sung** to the accompaniment **of** a musical instrument.

It is somewhat difficult to **understand** the meaning of "waiteth". It is **given** in the margin **of** the A. V. (Heb. is silent). The R. V. margin **gives** what is more difficult, "There shall **be** silence **before** Thee, **and** **praise**, O God". **But** the idea **of** silence **seems to** indicate the stillness **of** the human spirit before God, **and** that, in this **case, on** the **part of** the Levitical singers **as** they were **about** to sing to **God**. "The vow" **seems to be** the vow contained in the songs they sung. We **do** the **same** in **many** of the hymns **and** spiritual songs that we sing.

J. M.

POSTSCRIPT

Editors wish to thank all who have continued to **support** the magazine throughout another **year**, whether **as** contributors **or** readers. Looking forward to further studies together in 1970(DV), we ask for **prayer** that we all **may be granted** "a **spirit of** wisdom **and** revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Ephesians 1. 17).

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